

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

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FREE 

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The Importance of Couples' Health

EMBRACING SELF-LOVE

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NATIONAL CAREGIVERS DAY

Appreciating and Supporting Our Caregivers

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HEART DISEASE IN SENIORS

Understanding the Silent Threat

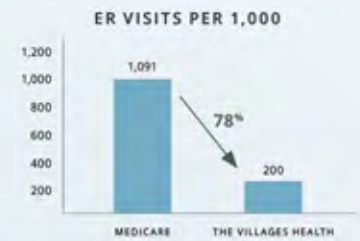
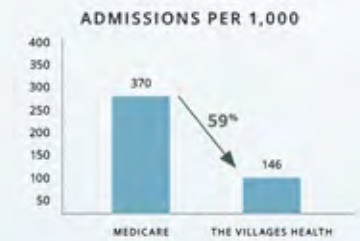




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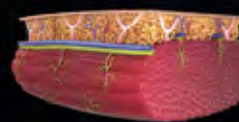
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By Elisha Lopez

NURTURING LOVE: The Importance of Couples' Health

In a world where life's pace is often frenetic, maintaining a healthy lifestyle becomes a shared journey for couples. Beyond the superficial aspects of physical well-being, the synergy between partners in embracing a wholesome lifestyle can significantly impact their relationship.

1. Physical Wellness as a Foundation

Couples who prioritize their health together lay a strong foundation for a lasting relationship. Engaging in regular exercise not only fosters individual fitness but also creates opportunities for shared activities. From brisk walks in the park to challenging workout routines, the mutual support can deepen the emotional bond between partners.

2. Nutritional Harmony for Two

Sharing meals is a fundamental aspect of any relationship, and couples who make conscious, nutritious choices together experience the benefits beyond just physical health. Collaborating on meal planning, experimenting with new recipes, and choosing balanced options contribute not only to better health but also to a sense of unity in decision-making.

3. Mental Well-being: A Joint Responsibility

The demands of modern life can take a toll on mental health. Couples who prioritize mental well-being engage in open conversations about stressors, providing emotional support to each other. Practices such as mindfulness, meditation, or simply spending quality time together can be effective tools in promoting mental resilience as a team.

4. Shared Goals, Shared Successes

Setting health goals as a couple creates a sense of accountability. Whether it's running a marathon, trying a new fitness class, or maintaining a certain diet, achieving these milestones together fosters a sense of accomplishment and strengthens the sense of partnership.

5. The Ripple Effect on Relationship Dynamics

A healthy lifestyle not only benefits individuals but also has a positive impact on the dynamics of the relationship. Increased energy levels, better mood, and enhanced self-esteem contribute to a more vibrant connection between partners. The shared commitment to health becomes a source of mutual encouragement, reinforcing the idea that a strong relationship is built on a foundation of well-being.



6. Overcoming Challenges Together

Life is unpredictable, and health challenges can arise. Couples who face these obstacles together, supporting each other through illnesses or setbacks, often emerge with a deeper appreciation for their bond. The shared resilience becomes a testament to the strength of their relationship.



Conclusion: A Journey of Wellness Together

In essence, the journey towards a healthier lifestyle is not just an individual endeavor; it's a shared expedition for couples. Prioritizing physical, nutritional, and mental well-being collectively strengthens the foundation of a relationship. As partners support each other through the highs and lows of health, they build a resilient connection that weathers the storms of life. So, embrace the journey of wellness together, because a healthy couple is a happy couple.



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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.

NATIONAL CAREGIVERS DAY:

Appreciating and Supporting Our Caregivers

National Caregivers Day is recognized on the third Friday of February each year. It serves as a reminder to express appreciation to the caregivers in our and others' lives.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines a caregiver as someone who takes care of a person who is young, old, ill or disabled. Caregivers are all around us.

There are two main types of caregivers — formal and informal. In 2022, 14.7 million people aged 16 and older were employed in healthcare occupations, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Registered nurses make up the largest group, numbering 3.4 million. Other familiar titles include medical assistants, physicians, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, clinical laboratory technologists, nurse practitioners and therapists, among many others. Because these professionals are paid for their services, they would fall under the umbrella of formal caregivers.

AARP reports that millions more — around 38 million Americans — serve as unpaid (informal) caregivers who devote an estimated 36 billion hours of free care annually to parents, spouses, partners, children and friends with severe or disabling health conditions. Their tasks range from hands-on assistance to managing prescriptions and medical claims, scheduling and providing transportation to appointments or friendly companionship. These are often done while juggling their own health needs, family demands and full-time or part-time jobs.

Whether caregiving is someone's professional job or an unpaid role taken on by a family member or friend, they share a dedication to providing comfort, compassion and companionship.

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) recognizes and supports the family members and friends who support their loved ones through their journey as cancer patients. Their critical caregiving role often comes with its own set of burdens and does not go unnoticed.

Caring for the caregivers

Caregivers are deserving of our gratitude as well as our encouragement to take the best care of themselves. For caregivers, caring for oneself is just as important as supporting their loved one. If you are running on empty, you won't get very far with helping others.

FCS Behavioral Health experts share the following valuable tips to help cancer caregivers cope with the sickness of a loved one and advice for prioritizing self-care and well-being.

Coping with emotions

Caring for someone with cancer can be very demanding. Many caregivers describe it as "like a rollercoaster" at times. It is perfectly normal to feel a range of emotions. Recognizing your feelings is the first step to overcoming difficulty on more challenging days.



Caregivers can benefit by learning coping skills to manage their highs and lows. Suppressing feelings or trying to hide difficult emotions are not helpful coping mechanisms.

Everyone needs an outlet and someone to talk to. Seek out someone you trust, like a best friend, family member, religious figure or professional, who will allow you to express yourself fully. Group settings, such as organized support groups, can be tremendously powerful as a space to share with and learn from others experiencing similar circumstances. It is also a resource or safe space that can help validate your feelings.

When things get particularly overwhelming, allow yourself compassion and grace. Remembering to take one breath at a time, one moment at a time and one day at a time can help ground caregivers in the present.

Caregivers may frequently put their loved one's needs over their own. Over time, that can fuel fatigue and resentment and create an overwhelming environment.

Be sure to prioritize personal wellness. Regularly sleeping and eating healthy meals can help caregivers keep their bodies physically strong and equipped. Mental fitness is important, too. Try to make time for a self-care activity, such as:

- Mindful breathing or meditation
- Stretching or exercise (like yoga, walking or others)
- Spending time in nature/outside
- Participating in hobbies

Asking for help

Everyone needs help at some point. However, caregivers may be more likely to avoid asking for help so that they don't burden others — even if they are carrying the weight of a loved one's illness. Remind yourself that getting help can also help your loved one because it can allow you to be in a healthier place.

Reach out to another family member, friend or neighbor who can lend time and assistance or share skills you may need or don't have. It can take a lot of courage to ask for help, but accepting and recognizing these facts is crucial. Other helpful tips:

- Divide tasks among others.
- Be specific about what is needed.
- Accept offers without guilt.
- Know your boundaries.

While National Caregivers Day reminds us of the critical role caregivers play in our lives, every day is a perfect day to show our gratitude and thanks to those who give their time, love and support to the ones they care for.

The most powerful way to let someone know you appreciate them involves two words: "thank you." And remember to encourage those special people to take time to care for themselves as they do for you.

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About Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, LLC:
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Heart Disease in Seniors: Understanding the Silent Threat

Heat disease is the leading cause of death for all genders, races, and ethnicities in the United States. According to the CDC, it claims a life every 34 seconds. That makes it so that roughly one out of every five deaths is a direct result of heart disease. That's a statistic that's hard to swallow. Are you at risk?

With the advancement of modern-day medicine, doctors can look at various known risk factors and determine with some degree of accuracy what your odds of developing heart disease will be. Heart attacks and strokes can be catastrophic, but 80 percent of premature heart disease is preventable. That's why it's important to know and understand your risk.

Heart disease is a significant health concern for people of all ages, but it poses an even greater risk to seniors. As we age, our cardiovascular system undergoes various changes that can contribute to heart disease. Arteries can become less flexible, leading to atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), and blood vessels may lose their elasticity. The heart's pumping efficiency may decrease, which can result in reduced blood flow. These age-related changes can raise the risk of heart disease, such as coronary artery disease, heart failure, and arrhythmias.



In addition to an aging heart, older adults often have a higher prevalence of heart disease risk factors, including hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, and obesity. Additionally, lifestyle factors like a sedentary lifestyle, poor diet, and smoking can exacerbate the risk of heart disease in seniors.

While heart disease is a significant concern for older adults, several strategies can help prevent or manage the condition.

Regular Medical Check-ups: You should schedule regular check-ups with your healthcare providers. These visits can help identify risk factors and early signs of heart disease, allowing for prompt intervention.

Healthy Lifestyle: Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is crucial. This includes a balanced diet, regular exercise, and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.

Medication Management: Seniors with established heart disease may need medications to manage their condition. It's essential to follow the prescribed treatment plan and monitor any potential side effects.

Stress Management: High stress levels can contribute to heart disease. You should explore stress-reduction techniques like meditation, yoga, or counseling.

Heart disease is a critical health issue that demands attention and proactive management. You can reduce your risk through healthy living and regular medical care. Understanding the unique challenges and strategies for prevention and management is key to ensuring a longer and healthier life. Take action now and get on the road to Better Health and a healthier heart.

VIPcare stands out for our commitment to delivering personalized care that goes beyond traditional healthcare models. Our key initiative and mission is prioritizing preventative care to improve overall health outcomes. By offering comprehensive wellness checks, screenings, and preventative measures, we focus on identifying potential health issues before they escalate. This proactive approach not only reduces healthcare costs in the long run but also significantly improves your quality of life. Schedule your VIPcare appointment today! Call 352-558-6759 or visit www.getvipcare.com.



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Reasons to LOVE Your Skin and How to Show Your Skin Some LOVE!

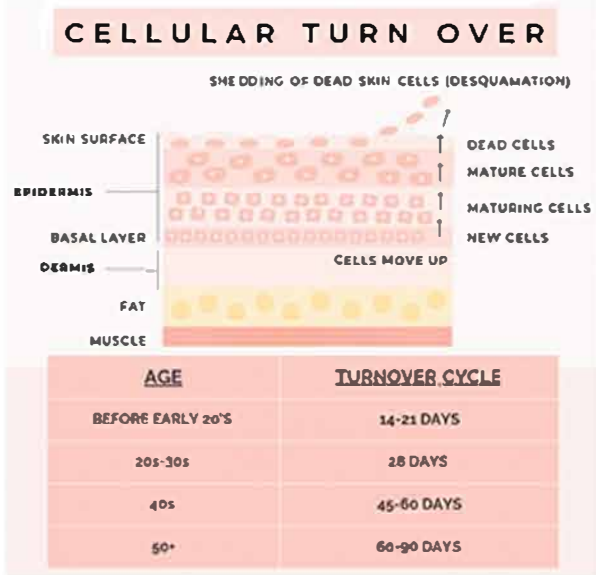
By Katie Keel - Cosmetic Nurse Practitioner

February! The season of love! I wanted to start by giving you a few reasons to love your skin that you probably weren't familiar with, and probably didn't think you could "love" as they involve blood vessels, bacteria, and your sweat!

The blood vessels in your skin alone equate to over twice the height of Mount Everest. Your skin is home to about 1,000 species of bacteria which help you heal, reduce inflammation, and fight infection. Believe it or not your sweat is a love potion. Smells can be very seductive—and expensive perfumes are not the only answer. Oxytocin is a brain chemical which, when sniffed in the name of science, made people appear more attractive to each other. Sweat, meanwhile, is your body's natural "perfume" and, remarkably, we're wired to prefer the sweat of genetically dissimilar people (which helps in reproduction). Top dating tip this Valentine's season—smell his/her sweat?

The top layer of your skin (the epidermis) renews and regenerates itself! This process of skin cycling can take anywhere from 14-90+ days. Why the large variability in time? – well yet another thing we can blame on age. Once the skin cell reaches the top layer, it fully matures and then becomes rough and dry. As the "mature" skin cells sit and wait for new skin cells to arrive, your complexion becomes dull, uneven and flaky. Children have the fastest cell turnover rate as they are in the stage of rapid growth. Their skin cell turnover rate is two to three times as fast as adults - hence they constantly have new, bright, healthy skin resurfacing. As we age, our cell turnover rate slows down. The older skin - dead skin - sits on the uppermost layer 20-60 days longer. That's why aging skin don't look quite as smooth, soft and luminous as it once did.

Here is a general guide to skin turnover rate at different ages.



We cannot blame our lackluster skin on age alone - our hormones, overall skin health, weather such as sun/wind/pollution and stress level can affect the skin cycle as well.

Now, you know I wouldn't leave you hanging without an answer how to get your skin back to being as bright and smooth as a baby's bottom! The answer lies in medical grade retinol and in office energy based/laser procedures.

My favorite retinoid is Skin Better Alpha Ret Overnight Cream. It improves the appearance of lines, wrinkles, uneven tone and texture. It does this by increasing skin cell production, proliferation, and thus increasing cellular turnover speed (which as discussed above slows significantly as we get older). It helps unclog pores, exfoliates your skin and increases collagen production, which can reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, giving your skin a fresher, plump appearance. In clinical trials Skin Better Alpha Ret Overnight Cream was as effective as prescription tretinoin (Retin-A) with better tolerability since it contains moisturizing ingredients as well. Added benefit - Skin Better Alpha Ret Overnight is also free of nasties such as parabens (a preservative), fragrance, sulfates, dyes, etc. and is cruelty free.

The packaging your products come in is important at maintaining the potency. Airless pumps are best as they keep the product away from light and air and of course Skin Better Alpha Ret Overnight comes in an airless pump. If you already have a retinol and you like it, check the packaging. Is it in a jar, dropper/vial, tube or a pump you can open and look inside? Keep in mind that the active ingredient that induces a change in your skin (and arguably the main ingredient you are paying for) breaks down quite easily with exposure to air and light. Every time you open the jar/bottle and use the product the active ingredient is degrading and you are not getting your monies worth out of the product and will see less of a change in your skin.

My favorite in office energy based laser treatment is Moxi. Moxi is a non-ablative fractionated laser, meaning it puts small areas of heat into the skin but does not break the skin's surface. Moxi treats superficial texture and pigmentation concerns, delivering tonal and textural improvements to your skin while correcting the initial signs of sun damage and aging. It is safe to use on all skin tones and even patients with melasma. It can be done year round, summer included! You can wear makeup the day after your treatment. It is a minimal to low downtime procedure that biopsy proven and in clinical trials was shown to induce a positive change in the skin.

When you think about it, your skin is truly amazing. There's no better way to love your skin than to protect it and keep it healthy. Two of the best ways to do this is to make regular dermatology appointments for routine skin checks and to wear sun protection – i.e. mineral based/zinc oxide sunscreen, hats, sunshirts etc. And consider giving your skin a well-deserved treat with some medical grade skincare and/or an in office laser/energy based procedure.

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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.



Heartfelt Health:

Nurturing Couples Wellness This Valentine's Day

By Elizabeth Mello, Executive Director

As Valentine's Day approaches, many couples focus on expressing their love through romantic gestures and thoughtful gifts. While these are wonderful ways to celebrate, it's equally important to prioritize the health and well-being of both partners. This Valentine's Day, consider embracing a holistic approach to love by nurturing your physical and emotional connection. In this article, we explore various aspects of couples' health, providing tips and ideas to make this Valentine's Day a celebration of love and well-being.

Heart-Healthy Date Ideas:

- Start the day with a heart-healthy breakfast rich in fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Plan an active date, such as a scenic hike, bike ride, or dance class to get your hearts pumping and boost your cardiovascular health.
- Cook a nutritious, homemade dinner together using fresh and wholesome ingredients.

The Gift of Wellness:

- Instead of traditional chocolates, consider gifting each other fitness trackers or a couples' massage to promote relaxation and physical well-being.
- Personalize your gifts by choosing items that support your partner's specific health goals or interests, such as a yoga mat for a yoga enthusiast or a cooking class for a foodie.

Mindful Communication:

- Take the time to truly connect by engaging in deep and meaningful conversations.
- Practice active listening, empathy, and open communication to strengthen your emotional bond.
- Consider trying a couples' meditation session to relax and center your minds together.

Healthy Habits as a Team:

- Set wellness goals together, whether it's committing to regular exercise, adopting a balanced diet, or getting enough sleep.
- Encourage each other to stay accountable and celebrate milestones, fostering a supportive environment for positive lifestyle changes.



Spice Up Your Meals, Not Just Your Relationship:

- Experiment with new, healthy recipes together to make mealtime an enjoyable and nutritious experience.
- Choose foods known for their aphrodisiac properties, such as dark chocolate, strawberries, and avocados, to create a romantic and health-conscious dinner.

Prioritize Sleep:

- Quality sleep is crucial for overall well-being. Create a calming bedtime routine and ensure you both get adequate rest.
- Consider investing in comfortable bedding, such as high-quality pillows and a cozy mattress, to enhance your sleep environment.

This Valentine's Day, go beyond the traditional expressions of love and prioritize the health and well-being of your relationship. By embracing a holistic approach to couples' health, you can create lasting memories and build a foundation for a strong, vibrant connection. Celebrate love in all its forms and let this Valentine's Day be a stepping-stone toward a healthier and happier future together.



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STRESS INCONTINENCE IS NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT

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

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

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

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

SO, HOW DO YOU FIX IT?

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



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

By Dr. Tina Chandra

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

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

Emsculpt NEO

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

Radio frequency is used to heat the muscles and the electromagnetic energy then builds muscles. The heating of the muscles is what causes the reduction of fat in the area being treated. While the HIFEM simultaneously causes thousands of muscle contractions in order to improve strength and muscle tone. Combining these two treatments offers optimal results.

Emsella

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

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



How does "Core to Floor" work?

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

Emsculpt Neo for the Abdomen

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

Emsella for the Pelvic Floor

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

Why Choose Core to Floor Therapy?

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

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

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

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

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



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

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EMBRACING SELF-LOVE:

Thoughtful Self-Care Gifts for a Blissful Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is often associated with romantic gestures and expressions of love towards others. But here's a thought. In addition to expressing your love and appreciation for others, you should also celebrate the most important relationship of all – the one with yourself. Embracing self-love is a powerful and empowering act, and what better way to do it than by giving yourself thoughtful self-care gifts?

Below, we've highlighted some Valentine's Day gift ideas for you and your loved ones to pamper the mind, body, and soul.



A Relaxing Spa Day at Home: Enjoy a self-care moment by creating a spa-like atmosphere from the comfort of home. Try aromatic bath salts, scented candles, and luxurious body oils. Treat yourself or someone you love to a long, relaxing bath, and let the stress of daily life melt away. This simple yet indulgent self-care ritual can be a perfect way to unwind and relax.



Mindfulness and Meditation Tools: Gift yourself and your loved ones the tools to cultivate mindfulness and inner peace. Consider items like a meditation cushion, a guided meditation app subscription, or a beautiful journal for reflective writing. Engaging in mindfulness practices can help someone connect internally, reduce stress, and promote a sense of overall well-being.

Comfortable Loungewear or Pajamas: There's something undeniably comforting about slipping into cozy loungewear or pajamas. Treat yourself or special someone to a set of high-quality, comfortable clothing to feel pampered and relaxed. This simple act can make a significant difference by encouraging restfulness and peace.

Nourishing Skin Care: Show your skin (or theirs) some love with nourishing, natural skin care products. Invest in a good quality face mask, moisturizer, and serums that cater to specific skin needs like wrinkle-care, acne prevention or sensitive skin. Taking care of the skin is not only a physical self-care practice but can also contribute to a boost in confidence and self-esteem.

Fitness and Wellness Accessories: Prioritize physical well-being by purchasing fitness and wellness accessories. This could include a new yoga mat, resistance bands, or a fitness tracker. Regular exercise is not only beneficial for the physical body, but it also has positive effects on mental health.

A Good Book or Personal Development Course: Feed the mind with knowledge and inspiration. Give yourself or a friend a captivating book or enroll in a personal development course that aligns with your (or their) interests. Continuous learning and personal growth are essential aspects of self-care, contributing to a sense of fulfillment and purpose.

Mind-Body Practices: Consider activities that integrate both the mind and body, such as yoga, tai chi or pilates. These practices not only enhance physical flexibility but also promote mental clarity and emotional balance. Investing time in mind-body activities can be a holistic approach to happiness and joy.



This Valentine's Day, let's skip the traditional chocolates and roses and focus on self care. Whether it's a spa day at home, mindfulness tools, comfortable loungewear, skin care products, fitness accessories, a good book, or mind-body practices, the options for creating and gifting self-love are limitless. Remember, self care is not a luxury. Go ahead and shower yourself and your loved ones with thoughtful self-care gifts. Happy Valentine's Day!



www.naplessoap.com

SUPPORTIVE CARE IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

All of us deserve to live as comfortably as possible; however, when an accident, sudden illness or chronic condition takes hold of our lives, comfort may seem impossible or out of reach. In the past decade, hope for relief from acute pain and distressing symptoms has become a reality and within reach, thanks to a growing trend in supportive care.

Supportive Care is comforting, soothing, calming and reassuring. It should not be confused with quick fixes offered in so-called "pain clinic" settings. Supportive Care is specialized medical care for people with serious conditions. Its focus is to provide relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress that entails—whatever the cause or diagnosis. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

This type of care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses and other specialists, who work together with a patient's primary doctor and/or specialist to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and can be offered along with curative treatment. Examples of those who have benefited include someone with pancreatitis and a diabetic with neuropathy (nerve pain). Both conditions are chronic but not life-threatening.

Supportive Care improves healthcare quality in three significant ways. It:

1. effectively relieves physical symptoms and emotional suffering,
2. strengthens patient-family-physician communication and decision-making, and
3. ensures well-coordinated care across healthcare settings.

As a holistic approach to care, it's about a person's whole being, including family and loved ones. It is covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurances. Those with advancing illness can deal with their situation without the added burden of debilitating pain or life-altering symptoms that prevent them from enjoying daily life.



The steady growth in this type of care is primarily in response to the increasing number of people with serious and chronic illness. People are living longer, but not necessarily better. Their needs are many, placing overwhelming caregiving demands on families. We recognize their needs and are addressing these challenges through a strong partnership between patient, family and the Carewell Supportive Care team. A consult is available through one's own physician or by calling (352) 291-5881 for information about receiving services. They can request treatment if the outcome from surgery, accident or disease has left them in physical or mental distress.

Because patients are carefully regulated by their physicians in collaboration with experts on Carewell Supportive Care team, they can rest assured that

symptoms can be managed (most within 24-48 hours) and their condition monitored on an ongoing basis. Many go on to fully regain their lives.

The Carewell Supportive Care team has two medical directors and six advanced practitioner registered nurses. Together they conduct more than 1,000 consults a year, in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and even private homes. Learn how Carewell Supportive Care can help: (352) 291-5881 or visit www.carewellsupportivecare.com.

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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.

Contact our team at
Trusted HomeCare and let's discuss
how we can support
you or your loved one

352-240-7522

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 effects 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**



BETTER FIVE YEARS TOO EARLY THAN FIVE MINUTES TOO LATE

By Janice Martin, Owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida

Someone recently told me that a salesperson at a community once said to her, "Better five years too early than five minutes too late." I had never heard that before, but I couldn't agree more. It validates what I have said for years – that most people wait for a crisis before thinking about senior living or they are forced to make an immediate decision.

It reminded me of a meeting I had with a husband and wife who are thinking about assisted living. They aren't sure when they want to make a move, but at least they're talking about it. The wife has some early memory impairment and they are both in their mid-80's. The husband asked me why I felt they should make a move now rather than later. There was no hesitation with my response.

Imagine two scenarios. In the first, the husband and wife move to assisted living together now. Although neither really need any care, they allow themselves the confidence of taking their time to find the community that fits their lifestyle and budget needs. Their family has time to plan to travel to assist with the move. Because they don't need much care, they don't have to pay any care fees, if at all. They sell their home after they've moved, allowing for a calm and relaxed transition. They meet the other residents, get to know the staff, and enjoy the ability to come and go as they wish.

A few months, or perhaps a year later, the wife's memory impairment has increased. And one day unexpectedly, the husband dies. Although this is devastating to everyone, the wife is now settled in her new home. The staff knows her and steps in immediately to provide the care that her husband may have been doing for her. The residents know her and surround her with love and support. She is allowed the comfort of grieving for the loss of her husband quietly.

Now, imagine the other scenario. The husband and wife decide to stay in the home "until they're ready" (in other words, something happens). The wife's memory impairment has increased, and her husband is providing all her care and she's not safe to be alone. One day, her husband dies unexpectedly. The family panics and has to rush to her after making arrangements for their travel and being away from work for an extended time. They are now faced with finding an assisted living for their



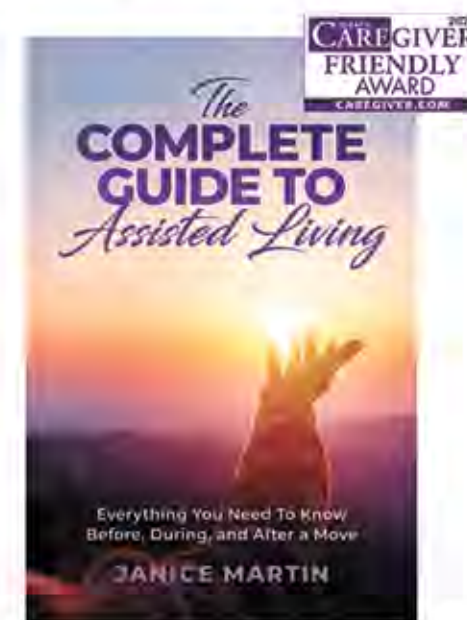
mother without knowing what to look for or one that can meet her needs. They make a hasty decision hoping for the best. They find someone to sell the house, but they are also left to decide what to do with all their things. The wife is now in an unfamiliar environment with people she doesn't know, and she doesn't understand where her husband is. Everything is chaos and the grieving process is now doubled from all the immediate changes.

Perhaps the decision to move doesn't necessarily need to be five years. But the point is that if you are the caregiver for a spouse who may be declining, it is vital that you make decisions now for their safety and well-being. You don't know if you have days, months, or even years for something to happen. You as the primary caregiver may be perfectly healthy, but it may not be health related incident. You could make a quick trip to pick up a prescription and be involved in an accident. None of us has a crystal ball to see when and how it will happen.

Husband and wives move to assisted living together often, even though one of them needs no care at all. This is the truest gesture of love and compassion. Although the caregiver can continue to provide the care in their new place, it may be a good idea to have the staff take over some of the responsibility. Not only will this allow the caregiver time to be "off duty," it also allows the staff to understand how to provide the care and what medications are given. If the spouse always gives the other a shower, this can be very upsetting when they are no longer there to let them know it's ok for someone else to do it.

It may be a financial hardship to make the move early or to pay the care fees to allow the staff to assume some care. Think of it as an insurance policy for your loved one. Paying any insurance policy for years can be expensive and you never know when you might need it. However, this is a short-term insurance policy where the benefit far outweighs any financial sacrifice.

If you would like to learn more about how to have a successful transition to senior living, there will be a free presentation at Watercrest Spanish Springs, 930 Alvarez Ave, Lady Lake, FL on February 27, 2024 at 2:00. Seating is limited, so please reserve a seat by calling 352-320-5185. To learn more when additional presentations will be scheduled throughout the year, call Janice Martin at Senior Liaison of Central Florida at 352-477-1866. Copies of "The Complete Guide to Assisted Living" will be available at a reduced price.



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 options and communities and has written "The Complete Guide to Assisted Living: Everything You Need to Know Before, During, and After a Move" available on Amazon.com. For more information, call 352-477-1866 or visit www.seniorliaisoncfl.com.



352-477-1866 | seniorliaisoncfl.com
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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 wellbeing, can help fight addictions, can generate health and improve immune function, it can stave off memory disorders and increase neuronal plasticity.

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

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

Quick Care Med Urgent Care

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

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

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

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(Just past Walgreens)
6341 N US 441, Ocala, FL 34475
(Across from John Deer)
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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>

Ocala Infectious Disease and Wound Center

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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Vestibular Balance Issues Should Not be Ignored:

A Physical Therapy Method has Helped Countless Individuals Find Restoration

At least 50 percent of the U.S. population will develop a balance issue, at some point in their lives. Balance disorders typically happen to the aging population, between the ages of 50 to 75, and most of these are related to vestibular disruptions.

Patients suffering from vestibular related disorders frequently experience vertigo, dizziness, nausea, migraines, gait issues (walking), and imbalance. In addition, many patients complain of mood changes and cognitive impairment. Usually, these symptoms stem from issues in the inner ear. More than 69 million Americans have experienced some form of vestibular problems in their lifetime, and that number is on the rise.

BPPV: The most common form of vestibular complications is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo or BPPV.

- **Benign** - Not life-threatening
- **Paroxysmal** - Brief spells that come and go
- **Positional** - Triggered by certain head positions or movements
- **Vertigo** - A false sense of rotational movement

Tiny calcium crystals (otoconia) in the inner ear that slough off and get lodged in the fluid of the ear canals (labyrinth) usually are the cause of BPPV. Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

can be effectively treated with one of two simple manual therapies that move the crystals through the ear, improving and in many cases alleviating vertigo and the sensations of dizziness. These therapies can be performed in the convenience of Innovative Therapies Group's office.

It's dangerous to leave vestibular disorders untreated. If you have balance issues, your likelihood of suffering a

fall with possible complications like broken bones, or impingements, which cause limited range-of-motion is much higher. Not to mention that the unpleasant side effects of nausea and painful headaches can be alleviated through the proper treatment, which will help you to get back to living a good quality of life.

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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THE IMPACT ON CANNABIDIOL ON MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

By Dr. Nathalie Solomon: PharmD, CPH

Occasional feelings of anxiety or depression are nothing to be alarmed about. Nearly everyone will experience these unwanted feelings at some time or another. However, when the frequency and intensity of either begins to interrupt your day-to-day life, it may be time to get help. While avoiding certain places, people, and situations may be helpful, sometimes it is impossible. Living in a bubble just isn't possible or healthy. Having something to help calm your fears and worries can be beneficial.

Cannabidiol (CBD) is a cannabinoid from the Cannabis sativa plant. It, along with tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), has been researched extensively and has been shown to bind to cannabinoid receptors in the brain. CBD, unlike THC, does not produce a "high" and offers a variety of health benefits. Among those benefits is the treatment of mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety.

Benefits of CBD

CBD acts on opioid and glycine receptors in the body. These receptors are mostly found in the central and peripheral nervous systems. They regulate pain in the body. It also acts on the neurotransmitter serotonin, which helps us feel good in general. Low serotonin levels are closely associated with depression and may also cause anxiety.

Research has shown that some of the benefits of CBD can include:

- Reducing seizures
- Reducing inflammation
- Reducing pain
- Regulating the immune system
- Reducing anxiety

Conventional medicines generally used to treat low serotonin are called serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRI). Their common trade names are Zoloft and Prozac. These are only available by prescription. However, some studies have shown that instead of using SSRIs to treat anxiety, some patients may be able to manage their condition with CBD instead. (Always speak to your doctor before making any changes to prescribed medications.)

Cannabinoids for depression

Experts believe that CBD's potential benefits for depression are related to its positive effect on serotonin receptors in the brain.

Low serotonin levels are likely connected to depression. CBD doesn't necessarily boost serotonin levels, but it may affect how your brain's chemical receptors respond to the serotonin that's already in your system.

Cannabinoids for anxiety

Depression and anxiety commonly occur together, and people with one are more likely to have the other. CBD does appear to help with both.

One study found that people who took 600 milligrams (mg) of CBD experienced significantly less social anxiety than people who took a placebo. Another study used a smaller dose of 300 mg, which reduced levels of anxiety.¹

Anxiety may also have a link to low serotonin, so CBD's effect on serotonin receptors might partly explain these beneficial effects.

How to use CBD for depression and anxiety

Since CBD has not yet been given clear FDA guidance, the best way to use CBD for anxiety and depression varies from person to person. Someone may find that a certain type and certain dosage works, while the same type and dosage has little effect on someone else. A bit of trial and error may be necessary in order to reach optimal effectiveness. (This is also true with conventional medicines too, so no need to be alarmed.)

The following are some of the forms in which CBD is available:

- Vapes heat CBD oil giving off an inhalable vapor.
- Flowers (dried hemp plants) can be smoked.
- Gummies are chewable and sweet like the popular candies.
- Oils and tinctures are consumed orally usually from droppers.
- Sprays can be sprayed into the mouth, usually under the tongue.
- Capsules or tablets are taken orally.
- Creams and gels are absorbed through the skin.

Again, trying different types and doses may be necessary. For example, you may find that vaping is more effective than gummies while another may find smoking to be most effective. Trying the different types will help you find what is right for you.

1. Holland, K. (2019) CBD for depression: What are the benefits?, Healthline. Healthline Media. Available at: <https://www.healthline.com/health/cbd-for-depression#for-anxiety>.

Usually the effects of oral CBDs, such as gummies or capsules, are felt within 30 minutes or a little more. Smoking or vaping usually has a more immediate effect.

These various forms can be used throughout the day to relieve anxiety. Some find it helpful to take them in the morning with breakfast.

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.



Dr. Nathalie Solomon: PharmD, CPH

Dr. Solomon is our licensed on staff pharmacist. She graduated from the University of Florida college of pharmacy and has 15 years of combined pharmacy experience. As a wife, mother, and provider to her family she discovered the medicinal value of cannabis. She decided to devote her career in creating valuable Hemp Extract products that are safely formulated and tested. She also wanted to guarantee that her Hemp Extract products came with the opportunity to be counseled by a pharmacist to ensure the consumer receive a product that can be trusted. There are not many companies that have a direct link to this kind of knowledge right at the customers fingertips and we are so lucky to have her!



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WHOLEHEARTED

By Jodi Thomas

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

Lately I've been thinking a lot about my own heart. When reflecting on 2024 and what I hope for this year, I really desire to live *wholeheartedly*. And the first step in doing this is learning to pay attention to my **heart**. I'm reading a great book right now called *Soulful Simplicity* by Courtney Carver. I highly recommend it. In the book, she discusses living wholeheartedly and that we have to learn to *listen* to our hearts. She has an exercise where in a quiet moment, you place both hands on your heart, one hand on top of the other, and just sit in the quiet for a moment or two, and ask yourself, "What is my heart saying? What is my heart feeling?"

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

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



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

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

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

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

When you see those pretty pink and red hearts this Valentines Day, I hope you are reminded that your heart is a unique treasure to God. There is no other heart like yours. It is so valuable to Him that Jesus died on the cross so that He could live there and God's love be poured out into your heart. Because your heart is of the utmost value to God, you need to value it, too. Learn to listen to it. Learn to respect it. Don't ignore it. I hope you will join me in the quest of living *wholeheartedly* in 2024.

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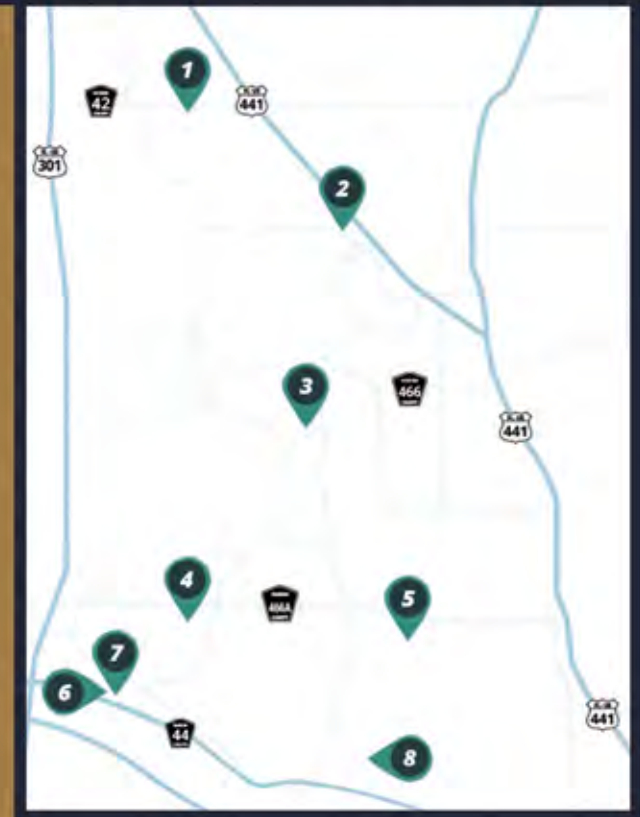
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