

TAMPA BAY'S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

May 2026

Tampa Bay Edition - Monthly

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UNPLUG TO POWER UP

Why Digital Balance Matters
for Mental Health

GIVE THE GIFT
OF MONA LISA
LASER THERAPY
FOR MOTHER'S DAY

THE ART OF AGING GRACEFULLY

Why Skin Checks Matter

BETTER HEARING STARTS WITH YOU

Why May Is the Perfect
Time to Prioritize Your
Hearing Health

ANYONE CAN
SUFFER A STROKE



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Ali Zarezadeh, MD

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CONTENTS MAY 2026

- 6 Unplug to Power Up: Why Digital Balance Matters for Mental Health
- 7 Take Control of Your Health with BodyView Preventive MRI by Encore Imaging
- 8 The Art of Aging Gracefully: Why Skin Checks Matter at Art of Dermatology
- 9 Better Hearing Starts with You: Why May Is the Perfect Time to Prioritize Your Hearing Health
- 12 Autism Spectrum Disorder: Can Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Help?
- 13 Give the Gift of Mona Lisa Laser Therapy for Mother's Day
- 14 Why Single Seniors Flourish in Senior Living Communities
- 16 Anyone Can Suffer a Stroke
- 17 Painful Nerve Damage: How One Patient's Story Helps Another Find Relief: Treating Shoulder Pain Successfully with Radiofrequency
- 18 Seniors Aging in Place
- 19 Spiritual Wellness: Finding Rhythm in a Rushed World

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UNPLUG TO POWER UP:

WHY DIGITAL BALANCE MATTERS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

By Elizabeth Dosoretz, LCSW

We live in a world that rarely slows down.

Between packed schedules, constant notifications and the pressure to stay informed and connected, it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Many of us move from one thing to the next without ever stopping to take a breath.

There is often an unspoken expectation to always be on, available, responsive and productive. That expectation is not realistic or sustainable. Feeling tired or overwhelmed does not mean you are failing. Not every day will feel productive, and that is okay. Taking care of your health, mentally and physically, should remain the top priority.

Sometimes what we really need is permission to pause. Setting thoughtful boundaries, especially around technology, can help reduce stress and support both our mental and physical well-being.

Digital overstimulation plays a major role in burnout and stress. Screen time adds up quickly through online shopping, group chats, social media, emails and documenting everyday life. At the same time, we are constantly exposed to curated content from companies, colleagues, friends and even family. Over time, this can quietly shape expectations and fuel comparison, making it feel as though everyone else is doing more or coping better.

At the same time, digital balance does not mean eliminating technology or disconnecting completely. It means being intentional about how, when and why we engage with digital tools. When technology use is unregulated, it can increase mental load, disrupt focus and keep the nervous system in a constant state of alert. When balanced, it can support connection and productivity.

Finding Your Balance

Part of what makes these patterns so difficult to change is how our brains are wired. Behavioral science research, including the work of Katy Milkman, shows that we naturally default to what is easy, familiar and immediately rewarding, such as scrolling or checking notifications.

Insight alone is rarely enough to create change. When our surroundings encourage constant engagement, even the best intentions can be overridden by habit. Real and lasting change happens when we make small adjustments to our environment and routines, making healthier choices more natural.



These changes reduce friction, lower decision fatigue and help new behaviors stick without requiring constant self-monitoring or discipline.

It's why creating intentional digital boundaries can be so powerful. It does not mean deleting apps or giving up devices altogether. It means pausing long enough to ask yourself why you are reaching for your phone. Is it habit, boredom, stress or a genuine desire to connect?

When possible, replace mindless scrolling with something restorative. This might include writing a few thoughts down, spending time with someone you love or engaging in a favorite activity. Many types of activities can help reset your nervous system. These moments do not need to be long to be effective.

Small and well-timed changes are often far more sustainable than sweeping resolutions. A recent study published in *Jama Network Open* found that even short reductions in social media use can significantly reduce mental health symptoms in young adults. Less screen time has been associated with lower anxiety, improved sleep, better focus and more space for emotional processing that often gets buried in a constantly moving, digital world.

A healthier relationship with technology is possible, even if it feels difficult right now. After all, building digital balance does not mean giving something up forever. It means learning how to use technology in a way that supports your mental health rather than draining it. With the right support, new habits can be formed and sustained over time.

Remember, the goal is not perfection. Simple steps like putting your phone away during meals, setting a tech free window before bed, turning off nonessential notifications or taking a short break

from social media can create meaningful shifts. All of this is progress. Designing your environment to support these choices, rather than relying on willpower alone, makes change more realistic and lasting.

As you reflect on your habits, consider how technology truly makes you feel. What adds value, and what drains you? The digital world can be an incredible tool for connection and information, but it works best when used intentionally and balanced with other healthy habits. With consistency and self-compassion, it is possible to build a healthier relationship with technology.

Looking for support as you work on finding your digital balance? At Elite DNA Behavioral Health, we help individuals build healthier routines that support emotional well-being in a demanding, always-connected world. As one of the fastest-growing mental health providers in the Southeast, Elite DNA provides accessible, affordable mental healthcare through in-person and virtual services across Florida, Virginia, and Alabama. To learn more or request an appointment, visit [EliteDNA.com](https://www.EliteDNA.com).

About the Author

Elizabeth Dosoretz, LCSW, is the founder and CEO of Elite DNA Behavioral Health. As a mother of three, her personal journey through the challenges of postpartum depression inspired her to found Elite DNA Behavioral Health in 2013 with a goal to provide accessible, affordable mental health care to everyone. Now one of the fastest-growing mental health providers in the Southeast, Elite DNA provides in-person and virtual behavioral health services from more than 40 locations across Florida, Virginia, and Alabama. For more information, visit [EliteDNA.com](https://www.EliteDNA.com).



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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Scan to Schedule an Appointment

Take Control of Your Health with BodyView Preventive MRI by Encore Imaging

In an era where healthcare costs continue to rise and medical conditions often go undetected until they become serious, preventive medicine has never been more crucial. Encore Imaging's BodyView Preventive MRI represents a revolutionary approach to health screening, offering comprehensive peace of mind in under 60 minutes through advanced, radiation-free technology.

Knowledge Is Your Greatest Health Asset

The old adage "knowledge is power" takes on profound meaning when applied to personal health. BodyView Full Body MRI empowers individuals to take charge of their wellbeing by providing detailed insights into their body's current state. This innovative screening technology transforms the traditional reactive approach to healthcare into a proactive strategy that can literally save lives.

For individuals with a family history of cancer or other hereditary conditions, the psychological burden of uncertainty can be overwhelming. BodyView MRI addresses this concern head-on, offering a simple yet comprehensive scan that can deliver worry-free results or identify potential issues while they're still manageable. The relief that comes from knowing your body is healthy – or the advantage of early detection – cannot be overstated.

Comprehensive Screening Without Compromise

What sets BodyView apart from traditional screening methods is its remarkable scope and safety profile. This radiation-free scan screens for cancer and over 500 different medical conditions across 13 vital organs, providing a full internal snapshot of your health in a single session.

The scan examines critical areas including the brain, thyroid, spine, lungs, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, spleen, kidneys, adrenal glands, bladder, and reproductive organs (ovaries, uterus, and prostate). This thorough approach means that potential health issues across multiple body systems can be identified simultaneously, eliminating the need for multiple separate screenings and reducing the overall time and cost associated with comprehensive health monitoring.

**1 in 2 Men.
1 in 3 Women.
Will Develop Cancer**

Most don't know until it's too late.

Don't wait for symptoms.

BodyView

The Power of Early Detection

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of BodyView Preventive MRI is its ability to reveal hidden conditions before they become symptomatic. Many serious health conditions, including various forms of cancer, develop silently over months or years. By the time symptoms appear, treatment options may be more limited and outcomes less favorable.

BodyView MRI changes this narrative by enabling early intervention. When conditions are detected in their initial stages, treatment is typically more effective, less invasive, and often less expensive. For health-conscious individuals who understand the value of prevention, this technology represents the ultimate proactive health tool.

Safety and Convenience Combined

Unlike traditional CT scans or other imaging methods that expose patients to ionizing radiation, BodyView MRI utilizes magnetic resonance technology that is completely radiation-free. This safety advantage makes it suitable for regular health monitoring without the cumulative radiation exposure concerns associated with other screening methods.

In less than an hour, patients receive a comprehensive health screening followed by a virtual consultation with a physician to review the results in detail, which would traditionally require multiple appointments, various specialists, and extensive testing. This efficiency makes preventive screening accessible to busy professionals and anyone who values their time while prioritizing their health.

Investing in Your Future Self

BodyView Preventive MRI represents more than just a medical screening – it's an investment in your future health and quality of life. The peace of mind that comes from comprehensive health knowledge allows individuals to plan confidently, whether that means pursuing aggressive career goals, planning family expansion, or simply enjoying life without the nagging worry about undetected health issues.

For those ready to embrace truly preventive healthcare, Encore Imaging's BodyView MRI offers an unparalleled opportunity to gain comprehensive health insights quickly, safely, and conveniently. In the world of modern medicine, this level of preventive screening allows you to be in control of managing your health and your future.

Take the first step. It's peace of mind and early detection when it matters most.

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THE ART OF AGING GRACEFULLY: WHY SKIN CHECKS MATTER AT ART OF DERMATOLOGY

Our skin tells the story of our lives—every laugh line, sun-kissed moment, and year of experience. As we age, maintaining skin health becomes increasingly important, not just for aesthetics but for overall wellbeing. At Art of Dermatology, we believe that healthy aging skin begins with proactive care and regular professional assessment.

Understanding Skin's Aging Process

Skin ages through two distinct processes: intrinsic aging (determined by genetics) and extrinsic aging (influenced by environmental factors). While we cannot control our genetic timeline, we can significantly impact how external factors affect our skin.

With age, our skin naturally produces less collagen and elastin, leading to thinner, less resilient skin. Cell turnover slows, and moisture retention diminishes. Meanwhile, years of sun exposure, pollution, and lifestyle choices accelerate these changes, potentially leading to premature aging and increased risk of skin conditions, including cancer.

The Crucial Role of Regular Skin Checks

Regular dermatological examinations serve as the cornerstone of proactive skin health management. These checks provide much more than peace of mind—they can be lifesaving. Consider these compelling reasons to schedule regular visits to Art of Dermatology:

- **Early Detection of Skin Cancer:** With over one million Americans diagnosed with skin cancer annually, early detection dramatically improves treatment outcomes. Professional dermatologists can identify suspicious changes that might go unnoticed during self-examinations.
- **Personalized Aging Management:** Everyone's skin ages differently. Regular assessments allow dermatologists to craft personalized treatment plans that address your skin's unique needs, from addressing sun damage to managing age-related conditions like rosacea or seborrheic keratosis.
- **Tracking Changing Moles and Spots:** What appears as a harmless freckle today could develop concerning characteristics over time. Consistent monitoring creates a valuable baseline for detecting meaningful changes.



- **Expert Guidance on Products and Treatments:** The skincare industry overwhelms consumers with countless anti-aging products. Your dermatologist can recommend evidence-based solutions truly appropriate for your skin type and concerns.

Healthy Habits for Aging Skin

Between professional visits to Art of Dermatology, maintaining these daily habits supports optimal skin health:

- **Sun Protection:** Apply broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen daily, regardless of weather conditions. Wear protective clothing and seek shade when possible.
- **Hydration:** Both internal hydration (drinking water) and external moisturizing help maintain skin's barrier function and elasticity.
- **Gentle Cleansing:** As skin becomes more delicate with age, harsh products can cause irritation. Opt for gentle, pH-balanced cleansers.
- **Antioxidant-Rich Diet:** Consuming foods high in vitamins C, E, and omega-3 fatty acids supports skin's natural repair processes.
- **Quality Sleep:** During deep sleep, skin undergoes essential regeneration and repair processes critical for healthy aging.

The Art of Dermatology Difference

At Art of Dermatology, we combine medical expertise with aesthetic sensibility. Our comprehensive skin examinations include advanced technologies

for detecting subtle changes invisible to the naked eye. Our dermatologists take time to understand your concerns, family history, and lifestyle factors affecting your skin health.

Rather than simply treating visible problems, we partner with you in preventative care—identifying risk factors and potential issues before they manifest. This approach not only supports graceful aging but potentially prevents serious health complications.

Don't wait for visible problems to appear. Schedule your comprehensive skin check at Art of Dermatology today and take the first step toward lifetime skin health. Remember, healthy aging isn't about fighting time—it's about supporting your skin's natural processes with expert care and attention.

Your skin's journey deserves the art of professional dermatology.



Art of Dermatology is the premier choice for comprehensive **Dermatology, Surgical, and Aesthetic** services. We are dedicated to offering exceptional care for the diagnosis, treatment, and enhancement of your overall skin health.

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Better Hearing Starts with You:

Why May Is the Perfect Time to Prioritize Your Hearing Health

Each May, we celebrate Better Hearing Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about hearing loss and encouraging people to take a proactive approach to their hearing health. As an audiologist, I couldn't be more excited about this annual reminder—because hearing is one of our most powerful connections to the world around us, and yet it's often overlooked until it starts to slip away.

Hearing is Health

When I talk to patients at AudioNova, many are surprised to learn that hearing loss doesn't just affect how we perceive sound—it also plays a major role in our cognitive function, mental well-being, balance, and even heart health.

The ears may be small, but they are part of a much bigger system. When hearing begins to decline, the brain has to work harder to process sound. This increased mental strain has been linked to memory issues, faster cognitive decline, and even early signs of dementia. Additionally, untreated hearing loss has been associated with higher risks of depression, social isolation, and falls in older adults.

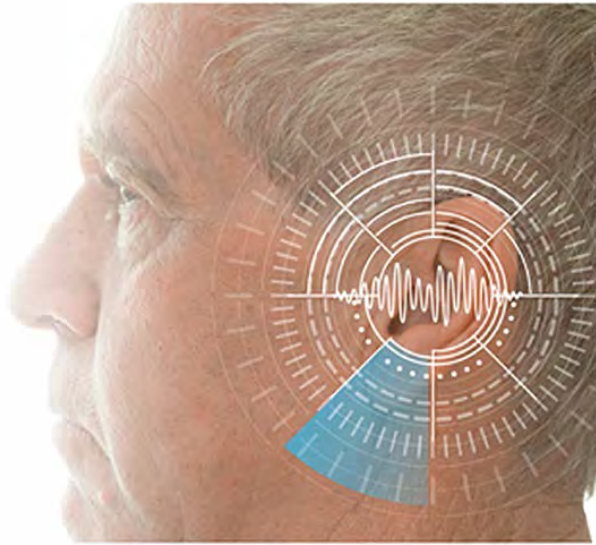
That's why hearing health is not just about communication—it's a key part of your overall wellness.

The Signs Are Easy to Miss

One of the biggest challenges with hearing loss is how gradually it tends to happen. You may find yourself turning up the TV volume more often, asking people to repeat themselves, or avoiding noisy restaurants because conversations feel too difficult to follow. You may even think others are mumbling more than they used to.

These are all signs that your hearing may be changing—but many people chalk it up to "getting older" or don't realize how much they're missing until they're tested.

Better Hearing Month is the perfect reminder to schedule a baseline hearing screening, especially if you're over 55. Just like an annual eye exam or a check-up with your primary care provider, hearing evaluations should be a regular part of your preventive health care.



Hearing Loss Is Treatable

The good news? Hearing loss is manageable, and the solutions today are better than ever. At AudioNova, we prescribe medical-grade hearing devices from all major manufacturers. That means we don't take a one-size-fits-all approach—we take time to understand your hearing needs, your lifestyle, and your budget.

Whether you spend your time golfing, traveling, volunteering, or simply enjoying family time, we can help you find a solution that keeps you hearing your best in the moments that matter most.

One of my favorite parts of this job is watching someone light up when they realize what they've been missing. A patient recently told me, "I didn't realize how quiet my world had become until I could hear the birds again." That's what hearing care is all about—restoring your connection to life.

Don't Wait—Your Brain Won't

Some people hesitate to take the first step because they think their hearing loss "isn't that bad yet." But studies show that the longer hearing loss goes untreated, the harder it can be for your brain to adapt to sound again. Early intervention not only helps you hear better now—it protects your cognitive health and keeps those vital neural pathways strong.

The sooner you start, the better your outcomes. And no—hearing aids are not bulky or embarrassing anymore! Today's technology is discreet, smart, and designed to fit seamlessly into your life.

Start with a Conversation

If you're not sure where to begin, start by talking with your loved ones or your primary care provider. Or better yet, call us directly! A simple hearing screening takes less than an hour and gives us a clear picture of your hearing health. From there, we'll guide you through your options—real answers and real care.

At AudioNova, we're here to build a lifelong partnership with you. That means helping you every step of the way—from your first test to follow-up adjustments and annual check-ins.

Let This May Be Your Moment

If you've been putting off your hearing test, now is the time. Make Better Hearing Month the moment you finally prioritize your hearing just like you would your heart, eyes, or joints. Because hearing isn't just about sound—it's about connection, confidence, and living life fully.

We invite you to schedule a free hearing screening at one of our convenient locations in Sarasota. Let's work together to protect one of your most precious senses and keep you hearing—and thriving—for years to come.

Call today and schedule your complimentary hearing test and consultation.

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Autism Spectrum Disorder: Can Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Help?

Autism is a spectrum disorder that is quickly increasing in rates across the world. Here in the United States, it is one of the fastest-growing developmental disabilities affecting up to 1.5 million. Commonly, social interaction and communication dysfunction are prevalent. While there are degrees of the spectrum disorder and impacts, the most common is Pervasive Developmental Disorders / PDDO.

Early Intervention

Currently, there is no cure for Autism. However, according to the CDC, There are many types of treatments available. These include applied behavior analysis, social skills training, occupational therapy, physical therapy, sensory integration therapy, and the use of assistive technology.¹

The types of treatments generally can be broken down into the following categories:¹

- Behavior and Communication Approaches
- Dietary Approaches
- Medication
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Alternative Treatment

The causes of Autism are still unknown, but many medical professionals and researchers feel that hypoxia (lack of oxygen to the brain) is a key element. Some also feel that infections, toxins, inflammation, and deficiencies also contribute to the disorder.

Hyperbaric Therapy for Autism – Worldwide, medical researchers are discovering promising results with the effects of hyperbaric therapy on persons with Autism. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy increases oxygen levels, reduces inflammation, helps the body remove toxins and regenerate tissues.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) is a medical treatment that delivers 100% oxygen to a patient's pulmonary system while they are within a pressurized chamber. This saturation of oxygen allows high-levels of life-sustaining oxygen to be delivered to the tissues and organs. This increase of the partial pressure of oxygen at the cellular level accelerates the healing processes and assists in the recovery from numerous indications.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is an FDA approved and lifesaving remedy for multiple conditions such as carbon monoxide poisoning and decompression sickness (the bends), and it has many off-label uses such as autism spectrum disorder.

HBOT Autism

Over the past decade, HBOT therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorder has been utilized as a way to establish positive effects via anti-inflammatory responses, improved cognition function, behavioral and language abilities, and to reduce apprehension. It's always important to speak to your specialist, talk to other parents that have tried HBOT, and also to research any alternative options on your own. If you decide to try HBOT for your child with Autism Spectrum Disorder, finding a reputable, experienced, trustworthy clinic is critical.

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida is a premier hyperbaric treatment facility located in the Tampa Bay area. Their state-of-the-art hyperbaric clinic provides therapy to outpatients on a 7-day per week basis, closing only on major holidays.

Currently, There Are 15 FDA Approved HBOT Conditions:

- Air or Gas Embolism
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
- Compromised Skin Grafts or Flaps
- Crush Injury, Compartment Syndrome
- Decompression Sickness (Bends)
- Diabetic & Other Non-healing Wounds
- Enhancement of Healing in Selected Problem Wounds
- Exceptional Anemia: Resulting of Bleeding
- Gas Gangrene
- Intracranial Abscess
- Osteomyelitis
- Radiation Injury
- Refractory Osteomyelitis
- Thermal Burns
- Idiopathic Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss

HBOT is used "off-label" for various disease states and disorders and HBOT may be ordered by a physician for off-label indications. Hyperbaric Centers of Florida makes no claims as to the efficacy for any indications other than the fifteen approved by FDA.

 **Hyperbaric Centers of Florida**
www.hyperbariccentersofflorida.com

To find out more, or to schedule your appointment today, please call Hyperbaric Centers of Florida at 813-788-3969.

Common Off-Label Indications:

- Autism
- Brain Injury
- Bells Palsy
- Cerebral Palsy
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Infections
- Inflammations
- Lyme Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Nerve Injuries
- Oral Disease
- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Scleroderma
- Shingles
- Severe Migraines
- Sports Injury
- Stroke
- Tendon Injuries
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Venomous snake and spider bites

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida is a premier Hyperbaric Treatment Facility. We serve all of North America as well as Caribbean, Latin & Central American Markets. The Hyperbaric Clinic is equipped with Real 3ATA Monoplace and Multi-Place Hyperbaric Chamber Systems that are ASME, PVHO, National Board, NFPA, and FDA 510(K) cleared and compliant systems. We are treating all approved indications and selected off-label indications, as directed by a licensed physician with written orders.

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida provides a clean, professional and caring environment for all of our patients. The founders of our new center have over 40 years of cumulative experience in Hyperbaric Medicine and providing Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for a broad spectrum of indications.

With Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy It is always more important to find a safe clinic with a fully trained knowledgeable staff rather than a close clinic. This is one reason people from all over the world travel to Hyperbaric Centers of Florida. We use Real ASME PVHO Chambers capable of 3 Atmospheres Absolute of pressure (29.4psi), Medical Grade oil-less / oil-free breathing air compressors, 100% Medical Grade Oxygen, Sea-Long Hoods, and 100% Cotton Scrubs. Hyperbaric Centers of Florida has a reputation of providing the safest and most comfortable treatments available.

*DISCLAIMER This information is for informational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of a physician! Anyone who wishes to embark on any medical program intended to prevent or treat a specific disease or condition should first consult with a qualified physician!

REFERENCE:

1. CDC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Treatment and Intervention Services for Autism Spectrum Disorder
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/treatment.html>

GIVE THE GIFT OF MONA LISA LASER THERAPY FOR MOTHER'S DAY

By Parveen Vahora, M.D.

MonaLisa Touch

Give the gift of comfort and confidence to all the women in your life, your wife or girlfriend, this Mother's Day with MonaLisa Touch® Laser Therapy, thoughtfully provided by Dr. Parveen Vahora. Say goodbye to the discomfort of vaginal atrophy and embrace the joy of restored intimacy. MonaLisa Touch® offers a noninvasive solution to treat the genitourinary syndrome of menopause (GSM), providing relief from symptoms like vaginal dryness and painful intercourse. Unlike estrogen-based therapies, MonaLisa Touch® offers a safe and effective alternative, making it ideal for those who cannot or choose not to use hormone-based treatments. Let your mom experience the freedom and empowerment of reclaiming her vitality and well-being this Mother's Day with MonaLisa Touch® Laser Therapy.

MonaLisa Touch and Menopause

The MonaLisa Touch treats symptoms of GSM that most commonly occur in menopause. During menopause, your estrogen levels decrease. These hormonal changes cause your vaginal tissue to become dry and thin. This can lead to several symptoms, such as:

- Painful sexual intercourse.
- Vaginal discomfort and bleeding.
- Frequent urinary tract infections (UTIs).
- Urinary incontinence (leaking pee when you sneeze, laugh or cough).
- Vaginal irritation, itchiness or burning.

The MonaLisa Touch helps the tissues in your vagina regenerate, enabling it to become moist again. It's important to note that the MonaLisa Touch doesn't tighten your vagina. There are other methods your provider may suggest if your goal is to fix looseness or sagging. The MonaLisa Touch helps restore your vagina's lubrication, not necessarily appearance.

MonaLisa Touch is for YOU

The ideal candidates for MonaLisa Touch treatment are people who:

- Are experiencing symptoms of low estrogen during the transition to menopause or after menopause.
- Tried other methods (such as estrogen therapy) and were unsuccessful.
- Have symptoms as a result of chemotherapy, breast cancer or hysterectomy.
- Can't take estrogen due to other health conditions or treatments.
- Have been diagnosed with vulvar disorders like lichen sclerosus.

How the MonaLisa Touch treatment works

The MonaLisa Touch is a CO₂ (carbon dioxide) fractional laser. A fractional laser delivers thousands of tiny light beams into a specific area. The laser beams destroy vaginal tissue and stimulate your vaginal tissue to generate new blood vessels and produce more collagen and elastin. This essentially causes the tissue lining to regenerate and repair itself.

PROCEDURE DETAILS

Treatment with the MonaLisa Touch happens in your healthcare provider's office. It's similar to what happens during a Pap smear. Your provider will insert a wand-like device into your vagina to begin treatment. The device delivers tiny energy pulses into your vagina. It may feel like a vibration or a tiny prick — like the poke of a needle. Your provider will treat both the internal vaginal skin and the skin at the opening of your vagina. You need three treatments spaced about three weeks apart. Your provider may recommend annual treatments to maintain relief of your symptoms. Treatment with the MonaLisa takes about five minutes.

Recovery from MonaLisa laser therapy is quick. You can continue with your day as normal. Your vagina may feel a little irritated or uncomfortable. Applying ice packs or a lubricant may help if you feel discomfort. Avoid doing activities that cause you pain.

RISKS / BENEFITS

Treatment with MonaLisa Touch has been shown to cause significant improvements in vaginal moisture. It can restore a person's sexual intimacy and give them confidence again. MonaLisa Touch treatment is also beneficial for people who can't take estrogen. Treatment for vaginal dryness traditionally involved estrogen medications. This means people who can't take estrogen were left without relief options before MonaLisa Touch laser treatment.

Effectiveness

Studies show that over 80% of people are satisfied or very satisfied with the treatment results. About 90% of people rate their improvement as better or much better. Many people say they notice relief from vaginal dryness after just one treatment.

Side Effects

Side effects are mild and don't last longer than 36 hours. The most common side effects are:

- Irritation at your vaginal opening.
- Light bleeding.
- Pink or brown vaginal discharge.
- Itching or burning sensation when you pee.
- Swelling or redness at your vaginal opening.

RECOVERY AND OUTLOOK

Most people return to their normal activities the same day. You should refrain from intercourse for three days. You can expect to have mild irritation or discomfort for 24 to 36 hours. Discuss specific recovery instructions with your provider so you know what to expect. Contact your healthcare provider if you have uncomfortable symptoms due to vaginal dryness. They can talk to you about possible treatment options, including treatment with MonaLisa Touch.

Treatment Cost

Your insurance doesn't cover MonaLisa Touch treatment. The exact cost of treatment depends on your location and provider. Some people may need up to five sessions initially. Most people need to return every 12 to 18 months for touch-ups. Be sure to talk to your provider about what you can expect to pay for treatment. At Vahora Gynecology we offer financing options thru Affirm. <https://www.affirm.com>

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WHY SINGLE SENIORS FLOURISH IN SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES

Research has shown what most of us already intuitively know: After your 20s, it gets difficult to make friends, let alone find someone to date and/or marry. This issue usually gets tougher as we age. Although perceptions are slowly but surely changing, most of our culture and social activities are still built around couples. However, surrounding yourself with people of a similar life stage who share your interests increases your chances of forming new relationships.

That's why many single seniors are considering senior living communities like Freedom Village of Bradenton. This article will look at our retirement lifestyle and show you how communities like ours make building relationships easier.

WHAT IS INDEPENDENT LIVING?

Senior independent living is a term used to describe a maintenance-free community designed exclusively for older adults. They also typically feature a variety of activities and amenities and services like:

- Fully-equipped fitness center with fitness classes and wellness programs
- Heated indoor pool
- Lifelong learning opportunities
- On-campus shows and concerts
- Arts and crafts studio
- Woodworking shop

BENEFITS OF SENIOR LIVING FOR SINGLE SENIORS

Senior living communities provide a range of advantages you might not be able to get staying in your current home. Senior living can make it easier and more convenient to live the life you want. Some benefits include:

More social opportunities: For isolated seniors, senior living communities have calendars filled with social activities, classes, interest groups and clubs, outings, lifelong learning discussions and more. They also have a welcoming committee to help new residents meet people. So, you're sure to find others who share your goals and interests.

Maintenance-free lifestyle: Independent living communities have a variety of helpful services and thoughtful amenities to give you the freedom to do more of what you want and less of what you don't. So let our talented staff handle the housekeeping, indoor and outdoor maintenance and even the cooking.

Community of support: Many senior living communities offer support groups and spiritual services. These circles of support often develop organically through continual social interactions.

Right-sized residences: Most senior living communities offer studio and one-bedroom senior apartments that are the perfect size for a single person. Once you compare the cost of living in your current residence with everything you get at a retirement community, you'll also find it's more affordable than you think.



DISCOVER THE SINGULAR FREEDOM OF FREEDOM VILLAGE

If you're looking for a group of active older adults who share your interest in getting more out of life, consider attending one of our free luncheons to learn more. Call us today at 941-798-8122 to arrange a personal visit to our beautiful campus and we'll be happy to show you around our beautiful community, where you can meet with one of our residency counselors and some of our residents to learn more.



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Sunil J. Panchal, M.D.

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ANYONE CAN SUFFER A STROKE:

Beware of falling into trap of thinking there's a 'stereotypical high-risk patient'

By Rick Weber

Anyone can suffer a stroke. Literally *anyone*.

Stroke is not confined to a specific age group or a stereotypical "high-risk" patient. While there is a tendency to associate stroke with older adults or individuals with obvious health issues, that framing is incomplete—and a bit misleading.

"Yes, there are well-established risk factors like hypertension, diabetes and smoking, but stroke can also occur in individuals who don't fit that profile at all," says Megan Walsh, DPT, NCS, a Clinical Assistant Professor in Florida Gulf Coast University's Marieb College of Health and Human Services who is recognized as a Board Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist by the American Board of Physical Therapy.

"Younger, otherwise healthy people can experience strokes due to less obvious mechanisms like embolic events, cardiac rhythm disturbances, vascular abnormalities or even spontaneous arterial injury. In some cases, there isn't a clear, immediately identifiable cause. What complicates this further is that stroke doesn't always present in the dramatic way people expect. It's not always a sudden collapse or complete paralysis. It can be subtle, such as sudden dizziness, difficulty with balance, changes in vision or mild speech disturbances."

Those presentations are easy to dismiss, especially when the person doesn't "look like" someone at risk. So the idea that "anyone can suffer a stroke" is less about creating alarm and more about correcting that bias.

"It's a reminder that stroke is fundamentally a neurological emergency defined by its presentation, not by the person it happens to," says Walsh, who is certified in Neurodevelopmental Treatment (NDT) by the Neurodevelopmental Treatment Association (NTA). "If symptoms appear suddenly and don't make sense, they deserve to be taken seriously, regardless of age or perceived health status."

Walsh speaks from painful experience. She did not realize that babies could have a stroke—until her second daughter, Piper, was born full-term in 2009. Within 24 hours, doctors discovered that she was experiencing seizures that necessitated admission to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). A battery of tests determined that she had suffered a large stroke affecting the left side of her brain in an area known to control right-sided movement and speech.

Walsh begged the neurologist in the NICU to tell her and her husband that Piper would still be OK and be able to live a normal life. Of course, he could not do that, instead saying, "She will be anything from profoundly disabled to relatively normal. Time, early intervention and neuroplasticity will dictate her outcome."

Piper made a phenomenal recovery. Now in 10th grade, she has participated in Irish dance, played club-level soccer and graced her school's Honor Roll on several occasions.

Even before Piper's ordeal, Walsh had developed a passion for helping people through difficult and often unforeseen circumstances. She became interested in stroke rehabilitation while working at the Rehab Hospital of the Pacific in Honolulu from 2005 to 2008. But it was not until Piper was born that she expanded that passion to include awareness and research.

From a healthcare provider and professor's perspective, she believes stroke prevention is one of the areas where they can have the most meaningful impact in the community, because so many of the major risk factors are actually modifiable.

"Hypertension is still the leading contributor, so consistent blood pressure management—through medication when needed, but also through movement and lifestyle—is fundamental," she says. "What we see clinically, though, is that these risks rarely exist in isolation. Physical inactivity, impaired glucose control and high cholesterol tend to cluster, creating a cumulative strain on the vascular system over time. Tobacco use and excessive alcohol intake further accelerate that process."

"What I consistently emphasize, both in the classroom and in practice, is that movement is not just a general wellness recommendation, but it is a targeted, evidence-based intervention. Regular aerobic activity and strength training directly improve blood pressure, insulin sensitivity and lipid profiles, which are all central to reducing stroke risk."

"There is also increasing recognition of the role that sleep quality and chronic stress play, particularly in conditions like obstructive sleep apnea, which often go under-identified. Ultimately, stroke prevention is not about a single behavior change. It is the cumulative effect of managing cardiovascular health over

time. The encouraging part is that even small, consistent changes in these modifiable factors can meaningfully reduce long-term risk."

She says that when we talk about who is more susceptible to stroke, it's important to frame it less as a specific "type" of person and more in terms of non-modifiable risk factors layered on top of an individual's overall risk profile. Age remains the most significant non-modifiable factor, with risk increasing over time, but it's critical to recognize that stroke is not exclusive to older adults.

"We are continuing to see strokes in younger populations, often because modifiable risks are present but under-recognized," she says. "There are also important sex-based considerations. Women, for example, have unique risk periods related to pregnancy and the postpartum state, as well as considerations with hormonal contraception and migraine with aura, all of which can influence stroke risk through vascular and clotting mechanisms."

"In addition, race and ethnicity play a role, as African American adults in the United States experience higher stroke incidence and often at younger ages, which reflects both biological predispositions and broader social and healthcare access factors. Genetics and family history are also key non-modifiable contributors, particularly in individuals with inherited clotting disorders or early cardiovascular disease in first-degree relatives. These factors can increase baseline risk even in individuals who appear otherwise healthy."

"That said, these non-modifiable risks don't act in isolation. They interact with modifiable factors like hypertension, physical inactivity, diabetes, dyslipidemia and tobacco use, which ultimately drive the majority of stroke risk. So while we can't change age, sex, race or genetics, understanding how they influence baseline risk allows us to be more proactive and aggressive in managing the factors we *can* modify."

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PAINFUL NERVE DAMAGE: HOW ONE PATIENT'S STORY HELPS ANOTHER FIND RELIEF

Treating Shoulder Pain Successfully with Radiofrequency

Paula Sharper and her husband had just recently moved to Florida, and she had been dealing with ongoing shoulder pain for a long time, which seemed to be getting worse. Paula was diagnosed with severe osteoarthritis of the AC joint (acromioclavicular joint) in the shoulder.

Paula told us that the pain was excruciating, keeping her up all night and disrupting her daily activities, including driving. While she was in the waiting room of another physician for her pain, she read an article about Dr. Sunil Panchal and how he helped a woman with chronic pain become pain-free.

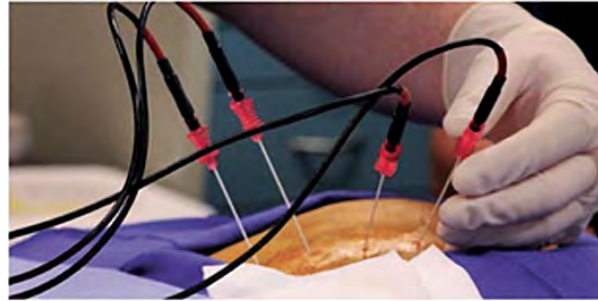
When Paula left the office, she immediately called Dr. Panchal and scheduled an appointment.

Paula explained, "Dr. Panchal is an amazing doctor and a great person. He takes a lot of time and listens to you. He explains everything in detail, and he pinpoints exactly where the pain is stemming from and what is the best option for you specifically."

She continued, "I've been to many doctors over the years, and it's rare to find a physician that is not only a great doctor but also a kind, genuine person that cares about you. My procedure with Nerve Blocks and Radiofrequency was terrific. I immediately had pain relief. My shoulder no longer hurts at all. I'm back to living a normal routine for the most part."

"Dr. Panchal explained that this is a process. He likes to take things in steps, so we are doing the radiofrequency first, and then if later on my pain starts to return and I need additional regenerative medicine such as stem cell therapy, we will go from there. For now, I'm ecstatic about my pain relief. I would recommend Dr. Panchal to anyone that is in pain."

"It's impressive that so many patients and peers speak so highly of Dr. Panchal. At the surgical center, the staff and medical practitioners are very



fond of him and his work. Everyone you talk to says what a kind and talented physician he is as well. Medicine shouldn't just be about temporary fixes, it should be about treating the cause and helping people find solutions. That's what Dr. Panchal offers his patients."

Surgery is Not Always the Answer

Many people are familiar with radiofrequency ablation for lower back pain, but they don't realize that it can be used for other areas of the body. With shoulder pain, whether due to osteoarthritis or injury, many people believe or have been told that surgery is the only solution.

Minimally invasive procedures like radiofrequency and nerve blocks offer remarkable results in long-term pain relief.

Nerve Blocks and Radio Frequency

Nerve Blocks are numbing medications that are injected into the area that is causing pain. In conjunction to nerve blocks, Dr. Panchal uses an advanced procedure called Radiofrequency (RF).

With RF ablation treatments, the nerves that are damaged, narrowed, or impinged, are injected with a low-level of localized heat, causing the nerve to stop sending signals to our brain through

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an interruption in the nerve conduction. This procedure is entirely safe and effective. It has been used for many years with long-lasting results for people suffering from nerve back pain.

Regenerative Medicine

For neuropathic pain, regenerative medicine is also highly effective treatment for relieving pain and regenerating tissue naturally. These options include PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma), Bone Marrow Aspirations, Lipid Aspirations and exosomes.

More on Exosomes

Always on the leading edge of innovative procedures, Dr. Panchal adds exosomes into his stem cell treatment. Exosomes are produced from the plasma membranes of cells and are best explained as extracellular vesicles. Exosomes are nano-sized particles that are released due to an immune response. Some medical professionals are reporting that they are more regenerative and effective than stem cells. Because they act as intracellular communication messengers within the body and have the ability to move between multiple cells, they are also incredibly useful when paired with stem cell therapy.



Dr. Sunil Panchal

Although surgery is critical in certain situations, finding alternative methods to treat the underlying condition is always the first step. The National Institute of Pain is a state-of-the-art facility that specializes in the treatment of spine and orthopedic conditions, as well as acute and chronic pain management. They provide the utmost quality of care for patients to address the problem directly, and if needed, provide for their pain management needs.

At the National Institute of Spine and Pain, they treat each patient individually, using the latest equipment and various innovative procedures to diagnose pain and determine your care needs. The National Institute of Spine and Pain's President and Founder, Sunil J. Panchal, MD, is a board-certified interventional pain/ minimally invasive spine physician.

At National Institute of Spine and Pain, their goal is to strive to deliver the highest quality of comprehensive care for those who are suffering from spine, joint, and nerve injuries. They have many alternatives to help you with your personalized treatment needs. Please visit their website at www.nationalinstituteofpain.org, or call them at **(813) 264-PAIN (7246)**.

SENIORS AGING IN PLACE

For today's seniors, the desire to stay at home is strong. In fact, the modern elderly population is much different from its past counterparts. Almost 90% of people over 65 want to live in their home and community as long as possible, according to a report by the AARP Public Policy Institute and the National Conference of State Legislatures. A whopping 80% believe they will stay in their home for the remainder of their life. Aging in place allows seniors to enjoy all the comforts their familiar home has to offer. Today's options to support seniors in their home offer seniors and their families the peace of mind and support to make staying at home a healthy option.



AGING IN PLACE PROVIDES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Seniors have spent a lifetime building family relationships and likely years bonding with neighbors. Removing older adults from their long-time homes can make them feel like those connections have weakened. According to research published in *The Gerontologist*, the majority of seniors want to age in place because of the attachment and familiarity they feel with their home and communities.

IT FIGHTS ISOLATION

That sense of community provided through aging in place does more than make seniors feel comfortable. It is also integral for fighting feelings of isolation, a dangerous trend among seniors. Researchers from the University of Chicago found a link between loneliness and high blood pressure in older adults. The study authors noted that feelings of loneliness can occur even when a senior is surrounded by people. This further demonstrates the importance of the familiarity and sense of community provided through aging in place.

Besides being preferred by seniors, aging in place offers another benefit: savings.

While it may seem that aging at home would be more expensive than moving to a nursing or assisted living home, the opposite is actually true. With help from a home healthcare worker, staying in your home costs about 20% of what a nursing home costs on a monthly basis.

HOME HEALTH CARE CAN HELP

For many families and seniors, home health care is a beneficial choice – a safe and affordable solution that supports the family, while allowing seniors to stay in the comfort of their own homes and communities.

HERE ARE TEN WAYS HOME HEALTH CARE CAN SUPPORT YOU:

1. Home health care professionals can be there when needed. If family and loved ones are a distance away, home health care can give you peace of mind. Trained and qualified professionals

can assess safety risks and make simple corrections in the home – from placing a rug on a slippery floor, to recommendations for ambulatory assistance.

2. Home care supports activities of daily living (ADLs). In-home services allow adults to receive day-to-day help with the personal care they need, preserving their dignity and maintaining a good quality of life. Assistance with activities of daily living can include bathing, grooming, and medication reminders.

3. Access to skilled nursing care at home. Skilled medical care can be delivered at home by thoroughly supervised nurses, certified, licensed and knowledgeable about high-technology medical equipment. Home health care can ensure that your loved one's complex medical needs are met.

4. Support with diet and nutrition. Adults age 65 and older, people with chronic conditions, and those recently discharged from a hospital or nursing facility are likely to be nutritionally at-risk. Aging, bed rest, illness, and injury can all contribute to the loss of lean body mass. Home care may include nutritional counseling and home-cooked meals to protect against malnutrition.

5. Medication management. Multiple prescriptions it can be confusing to manage. Home health care professionals can ensure the right medications are being taken at the right times to control health conditions and prevent harmful drug interactions.

6. Home health care professionals provide caring companionship. Research shows that aging adults stay healthier with social interaction. Home health aides can become trusted friends for walks, reading, cards, games, movies, meals, and other social activities. Accompaniment on errands such as grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other activities are also added benefits.

7. Home care helps with light household chores. When aging adults struggle the daily demands of housework, such as laundry, vacuuming, dishes, and simple chores home care helps to consistently maintain a safe and healthy living environment.

8. Home health care clients have comparable or better health outcomes. Research has shown that clinical results are comparable or better with fewer complications when home care is provided to individuals with chronic conditions such as pneumonia, diabetes, or COPD.

9. One-on-one focus and support. Home health care services are truly unique, providing meaningful, one-on-one personal and skilled care that builds strong bonds between professionals and their clients. According to the *Cleveland Clinical Journal* a person who is seen by a clinician in the comfort of home more readily trusts that the health care team places their needs first.

10. An affordable alternative to facility or hospital care. According to the National Association of Home Care, the average cost of care from a skilled nursing facility is \$544 dollars per day, while the average cost of home health care is \$132 dollars.

OUR PROMISE

Through Trusted HomeCare Home Care Services, you can rest assured that your loved one and family will be safe and secure in a positive environment right at their home. Even if you simply have questions or want to understand how to better care for your elderly loved one experiencing the inevitable process of aging, we are able to help with that.

TRUSTED HOMECARE SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

As a whole group, our mission statement says that we are here to access the needs of each client to help them maintain their independence while living in their own homes and communities.

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FINDING RHYTHM IN A RUSHED WORLD

By Pastor Tim Neptune

In our fast-paced culture, calendars overflow, to-do lists never end, and we race from one commitment to the next. We long for weekends only to collapse before Monday's demands return. Many of us live as prisoners of the clock, pushing ourselves to burnout. But what if this isn't how we were designed to live?

God built rest into our very DNA. Science confirms we need roughly eight hours of sleep per 24-hour cycle—about one-third of our lives in “recharge mode.” The ancient practice of Sabbath, rooted in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11), reminds us that even the Creator rested after six days of work—not because He needed to, but to model a healthy rhythm for us.

Jesus affirmed this truth: *“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath”* (Mark 2:27). Rest isn't a luxury or sign of laziness; it's a gift that sustains us physically, mentally, and spiritually.

We need to rest our body. Downtime boosts health, focus, productivity, and creativity. Yet, too often we stay “always on,” tethered to devices that steal our recovery time. Turn them off. Protect one full day each week as a true Sabbath—clear of obligations. Embrace simplicity by eliminating clutter and unnecessary commitments. Prioritize family over endless striving for more money or success. Practice contentment, remembering that life doesn't consist in an abundance of possessions (Luke 12:15).

As the Harvard Business Review notes, silence and breaks restore the nervous system and help us navigate complex demands. Don't feel guilty for a “do nothing” day—sleep in, stay in pajamas, and recharge. Your body was designed for it.

We need to rest our minds. Racing thoughts, anxiety, and mental overload plague many of us. The Apostle Paul offers a powerful antidote in Philippians 4:4-9: rejoice, pray instead of worrying, and focus on what is true, noble, pure, and lovely. Shift from negativity and over-responsibility to trust in God.

Jesus modeled healthy boundaries by withdrawing from crowds to pray and recover (Matthew 14:23). Adopt Rick Warren's rhythm: divert daily (a short walk, music, reading, or hobby), withdraw weekly



(a full recharge day), and abandon annually (a real vacation). Even simple acts like playing piano—switching songs freely—create mental space. As Mozart observed, the beauty of music lies in the rests between notes. The same holds for life.

We need rest for our souls. True, deep rest comes from surrender. Jesus invites the weary: *“Come to me... and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me... and you will find rest for your souls”* (Matthew 11:28-30). When we relinquish control and trust God with our worries—finances, health, relationships, future—we experience supernatural peace.

King David, no stranger to stress, declared, *“In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety”* (Psalm 4:8). We cannot control everything, but we can entrust everything to a sovereign, loving God.

You are important—but not that important. The world will keep spinning if you step off the treadmill. Schedule rest intentionally. Protect your Sabbath. Divert, withdraw, and abandon. Most importantly, come to the One who offers soul-deep rest.

Your body, mind, and spirit will thank you. In the silence between the notes, you just might rediscover the abundant life for which you were created.

Tim Neptune is the Lead Pastor of Venture Church located at 14601 Tamiami Trail E. Naples. For service times, visit venturenaples.com or call (239) 775-5323.



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