

TAMPA BAY'S

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

January 2024

South Tampa Edition - Monthly

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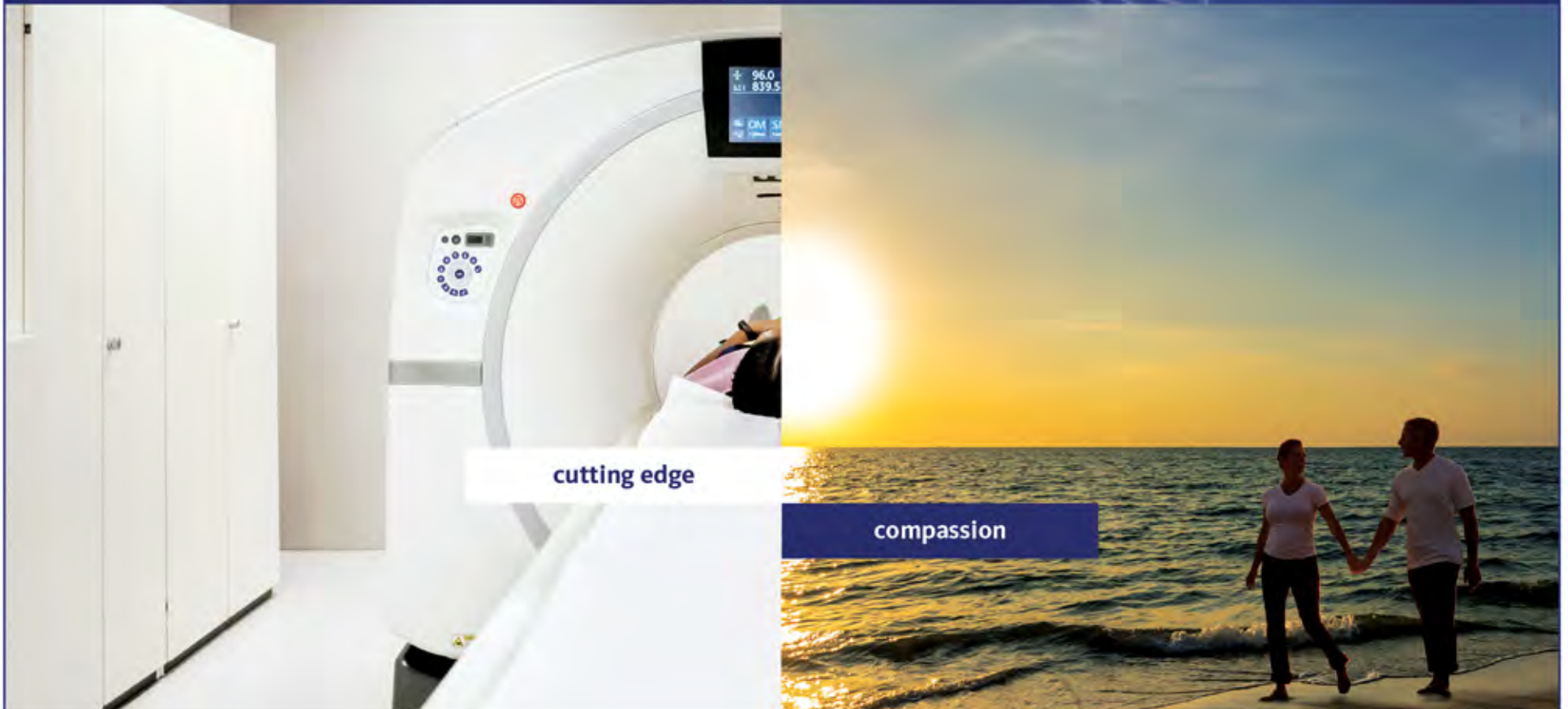


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#### NEUROLOGICAL

- Peripheral Neuropathy • Bell's Palsy
- TMJ • Stroke

#### WOMEN'S HEALTH

- Fertility • Post-Partum Support • Menopause
- Dysmenorrhea • PMS • Labor Induction
- Breach Fetus • Labor • Delivery

#### MEN'S HEALTH

- Overall Men's Health • Prostatitis • Fertility

#### RESPIRATORY

- Common Cold • Allergies • COPD

#### IMMUNE SYSTEM

- Adversity to Radiation • Chemotherapy
- Cold & Flu • Fatigue • Immune Support

#### DIGESTIVE

- Acid Reflux • Gastritis • Diarrhea • Nausea
- Constipation • Vomiting

#### ADDICTION

- Drugs • Alcohol • Nicotine



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# Does Your Heart Need an Electrician?



**A**n electrophysiologist is a medical specialist who plays a crucial role in diagnosing and treating various heart rhythm disorders, also known as arrhythmias. Their expertise lies in understanding the heart's electrical activity and using that knowledge to provide effective care to patients. Here, we will delve into the role of an electrophysiologist in cardiology, focusing on their responsibilities and the conditions they address.

**1. Diagnosing Arrhythmias:** Electrophysiologists use various diagnostic tools to identify and classify different types of arrhythmias. These tools may include electrocardiograms (ECGs or EKGs), Holter monitors, event monitors, and electrophysiology studies (EPS). They meticulously analyze the heart's electrical patterns to pinpoint irregular rhythms.

**2. Treatment Planning:** Once an arrhythmia is diagnosed, electrophysiologists develop individualized treatment plans based on the specific condition and needs of the patient. These plans may involve lifestyle modifications, medications, or more advanced interventions.

**3. Cardiac Ablation:** Electrophysiologists are highly skilled in performing cardiac ablation procedures. During ablation, they use catheters to target and eliminate the abnormal electrical pathways causing arrhythmias. This procedure is particularly effective for supraventricular tachycardia, atrial fibrillation, atrial flutter, premature ventricular contractions (PVC) etc.

**4. Implantable Devices:** Electrophysiologists are trained to implant and manage various cardiac devices, such as pacemakers and implantable cardioverter-defibrillators (ICDs). These devices help regulate the heart's rhythm and can provide life-saving interventions if dangerous arrhythmias occur.

**5. Risk Assessment:** Electrophysiologists assess the risk factors associated with arrhythmias and help patients understand their condition's implications. They may educate patients on lifestyle changes to reduce risk, such as avoiding excessive caffeine or alcohol intake.

**6. Collaboration:** Electrophysiologists often collaborate closely with other healthcare professionals, including cardiologists, cardiovascular surgeons, and primary care physicians. This teamwork ensures comprehensive care for patients with heart rhythm disorders.

**7. Research and Advancements:** Many electrophysiologists are involved in research to advance the understanding and treatment of arrhythmias. They stay updated on the latest technologies and treatment options to provide the best care possible.

**8. Patient Education:** Electrophysiologists are vital in educating patients about their conditions. They explain the nature of arrhythmias, available treatment options, potential risks, and the importance of regular follow-up appointments.

**9. Monitoring and Follow-Up:** Electrophysiologists closely monitor their patient's progress and adjust treatment plans as necessary after treatment. They ensure the heart's rhythm remains stable and address new concerns.



## Shalin S. Shah, MD

Dr. Shalin Shah is board-certified in cardiovascular disease and clinical cardiac electrophysiology. He earned his medical degree from Baroda Medical College in Baroda, India. Dr. Shah continued his medical education by completing an internal medicine residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. He then completed a cardiology fellowship at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, followed by a cardiac electrophysiology fellowship from Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut. Dr. Shah has practiced in the Tampa Bay area as a cardiac electrophysiologist since 2007. His primary interest is the management of various arrhythmias like atrial fibrillation, atrial flutter, SVT, ventricular tachycardia, advanced therapies like ablations, watchman, lead-less pacemakers, defibrillators, cardiac resynchronization therapy, left bundle branch and his bundle pacemakers etc. An accomplished author, Dr. Shah has contributed numerous articles in peer-reviewed publications including the Journal of the American College of Cardiology and the British Journal of Clinical Governance. He is part of BayCare Medical Group serving the Tampa area, a member of the American College of Cardiology and the Heart Rhythm Society and affiliated with St. Joseph's Hospital.

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# Revolutionizing Wellness:

By Daniel Sucherman, MD

## QC Kinetix Integrates GLP-1 Weight Loss with Regenerative Medicine for Joint Pain Relief

In the ever-evolving landscape of healthcare, cutting-edge solutions often emerge from the intersection of medical disciplines. One such groundbreaking development is taking place at QC Kinetix, where the integration of GLP-1 weight loss strategies with regenerative medicine is offering an integrated approach to not only shed unwanted pounds but also alleviate joint pain. This innovative combination is transforming the way we address health, providing a comprehensive solution to individuals dealing with both weight management and joint discomfort.

### The GLP-1 Advantage:

QC Kinetix's pioneering approach begins with the incorporation of GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) into their weight loss programs. GLP-1 is a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels and satiety, and its synthetic analogs have been widely used to address obesity. By enhancing feelings of fullness and promoting weight loss, GLP-1 acts as a catalyst for overall health improvement. You may have heard of some of these GLP-1 medications in the news: semaglutide, Ozempic®, Wegovy®, tirzepatide, Mounjaro®, Zepbound®.

### Weight Loss as a Foundation for Joint Health:

Weight management plays a pivotal role in joint health. Excess body weight places undue stress on joints, contributing to conditions like osteoarthritis. QC Kinetix recognizes the symbiotic relationship between weight loss and joint pain relief. As patients shed pounds through GLP-1 interventions, the burden on their joints is alleviated, creating a conducive environment for regenerative medicine to take center stage.

### Regenerative Medicine: A Ray of Hope for Joint Pain:

QC Kinetix's regenerative medicine techniques involve harnessing the body's innate healing mechanisms to address joint pain at its source. Procedures such as platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy and stem cell treatments are administered to stimulate tissue repair and regeneration. By combining these regenerative modalities with GLP-1-induced weight loss,



QC Kinetix offers a synergistic approach that not only addresses symptoms but also targets the underlying causes of joint pain.

### The Science Behind the Integration:

GLP-1 weight loss strategies prepare the ground for regenerative medicine by creating an environment conducive to healing. As patients lose weight, inflammation decreases, and the body's response to regenerative treatments becomes more potent. The combined approach enhances the effectiveness of regenerative medicine, providing patients with a comprehensive and lasting solution to joint pain.

### Patient Success Stories:

QC Kinetix's integrated approach has yielded remarkable results for patients struggling with both weight management and joint pain. Individuals have reported not only significant weight loss but also a noticeable reduction in joint discomfort. Improved function and higher energy levels return as well. Our patients are able to return to doing the things they love.

### Jim finds relief at QC Kinetix:

One year ago Jim walked into QC Kinetix with a lot of pain, extra weight, and skepticism. Years of bilateral

knee, ankle, foot and low back pain had reduced his mobility and his health was suffering. "When it hurts to get out of bed, exercise becomes impossible." Jim had been told masking his symptoms was all that could be done. Luckily he found us! QC Kinetix was able to combine regenerative medicine therapies with cutting edge weight loss medications to help Jim regain his health. Over the course of a year, Jim lost a very healthy and sustainable 2-3 pounds per week; ultimately losing over 100lb. Regenerative therapies repaired the damage that had accumulated in his joints. He is back to exercising and doing the things he loves without pain.

In the quest for optimal health and wellness, QC Kinetix has emerged as a trailblazer by seamlessly integrating GLP-1 weight loss strategies with regenerative medicine to address joint pain. Schedule your free consultation at [qckinetix.com/suncoast](http://qckinetix.com/suncoast).

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# COMPETITIVE EDGE PHYSICAL THERAPY'S 2024 MISSION TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY WELLBEING

In the heart of Tampa, Competitive Edge Physical Therapy isn't just another PT clinic. It stands as a beacon of support for the entire community's well being. Next year, CEP is going even further with its groundbreaking "Get One, Give One" program, where every paid therapy session helps provide treatment to someone in need. This isn't just about healing bodies, it's about healing the community, one treatment at a time.

## Empowering Wellbeing: CEP's Community Mission

CEP's core mission is to provide accessible physical therapy and optimal well health services to those in need, and in 2024 opening opportunities for the underserved members of our community. Their approach is unique, as they don't just offer services but build bridges within the community, creating a network of care and support.

## The 'Get One, Give One' Initiative: A Cycle of Giving

The 'Get One, Give One' program, set to commence in 2024, is a creative and philanthropic venture. With every private pay initial evaluation purchased at CEP, an equivalent service is donated to someone in need. This initiative not only provides essential health services but also allows community members to become heroes by "paying it forward". CEP patients can choose to gift the session to a friend or family member or contribute it to CEP's scholarship fund, ensuring that the benefits reach far and wide within the community.







A quote for CEO Jason Waz, "at CEP. We've always had a philosophy of giving back to the community as much as we possibly can and in 2024 we are dramatically expanding on our philosophy, being able to offer services to those who otherwise would not be able to benefit from the unique care that we provide. Essentially anyone in our community who pays for a private initial evaluation will have the opportunity to donate an equal service to a friend, family member, or donate it to our community scholarship fund for the others in need. These are the real community heroes that we want to highlight and celebrate."

#### Community Heroes: The Backbone of CEP's Mission

Through the "Get One, Give One" program, anyone can become a hero by choosing to invest in their own wellbeing while extending a lifeline to a neighbor in need. This ripple of generosity strengthens not just bodies, but the very fabric of the Tampa community.

#### More Than Physical Therapy: A Vision for Community Health

CEP's mission transcends the boundaries of traditional physical therapy. They envision a community where every individual has the opportunity to achieve optimal wellbeing. This holistic approach emphasizes the importance of individual health and community prosperity.

#### Joining Hands with CEP

By supporting CEP, community members and organizations aren't just contributing to a noble cause; they're reinvesting into the local Tampa community. Every action, every session purchased, and every service donated contributes to the larger goal of community wellbeing.



#### Learn More and Get Involved

To discover more about Competitive Edge Physical Therapy and their impactful community initiatives, visit [goceppro.com](http://goceppro.com) or contact them at 813.849.0150. It's more than just a service; it's a movement towards a healthier, stronger community.



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# PAINFUL NERVE DAMAGE: HOW ONE PATIENT'S STORY HELPS ANOTHER FIND RELIEF

## Treating Shoulder Pain Successfully with Radiofrequency

**P**aula Sharper and her husband had just recently moved to Florida, and she had been dealing with ongoing shoulder pain for a long time, which seemed to be getting worse. Paula was diagnosed with severe osteoarthritis of the AC joint (acromioclavicular joint) in the shoulder.

Paula told us that the pain was excruciating, keeping her up all night and disrupting her daily activities, including driving. While she was in the waiting room of another physician for her pain, she read an article about Dr. Sunil Panchal and how he helped a woman with chronic pain become pain-free.

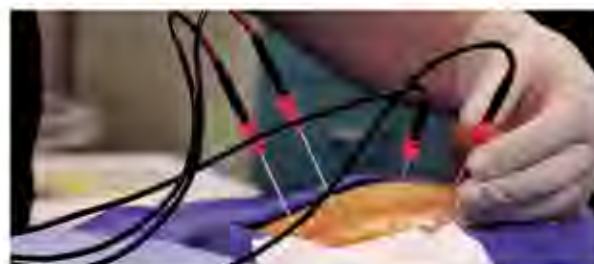
When Paula left the office, she immediately called Dr. Panchal and scheduled an appointment.

Paula explained, "Dr. Panchal is an amazing doctor and a great person. He takes a lot of time and listens to you. He explains everything in detail, and he pinpoints exactly where the pain is stemming from and what is the best option for you specifically."

She continued, "I've been to many doctors over the years, and it's rare to find a physician that is not only a great doctor but also a kind, genuine person that cares about you. My procedure with Nerve Blocks and Radiofrequency was terrific. I immediately had pain relief. My shoulder no longer hurts at all. I'm back to living a normal routine for the most part."

"Dr. Panchal explained that this is a process. He likes to take things in steps, so we are doing the radiofrequency first, and then if later on my pain starts to return and I need additional regenerative medicine such as stem cell therapy, we will go from there. For now, I'm ecstatic about my pain relief. I would recommend Dr. Panchal to anyone that is in pain."

"It's impressive that so many patients and peers speak so highly of Dr. Panchal. At the surgical center, the staff and medical practitioners are very



fond of him and his work. Everyone you talk to says what a kind and talented physician he is as well. Medicine shouldn't just be about temporary fixes, it should be about treating the cause and helping people find solutions. That's what Dr. Panchal offers his patients."

### Surgery is Not Always the Answer

Many people are familiar with radiofrequency ablation for lower back pain, but they don't realize that it can be used for other areas of the body. With shoulder pain, whether due to osteoarthritis or injury, many people believe or have been told that surgery is the only solution.

**Minimally invasive procedures like radiofrequency and nerve blocks offer remarkable results in long-term pain relief.**

### Nerve Blocks and Radio Frequency

Nerve Blocks are numbing medications that are injected into the area that is causing pain. In conjunction to nerve blocks, Dr. Panchal uses an advanced procedure called Radiofrequency (RF).

With RF ablation treatments, the nerves that are damaged, narrowed, or impinged, are injected with a low-level of localized heat, causing the nerve to stop sending signals to our brain through

### The National Institute of Spine and Pain

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an interruption in the nerve conduction. This procedure is entirely safe and effective. It has been used for many years with long-lasting results for people suffering from nerve back pain.

### Regenerative Medicine

For neuropathic pain, regenerative medicine is also highly effective treatment for relieving pain and regenerating tissue naturally. These options include PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma), Bone Marrow Aspirations, Lipid Aspirations and exosomes.

### More on Exosomes

Always on the leading edge of innovative procedures, Dr. Panchal adds exosomes into his stem cell treatment. Exosomes are produced from the plasma membranes of cells and are best explained as extracellular vesicles. Exosomes are nano-sized particles that are released due to an immune response. Some medical professionals are reporting that they are more regenerative and effective than stem cells. Because they act as intracellular communication messengers within the body and have the ability to move between multiple cells, they are also incredibly useful when paired with stem cell therapy.



### Dr. Sunil Panchal

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

At the National Institute of Spine and Pain, they treat each patient individually, using the latest equipment and various innovative procedures to diagnose pain and determine your care needs. The National Institute of Spine and Pain's President and Founder, Sunil J. Panchal, MD, is a board-certified interventional pain/ minimally invasive spine physician.

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



# PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY BREAKTHROUGH

*"My feet feel like they are on fire."*

*"Each step feels like I'm walking through wet paint."*

*"I live in constant fear that I'll fall."*

*"I can't sleep, my hands and feet tingle all night."*

What do all of these people have in common? They suffer from **peripheral neuropathy**. It's estimated that more than 20 million people in the United States have peripheral neuropathy. Unfortunately, this figure may be significantly higher as the disease is often misdiagnosed because of its wide array of symptoms.

Dr. Kim Windschauer of Acupuncture of West Florida in Clearwater Florida share this belief. "I've been treating neuropathy in all various forms for many years, and so often my patients come to me because of the symptoms, not because of a diagnosis. They saw one of my ads or read the testimonial of another patient and say to themselves, 'hey, I feel the same thing.'"

Kathy of Largo testifies to this. "I remember my husband driving me to my consultation, and I saw a woman running. I was so envious. I just kept thinking 'I would give anything just to walk again'. My primary care doctor told me my troubles with pain and balance were just symptoms of old age and gave me a prescription. I was so depressed."

Fortunately, Kathy would eventually see Dr. Kim's ad, describing similar symptoms, and how she offers a real solution at **Acupuncture of West Florida**. "I just knew I had to see her; it was my last hope."

"Almost all of our patients come to us with a story like Kathy's. They've been everywhere else. They've been told, 'it's just a part of growing older,'" shares Lauren, a Patient Care Technician at **Acupuncture of West Florida**, "it just breaks my heart, but I know how much we can help people like Kathy so I'm always so happy when they walk through our door."

Those diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy often face a very grim reality, Western medicine declares that there is no solution while most alternative therapies carry large price tags and offer little to no resolve. Which is why Dr. Kim and the staff at **Acupuncture of West Florida** pride themselves on being "the last resort with the best results."

Peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves and this damage is commonly caused by lack of blood flow in the hands and feet. A lack of blood flow results in the lack of nutrients; the nerves then begin to degenerate and die which causes pain ranging from discomfort to debilitating. Because neuropathy is a degenerative condition, once those nerves begin to deteriorate, they will continue to do so until they are completely expired, leaving those suffering with crippling balance issues. "In this case the absence of pain is not necessarily a good thing," shares Dr. Kim. "This usually indicates that your nerves are hanging on by a fragile thread."

## So how exactly is Dr. Kim able to reverse the effect of this degenerative disease?

"Acupuncture has been used to increase blood flow for thousands of years which helps to get the necessary nutrients to the affected nerves. But the real magic happens when I integrate ATP Resonance Bio-Therapy. This is technology that was originally developed by NASA to expedite recovery and healing."

"I just can't say enough about **Acupuncture of West Florida**," Kathy shared through tears of joy. "My husband and I moved here 3 years ago, and he's gone to the beach almost every day. I always stayed home because of the pain and discomfort. Yesterday I walked on the beach with him! And next week we're starting dancing lessons. I am truly living life these days!"

According to Kathy's test result, she has seen a 74% improvement in pain and functionality, which is on par with a majority of our patients, shares Lauren. "But more important than those test results is the joy she's expressed being here and hearing about all the amazing things she's able to do because she feels great."

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By seamlessly blending the ancient science of acupuncture with modern medical solutions, Dr. Kim has achieved a 90% success rate in reversing the effects of neuropathy. She starts each patient with an initial consultation during which a sensory exam is performed. "This not only aids in making a proper diagnosis, but it helps to define just how much nerve damage has occurred," tells the doctor. "This is important because if a patient has suffered more than 95% damage there is little that I can do to help them. I'm familiar with the medical miracle but I know my limitations as a practitioner as well as the limits of my medicine."

When it comes to treating peripheral neuropathy, regardless of its origin, early detection greatly improves your chances of full recovery.

If you or someone you love are suffering with chronic pain that presents as burning, tingling or 'pins and needles' or you've recently been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy, it's important to know that there are options. There is hope.

Call (727) 490-6060 to schedule an initial consultation or visit [AcuofwestFL.com](http://AcuofwestFL.com) to read more incredible success stories.



## ABOUT Dr. Kim Windschauer

I am an Acupuncture Physician, Board Certified by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) as well as the Florida State Board of Health, to practice both Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine.

I graduated from East West College of Natural Medicine, and am a member of the Florida State Oriental Medical Association (FSOMA). I have a Masters in Science degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine and a Bachelor's degree in Health Services, from East West College of Natural Medicine, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of South Florida.

I am one of the few native Floridians, born and raised right here in St. Petersburg. My husband and I have been married for over 35 years, and have nine children: Tyler, Jordann, Gabriel, Kevin, Annalyse, Lucas, Olivia, Cameron, and Addison. While the first five have moved into their own homes, and two are in college, we are far from empty nesters, having teenage twins and several dogs running around the house to keep us on our toes!



# Senior Living—The New Year's Resolution You're Looking For

Countless people are making New Year's resolutions for change, whether that's living a healthier lifestyle or learning a new skill, but if you are a senior, it's time you found out more about your opportunities for change within your living conditions. Most seniors are tired of doing yard work and home maintenance, and they desire a life that's full of laughter and socializing in the security of a senior community. Aston Gardens is the place many seniors choose to call home.

The folks at Aston Gardens at Tampa Bay have perfected senior community living and offer extensive opportunities and events for their residents to enjoy throughout each day of the month.

## Aston Gardens' Independent Living Features Include:

1. No maintenance
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5. Convenience to shopping, the arts, sporting events, restaurants, pharmacies, medical care and much more
6. Safety and security of a gated community
7. Ongoing activities and events
8. Friendly staff and fantastic neighbors
9. Fabulous, resort-quality amenities

At Aston Gardens, they offer several options that suit multiple needs for each individual or couple.

## Aston Gardens' Senior Living Options at Our Tampa Bay Campus

In our beautifully appointed Tampa, Florida retirement community, we offer the following senior living options:

- **Independent Living** – Stay active through daily events, outings, and recreational opportunities while enjoying the peace of mind of having on-site staff
- **SHINE® Memory Care** – In our memory care program, residents will receive personalized attention and assistance with everyday living activities as needed
- **Senior Assisted Living** – Suitable for residents who need a little, extra assistance with daily tasks like medication management, personal grooming, and household chores

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

## Independent Living

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

## Assisted Living

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

## SHINE® Memory Care

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



## The Difference

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

## Amenities

- Grand Ballroom
- Elegant Main Dining Room (5-Star)
- Private Dining Room
- Elegant Terraces and Outdoor Entertaining Spaces
- Heated Swimming Pool
- Lush Landscaping
- Senior-Equipped Fitness Center
- Library and Business Center
- Card and Game Rooms
- Activity Center
- Beauty Salon and Barber Shop
- Lounge
- Inviting Living Rooms and Common Areas Throughout
- Mail Room
- Concierge
- Full-Time Activities Director
- Themed Parties and Dances
- Educational Seminars
- Craft and Hobby Classes
- Card and Game Clubs
- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Local Outings Around Town
- And so much more

## Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay

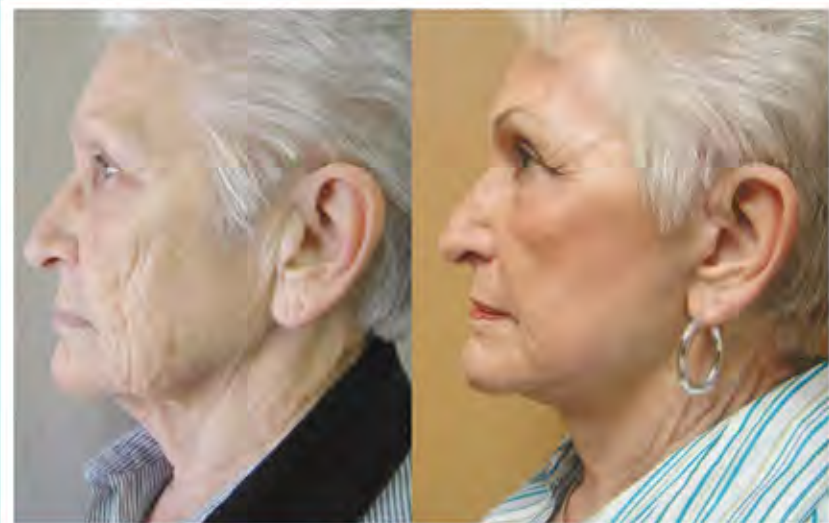
Aston Gardens is a luxury senior living community offering the best combinations of active-adult lifestyles and personalized care services. Wake up inspired each morning with a wealth of amenities, activities, and support at your doorstep. Explore the stylish Grande Clubhouse and indulge in our unique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

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# Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

**R**emember the old merry-go-rounds on the playground when you were a kid? You would spin in circles until you felt like you were going to fly off. That's how life can feel if you don't make some necessary changes.

You live a much faster lifestyle than your parents did. Your children will live an even faster lifestyle than you did. As we enter a new year, perhaps it is a good time to evaluate the pace of your life and make some necessary adjustments. The Psalmist tells us:

*2In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.*  
Psalm 127:2

If you are getting up early and staying up late but still don't feel like you can get everything done... you are probably trying to do too much.

Living at a hectic pace comes at a price. You end up feeling more stressed because you are trying to cram too many things into your day. You end up having no margin in your life. As the margins get tighter the stress goes higher.

You have to take time to recharge your batteries. Here's a lesson I learned years ago: You have just enough time to do the will of God. If you can't get everything done on your "to do" list, maybe there are things on the list you shouldn't be doing.

I want to share with you two simple strategies to help you slow down the pace of your life so that you can enjoy life.

The first strategy is to learn to be content. If you're serious about slowing down, you don't start with your schedule—you start with your heart.

The Apostle Paul said this about contentment. *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."*

Philippians 4:11-13

If you're going to slow down your life, you have to learn contentment. Paul also said this about contentment: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it."* 1 Tim. 6:6-7

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things. Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

I'm not waiting for *more* in order to be happy. I'm happy right now. I have dreams and I have goals but I don't need *more* in order to be happy. That's contentment.

Contentment will come easier when you realize two things: life is not a competition with other people and having *more* will not make you happier. This is not the message promoted by our culture, but it is true.

Jesus said it like this, *"Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'"* Luke 12:15

If you find yourself making statements like this:



- My life is a rat race.
- I don't know how I'm going to get it all done.
- I am just so exhausted.
- I don't know how much more of this I can take.
- I just want to escape.

These phrases are all warning signs that you are on the road to burn out. You need to slow down the pace. Perhaps as we begin this new year, taking an honest evaluation of your life and determine if some changes are necessary. Are you content in your life right now?

As the merry-go-round spins faster it is only a matter of time before you either get sick, or fall off. Or, better yet, just slow down, be content, and enjoy the ride.



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