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February 2024

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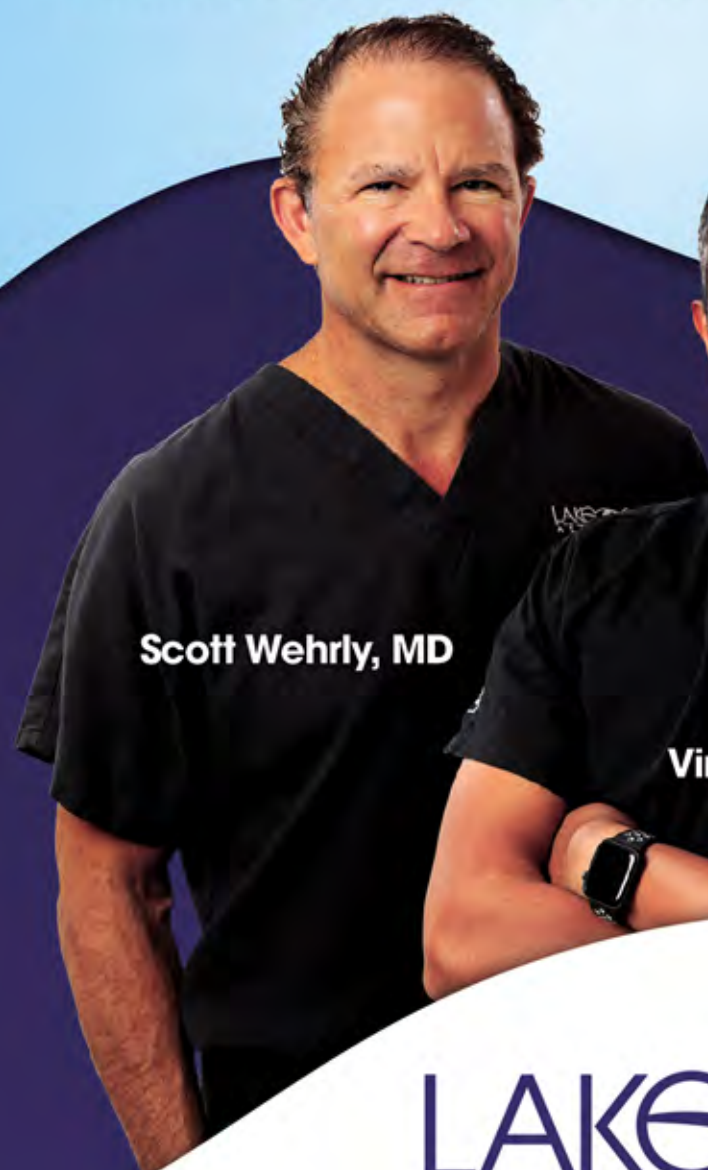




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# HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT EYEGLASSES FOR YOUR FACE SHAPE

**P**icking out the perfect frames for your face relies foremost on your personal sense of style. First, consider your tastes: classic, haute couture, playful or practical, or perhaps you want a variety of frames to fit your various moods and wardrobe options.

Another consideration is picking frames that compliment your face shape, to lend balance without overpowering your features. Choosing the right glasses can enhance your appearance and highlight your attributes. Whether your face is round, oval, square, heart-shaped or diamond-shaped, the right frames can make the most of your uniquely wonderful face.

## PICK EYEGLASSES THAT FIT YOUR FACE SHAPE

Here are some general guidelines for picking out eyewear to compliment the particular shape of your face:

### An Oval Face

An oval face is longer than it is wide. Oval faces can wear a wide variety of frame types. To balance the length of your face, pick styles that are about as wide as the broadest part, which is usually the forehead, temples or cheeks. If your face has sharp features, select a rounded style. If your features are softer, glasses with prominent or upturning corners can add definition.

### A Round Face

A round face tends to be shorter, with the cheekbones as the widest part of the face, and the forehead and jaw about the same width. Frames with an angular or geometric shape, such as rectangular, square or cat-eye, or frames with thick or decorative brow-lines, create definition and balance.

### A Square Face

A square face tends to feature a wider hairline and angular jawline. Flattering glasses frames for a square face include round or oval shapes, and rimless or semi-rimless styles. Select frame styles that are wider than the middle part of your face and sit high on your nose.



### A Heart-shaped Face

This romantic face shape has a tapered jaw and chin, with the cheekbones being the most prominent feature. Heart-shaped faces are flattered by frames with low-set temples, such as cat-eye or rounded frames, that are not heavy or overly embellished at the top. Semi-rimless styles also work well. Choosing frames that are a little bit wider than your forehead can be especially complementary.

### A Diamond-shaped Face

A diamond-shaped face is widest at the cheekbones, and narrower at the jaw and forehead, often with a smaller chin. Frames with distinctive brow-lines such as horn-rimmed, cat-eye or oval shapes, and rimless or semi-rimless styles can beautifully complement a diamond-shaped face.

## FINDING THE PERFECT GLASSES FOR YOU

Of course, the guidelines above are merely suggestions – ultimately, the choice of the right frames for your face is a matter of your tastes, preferences and lifestyle. But, if you're looking for some help to pick eyeglasses fit your face shape, hair color, skin tone and wardrobe, visit your local Lake Eye (a US Eye company).

Every Lake Eye location features an on-site optical department with a vast array of quality designer frames from names like Oakley, Kate Spade, Tom Ford, Gucci, Marc Jacobs, Fossil, Maui Jim and many others known for style, function, and durability. Our experienced and fashion-savvy licensed opticians will provide personalized service helping you pick out just the right shapes, colors and styles to perfectly accent your delightful, one-of-a-kind face.



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# WHAT IS VENOUS HYPERTENSION?

**V**enous hypertension is a medical condition involving increased pressure in the veins, particularly the legs. It is crucial to understand the implications of this diagnosis, including its description, associated risk factors, symptoms, and available treatment options.

## Description of Venous Hypertension:

Venous hypertension, also known as chronic venous insufficiency (CVI), occurs when the veins in the legs struggle to return blood to the heart efficiently. This condition often results from weakened or damaged valves within the veins, leading to poor blood circulation. Consequently, blood can pool in the lower extremities, causing increased pressure in the veins.

## Risk Factors Associated with Venous Hypertension:

Several factors contribute to the development of venous hypertension. These may include:

- 1. Age:** The risk of venous hypertension increases as veins lose elasticity.
- 2. Family History:** A genetic predisposition may make some individuals more susceptible to venous issues.
- 3. Gender:** Women are generally more prone to venous hypertension, particularly during pregnancy.
- 4. Prolonged Sitting or Standing:** Jobs or lifestyles involving long sitting or standing periods can contribute to poor circulation.
- 5. Obesity:** Excess body weight can pressure veins, affecting their proper functioning.

## Symptoms of Venous Hypertension:

Patients with venous hypertension may experience various symptoms, including:

- 1. Swelling:** Persistent swelling, especially in the ankles and lower legs.
- 2. Varicose Veins:** Discoloration, redness or the development of varicose veins.
- 3. Pain or Discomfort:** Aching or throbbing sensations in the affected legs.
- 4. Skin Changes:** Brownish discoloration in the lower calf, hardening of the tissues of the lower calf.
- 5. Fatigue:** Feeling tired or heavy legs, particularly after prolonged periods of sitting or standing.
- 6. Ulcers:** Skin ulcers may develop in severe cases, often near the ankles.



## Treatment Options for Venous Hypertension:

It's essential to emphasize that treatment for venous hypertension aims to manage symptoms and improve overall venous health. Potential treatment options that patients may discuss with their healthcare provider include:

### 1. CONSERVATIVE MEASURES:

- **Compression Therapy:** Wearing compression stockings can reduce the pressure buildup that causes the complications of venous hypertension and alleviate symptoms.
- **Lifestyle Changes:** Encouraging patients to exercise regularly and elevate their legs when possible. Weight loss and walking to build up calf muscle pump is key.

### 2. MEDICAL PROCEDURES:

- **Endovenous Laser Treatment (EVLT):** This minimally invasive procedure uses laser energy to seal problematic veins, redirecting blood flow to healthier vessels.
- **Microphlebectomy:** A surgical technique involving the removal of small varicose veins through tiny incisions.
- **Radiofrequency Vein Ablation:** Use of radiofrequency energy to heat and close off problematic veins, thereby reducing the appearance and symptoms of varicose veins. This procedure is performed under local anesthesia and involves the insertion of a catheter into the affected vein, which delivers radiofrequency energy to collapse and seal the vein.
- **Venaseal Cyanoacrylate:** Adhesive to close the veins, creating venous hypertension.
- **Varithena:** a non-compounded sclerosant that chemically shuts down veins, leading to venous hypertension.
- **Ultrasound-guided Foam Sclerotherapy:** Injection of a special solution into the affected veins, causing them to collapse and fade.

Patients diagnosed with venous hypertension must prioritize consultation with a healthcare professional for personalized care. A qualified medical professional, such as a vascular specialist or phlebologist, will conduct a comprehensive assessment, considering individual health conditions, lifestyle factors, and the specific severity of venous hypertension. This evaluation is crucial in determining the most appropriate treatment plan tailored to the patient's circumstances.

Venous hypertension demands meticulous management to address symptoms effectively and mitigate potential complications. Medical guidance is indispensable in navigating the range of available interventions. Patients should be informed that seeking timely medical advice is beneficial and imperative for their well-being. Exploring suitable treatment options under the guidance of a healthcare provider ensures a targeted approach to managing venous hypertension, promoting better vascular health, and enhancing the patient's quality of life.

## Get support for your veins and circulation problems today.

You may need medical treatment for your veins, and the team at Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center wants to help. Contact them today to learn more about their services and how they can help you live better. Their board-certified Vascular Surgeons and Phlebologists specialize in minimally invasive vein therapy.

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# Heart Disease in Seniors: Understanding the Silent Threat

**H**ear 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.

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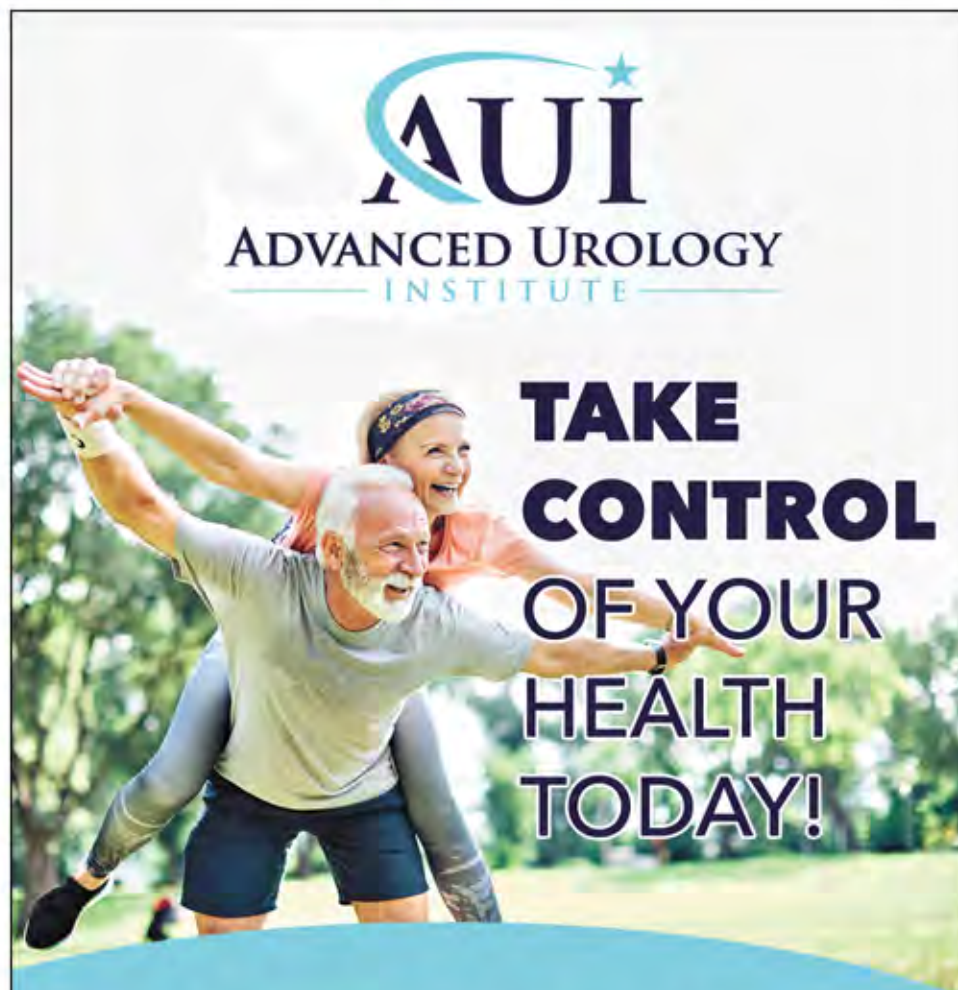
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# STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR YOUR HEART: WHY IT'S CRITICAL

T.E. Vallabhan, MD, FACC

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

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

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

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

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

## Dr. Vallabhan's Tips to Relieve Stress

### Tip #1

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



### Tip #2

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

### Tip #3

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

# Dr. V

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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.<sup>1</sup>

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

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

## SO, HOW DO YOU FIX IT?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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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 Incontinence<sup>1</sup>

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-emsulps-neo-and-emsella>.



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## Emerging Treatments for Age-Related Macular Degeneration: A Beacon of Hope for Adults Over 50

By Dan P. Montzka, M.D.

**A**ge-related macular degeneration (AMD) remains a prevalent concern for individuals over 50, affecting their vision and quality of life. This progressive eye condition gradually damages the macula, the central portion of the retina, leading to blurred or distorted vision and, in severe cases, vision loss. The impact of AMD on daily life can be profound, affecting activities like reading, driving, and recognizing faces.

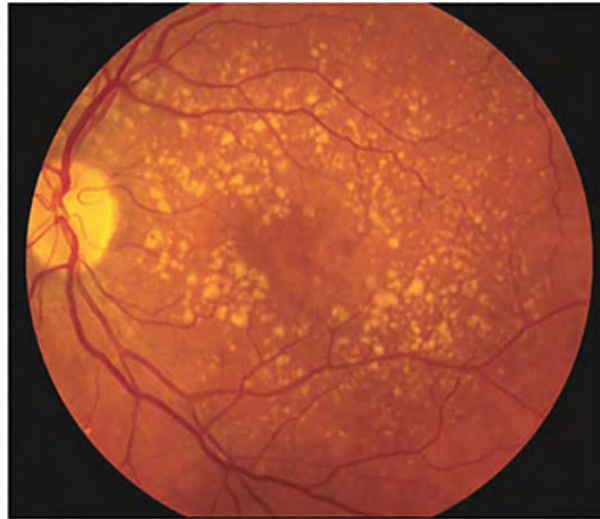
However, in recent years, significant advancements in treatment options have sparked hope for those grappling with AMD. Traditional treatments, such as anti-VEGF injections, remain crucial in managing AMD. These injections target the abnormal blood vessel growth that characterizes the more severe form of the disease, known as "wet" AMD. They have been successful in slowing down vision loss and, in some cases, even restoring vision.

Yet, the landscape of AMD treatments is evolving rapidly, offering new avenues beyond the conventional approaches. One such promising development involves the use of gene therapy. This cutting-edge treatment aims to address the underlying genetic factors contributing to AMD, potentially offering more targeted and long-term solutions.

Another groundbreaking area is stem cell therapy. While still in the experimental stage, researchers are exploring the potential of stem cells to replace damaged cells in the retina, thereby restoring vision. Although this avenue requires further extensive research, it holds immense promise for revolutionizing AMD treatment in the future.

Furthermore, innovative drug therapies are under investigation to supplement or even replace current treatments. These therapies focus on different aspects of the disease, such as inflammation or oxidative stress, offering a multi-pronged approach to combating AMD and potentially reducing the frequency of invasive treatments.

In addition to these medical interventions, lifestyle modifications and nutritional supplements are gaining attention for their role in managing AMD progression. A diet rich in antioxidants, omega-3



fatty acids, and specific vitamins and minerals has been associated with a reduced risk of AMD advancement. Furthermore, lifestyle changes like quitting smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, and protecting the eyes from harmful UV rays may contribute to slowing the disease's progression.

While these advancements are promising, it's important to note that not all treatments might be suitable for everyone, and their effectiveness can vary from person to person. Consulting with an eye care professional is crucial for proper diagnosis and personalized treatment plans.

Moreover, the cost and accessibility of these emerging treatments remain important considerations. As these innovative therapies continue to evolve, ensuring their availability and affordability to a broader population becomes a significant concern for healthcare systems worldwide.

In conclusion, the landscape of AMD treatment is witnessing a remarkable transformation, offering newfound hope for individuals over 50 facing this debilitating condition. From gene therapy and stem cell research to innovative drug therapies and lifestyle modifications, the spectrum of options for managing AMD is expanding. While these advancements hold immense promise, continued research, accessibility, and personalized care are essential to harness the full potential of these emerging treatments and improve the lives of those affected by AMD.

**Dan P. Montzka, M.D.** is a board-certified ophthalmologist, specializes in diseases of the vitreous and retina. His area of sub-specialty includes the medical and surgical management of diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, retinal detachments and complications of intraocular surgery.

Dr. Montzka received his bachelor's degree with honors in Chemical Engineering from the University of Minnesota, Institute of Technology in 1985. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in 1989, receiving the Charles A. Oliver award for outstanding achievement in the field of Ophthalmology. After serving his ophthalmology residency at the Scheie Eye Institute in Philadelphia, Dr. Montzka completed his fellowship training in retina and intraocular tumors at the Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia.

Dr. Montzka has authored numerous papers on retinal vascular disease and retinal electrophysiology. He edited the popular Wills Eye Hospital Atlas of Clinical Ophthalmology on CD-ROM and served as the medical consultant on the classic ophthalmology reference Duane's Clinical Ophthalmology on CD-ROM. Dr. Montzka has developed his own electronic medical software for use in his practice. In April 2001, he earned a United States Patent for the apparatus, system and method for securing scleral tissue during certain forms of retina surgery.

Dr. Montzka maintains an active interest in the latest research and treatment of retinal disease. He recently served as an investigator for the Visudyne Photodynamic Therapy Study and Rheopheresis Clinical Trial.

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If you are experiencing any changes in your eye health, whether it is blurry vision, pain, impaired vision, or any other visual irregularities, you should see an ophthalmologist right away. The earlier a disease is detected, the better the outcome and treatment options are for you. You will find a friendly and warm environment at Retina Group of Florida.

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# Consider CBD For Your Heart and Your Sweetheart

Love is in the air and if you are looking for a special gift for your sweetheart consider CBD. For couples it should be valentines every day, not just one day of the year. We all get so busy with work and life stresses that we do not often consider what it is doing not only to our relationships but also our overall health. Stress can lead to different health issues such as high blood pressure, insomnia, depressed immune response and yes heart problems... pun intended. CBD can have positive effects on health leading to benefits in improving your relationship. Improving your health can trickle down other aspects of your life so you feel like doing small things together that make a big difference even just taking a walk.

Women and men alike are affected by stress although it can manifest in different ways. Stress can cause anxiety and lack of sleep and even cause physical pain in the body. All of these can decrease desire for intimacy and further damage our relationships. Lack of sleep, pain, feelings of rejection or inadequacy continue to exacerbate the issues and in turn continue to snowball to performance issues leading to further withdrawal from your partner. It is a downward spiral of chain reactions caused by external stresses our body and mind fail to handle appropriately. It is rarely a lack of love or concern for each other that is the cause of this type of heart problem. The heart is an organ but also symbolizes love and passion, so it makes sense that our emotional, mental, spiritual, and relational well-being can affect the physical organ. Women are particularly affected emotionally; it is a known fact that our ability as women to enjoy intimacy is tied to our emotional state. It is sometimes difficult for both men and women to turn off our minds and put away the cares of the day and just be present with our partner in the moment. We get in our heads about it; negative thinking, we are not loved, we are inadequate or at fault for our failing relationships.

## How Can CBD Help?

Well, CBD can help in several different ways. CBD can help relieve stress and anxiety giving us the ability to put the stresses that are overwhelming us into perspective. It produces a calming effect by triggering our body to make anandamide which is known as the bliss molecule. Anandamide plays on the reward center of the brain just like serotonin or dopamine giving you a sense of peace, calm and relaxation. CBD works to regulate all the systems of your body including circulation, digestion,



hormones, sleep, anxiety, blood pressure, pain and they are all connected. When you relax you lower your blood pressure and increase circulation which some studies have shown CBD can have a protective effect on the heart and in turn can improve heart health again pun intended.

Increased circulation can help with issues of ED through vasodilation. Cannabis is a vasodilator as well as anti-inflammatory. Depression, anxiety, and blood pressure are also other contributing factors of ED that CBD may be able to improve. You should always talk to your doctor before starting a CBD regimen especially if you are on medications such as blood thinners and anti-depressants which are a few

types of medications that can also contribute to ED in men and lack of desire in women. It is important to talk to your partner about the possibilities and find solutions together. Having the difficult and sometimes uncomfortable conversations can also be a step in building the deep intimacy we crave. There are different ways to use or consume cannabis products for health. 1st and foremost, ingestion of CBD is how we activate our endocannabinoid system the (ECS) to bring about homeostasis systemically. 2nd, topical application is also helpful. Although topically it is not going to activate the ECS it will help in localized areas to help reduce inflammation and pain. One of my favorite topicals is CBD massage oil. It is the gift that keeps on giving in our home. My husband and I take turns giving each other massages. Massage is important because touch is vital to our physical, mental, and relational health. Massage can help relax the body and the mind, relieve aching muscles, and stimulate blood flow and circulation. Don't underestimate the power of massage in cultivating intimacy with your sweetheart this Valentine's Day and every other day throughout the year.

*These statements and the products of this company are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.*



***Cannabis has been used in many cultures throughout history as far back as 3000 years ago to enhance sexual experiences and increase libido. In a study done in 2023 on Cannabis effects on sexual functioning and satisfaction confirmed the benefits of this natural plant by relaxing muscles, increasing lubrication, stimulating arousal by increasing sensory response to touch and taste in both men and women.***

Sources:  
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# Do You Need Knee Replacement Surgery?

## What You Should Know

By Sergio Martinez, D.O.

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

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

### Your Knees Withstand Remarkable Pressure on a Daily Basis

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

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

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

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

### Treatment

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



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

### Knee Joint Replacement

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

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

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

### SERGIO MARTINEZ, DO, AOA, AOAO

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



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

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

#### SHOWING KINDNESS TO YOUR NEIGHBOR

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

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

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

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

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



#### SHOWING KINDNESS TO YOURSELF

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

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

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# EMBRACING SELF-LOVE:

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

**V**alentine'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!



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# SENIORS AGING IN PLACE

**F**or today's seniors, the desire to stay at home is strong. In fact, the modern elderly population is much different from its past counterparts. Almost 90% of people over 65 want to live in their home and community as long as possible, according to a report by the AARP Public Policy Institute and the National Conference of State Legislatures. A whopping 80% believe they will stay in their home for the remainder of their life. Aging in place allows seniors to enjoy all the comforts their familiar home has to offer. Today's options to support seniors in their home offer seniors and their families the peace of mind and support to make staying at home a healthy option.



## AGING IN PLACE PROVIDES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Seniors have spent a lifetime building family relationships and likely years bonding with neighbors. Removing older adults from their long-time homes can make them feel like those connections have weakened. According to research published in *The Gerontologist*, the majority of seniors want to age in place because of the attachment and familiarity they feel with their home and communities.

## IT FIGHTS ISOLATION

That sense of community provided through aging in place does more than make seniors feel comfortable. It is also integral for fighting feelings of isolation, a dangerous trend among seniors. Researchers from the University of Chicago found a link between loneliness and high blood pressure in older adults. The study authors noted that feelings of loneliness can occur even when a senior is surrounded by people. This further demonstrates the importance of the familiarity and sense of community provided through aging in place.

Besides being preferred by seniors, aging in place offers another benefit: savings.

While it may seem that aging at home would be more expensive than moving to a nursing or assisted living home, the opposite is actually true. With help from a home healthcare worker, staying in your home costs about 20% of what a nursing home costs on a monthly basis.

## HOME HEALTH CARE CAN HELP

For many families and seniors, home health care is a beneficial choice – a safe and affordable solution that supports the family, while allowing seniors to stay in the comfort of their own homes and communities.

## HERE ARE TEN WAYS HOME HEALTH CARE CAN SUPPORT YOU:

1. Home health care professionals can be there when needed. If family and loved ones are a distance away, home health care can give you peace of mind. Trained and qualified professionals

can assess safety risks and make simple corrections in the home – from placing a rug on a slippery floor, to recommendations for ambulatory assistance.

2. Home care supports activities of daily living (ADLs). In-home services allow adults to receive day-to-day help with the personal care they need, preserving their dignity and maintaining a good quality of life. Assistance with activities of daily living can include bathing, grooming, and medication reminders.

3. Access to skilled nursing care at home. Skilled medical care can be delivered at home by thoroughly supervised nurses, certified, licensed and knowledgeable about high-technology medical equipment. Home health care can ensure that your loved one's complex medical needs are met.

4. Support with diet and nutrition. Adults age 65 and older, people with chronic conditions, and those recently discharged from a hospital or nursing facility are likely to be nutritionally at-risk. Aging, bed rest, illness, and injury can all contribute to the loss of lean body mass. Home care may include nutritional counseling and home-cooked meals to protect against malnutrition.

5. Medication management. Multiple prescriptions it can be confusing to manage. Home health care professionals can ensure the right medications are being taken at the right times to control health conditions and prevent harmful drug interactions.

6. Home health care professionals provide caring companionship. Research shows that aging adults stay healthier with social interaction. Home health aides can become trusted friends for walks, reading, cards, games, movies, meals, and other social activities. Accompaniment on errands such as grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other activities are also added benefits.

7. Home care helps with light household chores. When aging adults struggle the daily demands of housework, such as laundry, vacuuming, dishes, and simple chores home care helps to consistently maintain a safe and healthy living environment.

8. Home health care clients have comparable or better health outcomes. Research has shown that clinical results are comparable or better with fewer complications when home care is provided to individuals with chronic conditions such as pneumonia, diabetes, or COPD.

9. One-on-one focus and support. Home health care services are truly unique, providing meaningful, one-on-one personal and skilled care that builds strong bonds between professionals and their clients. According to the *Cleveland Clinical Journal* a person who is seen by a clinician in the comfort of home more readily trusts that the health care team places their needs first.

10. An affordable alternative to facility or hospital care. According to the National Association of Home Care, the average cost of care from a skilled nursing facility is \$544 dollars per day, while the average cost of home health care is \$132 dollars.

## OUR PROMISE

Through Trusted HomeCare Home Care Services, you can rest assured that your loved one and family will be safe and secure in a positive environment right at their home. Even if you simply have questions or want to understand how to better care for your elderly loved one experiencing the inevitable process of aging, we are able to help with that.

## TRUSTED HOMECARE SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

As a whole group, our mission statement says that we are here to access the needs of each client to help them maintain their independence while living in their own homes and communities.

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

**352-240-7522**





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.*



# Non-Surgical Innovations for Osteoarthritis and Joint Regeneration

By Physicians Rehabilitation

In recent years, the landscape of knee osteoarthritis (OA) treatment has undergone a transformative shift, steering away from traditional surgical interventions towards non-invasive alternatives that prioritize joint preservation and regeneration. Among these groundbreaking approaches, Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy and cutting-edge compounds derived from Amniotic and Wharton's Jelly have emerged as promising solutions, offering patients renewed hope and the potential to avoid invasive procedures such as knee replacements.

Osteoarthritis, a degenerative joint disease characterized by the breakdown of cartilage, has long been a prevalent concern, particularly among aging populations. Traditional treatments often involve pain management, physical therapy, and in severe cases, surgical options like knee replacements. However, the advent of non-surgical alternatives has opened up new possibilities for patients seeking relief without resorting to major surgery.

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy stands at the forefront of non-surgical interventions for knee OA. This innovative treatment involves extracting a small amount of the patient's blood, processing it to concentrate platelets, growth factors, and other bioactive proteins, and then injecting this enriched solution directly into the affected joint. The therapeutic components of PRP work synergistically to stimulate the body's natural healing processes, promoting tissue repair and regeneration.

What sets PRP apart is its ability to target the root cause of knee osteoarthritis – the deterioration of cartilage. The concentrated growth factors in PRP promote the regeneration of cartilage, reducing pain and improving joint function. Many patients have experienced significant relief and restored mobility, delaying or even avoiding the need for more invasive interventions.

In addition to PRP therapy, cutting-edge compounds derived from Amniotic and Wharton's Jelly have emerged as exciting prospects in the field of regenerative medicine. Amniotic fluid and Wharton's Jelly, sourced from the umbilical cord, contain a rich array of growth factors, cytokines, and hyaluronic acid – all essential elements for tissue repair and regeneration.



These compounds are processed into injectable forms that can be administered directly into the affected joint. The regenerative properties of Amniotic and Wharton's Jelly compounds go beyond cartilage repair, addressing inflammation and promoting overall joint health. Patients undergoing these treatments have reported not only pain reduction but also improvements in joint function and flexibility.

One of the key advantages of these non-surgical treatments is their minimally invasive nature. Unlike traditional knee replacement surgeries, PRP therapy and regenerative compounds offer patients a quicker recovery time, reduced risk of complications, and the convenience of outpatient procedures. This is particularly appealing to individuals who wish to avoid the lengthy rehabilitation associated with major surgeries.

Furthermore, the potential to sidestep knee replacement surgeries is a significant benefit for patients. Knee replacements, while effective in relieving pain, are associated with inherent risks and limitations. Non-surgical alternatives provide a viable option for those who may not be suitable candidates for or wish to postpone such invasive procedures.



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As with any medical treatment, it is crucial to consult with healthcare professionals to determine the most suitable approach based on individual needs and conditions. However, the increasing success stories and ongoing research in the realm of non-surgical treatments for knee osteoarthritis signal a promising future for those seeking alternatives to conventional interventions.

In conclusion, the era of non-surgical innovation in knee osteoarthritis treatment is here, offering patients a range of options that prioritize joint preservation and regeneration. PRP therapy and cutting-edge compounds from Amniotic and Wharton's Jelly have demonstrated remarkable success in alleviating pain, improving joint function, and, importantly, preventing or delaying the need for knee replacement surgeries. As these non-surgical treatments continue to evolve, they pave the way for a more patient-centric and minimally invasive approach to managing knee osteoarthritis.

*VaxD Spinal Decompression – a groundbreaking non-surgical solution for cervical and lumbar spine pain. Specifically designed to address common issues such as herniated discs, bulging discs, sciatic pain, Degenerative Disc Disease (DDD), and chronic neck and low back pain, VaxD offers patients a transformative alternative to traditional interventions. This innovative treatment utilizes advanced decompression technology to gently and precisely target affected areas, relieving pressure on spinal discs and facilitating the body's natural healing processes. By creating a controlled environment for disc rehydration and repair, VaxD aids in reducing pain, improving mobility, and restoring overall spinal health. Emphasizing a patient-centric approach, VaxD spinal decompression stands as a beacon of hope for those seeking relief from debilitating spine conditions without resorting to surgery, offering a non-invasive path to renewed well-being and a pain-free life.*

## Physicians Rehabilitation

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





# Obstructive Sleep Apnea & Oral Appliances: A Solution for a Good Night's Sleep

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDISM

**S**leep apnea affects more than 25 million people in the United States. It is a progressive condition that interrupts breathing patterns throughout a person's sleep. People who suffer from Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) may have episodes of stopping breathing up to hundreds of times per night for 10 seconds or longer, and along with this disruption comes many adverse side effects and morbidities.

## What Is Sleep Apnea?

The short answer is the airway collapses during sleep. It is a relatively common condition and is related to lifestyle and age. Once the sleep pattern is disrupted, the lack of oxygen to the brain and heart can cause serious health concerns and implications. Left untreated, OSA can lead to heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, and other serious complications.

## What are the Side Effects and Complications Associated with Sleep Apnea?

- High blood pressure
- Cardiovascular disorders such as A-Fib
- Chronic disease
- Diabetes
- Brain health impairment

## What are the symptoms of Sleep Apnea?

- Snoring
- Gasping for air while sleeping
- Dry mouth
- Cognitive decline or brain fog
- Restless sleeping
- Daytime sleepiness/dozing

## Obstructive Sleep Apnea & Oral Appliances:

### Have you tried CPAP therapy?

The customary first line of treatment for severe sleep apnea is a PAP device. For Mild and Moderate Sleep Apnea an oral appliance is an effective alternative. Approximately 50 percent of patients are unable to tolerate the use of a PAP, and therefore are not achieving optimum treatment results. In many cases those individuals are going untreated. Those



patients are candidates for Oral Appliance Therapy, or OAT. A custom-fit oral appliance is an effective therapeutic treatment option for Obstructive Sleep Apnea and can also help to eliminate snoring. By opening the airway, you increase your oxygen intake, as well as improve your sleep, and your overall health. The American Medical Association, The American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine all recommend OAT to be prescribed by a Sleep Physician and fabricated by an ABDISM qualified dentist.

The negative effects of poor sleep are numerous. We all know the short-term results of not sleeping well and feeling terrible but what about the more serious health concerns? If left untreated, people may experience poor memory, decreased cognitive function leading to dementia and Alzheimer's disease, cardiovascular disease including high blood pressure, insulin resistance, obesity and worsening symptoms of asthma and COPD due to lack of oxygen to the brain during sleeping hours. The good news is that if properly diagnosed and treated early, the effects of Sleep Apnea can be reversed over time.

*Laurel Manor Dental/Laurel Manor SleepCare*

**352.430.1710**

**laurelmanordental.com**

1950 Laurel Manor Drive, Suite 180B  
The Villages, Florida 32162

## Benefits of Oral Appliance Therapy for the treatment on Sleep Apnea:

- Oral appliances can be easily cleaned and disinfected by patients.
- Oral Appliances are silent.
- Oral Appliances are truly portable. They can fit in a pocket or purse. They require no electricity and are easily transported when traveling.
- Best of all, Laurel Manor Dental/SleepCare provides CDC recommended, single use WatchPAT™ ONE contact less, first and only disposable Home Sleep Apnea Test.

Laurel Manor Dental and SleepCare is not only qualified but is a Medicare approved provider as well. If you have Sleep Apnea, consider improving your health and your quality of life. Your body and mind will thank you!

## Meet Dr. Rozensky

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

At Laurel Manor Dental and SleepCare, Dr. Richard Rozensky and the entire team work closely with you so that you may make informed decisions about your health. In addition to sleep dentistry, all aspects of general dental care and treatment including restorative, cosmetic, implant restoration, hygiene and Invisalign™ are provided.

From the moment you step in the door you will feel at ease. You will be welcomed by a warm and inviting atmosphere, combined with a professional and caring team. You will immediately recognize the emphasis on professionalism and quality, from the people who care for you to the technology used-this is the way dental care should be!





## 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](http://www.seniorliaisoncfl.com).



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# SUFFERING FROM MEMORY LOSS?

## Could it be Alzheimer's Disease?

By Craig Curtis, M.D.

**Is your memory not what it used to be?  
Are you experiencing or having trouble with:**

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

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

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

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

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



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

### DIAGNOSIS

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

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

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

### CAN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE BE PREVENTED?

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

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you, a friend, or a loved one are experiencing memory loss, currently taking a medication such as Donepezil or Memantine, or just interested in learning more, please contact Dr. Curtis at (352) 500-5252 or visit [www.CraigCurtisMD.com](http://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  
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# Rheumatoid Arthritis Treatment:

## The Impact of Infusion Therapy and Sage Infusion's Patient-Centered Care

About 1.5 million people live with Rheumatoid arthritis (RA), according to the Arthritis Foundation. Women are three times more likely to get RA than men. Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disorder affecting your joints and causes swelling and pain. In some people, the condition can damage various body systems, including the skin, eyes, lungs, heart, and blood vessels.

An autoimmune disorder, rheumatoid arthritis, occurs when your immune system mistakenly attacks your body's tissues. Unlike the wear-and-tear damage of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis affects the lining of your joints, causing a painful swelling that can eventually result in bone erosion and joint deformity.

The inflammation associated with rheumatoid arthritis can also damage other parts of the body. Patients are traditionally prescribed oral medications to treat their symptoms. While new types of medications have improved symptoms and treatment options dramatically, patients with severe rheumatoid arthritis can still develop physical disabilities, find that their medication is not working, or can have a difficult time taking oral medications.

Luckily for patients, there is another treatment option – infusion therapy. Infusions target the immune system and prevent inflammation that causes RA symptoms. The medication is given directly into their bloodstream, so patients have stated they feel relief from symptoms after just the first treatment. In addition, patients noticed daily life improvements within weeks to months. Some of the benefits include:

- Providing relief from swelling, pain, and stiffness
- Performing daily activities without difficulty
- Preventing additional joint damage
- Slowing down the progression of bone damage
- Reducing fatigue

Infusion therapy options that have shown results are:

### Actemra

Actemra is a prescription medicine called an interleukin-6 (IL-6) receptor antagonist. Actemra is used to treat adults with moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis (RA) after at least one other medicine called a disease-modifying antirheumatic drug (DMARD) has been used and did not work well. One dose of Actemra is given every four weeks to treat patients.



### Orencia

Orencia is a prescription medication used to treat patients with moderate to severe Rheumatoid Arthritis in adults 18 years and older. Taking Orencia may prevent further damage to your bones and joints and may help your ability to perform daily activities. Orencia may help those who are not getting the results they need with other medicines for RA. In adults, Orencia may be used alone or with other RA treatments other than Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitors or biological disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (bDMARDs), such as tumor necrosis factor (TNF) antagonists. Patients receive the first three infusions two weeks apart from each other (Weeks 0, 2, and 4). After that, patients receive an infusion every four weeks.

### Simponi Aria

Simponi Aria is a prescription medicine used to treat moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in adults, used in combination with methotrexate in people 2 years of age and older. Simponi Aria targets binds with and blocks excess TNF-alpha (tumor necrosis factor-alpha), an underlying cause of inflammation. A short 30-minute infusion is given as two starter doses four weeks apart. Then, the patient receives infusions every eight weeks.

Results may vary depending on the severity of your illness. Check with your doctor to see which infusion treatment is best for you.

### Sage Infusion Can Help

Sage Infusion provides expert patient-centered infusion care in a contemporary boutique environment. We offer RA infusion treatments to patients and will coordinate care with the referring physician, including insurance authorization and patient progress updates. Our flexible scheduling meets our patient's needs with extended hours. Day, night, and weekend appointments are available. Our physician assistants and nurse practitioners follow the National Infusion Center Association guidelines and our proprietary clinical protocols. Sage Infusion offers a variety of comforting amenities, and patients can choose to receive treatment in the open lounge or a private room.

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# Vestibular Balance Issues Should Not be Ignored:

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**A**t 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

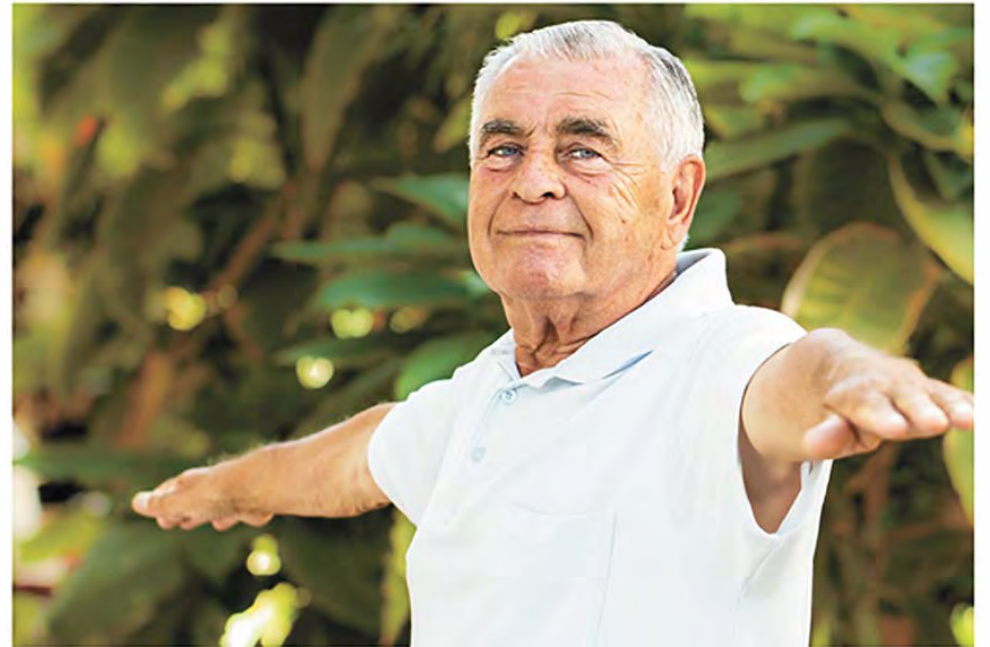
Tiny calcium crystals (otoconia) in the inner ear that slough off and get lodged in the fluid of the ear canals (labyrinth) usually are the cause of BPPV. Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

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.

To find out more or to schedule your appointment, please contact Innovative Therapies Group today.

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

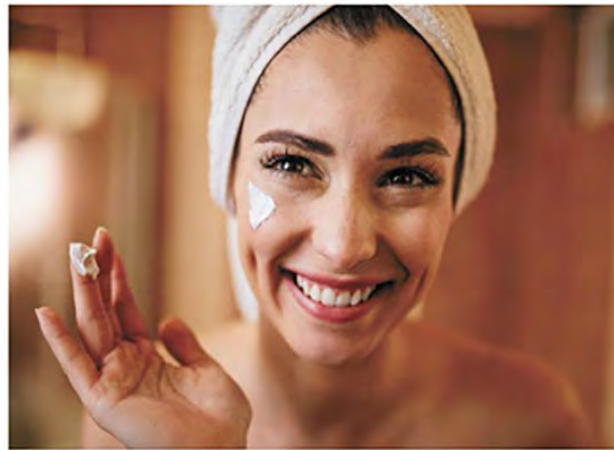
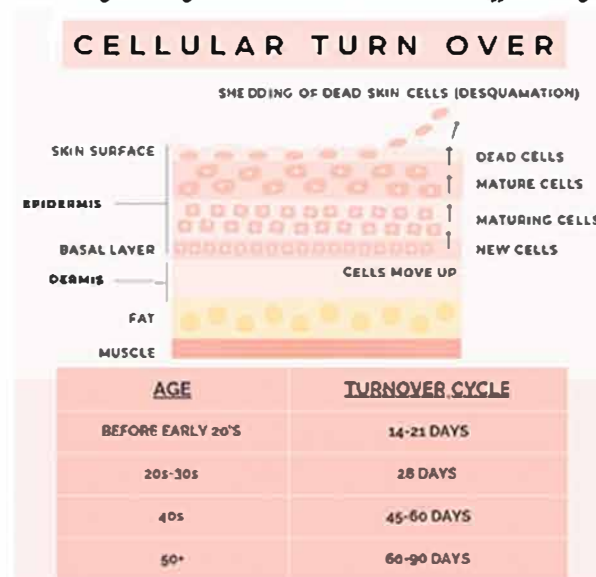
By Katie Keel - Cosmetic Nurse Practitioner

**F**ebruary! 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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### Surgical Dermatology

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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.



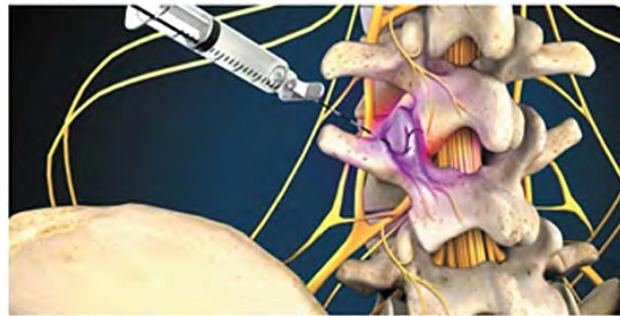
# Discover Superior **Pain Management** at The Interventional Pain Institute with Dr. Brent Compton in The Villages and Ocala, Florida

**W**hen it comes to pain management, The Interventional Pain Institute (IPI) is the new name creating waves in The Villages and Ocala, Florida. Led by Dr. Brent Compton, the institute offers a comprehensive array of interventional pain services designed to alleviate chronic and acute pain, thereby enhancing patients' quality of life.

Dr. Brent Compton was raised locally in Lady Lake, FL and after finishing his medical training and work in Texas has relocated his family back home to The Villages where he opened the practice in August of 2023. His vast experience, combined with a deep commitment to patient care, is the propelling force behind the success of IPI. Dr. Compton's approach integrates the most advanced medical technology with a compassionate understanding of each patient's journey, resulting in personalized treatment plans that address both the physical symptoms and the emotional impact of pain.

Regardless of if you are experiencing acute (new) or chronic (long term) pain, The Interventional Pain Institute has a treatment option specific to you. Dr. Compton knows every patient is unique and every patient is treated as such. Some patients require medication while others do not. This clinic specializes in a wide range of interventional pain services and our goal is to provide pain relief with the most conservative means possible. Our services include but are not limited to:

**1. Epidural Steroid Injections:** These are employed to relieve pain in the neck, back, arm, and leg caused by



inflamed spinal nerves due to conditions such as spinal stenosis, disc herniation, radiculopathy, and sciatica.

**2. Facet Joint Injections:** These injections can help identify the cause and location of pain while providing relief by reducing inflammation and irritation.

**3. Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA):** This technique uses heat generated by radio waves to target specific nerves and interrupt their ability to send pain signals.

**4. Spinal Cord Stimulation:** This involves the stimulation of the spinal cord with mild electrical pulses to block the sensation of pain.

**5. Sacroiliac Joint Injections:** Used to diagnose and treat pain associated with sacroiliac joint dysfunction.

**6. Trigger Point Injections:** These are used to treat painful areas of muscle that contain trigger points, or knots of muscle that form when muscles do not relax.

**7. Peripheral nerve stimulation:** This unique and newer technique uses stimulation technology that was once reserved for the spine only and now allows us to treat extremity pain as well.

**8. Minimally Invasive Lumbar Decompression (M.I.L.D):** Offers relief for patients with spinal stenosis with a minimally invasive procedure.

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At The Interventional Pain Institute, each patient's pain is thoroughly evaluated and a customized treatment plan is developed. Dr. Compton and his team are dedicated to treating every patient with the utmost respect and care, with a mission to help patients regain functionality and improve their quality of life.

The Interventional Pain Institute also places a strong emphasis on patient education. An informed patient is an empowered patient, and the team strives to provide as much information as possible about each patient's condition and treatment options.

With offices conveniently located in The Villages and Ocala, Florida, The Interventional Pain Institute is an excellent choice for those suffering from chronic or acute pain. Under the care of Dr. Brent Compton, patients can find not just relief, but also a renewed sense of hope for a painfree future. Experience the difference at The Interventional Pain Institute today.

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# Is Your Fish Oil Rancid?

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

**T**hink fish oil. If your gut reaction is “yuck,” you are in good company. Whether it’s from remembering Grandma’s cod liver oil or taking today’s capsules, many people believe fish oil ought to taste bad.

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

## What Is Rancidity?

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

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

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

## How Rancidity Affects Your Health

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



## How to Combat Rancidity

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

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

### 1. Evaluate your current product.

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

### 2: Make smart purchases.

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

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

### 3: Remember that bigger is not always better.

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

### 4: Keep it cold.

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

### 5: Use it or lose it.

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

*This article was abbreviated from a longer version published on [omega3innovations.com](https://omega3innovations.com). For the full text and references, visit:*

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

## About Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

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



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# 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 Courney 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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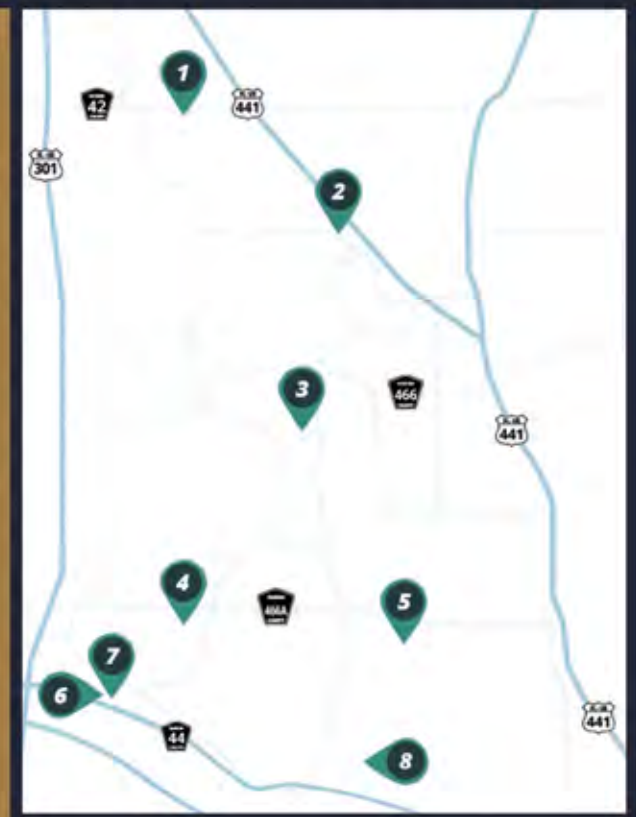
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