

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

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

December 2024

Lake/Sumter Edition - Monthly

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## HOLIDAY TRAVELS

How You Can Prepare Your Eyes

## THE HEALING POWER OF HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

## THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS STRESSFUL

What this Means for Your Heart Health

## ACHIEVING YOUR WEIGHT LOSS GOALS WITH SEMAGLUTIDE



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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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# The Inside Scoop: Naples Soap Company

**Skin & Hair Care formulated to stimulate the senses, soothe skin and pamper the soul.**

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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

**15 Years & Counting**  
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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.

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!

*Deanna*

Sincerely,  
Deanna Wallin  
Founder & CEO, Naples Soap Company



# The Holiday Season is Stressful: What This Means for Your Heart Health

**T**he Holiday season is upon us, and with all of the festivities, we should consider that this time of year can actually put a great deal of stress on our hearts. Heart disease is still the leading cause of death in both men and women, and during the holidays, it's essential to better understand and implement heart health and risk prevention.

## Did you Know that Heart Attack Risks Increase Around this Season?

The risk of heart attack increases substantially during and after the holidays. The term "post-holiday heart attack" is a condition that is well-known by medical professionals. We are busier than ever during and after the holiday season. With parties, gift shopping, community events, and family gatherings, our stress levels are quite often through the roof. Emotional stress is a huge factor in blood pressure spikes. Along with anxiety, and the fact that most of us overindulge during this time of year. For example, we're overeating, eating the wrong foods, like excessively salty and fatty fare, or we're drinking too much alcohol.

When we overeat, it can raise our cholesterol levels, and when we drink too much alcohol, it can cause ventricular fibrillation. Ventricular fibrillation causes rapid, electrical stimulations in your heart, and you may experience a dangerously high heart rate. Taking the time to make wise decisions can be the straw that allows for a happy holiday or an unfortunate one.

## Keeping Your Heart Healthy Through the Holidays

- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption
- Cut down on stress levels
- Eat a healthy diet
- Exercise multiple times per week
- Get physical examinations and regular checkups recommendations
- Get professional help for cutting out narcotics and other drugs
- Practice relaxation methods
- Stop smoking
- Learn to say no/too many activities can lead to undue anxiety



### Diet

Eating a healthy diet is strongly recommended for many health benefits, but in terms of keeping our hearts ticking along, a diet low in saturated fat, high in vegetables and fruits, legumes, healthy oils like olive oil and avocado is critical. Also, consuming less unhealthy carbohydrates and more low-fat proteins like fish and poultry are crucial. If you have high blood pressure, minimizing salt is also highly significant. Instead of salt, try substituting with lemon or spices and herbs.

### Stay Active

Carve out time to exercise. It's recommended that we get 2.5 hours of moderate exercise weekly or 1.5 hours of active cardiovascular training per week. It's okay to do a combination of the two, by walking one day for 20 minutes and sprinting the next for 30. No matter what you decide, you should always consult your physician before embarking on any workout plan. Along with cardiovascular uptake, exercise helps to increase the oxygen in our blood, and this is relevant to our overall heart health.

### Stop the Cycle of Harmful Habits

If you smoke, stop now. Smoking causes an array of adverse health effects, including increasing plaque buildup in our arteries, raising bad cholesterol, decreasing good cholesterol, and damages the vessel walls, to name a few. If you smoke, your chances of a heart attack are incredibly high; smoking causes 6 million deaths per year. Talk to your physician about a specific smoking cessation plan for you. This holds true for any drug addictions that you may have. Do not wait; get help today and enjoy this holiday season with friends and family in a healthy state.

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

## Sit Back, Relax, and Reclaim Control

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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# The Healing Power of Holiday Traditions

Samuel Alfano, D.O.

**T**he 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 352-268-9841 and take the first step toward a healthier, happier you this holiday season!

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

**N**europathy 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.

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

**W**hile 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.

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# DECOMPRESSION THERAPY

## UNLOCKING HEALING POTENTIAL

By Dr. Chad Rose, DC

**D**ecompression 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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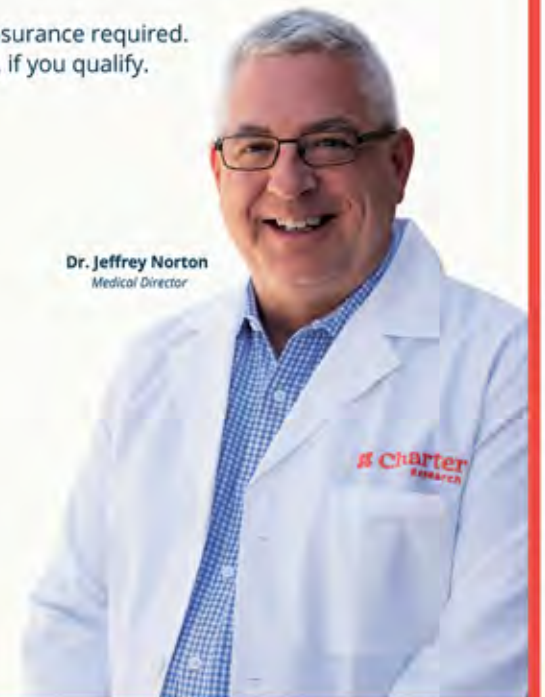
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# REVOLUTIONIZING WELLNESS: INFINITY MEDICAL INSTITUTE'S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ANTI-AGING AND LONGEVITY

In the heart of The Villages, Florida, a beacon of medical innovation is transforming how we approach aging and personal health. Infinity Medical Institute has been at the forefront of regenerative medicine since its establishment in 2009, offering a holistic and personalized approach to wellness that goes far beyond traditional medical treatments.

Founded in Tampa and now bringing its cutting-edge services to The Villages, Infinity Medical Institute represents a paradigm shift in healthcare. The institute's philosophy is simple yet profound: it's not just about adding years to life, but adding life to years. This approach recognizes that aging is not something to be feared, but a process that can be optimized and embraced with the right medical support.

## A Comprehensive Suite of Innovative Treatments

What sets Infinity Medical Institute apart is its comprehensive range of advanced therapies designed to address the multifaceted challenges of aging. The clinic offers a diverse array of treatments that target various aspects of health and wellness:

- **Bioidentical Hormone Therapy:** provides a natural approach to hormone balance, addressing common age-related symptoms like fatigue, mood fluctuations, and decreased libido.
- **Testosterone Replacement Therapy:** helps men restore vitality by supporting healthy testosterone levels, enhancing energy, muscle mass, and overall well-being.
- **Sexual Wellness Treatments:** offer targeted therapies to improve intimate health and quality of life.
- **Aesthetic Services:** including PDO Threads, provide non-surgical solutions for skin rejuvenation and tightening.
- **Pulse Wave Therapy:** improves circulation and addresses conditions like erectile dysfunction.
- **Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Therapy:** harnesses the body's own growth factors to accelerate healing and tissue repair.
- **Stem Cell Therapy:** represents a groundbreaking regenerative approach to treating injuries and revitalizing aging tissues.

- **Peptide Therapy:** uses specialized treatments to stimulate natural bodily processes, including metabolism and immune function.

- **Weight Loss Programs:** offer comprehensive, sustainable solutions supported by medical expertise.

## Patient-Centered Care: Beyond Treatment

Infinity Medical Institute stands out not just for its advanced treatments, but for its commitment to patient care. The clinic offers free consultations, allowing individuals to explore their health options without financial pressure. This approach reflects their belief in transparency and patient empowerment.

Located at 322 Heald Way in The Villages, the clinic operates Monday through Thursday from 8 AM to 4 PM, and Fridays from 8 AM to 1 PM. Each patient receives a customized treatment plan that recognizes their unique health needs and personal wellness goals.

## The Science of Regenerative Medicine

The institute's approach is grounded in regenerative medicine – a field that focuses on natural, integrative therapies working in harmony with the body's inherent healing processes. Their experienced medical team is dedicated to delivering evidence-based care that optimizes health and longevity.

## A Vision for Transformative Healthcare

Infinity Medical Institute represents more than just a medical clinic; it's a vision of healthcare that sees aging as an opportunity for growth, renewal, and continued vitality. By combining advanced medical technologies with a compassionate, individualized approach, they are redefining what it means to age gracefully and healthily.

For those seeking to take control of their health, optimize their wellness, and embrace a more vibrant future, Infinity Medical Institute in The Villages offers a beacon of hope and innovative medical care.

## About Infinity Medical Institute

Pioneers in Integrative Medicine, Infinity Medical Institute is a company dedicated to benchmarking health in concert with breakthroughs in education through



science. Understanding where individuals are in their "Life Cycle" as opposed to treating symptoms that are often an expression of a greater challenge they are experiencing with their bodies at the cellular level. A new approach in health and wellness based on recently made available research, allowing us to understand the differences in Biological Age as compared to Chronological Age.

Most of us fail to realize that our personal health is the result of the "aging process" complimented and/or penalized by the manner in which we take care of and/or misuse ourselves. Our consumption patterns combined with normal aging and physical activities directly affect our quality of life.

Our approach to wellness is based on meeting people where they are in their personal life and developing an individualized plan of action in and around nutrition, supplementation, and lifestyle.

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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

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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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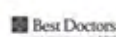
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# Navigating Holiday Travel After Orthopedic Surgery: Tips for a Safe and Enjoyable Journey

By Sergio Martinez, DO, AOA, AOA

**T**he holiday season often means travel, but for those recovering from orthopedic surgery, it can present unique challenges. Whether you're heading across the country or just around the corner, navigating holiday travel after orthopedic surgery requires careful planning and considerations to ensure a comfortable and smooth journey.

## PREPARATION IS KEY

- **Consult Your Physician:** Before making any travel plans, consult your orthopedic surgeon or healthcare provider. Ensure that traveling is safe considering your recovery stage and any specific precautions you should take.

- **Plan Ahead:** Choose the most convenient mode of travel that aligns with your physical condition. Whether it's by car, train, or plane, consider factors like seating comfort, accessibility, and duration of the journey.

## TRAVELING BY CAR

- **Comfortable Seating:** Ensure the car seat provides adequate support for your healing area. Consider bringing extra cushions or pillows for added comfort during the trip.

- **Frequent Stops:** Plan for regular breaks to stretch your legs, adjust your posture, and prevent stiffness or discomfort. This also reduces the risk of blood clots associated with prolonged sitting.

## TRAVELING BY AIR

- **Pre-Boarding Assistance:** Request special assistance or early boarding to avoid rushing and ensure a relaxed boarding process.

- **Choose the Right Seat:** Opt for an aisle seat or one with extra legroom to accommodate your comfort and ease of movement.

- **Movement and Exercises:** Perform in-seat exercises recommended by your healthcare provider to promote circulation and prevent stiffness during the flight.

## TRAVELING BY TRAIN

- **Accessible Seating:** Inquire about available accessible seating options to ensure comfort and ease during the journey.

- **Storing Medications and Essentials:** Keep your medications and necessary items within reach to avoid unnecessary movement or strain.

## GENERAL TIPS FOR ALL MODES OF TRAVEL

- **Pack Wisely:** Bring along necessary medications, assistive devices, and comfortable clothing to ensure a hassle-free trip.

- **Support System:** Consider traveling with a companion who can assist you with luggage and provide support during the journey.

- **Stay Hydrated:** Maintain proper hydration throughout the trip, as it's essential for overall well-being and can prevent complications.

- **Follow Post-Op Guidelines:** Adhere to the specific post-operative guidelines provided by your healthcare professional, including restrictions on physical activities and movements.

- **Travel Insurance:** Consider purchasing travel insurance that covers unforeseen circumstances or medical emergencies related to your condition.

## AFTER ARRIVAL

- **Rest and Recovery:** Allocate sufficient time for rest upon reaching your destination. Avoid overexertion and give your body time to recuperate.

- **Accessible Accommodations:** Ensure that your accommodation is equipped with amenities that cater to your needs, such as elevators, grab bars, or a shower chair.

- **Maintain Medication Schedule:** Stick to your prescribed medication schedule even while traveling. Set reminders or alarms if needed.



## CONCLUSION

Holiday travel after orthopedic surgery demands thoughtful planning and a focus on comfort and safety. By consulting your healthcare provider, making appropriate travel arrangements, and adhering to post-operative guidelines, you can enjoy the holiday season while ensuring a smooth recovery. Remember, prioritizing your well-being during travel will contribute to a more enjoyable and memorable holiday experience with your loved ones.

## 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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# Holiday Travels: How You Can Prepare Your Eyes

By Thomas G. Ward, D.O.

The holiday season is a time of joy, reunions, and travel. Whether you're driving over the river and through the woods or flying across the country to visit loved ones, your eyes face unique challenges during this busy season. From dry airplane cabins to long hours on the road, travel can take a significant toll on your visual health. Understanding how to protect and care for your eyes can make your holiday journey more comfortable and enjoyable.

## Understanding Travel-Related Eye Stress

Traveling exposes your eyes to multiple stressors that can cause discomfort and potential long-term issues. Air travel, in particular, presents unique challenges. Airplane cabins have extremely low humidity levels, often below 20%, which is significantly drier than most indoor environments. This dry air can quickly lead to eye fatigue, irritation, and increased tear evaporation.

Road trips bring their own set of eye challenges. Long hours of driving, especially during winter when daylight is limited, can cause eye strain from constant focus and potential glare from snow or oncoming headlights. The combination of artificial lighting, digital screens, and extended periods of concentrated visual work can lead to significant eye fatigue.

## Practical Preparation Strategies

- **Hydration is Key:** The first line of defense for travel eye care is proper hydration. Before your trip, increase your water intake and consider using preservative-free artificial tears. These lubricating drops can help maintain moisture and provide relief during long journeys. Pack a small bottle in your carry-on or travel bag for easy access.

- **Protection from Environmental Factors:** Invest in quality sunglasses that block 100% of UV rays. During winter, sun glare can be intense, especially when reflecting off snow or ice. Wraparound styles offer additional protection from wind and environmental irritants. If you wear contact lenses, consider bringing your glasses as a backup and to give your eyes periodic breaks.



- **Digital Screen Management:** Modern travel involves significant screen time. Whether you're navigating with your smartphone, watching in-flight entertainment, or working during transit, digital screens can cause significant eye strain. Follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. This simple technique helps reduce eye fatigue and provides necessary breaks for your visual system.

- **Comfort and Comfort Accessories:** Consider packing eye-specific travel accessories. A good sleep mask can help protect your eyes during flights or in unfamiliar sleeping environments. Noise-canceling headphones can also indirectly benefit your eyes by reducing overall stress and tension.

## Special Considerations for Different Travelers

Individuals with pre-existing eye conditions should consult their optometrist before traveling. Those with diabetes, dry eye syndrome, or wearing contact lenses might need additional precautions. Always carry your current prescription and extra contact lenses or glasses.

## Retina Group of Florida

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

Please call (352) 419-8928 today to schedule your eye exam. When necessary same day appointments can often be accommodated.



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# REVITALIZE MENTAL HEALTH THIS HOLIDAY SEASON WITH THE THETA CHAMBER AT KEEP YOUNG WELLNESS CENTER

By Allen T. Stanley, Practitioner

**A**s the holiday season approaches, many people find themselves grappling with stress, anxiety, and the mental strain that often accompany this time of year. Mental wellness and neurological health are critical than ever. At Keep Young Wellness Center, the Theta Chamber offers a state-of-the-art, non-invasive approach to enhancing brain health and improving overall mental wellness. This innovative therapy is designed to address neurological challenges at their root, supporting a healthier, more balanced mind. In addition to general stress and cognitive issues, it has shown potential benefits for people managing PTSD and other neurological conditions.

## What is the Theta Chamber?

The Theta Chamber is a revolutionary multi-sensory simulator that harnesses the principles of brainwave entrainment—a therapeutic approach that stimulates the brain using rhythmic frequencies to facilitate changes in neural activity. This process promotes the formation of new neural connections, balancing brain function and neurochemistry.

For those dealing with cognitive function challenges, stress, pain, headaches, migraines, PMS, and behavioral issues, the Theta Chamber offers a new avenue for mental health support. While many therapies are designed to target individual symptoms, the Theta Chamber goes a step further by focusing on holistic, brain-based health improvement. Through the use of precisely calibrated electrical frequencies, the Theta Chamber reinforces neural connections, supports regular brain function, and promotes a positive emotional state.

## A Scientific Approach to Brain Health

Inspired by research on electrophysiological oscillations, the Theta Chamber has been carefully engineered to optimize brainwave entrainment. Brainwave entrainment uses rhythmic stimuli—such as sound, light, and electrical pulses—to guide the brain into a desired frequency. This frequency is commonly associated with calmness, relaxation, and focus, aligning with the brain's natural oscillations to create harmony and mental clarity.

## How the Theta Chamber Works

Each 30-minute session in the Theta Chamber includes a blend of therapies scientifically designed to help “reset” the brain. These include:

- **Vestibular Motion:** Gentle rocking or rotation that synchronizes with the brain's natural motion-processing systems, promoting equilibrium and calming sensations.



- **Cranial Electrotherapy Stimulation (CES):** CES is a US FDA-approved noninvasive, electro-medical treatment that has been shown to decrease anxiety, insomnia, and depression significantly. CES is the main modality utilized in the recovery of drug addiction. Studies have shown that deep relaxation and calm alertness produced by CES increases suggestibility and hypotism along with an induced state of openness and adds heightened awareness; allowing new ideas, memories, and subconscious material to come to the surface.
- **Left/Right Hemispheric Synchronization using Light Therapy:** Alternating light stimulation aimed at aligning both brain hemispheres, fostering balanced thought patterns and emotional stability.
- **Traveling Pulsed Electromagnetic Frequencies (PEMF):** Low-frequency electromagnetic pulses work to improve cellular function and communication within the brain, supporting neural growth and recovery.
- **Inner Voice and Frequency Modulation:** This unique approach uses a combination of Theta, Alpha, and Delta brainwave frequencies, along with over 2,000 body-specific frequencies, customized to each client's current mental state.

Together, these modalities create an experience that is scientifically informed, safe, and tailored to individual needs. They help facilitate neurogenesis—the formation of new neurons and neural connections—enabling more rapid mental health recovery and emotional well-being.

## The Theta Chamber's Impact on Mental Health and PTSD

The Theta Chamber provides unique support for people managing mental health conditions such as PTSD, a condition that can be especially challenging during the holiday season when stress levels peak. PTSD affects millions, often impairing a person's ability to manage stress, control emotions, and process memories. Many people with PTSD experience recurring flashbacks, heightened anxiety, and mood disturbances. By helping to “reset” brainwave patterns and restore balanced brain activity, the Theta Chamber offers a new resource for PTSD relief.

Research has shown that brainwave entrainment therapies can produce measurable improvements in mood and behavior for those struggling with PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Through regular Theta Chamber sessions, clients report a reduction in intrusive thoughts, a decrease in anxiety symptoms, and a more positive overall outlook. The controlled sensory environment within the chamber is especially helpful in providing a calm, supportive space for people looking to improve their mental health. And because the treatment is non-invasive and drug-free, it's accessible to a wider range of clients who may be looking to avoid medication or who need complementary support.

## Prioritize Mental Health this Holiday Season

This holiday season, prioritize your mental health and consider how the Theta Chamber's powerful, multi-sensory experience could help you approach the season with renewed calm and resilience. Every session is designed with care, ensuring that each person receives a customized experience tailored to their specific neurological needs. Take the first step toward lasting mental wellness—contact Keep Young Wellness Center to schedule your Theta Chamber session today. Experience firsthand the benefits of this revolutionary therapy, and give yourself the gift of a healthier, more balanced mind.



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WELLNESS CENTER**

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510 County Road 466, Lady Lake, Florida 32159

# ACHIEVING YOUR WEIGHT LOSS GOALS WITH SEMAGLUTIDE AND THE RECHARGE CLINIC EDGE

**A**re you ready to make real strides toward a healthier, leaner version of yourself? At Recharge Clinic, our renowned weight loss programs are designed to help you do just that—whether it's through fat-burning injections, goal-driven coaching, or the popular weight loss prescription semaglutide. Voted #1 weight loss clinic for years, we're known for delivering real, visible results.

## Why Comprehensive Programs Make All the Difference

Weight loss isn't just about seeing the scale drop—it's about creating lasting, positive changes that keep the pounds off. At Recharge Clinic, we've crafted a range of programs to give you everything you need for success. Beyond just medications, we provide weekly weigh-ins, diet adjustments, fitness guidance, goal-setting, coaching, hormone consultations, and multiple options to boost your metabolism. These programs are tailored for each individual to ensure maximum results, because no two journeys are the same.

Our popular programs range from our four-week kickstart options to our 12-week transformation journeys and a maintenance program for those who've completed their primary weight loss goals and want to stay on track. Plus, we offer free consultations to help find the perfect fit for your needs.

## Semaglutide: A Weight Loss Powerhouse

One of the rising stars in weight loss medications, semaglutide is proving to be a game-changer for many on their weight loss journeys. Originally developed for managing type 2 diabetes, semaglutide belongs to a class of medications called GLP-1 receptor agonists. This means it helps regulate your blood sugar and keeps those pesky hunger pangs at bay. The result? You're more likely to feel full after meals, which can make it easier to cut back on calories without feeling deprived.

At Recharge Clinic, we offer semaglutide as part of our weight loss arsenal, and our clients have seen incredible success incorporating it into their programs. When paired with a holistic weight loss plan, semaglutide can offer powerful results.

## What Sets Recharge Clinic's Programs Apart?

There are a lot of weight loss programs out there, but only one Recharge Clinic! Our approach blends the latest in weight loss science with the personalized attention and edgy, no-nonsense support you need to achieve your goals. Here's what makes our programs effective and unique:



### 1. Personalized and Holistic Support

Your body is one-of-a-kind, and so is your weight loss plan. At Recharge Clinic, we start with a thorough assessment of your health and goals, creating a plan that's as unique as you are. Whether you're taking semaglutide or another prescription, our comprehensive approach supports your body and lifestyle, helping you get the most out of every step.

### 2. Nutritional Coaching and Meal Planning

Our nutrition coaches help you learn the ins and outs of balanced eating, with a focus on satisfying, healthy meals that fuel your weight loss. This isn't just about cutting calories—it's about developing a nutrition plan that's both enjoyable and sustainable.

### 3. Fitness Guidance for Every Level

Our fitness plans meet you where you are and help you level up. Regular activity is a key component of weight loss, so we offer workout advice that suits your abilities and goals.

### 4. Accountability with Weekly Check-Ins

The weekly check-ins and goal-setting built into our programs ensure that you stay on track and motivated. Weight loss takes effort, and having someone in your corner can make all the difference.

### 5. Medical Supervision for Safety and Effectiveness

We know that taking medications for weight loss can feel daunting, and that's why medical supervision is part of every Recharge Clinic program. We monitor your progress, check for side effects, and make any necessary adjustments to ensure that you're losing weight safely.

## A Glimpse at Recharge Clinic's Program Options

Our variety of weight loss programs lets you choose the level of support that fits your goals:

- One-Month Weight Loss Program
- One-Month Weight Loss with Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)
- 12-Week Weight Loss Program
- 12-Week Weight Loss with HRT
- Monthly Maintenance Program

## Semaglutide: The Secret Weapon in Your Weight Loss Arsenal

With the popularity of semaglutide soaring, more people are reaching their weight loss goals faster than they thought possible. However, at Recharge Clinic, we believe it's most effective when used as part of a well-rounded plan. Medications like semaglutide work best when they're accompanied by positive lifestyle changes that our team helps you make every day. If you're interested in trying semaglutide injections, talk to your Recharge Clinic coach to see how they can fit into your customized program.

## Take the First Step with Recharge Clinic

Embarking on a weight loss journey isn't easy, but it's worth it—and we're here to make sure you succeed! If you're ready to experience what Recharge Clinic's programs and semaglutide can do for you, schedule your free consultation today. Together, we'll create a plan that gives you the tools, support, and motivation to not only lose weight but also embrace a healthier, happier life. Let's get started on your path to the new you!

So, what are you waiting for? Call Recharge Clinic today and let's get your testosterone—and your life—back on track.

Free Consultations - 352-512-9996  
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# COSMETIC DENTISTRY IS MORE THAN A PRETTY SMILE

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDSM

**C**osmetic dentistry, also known as esthetic dentistry, is the method of dentistry that improves a patient's smile and self-image. Having a beautiful smile and strong teeth are essential for aesthetics and overall health. An attractive smile, or lack thereof, affects your oral health. Self-confidence and how the world perceives you on the outside are important to our mental health. This is because a person's smile is usually the first feature anyone notices.

Esthetic procedures include dental veneers and teeth whitening. Dental crowns, dental bonding, dental implants, inlays and onlays, and dentures are all restorative dental treatments. Dental veneers are the most requested treatment because they can correct tooth discoloration, teeth crowding, and teeth gaps.

## DENTAL VENEERS

Dental veneers are a popular method of correcting tooth imperfections such as misalignment, gaps, stains, and minor chipping. Made of a strong porcelain material designed for long-term wear, they can also reshape teeth and create beautifully symmetrical smiles that look and feel natural. Properly cared for, porcelain veneers can last for decades.

## TEETH WHITENING

Professional teeth whitening is a safe, effective, non-invasive, and long-lasting cosmetic option. With laser teeth whitening, you can see results in one treatment here in our Laurel Manor Dental and SleepCare office. Another option is to whiten your teeth at home. Your custom home whitening kit includes specialized trays that will be customized to fit over your teeth. We provide professional-grade whitening gel to insert into your tray before wearing it. Your dentist will tell you how long to wear the tray each day, and you will have a bright white smile within two to four weeks.

## DENTAL CROWNS

Dental crowns are caps placed on top of damaged teeth. Crowns are used to protect, cover, and restore the shape of your teeth when fillings don't solve the problem. Dental crowns can be made from metals, porcelain, resin, and ceramics. They typically don't require special care over time other than regular good oral hygiene. As we age, our teeth can get damaged. This can happen for a variety of reasons, like tooth decay, injuries, or just regular use. Your teeth can lose their shape or size. Think of the cap as a snug hat for your tooth. The crown restores the tooth's shape, size, strength, and appearance. The dental crown is cemented into place on your tooth, and it covers the visible portion of the tooth.

## DENTAL BONDING

Dental bonding, sometimes called composite bonding or teeth bonding, is a procedure where your dentist applies tooth-colored resin material to the affected teeth to change their shape, size, or color. Dental bonding is less

painful than other treatments because your dentist won't be working anywhere close to the pain-sensing nerve inside your tooth. In most cases, anesthesia isn't even necessary during dental bonding. Dental bonding is the most cost-effective and fastest fix of cosmetic imperfections. However, dental bonding isn't as stain resistant as porcelain crowns or veneers and can chip and crack over time with normal wear and tear.

## DENTAL IMPLANTS

Dental implants are artificial tooth roots that provide a permanent base for fixed, replacement teeth. Implants are a long-term solution for people who suffer from missing teeth, failing teeth, or chronic dental problems. Implants can be one tooth or a group of teeth depending on need. Because they fit, function, and feel like natural teeth, dental implants are the gold standard in tooth replacement. Doctors use a titanium anchor screw that over time, fuses to the living bone cells of the jaw. This union forms a strong and durable anchor for your new teeth, meaning there's no slippage movement. This makes implants more secure than dentures. Eating with dental implants is also more secure and sanitary than dentures because they are not removable.

## INLAYS AND ONLAYS

Inlays and onlays are indirect dental restorations. They are made outside of your mouth in a laboratory. An inlay or onlay is typically used when a cavity is too large for a simple filling. Inlays and onlays can be made of gold, composite, or ceramic materials. Inlays and onlays are more resistant to fractures and damage than traditional cavity fillings, stain-resistant and durable.

## DENTURES

Dentures are an affordable tooth replacement option for those who are not a good candidate for implants. Dentures provide facial support, improved nutrition, and improved confidence. Dentures can be a full set or a partial that replaces a group of teeth generally from an injury. Some dentures are designed to improve a person's bite, eliminating headaches, jaw pain, and other TMJ symptoms. The bases of most removable dentures today are made of polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA) and the teeth themselves can be made of PMMA or ceramic material like that used for porcelain veneers.

## WHY CHOOSE LAUREL MANOR DENTAL AND SLEEP CARE?

In addition to our experienced and caring team, we feel that our advanced technology makes Laurel Manor Dental and SleepCare the top choice for your dental needs. We carefully choose the latest dental tech and tools to increase patient comfort and expand our ability to provide advanced dentistry to our patients.

*In our practice, we utilize the following technology:*

- **iTero Scanner** — The iTero Scanner is a small handheld device that allows us to capture a full 3D image of your teeth and gums. The sharp images mean we can get a better picture of any issues and track any changes in your oral health with a detailed view.
- **Digital Impressions** — No more gooey impressions! Digital impressions also provide more detailed information and a speedier turnaround time in the creation of restorations.
- **Digital X-rays** — Digital radiographs reduce the patient's exposure to radiation while giving the dental team sharper, clearer images that are produced almost instantaneously.
- **Cone Beam 3D Imaging** — Using cone beam technology, we can map underlying bone structure, nerve pathways, and soft tissue for more detailed treatment planning.
- **Intraoral Camera** — The intraoral camera puts you in the driver's seat. You can see exactly what the doctor sees, allowing the doctor to explain your treatment plan tooth by tooth.

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

## Meet Dr. Rozensky

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

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

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

*Laurel Manor Dental/Laurel Manor SleepCare*

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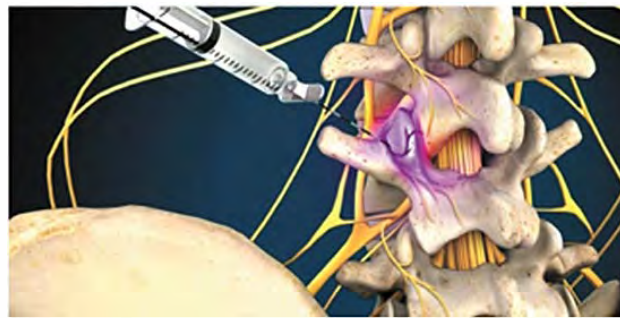
# Discover Superior Pain Management at The Interventional Pain Institute with Dr. Brent Compton in The Villages and Ocala, Florida

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**9. Medicare and insurance approved Back and knee braces.**

**10. Kyphoplasty/Vertebral Augmentation:** Treatment for compression fractures of the spine.

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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**BRENT COMPTON, MD**



# New Year's Resolutions to Protect Your Wishes

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

**A**s 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.

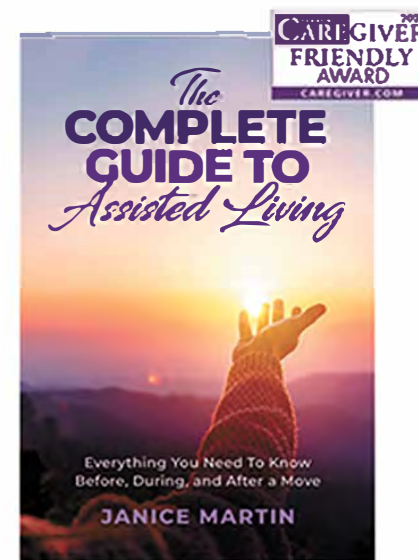
Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** should you ever give any money or property to anyone in an attempt to lower your assets. Medicaid has a five year look-back and if it is determined that you gave or sold anything for less than fair market value, you will be penalized by waiting years for approval.

**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](http://www.seniorliaisoncfl.com). She never uses AI to produce her writing for any publication.



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

**W**hen 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.

### Types of Treatment Available with Physical Therapy

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- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Functional Training
- Gait Training and Balance Programs
- Manual and Massage Therapy
- Neurological and Neurodegenerative Retraining
- Vestibular Rehabilitation

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# Attorney Patrick Smith Radio Show Now on 14 Stations

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## It's A Wonderful Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

**E**very 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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