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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

December 2024

Marion Edition - Monthly

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THE HOLIDAY
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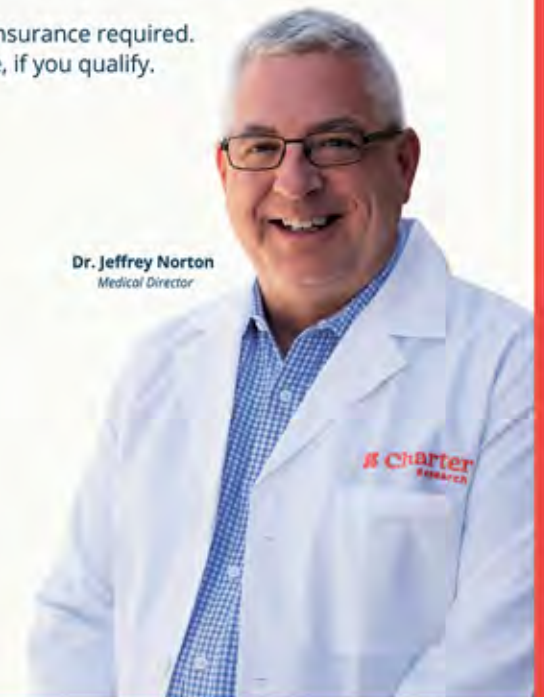
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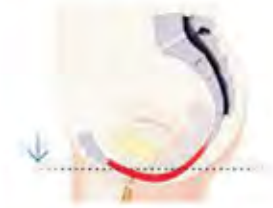
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The Inside Scoop: Naples Soap Company

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My Story

See a problem. Solve a problem. I suffered from psoriasis and eczema for much of my life. My daughter was born with eczema as well. I tried many prescriptions and over-the-counter products on the market to relieve our itchy skin, but none were effective.

8 million people in the U.S. have **psoriasis**

31 million Americans have some form of **eczema**

16 million suffer from the signs and symptoms of **rosacea**

millions of people are just like Deanna



Deanna Wallin, Founder & CEO

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As a former Registered Nurse with a background in healthcare and wound care, I started researching what we were putting on our skin that could be causing our skin irritations. I read product labels and researched ingredients used in many beauty products. It was a real eye opener. I was shocked to learn about the negative effects of ingredients like propylene glycol, parabens, hardening agents, phthalates and much more.

I knew there had to be a better alternative, so I started experimenting with natural skin care products made with coconut oil, shea butter and olive oil. Soon after, my daughter and I started to see real results. I was on to something life-changing and decided to use my skin care journey to help others as well.

In 2009, I opened Naples Soap Company in a 300 sq. foot shop in Naples, Florida. I created my own line-up of products for people just like me with sensitive skin.

Deanna

Sincerely,
Deanna Wallin
Founder & CEO, Naples Soap Company

Today, we operate 13 locations in Florida with over 600 different products. It has been a pleasure to meet and help so many people. I hope we can help you, too!



Navigating the Holiday Season When You Have Cancer

Managing stress during the holiday season can be uniquely challenging for cancer patients, who may be navigating physical and emotional struggles while trying to participate in holiday activities. Here are some thoughtful and supportive strategies to help cancer patients reduce stress during the holidays:

Prioritize Self-Care

The holidays often bring extra obligations, but self-care is especially important for cancer patients. Self-care may include meditation, light stretching, reading or simply taking time to relax. Rest, proper nutrition and adequate hydration should take priority over the need to attend every holiday gathering.

Set Realistic Expectations

The holidays don't need to look the way they always have. Consider setting boundaries around events, traditions or gatherings. This might mean choosing a few meaningful gatherings with close family or friends, only attending for a short time or even hosting a smaller, quieter event.

Ask for (and Accept) Help

Letting loved ones help with holiday tasks, like cooking, shopping, decorating or even gift wrapping, can help take some pressure off. Family members or friends are often eager to help but may not know how. It can be hard, but being open about where help is needed can make a significant difference for everyone.

Plan Energy-Conserving Activities

Cancer treatment can drain energy, so choosing holiday activities that don't require high energy output can reduce stress. For instance, watching holiday movies, decorating a small tree or baking simple treats can be joyful and manageable. Virtual gatherings are also a good option for connecting with loved ones, near or far, from the comfort of home.

Practice Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques

Simple techniques like deep breathing exercises, visualization and mindfulness meditation can help in staying calm and grounded. Regular practice, even for just a few minutes each day, can alleviate stress and enhance mental well-being.

Prioritize Sleep

Having a restful sleep environment and incorporating good sleep practices into the daily routine can support a healthy mind, enhance mood and support the body's healing process. A relaxing bedtime ritual with calming activities before bed, such as reading, gentle stretching,



meditation or deep breathing exercises, signal to the body that it's time to wind down. Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day can help regulate the body's internal clock and improve the quality of sleep.

Communicate with Loved Ones

Letting family and friends know what you can manage and what you cannot helps everyone feel more connected and supportive. Being open about energy levels, emotional needs and any limits also allows loved ones to offer support in meaningful ways.

Focus on Enjoyable, Low-Stress Traditions

Not every holiday tradition needs to be maintained, especially if they feel overwhelming. Embrace traditions that bring joy, are low-key and can be done in small groups or alone if preferred. Sometimes watching a favorite holiday film, listening to music or sipping hot cocoa in a cozy setting can create cherished moments.

Limit Holiday Overindulgence

While holiday eating and drinking are part of many celebrations, cancer patients may have specific dietary needs. Maintain balanced, nutrient-rich meals and consult with healthcare providers to understand dietary recommendations that best support health.

Express Gratitude and Find Joy in Small Moments

Taking time to reflect on small moments of joy or gratitude can help boost mood and reduce stress. Writing down a few things each day to be thankful for or sharing them with a loved one can create a positive perspective during the holiday season.

Seek Support from Cancer Resources and Counseling

The holiday season can heighten the emotional challenges of cancer treatment. Many organizations offer holiday support groups or counseling for patients and their families. Sometimes talking with others who understand the experience of cancer during the holidays can provide a comforting sense of community and perspective.

These strategies offer gentle ways for cancer patients to navigate the holiday season with reduced stress and more focus on self-care, personal comfort and meaningful connections.

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In Marion County, Board-certified physicians specializing in hematology, medical oncology, gynecologic oncology and radiation oncology provide personalized care for all forms of cancers and blood disorders. With extraordinary skill and experience, they deliver treatments with maximum effectiveness and safety, combined with compassion and concern for patients and their families. From genetic screening to immunotherapies and access to the latest clinical trials, our top-ranked cancer experts provide the newest and most advanced treatments available – increasing cure rates and extending lives.

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UNDERSTANDING AND TREATING ANKLE FLARE: A SYMPTOM OF VENOUS DISEASE

If you've ever noticed a spiderweb of veins around your ankles or feet, it could be more than just a cosmetic concern. Known as corona phlebectatica or *ankle flare*, these small, spider-like veins often signal underlying venous disease. While they may seem harmless, they can indicate a larger vascular issue that, if left untreated, may progress into more serious complications. At Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center, we specialize in diagnosing and treating this condition, ensuring that our patients receive top-tier care to improve both their health and confidence.

What is Ankle Flare?

Ankle flare is a common vascular issue where small veins inside and outside the ankle become visible due to increased pressure within the veins. This spider-like network of veins may appear insignificant at first, but they are often one of the earliest signs of chronic venous insufficiency (CVI). CVI affects over 40% of adults in the U.S., and ankle flare is frequently the body's first warning sign that venous health is at risk. When vein walls become damaged, they are unable to effectively return blood to the heart, causing it to pool and increase pressure in the lower extremities.

What Causes Ankle Flare?

Venous insufficiency occurs when the valves in the veins, designed to keep blood moving toward the heart, weaken or become damaged. As a result, blood begins to flow backward and collects in the veins of the legs and feet. This backward blood flow, known as venous reflux, increases pressure within the veins, causing them to stretch and twist. The buildup of pressure leads to the visible appearance of spider veins, particularly in delicate areas such as the ankles and feet.

In addition to aging and genetics, other factors that may contribute to venous insufficiency and the formation of ankle flare include:

- **Prolonged sitting or standing:** Many people who work desk jobs or stand for extended periods, like teachers or nurses, are more prone to venous issues.
- **Obesity:** Excess weight increases pressure on the veins in the legs, exacerbating venous reflux.
- **Pregnancy:** The increased blood volume and hormonal changes during pregnancy can weaken vein walls and cause vein issues to develop.
- **Family History**



If you notice swelling, aching, or itching in your legs, ankle flare may be the visible manifestation of an underlying venous problem that should be addressed with the guidance of a vascular specialist.

Treatment Options for Ankle Flare

At Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center, we tailor our treatment plans based on the severity of the venous disease. Early intervention is critical to prevent the progression of venous insufficiency and to restore healthy blood flow.

Early Treatment is Essential

Ignoring ankle flare or delaying treatment can lead to a worsening of venous disease, increasing the risk for conditions like varicose veins, chronic leg swelling, and even venous ulcers. According to the *American Vein and Lymphatic Society*, an estimated 1 in 4 Americans suffers from chronic venous insufficiency, and many of these individuals are unaware they have it. Early treatment not only improves cosmetic concerns but also prevents further damage to the veins and surrounding tissue.

Untreated venous insufficiency can result in:

- **Varicose veins:** Large, swollen veins that are visible on the surface of the skin.
- **Skin changes:** Over time, skin around the ankle area may become discolored or thickened.
- **Venous ulcers:** Chronic ulcers may form on the legs or ankles, which are difficult to heal without addressing the underlying venous issue.

Patient-Centered Care at Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center

At Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center, we believe that patient education and involvement are key to successful treatment outcomes. From the moment you walk into our office, our compassionate team listens to your concerns, explains your options, and ensures that you're an active participant in your healthcare decisions. We also provide comprehensive follow-up care to monitor your progress and offer ongoing support.

Take Control of Your Venous Health

If you're experiencing symptoms of venous disease or have noticed spider veins developing around your ankles, don't wait to seek treatment. Schedule a consultation with the specialists at Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center to discuss the best course of action for your unique condition. Our advanced treatment options can help you restore healthy circulation, reduce symptoms, and improve the appearance of your legs.

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The Healing Power of Holiday Traditions

Cobra Chamblee, D.O.

The holiday season is a time of celebration, warmth, and connection. Beyond the festive decorations, delicious treats, and gift-giving, holiday traditions have a profound impact on our emotional and physical well-being. For many, they provide a sense of continuity, comfort, and joy that can be incredibly healing.

The Joy of Familiar Rituals

Whether it's decorating the tree with family ornaments or baking your favorite holiday cookies, the familiarity of these rituals brings a sense of comfort and security. Holiday traditions often bring people together, creating special moments with loved ones that reinforce emotional bonds. These shared experiences help reduce feelings of loneliness or stress, promoting mental health and emotional resilience.

Stress Relief Through Fun and Creativity

The holidays are also a time to let go and have fun. Whether you're hanging up holiday lights, listening to your favorite holiday tunes, or crafting homemade gifts, these activities can reduce stress and spark creativity. Engaging in playful, low-pressure activities can give you a break from the daily grind and improve your mood.

These festive moments don't just benefit your mental health. Participating in holiday traditions can lower cortisol levels, helping to reduce stress and its harmful effects on the body. Activities like decorating, cooking, and gift-wrapping allow you to be present in the moment, providing a mental break and boosting overall well-being.

Reflecting on Gratitude and Giving

Holiday traditions often encourage us to reflect on the past year and express gratitude for the people and blessings in our lives. This practice of gratitude can have powerful benefits for both mental and physical health. Studies have shown that people who regularly practice gratitude experience lower blood pressure, improved immune function, and better sleep.

Traditions that focus on giving, such as volunteering or exchanging thoughtful gifts, can also foster a sense of purpose and joy. Acts of kindness, whether big or small, have been shown to reduce



stress, increase happiness, and even boost life expectancy. The holiday season reminds us that giving is often just as rewarding as receiving.

A Sense of Continuity and Comfort

For many, holiday traditions offer a sense of continuity, providing comfort through their familiarity. No matter how much life changes, these rituals remain, grounding us in what really matters—family, friends, and love. These traditions become the threads that connect generations, preserving memories and creating new ones.

Even simple traditions like watching holiday movies, going caroling, or visiting a local tree farm can anchor us during the often hectic holiday season, reminding us to pause and enjoy the present moment.

As you embrace the joy and healing power of holiday traditions this season, don't forget to prioritize your health. At VIPcare, we are committed to helping you feel your best all year long. Schedule an appointment with your local VIPcare provider today by calling 352-558-6759 and take the first step toward a healthier, happier you this holiday season!

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The Power of Emsella: The Non-invasive Treatment for Urinary Incontinence

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Emsella is a non-invasive treatment option for urinary incontinence, offering a groundbreaking solution for individuals seeking relief without surgery or medication. Using high-intensity focused



electromagnetic (HIFEM) technology, Emsella stimulates deep pelvic floor muscles, helping to strengthen and restore muscle tone. This treatment is ideal for patients suffering from stress incontinence, urge



incontinence, or mixed incontinence, and can be particularly beneficial for women post-childbirth or during menopause.

Clinical studies have demonstrated that Emsella can significantly reduce symptoms of urinary incontinence, improving quality of life for patients who

have struggled with this common condition. Many patients experience noticeable results after just a few sessions, with a significant reduction in accidents, urgency, and the need to frequently visit the bathroom. For those looking for a non-surgical solution to regain control over their bladder, Emsella offers a promising alternative to traditional treatments.

Emsella is quick, non-invasive, and painless. It is a revolutionary treatment for both men and women experiencing incontinence and/or wanting to improve sexual wellness.



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CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUNGLASSES: UV PROTECTION AND STYLE COMBINED

When 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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HAIR | SKIN | NAILS

By Anna Wilemon, Licensed Medical Aesthetician & Laser Tech

When it comes to hair, skin, and nails... we're kind of experts. Whether you're looking for less hair or more hair, to make your skin glow, or to grow your nails we've got a plethora of information just for you in this month's newsletter!

Let's talk hair! Hair can be a beautiful thing and a pain if it's not on the area of your body you desire! The good news is we treat all the above. If you are having trouble with hair loss, we have a few options to help with growth.



One treatment we have for hair loss on the scalp is PRP, Platelet Rich Plasma. This is described as "fertilizer for your garden". This means your plasma is "fertilizing" your hair follicles to cause hair growth that they otherwise would not. PRP is a series of 6 treatments over a period of 6 months. We draw your blood, spin it in a centrifuge to separate your blood cells from your stem cells/plasma and inject your own plasma into your scalp for a safe and effective treatment. Come in and see a provider to find out if you are a candidate for PRP! Another alternative is to go the medication route. Some common medications you might be prescribed for hair loss are spironolactone, finasteride (Propecia) and dutasteride (Avodart), or minoxidil (think Rogaine!).

On the other hand, we all have those areas that we want hairless right? My absolute favorite treatment we provide is laser hair removal. This treatment is great for dark/unwanted hair on ANY part of our body (like, anywhere). Laser hair removal can help with PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome), ingrown hairs, and razor irritation after shaving. There is a common misconception that laser hair removal is painful and expensive. But rest assured, not only is the treatment very tolerable, we also have pay-as-you-go options! Since laser hair removal is a multi-treatment regime, we allow you to pay each time you come in. Give me (Anna Wilemon) a call to schedule your laser consult to see if it's right for you.



Do you have that annoying white peach fuzzy hair on your face? Make an appointment for Dermaplaning. It's not as scary as "we use a scalpel on your face" sounds, just hear us out. This treatment removes that vellus hair and removes your top layer of dead skin cells using a medical grade scalpel and a trained, licensed medical aesthetician. Your skin will be glowing after dermaplaning, and look brighter, and healthy, and the best part is your skincare penetrates better along with your makeup looking flawless. We've got two aestheticians, Brenda at Jasmine and Lacy at Deerwood to take care of you.

SKIN! My favorite subject! My absolute number one piece of skin advice is to get your skin exam at least yearly from one of our providers. Skin exams can catch skin cancer before it's too late. And my second piece of advice... wear your sunscreen every day. Cloudy days. Days spent inside. Every. Day.

Along with those tips, we recommend having a good skincare regimen to fit your specific skin concerns. The best way to find out what you need is to book a facial with one of our Aestheticians (Brenda or Lacy). During your appointment, they can look at and feel your skin to help you with a good treatment plan, skincare products especially for your skin, and an at-home regimen. Good skin only happens by appointment.

Nail care comes from the inside out. Healthy nails can have a lot to do with supplements and vitamins. We recommend Elon supplements for your hair, skin, and nails. This supplement has many benefits and ingredients like biotin, fish collagen peptides, and L-cysteine

to help with thinning hair and brittle nails. The best part, it's available at any of our offices without a prescription. As a nail technician myself, I highly recommend applying solar oil to your nails a couple of times a day and massaging it in. This helps the nails stay hydrated and your cuticles moisturized to prevent them from peeling. This works even if you have gel, dip, or acrylic on your nails! You can usually purchase this from your nail tech.

In addition to all the healthy habits mentioned above by Anna, we got with Sierra Mahoney, PA-C to find out how sleep can aid in healthy hair, skin, and nails.

Sleep is awesome. It's the one time of the day that is truly all about you. Sleeping is a time to relax, recuperate, and replenish your...skin?! That's right! Sleeping is so important for skin health. Let's look at some of the wonderful benefits sleep has to offer our largest organ: 1) blood flow! Sleep is a great time to help encourage an increase in blood flow to your skin to help repair the damage done throughout the day ultimately leading to a lighter and brighter complexion in the morning. Damage done by UV rays throughout the day is best mended in the evenings. 2) less acne! Poor sleep hygiene can lead to an increase in stress, which is a leading culprit of acne and breakouts, even in adults!

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Promoting Mental Wellness in Assisted Living Communities During Festive Seasons

The holiday season often evokes feelings of joy and togetherness. For individuals residing in assisted living communities, this time of year can be particularly significant in fostering mental well-being. The convergence of festivities, engaging activities, and the presence of friends and family can play a pivotal role in uplifting spirits and promoting positive mental health.

Assisted living facilities are increasingly recognizing the importance of integrating festive activities into their programs. These initiatives aim not only to celebrate the holidays but also to support the emotional and psychological well-being of their residents. From themed decorations adorning common areas to a diverse array of events and activities, these communities strive to create an ambiance that promotes joy, connection, and a sense of belonging.

Engaging residents in holiday-themed activities is a cornerstone of enhancing mental health during this time. Craft workshops for creating decorations, cooking classes for baking traditional treats, and music sessions featuring beloved holiday tunes are among the many activities organized. These activities not only spark creativity but also encourage social interaction and a sense of accomplishment, which can significantly impact residents' mental and emotional state.

Moreover, the presence of people around—be it fellow residents, staff members, or visiting family and friends—contributes significantly to the festive spirit and mental well-being. Shared meals, gatherings, and celebrations allow individuals to connect, reminisce, and build meaningful relationships. The warmth and support offered by these connections help combat feelings of isolation that some individuals might experience, especially during the holiday season.

It's essential to recognize that for some residents, the holiday season might evoke feelings of nostalgia, grief, or loneliness due to past memories or absence of loved ones. Assisted living communities implement support systems to address these emotions sensitively. Counseling services, support groups, and personalized care plans are often available to assist



residents in coping with these emotions, ensuring they feel heard, understood, and supported during this time.

Additionally, the integration of physical activities and mindfulness practices complements the festive celebrations. Exercise classes tailored to seniors' needs, yoga sessions, or nature walks amid decorated surroundings offer opportunities for relaxation, physical well-being, and stress reduction. These activities not only promote a healthy lifestyle but also contribute significantly to mental wellness by reducing anxiety and fostering a positive mood.

Beyond the immediate benefits to the residents, involving them in planning and organizing these activities empowers them to contribute actively to the community. Being part of the decision-making process and taking on roles in executing events fosters a sense of purpose and accomplishment, bolstering their self-esteem and overall well-being.

In conclusion, the convergence of festivities, engaging activities, and community interactions in assisted living facilities during the holiday season holds immense significance in promoting mental wellness.

By embracing these elements, these communities create environments that foster joy, connection, and a sense of belonging for their residents. The integration of diverse activities, the presence of people around, and the provision of support systems collectively contribute to ensuring that the holiday season is a time of celebration, connection, and mental well-being for all within assisted living communities.

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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CONFRONTED WITH A NON-HEALING WOUND?

A chronic wound is a type of wound that fails to heal in a timely manner, typically lasting for more than 12 weeks despite appropriate and consistent treatment. Chronic wounds can occur for various reasons, such as diabetes, venous insufficiency, arterial insufficiency, pressure ulcers, and other underlying conditions. These wounds often result from a disruption in the normal healing process due to factors such as poor blood circulation, inflammation, infection, and impaired immune response. The key characteristic of chronic wounds is the body's inability to progress through the normal stages of wound healing, including hemostasis, inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling.

This delay in healing is often caused by a combination of factors, such as impaired blood flow, excessive inflammation, bacterial infection, and tissue necrosis. Chronic wounds are typically classified based on their underlying causes, with the most common types being diabetic ulcers, pressure ulcers, venous ulcers, and arterial ulcers. To prevent chronic wounds from developing, it is essential to address the underlying risk factors and promote optimal wound healing.

This includes maintaining good hygiene, managing underlying health conditions such as diabetes and vascular diseases, avoiding prolonged pressure on vulnerable areas, ensuring adequate nutrition, and implementing appropriate wound care techniques. Additionally, regular monitoring and prompt intervention are crucial in preventing acute wounds from progressing into chronic wounds. In recent years, advancements in medical technology have revolutionized the treatment of chronic wounds, with amniotic technology emerging as a promising approach.

Amniotic technology utilizes the human amniotic membrane, a biological material derived from the placenta, to promote wound healing and tissue regeneration. The amniotic membrane is rich in growth factors, cytokines, and extracellular matrix proteins that have been shown to enhance the healing process and reduce inflammation. One of



the key benefits of amniotic technology is its ability to modulate the inflammatory response, reduce pain, promote angiogenesis, and stimulate tissue regeneration.

By applying amniotic membrane products to chronic wounds, healthcare providers can create a conducive environment for healing and accelerate the closure of non-healing wounds. Clinical studies have demonstrated the efficacy of amniotic technology in treating various types of chronic wounds, including diabetic ulcers, venous ulcers, and pressure ulcers. These products can be applied topically to the wound site or used in conjunction with other therapies to enhance their effectiveness.

In-home wound care is becoming more popular because it is a cost-effective and convenient way to treat chronic wounds. This method allows trained healthcare professionals to provide care in the patient's home. There are many advantages to in-home care, including a lower chance of infections from hospitals, increased comfort for patients, and a better quality of life for those with chronic wounds. Additionally, recent modifications to Medicare eligibility allow seniors to access amniotic technology and enjoy the benefits of these advanced wound care solutions from the convenience of their own homes.

About RxWound

Founded in 2015, RxWound is a team of dedicated wound care professionals serving seniors with advanced care solutions across all 50 states.

The company mission is to improve the outcomes of wound healing and elevate the quality of life for each patient, while respecting the precious gift of donated human tissue. RxWound offers an impressive range of tissue alternatives and tailored treatment plans that cater to the unique needs of each wound and patient. As a result, 95% of patients achieve full wound closure in less than 6 weeks.

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COPING WITH GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

Death can happen to anyone at any age. It can be a sudden accident or anticipated over a long period of time due to a critical illness. Coping with grief during the holiday season is especially difficult.

There's a song about the holidays being "the most wonderful time of the year." However, for those facing the imminent death or already grieving the loss of a loved one, this time of year can be hard as not only are they navigating the season without their loved one but lost traditions and celebrations.

Grief experts in hospice and palliative care organizations understand how difficult this time of year can be and are available to assist grieving families now or any time throughout the year. Especially during the holiday season they recommend making decisions the grieving person feels is right for them. Here are some tips:

- Be willing to change traditions by creating new rituals to help lessen the pain and loss; find new ways of celebrating the holiday while remembering them.
- Help reduce stress by prioritizing and focusing on projects that bring you joy; pare down the gift list and cards that get sent, or let someone else cook and host the dinner.
- Share stories about your loved one around the table.
- Consider that children grieve differently than adults; you may want to do something special with your child to help remember the loved one lost.
- Remember those who have died in a meaningful way that honors them; volunteer with an organization special to them or donate to their favorite charity.
- Make a plan, but stay flexible and remember you shouldn't feel pressure to do anything you're not comfortable doing.
- Take time for yourself; be sure to include self-care in how you spend your holidays.



Focusing on the positive memories and remembering the life shared with friends and family can help you cope. Hospice of Marion County is hosting **Keeping the Holidays Light on Thursday, December 18** at 1:00 pm at the Elliott Center, 3231 SW 34th Avenue, in Ocala. This free event is offered to remember those who filled our lives with love and light. It's an interactive grief workshop that includes creating a permanent memento in honor of your loved one using the photos you bring. RSVP to reserve your space by calling **(352) 873-7456**.

Grief is a process that takes time. Having a wide range of emotions is normal and different for everyone. Sharing your feelings with others can help you process your emotions and cope.

The Monarch Center for Hope and Healing, a program of Hospice of Marion County, provides grief counseling at no charge for Marion County residents. This service is provided by trained professionals and offers counseling sessions to children, teens and adults, individuals or groups. Everyone will eventually experience the loss of a friend or loved one and the Monarch Center grief counselors are there to help guide you through your grief journey. Visit MonarchCenter-Marion.com to learn more or call **(352) 873-7456** to schedule an appointment.



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What's the Difference Between Alzheimer's and Dementia?

While many people use Alzheimer's and dementia interchangeably, these don't mean the same thing. What exactly is the difference?

Dementia is a word used to describe many diseases that lead to memory loss, problems with language, changes in behaviors, and difficulties with thinking or planning. Alzheimer's is a neurodegenerative disease that causes dementia — and it's the most common cause of dementia out there, accounting for as many as seven in 10 cases of dementia.

Alzheimer's dementia involves memory loss and cognitive problems, which scientists understand to be connected somehow to deposits of toxic proteins in the brain, which get in the way of neuron activity and eventually lead to the death of brain cells.

Other forms of dementia have similar symptoms, but those that aren't due to Alzheimer's might have different symptoms that appear first — and they might require different treatments. Here's a quick look at the most common dementias, including Alzheimer's, vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, and frontotemporal dementia.

COMMON TYPES OF DEMENTIA

Alzheimer's disease

Many scientists think that Alzheimer's disease is caused in part by the buildup of toxic protein plaques—amyloid and tau—which causes progressive cell death, memory loss, and thinking problems. There are many factors, including genes like APOE4, exercise, diabetes, and cardiovascular health, that can affect the risk of developing the disease.

Alzheimer's is diagnosed by measuring the levels of amyloid in the brain using a brain scan or through a lumbar puncture, though blood tests are on the way. Some drugs are available to treat the cognitive and behavioral symptoms of the disease, and one drug called Leqembi can slow the course of the disease in the earliest stages.

Vascular dementia

Vascular dementia is the second most common form of dementia. Damage to the brain's blood vessels prevents nutrients and oxygen from getting to the

Alzheimer's Disease



Healthy Brain



Mild Alzheimer's Disease



Severe Alzheimer's Disease

brain, causing the cells to die. The symptoms will depend on where the blood vessels are damaged. For example, if it's blood vessels near the language region of the brain, a person with vascular dementia might develop problems with their speech.

Vascular dementia shares cardiovascular risk factors with Alzheimer's disease, like obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. People who experience strokes or heart disease are at an elevated risk of vascular dementia. Vascular dementia can be detected using an MRI brain scan, which can spot damaged blood vessels, alongside cognitive testing. There are currently no treatments for this form of dementia.

Frontotemporal dementia

You might have heard of this form of dementia on the news: frontotemporal dementia. Bruce Willis has it. FTD often affects people between the ages of 50 and 60, causing parts of the brain important for language and understanding to die off. People with FTD often have a buildup of tau protein tangles and another misfolded protein called TDP-43 in their brain.

FTD may be more difficult to diagnose as there are no specific biomarkers. While some doctors may prescribe antidepressants off-label to treat some of the symptoms, scientists have not yet developed a treatment or cure for this disease.

Lewy body dementia

This form of dementia is caused by the buildup of a misfolded protein called alpha-synuclein in the brain, which causes progressive cell death. People first develop issues with thinking and then develop problems with moving.

Like FTD, this dementia with Lewy bodies is challenging to diagnose because there aren't any biomarkers. Getting the diagnosis right is important because some drugs used to treat behavioral symptoms in Alzheimer's cause harmful side effects in people who have dementia with Lewy bodies.

A precision approach to zeroing in on dementia

Right now, getting a precise diagnosis is difficult because there are many overlapping symptoms across dementias, and some people may develop multiple types at once. In clinical research, blood tests are being developed and tested to determine if they will potentially be able to tell the difference, making an early diagnosis accessible to everyone.

We're partnering with people just like you in the search for innovative new treatments. Learn how dementia can impact you, even if your memory is normal. We offer free assessments so you can learn about your brain health and your risk of developing Alzheimer's. Plus, we'll inform you if you might qualify for a new clinical trial designed to slow down the progression of Alzheimer's.

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BREAKTHROUGH IN NEUROPATHY TREATMENT: HOW SUMMUS LASER THERAPY OFFERS HOPE FOR NERVE PAIN SUFFERERS

Neuropathy is a debilitating condition that affects millions of people worldwide, causing chronic pain, numbness, and significant disruption to daily life. Traditional treatments have often fallen short of providing comprehensive relief, leaving patients searching for innovative solutions. Enter the Summus Laser, a cutting-edge therapeutic approach that is revolutionizing neuropathy treatment and offering new hope to those struggling with nerve-related pain.

Understanding Neuropathy: A Complex Challenge

Neuropathy is a condition characterized by damage or dysfunction of peripheral nerves, typically causing symptoms like burning pain, tingling sensations, muscle weakness, and sensitivity to touch. Common causes include diabetes, chemotherapy, autoimmune disorders, and physical injuries. The complex nature of nerve damage has historically made treatment challenging, with many patients experiencing limited success from conventional medical interventions.

The Summus Laser: A Technological Marvel in Pain Management

The Summus Laser represents a significant advancement in medical technology, utilizing high-powered laser therapy to address nerve pain at its source. Unlike traditional treatments that merely mask symptoms, this innovative approach focuses on cellular regeneration and healing. The laser delivers concentrated light energy deep into affected tissues, stimulating natural healing processes and promoting nerve repair.

Key Mechanisms of Summus Laser Therapy

1. Cellular Stimulation: The laser's precise wavelengths penetrate damaged nerve tissues, encouraging mitochondrial activity and accelerating cellular metabolism. This process helps restore normal cellular function and reduces inflammation.

2. Improved Circulation: By enhancing blood flow to damaged nerve areas, the Summus Laser helps deliver essential nutrients and oxygen, supporting the body's natural healing mechanisms.

3. Pain Reduction: The therapy triggers the release of endorphins and reduces pain-causing inflammatory markers, providing immediate and long-term relief for patients.

Clinical Evidence and Patient Outcomes

Numerous clinical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of Summus Laser therapy in treating neuropathy. Patients report significant improvements



in pain levels, sensation restoration, and overall quality of life. Many individuals who previously struggled with chronic nerve pain have experienced remarkable recoveries, regaining mobility and reducing their dependence on pain medications.

Treatment Process and Expectations

A typical Summus Laser treatment protocol involves:

- Comprehensive initial assessment
- Customized treatment plan
- Multiple targeted laser sessions
- Gradual progression of healing and pain reduction

Most patients experience noticeable improvements within 4-6 treatment sessions, with continued benefits developing over subsequent weeks and months.

Advantages Over Traditional Neuropathy Treatments

The Summus Laser offers several distinct advantages:

- Non-invasive approach
- No significant side effects
- No pharmaceutical dependencies
- Targets root causes of nerve damage
- Supports long-term healing
- Relatively quick treatment sessions

Who Can Benefit?

Summus Laser therapy is particularly beneficial for patients with:

- Diabetic neuropathy
- Chemotherapy-induced nerve damage
- Peripheral nerve injuries
- Chronic pain conditions
- Reduced sensation in extremities

Future of Neuropathy Treatment

As medical technology continues to advance, the Summus Laser represents a promising frontier in nerve pain management. Its ability to stimulate natural healing processes offers hope to countless individuals who have struggled with traditional treatment methods.

Conclusion

For those battling neuropathy, the Summus Laser provides a beacon of hope. By combining advanced technological innovation with a deep understanding of cellular healing, this treatment approach is transforming how we conceptualize and address nerve pain.

Patients interested in exploring this revolutionary treatment should consult with qualified healthcare professionals specializing in laser therapy and neuropathic conditions to determine their individual suitability and potential treatment outcomes.

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.

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NEW YEAR, NEW YOU:

Crafting Realistic Weight Loss Resolutions That Actually Work

As the calendar turns and a new year begins, millions of people around the world set weight loss goals with renewed determination. Yet, by February, many of these resolutions have already fallen by the wayside. The key to successful weight loss isn't about dramatic, unsustainable changes, but rather implementing practical, achievable strategies that transform your lifestyle.

Understanding the Resolution Mindset

The psychology of New Year's resolutions is complex. We're often motivated by a sense of fresh beginnings and the promise of self-improvement. However, many people sabotage their weight loss efforts by setting unrealistic expectations. Instead of aiming for drastic transformations, successful weight loss requires a holistic approach that combines nutrition, exercise, mental health, and sustainable lifestyle modifications.

FIVE STRATEGIES FOR MEANINGFUL WEIGHT LOSS

1. Set Specific and Measurable Goals

Vague resolutions like "lose weight" are destined to fail. Instead, create concrete, measurable objectives. For example, "lose 15 pounds by June" or "exercise 150 minutes per week" provide clear targets. Break these larger goals into smaller, weekly milestones that feel attainable and track your progress systematically.

2. Prioritize Nutrition Over Dieting

Radical diets rarely produce long-term results. Focus on developing a balanced, nutritious eating plan that you can maintain. This means incorporating more whole foods, reducing processed items, and learning portion control. Consider consulting a registered dietitian who can create a personalized nutrition strategy tailored to your body's specific needs.

Build a Sustainable Exercise Routine

Exercise should be enjoyable, not a punishment. Experiment with different physical activities until you find something you genuinely like. Whether it's dancing, hiking, swimming, or group fitness classes, the best exercise is the one you'll consistently do. Start slowly, gradually increasing intensity and duration to prevent burnout and reduce injury risk.



4. Develop Mental Resilience

Weight loss is as much a mental journey as a physical one. Practice self-compassion and understand that occasional setbacks are normal. Keep a journal to track not just your physical progress, but your emotional journey. Celebrate non-scale victories like increased energy, improved sleep, and enhanced confidence.

5. Create a Supportive Environment

Surround yourself with people who support your goals. This might mean joining a fitness community, finding an accountability partner, or communicating your objectives with family and friends. A strong support system can make the difference between giving up and pushing through challenges.

The Bottom Line

Successful weight loss isn't about perfection—it's about consistent, incremental progress. By approaching your resolution with patience, strategy, and self-compassion, you can create lasting change that extends far beyond the numbers on a scale.

Remember, the most important resolution is committing to your overall health and well-being. This year, focus on becoming a healthier version of yourself, one mindful choice at a time.

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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Keeping Your Home Safe: A REALTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

By David Culbreth, Senior Transitions Specialist, Realtor, SRES

As a professional realtor, I am in and out of homes on a daily basis, one of my primary concerns is ensuring the safety and security of the homes I help clients buy or sell. A home is not just an investment; it is a place where families create cherished memories, a home should be a sanctuary – a place where you and your loved ones feel protected and at ease. Unfortunately, burglaries, fires, and other hazards are all too common, which is why taking proactive measures to safeguard your property is crucial. As a trusted advisor, it is crucial for me to provide homebuyers and sellers with valuable insights into home safety measures that can protect their property and loved ones. I'll share some valuable insights and tips from a realtor's perspective on how to enhance the safety of your home.

1. Secure Entry Points: In addition to researching the neighborhoods safety/crime records, one of the first things I assess when listing or showing a property is the security of its entry points. Burglars often look for easy targets, such as unlocked doors or windows, or those with flimsy locks. Invest in a high-quality deadbolt lock for your front door. Don't use the screws that come with it, buy 2" screws to put into the door jam.

2. Lighting and Visibility: Adequate outdoor lighting not only enhances curb appeal but also serves as a deterrent to criminal activity. We encourage clients to install motion-sensor lights around the perimeter of their property and ensure that entrances, walkways, and driveways are well lit. Good visibility can discourage trespassers and make it easier to monitor the property.

3. Landscape and Maintenance for Safety: Believe it or not, the way you landscape your property can play a significant role in home safety. Overgrown bushes or trees near doors and windows can provide cover for burglars. Maintain your trees and shrubs, trim these back to eliminate hiding spots. Additionally, proper maintenance of the home's exterior, such as repairing broken windows can deter potential break-ins.

4. Create a Fire Escape Plan: Fires can spread rapidly, and having a well-practiced escape plan can mean the difference between life and death. Sit down with your family and map out at least two exit routes from each room and establish a safe meeting spot outside. Additionally, ensure that smoke detectors are installed on every level of your home and that they are tested regularly.

5. Protect Against Carbon Monoxide: Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that can be deadly if inhaled in high concentrations. It's crucial to have working carbon monoxide detectors installed near sleeping areas and any fuel-burning appliances, such as furnaces or water heaters. Regularly have these appliances serviced to ensure they are functioning properly and not emitting dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

6. Childproof Your Home: If you have young children, taking steps to childproof your home is essential. Install safety gates at the top and bottom of staircases, secure any furniture or appliances that could tip over, and keep medications, cleaning products, and other hazardous materials locked away and out of reach.

7. Consider a Security System: While not an absolute necessity, a professionally installed security system can provide an added layer of protection and peace of mind. These systems typically include door and window sensors, motion detectors, and the ability to remotely monitor and control the system from your smartphone. Many also offer fire and carbon monoxide monitoring, as well as emergency dispatch services.

8. Keep Valuables Safe: Burglars are often after valuable items such as jewelry, cash, and electronics. Consider keeping these items in a safe or safety deposit box and avoid leaving them in plain sight or easily accessible areas of your home. Additionally, keep an up-to-date inventory of your valuable possessions, including serial numbers and photographs, to aid in their recovery in the event of a burglary.

9. Be Cautious: Be careful with social media in today's digital age, it's important to be mindful of the information you share on social media platforms. Avoid posting details about your vacation plans, photos of your vacation while you are on it or sharing photos that reveal your home's layout or expensive possessions. These types of posts can make your home a target for burglars.

I understand the importance of not only finding the perfect home for my clients but also ensuring that they feel safe and secure within its walls. By implementing these home safety measures, you can significantly reduce the risk of burglaries, fires, and other hazards, and enjoy the peace of mind that comes with knowing your family and property are well-protected.



Meet David Culbreth, your dedicated Marion County Florida realtor with a heartfelt commitment to seniors. As a proud native Floridian with deep connections in the Marion County area, David combines his extensive local knowledge with a genuine passion for making a difference in the lives of others.

With a specialized Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES) designation, David is acutely attuned to the needs of senior citizens, recognizing the contributions they've made and the unique challenges they face when buying or selling property. He is driven by a deep-seated belief that our elders deserve the utmost respect and support as they transition into the next chapter of their lives.

Whether it's assisting seniors with downsizing, navigating the real estate market's complexities, or helping families find the perfect place to grow and create lasting memories, David's approach is tailored to your individual needs.

At Invictus Real Estate and Concierge Management, your journey is as important as the destination. As part of a full-service real estate firm, David Culbreth is equipped to offer a comprehensive array of resources that ensure seamless and successful transactions, whether you're looking to buy your dream home, sell for top value, or secure a residential or commercial lease.



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Tips to Stay Active & Take the Appropriate Precautions This Holiday Season

When we think of the holiday season, we typically visualize family dinners, lasting memories, and some relaxation, and we look forward to a peaceful experience. After all, holidays are a time to get away from our stress-filled lives and visit family and friends. In reality, these things hold true, but there is one blinding caveat that we all seem to gloss over—our sedentary lifestyle during the holidays because we don't take the time to exercise or keep our physical therapy appointments. Exercising through the holidays is critical!

Instead of taking the traditional family car drive to enjoy the festive lights in your neighborhood, take a walk. Walking after your evening dinner can be a peaceful experience for the entire family, but also it will facilitate the extra steps and activity that your body craves. In light of walking, when you're out shopping, park further away from the mall or stores to ramp up your cardio.

Hauling luggage, parking the car at the airport, waiting in the security line, worrying about catching our connecting flights, or traveling in the car or bus for long-distance in heavy traffic are all unpleasant experiences that we encounter while trying to get to our favorite destination.

Slips and falls are more common this time of year. If you're up north visiting loved ones, be careful and use extra caution if it's snowing or if there is ice on the ground, steps, and pavement. When you enter a building or home, make sure you get the majority of wet snow off of your shoes to avoid slipping as well.

One of the most common travel concerns in people with known heart disease, as well as healthy individuals, are DVT's, or deep vein thrombosis. DVT's can occur in travelers in the air, railways, or by road. Both chronic and acute symptoms could be a sign or lead to a DVT (deep vein thrombosis). DVTs are life-threatening and should be treated immediately. Deep vein thrombosis is a blood clot in the veins that are formed deep within the legs. Vascular malformations, pelvic tumors, or sitting for extended periods of time are some of the risk factors that go along with DVTs. Every year, over 2 million people are affected by deep vein thrombosis, and sadly over 200,000 of these cases end in death.

To alleviate your chances of DVT, it's imperative to try and move your toes, ankles, and do calf raises in your seat. If you can get up and walk around, that's a valuable method to keep your blood flowing correctly back to your heart. If your trip is over 3 hours, or if you have venous insufficiency, wearing compression stockings is critical to keeping your vascular structures healthy.

You can also do the same little exercises or movements while you're watching Rudolph or Elf with the kids. During the movie, wiggle your toes, stand up and sit down repeatedly for a few minutes, or do leg lifts. All of these flexion and extension movements will keep your circulation pumping and create oxygen-rich blood, and warm muscles.

Take the time to move this holiday season. Be thankful for your range-of-motion, and take advantage of dancing with your grandchildren, or taking a walk with your friends.

If you often experience pain, stiffness, immobility or balance issues, being proactive about physical therapy treatments and techniques can help to alleviate or lessen these circumstances.

For patients suffering from pain, the first step to recovery is to receive a proper diagnosis so the cause of the symptoms can be determined. Physical therapists are trained to administer flexibility and strengthening tactics along with body mechanics and awareness techniques to get your body moving and creating a much less painful range-of-motion. With ongoing therapy, most people see remarkable outcomes and lasting results.

Innovative Therapies Group offers massage, physical, occupational and speech therapy. They embrace alternative and eastern medicine philosophies and will help you explore new inventive ways to combat your pain or disorders.

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- Gait Training and Balance Programs
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New Year's Resolutions to Protect Your Wishes

By Janice Martin, owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida Inc.

As we end another year, it's a good time to consider things to accomplish in the new year. You might resolve to exercise more, eat better, or take the trip of a lifetime. It is also the perfect time to make plans to protect your health, wealth, and wishes.

RESOLUTION #1 – Assign a medical and financial power of attorney. I cannot adequately emphasize how important this is. Under ordinary circumstances, these documents are vital. However, if you or your loved one has any cognitive impairment, these documents must be completed while the individual is in full understanding of what they are signing and recognizes the person being assigned. If they cannot, the power of attorney is no longer an option, and the only alternative is a court appointed guardian. This individual may not know you or your wishes. If anyone needs access to bank accounts, investments, or safety deposit boxes, they will be denied without the power of attorney papers. It is not costly to create and if you ever wish to change your mind, you may do so at any time. When moving to assisted living, these papers are required so the community knows there is someone to make medical decisions and pay for care from their funds. If the papers have been created years ago or in another state, have an elder law attorney review them to ensure that they are recognized where you now live.

RESOLUTION #2 – Create advance directives, also known as a living will. This is not the same as a last will and testament where you are leaving valuables to someone. These are papers that will communicate what you want done for your care or end of life decisions if you are terminally ill and non-responsive. This should also be done by an elder law attorney. Avoid creating these important documents online as a hospital or court of law may not honor them and it may not include important information.

RESOLUTION #3 – Apply for Medicaid to protect your assets regardless of your financial situation. There are legal and ethical options to create trusts and contracts if your income or assets are above the limits to qualify. If something happens to you and you need to go to a skilled nursing home for long term care, it will avoid financial ruin. There are very few long term beds in nursing homes and they all have a long wait list. The cost can be from \$12,000 to \$15,000 a month! If you have not been pre-approved for Medicaid, you will be personally responsible for the cost. Many nursing homes will no longer accept someone as "Medicaid pending" and require full approval for admission.



Also, some assisted living communities accept the Medicaid waiver to cover the care costs. If your income is limited, this will help to ensure that your money will last longer.

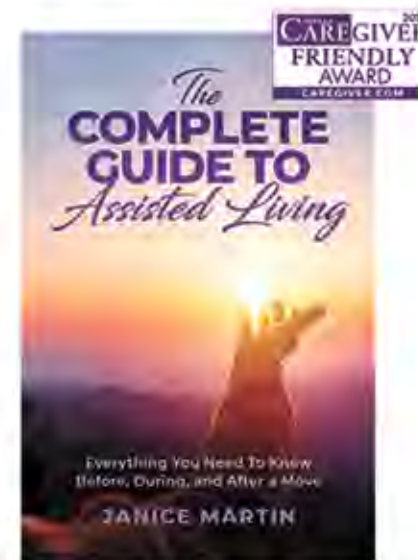
Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you ever give any money or property to anyone in an attempt to lower your assets. Medicaid has a five year look-back and if it is determined that you gave or sold anything for less than fair market value, you will be penalized by waiting years for approval.

RESOLUTION #4 – Begin a conversation of what to do if you need to move to assisted living. Too many people insist they will live in their home until they die without facing the reality that there are indeed circumstances when this may not be possible. Senior Liaison of Central Florida can help educate you on the options that are available to you based on your individual needs. This is the time to be talking about what you want. Do not wait for a crisis to begin the conversation! Educate yourself, talk with your family, and create a plan so confident and good decisions can be made. This is especially important if you are the primary caregiver for someone and decisions are needed for their care if something should happen to you.

RESOLUTION #5 – Begin downsizing now! Avoid the stress of facing where to begin with all your "stuff" if and when you must move anywhere. You do NOT need paperwork from 20 years ago! You do not need to keep clothes that are no longer worn or fit! Your collectibles could be enjoyed by someone who is beginning a collection of their own. If you have put something in the back of a closet, in the crawl space,

or in a container in a corner of the garage that you can't access, then you don't need it! Donate it, give it away, or throw it away. Start by attacking one room at a time. If you forgot you even had something, you don't need it. There are companies that will scan important documents, then shred the papers and give the files to you electronically. Photographs can also be scanned and put on a digital frame or onto the computer. You do not need to do this yourself! Let others help and keep you moving forward.

As we say goodbye to 2024, I would like to wish you and your loved ones a very happy, healthy, and productive new year. Senior Liaison is available 7 days a week to connect you with trusted professionals to accomplish these resolutions. We will work with you hand in hand to create a plan to ensure your wishes are honored.



Janice Martin is an author, educator, and specialist on senior living options and the owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida Inc. She assists families in locating senior options and communities and has written "The Complete Guide to Assisted Living: Everything You Need to Know Before, During, and After a Move" available on Amazon.com in paperback and eBook. For more information or a schedule of upcoming events on how to have a successful transition to senior living, call 352-477-1866 or visit www.seniorliaisoncfl.com. She never uses AI to produce her writing for any publication.



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seniorliaisoncfl@gmail.com

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!

Quick Care Med Urgent Care

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

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

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

At Quick Care Med, they understand that illness and injuries can happen outside of the normal 9 to 5. That's why they provide Fast, Easy, and Affordable® urgent care with the convenience of extended hours, including weekends and holidays!

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- 8119 SW State Rd 200, Ocala, FL 3448
(Just past Walgreens)
- 6341 N US 441, Ocala, FL 34475
(Across from John Deer)
- 2205 N Young Blvd, Chiefland, FL 32626

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Investing in Your Future:

The Power of Basic Financial Techniques for a Better Retirement

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

Retirement is a phase of life that many look forward to—a time to relax, explore new hobbies, travel, and spend quality time with loved ones. However, achieving a comfortable and secure retirement requires more than just wishful thinking. It necessitates careful planning, disciplined saving, and strategic investing. One of the most critical components to ensuring a successful retirement is obtaining a basic financial education. A fundamental understanding of financial principles, paired with the guidance of a reputable financial planner like Securenet Financial, LLC, can significantly enhance the quality of life in retirement.

The Importance of Basic Financial Techniques

Financial education doesn't need to be extensive to be effective. By focusing on a few key techniques, individuals can make substantial progress towards a secure retirement. Here are several simple yet powerful ways in which basic financial education can directly impact the quality of life in retirement:

- **Understanding Investment Options:** A basic grasp of investment options such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds can go a long way. Knowing the basics allows investors to build a diversified portfolio that balances risk and return, ensuring steady growth of their retirement savings.

- **Effective Budgeting and Saving:** Knowing how to budget and save effectively is crucial for accumulating a sufficient retirement fund. Basic financial education teaches individuals how to prioritize expenses, reduce unnecessary spending, and set realistic savings goals. This disciplined approach to saving can lead to a more substantial nest egg upon retirement.

- **Tax Efficiency:** Taxes can significantly erode retirement savings if not managed properly. Basic knowledge of tax-efficient investment strategies, such as utilizing tax-advantaged accounts like IRAs and 401(k)s, can help retirees minimize their tax burden and maximize their income.

- **Risk Management:** All investments come with a degree of risk. Understanding simple concepts such as asset allocation and diversification can help retirees manage these risks effectively and protect their portfolios from significant losses during market downturns.

- **Income Strategies:** Generating a reliable income stream in retirement is essential for maintaining one's lifestyle. Basic financial education covers simple income strategies, including annuities and dividends, helping retirees create a sustainable income plan.

The Role of a Financial Planner

While a basic financial education is crucial, navigating the complexities of retirement planning can still be challenging. This is where the expertise of a professional financial planner becomes invaluable. Securenet Financial, LLC, for instance, provides personalized financial planning services that can make a significant difference in one's retirement journey. Here's how a financial planner can be instrumental in achieving retirement success:

- **Simplified Planning:** A financial planner from Securenet Financial, LLC, takes the time to understand your specific goals, needs, and circumstances. They simplify the planning process by breaking down complex financial concepts into easy-to-understand strategies, ensuring that every aspect of your financial life is addressed without overwhelming you.

- **Expert Guidance:** Financial planners possess extensive knowledge and experience in various areas of finance, including investments, taxes, and estate planning. Their expertise allows them to handle the complexities for you, providing sound advice and recommendations that align with your long-term objectives.

- **Continuous Monitoring and Adjustments:** Retirement planning is not a one-time event but an ongoing process. A financial planner regularly reviews your plan and makes necessary adjustments based on changes in your life, the economy, and financial markets. This proactive approach ensures that your retirement plan remains on track, regardless of external factors.

- **Emotional Support and Confidence:** Investing and financial planning can be emotionally challenging, especially during market volatility. A financial planner

offers emotional support and reassurance, helping you stay focused on your long-term goals. This peace of mind can reduce stress and anxiety, leading to a better overall quality of life in retirement.

- **Maximizing Opportunities:** Financial planners are adept at identifying opportunities that can enhance your retirement plan. Whether it's taking advantage of new investment products, tax-saving strategies, or government incentives, their insights can help you maximize your retirement savings and income.

Conclusion

Achieving a comfortable and fulfilling retirement doesn't require an extensive financial education. By mastering a few basic financial techniques and working with a reputable financial planner like Securenet Financial, LLC, individuals can significantly improve their quality of life in retirement. Basic financial education empowers you to make informed decisions, while a skilled financial planner simplifies the complexities and provides continuous support. Together, they form a powerful partnership that can help you navigate the intricacies of retirement planning and secure a bright and prosperous future. Investing in your financial education today, even at a basic level, can lead to a more secure, enjoyable, and stress-free retirement tomorrow.

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DECOMPRESSION THERAPY UNLOCKING HEALING POTENTIAL

By Dr. Chad Rose, DC

Decompression therapy has emerged as a groundbreaking treatment option for individuals suffering from chronic pain, offering a non-invasive alternative to traditional medical interventions. At Rose Wellness Clinic, patients are discovering a revolutionary approach to managing pain, improving mobility, and enhancing overall quality of life through this advanced therapeutic technique.

Understanding Decompression Therapy

Decompression therapy is a specialized treatment designed to alleviate pressure on compressed joints, nerves, and soft tissues. The primary goal is to create negative pressure within the affected area, which helps decompress spinal discs, reduce nerve impingement, and promote natural healing processes. Unlike invasive surgical procedures, this therapy offers a gentle, strategic approach to addressing various chronic pain conditions.

KEY BENEFITS OF DECOMPRESSION THERAPY

1. Non-Invasive Pain Management

One of the most significant advantages of decompression therapy is its non-surgical nature. Patients can experience substantial pain relief without the risks associated with invasive procedures. The treatment is particularly effective for:

- Chronic lower back pain
- Herniated or bulging discs
- Sciatica
- Neck pain
- Degenerative disc disease
- Pinched nerves

2. Improved Healing and Circulation

The therapy works by creating negative pressure within the affected area, which:

- Promotes nutrient and oxygen flow to injured tissues
- Reduces inflammation
- Stimulates the body's natural healing mechanisms
- Helps rehydrate compressed discs
- Encourages the retraction of herniated disc material

3. Enhanced Mobility and Flexibility

Patients often report significant improvements in:

- Range of motion
- Muscle flexibility
- Overall joint function
- Reduction in stiffness and discomfort

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4. Holistic Approach to Treatment

Rose Wellness Clinic takes a comprehensive approach to decompression therapy, combining it with:

- Personalized treatment plans
- Complementary therapies
- Nutritional guidance
- Rehabilitation exercises

INSURANCE COVERAGE AT ROSE WELLNESS CLINIC

Many patients are pleasantly surprised to learn that decompression therapy may be covered by their insurance provider. At Rose Wellness Clinic, our dedicated team works closely with patients to:

- Verify insurance benefits
- Provide detailed documentation
- Navigate insurance claims process
- Offer flexible payment options for treatment

Insurance Considerations

- Most major health insurance plans provide partial coverage
- Coverage typically depends on:
 - Specific diagnosis
 - Recommended treatment duration
 - Individual policy details
 - Pre-authorization may be required
- Patients are encouraged to consult with their insurance provider

Rose Wellness Clinic Offers an Insurance Friendly Multidisciplinary Approach

- Conservative medical care
- Physical therapy
- Chiropractic
- Durable medical equipment (DME)

Who Can Benefit Most?

Decompression therapy is particularly beneficial for individuals experiencing:

- Chronic pain lasting more than six months
- Limited relief from traditional treatments
- Desire to avoid surgical interventions
- Recurring musculoskeletal issues
- Performance-related physical limitations

Safety and Effectiveness

Clinical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of decompression therapy, with many patients reporting:

- Significant pain reduction
- Improved functional capabilities
- Enhanced quality of life
- Reduced reliance on pain medications

At Rose Wellness Clinic, our expert practitioners utilize state-of-the-art equipment and personalized treatment protocols to ensure optimal results for each patient.

Consultation and Next Steps

Individuals interested in exploring decompression therapy should schedule a comprehensive evaluation with our specialized medical team. During the initial consultation, our experts will:

- Conduct a thorough medical history review
- Perform diagnostic assessments
- Create a customized treatment plan
- Discuss potential insurance coverage

Decompression therapy represents a promising solution for those seeking relief from chronic pain without invasive procedures. Rose Wellness Clinic remains committed to providing cutting-edge, patient-centered care that transforms lives and restores hope.

Dr. Chad Rose, DC is the lead chiropractor at Rose Wellness Clinic who serves The Villages and the surrounding communities in FL.

Dr. Chad Rose, DC uses chiropractic care to improve the health and wellness in all areas of patient's lives, whether they are having problems with back pain or neck pain, or just want to start feeling better when they wake up in the morning. Dr. Rose takes a "whole person" approach in chiropractic care, which means looking for the underlying causes of disease, discomfort, and pain, as opposed to just treating the symptoms. Many seemingly unrelated symptoms often arise from imbalances in the spinal column, and Dr. Rose will be able to determine the root of the pain and create a personalized chiropractic and wellness plan to suit each patient's individual needs. Under the supervision and care of our caring and skilled chiropractor, patients report higher functioning in all areas of their lives.

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It's A Wonderful Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Every year around this time the old classic Christmas movies start coming on television. It is easy to start a conversation at work by simply asking, "So, what's your favorite Christmas movie?" Mine is Frank Capra's *It's A Wonderful Life*.

Some of you might be able to relate to George Bailey this holiday season—lost, confused, stressed out, or at the end of your rope. Perhaps you are even thinking that it would be much easier to die than to go on living as you are.

Perhaps for you life isn't a joy right now. Maybe the debts are high and funds are low. It might even be difficult for you to even enjoy your family as you know you should. You may be wondering, "Is it really possible to live a wonderful life?"

I think the idea of a wonderful life is not that you can attain a wonderful life, but that it is an attitude that results from having certain issues settled in your life.

Truthfully, no one's life is wonderful—even Christ's life was filled with pain, hurt, loneliness, rejection, and sorrow. It is your attitude that determines how you "feel" about your life. You are the one responsible for settling the issues in your life and having an attitude of wonderment. So, what are the issues that need to be settled?

The first issue is to determine **what you are going to love**. To have a wonderful life, you start by having an attitude of love toward God and others. I say this first because where you choose to direct your love is going to affect every other area of your life. Love is a decision we make to place a high value on someone or something.

God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die for us. Jesus died to prove how much He loved us. God desires more than anything else to have a loving relationship with His creation. We were created to love God and other people. Maybe this Christmas it would be good for you to find a person or family in need and help them by buying some food or gifts. If you want to feel loved... start by loving others.

The second issue to settle is... **how am I going to live?** To have a wonderful life, you need an attitude of joy. This attitude deals with how you look at life. Are you a positive person or a negative person? If you are a person with joy, it simply means that you are cheerful. Over 350 times the Bible talks about us having a spirit of joy or rejoicing.

Joy isn't a feeling that is produced only when good things happen. Joy is the attitude by which we look at the things that happen to us and then respond in a way that lets everyone know we are trusting in God's grace in spite of our circumstances. Remember the disciples in the Bible... they had many negative things happen to them, yet in spite of it all, they had joy.

I've heard it said that you don't feel your way into an action but rather act your way into a feeling. If you want to be a joyful person... start acting joyful around others and you will most likely begin to genuinely feel joyful.



The third issue to settle is...**who are you going to help?** If you want to have a wonderful life, you've got to get beyond serving yourself, and start serving others. Isn't that the lesson that George Bailey learned? His life was wonderful because of all the people he was able to help in his lifetime.

When Clarence showed him what life would have been like had he never been born he realized that he really was making a difference in the world! His life did have purpose! Mr. Potter only cared about making money. Violet only cared about pleasure. But George understood a greater truth: life is better when you are working to make other people's lives better.

Understanding these things can make all the difference in the world. You are not here to fall in love with money and things—you're here to love God. You're not here to point out all the things that are wrong with the world—you're here to spread the joy that God has placed in your heart. You're not here to serve yourself—you're here to serve God and others—thus making a huge difference in the world.



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