

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

August 2026

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FEEL BETTER. LOOK YOUNGER. LIVE MORE CONFIDENTLY.

Invest in Yourself: The Power of Body Treatments and Advanced Skin Rejuvenation

Selfcare is no longer considered a luxury—it's an essential part of maintaining your physical health, emotional well-being, and confidence. Two of the most effective ways to care for yourself from the inside out are regular massage therapy and advanced facial rejuvenation treatments. Together, they help you feel energized, reduce the effects of stress, and support healthy, youthful-looking skin.

Healthy Skin Starts Here: The Benefits of Hydrating and Detoxifying Body Treatments

Body treatments do more than pamper; they support skin health, relaxation, and overall wellness. Combining hydration lotion applications with specialized wraps and exfoliation creates a restorative experience that leaves the body refreshed and revitalized. Hydrating lotions help replenish moisture, strengthen the skin barrier, soften rough areas, and improve elasticity, making skin feel smoother and look healthier.

Benefits Include

- Hydration lotion applications lock in moisture, reduce dryness, and promote a supple, radiant appearance.
- Castor oil wraps may encourage relaxation, nourish the skin, support circulation, and are commonly used to promote comfort and a sense of detoxification.
- Mud wraps provide mineral-rich nourishment, cleanse impurities from the skin, and improve softness and texture.

When paired with massage and proper hydration, these treatments can create a soothing self-care ritual that benefits both body and mind. While some claimed detox effects have limited scientific evidence, many people enjoy improvements in skin texture, relaxation, and overall comfort. Choosing high-quality products and receiving treatments from trained professionals helps maximize results while keeping the experience safe, enjoyable, and tailored to individual skincare needs for lasting wellness, confidence, every single day naturally and beautifully.

The Ultimate Self-Care Combination

Body treatments nurtures your body. Advanced skincare rejuvenates your appearance. Together, they create a complete wellness experience that helps you feel relaxed, energized, and confident both inside and out. When you make self-care a regular part of your lifestyle, you're investing in your long-term health, your confidence, and the first impression you make every day. Looking your best begins with feeling your best—and both are well within reach.

Healthy, Youthful Skin Starts with Advanced Facial Treatments

Your face is often the first thing people notice. Healthy, vibrant skin not only reflects good skincare habits but also helps create a positive and confident first impression. Modern aesthetic treatments make it possible to improve skin quality naturally by stimulating your body's own regenerative processes.

Benefits of Professional Facial Treatments

- Deeply cleanses and hydrates the skin
- Improves overall skin tone and texture
- Reduces the appearance of fine lines
- Softens wrinkles over time
- Minimizes enlarged pores
- Brightens dull or tired-looking skin
- Stimulates healthy collagen production
- Improves elasticity and firmness
- Supports healthier aging
- Leaves skin glowing and refreshed

One of today's most advanced treatments combines radiofrequency microneedling, which creates controlled microchannels in the skin while delivering gentle heat below the surface. This process stimulates collagen and elastin production—the building blocks responsible for firm, youthful skin. Over time, the skin becomes smoother, tighter, and more resilient.

Medical-grade hydrating treatments such as the AquaFirm facial deeply cleanse, exfoliate, and infuse the skin with nourishing serums that replenish moisture while improving overall skin health. These treatments help restore radiance, leaving skin refreshed, hydrated, and visibly brighter immediately after treatment.

Plant-based stem cell technology has also become an exciting addition to modern skincare. These botanical ingredients are rich in antioxidants and bioactive compounds that help protect the skin from environmental damage while supporting its natural repair processes.

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By Sabrina Ciceri



Sabrina Ciceri is a dynamic leader in health and wellness, recognized for her holistic approach to medicine and her dedication to empowering others through preventative health care. She is the founder of Immunity Health, a wellness company

offering advanced treatments including IV therapy, functional medicine, bio-identical hormone therapy, cryotherapy, hyperbaric and red light therapy, and microneedling with plant-based stem cells. Each service is designed to strengthen the immune system and help clients look and feel their best from the inside out.

Over the past 21 years, Sabrina has extensively studied and researched the preventative side of medicine, collaborating with leading experts at Hippocrates Wellness Center, a world-renowned holistic health institute in West Palm Beach. There, she conducted in-depth inter-views with health professionals worldwide and served as a plant-based health educator, helping others achieve optimal well-being through natural, sustainable methods.

In addition to her work in healthcare, Sabrina has made significant contributions to health education and publishing. In 2008, she helped launch *Healthy Living Magazine*, which was named "Best Overall Magazine" for nine consecutive years by the Florida Magazine Association. She also served as publisher of *Hippocrates Wellness Center's Healing Our World* magazine and as a board member for several respected organizations, including the American Cancer Society, LifeStream Behavioral Center, and the Central Florida Boys and Girls Club.

Beyond her professional achievements, Sabrina and her husband, Joe, are deeply committed to family and community. Together, they have fostered and adopted multiple children, earning the honor of 2014 Foster Parents of the Year by Kids Central Inc. The couple also co-own a successful nationwide electrical contracting business, founded in 2008, which now operates in more than 23 states.

Her lifelong dedication to health, service, and leadership continues to inspire others, and she is honored to contribute her experience and passion as a member of the AdventHealth Waterman Board.

♡ Sabrina

Healthy Ears: Hearing, Balance & Tinnitus

Understanding Ringing, Dizziness, Earwax, and the Surprising Ways Your Ears Affect Everyday Life

Most people think of their ears as something that simply helps them hear, but your ears actually do much more than that. They play an important role in balance, communication, and how you experience the world around you. When something feels "off," whether it is ringing in the ears, dizziness, muffled hearing, or a feeling of fullness, it can affect daily life more than many people realize.

As an audiologist here in Central Florida, I often meet patients who are unsure whether what they are experiencing is serious or simply something to ignore. The truth is that changes in hearing, balance, or ear comfort are worth paying attention to. Sometimes the solution is simple, while other times these symptoms may point to issues that deserve evaluation.

One of the most common concerns I hear about is tinnitus, often described as ringing in the ears. Some people notice buzzing, humming, clicking, roaring, or a high-pitched sound that no one else can hear. For some, it comes and goes. For others, it can feel constant and frustrating.

Tinnitus itself is not a disease. Instead, it is often a sign that something in the auditory system has changed. In many cases, tinnitus is connected to hearing loss, even mild hearing loss that someone may not yet recognize. Noise exposure, aging, stress, certain medications, jaw issues, and other medical conditions may also play a role.

One thing I tell patients often is this: tinnitus may be common, but that does not mean you should simply "learn to live with it" without understanding why it is happening. A hearing evaluation can often provide important clues and help guide treatment recommendations that improve quality of life.

Another concern many people experience is dizziness or balance problems. If you have ever felt unsteady, experienced spinning sensations, or found yourself feeling off-balance for no obvious reason, your ears may actually be involved.

Many people are surprised to learn that the inner ear houses part of the body's balance system. Your brain depends on information from your ears, eyes, and body working together to help you stay steady. When one part of that system is disrupted, balance problems can occur.



Sometimes dizziness happens because of inner ear conditions, infections, or changes in the balance system. Other times, it may be related to medications, blood pressure, dehydration, or other health concerns. Because there are many possible causes, persistent dizziness should not be ignored. Understanding the source of the problem is an important step toward finding relief.

Then there is earwax, something almost everyone deals with but few people understand.

Earwax often gets a bad reputation, but it actually serves an important purpose. It helps protect the ear canal by trapping dust and debris while keeping the ear healthy. In many cases, the ear naturally clears wax on its own.

Problems happen when wax becomes impacted or builds up excessively. This can cause muffled hearing, pressure, discomfort, ringing, or even balance concerns. Patients are often surprised to learn that what felt like sudden hearing loss was actually impacted earwax.

One important tip I always share is to avoid putting cotton swabs or other objects inside the ear canal. While it may feel like you are cleaning your ears, these tools often push wax deeper and can irritate the ear canal. In most cases, ears are better left alone unless there is a true problem.

Healthy ears are about more than hearing clearly. Hearing loss, tinnitus, and balance issues can quietly affect confidence, relationships, energy, and even safety. When hearing becomes more difficult, many people start avoiding restaurants, group conversations, or social activities because listening becomes exhausting. Balance issues can increase fall risk, especially as we age. Persistent ringing can interfere with sleep, concentration, and overall well-being.

The encouraging news is that many ear-related concerns can be managed once we understand what is causing them. Whether it is identifying hearing changes, addressing tinnitus, helping determine the cause of dizziness, or evaluating earwax concerns, there are often solutions available.

One of the best things you can do for your ear health is simply pay attention to changes. If you notice ringing, dizziness, muffled hearing, ear fullness, or changes in balance, do not assume it is something you just have to tolerate. Early evaluation often leads to better outcomes.

At our office, we are passionate about helping patients better understand their hearing and ear health so they can continue enjoying the activities and relationships that matter most. If you are experiencing ringing in the ears, balance concerns, hearing changes, or simply want peace of mind, our team are here to help.

To schedule an appointment, visit us online at www.AudioNova.com, or call us today. Healthy ears play an important role in living well, and taking care of them today can make a meaningful difference tomorrow.

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One Place, Complete Care:

UF Health's New Primary Care and Multispecialty Location Brings Expert Care Close to Home

When it comes to managing your health, convenient access to care matters. That's why UF Health continues to expand services in the Mount Dora community and beyond with a new primary care and multispecialty location, now open and ready to serve patients. The new site brings even more options closer to home while connecting patients to the comprehensive care they expect from UF Health.

As part of the trusted UF Health network — backed by more than 1,200 specialists — this location brings primary and specialty care together in one place, making it easier for adults and children to get the services they need. Providers across multiple specialties work together to coordinate treatment, reduce fragmentation and support a more seamless patient experience.

Designed to improve coordination and convenience, the location combines advanced expertise with a personalized approach, helping patients receive the right care at the right time within the broader UF Health system.

Located at 18650 US HWY 441, Mount Dora, FL, this new facility brings world-class care closer to home — all under one roof.



Lyndie Bentley, FNP-BC

Your Health Journey Starts with Primary Care

At the heart of this new clinic is primary care, the foundation of lifelong health. Family Nurse Practitioner Lyndie Bentley brings more than 20 years of clinical

experience to patients of all ages, offering comprehensive family medicine focused on prevention, wellness and management of both acute and chronic conditions. Whether you're coming in for an annual physical, managing a long-term condition or need same-day care for an unexpected illness, primary care is where your health story begins.





Having a trusted primary care provider means more than treating what's wrong today. It means building a relationship with someone who knows your history, coordinates your care across specialties and helps you make informed decisions about your long-term health. At UF Health, we believe better health starts with a trusted relationship — and we're committed to providing the compassionate, personalized care our patients deserve.

Specialized Care, All Under One Roof

What makes this clinic truly unique is the breadth of specialized care available alongside primary care, all in one convenient location. Rather than receiving a referral and starting over at a new office across town, patients can access a seamlessly connected team of experts under one roof, making it easier to get the care they need.



Hiep Nguyen, MD, FACS



Adrian Finol, MD

Heart, Vascular and Thoracic Care: Under the leadership of Dr. Hiep Nguyen, Medical Director of Cardiovascular Services and one of the nation's foremost experts in minimally invasive and robotic heart and aortic surgery, and Dr. Adrian Finol, Medical Director of the Lung Cancer Program,

UF Health is advancing a new model of thoracic care. With a focus on early diagnosis, precision techniques and multidisciplinary collaboration, they are changing how heart, vascular and lung conditions are treated.



Cesar Reategui-Sanchez, MD

His approach prioritizes reduced pain, smaller incisions and faster recovery times.

General Surgery: With decades of surgical experience, Dr. Samuel Bundz specializes in minimally invasive and robotic procedures designed to help patients recover faster and return to their daily lives sooner. His expertise includes gallbladder removal, hernia repair, appendectomies and bowel surgery, as well as surgical care for cancers of the breast, colon, skin and abdominal organs. He also provides comprehensive thyroid care.



Samuel Bundz, MD, FACS



Bela Kudish, MD, MS,
FACOG, URPS



Chand Rohatgi, MD

Women's Health: Two dedicated specialists provide comprehensive care across the full spectrum of women's health needs. Dr. Bela Kudish specializes in urogynecology, diagnosing and treating pelvic floor conditions to help improve comfort, function and quality of life. Dr. Chand Rohatgi focuses on comprehensive breast care, offering prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment with a strong emphasis on early detection and individualized care.

The Power of Connected Care

The real advantage of a multispecialty practice goes beyond convenience — it's the ability to deliver more coordinated, connected care. When your primary care provider and specialists work within the same health system, information is shared more efficiently, care plans are aligned and important details are less likely to fall through the cracks.

Patients benefit from a team-based approach that supports better continuity of care at every stage of their health journey.

At UF Health's new Primary Care and Multispecialty location in Mount Dora, that integration is built-in from day one. Every provider operates within the broader UF Health network, meaning your care team has access to the same records, the same resources and the same commitment to your health.

Not Just Great Care, Gator Care

Expanding access in Mount Dora reflects that commitment, bringing coordinated, expert care closer to home for patients throughout Lake County and the surrounding communities.

Whether you're establishing care for the first time, managing a complex condition or simply looking for a team that will be there for every stage of life, UF Health is ready to be your partner and expert in health.

UF Health Primary Care and Multispecialty — Mount Dora is now open and ready to serve you. Located at 18650 US HWY 441, Mount Dora, FL. Same-day and next-day appointments are available, please call **352.323.5665** to make an appointment or for more information.

BEYOND ARTIFICIAL TEARS: MODERN APPROACHES TO DRY EYE THERAPY

Dry eye disease affects millions of people worldwide, causing symptoms that range from mild irritation to debilitating pain that interferes with daily life. For years, the standard advice for sufferers was simple: use artificial tears and hope for relief. Today, the landscape of dry eye therapy has expanded dramatically, offering patients a range of options tailored to the underlying cause of their condition.

Understanding Dry Eye Disease

Dry eye occurs when the eyes don't produce enough tears, or when the tears produced are of poor quality and evaporate too quickly. This can result from a variety of factors, including aging, hormonal changes, autoimmune conditions, prolonged screen time, contact lens wear, certain medications, and environmental factors like dry or windy climates. Symptoms typically include a gritty or burning sensation, redness, blurred vision, light sensitivity, and paradoxically, excessive watering as the eyes attempt to compensate for the underlying dryness.

Because dry eye has so many potential causes, effective treatment often requires identifying the specific mechanism at play. This is why eye care providers increasingly emphasize a personalized, stepwise approach rather than a one-size-fits-all solution.

Traditional First-Line Treatments

For many patients, relief begins with the basics. Over-the-counter artificial tears, gel drops, and lubricating ointments can provide temporary comfort by supplementing the eye's natural tear film. Warm compresses and eyelid hygiene routines help address meibomian gland dysfunction, a common contributor to dry eye in which the oil-producing glands along the eyelid margin become blocked or inflamed. Omega-3 fatty acid supplements, humidifiers, and simple lifestyle changes, like taking regular breaks from screens, round out the conservative treatment options that many patients try first.

Advanced In-Office Procedures

When basic measures aren't enough, eye care specialists have a growing toolkit of in-office treatments. Punctal plugs, tiny devices inserted into the tear ducts, help retain natural tears on the eye's surface longer. Intense pulsed light (IPL) therapy uses light energy to reduce inflammation and



improve meibomian gland function. Thermal pulsation treatments apply heat and gentle pressure to unclog blocked glands. Prescription anti-inflammatory drops, such as cyclosporine or lifitegrast, target the underlying inflammation that drives chronic dry eye in many patients.

The Emergence of Platelet-Rich Plasma Therapy

One of the more innovative developments in dry eye treatment is the use of Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) eye drops. PRP therapy involves drawing a small sample of the patient's own blood, processing it to concentrate the platelets and growth factors, and formulating the result into customized eye drops. Because these drops are derived from the patient's own biological material, they contain a rich mixture of growth factors, vitamins, and proteins that closely mimic the composition of natural human tears, something artificial tear substitutes simply cannot replicate.

Lake Eye Associates has incorporated Platelet-Rich Plasma eye drops into its dry eye treatment offerings, providing patients with a biologically based option designed to support corneal healing and reduce ocular surface inflammation. This approach is often considered for patients with more severe or treatment-resistant dry eye, including those with associated corneal surface damage, who haven't found adequate relief through conventional therapies. Because PRP drops are prepared from the

patient's own blood, they also carry a lower risk of allergic reaction or rejection compared to some other specialty formulations.

Finding the Right Path Forward

Dry eye disease can be frustrating to manage, particularly when standard treatments fall short. The good news is that patients today have more options than ever before, from simple lubricating drops to advanced regenerative therapies like PRP eye drops. Practices such as Lake Eye Associates reflect a broader shift in the field toward individualized care, where treatment plans are built around a thorough evaluation of each patient's specific type and severity of dry eye.

If you're struggling with persistent dry eye symptoms that haven't responded to over-the-counter remedies, it may be worth scheduling a comprehensive evaluation with an eye care provider. Advances in diagnostic tools now allow specialists to pinpoint the underlying cause of dry eye more precisely, which in turn makes it possible to recommend targeted therapies, whether that means a simple change in eye drop formulation or an advanced treatment like Platelet-Rich Plasma therapy. With the right combination of treatments, most patients can find meaningful, lasting relief.

You don't have to keep living with the discomfort, irritation, and frustration of chronic dry eye. Every day spent relying on temporary fixes is another day you could be spending in real comfort. Lake Eye Associates offers comprehensive dry eye evaluations to help determine which treatment path, including advanced options like PRP eye drops, is right for you. Call Lake Eye Associates today to schedule your consultation and take the first step toward clearer, more comfortable vision.



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By David Kosiorek, PA-C

Understanding Basal Cell Carcinoma: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC) is one of the most common types of skin cancer, affecting millions of people worldwide each year. At Lumen Dermatology, our experienced team encounters this condition frequently and wants to ensure patients understand the importance of early detection and proper treatment.

What is Basal Cell Carcinoma?

Basal cell carcinoma develops in the basal cells, which are found in the deepest layer of the epidermis. These cancers typically grow slowly and rarely spread to other parts of the body, making them highly treatable when caught early. However, if left untreated, BCCs can become locally invasive, causing significant tissue damage and disfigurement.

Recognizing the Signs

The Lumen Dermatology team emphasizes the importance of knowing what to look for when examining your skin. Basal cell carcinomas can appear in various forms:

- **Nodular BCC** presents as a pearly, dome-shaped bump with visible blood vessels. These lesions may develop a central depression or ulceration as they grow.
- **Superficial BCC** appears as a red, scaly patch that may resemble eczema or psoriasis. These are commonly found on the trunk and can be easily overlooked.
- **Morpheaform BCC** looks like a scar-like, firm, pale area with poorly defined borders. This type can be particularly challenging to detect and treat due to its appearance.
- **Pigmented BCC** contains brown, black, or blue pigmentation and may be mistaken for a mole or melanoma.

BASAL CELL CARCINOMA (BCC)



SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA (SCC)



Risk Factors and Prevention

Several factors increase the likelihood of developing basal cell carcinoma. Prolonged sun exposure and a history of sunburns, particularly during childhood, significantly elevate risk. Fair-skinned individuals, those with light-colored eyes and hair, and people over 50 are at higher risk. Additionally, exposure to radiation, certain chemicals, or having a compromised immune system can increase susceptibility.

Lumen Dermatology strongly advocates for prevention through sun protection. This includes wearing broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30, seeking shade during peak sun hours (10 AM to 4 PM), wearing protective clothing, and avoiding tanning beds entirely.

Treatment Options

When we diagnose basal cell carcinoma, several effective treatment options are available, including Mohs surgery, surgical excision, and superficial radiation therapy. The choice depends on the size, location, and type of BCC, as well as the patient's overall health.

The Importance of Professional Care

Regular skin examinations by our qualified team at Lumen Dermatology are crucial for early detection. Our professionals can identify suspicious lesions that patients might miss and provide appropriate treatment recommendations.

If you notice any new, changing, or concerning spots on your skin, don't hesitate to schedule an appointment. Early intervention leads to better outcomes and often simpler treatment procedures. Remember, basal cell carcinoma is highly curable when detected and treated promptly by experienced medical professionals.

Expert Dermatology Care for Your Skin

At Lumen Dermatology, we bring over 50 years combined experience in skin health. Our team specializes in diagnosing, treating, and preventing skin cancer. With a patient-centered approach, we provide personalized care to help you achieve and maintain healthy skin for life.

Book Your Appointment

Booking a Dermatology appointment is an essential step for anyone looking to address skin concerns or maintain overall skin health. By scheduling an appointment, patients gain access to professional insights and tailored solutions that can significantly improve their skin health.

Call 352-830-1500 to schedule your appointment today!


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Coronary Artery Disease: PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Feeling short of breath, heart palpitations, chest pain and tightness? Do you know the signs of Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)? And if you're experiencing them, are you taking steps to see your cardiologist to find out what's the cause?

For many people, that have CAD symptoms, they, unfortunately, ignore their signs. Ignoring heart irregularities can be fatal! And if you are experiencing any, the best time to have diagnostic testing is when these indicators are acting up.

What Diagnostics are available?

In today's modern medical world, we have so many tests that can pinpoint exactly what's wrong with our hearts; if only more patients would take advantage of getting tested to know where their risk factors and cardiac health fall, they would give themselves a jump start on living a much healthier life with greater longevity.

An electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG) measures the electrical activity of the heartbeat. If you are experiencing heart symptoms, this is usually the first test that will be administered in an office setting or in the ER. If symptoms persist, more testing will follow to eliminate issues, or in many cases, put the pieces together to find out what's causing your warning signs.

Stress tests are one of the most common methods to detect heart function during exercise and at rest. If you are unable to exercise, there are nuclear stress test options that utilize an injectable contrast to mimic the heart rate elevation of exercise, while you lie or sit down.

Sometimes stress tests are not enough, and further testing like an angiogram is required to see how the inside (lumen) of the blood vessels, arteries, and heart chambers are working. An angiogram can show blockages and other blood flow abnormalities. Stents can be placed if needed during the procedure.

Many times cardiologists will ask patients to wear a Holter Monitor for anywhere from 24 hours to several days depending on your specific situation and risk factors. The monitor is a portable electrocardiography device that continuously monitors the rhythm and the heart's activity.



An echocardiogram is an ultrasound of the heart that can detect how the blood is pumping and it can also identify the size and thickness of the valves, chambers, and arteries.

There is also another vital test called a calcium score. This test measures the amount of plaque in your arteries. CT coronary angiogram is a technique to evaluate the coronary arteries in select patients.

CAD Symptoms

- Chest Pain and tightness
- Lightheaded
- Dizzy
- Tired/Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Fainting
- Rapid heart rate
- Sweating
- Gray color to the skin
- Arm/Shoulder Pain
- Abnormal heart palpitations
- Cardiac arrest

Depending on your diagnosis and indicators, the treatment can vary from merely taking medications to having a non-invasive procedure, or angiography/stents. The best advice any cardiologist will give you is, "Don't ignore your symptoms!" If you have any heart irregularities or discomfort, seeking medical attention fast is imperative.

If you believe you are having a heart attack or stroke, call 911! If you're having initial symptoms that come and go, contact your cardiologist immediately.

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If you believe you are having a heart attack or stroke, call 911! If you're having initial symptoms that come and go, contact your cardiologist immediately.

THE OVERLOOKED WOUND: UNDERSTANDING VENOUS LEG ULCERS

Chronic venous insufficiency (CVI) rarely announces itself with a single dramatic symptom. It builds slowly, tired legs after a long day, faint swelling around the ankles, skin that feels tight by evening. Because these signs are so easy to dismiss, one of CVI's most serious complications often goes unnoticed until it's already a problem: the venous leg ulcer.

Venous leg ulcers (VLUs) are open wounds that develop when damaged vein valves allow blood to pool in the lower legs instead of returning efficiently to the heart. They account for the majority of chronic leg wounds, yet they're frequently mistaken for a slow-healing scrape or an unrelated skin issue, a mix-up that can delay proper care by months.

How a Vein Problem Becomes a Wound

Healthy veins rely on one-way valves to push blood upward against gravity. When those valves weaken or fail, often the result of long-standing varicose veins, prior blood clots, or years of prolonged standing or sitting, blood begins to back up and pool near the ankles. The resulting pressure buildup, known as venous hypertension, pushes fluid and blood cells out into the surrounding tissue.

Over time, this trapped fluid deprives the skin of the oxygen and nutrients it needs to stay intact. The tissue becomes fragile, discolored, and increasingly prone to breaking down. Eventually, even a minor bump or scrape in the area can open into a wound that won't close on its own, this is a venous leg ulcer.

Recognizing the Signs

Venous leg ulcers have a fairly distinct presentation, and learning to recognize the early warning signs can make a real difference in outcomes.

Typical features include:

- A shallow, irregularly shaped wound, usually near the inner ankle
- A red or yellowish base, sometimes with weeping or drainage
- Surrounding skin that appears shiny, tight, brown, or hardened
- Swelling, aching, or a heavy sensation in the affected leg
- Itchy or discolored patches in the weeks before a wound actually forms



That last point is worth emphasizing: many patients notice changes in their skin — hardening, discoloration, persistent itching, well before an ulcer appears. These early clues are the body's way of signaling that venous pressure has already reached a damaging level, and they're the ideal moment to intervene before a wound forms at all.

Why These Wounds Are Often Overlooked

Unlike a fresh cut, a venous ulcer doesn't always look alarming at first. It can resemble a scrape that's simply taking its time to heal, which leads many people to treat it with basic first aid and wait. But venous ulcers don't heal like ordinary wounds, the underlying pressure problem persists, so the skin keeps breaking down faster than it can repair itself. Left unaddressed, a small sore can slowly enlarge, become painful, and open the door to infection.

This is why timing matters so much. A wound that hasn't shown real improvement after roughly two weeks, or one that's growing, draining more, or developing an odor, deserves evaluation from a vein specialist, not just a bandage change.

Treating the Wound and the Root Cause

Effective care for a venous leg ulcer has to address two things at once: the open wound itself and the venous pressure problem driving it. Wound-focused care typically involves regular cleaning and dressing changes to control infection risk and support new tissue growth.

At the same time, managing the underlying venous insufficiency is what allows healing to actually stick. Compression therapy is the cornerstone here, compression stockings or wraps counteract the pooling pressure in the leg, giving damaged skin a real chance to repair itself. For more advanced or recurrent cases, minimally invasive procedures like endovenous laser treatment, sclerotherapy, or Venaseal can close off the malfunctioning vein entirely, reducing the pressure that caused the ulcer in the first place and lowering the risk of it coming back.

Don't Wait for the Wound to Get Worse

Venous leg ulcers are a visible sign of an underlying circulation problem that's been building for a while, but they're also highly treatable, especially when caught early. If you're noticing swelling, skin changes, or a wound on your lower leg that isn't healing the way it should, it's worth having your veins evaluated rather than waiting to see if it resolves on its own. A proper diagnostic ultrasound can identify exactly which veins are contributing to the problem, opening the door to a treatment plan built around lasting relief, not just wound care in isolation.

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RECLAIM YOUR VITALITY: TESTOSTERONE PELLET THERAPY, SHOCKWAVE, AND Emsella

Aging is inevitable — but feeling like a diminished version of yourself doesn't have to be. At Lake Sumter Urology, we specialize in helping men and women restore their health, confidence, and quality of life through advanced, evidence-based treatments. Three of our most transformative offerings — testosterone pellet therapy, shockwave therapy, and Emsella — are changing the way patients approach hormonal balance, sexual wellness, and pelvic floor health. Here's what you need to know.

Testosterone Pellet Therapy: Consistent Hormones, Consistent You

Hormonal imbalance affects millions of Americans, yet it remains one of the most underdiagnosed and undertreated conditions in both men and women. Low testosterone — also known as “low T” — can trigger a cascade of symptoms including chronic fatigue, weight gain, brain fog, decreased libido, mood swings, and loss of muscle mass. For women, declining estrogen and testosterone levels during perimenopause and menopause bring their own challenges, from hot flashes and sleep disruption to diminished sexual drive and bone loss.

Testosterone pellet therapy offers a solution that stands apart from creams, patches, and injections. At Lake Sumter Urology, our providers implant tiny, bio-identical hormone pellets — roughly the size of a grain of rice — just beneath the skin, typically in the upper buttock area. This simple, in-office procedure takes only a few minutes and requires minimal downtime.

What makes pellets uniquely effective is their delivery method. Unlike other hormone replacement options that create peaks and valleys in hormone levels, pellets release a steady, physiologic dose of testosterone directly into the bloodstream over three to six months. Patients report more stable moods, improved energy, better sleep, enhanced libido, and sharper mental clarity — without the daily hassle of applying creams or scheduling frequent injections.

Both men and women are candidates for testosterone pellet therapy. Our team conducts thorough lab work and a comprehensive health evaluation



before recommending treatment, ensuring every patient receives a personalized dosing plan tailored to their unique needs.

Shockwave Therapy: A Drug-Free Path to Sexual Wellness

Erectile dysfunction (ED) affects an estimated 30 million men in the United States, yet many suffer in silence or rely solely on medications that mask the underlying problem. At Lake Sumter Urology, we offer low-intensity shockwave therapy — a non-invasive, drug-free treatment that addresses the root cause of most ED: poor blood flow.

Shockwave therapy uses gentle, acoustic sound waves delivered to the penile tissue through a handheld device. These waves stimulate the growth of new blood vessels — a process called angiogenesis — and break down micro-plaque that restricts circulation. The result is improved blood flow and enhanced erectile function that can be long-lasting.

Each treatment session lasts approximately 15 to 20 minutes and is performed comfortably in our office with no anesthesia required. Most patients complete a series of six sessions over several weeks. Clinical studies have shown that shockwave therapy produces meaningful improvements in erectile function, particularly for men with vasculogenic ED. Many patients who have relied on PDE5 inhibitors like sildenafil or tadalafil find that shockwave therapy allows them to reduce or even eliminate their dependence on medication.

Beyond ED, shockwave therapy is also being used to address Peyronie's disease — a condition in which scar tissue causes painful curvature of the penis — with promising results.

Emsella: The Chair That Strengthens Your Pelvic Floor

Urinary incontinence and pelvic floor weakness are far more common than people realize, affecting both women and men. Whether it's leaking when you laugh, cough, or sneeze — or experiencing sudden, urgent bathroom trips — these symptoms can be embarrassing and limiting. Emsella offers a breakthrough approach with zero surgery, zero downtime, and remarkable results.

Emsella is an FDA-cleared, non-invasive chair device that uses High-Intensity Focused Electromagnetic (HIFEM) technology to stimulate deep pelvic floor muscles. During a single 28-minute session, Emsella induces thousands of supramaximal muscle contractions — the equivalent of performing over 11,000 Kegel exercises — without any physical effort from the patient. You simply sit fully clothed in the Emsella chair while the device does the work.

Patients typically undergo six sessions scheduled twice per week. Many report noticeable improvement in bladder control, reduction in leakage episodes, and an enhanced sense of pelvic strength. Emsella is effective for stress incontinence, urge incontinence, and even sexual dysfunction related to pelvic floor weakness.

Take the First Step at Lake Sumter Urology

At Lake Sumter Urology, our mission is to provide compassionate, cutting-edge care that helps patients feel their best at every stage of life. Whether you're exploring hormone optimization, seeking solutions for sexual dysfunction, or looking to regain control of your bladder health, our experienced team is here to guide you.

Contact Lake Sumter Urology today to schedule your consultation and discover which treatments are right for you. Your vitality is worth it.



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REVOLUTIONIZING WELLNESS:

INFINITY MEDICAL INSTITUTE'S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ANTI-AGING AND LONGEVITY

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

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

A Comprehensive Suite of Innovative Treatments

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

- **Bioidentical Hormone Therapy:** provides a natural approach to hormone balance, addressing common age-related symptoms like fatigue, mood fluctuations, and decreased libido.
- **Testosterone Replacement Therapy:** helps men restore vitality by supporting healthy testosterone levels, enhancing energy, muscle mass, and overall well-being.
- **Sexual Wellness Treatments:** offer targeted therapies to improve intimate health and quality of life.
- **Aesthetic Services:** Including Botox, Derma fillers, laser skin resurfacing, PRP, Body contouring, cellulite reduction.
- **Pulse Wave Therapy:** Improves circulation and activates stem cell regeneration correcting conditions like chronic pain, neuropathy and erectile dysfunction.
- **Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Therapy:** harnesses the body's own growth factors to accelerate healing and tissue repair.

- **Stem Cell Therapy:** represents a groundbreaking regenerative approach to treating injuries and revitalizing aging tissues.
- **Peptide Therapy:** uses specialized treatments to stimulate natural bodily processes, including metabolism and immune function.
- **Weight Loss Programs:** offer comprehensive, sustainable solutions supported by medical expertise.

Patient-Centered Care: Beyond Treatment

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

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

The Science of Regenerative Medicine

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

A Vision for Transformative Healthcare

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

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

About Infinity Medical Institute

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



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

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

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

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THE NEW LUXURY ESSENTIAL: Sleeping Better Than Ever

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDSM

In the evolving world of health and wellness, true indulgence is no longer defined by what we add to our days—but by how deeply we rest at night. Sleep, once treated as a biological necessity, has become the ultimate marker of a well-lived life. And at the center of this quiet revolution is an unexpected accessory: the custom dental sleep device.

For many, sleep apnea has long carried a clinical stigma—white labs, blinking monitors, and bulky equipment that feels more hospital-grade than home sanctuary. But today's approach reframes the conversation entirely. Modern dental sleep devices are discreet, elegant, and designed with comfort in mind, aligning seamlessly with a lifestyle that values refinement, restoration, and ease.

Sleep as the Highest Form of Self-Care

Luxury wellness isn't about extremes. It's about optimization—making subtle, intelligent choices that elevate everyday experiences. A dental sleep device does exactly that by working quietly in the background, allowing the body to breathe freely and rest uninterrupted.

Unlike traditional sleep equipment that can dominate a bedroom or disrupt intimacy, these devices are custom-crafted to fit the wearer precisely. There are no hoses, no noise, no visual clutter. Just a small, tailored appliance that supports natural airflow and promotes deeper, more restorative sleep.

The result? Waking up clear-headed, energized, and calm—without feeling like you've "done" anything at all.

A Bespoke Experience for the Modern Sleeper

Customization is the hallmark of luxury, and dental sleep devices are nothing if not bespoke. Each is designed from a simple detailed scan of the patient's bite, ensuring a fit that feels intuitive rather than intrusive.

This personalization transforms the experience from treatment to ritual. Putting the device in at night becomes as effortless as slipping on silk pajamas or dimming the lights. It's a quiet signal to the body: rest is coming.



For those who travel frequently, the appeal is even greater. Lightweight and portable, these devices slip easily into a carry-on—no special adapters, no explanations at airport security, no disruption to routine. Whether at home, in a boutique hotel, or halfway across the globe, restorative sleep travels with you.

The Aesthetic of Effortless Health

There is a growing shift in wellness culture away from performative health and toward understated optimization. The most coveted tools are the ones no one notices—but everyone feels.

Dental sleep devices fit seamlessly into this ethos. There's no outward sign, no nighttime spectacle. Partners sleep undisturbed. Bedrooms remain serene. The benefits unfold privately: fewer nighttime awakenings, smoother breathing, and mornings that begin without fog or fatigue.

This is wellness that doesn't ask for attention. It simply delivers.

Beyond Sleep: The Ripple Effect

When sleep improves, everything else follows. Mornings feel lighter. Focus sharpens. Workouts become more effective. Even mood and skin often reflect the change.

Rather than addressing symptoms one by one—fatigue, irritability, low energy—supporting sleep addresses the foundation. A dental sleep device becomes not a solution to a problem, but an investment in overall vitality.

In this way, it aligns perfectly with the modern wellness mindset: proactive, refined, and deeply personal.

Redefining What It Means to Treat Yourself

Indulgence has evolved. Today, it's less about excess and more about intention. It's choosing experiences that enhance life quietly but profoundly.

A dental sleep device may not sparkle or announce itself, but its impact is unmistakable. Night after night, it creates space for the body to do what it was designed to do—rest, recover, and renew.

In a world that demands so much of our waking hours, the most luxurious thing we can do may be to sleep—fully, deeply, and effortlessly.

And that kind of rest? That's the ultimate upgrade.

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!

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BREAKTHROUGH IN NEUROPATHY TREATMENT:

HOW SUMMUS LASER THERAPY OFFERS HOPE FOR NERVE PAIN SUFFERERS

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

Understanding Neuropathy: A Complex Challenge

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

The Summus Laser: A Technological Marvel in Pain Management

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

Key Mechanisms of Summus Laser Therapy

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

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

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

Clinical Evidence and Patient Outcomes

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



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

Treatment Process and Expectations

A typical Summus Laser treatment protocol involves:

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

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

Advantages Over Traditional Neuropathy Treatments

The Summus Laser offers several distinct advantages:

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

Who Can Benefit?

Summus Laser therapy is particularly beneficial for patients with:

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

Future of Neuropathy Treatment

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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Developing Social Communication in Children

Innovative Therapies Group

A child's expressive vocabulary grows rapidly from the time of his first word at approximately 12 months, through first grade. Did you know that the average 2 year old uses over 200 words growing to 1000 words by age 3 years to over 1600 words by age 4? Your child's words may only be understood 50% of the time by age 2 but should be 90% understandable between 4-5 years.

There are many strategies that parents and caregivers can use to improve a child's communication:

Follow the child's lead

- Let the child choose the activity
- Join in the child's activity
- Comment on the child's play/talk about what he/she is doing
- Be face to face

Make it interactive – Create an opportunity for your child to communicate

- Keep toys/needed items in sight and out of reach to elicit requesting
- Provide inadequate portions so child requests more
- Create silly situations/be animated
- Playfully obstruct activity so child must request you "move", "go", etc.

Model and Expand the child's language

- Model gestures and words
- Simplify your language
- Speak slowly
- Be repetitive
- Provide choices (even when you already know what the child wants)
- Add one more element to your child's language (i.e.: if child uses one word utterances, model two word phrases, "go" becomes "car go")

Try some of these fun outdoor activities to help develop language skills.

Nature Walk: Whether at your local park or in your own backyard, now's the perfect time to get outside. While you are there, take the time to talk about what you are seeing:

- Label items (grass, leaf, flower, tree, dirt, stick). Collect items in a bag and encourage your child to show others what they found. Model language ("Look, I see, I found")



- Talk about the colors and sizes (big/little, short/tall) of the flowers, bugs, rocks and plants
- Discuss what you hear (model silly sounds and animal sounds)
- Talk about what people/animals are doing (who is running, sliding, throwing, swinging or what is crawling, flying, hiding). This is a great activity to practice verbs!

Water/sand play: Enjoy a hot day with water and/or sand play! Fill up a small pool or even a bucket with water/sand. You can use cups, big spoons and strainers while discussing the different steps throughout the activity:

- Talk about actions (splash, pour, fill, dump, scoop, dig)
- Label items (boats, spoons, cups). Children love to find items buried in the sand (hide, find and label them)!
- Talk about body parts (splash/scoop with your hands, splash with/bury your feet, do little splashes/dig with your fingers)

Follow the Leader/Simon Says: Both activities are great for toddlers and school-age children. Use Follow the Leader to work on identifying body parts and actions, as well as following directions. Younger children can participate by following visual instructions.

- Make sure you talk about what you're doing (model words), model actions and assist them with hand over hand assistance if necessary! ("Clap hands, stomp feet, arms up", "touch your eyes/nose/toes" and "Walk, run, jump, hop")
- Work on opposites (up/down, stop/go, loud/soft, high/low)

- Make instructions harder if the children are older (have them follow two "clap your hands then stomp your feet" or "touch your nose then touch your toes")
- Take turns being the leader and being "Simon". Encourage your child to tell you what to do!

Caregiver involvement can have a positive impact on improving a child's language skills. However, there are red flags which may indicate that a child may need professional intervention.

Red Flags

18 months:

- Does not point to objects
- Does not use gestures such as waving or shaking head
- Does not respond to "no" and "bye-bye"
- Does not use at least six to ten words consistently
- Does not hear well or discriminate between sounds

24 months:

- Does not use at least six consonant sounds
- Does not follow simple directions
- Has a vocabulary of less than 50 words
- Has decreased interest in social interactions

36 months:

- Strangers have difficulty understanding what the child is saying
- Does not use simple sentences

Innovative Therapies Group understands that family education is critical to improve a child's development of language skills. Coupled with family participation, direct therapy for a variety of communication disorders and delays can promote independent function and improved communication.

Speech therapy can help with improving a child's ability to understand and use language; and their ability to produce intelligible speech. We have experience treating children with a variety of disorders including Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. Medicare and insurance approved Back and knee braces.

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

At The Interventional Pain Institute, each patient's pain is thoroughly evaluated and a customized treatment plan is developed. Dr. Compton and his team are dedicated to treating every patient with the utmost respect and care, with a mission to help patients regain functionality and improve their quality of life.

The Interventional Pain Institute also places a strong emphasis on patient education. An informed patient is an empowered patient, and the team strives to provide as much information as possible about each patient's condition and treatment options.

With offices conveniently located in The Villages and Ocala, Florida, The Interventional Pain Institute is an excellent choice for those suffering from chronic or acute pain. Under the care of Dr. Brent Compton, patients can find not just relief, but also a renewed sense of hope for a pain-free future. Experience the difference at The Interventional Pain Institute today.

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WHEN TRAUMA DOESN'T LOOK LIKE TRAUMA

By Elizabeth Dosoretz, LCSW

Not all trauma is loud. Some of it is carried quietly.

When most people think about post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), they picture panic attacks, flashbacks, emotional outbursts or someone who is visibly struggling. But trauma does not always present that way. Many people with PTSD are still going to work, taking care of their families, showing up for responsibilities and doing everything they can to appear "fine" on the outside, while silently struggling underneath the surface.

This is often referred to as silent PTSD, a form of post-traumatic stress where symptoms are internalized rather than outwardly visible. These individuals may look high functioning to everyone around them while privately carrying significant emotional and physical distress.

Psychiatrist Judith Herman wrote that trauma is often not simply remembered but relived through emotions, physical reactions and patterns of behavior.

Silent PTSD can show up in ways that are easy to overlook or misattribute to stress, anxiety, burnout or even personality changes. Some people experience a constant sense of uneasiness or hypervigilance without fully understanding why. Others begin to disconnect emotionally from people they love or lose interest in things they once enjoyed. Some avoid certain conversations, memories, places or emotions tied to painful experiences without even realizing how much avoidance has taken over their lives.

Trauma affects more than emotions. It can impact the body in very real ways. Chronic headaches, stomach issues, muscle tension, exhaustion, difficulty sleeping, trembling or unexplained physical pain can all be connected to unresolved emotional stress.

Psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk wrote in "The Body Keeps the Score" that trauma can continue living in the body long after the traumatic experience itself has ended. This helps explain why so many people struggling with unresolved trauma experience physical symptoms, chronic stress, exhaustion, sleep issues and anxiety while still appearing "fine" to



everyone around them. Because these symptoms overlap with so many other medical concerns, the underlying trauma can go unrecognized for years.

One of the reasons silent PTSD is so difficult to identify is because many people minimize their own experiences. They may tell themselves they "should be over it by now," especially if the event happened years ago. Others compare their trauma to someone else's and convince themselves that others have it worse. Over time, this can cause individuals to invalidate their own pain and avoid acknowledging what they are truly carrying.

Society and stigma also contribute to the problem. Many people were taught to push through difficult emotions, stay busy, avoid vulnerability or keep painful experiences private. As a result, countless individuals continue functioning while silently struggling, often without ever asking for help.

These hidden struggles can also deeply affect relationships. People experiencing silent PTSD may have difficulty trusting others, expressing emotions or maintaining close emotional connections. To family members, friends or coworkers, it may look like someone is becoming distant, withdrawn, irritable or emotionally unavailable. On the outside, they may still appear like themselves. But internally, they often feel isolated, exhausted and misunderstood.

Clinically, silent PTSD can also be challenging to recognize because people do not always walk into treatment talking about trauma. Many initially seek help for anxiety, sleep problems, stress, irritability or physical symptoms without immediately connecting those struggles to deeper emotional wounds.

Studies have also shown that PTSD is far more common than many realize. Research available through the National Institutes of Health found that PTSD prevalence in some primary care settings can exceed 10%, with many individuals remaining undiagnosed or untreated for years.

This is why compassionate and intentional care matters so much.

Providers trained to recognize the more subtle signs of trauma understand the importance of listening beyond surface-level symptoms. Sometimes, the most important part of treatment is creating a safe, nonjudgmental environment where someone finally feels comfortable enough to share experiences they may have carried alone for years. Healing often begins not with forcing someone to "prove" their pain, but by helping them feel seen, heard and understood. PTSD does not look the same in everyone, and trauma should never be minimized or compared. The reality is that many people are carrying invisible burdens that others know nothing about.

With the right support, healing is possible. For many people, the first step toward recovery is simply recognizing what they are experiencing matters.

About the Author

Elizabeth Dosoretz, LCSW, is the founder and CEO of Elite DNA Behavioral Health. Inspired by her own experience navigating postpartum depression and the challenges surrounding access to mental health care, she founded Elite DNA in 2013 with the goal of making behavioral health services more accessible and integrated into communities. Today, Elite DNA is one of the fastest growing behavioral health providers in the Southeast, offering in-person and virtual services across Florida, Virginia and Alabama.



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Dealing With Life's Painful Situations

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

On Father's Day in 2005 my dad came to my office to visit and talk about how things were going. In the course of our discussion he mentioned that he experienced a terrible night's sleep because his back was causing him so much pain. I told him that it was time to go to the ER and get checked out to find out what was causing all of his pain. He did, and that started a two-year battle with pancreatic cancer. My dad fought an incredible fight with this terrible cancer but passed away in August of 2007.

Many people have faced the pain of having to bury a loved one. The question is, "How do I deal with the pain?" We may have confidence that our loved one is in a better place, but do we do with the pain that we still feel?

As you read this, maybe your pain is not in the loss associated with death, but rather you have faced the end of a relationship, or perhaps have received bad news regarding your own health. The question still remains, "what are we to do with these painful situations?"

As we turn through the pages of Scripture, we find that the thoughts and writings of the Psalmist David bring comfort and hope to those in pain. David understood painful situations for he faced many of them in his own life. He too, buried many loved ones and faced enormous family problems. How did he get through these challenges? He turned to God for help.

David tells us in the book of Psalms, *¹⁸The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalms 34:18*

You are never closer to God than when you are hurting. David knew that from personal experience. David took his pain and his problems to the Lord and asked for His help. In Psalm 142:1-2 David wrote, *"I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy.*

I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble."



Our natural tendency is to suffer in silence. We put on a smile and pretend that everything is fine in our lives. Yet in reality, we know that ignoring our pain does not bring relief. We hope that time will heal all wounds but we know it does not. In fact, time often makes matters even worse.

Pain is our body's way of letting us know that we need to deal with something. Whether it is physical, emotional, or relational, pain should not be ignored. And yet still, we try to run from it.

It is human nature to run from painful situations. By law, all doors in public buildings swing out. When people panic, they run. They try to escape. When we face pain, loss and hurt, we look for ways to escape. We dream of running away from reality in hopes of finding peace and comfort over the next rainbow. Sometimes people try to escape by turning to alcohol, drugs, food, or even inappropriate relationships. Running from your problems never brings resolution.

David went on to say in Psalm 142:3 that *³"When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who knows my way..."* God knows the pain we feel and He wants us to run to Him with our troubles.

As you read his Psalms, you will quickly notice that David was very open about what he was going through. And yet, through it all, he learned to trust and depend on God.

When dealing with the pressures and strains of life and the emotional challenges we face, we can learn much from David's example. Stop pretending that you can handle everything in your own strength and turn to God who loves you and cares about you. He specializes in mending broken hearts.

Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church Naples. For more information, visit www.venturenaples.com.



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