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Health & Wellness MAGAZINE®

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HOW TO MANAGE VARICOSE VEIN PAIN

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HORMONE OPTIMIZATION

WHY HORMONE REPLACEMENT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

Feeling exhausted, foggy, moody, restless, or simply "not like yourself" can be incredibly frustrating—especially when you have already sought help and been told that hormone replacement therapy should fix the problem.

But hormones are not a one-size-fits-all solution.

Simply receiving a prescription for hormones does not necessarily mean your hormones are optimized. Your body, symptoms, medical history, age, lifestyle, and individual needs all matter. The goal should not be to simply "replace" hormones. The goal is to understand what your body needs and develop an individualized approach to help you feel your best.

Hormones are powerful chemical messengers. They help coordinate communication between organs and tissues and influence countless functions throughout the body, including metabolism, mood, sleep, sexual health, bone health, and reproductive function. When hormone levels change, the effects can be felt throughout the body.

Why You May Still Feel Bad After Starting HRT

It is understandable to expect dramatic improvement after starting hormone therapy. But if your symptoms continue—or you feel no different—it may be time to take a closer look. Most medical professionals are barely tipping the iceberg with replenishing hormones to an optimal level and it's giving a bad impression that hormones don't work or don't help how you are feeling.

Please consider:

- The hormone may not be the right fit for you.
- The dosage may need adjustment.
- The delivery method may matter.
- More than one hormone may need to be considered.
- Your symptoms may have multiple contributing factors.
- Your treatment may need ongoing monitoring and adjustment.

Hormone therapy should be a conversation, not a prescription handed to you and forgotten about. Treatment decisions should take into account your symptoms, health history, personal and family history, and individual risks and benefits.

Hormone Optimization Requires a Bigger Picture

Many people assume that a single blood test can tell the whole story. In reality, hormone evaluation is more serious than what a blood test can reveal. Hormone levels can fluctuate, particularly during perimenopause and menopause, and symptoms and medical history are important parts of the clinical picture. More comprehensive testing is a MUST to safely take the Hormone journey to feeling and looking younger. To feeling like yourself again! The objective is individualized care—not simply chasing a number on a laboratory report.

What Are the Potential Benefits of BHRT?

- Relief from hot flashes, night sweats, brain fog and low energy
- Improvement of vaginal dryness and other genitourinary symptoms
- Protection against bone loss associated with menopause and unwanted weight gain
- Improvement in quality of life for many women experiencing significant menopausal symptoms

And hormone therapy is not something to fear or something to take casually. There is a balance required to have the optimal level of hormones in the body to prevent diseases. Too high puts you at risk but also too low puts you at risks for cancers and many other aging diseases.

Your Body Deserves Individualized Care

Schedule your FREE health consultation today and learn more about what your body may be trying to tell you. Discover whether a more individualized approach to hormone care may be right for you—and get the information you need to make an informed decision about your health.

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By Sabrina Ciceri

Sabrina Ciceri is a dynamic leader in health and wellness, recog-nized 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, col-laborating 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 com• munity. 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 leader-ship continues to inspire others, and she is honored to contribute her experience and passion as a member of the AdventHealth Waterman Board.

Sabrina

HEARING & WHOLE-BODY HEALTH

THE SURPRISING CONNECTION BETWEEN HEARING, HEART HEALTH, DIABETES, AND OVERALL WELLNESS

When most people think about hearing, they think about their ears. But what many people do not realize is that hearing health is closely connected to overall health. In fact, conditions affecting the heart, circulation, blood sugar, and general wellness can all play an important role in how well we hear.

As an audiologist here in The Villages, one of the things I enjoy helping patients understand is that hearing loss is often not just an "ear problem." Sometimes it can be one piece of a larger health picture. Paying attention to hearing changes may even encourage conversations about wellness that help people feel better in many areas of life.

One of the strongest connections we see is between hearing and heart health. Your inner ear depends on healthy blood flow to function properly. Tiny sensory cells inside the ear help turn sound into signals your brain can understand, and those cells rely on oxygen and nutrients carried through the bloodstream. Because these structures are so delicate, changes in circulation may affect hearing over time.

This is one reason researchers have found links between cardiovascular health and hearing loss. Conditions such as heart disease, high cholesterol, and poor circulation may increase the risk of hearing changes. While hearing loss does not automatically mean someone has heart concerns, it does remind us that the body often works as one connected system.

Blood pressure can also play a role. High blood pressure may place strain on blood vessels throughout the body, including those that support the inner ear. Some people with uncontrolled blood pressure may notice changes in hearing, ringing in the ears, or sensations that seem unusual. In some cases, fluctuations in blood pressure can even contribute to dizziness or balance concerns.

Diabetes is another important area where hearing health and overall wellness intersect. Research has shown that adults with diabetes may be more likely to experience hearing loss compared to those without diabetes. Over time, high blood sugar can affect nerves and blood vessels throughout the body, including those involved in hearing.

For patients managing diabetes, hearing evaluations can become an important part of overall preventive care. Just as routine eye exams help monitor vision changes, checking hearing may help identify subtle shifts before they begin affecting communication and daily life.

Inflammation, sleep, stress, and lifestyle habits may also influence hearing health more than many people realize. Poor sleep, unmanaged stress, smoking, and lack of physical activity can affect circulation and wellness throughout the body. While there is no perfect formula for preventing hearing loss, taking care of your overall health may also help support healthier hearing.

One thing I often tell patients is that hearing loss does not only affect how loudly we hear. It can also influence energy, focus, relationships, and emotional well-being. Many people with untreated hearing loss describe feeling tired at the end of the day because listening becomes harder work. Others withdraw from restaurants, social gatherings, or family conversations because hearing feels frustrating or overwhelming.

When hearing becomes difficult, the effects can quietly ripple into other areas of life. Staying socially connected, active, and engaged is an important part of healthy aging, and hearing plays a meaningful role in helping us stay connected to the people and moments we care about most.

The encouraging news is that small, healthy habits can support wellness throughout the body, including hearing health. Managing blood pressure, controlling diabetes, staying physically active, prioritizing sleep, protecting hearing from loud noise, and keeping up with routine medical care all contribute to a healthier future.

One of the simplest but most important things you can do is pay attention to changes. If conversations seem harder to follow, family members sound muffled, ringing in the ears becomes more noticeable, or listening simply feels more exhausting than it used to, it may be time for a hearing evaluation.

At our office, we believe hearing health is an important part of whole-body wellness. Whether you have concerns about hearing changes, manage conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure, or simply want a baseline evaluation, 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

Colorectal Surgery: A double board-certified, fellowship-trained colorectal surgeon, Dr. Cesar Reategui-Sanchez specializes in minimally invasive, robotic and trans-anal techniques for treating conditions of the colon, rectum and anus. 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.

HOW TO PREVENT COMMON EYE CONDITIONS

By Karin Girgis, OD - Optometric Physician

Keeping your eyes healthy is one of the most important things you can do to protect your health and wellbeing. There are several common eye conditions that, if left untreated, can lead to vision issues or even vision loss. However, these conditions are easily preventable if the right steps are taken. Here are some of the most common eye conditions afflicted by adults and tips to help you prevent them from developing.

COMMON EYE CONDITIONS EXPLAINED

Oftentimes, many eye conditions will develop over time, and they'll often develop without early-onset symptoms. Some of the most common eye conditions include:

- **Glaucoma:** Glaucoma is the general term for a series of eye diseases that can damage your optic nerve, which is often caused by increased pressure on the eye. Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness worldwide, and it's often not noticed until serious vision loss is experienced.

- **Cataracts:** Cataracts are a clouding of the eye, which is caused by damage to your eye's lens. This often leads to blurred vision and difficulty seeing at night. Surgery is the most common treatment for restoring vision affected by cataracts.

- **Macular Degeneration:** Affecting the central part of the retina, macular degeneration can gradually affect central vision, making it hard to do simple tasks, such as reading, driving, or even recognizing a loved one.

- **Diabetic Retinopathy:** Diabetic retinopathy affects people with diabetes. High blood sugar levels damage the retina's blood vessels, which are located in the back of the eye, leading to swelling, blurred vision or vision loss.

8 WAYS TO PREVENT COMMON EYE CONDITIONS

While the above eye conditions can be severe, they are fortunately treatable and even preventable. To avoid the side effects of these dangerous diseases, take the following proactive steps:

1. Diet: A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and vitamins A, C and E provide all the necessary nutrients to strengthen your vision. Some good foods to implement include dark leafy greens,

like spinach, kale or collard greens, as well as fish, including salmon, tuna and trout. Citrus and nuts are also excellent snacks that provide these vitamins.

2. Know Your Health: Many common eye conditions are genetic, so there's a chance you may be predisposed. If possible, try to understand your family's health history, particularly regarding eye health. If you have chronic conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure, try to keep your health in range. Maintaining a healthy weight will also keep stress off your body.

3. Avoid Smoking: Smoking has been found to increase the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Quitting or never starting smoking can significantly boost your eye health.

4. Take Care in the Sun: UV rays can be especially damaging to your eyes when outside. Look for sunglasses that have at least 99% UVA and UVB protection.

5. Practice Eye Safety: Protective eyewear, both at work and at home, can decrease your risk of eye injury. Painting, construction, yardwork or sports are common activities where protective eyewear should be worn at all times.

6. Limit Screen Time: While it may be hard to look away from your phone or computer in today's ever-connected world, digital eye strain is a serious complication that can affect your eye's health. The 20-20-20 rule – looking up every 20 minutes at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds – can help prevent the damages caused by excess screen time.

7. Use Contact Lens Safety: If you wear corrective contact lenses, it's important to wash your hands before taking them out or putting them in. You should also properly clean your contact lenses nightly to avoid dangerous eye infections.

8. Schedule Comprehensive Eye Exams: Many common eye conditions, including those mentioned above, are screened for during comprehensive eye exams. Eye exams use imaging to take pictures of critical parts of the eye, including the retina and optic nerve, to look for "undetected" signs of disease. It's the quickest way to get a personalized health plan to manage your eye health.

PRESERVE YOUR EYE HEALTH WITH LAKE EYE

Even by following proactive at-home steps, the best way to prevent eye conditions from developing is to schedule and receive regular eye exams. Your optometrist will work with you and prescribe treatment plans to prevent eye diseases from progressing. For advanced eye health protection from common eye conditions, contact the experts at Lake Eye.

Lake Eye, a US Eye company, is dedicated to preserving and restoring your vision. We offer comprehensive eye exams, a full-service optical department, and advanced surgical treatments for nearly every common eye condition. To learn more about the variety of services we provide to help slow and reverse vision loss, contact Lake Eye today and schedule an appointment with one of our experienced ophthalmologists or optometrists.

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High Cholesterol = High Risk for Debilitating Diseases

Cholesterol is a natural substance that the body produces through the liver. It's waxy and circulates through the blood stream, feeding the heart and brain. But when cholesterol is derived from foods like saturated fats and trans fats, the body over produces LDL, which is the "bad" cholesterol.

HDL is the "good" cholesterol. If we did not have HDL, our brains would not work properly, and we would suffer from other bodily disorders. The same holds true for too much bad, LDL cholesterol. If we have too much LDL, then it adversely affects our overall health.

What numbers are healthy?

Your total Cholesterol is made up of LDL and HDL. There are blood tests that your physician will order to check your cholesterol level. The best combination of both types of cholesterol is HDL (good) around 40 and LDL (bad) around 100.

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL LEVEL	
NORMAL	<150
BORDERLINE	150-200
HIGH	200 or higher

What are the Risk Factors?

Cholesterol along with another substance in the blood can form atherosclerosis, which is the plaque that builds up in the arteries. If you have excessive plaque, then you are at high risk of having a coronary heart attack, heart disease, stroke and other disease related issues. Triglycerides are the fat that is stored in the bloodstream from the excess fat in our diets. Triglycerides are what combine with the high LDL level and create harmful plaque build up.

What you can do

Because much of the high degree of cholesterol is associated with our food intake and our body's inability to burn fat, you can do many things to help lower your cholesterol naturally.

- Eating healthy diet
- Stop smoking (contributes to atherosclerosis)
- Start an exercise program
- Cut back on alcohol and processed foods

You should have an annual exam with your physician to check your cholesterol levels on a regular basis. If you have a high lipid count, your doctor will prescribe medication (statins) for you to help lower the total level. In addition to statins, you can change your diet to get your levels to drop more rapidly.

Foods to incorporate

A big part of lowering your LDL or low-density lipoprotein is through adding soluble fiber, omega 3 fatty acids, monosaturated fatty acids or MUFAs, powerful antioxidants and lutein to your diet. Some of the following foods listed below can literally lower your "bad" cholesterol levels by 5-10% within just a few weeks. But in order for these nutrients to make the most efficient decrease in your cholesterol, you must adhere to an overall healthy diet. You can't eat fried chicken and then eat an apple and think you'll get the benefit. You'll need to make a plan to eliminate the processed foods in your diet.

Cholesterol Lowering Foods
Garlic
Oatmeal and Oat bran
Pears
Apples
Prunes
Beans
Red wine
Fatty fish (salmon and sardines)
Nuts
Black tea
Spinach
Olive Oil

It's always best to speak directly with your physician before completely changing your diet or exercise program. Your doctor will construct a precise plan to suit your specific needs and incorporate some of the foods mentioned above along with a coordinated lifestyle strategy.

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SPECIALIST IN DISEASES OF THE HEART, ARTERIES AND VEINS

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To find out more information on the Dr. Vallabhan, your local specialists in the diseases of the heart, veins, and arteries, please call (352) 750-2040 or visit them online at, Drvcardio.com

HOW TO MANAGE VARICOSE VEIN PAIN

Elevate Your Legs
Many of us work jobs that require us to either sit or stand for extended periods of time. While we may hear from time to time that neither of these behaviors are great for our health, we don't always make the adjustments needed to keep our bodies healthy at work. Hours of standing and sitting can impact your circulation and put excess pressure on the veins.

An easy way to offset the damage done by sitting or standing? Keep your legs elevated when you can. This encourages blood to flow back up the leg toward the heart instead of pooling in the vein. If you're not able to elevate your legs at work, then try flexing and bending your legs frequently throughout the day to promote proper circulation in the leg.

Try placing your feet on a table or lie down and prop up your legs on a few pillows. You can also lie down and put your legs against a wall to elevate them. No matter which method is best for you, we recommend holding the position for at least 15 minutes.

Embrace Cold Water
Cold water, such as a cool swimming pool on a hot day, is great for relieving swelling — including the swelling caused by varicose veins! Opt for cold water over hot water when bathing. This can help shrink the blood vessels and minimize swelling. On the flip side, it's also important to avoid hot water. Heat can have the opposite effect on your veins, causing them to swell even more. If you've noticed your veins feel worse after a hot shower, try cooler water instead.

Ice Up
If you are able to handle going one step further than cold water, start using ice for varicose veins. Ice is good for varicose veins for many of the same reasons as cold water.

Stay Out of the Heat
This is easier said than done during the hot Florida summers. Still, the more you can stay cool, the happier your veins will be. Long periods spent in hot conditions, whether you're outside tanning or inside enjoying a hot bath, can cause veins to swell and further irritate varicose veins. We recommend avoiding heat when you can. And, when it's unavoidable, wear loose-fitting clothing and stay hydrated to give your body some extra support. A great way to escape the heat and stay cool is by swimming, which has buoyancy and vasoconstriction vein benefits.

Eat Less Salt & Eat More Potassium
A diet high in salt can cause you to retain water, which can put excess pressure on stressed veins. Cutting down salt can minimize water retention. Keep in mind that most of our salt doesn't come from the salt shaker. It's often hidden in processed foods. Read labels to ensure you're not unknowingly maxing your salt intake. Even if a package claims its contents are low-sodium, the label may tell a different story.

Upping your potassium intake can also be an effective way to minimize water retention. Plenty of tasty foods can give you a healthy potassium boost. Try picking up almonds, lentils, potatoes, and leafy vegetables during your next grocery run to add more potassium to your diet.

Minimize Processed Sugar
Love sweet foods? Choose your favorite fruits over snacks high in processed sugar. Too much sugar in your body leads to an increased production of low-density lipoprotein which sticks to blood vessel walls. This increases your risk of developing varicose veins or blood clots. If you already have varicose veins, increased sugar levels can further irritate symptoms.

Fruits and veggies are a tasty way to cure a craving for something sweet, but remember that fresh is always best. Canned or processed foods can still be packed with added sugar and preservatives, and often don't pose the same benefits that fresh foods do.

Eat More Flavonoids
Flavonoids can improve circulation, leading to lower blood pressure and more relaxed blood vessels. Foods high in flavonoids include vegetables like onions, bell peppers, spinach, and broccoli. There are also plenty of tasty fruits high in flavonoids. Try picking up citrus fruits, grapes, cherries, apples, or blueberries. Central Florida Vein and Vascular sells a supplement called "Lymphatic Formula" which supports healthy lymphatic function because it contains the micronized purified flavonoid fraction (MPFF) of Diosmin and Hesperidin as well as Selenium and Vitamin D. This supplement is especially important for patients with lymphedema and lipedema.

Incorporate Vein Health-Boosting Foods into Your Diet

There are specific foods that pose great benefits to your vein health. First, try adding more fiber to your diet by opting for whole wheat flour over white. This often means staying away from white bread, pasta, and rice, and instead choosing their whole wheat counterparts. Women should aim for 21 to 25 grams of fiber daily, while men should aim for 30 to 38 grams.

Next, look for foods that are rich in Rutin. These foods have been shown to reduce swelling, aching, and pain that often accompany varicose veins. Try incorporating buckwheat, blackberries, apples, apricots, and grapes into your diet. Many of them make great snacks!

Last, look for bioflavonoid-rich foods. These foods have antioxidants and anti-inflammatory qualities that can also reduce swelling in the veins and strengthen connective tissues in the vein walls. Try picking up some of the following next time you grocery shop: red bell peppers, strawberries, citrus, broccoli, mangoes, garlic, spinach, or teas. As always, opt for fresh foods over canned or processed ones, where possible.

Wear Compression Socks

Compression legwear gradually applies pressure to the leg, with the most pressure near the ankle. This helps minimize pain and swelling associated with varicose veins by gently circulating pooled blood back up the leg. Compression stockings come in various sizes and levels of compression, so it's best to consult a specialist about this legwear to make sure you're getting the size that will be most beneficial for your vein health.

Exercise Regularly

Many jobs require employees to either stand or sit for long periods of time. This can be troublesome for healthy circulation and puts a lot of stress on the veins in the lower leg. Regularly taking breaks to walk or stretch during the day can promote healthy circulation. Frequent low-impact exercises like walking or swimming can also help strengthen the calves and lead to better circulation. You don't need an extensive workout routine — fitting in a 30-minute walk or swim daily can be beneficial for your veins.

Jump On A Trampoline

Trampolines aren't just for kids. If it's been years since you've had fun jumping around, it may be time to get back into it. This childhood favorite activity has proven beneficial for your overall health and especially good for veins! The act of jumping on a trampoline can promote circulation, which reduces the amount of blood pooling in the vein. And if you're looking to lose weight or strengthen your knees and ankles, rebounding could be just the thing you need.

How much can you incorporate into your schedule? You don't need to set aside a lot of time. Just spending five minutes on a trampoline, three times a day, can be beneficial for your veins. If you want to exercise but hate running, put rebounding in your exercise routine as a substitute! You can get similar benefits as running in under 20 minutes.

Join A Yoga Class

High-impact exercise isn't for everyone, and this is especially true if you have bad joints. The ease and accessibility of yoga make it a perfect choice to build strength and flexibility. Many of the poses are good for your vein health, too! Some poses compress and decompress the veins, while others use gravity to promote circulation.

Don't have time to jump into a yoga class? There are still easy poses you can do at home to help your legs. Here's an easy one: while on the floor, lie on your back near a wall. Now, place your legs so that they're resting up against the wall. Relax and breathe! This helps to drain the blood back up through your leg. It's relaxing after a long day at work, especially if you've spent the entire day in a chair and the deep breathing, a mainstay of yoga, actually helps the venous blood flow better in your veins.

Pick Comfortable Clothes

Tight clothing and certain shoes can constrict blood flow. This isn't good for anyone but is especially problematic when you're already experiencing pain from varicose veins. Instead, choose loose-fitting clothing and comfortable shoes. You'll get an added bonus if your clothing options keep you cool in hot temperatures, as warm weather can also lead to unwanted leg pain.

Try Certain Plant Extracts

There are specific extracts that have been shown to reduce swelling and may relieve some of the pain from varicose veins. Horse chestnut extract can reduce pain, heaviness, and itching for some individuals, while others may benefit from sea pine extract and butcher's broom extract. Remember that, if these are used in essential oil form, they should be diluted before applying to the painful area.

Seek Treatment from a Vein Specialist

At the end of the day, these steps can help you manage your varicose vein pain, but only treatment from a specialist can get rid of it. Treatment itself is minimally invasive and done in-house by a specialist, which minimizes stress on both your life and your body. After treatment, you'll be able to enjoy legs without visible, painful varicose veins. We still recommend keeping these tips in mind even after treatment, as many of these habits can help keep your veins healthy and happy.

Looking to take the first step toward pain-free legs? Our team of the best vascular surgeons in The Villages at Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center is here to help. Our team has over 45 years of experience in vein care, and we understand that treatment isn't one-size-fits-all. During an initial consultation, we will work with you to assess the current state of your vein health, address your questions and concerns, and create a treatment plan that will work best for you and your veins. You can schedule a consultation to see us at one of our four locations today!

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We're excited to share that David Kosiorek, PA-C and Dr. John Cottam, MD have started a NEW Dermatology practice! David has 27 years of Dermatology experience and is proudly serving The Villages and Ocala. He is passionate in providing meticulous, personalized care with a focus on early detection and treatment of skin cancer. His new practice, Lumen Dermatology, continues his commitment to excellence, offering comprehensive skin care solutions in a welcoming environment.

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Understanding Squamous Cell Carcinoma

EXPERT CARE AND TREATMENT

By David Kosiorek, PA-C

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is the second most common form of skin cancer, affecting millions of people worldwide each year. While this diagnosis can be concerning, early detection and proper treatment lead to excellent outcomes for most patients. At Lumen Dermatology, our experienced team specializes in diagnosing, treating, and preventing skin cancer.

What is Squamous Cell Carcinoma?

Squamous cell carcinoma develops in the squamous cells that make up the outer layer of your skin. Unlike basal cell carcinoma, SCC has a higher tendency to spread to other parts of the body if left untreated, making early intervention crucial. This cancer typically appears on sun-exposed areas such as the face, ears, neck, lips, backs of hands, arms, and legs.

The primary cause of SCC is cumulative ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure from the sun or tanning beds. Other risk factors include fair skin, a history of sunburns, weakened immune system, exposure to certain chemicals, and previous skin cancer diagnoses. People over 50, men, and those with outdoor occupations face increased risk.

Recognizing the Warning Signs

SCC can present in various forms, making professional evaluation essential. Common signs include persistent, scaly red patches that may bleed or crust over, elevated growths with a central depression, wart-like growths, and open sores that don't heal within several weeks. Any new growth, changing mole, or suspicious skin lesion warrants immediate dermatological examination.

The cancer often develops gradually, which can lead patients to dismiss early symptoms as minor skin irritations. However, what distinguishes SCC from benign conditions is its persistence and progressive nature. Unlike temporary skin issues that resolve on their own, SCC lesions continue growing and changing over time.

When SCC is suspected, we perform precise biopsies to confirm the diagnosis and determine the specific subtype and characteristics of the cancer.

Our treatment philosophy centers on achieving complete cancer removal while preserving both function and cosmetic appearance.

For patients who aren't surgical candidates or have specific location concerns, we provide alternative treatments such as supeficial radiation therapy. Our team carefully evaluates each case to recommend the most appropriate treatment approach based on the cancer's size, location, depth, and the patient's overall health status.

Prevention and Ongoing Care

Beyond treatment, Lumen Dermatology emphasizes prevention and long-term skin health management. We provide comprehensive skin cancer screenings, educate patients about proper sun protection, and establish personalized follow-up schedules. Our team recommends daily broad-spectrum sunscreen use, protective clothing, and avoiding peak sun hours. For patients with a history of SCC, regular monitoring becomes essential since they face increased risk for developing additional skin cancers.

Your Partner in Skin Health

Receiving an SCC diagnosis doesn't have to be overwhelming. At Lumen Dermatology, our compassionate team guides you through every step of your treatment journey, from initial consultation through recovery and beyond. We're committed to providing personalized, evidence-based care that prioritizes your health, comfort, and peace of mind.

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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AWARENESS IS THE KEY TO PREVENT RABIES AND STAY SAFE

Not only are we easing out of the dog days of summer, but we are also just around the peak time of year for rabies. On average August sees the most animal rabies cases in Florida. With World Rabies Awareness Day on September 28, now is also a good time to review the basics.

So far in 2026, five animals have tested positive for rabies in Marion County. That is the typical number of cases for a full year in Marion County. Animals that have tested positive in Marion County include raccoons, bats, cats, a coyote, and a fox. Skunks, otters, and bobcats can also carry the virus. In fact, any mammal can carry and transmit rabies.

Rabies is a Deadly Disease

The rabies virus is deadly, with nearly 100% fatal illness in humans and other mammals. But human rabies deaths are exceedingly rare in the U.S., typically resulting in fewer than 10 fatalities per year, with an average of one to two deaths annually. This is due to widespread rabies immunization programs and highly effective post-exposure treatments.

The main wildlife sources of rabies in Florida are raccoons and bats. In the U.S., contact with infected bats is the leading cause of human rabies death, accounting for about 70% of cases.

Outside cats are by far the most common domestic animal found to have rabies in Florida, largely because they are often not kept up to date on rabies vaccinations. Pet dogs, cats, and ferrets are required by law to be vaccinated against rabies in Florida.

Prevention Goes a Long Way to Avoid Rabies

Here are some prevention tips:

- Immunize your pets and livestock based on your veterinarian's recommended schedule.
- Keep pets under direct supervision and on a leash, and keep livestock secured on your property. If an animal bites your pet or livestock, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and call Marion County Animal Services at 352-671-8727.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals. Do not handle, feed, or unintentionally attract them with outdoor pet food, open garbage cans, or other sources of food
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home; instead contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- Prevent wildlife, including bats, from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, schools, and other similar areas where they might come in contact with people and pets.

- Have your veterinarian vaccinate pets and at-risk livestock. Make sure you follow your veterinarian's instructions for revaccination.

Be Alert to Spot Signs of Rabies

Animals with rabies may show strange behavior. They can be aggressive, attacking for no apparent reason, or act very tame (especially wild animals). They may not be able to eat, drink or swallow. They may drool because they are unable to swallow their saliva. They may stagger or become paralyzed. Eventually they will die.

When an animal is sick with rabies, the virus is shed in the saliva and can be passed to another animal or a person, usually through a bite.

Transmission may also occur if the saliva enters open wounds, the mouth, nose, or eyes of another animal or person.

Act Quickly if Exposed to Rabies

If you believe you may have been exposed to rabies, contact your health care provider and DOH-Marion at **352-629-0137** right away, or go to the nearest emergency room. There is effective treatment that can prevent infections in people if administered quickly.

If an animal bites, immediately scrub the wound with lots of soap and running water for 5 to 10 minutes. Try to get a complete description of the animal and determine where it is so that it can be contained by animal control for quarantine or rabies testing. The animal will either be quarantined for 10 days (if it is a dog, cat, or ferret) or be tested for rabies. If the animal is dead, be careful not to damage the head, and avoid further contact.

If your animal is attacked by a wild, stray, or unvaccinated animal, do not examine your pet for injuries without wearing gloves. Wash your pet with soap and water to remove saliva from the attacking animal. Do not let your animal come into contact with other animals or people until the situation can be handled by animal control or county health department staff.

By staying alert and taking precautions, Marion County residents can avoid adding rabies exposure to the summer heat. Find out more at floridahealth.gov/rabies.

Florida HEALTH

For more information, visit **FloridaHealth.gov/Rabies.**

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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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.

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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 Insitute
Pioneers in Integrative Medicine, Infinity Medical Institute is a company dedicated to bench marking 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.

INFINITY
MEDICAL INSTITUTE

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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 to reduces pain and inflammation, enhances healing, and increases circulation with no surgery, drugs, or side effects.

LaserLab believes there's a better way to manage pain. We've pioneered a paradigm-changing health and wellness program that helps to revitalize the lives of people suffering from pain.

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The Power of Physical Therapy:
Maximizing Recovery Through Proactive Care

Undergoing orthopedic surgery involves more than just the procedure itself. A crucial aspect that often goes unrecognized is the role of physical therapy both before and after surgery. Did you know that engaging in physical therapy sessions prior to your surgery can significantly impact your recovery?

It's a common misconception that physical therapy starts after surgery. However, the reality is quite the opposite. Pre-operative physical therapy plays a pivotal role in enhancing your overall fitness and readiness for the impending procedure. The key lies in proactive preparation, aiming to strengthen your body and address any existing weaknesses or limitations.

One of the primary benefits of pre-operative physical therapy is its ability to address issues that might exacerbate during the lead-up to surgery. Loss of joint motion, weakened muscles, and poor movement patterns tend to worsen before a surgical intervention. Engaging in a pre-operative strengthening regimen helps counter these issues by reinforcing soft tissue mobility, reducing inflammation, and enhancing muscle balance and coordination.

For instance, individuals preparing for a total knee replacement require specific strengthening of the muscles supporting and stabilizing the knee joint. A tailored pre-operative strengthening protocol, curated by a skilled therapist, can make a significant difference in the outcome of the surgery.

Beyond physical preparation, pre-operative therapy also involves education and guidance. Therapists provide invaluable insights into the impending procedure, pain management strategies, and establish a supportive environment that diminishes fears or concerns related to the surgery.

Wondering how to kickstart this proactive approach? Simply ask your primary care physician, orthopedic surgeon, or any healthcare professional involved in your care for a physical therapy script aimed at pre-operative strengthening. This step opens the door to an evaluation of your condition and allows the therapist to determine the most beneficial treatment options tailored to your specific needs, ensuring the swiftest recovery possible.

But it doesn't stop there. Post-operative physical therapy is equally crucial. It's the bridge between the surgery and returning to your optimal functionality. Through targeted exercises, pain management techniques, and personalized care, post-operative therapy aims to expedite recovery, rebuild strength, and restore mobility.

The impact of physical therapy both before and after orthopedic surgery cannot be overstated. It's a proactive investment in your well-being, enabling a smoother recovery trajectory, minimizing complications, and ultimately allowing you to regain your active lifestyle sooner.

In conclusion, don't overlook the power of physical therapy in the pre- and post-operative phases of orthopedic surgery. By taking proactive steps to strengthen your body before surgery and engaging in a dedicated rehabilitation program afterward, you pave the way for a swifter, more successful recovery, ensuring you get back on your feet in no time.

Physical & Occupational Therapy Benefits

- Manual stretching
- Hip & Ankle Alignment Strategies
- Decompression
- Electrical nerve stimulation
- Help with daily tasks & Living
- Cold laser treatment

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

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

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

Innovative Therapies Group, Inc.
352-433-0091 | innovativetherapiesgroup.com

CAUDAL STEROID INJECTIONS:

An Effective Treatment Option for Lower Back and Tailbone Pain

By Brent Compton, MD

Caudal steroid injections have emerged as a valuable treatment option for patients suffering from chronic lower back pain, sciatica, and tailbone discomfort. This minimally invasive procedure delivers powerful anti-inflammatory medication directly to the affected area, providing meaningful relief for many individuals who have not found success with conservative treatments.

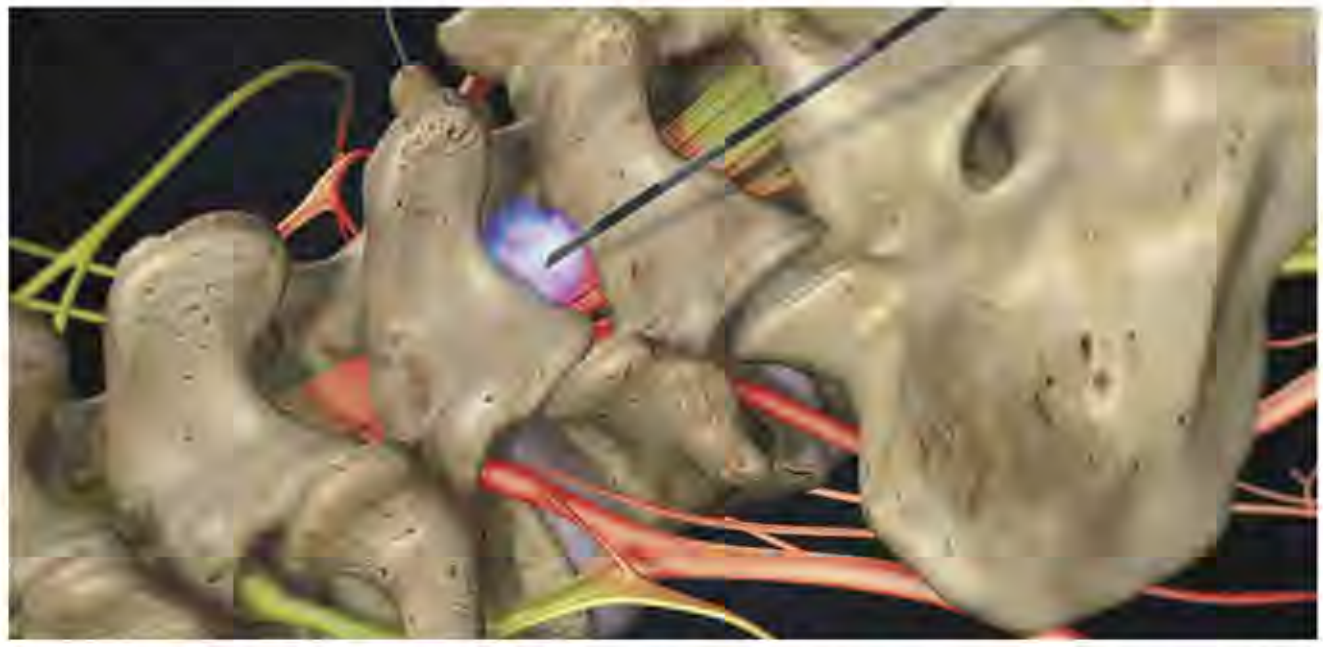
The caudal approach involves injecting a combination of local anesthetic and corticosteroids into the epidural space through the sacral hiatus, a natural opening at the base of the spine. This technique is particularly effective because it allows medication to spread throughout the lower epidural space, addressing inflammation and pain signals in multiple nerve roots simultaneously.

Patients considering this treatment often have conditions such as herniated discs, spinal stenosis, or failed back surgery syndrome. The procedure is especially beneficial for those experiencing radicular pain – pain that radiates from the spine into the legs – as the medication can effectively target inflamed nerve roots that cause these symptoms.

The procedure itself is typically performed in an outpatient setting and usually takes less than 30 minutes. Before the injection, patients receive local anesthesia to minimize discomfort. Using fluoroscopic (X-ray) guidance, the physician carefully positions the needle to ensure accurate placement. This imaging guidance is crucial for both safety and effectiveness, allowing the doctor to verify the correct distribution of medication.

Most patients report feeling pressure during the injection but minimal pain. The local anesthetic provides immediate pain relief, while the steroid medication typically begins working within 2-3 days, gradually reducing inflammation and pain over the following week. The duration of pain relief varies among individuals, with some experiencing benefits for several months or longer.

While caudal steroid injections are generally safe, patients should be aware of potential risks and side effects. These may include temporary numbness or weakness in the legs, mild soreness at the injection site, and rarely, infection or bleeding. Some patients might experience a temporary increase in pain before the anti-inflammatory effects take hold.



The success rate of caudal injections varies depending on the underlying condition and individual factors. Research suggests that approximately 60-75% of patients experience significant pain reduction following the procedure. This treatment can be particularly effective when combined with physical therapy and appropriate exercise programs, as the pain relief window provides an opportunity to strengthen supporting muscles and improve flexibility.

For optimal results, healthcare providers typically recommend limiting strenuous activities for a few days following the injection. Patients can usually return to normal activities the day after the procedure, though they should follow their physician's specific instructions for recovery.

While not a permanent cure for chronic pain conditions, caudal steroid injections can provide substantial relief and improve quality of life for many patients. They may be repeated if necessary, though most physicians limit the number of injections to three or four per year to minimize potential side effects from repeated steroid exposure.

Before considering this treatment, patients should undergo a thorough evaluation to determine if they are suitable candidates. Certain conditions, such as active infections, bleeding disorders, or allergies to the medications used, may preclude someone from receiving these injections. A detailed discussion with a healthcare provider can help determine if caudal steroid injections are an appropriate treatment option for an individual's specific condition.

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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Unchanged these his last 18 years of practice is Attorney Smith's flat fee model of Estate Planning, including $75 Wills. He continues to be available free of charge to speak to your church or social club on a wide range of topics, including charitable giving, estate planning for Florida residents, and homestead and tax planning. The previous year's radio content can be found and streamed at www.AttorneyPatrickSmith.com.

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CAREGIVING IMPACTS YOUR HEALTH

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

According to the 2023 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, the Alzheimer's Association reported that more than 11 million Americans provided unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias. These caregivers provided an estimated 18 billion hours valued at $340 billion. Additionally, 59% of these caregivers report that their own health has suffered due to care responsibilities with high or very high levels of emotional stress.

Health of Caregivers Impacted

Most caregivers receive little or no support from their own families or other organizations and are basically on their own. There's been a growing trend over the last few decades of closing mental health facilities, early discharge of hospital patients, and implementation of managed care practices which causes a shift and burden to families and caregivers. This often results in financial loss, strain among families, and caregiver health issues that manifest due to increased stress.

Studies consistently show the following impacts on a caregiver's health:

- Higher levels of depression and depressive symptoms than in non-caregivers
- Depressed caregivers are more likely to have coexisting anxiety disorders, substance abuse or dependence
- Chronic stress in caregivers sometimes is associated with an increase in hypertension, inflammation and decreased immune function
- Caregivers who experience chronic stress may be at a greater risk for cognitive decline
- Caregivers report having a higher incidence of stress, weight gain, headaches, and back strain among other physical ailments and pain associated with caregiving

Women tend to be, more often than not, the primary caregivers. However, being a caregiver whether male or female affects your quality of life and increases the challenge of balancing your personal schedule with that of the intense, demanding focus needed to be a caregiver.

Resources and Tips Available

Caregivers tend to put others first and themselves last. It's not uncommon to see the impact of ongoing stress from caregiving sometimes results in anger and resentment. It's vitally important for caregivers to make sure they are taking care of themselves mentally, physically and socially. How can a caregiver take care of a loved one, if they are not being mindful of their own needs and health? Below are some resources and tips:

- Don't be afraid to ask for help from family members or close friends who could run errands
- Practice meditation and exercise to help relieve stress—set aside early morning or evening for yourself
- Do something socially just for you–see a movie, have lunch with friends
- Check into your office policies to see if you have family leave benefits

Call Hospice of Marion County for support from these programs:

Transitions Program at (352) 854-5200 – This is a community supported volunteer-based resource with caregiver support groups, respite for the caregiver, providing assistance whether in homes or assisted living facilities.

Nancy Renyhart Dementia Education Program at (352) 291-5138 – This program provides education for those caring for someone with dementia. It is provided at no charge and provides a three-hour workshop with tips and helpful caregiving resources, along with a Virtual Dementia Tour® that lets the caregiver experience dementia through the eyes of their loved one.

empath
HOSPICE OF MARION COUNTY

Hope and Optimism

By Pastor Timothy L. Neptune

Hope is confidence in God...not wishful thinking. To have hope is to trust in God to meet our needs...even in the midst of difficult times. When we do go through tough times our confidence in God can get a little rattled, as the Old Testament figure Job experienced. In the midst of his pain and heartache he cried out, *"Where then is my hope? Who can see any hope for me?"* (Job. 17:15)

Ultimately, hope comes from God. The Scriptures say, *"May the God of hope fill you all with joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* (Romans 15:13) Hope is an essential element of the Christian's life. In 1 Corinthians 13 the Apostle Paul included hope as one of the top three qualities of a person's life: *"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."* (1 Cor. 13:13)

As followers of Christ, we are called to be dispensers of hope. We should exude a confidence and trust in God that demonstrates that we have hope. Yet I pose the question, "Can a person be filled with hope without being filled with optimism?" According to the encyclopedia, optimism is "to anticipate the best possible outcome." Can we demonstrate hope in God without anticipating the best possible outcomes of the situations we face?

I believe we can. In fact, I think hope is best exemplified when it is demonstrated in the face of negative circumstances. There are many times when hope and optimism go hand in hand. David had both when he faced Goliath. He had confidence in God and he expected the best possible outcomes...Goliath's defeat and an Israelite victory over the Philistines. And yet, there are many examples of people who had hope in God but did not anticipate the best possible outcomes.

Simon Peter is a good example. He and the disciples had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. They had worked so hard and yet still had nothing to show for their labors. And then Jesus tells them to cast out the net one more time. Simon did not expect to catch any fish. He was pessimistic. But, he had confidence in Jesus, so he cast the net. Though the circumstances did not look promising, his hope in God made up for his lack of optimism.

Esther is another good example. She had confidence that God would ultimately provide deliverance for the Jews but as she prepared to go before the King she said, *"...I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"* (Esther 4:16) She demonstrated hope but not necessarily optimism.

The point is this: hope and optimism are not the same thing. You can still be hopeful even if you are not optimistic. You can still be a dispenser of hope even if you think you are going to face hard times ahead because you know that God will meet your needs.

Jesus didn't sound very optimistic when he said, *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation* (a rather pessimistic view); *but be of good cheer* (maintain your hope), *I have overcome the world* (which is the basis of our hope)." (John 16:33)

Hope doesn't mean that the best possible situations will always occur, but it does mean that in some way God will bring something good or useful out of the situation. As we look into the future, we may not always be filled with optimism, but we must always be filled with hope...God is still in control!

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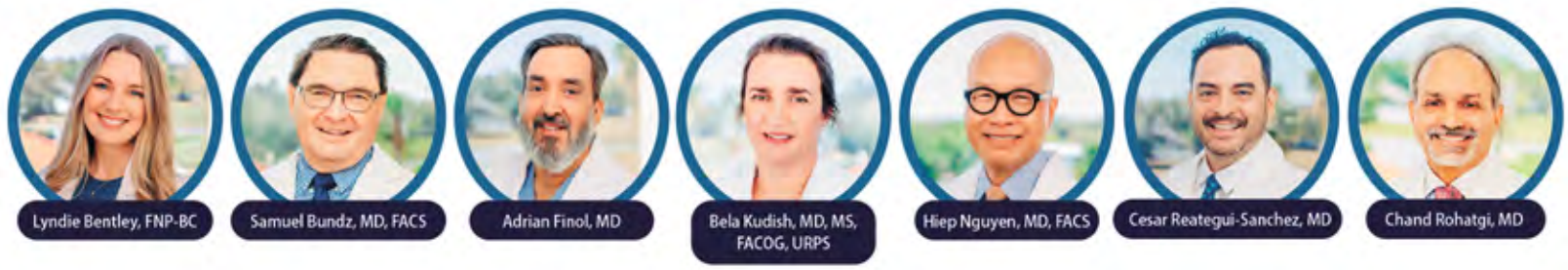

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