

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

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

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## UNDERSTANDING THE HIDDEN RISK FACTOR

HOW LIPOPROTEIN(A) IMPACTS  
STROKE AND HEART DISEASE

## RECLAIMING YOUR PRIME

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO  
MEN'S HEALTH THIS JUNE

## 10 SUMMER HEALTH TIPS FOR HOLISTIC LIVING IN FLORIDA'S HEAT

## IS IT TIME TO WORRY ABOUT YOUR MEMORY?

## PROTECTING YOUR EYES FROM UV RAYS

## UNSEEN BATTLES THE SILENT TOLL OF PTSD







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# UNDERSTANDING THE HIDDEN RISK FACTOR: HOW LIPOPROTEIN(A) IMPACTS STROKE AND HEART DISEASE

**S**troke remains one of the leading causes of death and disability worldwide, affecting millions of people each year. While most people are familiar with traditional risk factors like high blood pressure, diabetes, and smoking, there's a lesser-known but equally important factor that could be silently increasing your cardiovascular risk: Lipoprotein(a), commonly referred to as Lp(a).

## What is Lipoprotein(a)?

Lipoprotein(a) is a unique type of cholesterol-carrying particle that circulates in your blood. Unlike other cholesterol markers that can be influenced by diet and lifestyle, Lp(a) levels are primarily determined by genetics. This means that if you have elevated Lp(a), you likely inherited this trait from your parents, and traditional approaches like dietary changes or standard cholesterol medications may have limited impact on reducing these levels.

The structure of Lp(a) makes it particularly problematic for cardiovascular health. It combines the cholesterol-carrying properties of LDL (bad cholesterol) with additional inflammatory and clot-promoting characteristics. This dual nature makes Lp(a) a potent contributor to atherosclerosis – the buildup of plaque in arteries that can lead to heart attacks and strokes.

## The Connection Between Lp(a) and Stroke Risk

Research has consistently shown that elevated Lp(a) levels significantly increase the risk of cardiovascular events, including stroke. People with high Lp(a) levels face up to a 70% increased risk of heart disease and stroke compared to those with normal levels. This elevated risk occurs through several mechanisms.

First, Lp(a) promotes the formation of arterial plaque more aggressively than regular LDL cholesterol. The unique protein component of Lp(a) can directly bind to arterial walls, accelerating the atherosclerotic process. Second, Lp(a) interferes with the body's natural clot-dissolving mechanisms, making dangerous blood clots more likely to form and persist.

For stroke prevention, this means that individuals with elevated Lp(a) may remain at high risk even when their other cholesterol levels appear well-controlled through conventional treatments. This hidden risk factor could explain why some people experience cardiovascular events despite seemingly optimal management of traditional risk factors.



## Beyond Stroke: Comprehensive Cardiovascular Impact

While stroke prevention is crucial, elevated Lp(a) also increases the risk of other serious cardiovascular conditions. Peripheral artery disease, which affects blood flow to the legs and arms, is more common in people with high Lp(a) levels. Additionally, heart disease risk remains elevated, with some studies suggesting that Lp(a) contributes to more aggressive forms of coronary artery disease that may be harder to treat with standard interventions.

The implications extend beyond individual health outcomes. Family members of people with elevated Lp(a) should consider testing, as this genetic trait can run in families. Early identification allows for more aggressive management of other modifiable risk factors and closer cardiovascular monitoring.

## Hope on the Horizon: Advancing Treatment Options

The recognition of Lp(a) as a significant cardiovascular risk factor has sparked intensive research into targeted treatments. Currently enrolling clinical trials are evaluating innovative investigational medications specifically designed to lower Lp(a) levels in the blood. These studies represent a promising frontier in cardiovascular medicine, offering hope for millions of people who carry this genetic risk factor.

These clinical trials are investigating whether effectively lowering Lp(a) levels can translate into reduced rates of heart attacks, strokes, and other cardiovascular events. The medications being studied work through novel mechanisms that specifically target Lp(a) production, potentially offering solutions where traditional treatments have fallen short.

Participation in clinical research not only provides access to cutting-edge treatments but also contributes to advancing medical knowledge that could benefit future generations. For individuals with elevated Lp(a) levels, these studies may represent an opportunity to take proactive steps toward reducing their cardiovascular risk.

Understanding and addressing Lp(a) represents a crucial step forward in comprehensive stroke and heart disease prevention, offering new hope for protecting cardiovascular health.

## Leading the Way in Cardiovascular Research

Renstar Medical Research is at the forefront of advancing cardiovascular health through innovative clinical trials, including studies focused on Lipoprotein(a) reduction. Our dedicated research team is committed to bringing cutting-edge treatments to patients while contributing to the global understanding of cardiovascular disease prevention. For those interested in learning more about current clinical trial opportunities or how Lp(a) testing and research might benefit their cardiovascular health, Renstar Medical Research provides expert guidance and access to the latest developments in heart disease and stroke prevention.

## OPEN YOUR HEART TO NEW POSSIBILITIES

*Explore Lp(a) clinical trials for people who are at risk for heart disease, stroke, or peripheral artery disease.*

Lipoprotein(a), or Lp(a), carries cholesterol in the blood. If you have a high level of Lp(a), you may have a higher risk of heart disease, stroke, or peripheral artery disease. Learn more about currently enrolling clinical trials evaluating the ability of investigational study medications to lower the levels of Lp(a) in the blood.

### Qualified Participants May:

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# Beyond the Buzz: Alcohol-Related Cancer Risk.

**M**ost people are aware that “binge drinking” or having too much alcohol in a brief period can cause alcohol poisoning and be deadly. With the average calorie count in a standard drink ranging from 90 to 200 calories, it’s a well-known contributor to weight gain. Yet, research confirms that less than half of all Americans know that long-term consumption of alcohol can raise both cancer and death risk.

Alcohol use is, in fact, a leading preventable cause of cancer in the U.S.—contributing to 100,000 cancer cases and about 20,000 cancer deaths each year.

## Understanding Alcohol

The most common alcoholic drinks include beer, wine and spirits, also known as hard liquor. Ready-to-drink alcoholic beverages, such as canned margaritas and other pre-mixed cocktails, continue to grow in popularity by offering easy access to classic favorites without the need for extensive preparation.

The type of alcohol found in beverages is ethanol, and it’s the primary ingredient that makes people feel intoxicated. Ethanol is a chemical compound that, when consumed, affects the central nervous system, leading to changes in behavior, thinking and motor skills.

On average, the human body can process, or metabolize, about 10 to 15 grams of ethanol per hour. Let’s break down what that actually means:

- A 12-ounce regular beer typically contains about 5% alcohol by volume (ABV), which equates to 14 grams of ethanol.
- One 5-ounce glass of table wine contains about 12% ABV—also equal to 14 grams of ethanol.
- A standard 1.5-ounce shot of hard liquor—such as vodka, whiskey, tequila, etc.—is typically 40% alcohol by volume, or just over 9 grams of ethanol.

## Beyond the Buzz: The Real Effects of Alcohol

According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, alcohol increases the risk of developing six common cancers: mouth, throat, liver, colorectal, breast and stomach cancer. There is also evidence suggesting that alcohol increases the risk of developing lung, pancreatic or skin cancers (i.e., basal cell carcinoma or malignant melanoma).

Alcohol can cause cancer by different mechanisms. When alcohol is consumed, the body breaks it down into acetaldehyde, a toxic compound that can damage DNA and cause mutations. Excessive alcohol metabolism also produces free radicals, which harm cells and contribute to



cancer risk. Alcohol can also act as a solvent, helping harmful substances like tobacco smoke particles enter the body more easily, especially in the mouth and throat. Additionally, alcohol can disrupt hormone levels, such as increasing estrogen, which may raise the risk of breast cancer.

More people need to be aware of the relationship between alcohol consumption and cancer risk when considering whether to drink alcohol or how much to drink. This is especially true for individuals who are more likely to develop certain diseases or conditions because of the genes they inherited from their parents.

There is a generalized belief that drinking red wine is good for heart health due to the potential health benefits of resveratrol, a plant compound found in red wine with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. However, the potential benefits are overshadowed by the increased risk for developing cancer. Red wine is not the only source of resveratrol—consider instead eating grapes, berries (blueberries, cranberries, strawberries, raspberries), nuts (peanuts and pistachios) or dark chocolate.

## The Bottom Line

When it comes to cancer risk, there is no safe amount of alcohol. Therefore, for cancer prevention, it is best not to drink alcohol.

Mocktails are a healthier alternative. These delicious and refreshing drinks can provide hydration, vitamins and naturally occurring phytochemicals derived from fruits, fruit juices, herbs and spices that may play a role in cancer prevention by acting as antioxidants and reducing inflammation. Herbs and spices rich in phytochemicals include rosemary, mint, basil, turmeric, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, anise and vanilla, among others.

Unleash your creativity, and reduce your cancer risk! Create your own combinations by mixing sparkling water, a piece of fruit or fruit juice, herbs and spices, and even a sweetener, if desired.

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# Reclaiming Your Prime:

## A Complete Guide to Men's Health This June

By Gene Turner, MD, FAARFM

June is Men's Health Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about preventable health issues and encouraging men to take proactive steps toward optimal wellness. While men are statistically less likely to visit healthcare providers regularly, the reality is that many common health concerns can be effectively addressed with the right approach and modern treatment options.

### The Foundation:

#### Testosterone Replacement Therapy Done Right

At the heart of men's health lies hormonal balance, particularly testosterone levels. As men age, testosterone naturally declines by approximately 1-2% per year after age 30. This gradual decrease can lead to fatigue, decreased muscle mass, reduced libido, mood changes, and cognitive fog. However, not all testosterone replacement therapy (TRT) is created equal.

Testosterone Replacement Therapy Done Right involves comprehensive testing, personalized protocols, and ongoing monitoring to ensure optimal results while minimizing risks. Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, proper TRT begins with detailed hormone panels, including total testosterone, free testosterone, estradiol, and other key markers. Treatment plans are then tailored to individual needs, lifestyle factors, and health goals.

The benefits of properly administered TRT extend beyond addressing low testosterone symptoms. Men often experience improved energy levels, enhanced muscle mass and strength, better mood stability, increased mental clarity, and restored sexual function. The key lies in working with experienced practitioners who understand the nuances of hormone optimization and can adjust protocols based on ongoing results.

#### Revolutionary Treatment Options for Men's Wellness

Modern men's health extends far beyond traditional approaches, incorporating cutting-edge technologies that address specific concerns with remarkable effectiveness.

The EmSella Chair for Men represents a breakthrough in treating pelvic floor dysfunction and urinary incontinence. This FDA-approved treatment uses high-intensity focused electromagnetic technology to strengthen pelvic floor muscles without invasive procedures. Men dealing with post-surgical



incontinence, overactive bladder, or pelvic floor weakness can benefit from this comfortable, non-invasive treatment that requires no downtime.

For men experiencing erectile dysfunction or seeking enhanced sexual performance, the P-Shot offers a natural, regenerative approach. This procedure utilizes platelet-rich plasma (PRP) derived from the patient's own blood to stimulate tissue regeneration and improve blood flow. As an authorized and licensed practice with Dr. Runels' permission, we provide this innovative treatment that can enhance sensitivity, improve function, and potentially increase size naturally.

GainsWave therapy protocols complement these treatments by addressing erectile dysfunction at its source through low-intensity shockwave therapy. This non-invasive treatment stimulates the growth of new blood vessels and breaks down micro-plaque in existing vessels, improving blood flow to the penis. The result is often improved erections, enhanced sensitivity, and better overall sexual performance without medications or surgery.

#### Taking Action This Men's Health Month

Men's Health Month serves as a crucial reminder that proactive healthcare isn't just about addressing problems after they arise—it's about optimizing performance and preventing issues before they impact quality of life. Whether dealing with hormonal imbalances, sexual health concerns, or pelvic floor dysfunction, modern treatment options offer hope and results.

The combination of properly administered testosterone replacement therapy with innovative treatments like the EmSella Chair, P-Shot, and GainsWave protocols provides a comprehensive approach to men's wellness. These treatments work synergistically to address multiple aspects of men's health, from hormonal optimization to sexual function and urinary health.

This June, make your health a priority. Schedule comprehensive testing, explore treatment options, and take the first step toward reclaiming your prime years with confidence and vitality.

### 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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# UNSEEN BATTLES: THE SILENT TOLL OF PTSD

By Matthew Rocklage

**M**illions of people walk among us with hidden mental health challenges. It's a battle that doesn't always come with visual indicators. One of these conditions is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). For veterans, survivors of abuse, first responders and countless others, PTSD is not just a mental health diagnosis – it's a daily struggle for peace and healing.

This experience can be isolating, making sufferers feel alone. However, when there is understanding, support and appropriate treatment, recovery is possible.

There's a common misconception that PTSD only affects combat veterans, but it can impact a variety of individuals. PTSD can affect anyone whose nervous system responds to a traumatic event with a heightened sense of fear or danger. Everyone is different, and what's traumatic for one person might not be for others. This could include natural disasters, physical assault, domestic violence or even a car accident. However, whether PTSD develops is unique to each person, so individuals may experience PTSD from sustained hardships like bullying, medical issues, family issues or grief. Each year, nearly 9 million people are affected by PTSD.

## In Florida specifically, residents may experience hurricane-related PTSD.

With several significant storms in the past few years, it's common to feel fearful and vulnerable when hurricane season begins. A range of emotions, from anxiety to depression, can last for days, weeks or even months after the storm. People who experience particularly traumatic events during a hurricane, including being trapped or injured, or suffering the loss of a loved one or pet, may be at a higher risk of developing PTSD.

## What are the symptoms of PTSD?

The most common warning signs include:

- Nightmares or flashbacks that vividly recall traumatic events leading to distressing emotions or even physical sensations.
- Avoidance behaviors, where you try to avoid people, places or situations that remind you of the trauma.
- Increased irritability, anger or difficulty concentrating, leading to challenges at home, work or school.



- Hyperarousal or being easily startled, having difficulty sleeping or feeling a constant sense of unease.
- Increased alertness, also known as hypervigilance, which can result in increased anxiety, persistent worrying or difficulty sleeping.
- Persistent feelings of guilt, shame or self-blame, even when you are not at fault.

Experiencing any of these symptoms can significantly impact your mental and physical well-being. They can also affect your daily activities, relationships and diminish your overall quality of life.

## Who can experience PTSD?

PTSD is a mental health condition that can impact anyone, regardless of race, gender or background. However, the way it presents in children is often different than adults.

Very young children might have trouble describing their experiences, but there may be noticeable changes in their behavior, mood or academic performance. You may even see milestone regression in some children. In extreme cases, some children may stop talking entirely.

Adolescents may have dramatic shifts in their social behaviors, friend groups or stop taking part in hobbies and interests.

Recognizing the symptoms or spotting changes in your child's behavior is essential. You can help them get early intervention from a professional mental health provider, which is the first step towards recovery. Without treatment, the effects of PTSD can continue indefinitely.

## Treatment options

Early diagnosis and intervention from a professional are key to effectively managing PTSD symptoms.

PTSD treatment plans often include a range of therapeutic approaches. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and talk therapy are commonly used to

treat PTSD. In other cases, medication may also be utilized as part of the treatment approach. There isn't one specific treatment plan that works for everyone, so it's important to work with a professional you trust for individualized support.

## How can you help someone with PTSD?

Caregivers play a vital role in supporting their loved ones with PTSD. Whether you're caring for a parent, spouse or child, it's crucial to educate yourself about the disorder and its effects.

Emotional support is one of the most valuable contributions caregivers can offer. Creating a safe space for someone to express their emotions and actively listening without judgment can make a significant difference. This especially applies for children, as they likely don't understand what they're experiencing and need support from a family member or loved one to process these feelings.

Even though it can be scary, it's critical to encourage your loved one to seek professional help and assist them in finding the right therapist. You can also provide support by attending their appointments with them.

Recovery is possible – even when it feels entirely out of reach. Healing doesn't mean forgetting the trauma or pretending it never happened; it means learning to live with the past without it controlling you. With timely intervention, professional help and a compassionate support system, the brain can unlearn fear and rebuild trust. The path may be difficult, but there is hope.

## About the Author

Matthew Rocklage, DNP, PMHNP-BC, is a board-certified psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner at Elite DNA Behavioral Health's North Palm Beach location. Elite DNA is one of Florida's largest mental health providers, offering accessible and affordable in-person and virtual behavioral health services for children, adolescents, and adults at more than 30 locations across the state. For more information, visit [EliteDNA.com](http://EliteDNA.com).



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# 10 SUMMER HEALTH TIPS FOR HOLISTIC LIVING IN FLORIDA'S HEAT

By Jessica Howington, APRN

**T**he summer sun beckons in Florida, bringing both beautiful beach days and challenging heat. Here are ten essential tips to help you maintain holistic wellness during the Sunshine State's most intense season.

## Stay Hydrated with Intention

Florida's summer heat can quickly deplete your body's water reserves. Drink at least eight glasses of water daily, but make it meaningful by infusing your water with cooling cucumber, mint, or citrus fruits. This not only encourages consistent hydration but also provides additional vitamins and flavor without artificial additives.

## Practice Sun-Smart Outdoor Activity

Early mornings and evenings offer the perfect opportunity for outdoor activities when temperatures are more moderate. Whether it's beach yoga at sunrise or a peaceful evening kayak through the mangroves, scheduling outdoor time during these cooler hours allows you to enjoy Florida's natural beauty while avoiding peak UV exposure.

## Nourish with Local Seasonal Produce

Summer in Florida brings an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables. Visit local farmers' markets to find mangoes, watermelon, and other water-rich fruits that naturally help you stay hydrated. These seasonal offerings not only support local agriculture but provide the perfect nutritional profile for hot weather.

## Create a Cooling Sleep Environment

Quality sleep becomes challenging during hot Florida nights. Keep your bedroom cool with appropriate air circulation, use lightweight, breathable cotton bedding, and consider cooling pillows designed to regulate temperature. A restful night directly impacts your entire holistic health framework.

## Mind Your Skin Microbiome

Beyond sunscreen application, nurture your skin with natural moisturizers containing aloe vera to soothe sun exposure. Regular gentle exfoliation helps prevent clogged pores from increased sweat and sunscreen use. Remember that skin health reflects overall wellness.

## Establish a Humidity-Friendly Fitness Routine

Adapt your exercise routine to include water-based activities like swimming or aqua fitness, which provide



resistance without overheating. Indoor practices like yoga and pilates offer strength and flexibility benefits while avoiding extreme heat and humidity.

## Practice Heat Mindfulness

Incorporate mindfulness practices specifically designed for heat management. Deep breathing exercises can help regulate your body temperature and reduce stress that often accompanies extreme heat. A brief afternoon meditation can reset your system during the hottest part of the day.

## Create Indoor Clean Air Sanctuaries

While air conditioning provides necessary relief, ensure your indoor environments maintain good air quality. House plants like snake plants and pothos naturally filter air, while avoiding synthetic air fresheners reduces chemical exposure in closed environments.

## Embrace Water Therapy

Florida's abundant water bodies offer natural therapy. Regular ocean swims provide beneficial minerals and gentle resistance, while the negative ions from ocean air and falling water (like showers or rainfall) have been shown to improve mood and energy levels.

## Honor Your Personal Heat Threshold

Perhaps most importantly, recognize and respect your body's unique response to heat. Some individuals naturally tolerate heat better than others. Listen to your body's signals and adjust activities accordingly rather than pushing through discomfort that could lead to heat-related illness.

By integrating these holistic practices with Florida's natural summer rhythms, you can not only survive but thrive during the warmest months of the year. Remember that wellness involves harmonizing with, rather than fighting against, the natural environment around you.

## 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

Driven by a passion for wellness, Jessica is a versatile nurse practitioner who has honed her skills across a range of dynamic healthcare settings. After earning her Master's in Nursing from Emory University, she has gone on to make her mark in the emergency room, psychiatry, hospice, palliative care, and functional medicine, dedicated to empowering each of her patients to achieve their optimal health.

When she's not in the clinic, Jessica channels her competitive spirit into the equestrian sport of dressage, recently being short-listed for the Tokyo Olympics with her horse, Cavalia. As an accomplished competitor, she also manages her family's top-tier training, boarding, sales, and lesson facility in Ocala, where she shares her love for all animals, including her own sweet dogs.

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# PROTECTING YOUR EYES FROM UV RAYS

A lot of attention is given to protecting our skin from the sun's damaging UV rays; however, there's another part of the body that's just as crucial to cover up when outside: your eyes. UV light exposure can cause or accelerate several serious eye conditions, some of which can lead to severe vision loss. Fortunately, there are ways to preserve your vision while having fun in the sun. Below are some helpful tips to protect your eyes from UV rays.

## WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR EYES FROM UV RAYS

Shielding your eyes from UV rays is easy to implement into your summer routine. There are three simple steps you can take to reduce exposure to blinding sunlight:

### 1. Limit your time outside:

The sun is usually strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so stick to the shade or stay indoors during these hours as much as possible. Most weather apps display a UV index, which is the measure of the sun's intensity. Check the index before going outside, even if it's a cloudy or rainy day.

### 2. Wear a hat:

Wearing a hat not only keeps your face shaded from the sun, but it can keep your eyes protected from both glare and dangerous UV rays. Choose a hat that has a broad, dark brim. Test it out before going outside to make sure it fully covers your eyes.

### 3. Choose UV-resistant sunglasses:

Sunglasses work by blocking and reflecting harmful UV light away from your eyes. All sunglasses are

required to meet minimum requirements for UV protection and lens quality. Look for lenses that provide 99%-100% protection or have a UV400 rating. Fit is more important than style, and they should stay in place while covering the skin around your eyes. Polarized lenses can help reduce glare if you're near the water. If you're unsure whether your sunglasses are effective, ask your ophthalmologist or optometrist to test them with a device called a photometer.

## HOW UV RAYS CAN DAMAGE YOUR EYES

UV rays are extremely harmful, and they can damage nearly all parts of your eye, including your eyelid. Light exposure ages all structures of your eye, and it can lead to several chronic conditions, especially on the eyelids. Your eyelids have the thinnest skin throughout your whole body, and UV rays can cause them to experience dryness, wrinkles, loss of elasticity and sagging. Other serious damages UV exposure can cause to your eyes include:

- **Pinguecula:** This non-cancerous fat and protein deposit can build up in the white part of your eye, called the sclera, causing irritation that affects the efficiency of your tear ducts.

- **Pterygium:** Also known as "Surfer's Eye," pterygium develops as a growth that extends from your sclera to your cornea. Both pterygium and pingueculas often affect those who participate in water sports because the front surface of the eye absorbs a majority of UV rays, especially when it's reflected off the water's surface.

- **Cataracts:** UV rays can modify your lens proteins, which can cause clouding in the lens of your eye, known as a cataract. The damage from cataracts is irreversible and can only be removed with surgery treatment to artificially replace your eye's lens.

- **Cancers:** Basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and cutaneous melanoma are cancers that can develop on your eyelid. Squamous cell carcinoma can also spread to your conjunctiva and make its way into your cornea. These diseases are the only type of ocular cancer linked to UV ray overexposure.

- **Age-Related Macular Degeneration:** Commonly hyphenated as AMD, this condition is the major cause of blindness in Americans over 55. The condition breaks down the macula, which, as part of your light-sensitive retina, is the part of the eye that controls straight-ahead sight and clear vision. Oxidative stress and prolonged exposure to UV rays without protection increase your risk of developing AMD, for which there is no cure.

Protecting your eyes against UV rays is crucial in maintaining your eye's overall health. If you're worried you're experiencing symptoms of UV damage or you want to take preventative action, consult with your local ophthalmologist or optometrist. To keep your eyes protected and your vision strong, trust the experts at Lake Eye.

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# ESSENTIAL OILS TO IMPROVE SYMPTOMS OF VARICOSE VEINS

**V**aricose veins can be more than just a cosmetic concern; they can cause discomfort, including itchiness and leg pain. While seeking treatment from vascular physicians like those at Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center in Orlando is essential for effectively addressing varicose veins, many individuals also explore natural remedies like essential oils for symptom relief.

Essential oils have gained popularity for their therapeutic properties and offer promising benefits for those dealing with varicose veins. These veins develop when the valves in the legs fail to function correctly, leading to poor circulation and blood pooling in the veins. Fortunately, certain essential oils can help alleviate the discomfort associated with varicose veins and support healthy circulation.

Here are some of the top essential oils known for their potential to relieve varicose vein symptoms:

**1. Lemongrass Oil:** Lemongrass essential oil promotes blood circulation, benefiting individuals with varicose veins. By improving circulation, lemongrass oil helps prevent blood from stagnating in the veins, reducing the risk of complications like blood clots and venous ulcers.

**2. Chamomile Oil:** Chamomile oil is renowned for its soothing properties, which can provide relief from the heaviness and pain associated with varicose veins. Massaging chamomile oil into the legs before bedtime can help alleviate discomfort, particularly for individuals who spend prolonged periods standing during the day.

**3. Helichrysum Oil:** Helichrysum essential oil offers dual benefits for varicose veins. Not only does it possess anti-inflammatory properties that reduce inflammation in the veins, but it also supports healthy circulation and helps prevent the formation of new varicose veins. Regular use of helichrysum oil can help manage existing symptoms while protecting against further vein damage.

Using essential oils for varicose veins requires proper application to ensure safety and effectiveness. Essential oils are highly concentrated and



should always be diluted before use. One common method is to create a compress by adding five drops of essential oil to a liter of warm or cold water and soaking a cloth in the solution. Alternatively, you can mix 30 drops of essential oil with a carrier oil like sweet almond, coconut, or olive oil and massage it into the affected area.

While essential oils can provide temporary relief from varicose vein symptoms, they are not a substitute for professional treatment. For lasting relief and comprehensive vein care, it's essential to consult with vascular physicians who specialize in varicose vein treatment. The experts at Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center are dedicated to helping patients achieve optimal vein health and regain comfort in their legs. Contact us today to schedule a consultation and take the first step towards a life free from varicose vein discomfort.

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

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

For more information regarding the prevention of varicose veins, please see our blog at:  
<https://cfvein.com/spider-veins-bruise-prevention/>

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# IS IT TIME TO WORRY ABOUT YOUR MEMORY?

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

**H**ave you ever had a 'senior moment' -- momentarily forgetting why you walked into a room, forgetting where you put something? You laugh about it, calling it an age-related problem, but later wonder was it really a temporary lapse in memory or could it be something more serious? You are not alone. We all do that from time to time and it is usually nothing to worry about. However, there are things to look for when it is time to take a closer look.

## When is it a serious memory problem?

If you do not remember your own phone number or address, or forgetting things on a regular basis that your spouse or family member has noticed is an increasing frequency, then you may want to seek further evaluation from your physician. These scenarios could be an indication of memory decline versus a momentary senior moment:

- You lose your car in the parking lot because you forgot the color, make or model.
- You have always had a remarkable memory and now you cannot remember anything.
- You get lost in places you should know well.
- You repeat yourself or ask the same questions over and over.
- You are confused about people you should know.
- You are confused about time or unable to tell time.

With mild cognitive impairment (MCI), patients are more likely to develop dementia. Although there are many different types and causes of dementia, the four most common are: Alzheimer's, Vascular, Frontotemporal, and Lewy Body. Depending on the diagnosis, the progression varies.

## How the brain stores memories

Information we take in goes through three stages: 1) encoding, 2) storage and 3) retrieval. Our brains are like a computer that stores memories in different categories: **recent**—what you ate for breakfast; **short-term**—the name of a person you met moments ago, and **long-term**—memories of your childhood. It is the most complex organ of the body that controls every process that regulates our body and consists of about eighty-six billion neurons.



Scientists estimate that the human brain will hold up to one quadrillion pieces of information over the course of a lifetime.

Aging affects our memory and begins in our twenties. A few cells at a time are lost, with fewer chemicals produced that help the brain function. The older you are, the more these changes affect the memory. There are also changes in the way memories are stored, making it harder to recall information. Other conditions that can affect memory include depression, side-effects of drugs, strokes, head injuries and alcoholism.

## Here are some ways to help improve your memory:

- Make lists, use notes.
- Stick to routines and use calendars.
- Make associations to connect things in your mind.
- Put frequently used items in the same place each time.
- Learn new things, do brain games, learn a new language.
- Exercise, meditation, and deep breathing also helps.
- Hydration is important.

- Preventative measures such as stop smoking, drink alcohol in moderation.
- Sleep is especially important, regenerative and restorative.

## Living with a loved one's dementia

Hospice of Marion County offers Dementia Caregiver Workshops along with sensitivity training which enables caregivers to have a better experience with their loved one. This training includes the Virtual Dementia Tour® which helps caregivers understand the challenges people living with dementia face daily, including Teepa Snow's Positive Approach® techniques which teaches HOW to live in a relationship with someone living with dementia. If you are interested in attending this workshop, contact the Nancy Renyhart Dementia Education Program at (352) 291-5138. Classes are offered monthly in the Elliott Center.

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# BREAKING THE SILENCE:

## MEN'S HEALTH MONTH SPOTLIGHTS ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

June marks Men's Health Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about health issues that disproportionately affect men, including one of the most common yet least discussed conditions: erectile dysfunction (ED). While millions of men experience ED, many suffer in silence due to embarrassment or misconception. This Men's Health Month, it's time to change the conversation around this treatable condition.

### UNDERSTANDING ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

Erectile dysfunction affects approximately 30 million American men, with prevalence increasing significantly with age. According to statistics, approximately 12 percent of men under 60, 22 percent of men between 60 and 69, and 30 percent of men over 70 experience ED.

Despite its prevalence, many men still don't understand what causes ED or how it develops. An erection is a complex process involving nerve signals, blood vessels, and muscle tissue. When aroused, the brain sends nerve signals that cause arteries in the penis to dilate, increasing blood flow to erectile tissue. This blood must then remain trapped in the penis to maintain the erection until release.

When this process is disrupted, ED can occur. Medical professionals categorize ED into two main types: psychogenic and organic. Psychogenic ED stems from psychological factors like stress, anxiety, depression, or relationship issues. However, most cases (about 80%) are organic, meaning they result from physical conditions affecting the body's systems.

### PHYSICAL CAUSES OF ED

Organic ED often results from conditions that affect either the nervous system, circulatory system, or both. Some of the most common causes include:

- **Diabetes:** This condition can damage nerves and blood vessels essential for erectile function, making it one of the leading causes of ED.
- **Cardiovascular disease:** Conditions like atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) restrict blood flow throughout the body, including to the penis.
- **Hypertension:** High blood pressure damages blood vessels and can lead to ED both directly and through medications used to treat it.



- **Venous leak impotence:** This condition allows blood to escape from the penis prematurely, making it difficult to maintain an erection.
- **Medication side effects:** Many medications, particularly those for blood pressure, depression, and prostate conditions, list ED as a potential side effect.

### TREATMENT OPTIONS

Men's Health Month serves as a reminder that ED is a medical condition, not a reflection of masculinity or worth. Most importantly, numerous effective treatments exist, and finding the right one often just requires an honest conversation with a healthcare provider.

For psychogenic ED, counseling often provides significant improvement. For organic cases, treatment options include:

- **Oral medications:** FDA-approved medications like Viagra®, Levitra®, and Cialis® work by enhancing the effects of nitric oxide, a natural chemical that relaxes penile muscles and increases blood flow. However, these aren't appropriate for everyone, particularly men with certain cardiovascular conditions or those taking nitroglycerine medications.
- **Vacuum constriction devices:** These non-invasive devices use negative pressure to draw blood into the penis, creating an erection that is then maintained with a constriction band at the base of the penis.
- **Injectable therapies:** Medications like Caverject® are directly injected into the penis to increase blood flow and produce an erection.

• **Medical devices:** Various implantable and external devices can help men achieve erections when other treatments aren't effective.

• **Surgical procedures:** For men who don't respond to other treatments, penile implant surgery offers a highly effective solution with high satisfaction rates. Many procedures can be performed on an outpatient basis with relatively short recovery periods.

### BREAKING THE STIGMA

This Men's Health Month, healthcare providers are encouraging men to break the silence around ED. The condition is often an early warning sign of other serious health conditions like heart disease or diabetes, making diagnosis and treatment not just about sexual health, but overall wellbeing.

By addressing ED with a healthcare provider, men often discover underlying health issues that, once treated, improve both their erectile function and overall health. Remember, seeking help isn't a sign of weakness—it's taking control of your health.

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If you're experiencing symptoms of erectile dysfunction, don't wait. Contact Lake Sumter Urology at 352-775-6899 to schedule a confidential consultation with specialists who understand and can help address your concerns.



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# MEN'S HEALTH MONTH: The Silent Crisis of Male Hearing Loss

By Dr. Evans Pemba

**J**une marks Men's Health Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about health issues that disproportionately affect men. While conversations often focus on heart disease, prostate cancer, and mental health, one critical aspect of male wellness frequently goes unnoticed: hearing health. The statistics paint a concerning picture that demands attention and action.

Men are significantly more likely to experience hearing loss than women, with studies showing they face nearly twice the risk. According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, approximately 18% of men between ages 20-69 have hearing loss in both ears, compared to just 11% of women in the same age group. This disparity becomes even more pronounced with age, as men over 65 are three times more likely than their female counterparts to develop hearing impairment.

The reasons behind this gender gap are multifaceted and often preventable. Occupational hazards play a significant role, as men are more likely to work in industries with high noise exposure, including construction, manufacturing, military service, and transportation. The constant exposure to machinery, power tools, aircraft engines, and heavy equipment takes a cumulative toll on their auditory system over decades of employment.

Recreational activities also contribute to the problem. Men are more prone to engage in loud hobbies such as hunting, motorcycling, attending concerts, and using power equipment for home improvement projects. These activities, while enjoyable, often occur without proper hearing protection, gradually damaging the delicate structures of the inner ear.

The biological differences between men and women may also play a role. Research suggests that estrogen might have protective effects on hearing, potentially explaining why women maintain better hearing health throughout their lives. Additionally, men may be more susceptible to noise-induced hearing damage due to differences in ear anatomy and blood flow patterns.

Perhaps most troubling is the reluctance many men show toward addressing hearing problems. Cultural factors and traditional masculine stereotypes often discourage men from seeking help for what they



perceive as signs of weakness or aging. This delay in treatment can have serious consequences, as untreated hearing loss is linked to social isolation, depression, cognitive decline, and increased risk of falls and accidents.

The impact extends beyond the individual. Hearing loss affects relationships, job performance, and overall quality of life. Family members often bear the burden of repeated conversations, raised television volumes, and the frustration that comes with communication barriers. Professional relationships may suffer when important information is missed during meetings or phone calls.

Fortunately, prevention and treatment options are more accessible than ever. The first step is recognition and regular hearing assessments. Men should have baseline hearing tests by age 50, or earlier if they have significant noise exposure. Annual screenings can catch problems early when interventions are most effective.

Prevention strategies include wearing appropriate hearing protection in noisy environments, keeping the volume reasonable when using headphones or earbuds, and taking breaks from loud activities. Modern hearing protection doesn't mean sacrificing enjoyment—high-quality earplugs and noise-canceling headphones can preserve sound quality while protecting hearing.

For those already experiencing hearing loss, today's hearing aids are remarkable technological achievements. They're smaller, more effective, and often virtually invisible. Many connect seamlessly with smartphones and other devices, offering features that enhance rather than hinder daily life.

This Men's Health Month, let's break the silence around male hearing health. Encourage the men in your life to prioritize their auditory wellness alongside other health concerns. Regular check-ups, proper protection, and early intervention can preserve one of our most precious senses. After all, staying connected to the sounds of life—from grandchildren's laughter to meaningful conversations—is an essential part of healthy aging and overall well-being.

If you're ready to take control of your hearing health, don't wait any longer. Contact Dr. Pemba at Ocala Hears to schedule a comprehensive hearing evaluation at 352-612-3739. With expert care and cutting-edge technology, Dr. Pemba and the team at Ocala Hears are committed to helping you maintain your connection to the world around you. Your hearing—and your quality of life—are worth the investment.



## 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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# BREAKTHROUGH IN NEUROPATHY TREATMENT:

## HOW SUMMUS LASER THERAPY OFFERS HOPE FOR NERVE PAIN SUFFERERS

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

### Understanding Neuropathy: A Complex Challenge

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

### The Summus Laser: A Technological Marvel in Pain Management

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

### Key Mechanisms of Summus Laser Therapy

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

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

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

### Clinical Evidence and Patient Outcomes

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



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

### Treatment Process and Expectations

A typical Summus Laser treatment protocol involves:

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

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

### Advantages Over Traditional Neuropathy Treatments

The Summus Laser offers several distinct advantages:

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

### Who Can Benefit?

Summus Laser therapy is particularly beneficial for patients with:

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

### Future of Neuropathy Treatment

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

### Conclusion

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

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.

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# ELEVATE YOUR HEALTH:

## Elite Medical Celebrates National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

June marks National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, a time when Elite Medical emphasizes the vital connection between regular physical activity and overall wellness. As healthcare providers committed to comprehensive patient care, we recognize that exercise is not just a recreational activity but a fundamental component of preventive medicine and lasting health.

### The Science Behind Movement

Physical activity triggers a cascade of positive physiological responses throughout the body. When you engage in regular exercise, your cardiovascular system strengthens, improving blood flow and reducing the risk of heart disease. Simultaneously, your muscles and bones gain density and resilience, providing better support for daily activities while preventing age-related deterioration.

Beyond the physical benefits, exercise produces endorphins—natural mood elevators that combat stress and anxiety. These neurochemical changes explain why a brisk walk or swim can transform your mental state, providing clarity and emotional balance when you need it most.

### Finding Your Fitness Path

At Elite Medical, we understand that the perfect exercise regimen varies from person to person. While some thrive in competitive sports environments, others prefer solitary activities that allow for reflection and personal pace-setting. The key is discovering physical activities that bring you joy and sustainability.

Consider these options as you explore your fitness journey:

- Low-impact activities like swimming, cycling, or yoga for joint protection
- Strength training to maintain muscle mass and metabolic health
- Team sports for both physical conditioning and social connection
- Outdoor activities that combine exercise with nature's therapeutic benefits

Remember that consistency outweighs intensity. A moderate daily walk delivers more health benefits than occasional extreme workouts followed by prolonged inactivity.



### Special Considerations for Medical Conditions

For patients managing chronic conditions, exercise becomes even more crucial—yet requires thoughtful adaptation. Those with diabetes can experience improved insulin sensitivity through regular movement. Individuals with hypertension often see significant blood pressure improvements with cardiovascular exercise. Even those recovering from injuries can benefit from appropriately modified regimens.

Our Elite Medical specialists are trained to develop customized fitness plans that account for your unique health profile, ensuring safe and effective physical activity that complements your treatment plan.

### Making Movement a Family Affair

This June, consider how physical activity can strengthen family bonds while improving health outcomes for all generations. Children who see parents prioritizing fitness are more likely to develop lifelong healthy habits. Grandparents who stay active maintain independence longer and enjoy more quality time with younger family members.

Simple family activities like evening walks, weekend bike rides, or backyard games create memories while building healthier bodies. These shared experiences become the foundation for a family culture that values movement and well-being.

### Our Commitment to Your Active Lifestyle

Elite Medical remains dedicated to supporting your fitness journey through personalized guidance, condition-specific recommendations, and evidence-based approaches to physical activity. This National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, we invite you to schedule a wellness consultation to discuss how movement can enhance your treatment outcomes and overall quality of life.

Remember, the best exercise program is one that you'll maintain consistently. Let's work together to discover your path to sustainable fitness and improved health.

### 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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# Vestibular Balance Issues Should Not be Ignored:

## *A Physical Therapy Method has Helped Countless Individuals Find Restoration*

**A**t least 50 percent of the U.S. population will develop a balance issue, at some point in their lives. Balance disorders typically happen to the aging population, between the ages of 50 to 75, and most of these are related to vestibular disruptions.

Patients suffering from vestibular related disorders frequently experience vertigo, dizziness, nausea, migraines, gait issues (walking), and imbalance. In addition, many patients complain of mood changes and cognitive impairment. Usually, these symptoms stem from issues in the inner ear. More than 69 million Americans have experienced some form of vestibular problems in their lifetime, and that number is on the rise.

**BPPV:** The most common form of vestibular complications is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo or BPPV.

- Benign - Not life-threatening
- Paroxysmal - Brief spells that come and go
- Positional - Triggered by certain head positions or movements
- Vertigo - A false sense of rotational movement

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

can be effectively treated with one of two simple manual therapies that move the crystals through the ear, improving and in many cases alleviating vertigo and the sensations of dizziness. These therapies can be performed in the convenience of Innovative Therapies Group's office.

It's dangerous to leave vestibular disorders untreated. If you have balance issues, your likelihood of suffering a

fall with possible complications like broken bones, or impingements, which cause limited range-of-motion is much higher. Not to mention that the unpleasant side effects of nausea and painful headaches can be alleviated through the proper treatment, which will help you to get back to living a good quality of life.

Patient & Occupational Education is critical to alleviate further injury and to promote the most efficacious healing. Coupled with family participation, self-help management to promote and maintain independent function, and mobility is critical.



Physical therapy is used to help with numerous indications and conditions like retraining the body to improve gait and balance and also after hip, knee or shoulder replacement and so much more. There is no better way to alleviate pain, increase range-of-motion and live a more mobile higher quality of life than through physical & Occupational therapy.

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

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# PILATES: THE MISSING LINK IN MEN'S FITNESS

Pilates isn't just for dancers or social media influencers—it's a powerful, science-driven system that sharpens how your body moves, functions, and holds up under pressure. It's time to train smarter, especially if you're dealing with morning stiffness, nursing an old injury, or noticing your range of motion getting tighter by the year. Pilates helps you build strength where it counts, fire up underused muscles, and fix the breakdowns from years of wear and tear.

This isn't about chasing a pump or maxing out reps. It's about dialing in precision, control, and the kind of deep core power that holds your frame together—so you move better, play harder, and age like the engine of a well-kept Porsche. Think less "break down at 50," more "built to outlast Clooney."

## The Tool Often Overlooked in Men's Fitness

Cultural norms often condition boys and young men to move in a linear and force-dominant manner: push hard, lift heavy, repeat. This kind of training usually focuses too much on the front of the body and sticks to a limited range of movement. Over time, that can lead to tight hamstrings, shoulder impingements, and low back pain. These issues aren't random—they're the natural result of muscle imbalances and moving in the same patterns without full-body coordination.

Pilates was initially designed as a system to support full-body functionality through controlled, precise movements that emphasize core stabilization, breath coordination, and joint alignment. Rather than merely adding more load to dysfunctional patterns, Pilates helps reorganize those patterns at the neurological and fascial levels, facilitating improved posture, energy conservation, and pain reduction.

## Built for Athletes. And Built to Last.

Some of the world's highest-performing athletes include Pilates in their regular training schedules. This is not incidental. Pilates strengthens the smaller stabilizing muscle groups often ignored in weightlifting or sport-specific drills, particularly those around the shoulder girdle, hip complex, and spine. It enhances rotational strength and postural endurance, critical for athletic efficiency and joint health.

Athletes from football, basketball, golf, soccer, and baseball have publicly credited Pilates for helping them stay strong, recover faster, and move with more control. Instead of just building brute strength, Pilates trains the body to work as one connected unit, making it perfect for sports and workouts that demand power, repetition, and endurance.



## Secondary Gains: The Underestimated Benefits

Improving performance is just the beginning. Pilates also delivers a range of benefits that are especially valuable for men. Better posture is perfect for guys who spend long hours at a desk or behind the wheel, as Pilates helps retrain your body to hold itself tall and strong. You'll develop stronger, safer joints through better alignment and control, which means less strain on your knees, hips, and shoulders, allowing you to move with less wear and tear.

For a healthier back, you'll learn to decompress your spine and build strength where it matters, helping reduce pain and prevent future issues. Smarter breathing techniques teach you how to breathe in a way that supports digestion, powers your movement, and connects your core to the rest of your body. The controlled movement and focused breathing activate your body's natural recovery system, lowering stress and helping you reset.

Pilates also supports balanced hormones through better sleep, more stable blood sugar, and stronger neuromuscular function, promoting healthy testosterone and metabolism. And let's be honest: it shows. Regular Pilates often leads to leaner muscle, better posture, and more upper-back mobility, allowing you to move better, feel better, and confidently carry yourself.

## Strength That Transfers Beyond the Gym

Pilates develops strength that applies directly to real-world and sport-specific activities. In this context, functional strength refers to the ability to stabilize under load, rotate through multiple planes of motion, and maintain ideal posture through fatigue.

Key exercises that illustrate this include The Hundred, which enhances respiratory efficiency and trunk endurance, and Leg Circles, which reinforce lumbo-pelvic control and hip joint mobility. Side Plank Variations promote shoulder joint integrity and lateral line engagement, while the Bridging Series targets gluteal

strength and spinal articulation. Standing Reformer Work develops dynamic balance and single-leg control—critical fall prevention and athletic readiness skills.

These subtle movements contribute to profound kinetic coordination and physical sustainability gains, especially in aging populations.

## Systemic Impact: Deep Core and Internal Health

Pilates doesn't just work the muscles you can see—it also strengthens the deep muscles inside the body that help with breathing, posture, and staying steady when you move. Activating and conditioning this system improves intra-abdominal strength and reaction, spinal support, and organ mobility. Clinically, this can have a measurable impact on chronic constipation and digestive sluggishness, stress-induced shallow breathing, pelvic dysfunction or pain, adrenal fatigue and overtraining symptoms, and diaphragmatic inhibition and respiratory issues.

Addressing these often-overlooked contributors to male health allows Pilates to function as both a corrective tool and a proactive intervention for comprehensive well-being.

## Movement Investment With Maximum Return

Pilates benefits the male body in ways that traditional strength training often overlooks. From joint protection to cognitive focus, from digestive support to functional strength, Pilates offers a multidimensional approach to movement training that aligns with the complex demands of modern male health.

This system does not replace strength training or cardio conditioning. It enhances them, fills in the gaps, and balances the lineup. As movement science continues to evolve, Pilates remains ahead of the curve—training the brain, body, and breath as one intelligent system.

Whether you're a lifter, a golfer, a runner, a dad, or just tired of feeling stiff and sore, Club Pilates Ocala has a place on your roster.



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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.

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

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# INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN ALZHEIMER'S CARE: The Theta Chamber at Keep Young Wellness Center

By Allen T. Stanley, Practitioner

In the challenging landscape of Alzheimer's disease treatment, innovative approaches are bringing new hope to patients and families affected by this progressive neurodegenerative condition. Among these promising developments is the integration of neurological stimulation technologies like the Theta Chamber, now available at Keep Young Wellness Center, which offers a complementary approach to conventional Alzheimer's treatments.

## Understanding Alzheimer's Challenges

Alzheimer's disease remains one of the most formidable health challenges of our time, affecting approximately 6.7 million Americans, with numbers expected to rise dramatically as the population ages. Traditional medications have shown limited effectiveness in halting the progression of the disease, creating an urgent need for alternative and complementary treatment modalities.

The disease's complex nature—involving protein accumulation in the brain, neuroinflammation, and disrupted neural signaling—requires multifaceted treatment approaches. This complexity has led forward-thinking facilities like Keep Young Wellness Center to explore technologies that address brain function at the fundamental level.

## The Theta Chamber: A Neurological Approach

The Theta Chamber represents a technological innovation designed to influence brain wave patterns through a combination of sensory inputs. At Keep Young Wellness Center, this technology is being utilized as part of an integrated approach to cognitive health, with potential applications for Alzheimer's patients.

The system works by producing theta brain wave states—low-frequency patterns associated with deep relaxation, improved memory function, and enhanced learning capacity. For Alzheimer's patients, who often experience disrupted brain wave patterns and neural connectivity issues, this therapy aims to create more harmonious neural activity.

"What makes the Theta Chamber particularly interesting for Alzheimer's care is its non-invasive nature," explains Allen Stanley. "Patients experience a multi-sensory session that includes visual stimulation, auditory input, and gentle physical vibrations—all designed to guide the brain toward healthier functioning patterns."

## Integration with Conventional Treatment Plans

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the Theta Chamber approach is its compatibility with established medical treatments. Rather than positioning itself as a replacement for conventional care, the center emphasizes that Theta Chamber sessions can work alongside physician-directed treatment plans.

This integrated approach recognizes the importance of standard medical care while acknowledging that complementary techniques may offer additional benefits. For Alzheimer's patients, this might mean continuing prescribed medications while adding regular Theta Chamber sessions to potentially enhance cognitive function, reduce anxiety, and improve sleep patterns—all common challenges in the Alzheimer's journey.

## Addressing Multiple Dimensions of Alzheimer's

The effects of Alzheimer's extend far beyond memory loss, often manifesting as anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, and agitation. The Theta Chamber's approach to balancing brain activity shows promise in addressing these secondary symptoms that significantly impact quality of life.

Keep Young Wellness Center clients with early-stage cognitive decline have reported improvements in sleep quality, reduced anxiety levels, and a greater sense of calm after beginning regular sessions. These quality-of-life improvements, while not curative of the underlying condition, represent meaningful gains for patients and caregivers navigating the Alzheimer's journey.

## Research and Future Directions

While the application of technologies like the Theta Chamber in Alzheimer's care is still evolving, preliminary research into neurological stimulation techniques shows promising directions. Studies examining various forms of brain stimulation have demonstrated potential benefits for cognitive function, though more research specific to Theta technology is needed.

Keep Young Wellness Center maintains careful records of client outcomes, contributing to the growing body of knowledge about complementary approaches to Alzheimer's care. This commitment to evidence-based practice ensures that while offering innovative options, they remain grounded in responsible healthcare principles.

## A Person-Centered Approach

Central to Keep Young Wellness Center's philosophy is personalization of care. Each client's Theta Chamber experience is tailored to their specific needs, cognitive status, and comfort level. This individualized approach recognizes that Alzheimer's affects each person differently and that treatment approaches must be equally nuanced.

For families exploring options beyond conventional treatments, the center provides educational resources and consultation to determine if their services might be appropriate for their loved one's specific situation and stage of cognitive change.

## Looking Forward

As the search for effective Alzheimer's interventions continues, approaches that can work harmoniously with medical treatments offer an expanded toolkit for patients and healthcare providers. Keep Young Wellness Center's integration of the Theta Chamber into comprehensive care plans represents one direction in this evolving landscape.

For those affected by Alzheimer's disease and seeking additional support strategies, technologies like the Theta Chamber may offer a complementary approach to enhancing brain function and quality of life—working not to replace but to supplement the best that conventional medicine has to offer.

Keep Young Wellness Center stands ready to collaborate with patients, families, and healthcare providers in exploring how innovative approaches like the Theta Chamber might contribute to more comprehensive Alzheimer's care—offering support for the mind, brain, and overall well-being during one of life's most challenging health journeys.



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

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDISM

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

## What Is Sleep Apnea?

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

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

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

## What are the symptoms of Sleep Apnea?

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

## Obstructive Sleep Apnea & Oral Appliances:

### Have you tried CPAP therapy?

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



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

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

*Laurel Manor Dental/Laurel Manor SleepCare*

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

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

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

## Meet Dr. Rozensky

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

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

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



# When You Are At Your Wits End

**H**ave you ever been at your wits' end? Have you ever been so confused that you didn't really know which way was up? Have you ever had the feeling, "I know I need to do something...but I don't know what 'something' to do."

The Bible tells the story of a group of sailors who went out to sea and encountered a huge storm that almost killed them:

*<sup>23</sup>Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. <sup>24</sup>They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep. <sup>25</sup>For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. <sup>26</sup>They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. <sup>27</sup>They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. <sup>28</sup>Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. <sup>29</sup>He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. <sup>30</sup>They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. <sup>31</sup>Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.* Psalm 107:23-31

**Can you relate to this group of sailors?** Maybe the circumstances in your life have caused your courage to melt away. Perhaps you are going through a storm of your own. You may find yourself at your wits' end without any clear direction as to what to do next. If so, follow the example of the sailors in the Bible.

There first thing they did was cry out to the LORD in their trouble. Don't underestimate the power of prayer. An old gospel song says, "when God is all you have, you'll find He's all you need." God responded to the sailor's prayer by bringing them out of their distress. In fact, it says he stilled the storm to a whisper and the waves of the sea were hushed. God can do that in your life and in your situation as well. Call out to him. His timing is not always as quick as we may like but He knows what is best for each of us.

When the storm was over, the text says that God guided the sailors to their desired haven. They found their place of rest and peace. Storms don't last forever... and neither will yours. Keep your faith in God. Cry out to Him in your pain. Trust that He knows what's best and keep praying and seeking your desired haven... it may be just around the corner.

And then, don't forget to thank God when He does bring you through the storm. The story concludes by saying, "*Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.*"

Storms, crises, pain and problems are an unfortunate reality of life. We grow through the pain and learn valuable lessons during these times. Don't give up, give in, or quit. When you find yourself at your wits' end...hang on, cry out to God, and look for His deliverance.








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