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May 2025

Marion Edition - Monthly

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CONTACT US

Owner
Cristan Gensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sonny Gensing
sonnygensing@yahoo.com

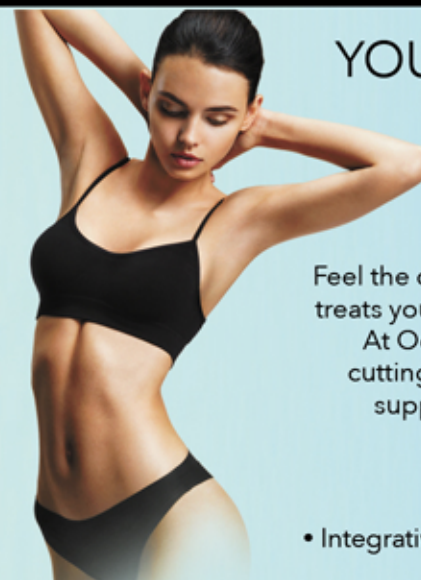


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PIONEERING THE FUTURE:

THE AHEAD STUDY AIMS TO PREVENT ALZHEIMER'S BEFORE SYMPTOMS BEGIN

In a groundbreaking approach to combating one of medicine's most challenging diseases, Renstar Medical Research is spearheading clinical trials that could fundamentally change how we address Alzheimer's disease. Rather than focusing solely on treating symptoms after they appear, the AHEAD Study takes a revolutionary preventative approach by targeting the disease up to two decades before cognitive decline becomes apparent.

The Science of Prevention

The AHEAD Study represents a paradigm shift in Alzheimer's research. Scientists have discovered that the pathological changes associated with Alzheimer's—particularly the accumulation of amyloid protein in the brain—can begin silently 15-20 years before memory loss or confusion becomes noticeable. This critical window presents an unprecedented opportunity for intervention.

"We now understand that by the time symptoms appear, significant brain damage has already occurred," explains Renstar Medical Research. "The AHEAD Study aims to determine if early intervention during this pre-symptomatic phase can actually prevent cognitive decline from developing."

The clinical trials focus on an investigational treatment designed to target and reduce amyloid buildup in the brain before it causes irreversible damage. This approach could potentially halt the disease process before it manifests as the devastating memory loss and cognitive impairment that affects millions of families worldwide.

Participation: An Opportunity to Make History

Renstar Medical Research is currently seeking healthy adults between 55 and 80 years of age who have not been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. What makes this study unique is its focus on individuals who show elevated or intermediate levels of amyloid in their brains—detected through specialized brain imaging during the screening process—but who remain cognitively healthy.

Participants in the AHEAD Study receive multiple benefits beyond contributing to groundbreaking research. These include:

- Access to potential new treatments years before they might become publicly available
- Comprehensive diagnostic tests, laboratory work, and medical examinations at no cost



- Compensation for time and travel expenses associated with participation
- Regular monitoring by specialists in neurodegenerative disease

Importantly, no health insurance is required to participate, making this cutting-edge research accessible to a broader population.

The Bigger Picture: Transforming Alzheimer's Care

The implications of the AHEAD Study extend far beyond individual participants. If successful, this research could fundamentally transform how we approach Alzheimer's disease—shifting from a primarily symptomatic treatment model to a preventative paradigm that identifies and treats at-risk individuals before cognitive decline begins.

This approach mirrors successful prevention strategies now common for conditions like heart disease, where early intervention based on risk factors has dramatically improved outcomes. Alzheimer's prevention could follow a similar trajectory, with routine screening for biomarkers like amyloid becoming standard practice for aging adults.

"The goal isn't just to find another treatment," notes Renstar Medical Research. "It's to prevent millions of people from ever experiencing Alzheimer's symptoms in the first place."

For those with family histories of Alzheimer's or concerns about cognitive health, participation in studies like AHEAD represents both personal benefit and contribution to a potentially historic medical advancement.

Interested individuals are encouraged to contact Renstar Medical Research to learn more about eligibility requirements and participation details. With every participant, we move one step closer to a future where Alzheimer's disease may no longer be an inevitable outcome for those at risk—but rather a condition that can be identified early and prevented through timely intervention.

For more information about the AHEAD Study and to determine if you qualify, contact Renstar Medical Research today.

About Renstar Medical Research

Founded in 1997, Renstar Medical Research has been at the forefront of clinical research, dedicated to advancing medical breakthroughs through high-quality, multispecialty clinical trials. With over two decades of experience, we have conducted studies across a wide range of therapeutic areas, including obesity, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, psoriasis, and other conditions.

Through innovation, expertise, and a patient-centered approach, we strive to make a meaningful impact on global healthcare. At Renstar Medical Research, we are seeking tomorrow's answers to the health questions of today.

**Are you ready to find out more about a clinical research trial?
Call Today!**

Those who qualify:

- Are between 55 and 80 years of age
- Have not been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease
- Other criteria may apply



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*"Seeking tomorrow's answers
to the health questions of today."*

Blood in Your Urine? Don't Delay, Seek Out Health Care

Bladder cancer is a significant health concern in the U.S., and there are some interesting gender differences to be aware of.

Bladder cancer mainly affects adults over 55, with the highest rates in those ages 65–74. It is the third most diagnosed cancer in U.S. men, who are three to four times more likely than women to develop it, due to a mix of biological, behavioral and environmental factors. Lifetime risk is about 1 in 28 for men and 1 in 91 for women.

However, women in the U.S. often experience delays in being diagnosed with the disease. Studies show that nearly 70% of women are initially diagnosed with another condition, compared to only 39% of men.

According to Elizabeth Guancial, MD, board-certified medical oncologist and hematologist with Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS), these delays can result in more advanced disease at the time of diagnosis and poorer outcomes for women.

Let's take a closer look:

Warning Signs & Symptoms

There can be many warning signs of bladder cancer and the most common include:

- Blood in the urine, which may cause the urine to appear bright red or cola-colored
- Frequent urination or a strong and sudden urge to urinate, even when the bladder is not full
- Discomfort or pain while urinating
- Pain in the pelvic area, lower back or sides
- Loss of bladder control, leading to involuntary leakage of urine

Blood in the urine is the most common and often the first very visible warning sign of bladder cancer.

"For a man to have blood in his urine, that's abnormal," said Dr. Guancial, noting that primary care physicians will often check for prostatitis, an inflammation of the prostate gland, or for urinary tract infection in men, and then refer promptly to a urologist.

"With women, it takes longer," said Dr. Guancial. "They may go through multiple courses of antibiotics thinking, 'Oh, it's a urinary tract infection that's hard to treat. Maybe it's related to vaginal or postmenopausal bleeding.'" Sometimes they'll even see a gynecologist before they eventually get to a urologist."

Why is early detection important? When symptoms aren't clearing up quickly, referral to a urologist is really important. Dr. Guancial explains: "When patients do get to us earlier on, once a cancer diagnosis has been made, very often they have an earlier stage of disease, and so it opens up a lot more treatment options. And it's also



associated with better outcomes. Any delay in that initial workup, I definitely think contributes to the disparity that we see in terms of gender outcome."

Bladder Cancer Basics

The bladder is a hollow organ in the lower pelvis that stores urine. When a person urinates, the bladder's muscle walls contract, pushing urine out through the urethra. The bladder wall is made up of several layers of cells, and when the DNA in these cells changes, it can cause uncontrolled cell growth, leading to the formation of tumors.

Bladder cancer comes in several types, with urothelial carcinoma being the most common. This type begins in the cells lining the inside of the bladder and is often non-muscle invasive, meaning it stays in the bladder's inner layer. Less common types include squamous cell carcinoma and adenocarcinoma, which originates in glandular cells.

When found in early stages, bladder cancer is highly treatable and potentially curable.

Who's at Higher Risk?

Research has shown that smoking causes about half of all bladder cancers in both men and women, due to the harmful chemicals that can accumulate and damage the bladder lining. Exposure to certain industrial chemicals, such as dyes, rubber and leather, previous radiation aimed at the pelvis or treatment with certain anti-cancer drugs, as well as chronic urinary tract inflammation or infections can increase risk. As with many forms of cancer, family history can play a role.

Importance of Awareness

It's crucial for women and men to pay attention to their bodies and recognize that blood in the urine should be promptly evaluated. See your medical doctor if you experience this or other symptoms, which can also indicate other non-cancerous conditions. Early and accurate diagnosis is essential for effective treatment and improved outcomes.

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About Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, LLC (FLCancer.com)

For more than 40 years, FCS has built a national reputation for excellence that is reflected in exceptional and compassionate patient care, driven by innovative clinical research, cutting-edge technologies and advanced treatments, including targeted therapies genomic-based treatment and immunotherapy. Our highest values are embodied by our outstanding team of highly trained and dedicated physicians, clinicians and staff.

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



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MELANOMA MAY!

By Sierra Mahoney, PA-C

April showers bring May flowers, and the flowers certainly are in full bloom this season! It's warm, the sun is shining, and the sweet smell of melanoma is in the air.

"Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer, characterized by the uncontrolled growth of pigment-producing cells. Sadly, melanoma rates in the United States doubled from 1988 to 2019, and worldwide, the number of melanoma diagnoses are expected to increase by more than 50% by 2040", according to the American Academy of Dermatology Association. The good news is that melanoma is treatable when caught early. Here at Midstate Skin Institute, we recommend that everyone over the age of thirty get at least one annual skin exam to help detect and treat melanoma- as well as other forms of skin cancer.

Living in Florida has many wonderful benefits, one of which being the warm, sunny climate. However, more sun means more UV ray exposure which means more skin cancer. One of my favorite lines to tell patients is that everyone will develop a skin cancer at some point if they live long enough. This is because our skin can only handle so much UV radiation before cells start to misbehave, which is why establishing care with a dermatology practice is so important. So, what are some things you can do as a patient to help ensure your skin stays as healthy as possible?

1. Wear Sunscreen

We all know that "back in the day," baby oil and iodine was the perfect way to develop the nice, crisp, golden-brown tan...and to increase your risk of developing melanoma. Interestingly enough, there is a genetic component to melanoma, which can sometimes explain why we see melanoma in young kids, or in places where the sun does not shine, like in between the toes (RIP Bob Marley) or in the genital region, which leads me to my next point...

2. Fully undress for skin exams

As uncomfortable as it may be, removing all undergarments, shoes and socks during skin exams just may save your life. My favorite joke to tell patients when they come in for skin exams and do not wish to fully undress is that my x-ray vision is not working today...however, this is true. I just recently had a patient develop a melanoma between his toes who had been seen for "waist up" skin exams for years. Luckily, the melanoma was discovered in the very beginning stages, but had he not removed his shoes and socks this time, the story may have ended differently.

**MAY IS
MELANOMA &
SKIN CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH**



Please do not let insecurities, being "too cold," or not "feeling" like fully undressing be the thing that prevents catching something potentially life-threatening on your skin. Taking the extra 30 seconds to fully undress just may save your life.

3. Be an advocate for yourself

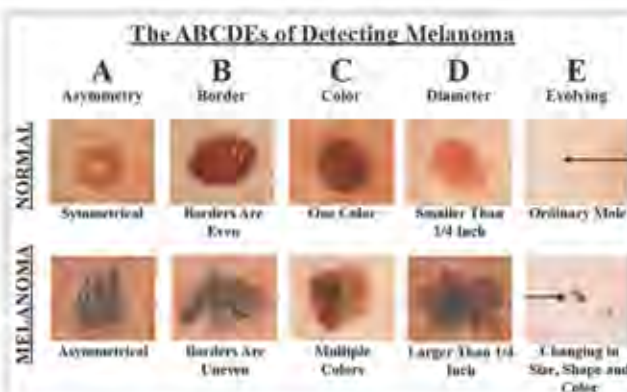
As a dermatology provider I can whole-heartedly say that I do my best to diagnose and treat every possible harm that may come your way...however, you know your body best and we at Midstate Skin Institute will not dismiss or ignore anything that you as a patient have a concern about. Not all melanomas "read the textbook," so it is especially important that you advocate for yourself as patient. See a new mole appear (especially after the age of forty) and want to have it looked at? Notice a change in a pre-existing spot? Have a spot that looks different than your other spots? Develop a spot that is tender to the touch or that bleeds spontaneously? Please call or schedule an appointment online so we can help treat you accordingly.

4. Stay Informed

While (unfortunately) it is true that not all melanomas read the textbook, there is a quite easy and fairly accurate mnemonic that everyone should know when it comes to detecting a melanoma: ABCDE.

A: ASYMMETRY (does one part of the spot look different from the other? Make an appointment in office)

B: BORDERS (does a spot have weird borders surrounding it or an unusual shape? Make an appointment in office)



C: COLORS (pinks, blues, grays, and blacks are not always normal. If you see this in a spot, make an appointment in office)

D: DIAMETER (the larger the spot, the more concerning. If you see a spot growing- make an appointment in office)

E: EVOLUTION (have a spot that started out looking one way, and has morphed/changed over time in size, shape, color, or appearance? Make an appointment in office).

There is far more that could be said on the topic, but the bottom line is that we love and care for our patients here at Midstate Skin Institute and we always want what is best for you. Please come and see our smiling faces so we can continue to work together to provide you with the best care possible and to keep your skin as healthy as possible this blossoming season!

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Medical Dermatology

The science of treating the skin, hair, and nails to relieve or cure skin disorders.

Surgical Dermatology

The practice of dermatology that specializes in surgical procedures & minimally invasive techniques to treat skin cancer.

Cosmetic Dermatology

The practice of improving the look and health of one's skin through medical or surgical procedures, to help patients look and feel their best.

Aesthetics

Treatment for the skin, hair or body that is meant to enhance the appearance of patients through minimally invasive techniques & personalized topical skin care recommendations.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE STARTS WITH YOU: Finding harmony in your career and life

By Misty Brueckner

Did you know the average person will spend 90,000 hours at work over their lifetime. Whether or not you work a typical 9-5, the hours add up. It's crucial for your overall well-being to achieve work-life balance and minimize your risk of burnout.



Burnout happens when we feel overwhelmed and stressed over a prolonged period of time. This can often be connected to your career but can also happen due to other demanding areas of life.

Life can be overwhelming at times. We have numerous daily responsibilities – work, taking care of family, managing a household, raising children – and sometimes, we get too busy to take a step back and attain balance. That's when burnout creeps in.

The emotions that come with burnout often leave you feeling hopeless, unmotivated and overall unhappy. This can ultimately hurt your work productivity and connections, your familial relationships and your social life. Burnout can also cause physical implications too, such as chronic fatigue, headaches, muscle pain, digestive issues and a weakened immune system.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a crucial time to spotlight the importance of mental well-being and breaking the stigma around mental health. This month serves as a reminder to prioritize self-care and promote healthy coping mechanisms, including establishing a work-life balance and setting boundaries.

A healthy work-life balance can help you feel motivated at work, reduce stress, improve your mental and physical health and enhance your overall well-being. This is imperative to minimizing burnout.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. Everyone has different personal and professional goals. It's important to find an effective way to manage the demands of work and personal life while feeling fulfilled in both areas. This includes balancing work obligations, family commitments, personal interests, self-care and other areas of importance. It's not about strictly splitting your time evenly but rather finding a harmony that works for you and your priorities.

Burnout tends to happen over time so there are ways to get ahead of it. Symptoms may be subtle at first, but the longer they go unaddressed, the worse they can become.

According to the National Institutes of Health, signs of burnout can include:

- **Exhaustion:** You may feel drained, emotionally exhausted and unable to properly deal with the problems around you, both personally and professionally. These symptoms can present as physical pain or even stomach or bowel problems.
- **Isolation:** People who are experiencing burnout find their jobs increasingly stressful and can target frustration toward work or colleagues. You may find yourself distancing and feeling disinterested in your work and environment or avoiding social activities.
- **Reduced performance:** This can occur in your personal or professional areas because you have little or no energy left for everyday tasks. Burnout can make it hard to concentrate or handle your responsibilities and not feel negative toward them.
- **Feeling down:** You may feel self-doubt, helplessness, defeat and failure. This can result in feeling alone and isolated, losing your sense of purpose and feeling increasingly dissatisfied or incapable.
- **Physical fatigue:** You may feel greatly fatigued and without energy. Burnout can lead to getting sick often, suffering from colds, having body aches and recurring headaches, losing your appetite or experiencing insomnia.

If you find yourself experiencing these symptoms, it's important to recognize your feelings and work

toward finding solutions that work for you. If you're comfortable doing so, talk to your employer about how you're feeling. Communication is essential, and they may be able to help you with your time management, delegating, setting boundaries and other skills. This also applies at home. When feeling burnout, communication with your significant other, family members, roommates or friends is key, as they may be able to help lighten your burden during especially stressful times.

Prioritizing your health and well-being are key to preventing or treating burnout. After all, you cannot effectively help others if you can't help yourself. Make sure you're getting enough quality sleep at night, practice mindfulness and set aside personal time for things that help you relax or bring you joy, like reading, spending time with loved ones or other hobbies. Talking to a therapist to share your feelings and learn new coping skills can help. In some cases, psychiatric care or medication may be beneficial in reducing symptoms of burnout.

Remember, life can get busy and it's easy to get caught up in the chaos. Slow down, take a step back and reflect on what's most important to you, discover your definition of work-life balance and keep both your body and mind healthy. Addressing the issue in the beginning is key to avoiding more serious implications down the road. We all want to live fulfilling, healthy lives, but achieving that often requires intentional effort. Dedicate the time to prioritizing your well-being and take the necessary steps to create the life you deserve.

About the Author

Misty Brueckner is a licensed clinical social worker for Elite DNA Behavioral Health's Fort Myers office. Elite DNA seeks to provide accessible, affordable mental health care to everyone and has become one of the largest mental health providers in the state, providing in-person and virtual behavioral health services to children, adolescents and adults at more than 30 locations across Florida. For more information, visit [EliteDNA.com](https://www.EliteDNA.com).



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Transforming Lives Through Semaglutide:

Ocala Health & Wellness's Personalized Approach to Weight Management

By Danette Anderson, APRN

In a world where weight management challenges affect millions of Americans, innovative medical approaches are providing new hope. Semaglutide has emerged as a groundbreaking option in the weight loss landscape, and Ocala Health & Wellness stands at the forefront of integrating this treatment into comprehensive, personalized weight management programs that are changing lives throughout the community.

Semaglutide, initially developed for type 2 diabetes treatment, has revolutionized weight management by effectively regulating appetite and food intake through its action on brain receptors that control hunger. Clinical studies have demonstrated impressive results, with patients typically experiencing 15-20% weight reduction over the course of treatment. This medication works by mimicking a naturally occurring hormone called GLP-1, which slows stomach emptying and signals fullness to the brain, creating a sustainable approach to calorie reduction without the extreme hunger often associated with traditional diets.

What sets Ocala Health & Wellness apart is their understanding that effective weight management extends far beyond medication alone. Their dedicated team recognizes that each patient's weight loss journey is unique, requiring an individualized approach that addresses the complex interplay of biological, psychological, and lifestyle factors influencing weight.

"We believe in treating the whole person, not just the number on the scale," explains the clinical team at Ocala Health & Wellness. "Semaglutide provides an effective medical foundation, but lasting success requires comprehensive support tailored to each individual's specific needs and circumstances."

The Ocala Health & Wellness approach begins with thorough medical evaluations to determine appropriate candidates for semaglutide therapy. Their medical professionals carefully assess each patient's health history, current medications, and specific weight-related challenges before creating a personalized treatment plan. This attention to detail ensures both safety and optimal outcomes.

Beyond medication management, the clinic provides nutritional counseling that teaches sustainable eating habits rather than restrictive dieting. Patients receive guidance on making healthier food choices



that complement semaglutide's effects, maximizing results while establishing long-term healthy relationships with food.

Regular monitoring throughout the treatment journey allows the Ocala team to make real-time adjustments, addressing challenges promptly and celebrating successes along the way. This consistent support system proves invaluable as patients navigate the physical and emotional aspects of significant weight loss.

Perhaps most importantly, Ocala Health & Wellness prioritizes long-term success by equipping patients with strategies for weight maintenance after reaching their goals. Their comprehensive approach includes behavioral coaching that addresses emotional eating, stress management, and other psychological factors that often sabotage weight management efforts.

The transformative impact of this integrated approach extends beyond physical appearance. Patients routinely report improvements in obesity-related health conditions, including reduced blood pressure, improved blood sugar control, decreased joint pain, and enhanced energy levels. Many describe newfound confidence and engagement in activities they had long abandoned due to weight-related limitations.

As medical weight management continues evolving, Ocala Health & Wellness remains committed to incorporating cutting-edge approaches like semaglutide while maintaining their patient-centered philosophy. Their dedication to comprehensive, compassionate care has established them as trusted partners for individuals seeking effective, lasting solutions to weight management challenges.

Ocala Health & Wellness

At Ocala Health & Wellness, we envision a vibrant community where holistic health and well-being thrive. We strive to empower individuals on their journey to optimal wellness through personalized care, education, and support. Our commitment is to create a nurturing environment that fosters physical, mental, and emotional balance, inspiring each person to embrace a healthier, happier life. Together, we cultivate a culture of wellness that transforms lives and uplifts our community.

About the Author

Danette is a compassionate and dedicated provider, who is board certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner through AANP. She has 10 years of experience as a nurse and received her MSN from St. Thomas University in Miami in 2022. She has a strong clinical background in family practice, and also enjoys the art of aesthetics. Danette is educated and trained in aesthetics and lasers and continues to further that education on a regular basis in order to help her clients look and feel their best. Her goal as a provider is to help you become the best version of yourself.

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Breaking Through the Pain:

INNOVATIVE SHOCKWAVE THERAPY TRANSFORMS ARTHRITIS TREATMENT

By Gene Turner, MD, FAARFM

As we enter May, Arthritis Awareness Month, healthcare providers like our team at Mid-Florida Age Management are highlighting breakthrough treatments that are changing lives for the millions of Americans living with this challenging condition. Among these innovations, Omniwave shockwave therapy is emerging as a game-changer for patients seeking relief from arthritis pain and improved mobility without invasive procedures.

Understanding the Arthritis Epidemic

Arthritis remains America's leading cause of disability, affecting approximately 58.5 million adults nationwide. This family of more than 100 related conditions causes joint inflammation, pain, stiffness, and decreased range of motion that can significantly impact quality of life. While medications and surgery have long been standard treatments, many patients are now turning to advanced non-invasive alternatives like shockwave therapy.

Shockwave Therapy: A Non-Invasive Revolution

The Omniwave shockwave therapy device represents the cutting edge of musculoskeletal treatment technology. This sophisticated system delivers precisely calibrated acoustic waves that penetrate deep into affected tissues, stimulating the body's natural healing processes without the risks associated with surgery or the side effects of long-term medication use.

"What makes Omniwave particularly effective is its versatility across different joint applications," I explain to my patients. "At Mid-Florida Age Management, we're seeing remarkable improvements, particularly in hand, shoulder, and knee treatments, where precision targeting is crucial. Our patients have responded exceptionally well to this innovative approach."

Targeted Treatment for Multiple Joint Conditions

The Omniwave system has demonstrated particular success in treating arthritis in small joints of the hands, where traditional therapies often fall short. The device's precision allows practitioners to direct healing energy to the exact location of inflammation, even in these smaller anatomical structures.

For shoulder arthritis—often one of the most mobility-limiting forms of the condition—patients report significant pain reduction and improved range of motion after a series of Omniwave treatments. The therapy's ability to reduce inflammation while simultaneously promoting tissue regeneration makes it uniquely suited for complex shoulder joint issues.

Knee arthritis patients, who often face limited options between pain management and eventual joint replacement, have found Omniwave treatments provide a middle path—reducing pain and improving function without surgical intervention.

Beyond these primary applications, clinical results show promising outcomes for hip arthritis and other joints affected by degenerative conditions or inflammation.

Patient-Centered Benefits

What sets Omniwave apart is not just its clinical effectiveness but its patient-friendly profile:

- Treatments typically take just 15-20 minutes
- No anesthesia required
- No incisions or scarring
- Minimal to no recovery time
- Cumulative benefits with successive treatments
- Compatible with other therapy modalities

Most patients report feeling only mild discomfort during treatment sessions, describing the sensation as a series of light tapping pulses as the acoustic waves work their healing magic.

A Timely Focus During Arthritis Awareness Month

As healthcare providers prepare educational initiatives for Arthritis Awareness Month, many are featuring shockwave therapy as an example of how technology is expanding options for arthritis sufferers. The Omniwave system exemplifies the trend toward treatments that work with the body's natural healing capabilities rather than simply masking symptoms.

For millions living with arthritis pain, awareness of these advanced treatment options offers new hope. As one of my Omniwave patients at our Ocala clinic expressed, "After years of limiting my activities because of knee pain, I've returned to gardening, walking with friends, and playing with my grandchildren. The relief I've experienced feels nothing short of miraculous."

As we recognize Arthritis Awareness Month, the success stories from Omniwave therapy recipients at Mid-Florida Age Management remind us that while arthritis remains a serious health challenge, innovative approaches continue to improve outcomes and quality of life for those affected by this pervasive condition. If you're in the Ocala area and struggling with arthritis pain, I invite you to learn more about how our Omniwave shockwave therapy might help restore your comfort and mobility.

About the Author

"Gene" Turner, MD is a board-certified physician, advanced fellowship-trained in Regenerative and Functional Medicine and a diplomate of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, with over 25 years of clinical experience. Dr. Turner graduated from the University of Arizona College of Medicine and received residency training at Vanderbilt University. He is the medical director of Mid-Florida Age Management.

Your wellness doctor in Ocala is Board Certified by the American Board of Anti-Aging and Regenerative Medicine and is fellowship trained in Metabolic and Nutritional Medicine. He has also received certification as Therapeutic Lifestyle Practitioner through Metagenics FirstLine Lifestyle Medicine Program. The CDC and NIH recommend Lifestyle Treatment Programs for such lifestyle conditions such as hypertension, hyperlipidemia, poor glucose control and overweight. Such programs require time and expertise to develop and implement: our programs include addressing diet, exercise, stress management, sleep issues, nutritional supplementation where indicated and correction of metabolic deficits when detected. Evidence-based programs are used to assess, interpret, and recommend proven integrative protocols which dramatically increase patient adherence and engagement level. The effect is a symbiotic relationship between practitioner and patient, resulting in patient centered care and higher levels of wellness.

Dr. Turner uses conventional, nutritional, complementary and alternative modalities. He specializes in hypertension, lipid disorders, prevention of cardiovascular disease, nutritional and weight management, and clinical age management. He has a special interest in anti-aging medicine for which he uses a combination of natural and prescriptive therapies.

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YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS TO YOUR WELL BEING

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

May is Mental Health Awareness Month which is dedicated to destigmatizing mental health issues, promoting understanding and support. It serves as a platform to raise awareness about the importance of mental well-being, encouraging open conversations and advocating for accessible resources and treatment. It's also a reminder that mental health is an integral part of overall wellness and that everyone deserves compassion and support on their journey towards healing.

You don't have to be diagnosed with a mental disorder to appreciate the importance of keeping mentally healthy. Just the stress of everyday life can cause us to feel like we need a mental health day. It could be from a recent loss of a job. It could be from the loss of someone you loved, whether it was a dear friend, a family member or even a beloved pet (who is just like a member of the family). Loss of any kind can and does affect us emotionally, physically, and mentally.

During Mental Health Awareness month, remember that mental health is as important as physical health. While we may not always have control over our physical health, we do have options when it comes to experiencing grief and loss. Learning how to cope and hold loss and joy side by side is the beginning of hope and healing. The feelings for that lost loved one never goes away, but remembering the joy they brought and the lives they touched can help one experience the loss, remember and celebrate them at the same time.

Here are some poignant quotes to consider:

"Grief is the price we pay for love."
- Queen Elizabeth II

"There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind."
- C.S. Lewis

"When someone you love becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure."
- Anonymous



If you are experiencing the grief of losing a loved one and the helplessness you feel, you're not alone. Join others who are navigating and adjusting to grief – Finding peace and hope in your grief journey is possible. The Monarch Center for Hope & Healing can help through their expert guidance and trained professionals. Available at no charge to the Marion County community, the center has been offering adult, teen and children's programs, counseling for individuals and in group settings. Programs include providing tips and coping mechanisms to help you express grief through simple art or journaling projects, sharing thoughts with others in a group or in a one-on-one session with a trained counselor. In these sessions you'll learn: 1) What is a normal grief reaction, 2) How can I cope with stress, and 3) What can I use from the past to focus on the future?

The Monarch staff guides people in understanding that grief is natural and necessary to healing. It's essential to feel the pain, not suppress it. Being able to talk about your feelings is the first step to finding peace in your grief journey. Staff are available to work with bereaved families and individuals in person, via phone, email or teleconferencing. The Monarch Center's phone lines are open Monday-Friday, 8:00 am -5:00 pm. Call (352) 873-7456 to speak with a counselor.

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REGAINING CONTROL: THE BENEFITS OF EMSELLA FOR URINARY INCONTINENCE

For millions of people, urinary incontinence is an uncomfortable and embarrassing condition that can significantly impact their quality of life. Whether it's a occasional leak during physical activity or a constant struggle to make it to the restroom in time, urinary incontinence can be a source of frustration, social isolation, and even depression. However, thanks to a revolutionary new treatment called EMSELLA, those suffering from urinary incontinence now have a non-invasive and effective solution to regain control over their bladder.

Understanding Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is the involuntary leakage of urine, and it can occur for a variety of reasons. In women, it is often caused by weakened pelvic floor muscles, which can result from pregnancy, childbirth, or the natural aging process. Men, on the other hand, may experience incontinence due to prostate problems or as a side effect of certain medical treatments. Regardless of the cause, urinary incontinence can be a source of significant physical and emotional distress.

The EMSELLA Solution

EMSELLA is a revolutionary treatment that uses high-intensity focused electromagnetic (HIFEM) technology to stimulate and strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. During a typical EMSELLA session, the patient sits fully clothed on a specialized chair that delivers thousands of supramaximal muscle contractions to the pelvic floor area. These contractions are similar to the muscle contractions that occur during Kegel exercises, but are significantly more intense and efficient.

The Benefits of EMSELLA

One of the primary benefits of EMSELLA is its non-invasive nature. Unlike surgical procedures or medications, EMSELLA does not require any incisions, injections, or oral medications. This means that patients can undergo treatment without the risk of complications or side effects associated with more invasive interventions.

Another significant advantage of EMSELLA is its effectiveness. Clinical studies have shown that EMSELLA can significantly improve urinary incontinence symptoms in both men and women. In one study, 95% of patients reported a significant



improvement in their quality of life after undergoing EMSELLA treatment. Additionally, EMSELLA has been shown to be effective in treating other pelvic floor disorders, such as fecal incontinence and sexual dysfunction.

EMSELLA is also convenient and time-efficient. Each treatment session lasts only 28 minutes, and most patients require a series of six sessions spaced a week apart. This means that patients can receive the full course of treatment in just six weeks, with minimal disruption to their daily routine.

Furthermore, EMSELLA is a comfortable and painless treatment. Patients may feel a slight tingling sensation during the treatment, but the procedure is generally well-tolerated and does not require any anesthesia or recovery time.

Regaining Confidence and Quality of Life

For those struggling with urinary incontinence, the impact on daily life can be significant. Simple activities like exercise, social gatherings, or travel can become sources of anxiety and embarrassment. However, with the help of EMSELLA, many patients are able to regain control over their bladder and reclaim their confidence and quality of life.



One patient, Sarah, a 47-year-old mother of two, had been struggling with urinary incontinence for years after giving birth to her children. "I was always worried about leaking, especially during exercise or when I laughed too hard," she recalls. "It was embarrassing and made me feel self-conscious." After undergoing EMSELLA treatment, Sarah noticed a significant improvement in her symptoms. "It's been life-changing," she says. "I can exercise without worry, and I feel so much more confident in social situations."

Another patient, John, a 62-year-old retiree, had been dealing with urinary incontinence as a result of prostate problems. "It was really limiting my lifestyle," he explains. "I couldn't travel or participate in activities without worrying about finding a restroom." After completing his EMSELLA treatment, John reports a dramatic improvement in his symptoms. "I feel like I have my freedom back," he says. "It's been a game-changer for me."

Conclusion

Urinary incontinence is a common and often debilitating condition, but with the help of EMSELLA, those suffering from this condition now have a safe, effective, and convenient treatment option. By strengthening the pelvic floor muscles, EMSELLA can help patients regain control over their bladder and improve their overall quality of life. Whether you're a new mother, an active adult, or someone dealing with the effects of aging, EMSELLA offers a promising solution for regaining confidence and freedom from the constraints of urinary incontinence.



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MAY: A MONTH TO AMPLIFY UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

By Dr. Evans Pemba

May is designated as Better Hearing and Speech Month, an annual observation dedicated to raising awareness about communication disorders and promoting treatments that can improve the quality of life for those affected. This special month highlights the essential work of audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and other professionals who help individuals overcome challenges in hearing, speaking, and understanding language.

Communication disorders affect millions of Americans across all age groups. These conditions range from hearing loss and auditory processing disorders to speech impediments, language delays, and voice disorders. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), which established this observational month in 1927, nearly 40 million Americans have communication disorders, making them among the most common disabilities in the United States.

Early intervention is crucial for children with communication disorders. Research consistently shows that identifying and addressing these issues during the formative years leads to significantly better outcomes. During Better Hearing and Speech Month, healthcare providers and educators emphasize the importance of developmental screenings and encourage parents to seek professional evaluation if they notice delays in their child's communication milestones.

For adults, hearing loss represents one of the most prevalent yet undertreated health conditions. Often developing gradually, many individuals wait an average of seven years before seeking help for hearing difficulties. This delay can lead to social isolation, cognitive decline, and decreased quality of life. May serves as an important reminder for adults to prioritize hearing health through regular screenings and appropriate interventions when needed.

The workplace represents another critical setting where communication abilities significantly impact success and well-being. Employers are encouraged during this month to create accommodating environments for employees with communication disorders and to implement strategies that foster inclusive communication practices.



Technological advancements continue to transform the field of communication disorders. From sophisticated hearing aids and cochlear implants to augmentative and alternative communication devices, these innovations help bridge communication gaps and restore connections between individuals and their communities. Better Hearing and Speech Month showcases these technologies and makes them more accessible to those who need them.

Community outreach forms a cornerstone of May's activities, with professionals organizing free screenings, educational workshops, and support groups. These events not only provide valuable services but also help reduce the stigma associated with communication disorders.

Schools also play a vital role in this observance, incorporating lessons about communication differences into their curricula and teaching students about empathy and inclusion. These educational efforts help nurture a more understanding and supportive generation.

The pandemic has further highlighted the importance of effective communication. With mask-wearing creating barriers for those who rely on lip-reading and facial expressions, awareness about communication accessibility has gained new urgency. Innovations like clear masks and digital communication tools have emerged as solutions, demonstrating the adaptability of the field in meeting unexpected challenges.

Personal stories shared during May's observance provide powerful testimonials about the impact of communication therapies. From toddlers speaking their first words after therapy to seniors reconnecting with loved ones through hearing aids, these narratives inspire hope and motivate action. They remind us that behind every statistic is a human experience worthy of attention and support.

As May unfolds, the message of Better Hearing and Speech Month extends beyond those directly affected by communication disorders. It reminds us all of communication's fundamental role in human connection and underscores our collective responsibility to create a world where everyone can express themselves and be understood—regardless of the challenges they face. Through education, advocacy, and compassion, Better Hearing and Speech Month invites us to listen more carefully and speak up for those whose voices need amplification. This May, take the first step toward better communication by scheduling your comprehensive hearing evaluation with Ocala Hears, where expert care meets compassionate service for all your hearing health needs.



DR. EVANS PEMBA

Dr. Evans Pemba is the Audiologist and owner of Ocala Hears Audiology. A graduate of the University of Florida (UF), Dr. Pemba is a rabid fan of all things Gators and bleeds orange and blue through and through.

After graduating from UF, Evans served in the Army and has a special place for the Veterans that gave us all the freedoms we enjoy. When he is not seeing patients, Evans likes to enjoy the Florida outdoors with his wife and two daughters.

Born in Zimbabwe, he comes from a culture where oral tradition is the primary method via which knowledge is handed down from generation to generation. Therefore, he knows how important it is to be a good listener. As such, he promises to always listen more than he talks. That way you and he will chart the best path towards helping you hear better.

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ASSISTED LIVING FOR MEMORY CARE: UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS

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

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

A Safe and Secure Environment

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

Specialized Care

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

Structured Activities

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

Nutritious Meals

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

Socialization Opportunities

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

24/7 Monitoring

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

Peace of Mind for Family Members

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

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

Memory Care Services Include:

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



Choosing a Memory Care Community

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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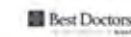
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COSMETIC DENTISTRY IS MORE THAN A PRETTY SMILE

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDSM

Cosmetic 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.

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- **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.

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BREAKTHROUGH IN NEUROPATHY TREATMENT:

HOW SUMMUS LASER THERAPY OFFERS HOPE FOR NERVE PAIN SUFFERERS

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

Understanding Neuropathy: A Complex Challenge

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

The Summus Laser: A Technological Marvel in Pain Management

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

Key Mechanisms of Summus Laser Therapy

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

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

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

Clinical Evidence and Patient Outcomes

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



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

Treatment Process and Expectations

A typical Summus Laser treatment protocol involves:

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

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

Advantages Over Traditional Neuropathy Treatments

The Summus Laser offers several distinct advantages:

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

Who Can Benefit?

Summus Laser therapy is particularly beneficial for patients with:

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

Future of Neuropathy Treatment

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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SPRING INTO FITNESS:

WHY MAY IS THE PERFECT MONTH TO PRIORITIZE YOUR HEALTH

As May ushers in warmer temperatures and longer daylight hours, it presents an ideal opportunity to renew our commitment to physical fitness. The pleasant spring weather creates perfect conditions for outdoor activities, making it easier to establish healthy habits that contribute to weight loss and overall wellbeing. Understanding the multifaceted benefits of regular exercise can provide the motivation needed to make fitness a priority this month.

The Weight Loss Connection

Physical activity plays a crucial role in weight management. Regular exercise increases calorie expenditure, creating the energy deficit necessary for weight loss. When combined with proper nutrition, fitness routines accelerate fat burning while preserving lean muscle mass—a combination that not only helps shed pounds but also maintains a healthy metabolism.

Consistency is key when it comes to fitness-based weight loss. May offers an excellent starting point for establishing sustainable routines that can carry through the summer months. Morning walks, evening bike rides, or weekend hikes all become more accessible as spring fully blooms, providing low-barrier options for those beginning their fitness journey.

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) and strength training deserve special attention in any weight loss program. These exercise modalities continue burning calories hours after the workout ends through a process called excess post-exercise oxygen consumption (EPOC). Incorporating these training styles two to three times weekly can significantly enhance weight loss results.

Beyond Weight Loss: Comprehensive Health Benefits

While weight management often motivates people to begin exercising, the health benefits extend far beyond changes on the scale. Regular physical activity strengthens the cardiovascular system, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke. Even moderate exercise—like a brisk 30-minute walk five days weekly—can lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol profiles.

Mental health also receives a tremendous boost from consistent physical activity. Exercise stimulates the production of endorphins and other mood-enhancing neurotransmitters, alleviating symptoms of depression and anxiety. May's natural beauty provides an added psychological benefit, as outdoor exercise in green spaces has been shown to further reduce stress and improve mental clarity.



Physical fitness also strengthens the immune system—a benefit that shouldn't be overlooked. Regular moderate exercise enhances immune function, potentially reducing susceptibility to both minor illnesses and chronic diseases. Additionally, exercise improves sleep quality, which itself contributes to better immune function and overall health.

Making May Your Fitness Month

Starting a fitness routine in May allows you to establish healthy habits before summer vacations and activities begin. Begin with realistic goals—perhaps a 20-minute daily walk, gradually increasing duration and intensity as your fitness improves. Finding activities you genuinely enjoy increases the likelihood of maintaining your routine beyond this initial month.

Variety remains essential for both physical results and mental engagement. Mix cardiovascular training, strength work, flexibility exercises, and recreational activities to create a well-rounded approach to fitness. This balanced strategy prevents plateaus while developing multiple aspects of physical health simultaneously.

Remember that consistency trumps intensity, particularly when beginning. Five moderate workouts weekly typically yield better results than two exhausting sessions followed by days of inactivity. Build fitness gradually to prevent injury and burnout, allowing May to truly become the foundation month for long-term health improvements.

As flowers bloom and temperatures rise this May, let your commitment to physical fitness blossom as well. The benefits—from weight management to enhanced mood and reduced disease risk—create a compelling case for making exercise a non-negotiable part of your daily routine. Your body and mind will thank you, not just this month, but for years to come.

MEET THE TEAM

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



Christopher Bagley, APRN

Chris is a lifelong Marion County resident who grew up in the northern part of the county. He attended North Marion High School, College of Central Florida and the University of Florida. After graduating college, Chris became a firefighter/paramedic and attained the rank of Lieutenant before retiring.

Chris became a registered nurse and worked at Advent Health Ocala and HCA Ocala Regional. Chris has always had a passion for health and after committing himself to his health, he was inspired along with Eldon, to open Elite Medical, a comprehensive wellness practice that focuses on health and well-being to prevent sickness and chronic diseases.



Eldon Waters, MSN, APRN

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

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

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



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Mirror Therapy - Hope for Pain and Stroke Sufferers

Mirror Therapy (MT) is an occupational therapy technique used to help increase motor function and decrease pain in a limb, such as in your hand or wrist. The principle of MT is the use of a mirror to create a reflective illusion of the affected limb in order to trick the brain into thinking movement has occurred and without pain.

Although initially developed for amputees to control phantom limb pain, it is now commonly used for many different conditions, including stroke rehabilitation, complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS), arthritis, and other chronic pain conditions in the limbs.

The Brain and Pain: Research tells us there's a complete map of the body's surface in the brain. After a limb injury or in the case of chronic pain in the hand or wrist, the area in the brain mapped to that limb holds on to the memory of the pain. The brain learns to associate movement of the limb to pain, sometimes well after the injury has resolved. This is called, "learned pain". MT uses a reflective illusion of an affected limb in order to trick the brain into thinking movement has occurred without pain and to create positive visual feedback of limb movement.

Mirror Therapy: The device is simply a mirrored box positioned so that your unaffected hand is outside of the box and can be visibly seen as a reflection in the mirror. The affected hand is covered and positioned out of site. The Occupational Therapist will guide you through slow and



repetitive hand and wrist exercises of the unaffected hand, while encouraging you to focus on the reflection in the mirror. The goal is to envision that the hand in the reflection is your affected hand. Exercises may include making and releasing a fist, turning your palm up and down, moving fingers individually, or grasping items like a coin or a water bottle.

Mirror Therapy and the Brain: From the reflective illusion, the brain is tricked into "seeing" the affected limb moving without pain. With continued practice, the brain will "learn" that your limb is healthy and, therefore, will start to move it more easily.

If practiced regularly, MT has helped many people control their pain independently. Occupational Therapists suggest practicing 3-5 sessions a day for up to 30 minutes each. Once learned, the therapy can continue in your home environment.

Innovative Therapies Group

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 Hand Therapy Specialists, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy and Massage Therapy. They embrace alternative methods and will help you explore new inventive ways to combat your pain or disorders.

Types of Treatments Available with Physical Therapy

- Assessment and Evaluation Programs
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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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A LIFE WITHOUT JOINT PAIN

The pain pandemic continues to affect joints worldwide, with over 500 million people impacted by osteoarthritis (OA). Joint pain fundamentally alters how people feel and function in daily life, but fortunately, numerous non-medication support options exist.

When experiencing pain, exercise might seem counterintuitive. However, as Professor Helen French emphasizes, "exercise plays the most important role as the first line of treatment for OA." The widely-shared mantra "motion is lotion" deserves universal adoption, especially among those with joint pain. Research demonstrates that exercise matches the effectiveness of over-the-counter pain relievers while providing superior long-term benefits.

The relationship between posture and OA creates a significant feedback loop. According to occupational therapist Carole Dodge, "Joint misalignment due to arthritis frequently coincides with muscle imbalance creating additional stress on involved joints." Fortunately, proper movement training programs can quickly improve these muscular imbalances.

Physical therapist Dr. Kelly Ruther offers a paradigm shift: "Your arthritis isn't what is causing your pain. Your body's misalignment, and muscular imbalance resulting in joint compression is. Just because you have arthritis doesn't mean you have to live with discomfort. If we can reduce compression in your joint by improving your body's alignment and muscular balance we can reduce inflammation, and ultimately reduce pain!"

Pilates for OA

Pilates transcends being merely a method for joint pain management—it represents a lifestyle capable of reducing chronic pain and inflammation. Beginning with alignment, breathing, and core stability, these three foundational elements weave a supportive framework for joints.

Easy as A, B, C

Alignment: The Pilates method primarily focuses on harmonizing muscles through postural stretches and resistance training. Every exercise begins, continues, and concludes with corrective alignment to balance muscle groups. As muscles achieve balance, joint compression naturally decreases, allowing joints to move more freely.

Breathing: Beyond facilitating better posture and stability, breathwork can decrease inflammation. Research indicates that breathwork combined with



deeper mind-body training significantly lowers inflammation levels. The guided breathing in Pilates connects body awareness to every movement.

Core: Pilates demonstrates how stability originates from a resilient core. The method extends beyond improving core strength to train dynamic and functional movements. This directly reduces load on the spine and hips. Effective Pilates sessions incorporate functional core challenges including rotation and lateral training.

Support that Brings Joy to Joints

Pilates goes beyond nurturing joints by using equipment that supports optimal movement patterns. This reintroduces playfulness into movement, allowing people to move like carefree children again.

Reformer: A masterfully crafted lower body warm-up called footwork focuses on ankle, knee, and hip alignment while using resistance in a reclined position. This gently facilitates movement even in severely affected knees.

Chair: The Pilates chair ideally removes load while exploring rotation and side bending. The resistance springs provide feedback that integrates the shoulder girdle with the ribcage and spine. These movements accommodate even non-loading joints like hands.

BOSU: This unstable equipment provides balance training challenges. Movements like 'cat' and 'bird dog' are particularly effective on the BOSU because it provides reactive control, subconsciously engaging the core while stretching the spine and gently challenging balance.

Joints Deserve Happiness Too

Pilates is thoughtfully designed to protect joints from aches and inflammation. While exercise represents the first line of defense against osteoarthritis, Pilates serves as the game-changer that joints deserve. The method provides what joints need to remain happy and healthy through thoughtful, enjoyable movement.

This harmonious relationship even outperforms the most successful dating algorithms, creating a perfect match between body mechanics and therapeutic movement. For those with joint pain, the Pilates method offers not just relief but restoration—rebuilding strength, flexibility and confidence in movement.

By focusing on alignment, breathing techniques, and core stability, Pilates creates the ideal environment for joints to thrive despite degenerative conditions. The supportive equipment and carefully structured progressions allow even those with significant pain to find comfortable ways to move again.

The beauty of Pilates lies in its comprehensive approach that addresses not just symptoms but underlying causes of joint pain. By retraining movement patterns, balancing muscle groups, and improving postural awareness, it tackles the root issues that contribute to joint compression and inflammation.

For the millions suffering from osteoarthritis worldwide, Pilates offers a sustainable, enjoyable path toward better mobility and decreased pain. As more healthcare professionals recognize its benefits, Pilates continues to establish itself as an essential component in joint health management. Begin your transformation today at Club Pilates Ocala, where expert instructors guide you through personalized sessions in a supportive community environment. Your journey to holistic wellness awaits—join us and discover the power of mindful movement.



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Stress Management Tips from Quick Care Urgent Care

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

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

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

Take Time for Yourself

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

Get Moving

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

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

Meditation

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

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

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

Quick Care Med Urgent Care

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

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

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

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AT THE ONSET OF A STROKE:

Prompt Treatment Can Save Lives and Lessen Long-Term Side Effects

T.E. Vallabhan, MD, FACC

When oxygen and blood can't reach the brain, the brain cells begin to die very rapidly. When you are experiencing symptoms of stroke, minutes matter! There is a medication called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) that can break through a blood clot, but not everyone with stroke can receive the clot-busting drug tPA. If the medical team deems it fit for you, the medication must be given within 3 to 4 ½ hours of the onset of symptoms.

Every year in the United States nearly 800,000 people will suffer from a stroke. If it's not caught early enough, it can lead to death, paralysis, cognitive impairment, aphasia and many more complications.

Hemorrhagic strokes are when a damaged blood vessel begins to bleed then ruptures. Ischemic strokes are formed by blood clots that obstruct a blood vessel that supplies blood to the brain. TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack), also known as a mini-stroke, is caused by a temporary clot that blocks blood flow

Signs and Symptoms

Adding to the original FAST acronym, BE FAST adds two additional stroke symptoms, which help individuals recognize and prevent 95 percent of acute strokes.

B

Balance: Does the person have a sudden loss of balance or coordination?

E

Eyes: Is your loved one experiencing double vision or are they unable to see out of one eye?

F

Face: Is one side of the face drooping? Ask the person to smile.

A

Arms: Does one arm drift downward? Have the person raise both arms in the air.

S

Speech: Is he or she slurring their speech or having difficulty getting the words out right? Have the person repeat a simple phrase.

T

Time: Time to act! Call 9-1-1 and get the person to a certified stroke center immediately, such as Adventist Medical Center.

STROKE?

DON'T WAIT!

B.E. F.A.S.T.

What You Can Do

- Keep weight down
- Workout (30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise daily)
- Eating a Healthy diet of vegetables, fruit and lean protein
- Maintain normal blood pressure
- Regulate Lipid levels and any cholesterol issues
- Manage stress
- Get regular physicals and check-ups
- Know the Signs of stroke
- Don't delay, if you or someone you know has stroke symptoms

Getting regular check-ups and screenings are critical to staying on top of your vascular health. If you think you or someone you know is having a stroke or cardiac infarction, do NOT hesitate! Call 911 immediately.

Dr. V

T.E. VALLABHAN, MD, FACC
BOARD CERTIFIED CARDIOLOGIST
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Breaking the Silence:

Addressing Incontinence During National Women's Health Month

By Bela Kudish, MD, MS, ACOG, URPS

National Women's Health Month presents an ideal opportunity to discuss a condition that affects millions of women but remains shrouded in unnecessary silence: urinary incontinence. While common, affecting approximately 25-45% of adult women, many suffer silently due to embarrassment or misconception that it's an inevitable part of aging or motherhood.

Understanding Incontinence in Women

Urinary incontinence—the involuntary leakage of urine—exists in several forms. Stress incontinence occurs during physical activities like coughing, sneezing, or exercise. Urge incontinence involves sudden, intense urges to urinate followed by involuntary leakage. Mixed incontinence combines both types.

Women face unique risk factors across different life stages. In younger women (20s-30s), pregnancy and childbirth can weaken pelvic floor muscles. During perimenopause and menopause (40s-60s), hormonal changes affect urethral tissue integrity. In older women (70+), age-related muscle weakening and neurological changes may contribute to symptoms.

Breaking Myths: It's Not Just Age or Childbirth

While aging and childbirth are significant factors, they're not the only causes. Other contributors include:

- Chronic constipation creating persistent pressure on the bladder
- High-impact exercises without proper pelvic support
- Untreated urinary tract infections
- Certain medications affecting bladder function
- Neurological conditions impacting nerve signals
- Pelvic surgeries, including hysterectomy

Evidence-Based Management Strategies

The good news? Most cases respond well to conservative interventions:

Pelvic Floor Therapy: Beyond Basic Kegels

Pelvic floor physical therapy has emerged as a front-line treatment. Professional therapists assess muscle function and prescribe personalized exercise regimens. Treatment may include:

- Biofeedback to visualize muscle contractions
- Internal and external manual therapy
- Electrical stimulation to improve muscle recruitment
- Functional retraining for everyday activities



Self-Management Exercises

Between therapy sessions, these exercises build strength and control:

1. **Basic Kegels:** Identify the correct muscles by stopping urine mid-stream (for identification only, not as regular practice). Contract these muscles for 3-5 seconds, then release. Build to 10-second holds with equal rest periods.
2. **Elevator Kegels:** Visualize your pelvic floor as an elevator. "Lift" it floor by floor, pausing briefly at each level before descending slowly.
3. **Quick Flicks:** Perform rapid pelvic floor contractions (1-second contract, 1-second release) to improve reactivity during sudden pressure increases.
4. **Bridge Pose:** Lie on your back with knees bent. Lift hips while contracting pelvic floor muscles, hold for 5 seconds, then lower.
5. **Squat-to-Stand:** Perform controlled squats while maintaining pelvic floor engagement throughout the movement.

Lifestyle Modifications

Simple changes can significantly impact symptoms:

- **Bladder training:** Gradually increasing time between bathroom visits
- **Fluid management:** Maintaining hydration without excessive intake
- **Dietary adjustments:** Reducing bladder irritants like caffeine, alcohol, and artificial sweeteners
- **Weight management:** Even modest weight loss can reduce pressure on the pelvic floor
- **Smoking cessation:** Chronic coughing strains pelvic floor muscles

When to Seek Professional Help

While self-management helps many women, certain situations warrant medical attention:

- Incontinence interfering with daily activities or sleep
- Symptoms developing suddenly
- Pharmacotherapy for overactive bladder symptoms
- Pain accompanying leakage
- Blood in urine
- Recurrent UTIs
- Failed response to conservative measures

Healthcare providers might recommend additional treatments like pessaries (supportive devices), medication, or minimally invasive surgical procedures for appropriate candidates.

Empowerment Through Education

National Women's Health Month reminds us that health literacy empowers self-advocacy. Incontinence, though common, is never normal. With proper assessment and targeted interventions, most women can experience significant improvement or complete resolution of symptoms.

By bringing these conversations into the open, we normalize seeking help and ensure women of all ages understand that effective solutions exist for this treatable condition.

About Bela Kudish, MD, MS, FACOG, URPS

Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgeon



Bela Kudish, MD, MS, ACOG, URPS, is a double board-certified urogynecologist specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of complex pelvic conditions, lower urinary tract disorders, and pelvic floor dysfunction. With more than 20 years of experience

and a compassionate approach, Dr. Kudish is committed to enhancing her patients' quality of life through the latest medical advancements and evidence-based practices. She values the importance of building trusting relationships with her patients and is dedicated to empowering them with knowledge and ensuring they are actively involved in their care decisions.

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Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Remember the old merry-go-rounds on the playground when you were a kid? You would spin in circles until you felt like you were going to fly off. That's how life can feel if you don't make some necessary changes.

You live a much faster lifestyle than your parents did. Your children will live an even faster lifestyle than you did. As we enter a new year, perhaps it is a good time to evaluate the pace of your life and make some necessary adjustments. The Psalmist tells us:

2In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.
Psalm 127:2

If you are getting up early and staying up late but still don't feel like you can get everything done... you are probably trying to do too much.

Living at a hectic pace comes at a price. You end up feeling more stressed because you are trying to cram too many things into your day. You end up having no margin in your life. As the margins get tighter the stress goes higher.

You have to take time to recharge your batteries. Here's a lesson I learned years ago: You have just enough time to do the will of God. If you can't get everything done on your "to do" list, maybe there are things on the list you shouldn't be doing.

I want to share with you two simple strategies to help you slow down the pace of your life so that you can enjoy life.

The first strategy is to learn to be content. If you're serious about slowing down, you don't start with your schedule—you start with your heart.

The Apostle Paul said this about contentment. *¹¹I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹²I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

Philippians 4:11-13

If you're going to slow down your life, you have to learn contentment. Paul also said this about contentment: *⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.* 1 Tim. 6:6-7

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things.

Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

I'm not waiting for *more* in order to be happy. I'm happy right now. I have dreams and I have goals but I don't need *more* in order to be happy. That's contentment.

Contentment will come easier when you realize two things: life is not a competition with other people and having *more* will not make you happier. This is not the message promoted by our culture, but it is true.



Jesus said it like this, ¹⁵ *Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* Luke 12:15

If you find yourself making statements like this:

- My life is a rat race.
- I don't know how I'm going to get it all done.
- I am just so exhausted.
- I don't know how much more of this I can take.
- I just want to escape.

These phrases are all warning signs that you are on the road to burn out. You need to slow down the pace. Perhaps as we begin this new year, taking an honest evaluation of your life and determine if some changes are necessary. Are you content in your life right now?

As the merry-go-round spins faster it is only a matter of time before you either get sick, or fall off. Or, better yet, just slow down, be content, and enjoy the ride.



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