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

October 2024

Marion Edition - Monthly

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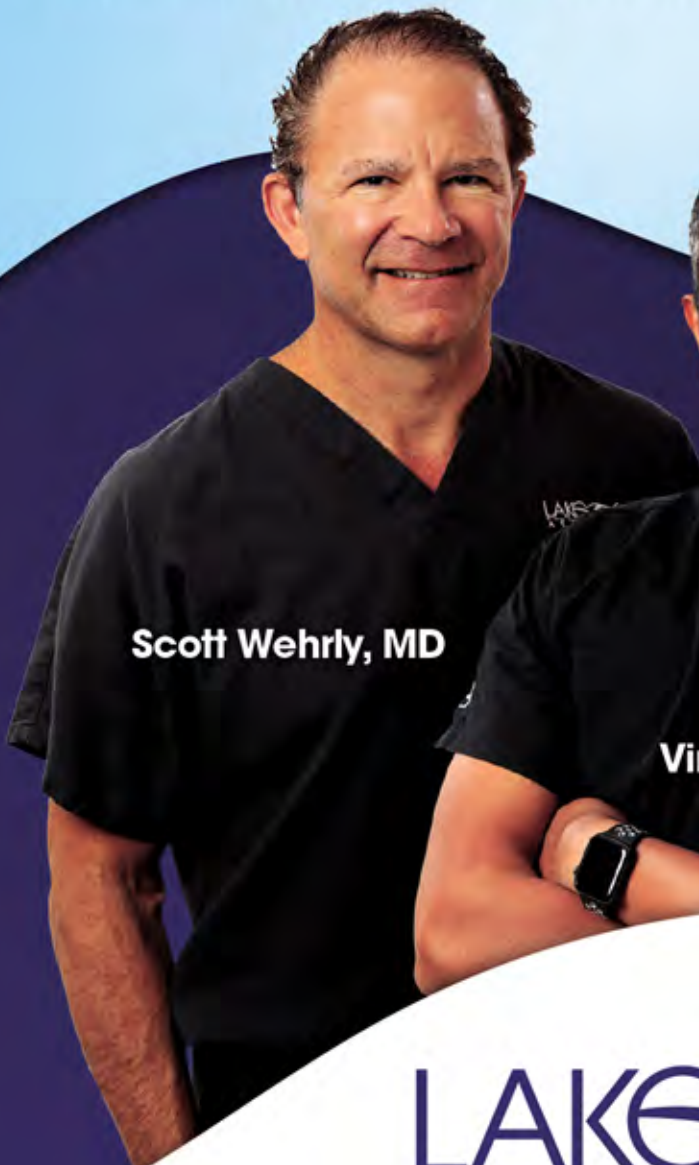
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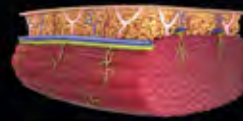
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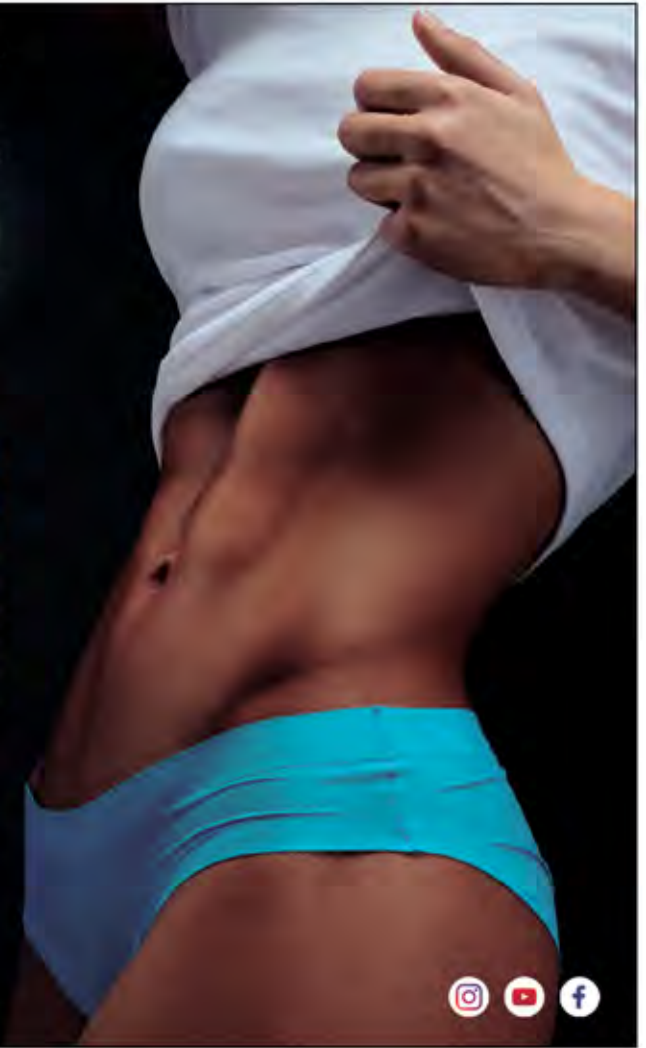
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Lake Mary, FL 32746

**CONTACT US**

Owner  
**Cristan Gensing**  
[cristan@gwhizmarketing.com](mailto:cristan@gwhizmarketing.com)

CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
**Sonny Gensing**  
[sonnygensing@yahoo.com](mailto:sonnygensing@yahoo.com)



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## CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUNGLASSES: UV PROTECTION AND STYLE COMBINED

**W**hen it comes to selecting the perfect pair of sunglasses, it's imperative to have both UV protection and incredible style. 100% UV protection is essential for protecting your eyes from the damaging rays of the sun, and the styling flatters your face and showcases your tastes. With that in mind, here's a guide to help you make an informed choice when picking out sunglasses.

### UV PROTECTION IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

The primary function of sunglasses is to protect your eyes from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation, which include an increased risk of cataracts, macular degeneration, photokeratitis (sunburn of the cornea), pterygium (yellow growths on the white of the eye), skin cancer of the eyelid, and other detrimental conditions.

When picking out a pair of sunglasses, check the label for:

- **100% UV Protection:** Make sure any sunglasses you pick block 100% of both UVA and UVB rays. If the sunglasses contain no UV information, it's safer to assume they lack the requisite protection.
- **UV400 Label:** This means the lenses block all light rays with wavelengths up to 400 nanometers, offering maximum UV protection.

### INVEST IN A DURABLE PAIR

Sunglasses come in various materials, mainly plastic, metal, or a combination of both. Choose a material that complements your lifestyle and overall look. Metal frames tend to be more durable and classic looking, while plastic frames are often lighter, making them more comfortable for some, and come in a wide variety of shapes and colors.

For maximum wear and ongoing protection, look for lenses made from durable materials like polycarbonate to ensure clarity and impact resistance. For enjoyment outside, driving and playing sports, polarized lenses can reduce glare for optimal performance and comfort. The lenses as well as any coatings can affect the safety, effectiveness and lifespan of your sunglasses. Things to consider include:

- **Polarized Lenses:** Polarization reduces glare from the sun as well as reflective surfaces like water, glass and pavement.
- **Lens Color:** While lens color doesn't affect UV protection, it can enhance visual comfort and clarity in different lighting conditions. **Gray lenses** can reduce overall brightness while preserving natural color balance. **Brown/amber lenses** can boost



contrast and depth perception, making them great for sports and driving. **Green lenses** can provide a balance of contrast and color accuracy.

- **Scratch-resistant Coating:** If you play sports, tend to drop your glasses, or slide them in and out of a pocket or purse throughout the day, this coating can prevent minor abrasions.
- **Transitions/Photochromatic:** These specialty lenses change to perform for your current environment, darkening in bright settings and clearing in darker ones.

To protect your sunglasses, remember to store them in a protective case when not in use.

### MAKE SURE TO GET THE PERFECT FIT

A good fit is crucial for both comfort and effective protection. To prevent slipping, choose a sunglass style that fits snugly but comfortably, to avoid pressure points over the course of the day. Make sure sunglasses rest on your nose and ears without pinching. A skilled optician can help ensure a perfect fit by adjusting the nose pads and temple tips to customize the fit.

### PICK A STYLE THAT SUITS YOUR FACE

While UV protection is crucial, style is what makes wearing sunglasses fun and fashionable. The right sunglasses make your face and outfit dazzle! While the design of your sunglasses is entirely up to your personal sense of style, picking the right pair can be challenging. That's why it's always good to have a friend, or perhaps even more helpful, a skilled optician, on hand to help you pick out the most flattering sunglasses for your face.

While there are no rigid rules for picking a frame style (you do you!), different frame types can be especially complementary to certain face shapes.

For instance:

- **Round Faces:** Angular frames, such as square, rectangular and cat-eye, add flair and definition to rounder faces.
- **Square Faces:** Round or oval frames, wire frames and thin rim styles help balance strong jawlines.
- **Heart-Shaped Faces:** Frames that are wider at the top than the bottom are especially flattering to heart-shaped faces.
- **Triangular Faces:** A broad jawline and narrower forehead can be complemented by frames that draw the eye upward, such as rectangular and cat-eye styles.
- **Oval Faces:** Oval faces have the benefit of working well with most frame shapes, including bolder frames.

For sports and driving, you may want to consider wraparound frame styles, which deliver peripheral protection against UV rays, glare, and debris.

### UV PROTECTION LENSES FROM LAKE EYE

Remember, investing in a good pair of sunglasses is about more than just looking cool, but also about protecting your eyes from the sun and other potential hazards. By choosing sunglasses that offer both excellent UV protection and a style that suits your personal tastes, you'll protect your eyes, and look sensational doing it.

Need help choosing the right sunglass style, lenses or coating? Look no further than Lake Eye (a US Eye company). Each Lake Eye location features a full-service optical center with a vast array of sunglass frames by famous name designers, cutting-edge lenses and coatings, and skilled, friendly opticians ready to help you select the right sunglasses for your face, wardrobe and active lifestyle.



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# World Mental Health Day

**W**orld Mental Health Day is observed on October 10 each year. The day aims to educate, reduce stigma and advocate for better mental health services and policies worldwide.

The topic of mental health is of critical importance for the more than 18 million Americans with cancer and their loved ones.

**Support for psychological, mental and emotional health during and beyond cancer treatment is essential.**

It is not uncommon for patients dealing with cancer or chronic illness to experience emotional and psychological distress. A cancer diagnosis or unexpected health issue can increase feelings of stress, anxiety, depression or grief.

Treatments, which can become intense and span many months or years, can negatively impact a person's mood, routine and ability to work or limit participation in activities and relationships. Patients may experience:

- Loss of interest
- Depressed mood
- Fatigue
- Changes in appetite
- Anxiety and worry
- Difficulty concentrating and sleeping
- Irritability
- Fear

Talking with trained and licensed mental health professionals during this journey can help to address and remedy these issues. Research shows that having access to behavioral health services helps to improve patient treatment outcomes and overall quality of life.

Community oncology practices typically incorporate behavioral health and wellness services as part of routine care. If not offered proactively, patients are encouraged to request access to a therapist whenever needed. Therapy services can be provided in person or virtually via video or telephone, and many services can be billed to insurance. Services are confidential, voluntary and driven by the patient's unique needs and goals.

Support groups are another option that patients may benefit from. They are a valuable resource for connecting with others who can relate to their experience. Virtual or in-person support groups are often free of charge and moderated by a trained professional or expert.

**Cancer can be emotionally challenging for family members and other loved ones, too.**

Many people report that being a caregiver is more difficult emotionally than being the one with cancer. As one patient described, "At least I (the patient) am doing something about the disease by having chemo, getting radiation, going to appointments, etc. My husband can only watch, and he feels powerless."

Certain relationships in families can enhance the stress and loneliness a cancer patient may feel. Here are some common beliefs and action steps that can improve the dynamics for loved ones living with cancer:

***We must be positive all the time.***

Some families refuse to allow themselves or the patient to utter any so-called negative words or thoughts regarding an illness. They believe that the power of only positive thinking somehow enhances survival odds. But this notion is fantasy, not reasonable or realistic, and can lead to massive disappointment. The truth is, there will be difficult times on the cancer journey for every member of a family. Not being allowed to talk about these scary and sad truths is unhelpful and dishonest and can lead to burying negative emotions. While striving for a positive attitude is helpful in these circumstances, open communication is always recommended. It is okay not to be okay.

***Let's pretend.***

Some family members and patients will not show any evidence that they feel fear, sadness or anger – preferring to stuff the powerful emotions deep down. Patients and family members sometimes believe that sharing their honest feelings and thoughts will "make it worse" for the other. The cancer becomes the elephant in the room that everyone pretends not to see.

***You must have treatment no matter what.***

Some families insist that the patient get as much treatment as possible, as quickly as possible and for as long as possible – sometimes despite the patient's doubts or reluctance about the side effects. Some families coerce a patient to continue treatment against their wishes to satisfy their desire to "do something!" Patients are entitled to self-determination when choosing their treatment or not to take treatment.

Families can overcome these and other challenges if they are educated, willing to change and motivated to grow.

**No one has to go through cancer alone. Help is available.** Mental health services are available to help educate and support cancer patients and their loved ones.

The following are helpful resources for patients and caregivers to find support: Cancer Support Community (CancerSupportCommunity.org), Family Caregiver Alliance® (Caregiver.org) and Can Care (CanCare.org).

Consider working with a licensed behavioral health therapist who has expertise in oncology or grief and loss to help navigate a cancer journey. It's likely a new experience for many, so there is a lot to learn – and it's never too early or too late to reach out.

Collectively, on World Mental Health Day and every day, significant strides continue to offer more hope and better outcomes for those affected by cancer.



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For the past 40 years, Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) has built a national reputation for excellence that is reflected in exceptional and compassionate patient care, driven by innovative clinical research, cutting-edge technologies and advanced treatments, including targeted therapy, genomic-based treatment and immunotherapy. Our highest values are embodied by our outstanding team of highly trained and dedicated physicians, clinicians and staff.

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# Say NO to Incontinence and Take Back Control of Your Bladder

By Dr. Tina Chandra

Urinary incontinence is a common occurrence in women. It can be caused by vaginal childbirth, changes due to menopause, or even by being overweight. There are two types of urinary incontinence.

Stress urinary incontinence is when urine escapes due to physical activities such as running or jumping, or it can be provoked by a sneeze or a cough. It is caused by weak pelvic muscles that may be a result of obesity, childbirth, or repeated strains such as lifting heavy objects or high-impact exercise. Urge incontinence is different in that it is an unusually frequent urge to urinate. The cause is unknown, but one possible contributor could be diabetes.

When a patient suffers from both of these conditions, it is known as mixed urinary incontinence. All three types are quite common, especially in older women.

No matter which type of urinary incontinence presents itself, it has been shown to increase with any or all of the following factors: age, menopause, a persistent cough, weight gain, and vaginal childbirth, among others. For some women, the increase is gradual while other women might experience a loss of control immediately after childbirth.

## Is there a solution for urinary incontinence or do I just buy stock in pads and diapers?

In the past, the primary method for dealing with urinary incontinence has been surgery or therapies that can be both difficult and embarrassing. Today the solution is primarily physical therapy with a urinary incontinence specialist showing the patient how to do vaginal exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. This has proved itself to be an effective treatment, however, many women avoid it because of its intimate nature.

There is some 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 uses high-intensity focused electromagnetic technology (HIFEM) 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

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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.

### What type of results can be expected from using Emsella?

According to the company's website, [btaesthetics.com](http://btaesthetics.com), Emsella patients report a 95% improvement in their quality of life and a 75% reduction in the use of pads.

Patients often see results after just one 30-minute session. For maximum results, a minimum of 6 sessions are recommended with a minimum of 2 days between each session. Results will, of course, vary by patient and by the severity of muscle weakness.

### What can I expect in an Emsella session?

First of all, it is important to note that patients remain fully clothed during their session. That is usually a relief to most patients. Secondly, there is no work involved on the patient's part, nor on the service provider once the device has started. The patient simply sits on the "throne" for 30 minutes while HIFEM technology contracts her (or his) muscles 10-11,000 times. Most patients report nothing more than a tingling sensation.

### Can MEN benefit from Emsella also?

According to the Massachusetts Male Aging Study, about 40% of men are affected by erectile dysfunction at age 40 and 70% of men are affected at age 70. Enter Emsella for men.

Emsella has been approved for men suffering with incontinence and erectile dysfunction because of weakening pelvic floor muscles. These muscles support all of the pelvic organs and when weakened, they can result in incontinence, premature ejaculation, and erectile dysfunction.

Men will be pleased with the many benefits Emsella affords. The same 30 minute session as the women are sitting through will give them increased bladder control, increased penile rigidity and hardness, increased control over erection, increased time until ejaculation, reduced stress and anxiety and restored confidence.



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



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# Breast Cancer Myths: WHAT SENIORS NEED TO KNOW

Cobra Chamblee, D.O.

**B**reast cancer is a significant health concern, particularly for older women. As the second most common cancer among women, it's essential to understand the facts and dispel the myths that surround it. Read on to learn about common breast cancer myths so you know the facts.

## **Myth: If I Don't Have a Family History of Breast Cancer, I'm Safe**

One of the most prevalent myths is that only women with a family history of breast cancer are at risk. While having a family history of breast cancer does increase the risk, most women diagnosed with breast cancer do not have a family history of the disease. According to the American Cancer Society, only about five to ten percent of breast cancer cases are linked to inherited genetic mutations. The truth is that every woman, especially as she ages, should be vigilant about breast cancer screening, regardless of family history.

## **Myth: Breast Cancer Only Affects Older Women**

While age is a significant risk factor, breast cancer can occur at any age. However, the risk of breast cancer does increase with age. Women aged 40 and above should be particularly attentive to breast cancer screening recommendations. As women age, especially after 50, the frequency and necessity of screenings may increase due to the heightened risk.

## **Myth: Small Breasts Lower the Risk of Breast Cancer**

The size of a woman's breasts does not determine her risk of developing breast cancer. This myth likely arises from the misconception that smaller breasts have less tissue to develop cancer. In reality, breast cancer occurs in the cells of the breast tissue, and all women, regardless of breast size, have breast tissue. Thus, the risk of breast cancer is present in all women.

## **Myth: Only Women Get Breast Cancer**

While it's true that breast cancer is far more common in women, men can develop breast cancer too. Men have breast tissue, and although their risk is much lower, they are not immune.



## **Myth: A Lump is the Only Sign of Breast Cancer**

A lump in the breast is one of the most common signs of breast cancer, but it's not the only one. Other symptoms can include changes in breast size or shape, dimpling of the skin, nipple discharge that isn't breast milk, and redness or scaling of the nipple or breast skin. Additionally, some women diagnosed with breast cancer may not have any noticeable symptoms, which is why regular breast cancer screening is so vital, especially as you age.

## **Myth: Mammograms Cause Cancer**

Some fear that the radiation exposure from mammograms can increase the risk of breast cancer. However, the level of radiation used in a mammogram is extremely low. The American Cancer Society emphasizes that the small amount of radiation exposure from a mammogram does not significantly increase breast cancer risk.

## **Myth: If You've Been Diagnosed With Breast Cancer, It's a Death Sentence**

Thanks to advances in medical technology, treatment options, and early detection, being diagnosed with breast cancer is not an automatic death sentence. Many women live long, healthy lives after breast cancer treatment. The survival rates for breast cancer have improved significantly over the years, especially when the cancer is caught early.

## **Myth: Antiperspirants and Bras Can Increase Breast Cancer Risk**

There's no scientific evidence that antiperspirants or bras cause breast cancer. These myths have circulated widely, but extensive research has found no link between wearing a bra, especially underwire bras, or using antiperspirants and an increased risk of breast cancer.

## **Myth: Healthy Lifestyle Completely Eliminates the Risk of Breast Cancer**

While maintaining a healthy lifestyle can reduce your risk of breast cancer, it does not entirely eliminate it. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and limiting alcohol intake can indeed lower the risk, but they cannot guarantee immunity.

## **Myth: Breast Cancer Always Requires a Mastectomy**

A mastectomy, or the removal of the entire breast, is not the only treatment option for breast cancer. Depending on the stage and type of cancer, many women may be eligible for a lumpectomy, which removes only the tumor and some surrounding tissue. This option is often followed by radiation therapy. The treatment plan for breast cancer is highly individualized and should be discussed thoroughly with a healthcare provider.

Understanding the facts about breast cancer is crucial, especially for seniors who are at an increased risk due to age. Dispelling common myths can help you make informed decisions about your health. Schedule an appointment with your local VIPcare provider to discuss your breast cancer risk and the proactive steps you should be taking. Call 352-558-6759.

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# REVOLUTIONIZING NEUROPATHY TREATMENT: THE SUMMUS LASER APPROACH AT LASERLAB

**N**europathy, a condition affecting an estimated 42.5 million Americans, can significantly impact one's quality of life. While traditional treatments often rely on prescription medications with potential side effects, LaserLab offers an innovative alternative: the Summus Laser. This advanced therapy provides a safe, non-invasive solution for those seeking relief from neuropathy symptoms without the risks associated with conventional treatments.

## Understanding Neuropathy

Neuropathy refers to nerve damage that primarily affects the hands and feet, causing symptoms such as pain, numbness, tingling sensations, and weakness. While 65% of neuropathy cases are linked to diabetes, other factors like toxin exposure, certain medical conditions, infections, and injuries can also contribute to its development. Individuals aged 55 and older face an increased risk of developing this condition.

## The Summus Laser:

### A Breakthrough in Neuropathy Treatment

The Summus Laser, a state-of-the-art class IV laser therapy device, offers a promising approach to treating neuropathy. By targeting inflammation, pain, tissue degeneration, nerve damage, and poor circulation, this advanced technology addresses the root causes of neuropathic symptoms. The laser's ability to repair damaged nerve cells and promote regeneration is key to restoring normal function and alleviating discomfort.

## How It Works

### The Summus Laser treatment focuses on:

1. Repairing damaged nerve cells
2. Reducing inflammation
3. Improving circulation
4. Promoting tissue regeneration

This comprehensive approach not only addresses pain but also targets the underlying factors contributing to neuropathy. The treatment is effective for various types of neuropathy, including diabetic neuropathy and phantom limb pain in amputees.

## The LaserLab Experience

At LaserLab, we've created an environment designed to enhance the healing process. Our facility offers:

- Customized treatment plans
- Relaxation and revitalization rooms
- Comfortable, adjustable treatment tables



This holistic approach ensures that patients receive not just laser therapy, but a comprehensive experience aimed at overall wellness and recovery.

## Treatment Process and What to Expect

The Summus Laser treatment is a painless, non-invasive procedure. During sessions, patients typically experience a warming or tingling sensation as the laser targets affected areas. The treatment aims to:

- Restore normal muscle function
- Improve sensation in hands and feet
- Eliminate pain and discomfort
- Enhance overall mobility and quality of life

Importantly, this treatment method avoids the potential side effects associated with many prescription medications, offering a safer alternative for long-term management of neuropathy symptoms.

## Ideal Candidates for Summus Laser Treatment

Individuals suffering from diabetic or general neuropathy who have found limited success with traditional therapies may be excellent candidates for Summus Laser treatment. This approach is particularly suitable for those who:

- Seek alternatives to medication-based pain management
- Have experienced unsatisfactory results from conventional treatments
- Wish to avoid therapies with adverse side effects

## Customized Treatment Plans and Membership Options

Recognizing that each patient's needs are unique, LaserLab offers flexible treatment packages and membership models. These options are tailored specifically

for neuropathy patients, ensuring a personalized approach to care. During the initial consultation, our team will discuss these options and how they can be integrated with our revitalizing experiences to maximize treatment efficacy.

## Conclusion: A Path to Improved Quality of Life

Living with neuropathy doesn't mean resigning oneself to a life of discomfort or relying on treatments that may cause further health issues. The Summus Laser treatment at LaserLab offers a beacon of hope for those seeking effective, safe, and non-invasive relief from neuropathic symptoms. By combining advanced laser technology with a holistic approach to wellness, we aim to help patients not just manage their symptoms, but truly improve their quality of life.

If you're struggling with neuropathy and are interested in exploring this innovative treatment option, we encourage you to schedule a consultation at LaserLab. Our team is committed to helping you find relief and restore your ability to enjoy life to its fullest, free from the limitations of neuropathic pain and discomfort.

**LaserLab** provides safe, effective, non-surgical pain relief and regenerative healthcare services. Our Pain Therapy Specialists use state-of-the-art Class IV Therapeutic Lasers to treat patients suffering from long-term pain. Our advanced laser technology reduces pain and inflammation, enhances healing, and increases circulation with no surgery, drugs, or side effects.

LaserLab believes there's a better way to manage pain. We've pioneered a paradigm-changing health and wellness program that helps to revitalize the lives of people suffering from pain.



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# NATIONAL PHYSICAL THERAPY MONTH:

## The Importance of PT After Hip and Knee Replacement Surgery

By Sergio Martinez, DO, AOA, AOA



**N**ational Physical Therapy Month serves as an annual reminder of the transformative power of physical therapy in restoring mobility and enhancing the quality of life for countless individuals. Among the various conditions and situations where physical therapy plays a pivotal role, post-operative care after hip and knee replacement surgery stands out as a testament to its significance.

### The Rise of Hip and Knee Replacement Surgeries

Over the past few decades, hip and knee replacement surgeries have become increasingly common. Millions of people worldwide undergo these procedures each year to relieve pain, improve joint function, and regain their independence. While these surgeries offer the promise of a pain-free and more active life, the path to full recovery is often paved with the expertise of physical therapists.

### Understanding the Procedure

Hip and knee replacement surgeries involve the replacement of damaged or deteriorated joints with artificial implants. Although these surgeries have a high success rate, the initial recovery period can be challenging. Patients often experience pain, stiffness, and reduced range of motion immediately after the procedure. This is where physical therapy becomes an indispensable part of the journey to recovery.

### The Role of Physical Therapy

- **Pain Management:** One of the primary goals of physical therapy after joint replacement surgery is to manage pain effectively. Physical therapists

employ a variety of techniques, including manual therapy, gentle exercises, and modalities like heat and cold therapy, to alleviate pain and discomfort.

- **Restoring Mobility:** Joint replacement surgery may temporarily limit mobility. Physical therapists design personalized exercise programs that gradually help patients regain their range of motion and strength. These exercises are tailored to the individual's needs and recovery progress.

- **Preventing Complications:** Physical therapists educate patients about the importance of maintaining proper posture, using assistive devices, and avoiding risky activities during the recovery process. This guidance is crucial in preventing complications and ensuring a smooth rehabilitation journey.

- **Enhancing Quality of Life:** Physical therapy goes beyond just physical recovery. Therapists focus on improving overall quality of life by addressing issues such as balance, coordination, and gait. This holistic approach helps patients regain their independence and confidence.

### The Personalized Approach

No two patients are alike, and physical therapists recognize this fact. Each rehabilitation plan is customized to meet the specific needs and goals of the individual. Whether you're an athlete seeking to return to peak performance or an older adult looking to enjoy daily activities pain-free, physical therapy adapts to your unique situation.

### The Role of Education

Education is a cornerstone of physical therapy. Patients are not only guided through exercises and treatments but also empowered with knowledge about their condition. Understanding the healing process and how to take care of oneself post-surgery is invaluable for long-term success.

### Celebrating National Physical Therapy Month

National Physical Therapy Month provides an opportunity to acknowledge the dedication and expertise of physical therapists who contribute significantly to the well-being of patients. It's a time to celebrate the success stories of individuals who have regained their mobility and independence through the guidance and support of these healthcare professionals.

In the realm of healthcare, National Physical Therapy Month shines a spotlight on the crucial role that physical therapy plays in post-operative care, particularly after hip and knee replacement surgeries. Through pain management, mobility restoration, complication prevention, and an emphasis on overall well-being, physical therapy enables patients to step into a brighter, pain-free future. So, as we celebrate this month, let's remember that physical therapists are true champions in helping individuals revitalize their lives after joint replacement surgery.

### SERGIO MARTINEZ, DO, AOA, AOA

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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# OCTOBER IS NATIONAL ECZEMA AWARENESS MONTH

By Dr. Ashley Cauthen

**E**czema, a common skin condition affecting millions worldwide, is characterized by dry, itchy, and inflamed skin, often accompanied by redness and rashes. Its impact on quality of life can be significant, varying in severity from person to person. As we observe National Eczema Awareness Month this October, let's delve into the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for this widespread condition.

## Understanding Eczema

Eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, is a chronic inflammatory skin condition believed to result from a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Often developing in early childhood, it can persist into adulthood. While the exact cause remains unclear, it's thought to involve a malfunction in the immune system, leading to an overactive inflammatory response in the skin.

## Recognizing the Symptoms

The symptoms of eczema can range from mild to severe and may include:

1. Intense itching, often leading to the urge to scratch
2. Dry skin lacking moisture
3. Redness or flushing, especially during flare-ups
4. Red, scaly, and inflamed patches of skin
5. Cracking, oozing, and crust formation in severe cases

These symptoms can significantly impact daily life, causing discomfort and sometimes embarrassment for those affected.

## Common Triggers

Identifying and avoiding triggers is crucial for managing eczema effectively. Some common triggers include:

- Irritants like harsh soaps and detergents
- Allergens such as pollen, dust mites, and certain foods
- Extreme temperatures and sudden weather changes
- Emotional stress and anxiety
- Skin infections

## Diagnosing Eczema

If you suspect you have eczema, consulting a dermatologist is essential for an accurate diagnosis. They will examine your skin, review your medical history, and may perform additional tests if necessary. The appearance and location of rashes, along with accompanying symptoms, help determine if it's eczema or another skin condition.



## Treatment Approaches

While there's no cure for eczema, various treatment options can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life. The choice of treatment depends on the severity of the condition and individual needs.

### Medical Treatments:

1. **Topical Corticosteroids:** These are commonly prescribed to reduce inflammation and relieve itching. They come in various strengths and formulations.
2. **Moisturizers and Emollients:** Regular use helps restore and maintain the skin's natural moisture barrier, reducing dryness and itchiness.
3. **Antihistamines:** These can relieve itching and promote better sleep, especially during flare-ups.
4. **Systemic Medications:** In severe cases, oral corticosteroids or immunosuppressants may be prescribed to suppress the immune system's response throughout the body.

### Lifestyle and Home Remedies:

1. **Moisturize Regularly:** Apply moisturizers at least twice daily, especially after bathing or showering.
2. **Avoid Triggers:** Identify and steer clear of factors that worsen your eczema symptoms.
3. **Practice Good Skincare:** Use gentle, fragrance-free cleansers and lukewarm water. Pat skin dry and apply moisturizer immediately after.
4. **Wear Soft Fabrics:** Choose clothes made from soft, breathable materials like cotton.
5. **Manage Stress:** Engage in relaxation techniques such as meditation, yoga, or hobbies.
6. **Maintain a Healthy Diet:** While not a cure, a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and omega-3 fatty acids can support overall skin health.

7. **Avoid Scratching:** Instead of scratching, try applying a cold compress or using over-the-counter anti-itch creams.

8. **Seek Support:** Connect with family, friends, or support groups to share experiences and coping strategies.

## Living with Eczema

Eczema management requires a multifaceted approach. It's important to work closely with your dermatologist to develop a personalized treatment plan. This may involve a combination of medical treatments and lifestyle modifications.

Remember that eczema affects each person differently, and what works for one individual may not work for another. Be patient as you find the right combination of treatments for your specific case.

Educate yourself about the condition and stay informed about new treatments and management strategies. Many resources are available through organizations like the National Eczema Association, offering support, information, and community for those affected by eczema.

## Raising Awareness

National Eczema Awareness Month serves as a reminder of the challenges faced by millions living with this condition. It's an opportunity to educate others, dispel myths, and promote understanding and empathy.

If you know someone with eczema, offer support and understanding. Small gestures, like avoiding fragranced products when meeting them or being mindful of environmental triggers, can make a big difference in their comfort and well-being.

For those living with eczema, remember that you're not alone. Reach out for support when needed, and don't hesitate to advocate for your needs. With proper management and care, many people with eczema lead full, active lives.

As we observe National Eczema Awareness Month, let's commit to increasing understanding, supporting research, and improving the lives of those affected by this common but often misunderstood condition. Consult with a dermatologist for personalized advice and guidance on managing your eczema effectively.



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# MANAGING GRIEF AND DEPRESSION

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

**T**he loss of a loved one often brings both grief and depression. What's the difference or are they one and the same emotion?

The Hospice Foundation of America defines grief as a reaction to loss. It is comprised of all the reactions you are experiencing, not just emotionally, but spiritually, physically, cognitively and socially. There is a clear correlation between how much you grieve and how much love you had for the person you lost. In grief, you may have had a particularly bad day remembering your lost special someone, but it may not be as bad the next day. However, depression, or more specifically clinical depression, is not intermittent. It is persistent, ongoing, never changing. Additionally, depression is accompanied by a feeling of hopelessness and apathy with one questioning "Why go on?" Deep sadness is usually more about the feelings of the lost loved one, whereas clinical depression often has a more negative self-focus which can become distorted with feelings of worthlessness and guilt.

During Depression Awareness Month, we recognize that mental health is as important as physical health. While we may not always have control over physical health, we do have options when it comes to staying grounded while grieving. If you find you are having a constant negative outlook on life and can find no meaning or joy in things you have previously cared about, you may be experiencing clinical depression. Know that depression is treatable with counseling and sometimes with medication. You are not alone in this journey.

That is where Hospice of Marion County can help. The center has been offering counseling for individuals, families and groups for more than a decade. Programs are offered for adults, teens and children at no charge to Marion County residents who are experiencing the loss of a loved one. Here are some tips to help you on your grief journey:

- **Grief is a recurring experience.** You will experience grief sometimes well after you thought you had healed. It may be a conversation that triggers a memory of your lost loved one or an event you're



attending with others that triggers a past experience. Being prepared and knowing this will happen in the future is the first step to healing at your own pace.

- **Grief affects everyone differently.** No matter the age, children, teens and adults experience grief in different ways. There is no right or wrong way to grieve.

- **Don't shut others out.** Talking to someone about your loss and feelings may not be easy, but is necessary. Find a friend or professional you can trust with your thoughts and feelings.

- **Allow yourself to feel your loss.** You can't heal if you don't acknowledge those feelings and let it run its natural path. Keeping emotions bottled up or suppressing them is never good. Facing your loss and expressing those emotions leads to a healthier outcome.

- **Express your grief through writing.** Sometimes writing a letter to your loved one is a helpful exercise that aids in coping.

- **Keep a journal.** Remember the good and the bad memories in a personal journal. Expressing your daily emotions can sometimes bring clarity and hope.

- **Be a good listener to others grieving.** While we all grieve in different ways, listening skills are very important whether you are listening to someone who has lost a loved one or you are sharing your loss in a group counseling session. Be supportive of others' loss.

Hospice of Marion County has trained professionals with the expertise to guide adults, children and teens through a process of understanding the grief they are experiencing towards healthy behaviors. Through its programs of sharing memories, emotions and strategies for coping with others who are also grieving, it can be especially helpful in healing and recovery for those suffering the loss of a loved one. Their message is that loss of control over external events does not mean the loss of one's inner strength.

 **empath**  
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## Blood pressure ranges are as follows:



**Normal blood pressure:**  
120/80 mm Hg or lower.



**Elevated blood pressure:**  
The top number ranges from 120 to 129 mm Hg, and the bottom number is *below* 80 mm Hg.



**Stage 1 hypertension:**  
The top number ranges from 130 to 139 mm Hg OR the bottom number is between 80 - 89 mm Hg.



**Stage 2 hypertension:**  
The top number is 140 mm Hg or higher OR the bottom number is 90 mm Hg or higher.

### What are these studies about?

Researchers want to see what effect investigational medicines will have on blood pressure in qualified study participants.

### Why take part in clinical research?

There remains an unmet need for safe and effective therapies. Synexus needs your help to advance world medicine. By volunteering, you may help get us one step closer to developing effective medications.

### Meet Dr. Okolie: A Leader in Hypertension Research

Leading our hypertension research efforts at Synexus is Dr. Okolie, the current Medical Director of Synexus Clinical Research in The Villages. Dr. Okolie graduated from medical school in Ghana in 2005 and initially worked as a general practitioner. In 2009, she moved to the United States to further her specialty training. She became board certified in Internal Medicine and Obesity Medicine, demonstrating her commitment to providing comprehensive care in these areas.

Dr. Okolie brings more than 20 years of medical experience to her role at Synexus. Her extensive background as a hospitalist and medical director of a hospital-based home care agency has provided her with a well-rounded understanding of various medical conditions and treatment approaches. She is known for her patient-centered approach and exceptional oversight of multi-phase studies, particularly in therapeutic areas such as vaccines, neuro/Alzheimer's and general medicine.

*"Come take advantage of our complimentary testing and explore all of the wonderful studies we have to offer at Synexus Clinical Research."*

**Angela Okolie, MD**  
Principal Investigator



## Together for *the Future* of Health

### Understanding hypertension

Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is a pervasive health condition affecting nearly half of all adults in the United States. Despite the availability of medications, managing this condition remains a significant challenge for many individuals. At Synexus Clinical Research, we understand the critical need for innovative solutions to address this widespread issue. We are excited to announce our complimentary testing services aimed at tackling hypertension through clinical trials. This initiative not only offers participants access to cutting-edge treatments but also contributes to the advancement of medical research.

### Complimentary testing services (hypertension and memory)

Synexus is offering complimentary testing services for individuals struggling with high blood pressure and memory loss. Our goal is to provide accessible, no-cost study-related care and medication to eligible participants. By doing so, we aim to alleviate the financial burden often associated with managing chronic conditions.

To qualify for our complimentary testing services, participants must be 18 years or older and have difficulty maintaining a healthy blood pressure range or a history of memory loss. Those who meet these criteria will receive payment for their participation, no-cost study-related care from local doctors, and no-cost study medication. This comprehensive support ensures that participants receive the best possible care throughout the trial period.

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# ASSISTED LIVING FOR MEMORY CARE: UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS

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

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

## A Safe and Secure Environment

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

## Specialized Care

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

## Structured Activities

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

## Nutritious Meals

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

## Socialization Opportunities

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

## 24/7 Monitoring

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

## Peace of Mind for Family Members

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

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

## Memory Care Services Include:

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



## Choosing a Memory Care Community

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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# Recurrent UTIs: Addressing the Risk of Antibiotic Resistance

**U**rinary tract infections (UTIs) are common bacterial infections that affect millions of individuals worldwide each year. While typically treated with antibiotics, the rising prevalence of antibiotic resistance poses a significant challenge in managing recurrent UTIs effectively. In this article, we'll explore the importance of addressing recurrent UTIs and strategies to mitigate the risk of antibiotic resistance, focusing on Utiva Cranberry PACs as a clinically effective prevention.

## 1. Overview of Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs):

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) occur when bacteria enter the urinary tract and multiply, leading to frequent urination, burning sensation during urination, and pelvic discomfort. UTIs can affect various parts of the urinary tract, including the bladder (cystitis), urethra (urethritis), and kidneys (pyelonephritis).

## 2. Importance of Addressing Recurrent UTIs:

Recurrent UTIs, defined as two or more infections within six months or three or more within one year, pose significant health risks and can profoundly impact quality of life. Individuals who experience recurrent UTIs often face frequent discomfort, disruption of daily activities, and an increased risk of complications such as kidney damage and sepsis.

## 3. The Growing Concern of Antibiotic Resistance:

Antibiotic resistance has emerged as a global health threat, compromising the effectiveness of antibiotics in treating bacterial infections. Recurrent UTIs present a particularly challenging scenario, as they often result in repeated antibiotic courses, contributing to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. A 2019 study published in the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) found alarming rates of antibiotic resistance among UTI-causing bacteria, with more than 92 percent resistant to at least one common antibiotic and almost 80 percent to at least two.

*(Source: NCBI Study)*

## 4. UTI Prevention: Strategies to Avoid Unnecessary Antibiotic Use:

Given the risks associated with antibiotic resistance, it's essential to explore preventive strategies to reduce the reliance on antibiotics for recurrent UTIs. Healthcare providers emphasize the importance of adopting lifestyle modifications and hygiene practices, such as staying hydrated, urinating after intercourse, and



practicing proper genital hygiene to prevent UTIs. Additionally, avoiding unnecessary antibiotic use for non-severe UTIs and considering alternative approaches for prevention are crucial in combating antibiotic resistance.

## 5. Utiva Cranberry PACs: A Clinically Effective Prevention:

Utiva Cranberry PACs offer a promising solution for UTI prevention without contributing to antibiotic resistance. Cranberry proanthocyanidins (PACs) have been extensively studied for their ability to inhibit bacterial adhesion to the urinary tract, preventing the colonization and proliferation of UTI-causing bacteria. A urogynecologist, Dr. Emily Rutledge emphasizes, "There is a lot of evidence that cranberry supplements are safe and effective. You can find all sorts of cranberry supplements but if they don't have that 36 mg PAC and are measured by DMAC/A2 then they are a waste of money." Utiva Cranberry PACs, with a standardized dose of 36 mg PACs measured by DMAC/A2, provide a clinically effective option for individuals seeking to reduce their risk of recurrent UTIs.

Recurrent UTIs pose a significant health concern, exacerbated by the growing threat of antibiotic resistance. Healthcare providers and patients play a vital role in addressing this challenge by adopting preventive strategies and exploring alternative approaches to UTI management. Dr. Colleen McDermott, another urogynecologist, recommends,

"Antibiotics are the first-line treatment, but there are clinically proven options to help prevent. When considering cranberry supplements, I recommend my patients select a product with 36 mg of PACs." Utiva Cranberry PACs offer a safe, evidence-based option for UTI prevention, empowering individuals to take proactive steps towards better urinary health and reduced reliance on antibiotics.



Sources:

- [https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/antibiotics-resistance?\\_pos=1&\\_sid=51bf18b74&\\_ss=r](https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/antibiotics-resistance?_pos=1&_sid=51bf18b74&_ss=r)
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6436442/>



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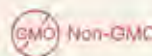
I cannot say enough good things about the Utiva Cranberry PACs. They have been instrumental in my battle with recurrent UTIs. They have enabled me to be free of infection and have so much peace of mind. Customer service is always fantastic, whether it is a question about their product line or help with my orders. 5 stars for Utiva! ”

Jo-Ann G.



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# Vision for the Future:

## Protecting Your Eyesight and the Security of Financial Health

By Steve Schneider, MBA - CEO, Securenet Financial, LLC.

October is *Eye Injury Prevention Month*. Taking care of one's eyesight and preventing eye injury is of great importance, but that importance becomes even more significant as we grow older. As we age, our eyesight becomes increasingly precious, yet vulnerable to various conditions that can impact quality of life. Proper eye care not only preserves vision but also plays a crucial role in overall well-being. This article explores the significance of maintaining eye health as we grow older, alongside the critical connection between financial preparedness and accessing quality healthcare, especially for age-related vision issues.

### The Importance of Eye Health

Healthy eyesight is fundamental to daily activities and maintaining independence as we age:

- **Regular Eye Exams:** Routine check-ups can detect early signs of eye diseases like glaucoma, macular degeneration, and cataracts, allowing for timely treatment.
- **Eye Protection:** Shielding eyes from harmful UV rays and wearing appropriate eyewear during activities can prevent damage and reduce the risk of age-related conditions.
- **Healthy Lifestyle:** Proper nutrition, including foods rich in antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids, supports eye health and reduces the risk of degenerative eye diseases.

### Financial Preparedness and Eye Care

Sound financial planning enables access to comprehensive eye care and treatment options:

- **Health Insurance Coverage:** Adequate health insurance, including vision coverage, ensures affordability of regular eye exams, glasses, and necessary treatments.
- **Emergency Funds:** Having savings set aside allows for immediate access to specialized eye care in case of sudden vision emergencies or surgeries.
- **Long-Term Care:** Planning for potential long-term care needs, including vision-related care, protects retirement assets and ensures quality of life in later years.

### Planning for a Secure Retirement

A secure financial future, including planning for healthcare needs, is crucial to reducing the burden of unforeseeable medical circumstances:



- **Retirement Income Planning:** Strategically plan retirement income to cover medical expenses, including vision care, without financial strain.
- **Investment Strategies:** Diversify investments to grow wealth and safeguard against unexpected healthcare costs, such as those related to eye health.
- **Estate Planning:** Protect assets and ensure they are used efficiently for healthcare needs, including potential vision-related treatments and long-term care.

### The Link Between Financial Security and Healthy Aging

Financial stability supports overall well-being and optimal aging, including maintaining eye health:

- **Quality of Life:** Access to timely eye care services preserves independence and enhances quality of life, allowing individuals to continue enjoying hobbies and social activities.
- **Reduced Stress:** Financial security alleviates anxiety about healthcare costs, promoting mental well-being and overall health.
- **Preventive Care:** Regular eye exams and proactive management of vision health reduce the risk of severe eye conditions and vision loss, contributing to long-term wellness.

### Conclusion: See Clearly and Live Fully

Protecting your eyesight is not just about seeing clearly—it's about safeguarding your independence, lifestyle, and overall health as you age. By prioritizing

both eye health and financial preparedness, individuals can ensure they are well-equipped to manage any vision-related challenges that may arise in later years. Securenet Financial LLC is dedicated to helping clients navigate retirement planning and financial strategies that support comprehensive healthcare needs.

Start planning today to secure a future where you can see clearly and live fully. Visit [SecurenetFinancial.com](https://www.securenetfinancial.com) to learn more about how Securenet Financial LLC can assist you in planning for a secure retirement.

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# PREVENTING TYPE 2 DIABETES: THE POWER OF WEIGHT LOSS

**T**ype 2 diabetes is a chronic condition affecting millions worldwide, but the good news is that it's largely preventable. One of the most effective ways to reduce your risk is through weight loss and maintaining a healthy weight. This article explores the connection between type 2 diabetes and weight, and provides practical strategies for prevention.

## Understanding the Link

Excess weight, particularly around the midsection, is a significant risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Fat cells, especially those in the abdomen, release chemicals that can interfere with the body's ability to use insulin effectively. This condition, known as insulin resistance, is a precursor to type 2 diabetes.

## The Benefits of Weight Loss

Losing even a modest amount of weight can have a substantial impact on your diabetes risk. Studies have shown that reducing body weight by 5-10% can:

1. Improve insulin sensitivity
2. Lower blood sugar levels
3. Reduce the need for diabetes medications in those already diagnosed
4. Decrease the risk of developing type 2 diabetes in high-risk individuals

## Strategies for Effective Weight Loss

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight involves a combination of dietary changes and increased physical activity. Here are some evidence-based strategies:

- 1. Balanced Diet:** Focus on a diet rich in whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. Limit processed foods, sugary drinks, and excessive carbohydrates.
- 2. Portion Control:** Use smaller plates, measure servings, and be mindful of calorie intake.
- 3. Regular Exercise:** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity per week. Include strength training exercises twice a week.
- 4. Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Sometimes thirst can be mistaken for hunger.



**5. Get Adequate Sleep:** Poor sleep can disrupt hormones that regulate hunger and metabolism. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night.

**6. Manage Stress:** Chronic stress can lead to weight gain and increased diabetes risk. Practice stress-reduction techniques like meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises.

**7. Track Progress:** Keep a food and exercise journal to stay accountable and identify areas for improvement.

## Beyond Weight Loss: Additional Prevention Strategies

While weight loss is crucial, other lifestyle factors also play a role in diabetes prevention:

- 1. Quit Smoking:** Smoking increases the risk of type 2 diabetes and its complications.
- 2. Limit Alcohol:** Excessive alcohol consumption can contribute to weight gain and increase diabetes risk.
- 3. Regular Check-ups:** Visit your healthcare provider regularly for diabetes screenings, especially if you have risk factors such as family history or obesity.
- 4. Medications:** In some cases, your doctor may recommend medications to help prevent diabetes progression.

Remember, preventing type 2 diabetes is not just about losing weight—it's about adopting a healthier lifestyle overall. By making sustainable changes to your diet, increasing physical activity, and addressing other risk factors, you can significantly reduce your risk of developing this chronic condition. Always consult with a healthcare professional before starting any new diet or exercise program, especially if you have existing health concerns.

## MEET THE TEAM

Elite Medical is comprised of a team who is dedicated to helping you on your journey to better health.



### Christopher Bagley, APRN

Chris is lifelong a resident of Marion county. Chris graduated with a Bachelors degree from the University of Florida in Health Science Education with a specialization in Health Promotion. Chris worked as a firefighter, paramedic and registered nurse prior to becoming a nurse practitioner. Chris has worked primarily as an ER nurse practitioner but also has experience in primary care and long term care.

Chris has always had a passion for health and after committing himself to his health, he was inspired along with Eldon, to open Elite Medical, a comprehensive wellness practice that focuses on health and well-being to prevent sickness and chronic diseases.



### Eldon Waters, MSN, APRN

Eldon is a Marine Corps veteran and attended the College of Central Florida, University of Virginia and completed a Bachelors of Science in Nursing from University of Central Florida. Eldon also completed his Masters of Science in Nursing from South University.

Eldon started as an EMT/Medic at the University of Virginia Medical Center, a level 1 trauma center and teaching facility. He went on to work at Advent Health Ocala as a tech then registered nurse. After gaining more experience, Eldon worked at Ocala Health in the ER as a Nurse Practitioner.

To find out more or to schedule your appointment, please contact Elite Medical today.



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# ADHD Awareness: Understanding the Invisible Condition

By David Culbreth, Senior Transitions Specialist, Realtor, SRES

As a real estate agent and a business owner that works in senior transitions this is a topic that you would not think that I would write about, but the topic of ADHD does not hit close to home for me, it and came crashing through my roof and has been a challenge in my life since childhood. It is a struggle I have had to deal with and work through since the 70's. There are not enough pages in the periodical to even begin to explore the depths of ADHD so I am just going to provide a general awareness of the topic and make you aware of some of the symptoms that you may be dealing with daily. ADHD does not discriminate, it can affect us all at any age.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects millions of people worldwide. Despite its prevalence, ADHD remains widely misunderstood and often stigmatized. This article aims to shed light on ADHD, its symptoms, diagnosis, treatment options, and the realities of living with this invisible condition.

## What is ADHD?

ADHD is a complex disorder characterized by persistent patterns of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity that interfere with daily functioning and development. It's important to note that ADHD is not a result of laziness, poor parenting, or a lack of intelligence. Instead, it's a neurological condition that affects the brain's executive functions, which are responsible for focus, organization, and self-regulation.

## Recognizing the Signs

ADHD manifests differently in each individual, but there are common signs to watch for:

### 1. Inattention:

- Difficulty focusing on tasks
- Easily distracted
- Trouble following instructions
- Appears not to listen when spoken to directly
- Forgetfulness in daily activities

### 2. Hyperactivity:

- Fidgeting or squirming
- Difficulty sitting still
- Excessive talking
- Always "on the go"

### 3. Impulsivity:

- Interrupting others
- Difficulty waiting for one's turn
- Making rash decisions

It's crucial to understand that not all people with ADHD exhibit hyperactivity. In fact, many adults with ADHD, particularly women, may have primarily inattentive symptoms, which can often go unrecognized.

## Diagnosis: A Complex Process

Diagnosing ADHD is not as simple as taking a blood test or brain scan. It requires a comprehensive evaluation by a qualified healthcare professional, typically a psychiatrist, psychologist, or specialized physician.

### The process often involves:

1. A detailed medical history
2. Behavioral assessments
3. Questionnaires for the individual, family members, and teachers (for children)
4. Ruling out other conditions with similar symptoms

It's worth noting that ADHD is often accompanied by co-occurring conditions such as anxiety, depression, or learning disabilities, which can complicate diagnosis and treatment.

## Treatment Options: A Multifaceted Approach

While there is no cure for ADHD, various treatment options can help manage symptoms effectively:

**1. Medication:** Stimulant medications like methylphenidate and amphetamines are often prescribed to improve focus and reduce impulsivity. Non-stimulant options are also available.

**2. Behavioral Therapy:** This can help individuals develop coping strategies and improve organizational skills.

**3. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** Particularly useful for adults with ADHD, CBT can help manage negative thought patterns and behaviors.

**4. Lifestyle Changes:** Regular exercise, adequate sleep, and a balanced diet can significantly impact ADHD symptoms.

**5. Educational Support:** For children, accommodations at school can make a substantial difference in academic performance.

It's important to remember that treatment plans should be tailored to each individual's needs and may require adjustments over time.

## Living with ADHD: Challenges and Strengths

Living with ADHD presents unique challenges, but it's essential to recognize that individuals with ADHD also possess many strengths. Some common challenges include:

- Time management difficulties
- Trouble maintaining relationships
- Low self-esteem
- Academic or professional struggles

However, many people with ADHD also report:

- High levels of creativity
- The ability to hyperfocus on interesting tasks
- Boundless energy and enthusiasm
- Unique problem-solving skills

Understanding and embracing these traits can lead to better self-acceptance and the ability to harness one's strengths.

## Breaking the Stigma

One of the biggest obstacles faced by individuals with ADHD is the persistent stigma surrounding the condition. Common misconceptions include:

- ADHD is just an excuse for bad behavior
- ADHD only affects children
- ADHD is overdiagnosed and overmedicated

Education and awareness are key to dispelling these myths. By sharing accurate information and personal stories, we can foster a more understanding and supportive society for those with ADHD.

## The Importance of Support

Support from family, friends, educators, and employers plays a crucial role in the lives of individuals with ADHD. Creating accommodating environments, offering patience and understanding, and celebrating strengths can make a world of difference.

## Conclusion

ADHD is a complex, often misunderstood condition that affects people of all ages. By increasing awareness, promoting early diagnosis and intervention, and fostering supportive environments, we can help individuals with ADHD thrive. Remember, ADHD is not a choice or a character flaw – it's a neurological difference that, with proper understanding and support, can be effectively managed. As our knowledge of ADHD continues to grow, so too does the potential for those affected by it to lead fulfilling, successful lives.



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# Vertigo: How to Stop Spinning—Fast

**V**ertigo is a condition that makes individuals feel sensations of spinning, which causes nausea, vomiting and other unpleasant side effects. A physical therapist will be able to determine if BBPV may be the cause of your symptoms. (*Vertigo may also be caused by a central nervous system disorder, and that type of spinning cannot be corrected with these maneuvers. Doing the maneuvers will help us to determine if the crystals are loose and if it's treatable with therapy.*)

Within the inner ear, are semicircular canals. Calcium crystals, known as canaliths help signal movement and positions to the brain. As we age, these crystals slough off of their stem (utricle) and the loose crystals can become displaced within the semicircular ear canals, causing BPPV.

Dr. Epley created a technique to reposition the crystals and get them out of the semicircular canals. The technique is known as the Epley maneuver. Physical therapists (PT) are trained to use the Epley maneuver in their practices and they can also teach patients how to safely perform this technique in the comfort of their home when necessary.

## The Epley Maneuver

The Epley maneuver is performed when the patient is lying down, and a small pillow is placed behind their head. The Physical Therapist will position the head at various angles for holds of 30 seconds. If the holds are inadequate or too long, the maneuver will fail. That is why it's important to fully understand the technique before attempting it at home. Innovative Therapies Group PTs are highly trained in performing the Epley maneuver and instructing patients how to perform it safely at home.



Along with the Epley Maneuver, Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo can be effectively treated with three other manual maneuvers that also move the crystals through the ear, improving and in many cases alleviating vertigo and the sensations of dizziness. These other techniques are known as the Semont maneuver, Foster maneuver, and the Brandt-Daroff exercises. These therapies can be performed in the convenience of Innovative Therapies Group's office.

## If you are dizzy or off balance, don't put off treatment.

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.

Physical and Occupational Therapy 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.

## In Florida, you do not need a referral to see a Physical Therapist

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.

## Types of Treatment Available with Physical Therapy

- Assessment and Evaluation Programs
- Difficulty Walking
- Fall Prevention and Balance Retraining
- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Functional Training
- Gait Training and Balance Programs
- Manual and Massage Therapy
- Neurological and Neurodegenerative Retraining
- Vestibular Rehabilitation

Along with PT, Innovative Therapies Group offers Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Massage.

To find out more or to schedule your appointment, please contact Innovative Therapies Group today at **352-433-0091**.





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# UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHTS IN ASSISTED LIVING

By Janice Martin, Owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida

**E**very person moving in to an assisted living community must sign a Resident Agreement. It is a long, legal document. Because it is so long and signed under stressful situations, it is often done without fully understanding it, taken home, and never look at it again.

I'm sure you've purchased apps for your cell phone. Before you can download it, there's a long section that includes a lot of rhetoric. If you actually read through it, you might not ever sign it! The reality is, you either sign it or you don't get the app. The same is true for Resident Agreements – you either agree to it and sign it, or you don't get to move in.

There are all kinds of addendums regarding pets, smoking, motorized scooters, even using an arbitrator in the event of a dispute. But of all those pages, the most important, most overlooked, and most misunderstood is Resident Rights. It may be difficult to accept that although you have provided certain types of care in your own home, you cannot in a facility.

It is each resident's right to do what they want to do, whether it is a) safe, b) logical, c) a health risk, or d) defies common sense. Let's look at two important scenarios:

***"To Be treated with consideration and respect and with due recognition of personal dignity, individuality, and the need for privacy."***

- Your father is diabetic and asks for 3 rolls at dinner and dessert at every meal. The community must give it to him no matter how much you yell, scream, or threaten. It is his RIGHT to have what he wants, and the community cannot deny him. As a result, you may now be required to pay for an expensive drug to counteract the elevated sugars.

- Your mother falls out of bed frequently and has bed rails on her bed at home. In an assisted living, you cannot have full bed rails. The regulations have changed somewhat, but many communities will not allow it for their own protocols. If they don't, the only solution is to make the bed lower and closer to the floor and put a mat alongside the bed.

- If a resident with Parkinson's has trouble eating from shaking hands and food gets all over their shirt, you may not use a bib so they're not embarrassed and remain clean because a bib is not "dignified."

- If your loved one is an alcoholic and wants to drink, they can. They may have alcohol in their apartment and have a drink at happy hour. One family asked if



we would admit their alcoholic father into memory care so he couldn't get out to get a drink. If there is no diagnosis of dementia, memory care is not an option.

- Each resident has the right to refuse to take a shower or change their clothes. Sometimes it becomes necessary to enlist the help of family. The community will try different staff, times of the day, persuasion, bribery, but sometimes the last resort is to bring in the family.

- No signage in a resident's room is permitted as it may deny their privacy and dignity. The staff may not put a sign stating something such as, "Don't forget to give XXX medication before bed." "Put extra protection on the bed at night." It is an infringement of their privacy. Even family may not leave signs such as "Please take teeth/hearing aids out at night".

***The right to present grievances on behalf of himself or herself or others to the staff or administrator of the facility... or to any other person...free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal.***

If you complain to the staff about concerns you have regarding care and feel you must take it to a higher level, you have the right to not receive retaliation.

In addition to Resident Rights, there is also a section in the Florida State Regulations regarding third party providers. This refers to hiring private caregivers, home care agencies, home therapy providers, hospice, etc. There are times where families are told "We use XYZ company for home therapy." Or "We use XYZ hospice." It does not matter which they use! It is YOUR decision. The community may have a preferred provider. This is a convenience for the staff. However, if you have a long-standing relationship with an outside provider, you have the right to continue to receive care from them.

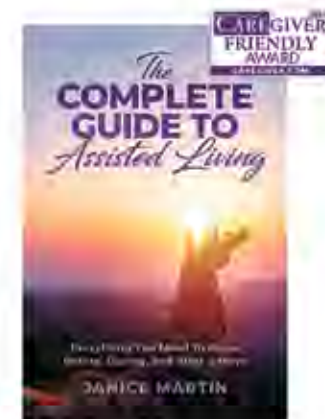
I was contacted by a family who felt their father wasn't receiving enough care in the assisted living. Rather than move him, they requested to bring a home care service to supplement the care at their own cost. The community denied the home care access to the community. THIS IS ILLEGAL! You may request any third party services you wish, and they may not be denied by the community.

The same is true for hospice. Some communities will have a preferred company, but if the family has a different request, the community must honor it.

A husband and wife are living in assisted living and the wife made the decision to enlist hospice. On behalf of the family, I asked for the nurse to give a referral to a specific hospice. After a week, I reached out to the hospice and asked if they had received the referral. When they learned who the director of nursing was, they responded that she "refused" to work with them. It does not work this way!!

In the case of home health, home care, or hospice, IT IS ALWAYS PATIENT CHOICE! Resident Rights will frustrate you and confound you, but they are there for a good reason. Learn to understand the basis for each decision and to advocate for your loved one when those rights are not being met.

In assisted living, if you feel your resident rights or the regulations have been denied or abused, you may make an anonymous complaint by calling (888) 419-3456 / (800) 955-8771 Florida Relay Service (TDD number) and an ombudsman/advocate will be assigned to investigate.



**Janice Martin** is an author, educator, and specialist on senior living options and the owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida Inc. She does not rely on AI to generate her articles! She assists families in locating senior options at home or to a community 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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# Stress Management Tips from Quick Care Urgent Care

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

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

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

### Take Time for Yourself

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

### Get Moving

Talk with your physician about the right exercise plan for you. Most people can benefit from taking a brisk 30-minute walk or a 30-minute swim. Exercise increases circulation, reduces stress, it also improves nutrient and oxygen

rich blood flow, and helps you build strength and to lose weight. If you can work out harder, it's extremely beneficial to get your heart rate up daily with cardiovascular exercise.

### Meditation

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

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

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

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

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

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# Understanding Interventional Pain Management: A Comprehensive Approach to Pain Relief

By Brent Compton, MD

**C**hronic pain is a debilitating condition that affects millions of people worldwide, significantly impacting their quality of life. While traditional pain management strategies, such as medication and physical therapy, can provide relief, interventional pain management offers a more targeted and minimally invasive approach to addressing the root causes of pain. In this article, we'll delve into the world of interventional pain management and explore its role in the comprehensive treatment of chronic pain.

Interventional pain management is a specialized field of medicine that focuses on diagnosing and treating various types of chronic pain through minimally invasive techniques. These procedures are performed by highly trained physicians, often pain management specialists or anesthesiologists, who use advanced imaging techniques and specialized equipment to target specific areas of the body responsible for pain.

One of the primary goals of interventional pain management is to reduce or eliminate pain while minimizing the need for oral medications, particularly opioids, which can have significant side effects and carry the risk of addiction. By targeting the source of pain directly, interventional techniques can provide long-lasting relief and improve overall functionality.

The decision to pursue interventional pain management typically follows a structured pathway, beginning with conservative treatments and progressing to more advanced interventions as necessary. This pathway can be visualized as a decision tree, guiding patients through the various options available to them.

At the most basic level, patients may begin with non-invasive treatments such as chiropractic care, physical therapy, massage, and home exercises. These approaches aim to alleviate pain through manual manipulation, stretching, and strengthening exercises, often addressing musculoskeletal issues or improving overall mobility.

If these initial treatments prove insufficient, the next level may involve medications and imaging tests. Pain medications, including over-the-counter and prescription options, can provide temporary relief, while imaging techniques like X-rays, MRI, or CT scans can help identify the underlying cause of pain and guide further treatment decisions.



When conservative methods and medications fail to provide adequate relief, interventional pain management techniques become a viable option. These minimally invasive procedures include:

**1. Epidural steroid injections:** These injections deliver corticosteroids directly into the epidural space of the spine, reducing inflammation and providing pain relief for conditions such as herniated discs, spinal stenosis, or radiculopathy.

**2. Facet joint injections:** Targeted injections into the facet joints of the spine can alleviate pain caused by arthritis or injury in these joints.

**3. Radiofrequency ablation:** This procedure uses heat generated by radio waves to disrupt the transmission of pain signals from specific nerves, providing long-term relief for conditions like chronic back or neck pain.

**4. Spinal cord stimulation:** Implanted devices deliver electrical impulses to the spinal cord, modulating pain signals and providing relief for various chronic pain conditions.

**5. Nerve blocks:** These injections involve the administration of medication, such as anesthetics or steroids, near specific nerves to block the transmission of pain signals.

If all other interventions fail to provide adequate relief, surgery may be considered as a last resort. However, interventional pain management techniques often allow patients to avoid or delay the need for surgical intervention, reducing the risks and recovery time associated with major procedures.

It's important to note that interventional pain management is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Each patient's condition is unique, and treatment plans are tailored to address their specific needs. Pain management specialists work closely with patients to develop comprehensive treatment strategies, combining interventional techniques with other modalities, such as physical therapy, medication management, and lifestyle modifications.

In conclusion, interventional pain management offers a promising solution for individuals suffering from chronic pain. By targeting the source of pain directly through minimally invasive techniques, these procedures can provide significant relief and improve overall quality of life. As awareness of these techniques continues to grow, more patients can benefit from this comprehensive approach to pain management.

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 pain-free future. Experience the difference at The Interventional Pain Institute today.

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# HEALTHY AGING

## and Quality of Life Within Reach with a Proactive Approach

**A**s we age, finding ways to improve our health and wellness - physically, mentally, and emotionally - can become an increasingly more important and sometimes more difficult task.

Recognizing the challenges that aging brings to the human body is an important first step towards a better you. By addressing those recognized challenges and health concerns, we give ourselves the power to transform our lives and reap the rewards of improved energy, strength, and an enhanced sense of well-being.

Improving quality of life as we age is important as it allows us to engage in life more meaningfully, maintain our independence, and to experience increased happiness and well-being. What's more, connecting with others, including health and wellness professionals, can positively impact our mental and physical health by helping us overcome feelings of depression and isolation and creating a sense of purpose and satisfaction.

### Can you maintain quality of life as you age?

Absolutely! Maintaining a good level of health and well-being and quality of life into our senior years is achievable and can be fun! Some proactive measures, including seeking health care services from qualified health and wellness authorities and medical professionals not only can help, but is an important part of maintaining quality of life.

Aches and pains, memory lapses, loss of hearing, skin changes, and more may be "symptoms" sometimes associated with getting older, but the fact is that we are living longer and are healthier and happier than ever before.

Many older adults enjoy vigorous health - even enjoying new and exciting activities - from pickleball to line dancing to softball and more - that they may not have had the time to enjoy in their earlier years - all due in part to taking care of their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Establishing a healthy lifestyle which includes maintaining a nutritious diet, managing stress, getting exercise, and sleeping enough hours can help you live a happy, quality life despite the expected changes associated with aging.

### Do I have to do it alone?

Not at all! Resources to help you every step of the way are plentiful. From primary and specialty health care providers, to hearing and dental care specialists, to nutritionists and dermatologists, and more, those committed to prioritizing your well-being should be an integral part of your health and wellness journey for years to come.

### Where can you find resources to help?

In addition to seeking qualified medical professionals to help you detect health issues early, reading articles about senior health, asking your physician about health and wellness classes available in your area, engaging in activities and social groups, and attending events such as health and wellness expos, can offer a host of useful information.

Locally, The Villages Homeowners Advocates (VHA) sponsors the area's largest health and wellness expo each November to celebrate and support health and wellness in our community and to encourage quality of life for seniors.

"Our 2024 Health and Wellness Expo will bring together local health and wellness experts in an effort to educate residents on how to stay healthy while aging and to maintain an overall good quality of life for years to come," commented VHA President Peter Russell.

Russell said the Health and Wellness Expo, slated for 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. November 15th at Rohan Recreation Center, 850 Kristine Way, The Villages, is a pivotal platform for helping area residents lead healthier, happier lifestyles by bringing them in front of representatives and experts in a wide variety of fields.

The free event will afford attendees the opportunity to participate in live interactive seminars, hear from guest speakers, and connect with a variety of representatives from wellness services ranging from primary and specialty health care services, Medicare and Medicare Advantage options, estate planning, dermatology, vein care, healthy eating, and much more - all aimed at helping seniors enjoy an enhanced quality of life.



Russell added, "The Health and Wellness Expo is part of the VHA's overall mission to foster good health for our residents by inspiring them to prioritize and participate in their own physical, mental and emotional health care journey. We believe the expo will help them achieve this by providing them the chance to connect with a diverse array of exhibitors and engaging activities all designed to promote overall good quality of life as we age."

Net proceeds from the 501 (c) (3) organization's event will benefit other organizations which address needs in the areas of nutrition, physical and mental health, US Veterans and armed forces, housing, and youth.

For more information on the VHA, visit [thevha.net](http://thevha.net)



The Villages Homeowners Advocates

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

# EXPO 2024

STAY HEALTHY WHILE AGING

**Friday, November 15th, 2024**

**1:00pm - 4:00pm**

Rohan Recreation Center  
850 Kristine Way

## Free Event!



# HUNGRY HEART

By Alex Anderson

**T**he songwriter and performer Bruce Springsteen was right when he wrote,

"Everybody's got a hungry heart..."

Inside of every human is this need or hunger. Sometimes we try to fill it with love for another person, but for some reason...another person is not the answer.

Sometimes the hungry heart destroys the very things we love and want.

Springsteen goes on to sing,

"We fell in love, I knew it had to end...we took what we had and we ripped it apart...everybody's got a hungry heart...don't make no difference what nobody says...ain't nobody like to be alone...everybody's got a hungry heart."

I do believe our hungry heart is about loneliness, not for another human...but for God himself. We were created in the very image of God (Genesis 1:26) but when man left God...man missed, and still misses, God. They had a bond that filled man with joy and satisfied his heart like nothing else.

C.S. Lewis calls this the, "Numinous Awe." It seems to be built into mankind, this *ravenous hungry heart to know God*. And it's so strong nothing can fill it but God himself.

Psalms 34:8 says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good."

**And the truth is...** If you don't get that deep ravenous hunger in your heart satisfied by Jesus you will starve to death spiritually, while eating everything else.

So how do you do that? How do you find the true satisfaction that calms your hungry heart?

If you are a Christ-follower, then you know how to do this. You...'do again'...something that you have already experienced when you asked God to be your Lord and Savior. You "make up" with God and you're back to stay.

You are so glad to be back together. Glad that God owns you and your life. So you decide to be happy because God owns you and is your life partner (Philippians 4:4).

Feel the pleasure, the joy and the delight again about Jesus being your master. Let this fact cause you happiness, pleasure and delight.

Be full of joy because Jesus paid a high price for your life. (1Corinthians 6:19-20).

Let the reality of what He has done sink over you.

Not only are you in His family now, but you can live the life of a victorious and joyful person of God; with all the rights and privileges of a child of rich royalty.

*"You are my child says the Lord...my very rich child says the Lord...let the riches of your heart begin to overflow into all of your life."* (3 John 2)

You can, should, and must rejoice always in the Lord...way before anything changes physically in your life.

The seed of hope and joy is there if you have become one with Jesus Christ. His seed is within you. If your hope is nonexistent then find the seed once planted deep in your heart by the Holy Spirit.

Like a precious pearl search for it (Matthew 13:45).

When you find it (that small seed), clean it up. Polish it and put it in the center room of your heart, shine the brightest light you can find on it and let its magnificent beauty captivate you. Stare at it with intentional focus as though you are searching and waiting for hope itself.

**Its magnificent light will light up your life.**

For it will change everything about you as you clearly see and feel the love that God has shed in your heart...that is for you (Romans 5:5).

It is so worthy of your time my friend to mediate and think about Jesus, again.

Whether things in your life are going well or not...you have the power of a Christ-follower to focus on Jesus...the author and finisher of your faith and the centerpiece of your heart.

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