

S O U T H W E S T F L O R I D A ' S

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

June 2020

Charlotte/South Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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# Endocrinologist Dr. Raymond de la Rosa Sheds Light on COVID-19 and Diabetic Patients

**I**t is well known that those with diabetes are more susceptible to infections. There are two coronavirus receptor proteins involved in regulating inflammation, glucose handling, kidney function and cardiovascular physiology.

**We caught up with Dr. Raymond de la Rosa of Millennium Physician Group in Englewood to find out more about receptors and drug inhibitors that affect immune function during COVID-19 in individuals with Diabetes.**

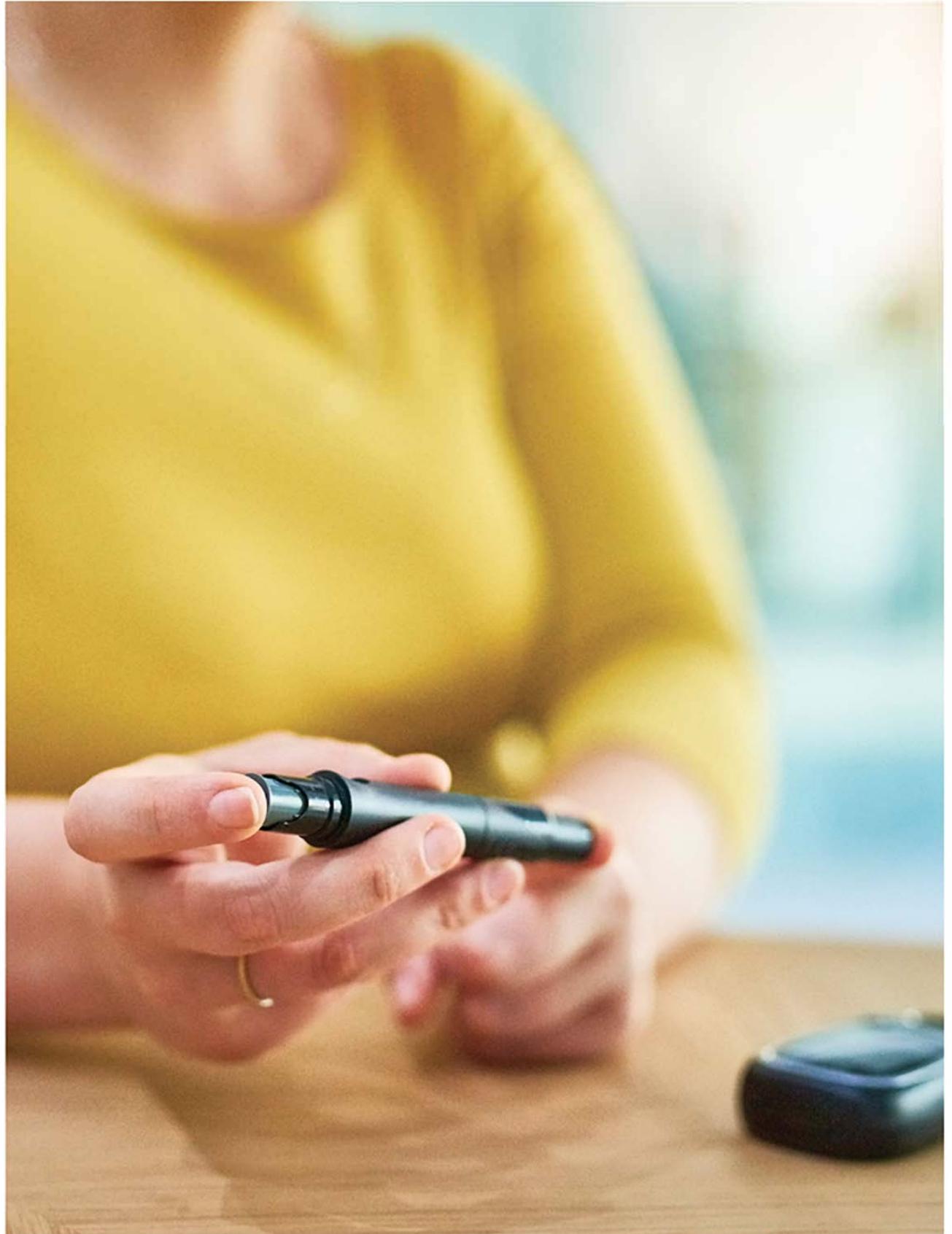
“COVID-19 is thought to modify immune system pathways through two receptor proteins commonly associated with diabetes mellitus. Inhibition of the DPP4 receptor is the mechanism of action for drugs like sitagliptin (Januvia) or linagliptin (Tradjenta). In rodents, disruption of DPP4 activity plays a role in regulating inflammation, which is typically increased in patients with COVID-19. There is no evidence that DPP4 inhibitors significantly modify immune response in humans.”

“Diabetic patients should stay on their prescribed medications, as discontinuing them can be dangerous and increase the probability of experiencing diabetic-related comorbidities.”

“The other diabetes-related receptor protein is ACE-2. This protein appears in large quantities in the organs of patients with COVID-19 and may cause increased inflammation in the lungs. Nearly every patient with diabetes is on an ACE inhibitor or an angiotensin receptor blocker to protect their kidneys from diabetes and to keep blood pressure under control.”

“If you have concerns regarding any of your diabetes medications and COVID-19, it would be prudent to speak with your doctor either in person or remotely.”

“Preliminary data from China and Italy indicate that 15 % of patients with COVID-19 have diabetes. Keep in mind that the prevalence of diabetes worldwide is about 10%. Diabetics also tend to be overweight and obesity is another risk factor for developing complications from coronavirus.”



“Diabetics are known to have compromised immune systems. A rise in blood glucose may be an early sign of impending clinical infection in some individuals. Patients with diabetes who have their blood sugar under control have a better chance of recovering from an infection.”

“In the United States, about 24 % of patients hospitalized for COVID-19 have diabetes mellitus. Up to 32% of patients in the ICU with COVID-19 have diabetes. During the 2003 SARS epidemic, patients with diabetes and SARS had 3 times the risk of dying compared to non-diabetics.”

“There are reports of younger individuals developing thyroid dysfunction after infection with COVID-19. The effects of this virus on fertility, cholesterol, bone loss and long-term blood sugar control on COVID-19 survivors remains unclear until we have more data.”

“My advice is to continue to keep blood sugar regulated, monitor your glucose levels regularly, stay on your medications. Keep your scheduled appointments with your endocrinologist or primary care physician. If you are more comfortable with telehealth, virtual visits are available. The staff at our practice will guide you through the steps needed to have a remote visit.”

“Many people are apprehensive about visiting a doctor’s office, but we have implemented measures to further protect our patients and staff. We do not have large numbers of people sitting in our waiting areas; patients can wait in their cars until we are ready to see them. We also ask them to wear face masks when social distancing is not possible. Our treatment areas, waiting areas, and equipment are stringently cleaned and disinfected. We also monitor all patients for fever, cough, nasal discharges before they enter our facilities. It may actually be safer to go to a doctor’s office than other public spaces like supermarkets and gas stations.”

#### Studies on ACE-2 and DPP-4

In a recent peer-reviewed study, researchers looked at the effects of diabetes and COVID-19 patients in regards to ACE 2 inhibitors. This is what they found: The clinical spectrum of COVID-19 is heterogeneous, ranging from mild flu-like symptoms to acute respiratory distress syndrome, multiple organ failure and death. Older age, diabetes and other comorbidities are reported as significant predictors of morbidity and mortality. Chronic inflammation, increased coagulation activity, immune

response impairment, and potential direct pancreatic damage by SARS-CoV-2 might be among the underlying mechanisms of the association between diabetes and COVID-19. No conclusive evidence exists to support the discontinuation of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACEI) or angiotensin receptor blockers because of COVID-19 in people with diabetes. Caution should be taken to potential hypoglycemic events with the use of chloroquine in these subjects. Patient tailored therapeutic strategies, rigorous glucose monitoring and careful consideration of drug interactions might reduce adverse outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, another recent study by D. Drucker, looked at the same receptor proteins and reported that both ACE2 and DPP-4 are established transducers of metabolic pathways that regulate diabetic conditions; however, stopping taking the inhibitor drugs is more of a risk to stop taking in those with diabetes.

The available evidence implicates diabetes and obesity as significant risk factors impacting the clinical severity of coronavirus infections, including SARS-CoV-2. Although ACE2 and DPP4 are important physiological regulators of glucose homeostasis, there is little compelling clinical evidence that drugs targeting ACE2- or DPP4-related pathways produce differential harm or benefit in the context of human coronavirus infections.<sup>2</sup>

Dipeptidyl Peptidase-4 (DPP4) is an established transducer of metabolic signals and pathways regulating inflammation, renal and cardiovascular physiology, and glucose homeostasis. Moreover, glucose-lowering agents such as the DPP4 inhibitors, widely used in subjects with T2D, are known to modify the biological activities of multiple substrates.<sup>2</sup>

#### Endocrinology

If your physician suspects that the underlying cause of a medical condition is related to hormone production, they may refer you to an endocrinologist who specializes in endocrinology and hormone production in various organs. They have extensive training in diseases that affect the glands and hormones, such as diabetes, thyroid disease, cancers, infertility, metabolic disorder, and other conditions.

#### Reference:

1. A Hussain, COVID-19 and Diabetes: Knowledge in Progress, *Diabetes Res Clin Pract.* 2020 Apr 9 : 108142. doi: 10.1016/j.diabres.2020.108142 [Epub ahead of print] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7144611/>

2. D Drucker, Coronavirus Infections and Type 2 Diabetes—Shared Pathways with Therapeutic Implications, *Endocrine Reviews*, Volume 41, Issue 3, June 2020, bnaa011, <https://doi.org/10.1210/edrv/bnaa011>



**Raymond de la Rosa, M.D.**, earned his Doctor of Medicine at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine in Manila. Dr. de la Rosa finished his residency in Internal Medicine at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York. He later completed his fellowship in Endocrinology at the Brown University Program in Providence, Rhode Island.

Dr. de la Rosa has over 24 years of experience as an Endocrinologist and is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism. He is the author of several scientific articles in the area of diabetes, thyroid dysfunction and other metabolic conditions. He has also served as a principal investigator in over 30 clinical trials for new diabetes treatments.

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# Bayfront Health Urges Patients To Not Delay Emergency Care

Bayfront Health Port Charlotte and Bayfront Health Punta Gorda are urging our local community to seek emergency care when needed — without delay. If you experience a medical emergency such as chest pain that may be a heart attack or stroke symptoms, a timely response will support the best possible outcome.

**B**oth hospitals have implemented precautions to protect patients and staff, including screening all patients for symptoms and risk factors, and placing any individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in a separate area. Cleaning and disinfection are emphasized in caregiving areas and throughout the facility. To learn more about how Bayfront Health is taking extraordinary measures to provide COVID-safe care for the protection of patients, visit [www.bayfrontcharlotte.com/covid-19](http://www.bayfrontcharlotte.com/covid-19).

**Heart attack and stroke are always urgent and don't stop for COVID-19.**

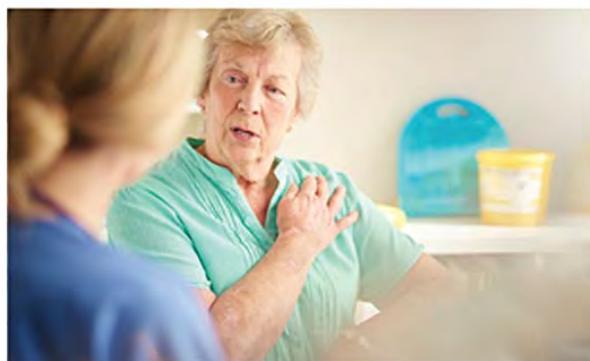
## Heart Attacks

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 805,000 Americans have a heart attack each year, with about 605,000 being a first heart attack, and 200,000 a recurrent heart attack. And, about 1 in 5 heart attacks is silent—the damage is done, but the person is not aware of it.

Heart attacks are not always sudden and intense. Many heart attacks start slowly with only mild pain or discomfort. Some people do not experience chest pain but instead have other signs.

While many symptoms of a heart attack are the same, men may experience different warning signs than women. Men may experience symptoms such as:

- Shortness of breath
- Weakness/Unusual fatigue
- Cold sweat
- Dizziness



For many women, a heart attack may feel like a strange discomfort in the back, or another sign that is easy to ignore, instead of crushing chest pain. They may feel pressure, squeezing or shortness of breath. Symptoms may even pop up elsewhere in the body, such as the jaw.

Man or woman, when you're having a heart attack, every second counts, and calling 911 starts treatment earlier. Emergency workers know what to do to protect and care for you. To learn more about signs and symptoms, and to take a heart health assessment, visit [www.bayfrontcharlotte.com/heart-attack-warning-signs](http://www.bayfrontcharlotte.com/heart-attack-warning-signs).

Bayfront Health Port Charlotte and Bayfront Health Punta Gorda are the only facilities in Charlotte County to have achieved accreditation as a Chest Pain Center and Chest Pain Center with Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) by the American College of Cardiology (ACC). Both are also accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC) as Primary Stroke Centers, and in May of 2019, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) designated Bayfront Health Port Charlotte a Comprehensive Stroke Center.

## Stroke

According to the CDC, approximately 795,000 people suffer a stroke each year, with about 600,000 of these being first attacks, and 185,000 recurrent attacks.

Prevention begins with knowing stroke's risk factors. Men and women share several — diabetes, excess weight, family history of the condition, inactivity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking — but women must be mindful of factors distinct to them, including:

- History of migraines
- Hormone replacement during menopause
- Oral contraceptive use, particularly with high blood pressure
- Physiological changes that may take place during pregnancy, such as preeclampsia (high blood pressure)

“F.A.S.T.” is a great way to remember the key symptoms of stroke and quickly determine whether one is occurring. The acronym encourages scrutiny of a person's Face, Arms and Speech for any signs that are out of the ordinary, and it reminds that Time is of the essence in stroke diagnosis and treatment.

If you notice any of these signs, call 911, and then note the time. Medical personnel will ask when you first noticed symptoms to determine the best treatment. To learn more about stroke warning signs and symptoms, visit [www.bayfrontcharlotte.com/stroke-care](http://www.bayfrontcharlotte.com/stroke-care).

*About Bayfront Health Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda*  
Bayfront Health Port Charlotte (opened 1962) and Punta Gorda (opened 1947) are both accredited hospitals by The Joint Commission and part of a regional network of seven hospitals along the I-75 corridor. The Port Charlotte campus consists of a 254-bed full-service facility offering comprehensive services in emergency care, comprehensive stroke center, and orthopedics. The Bayfront Baby Place is the only licensed obstetric and pediatric unit and Level II neonatal intensive care unit in Charlotte County, as well as the only facility in SWFL—and 1 of 4 in the state—to receive The Joint Commission Perinatal Care Certification. The Southwest Florida Heart Center offers all-private rooms and is an accredited chest pain center with PCI providing comprehensive cardiac services for more than 30 years. And the robotics program is the largest and longest running in the County offering surgical options for gynecology, general surgery, colorectal, urology and bariatric weight loss surgery, as well as total knee, total hip and partial knee replacement which is an exclusive in the area. The Punta Gorda campus offers all-private patient rooms, and consists of a 208-bed facility offering an accredited primary stroke center. The Joint Commission Certified Joint and Spine Center, an accredited chest pain center, and emergency care services. Additional on-campus services include outpatient and adult inpatient psychiatric care at Riverside Behavioral Center, an accredited Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine facility, and Wellness and Rehabilitation Center. To learn more, visit [www.BayfrontCharlotte.com](http://www.BayfrontCharlotte.com). Trust has a name — Bayfront Health.



# TELEHEALTH IS HELPING PROTECT CANCER PATIENTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

In March, 2020, Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) launched telehealth services across all FCS sites statewide, allowing patients continued and convenient access to care, while mitigating the impact and spread of COVID-19. Since the implementation of telehealth, thousands of patients have taken advantage of the service and have participated in more than 16,000 virtual visits (about 22% of all patient visits) with FCS physicians and other clinicians in the past three months.

## Cancer Patients Are at Increased Risk

Cancer patients are among the most vulnerable populations in terms of contracting viral infections due to a compromised immune system, which can occur as a result of chemotherapy or other underlying health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes or hypertension, that are often found in older adults. Wearing masks, increased handwashing, social distancing and other extra precautions help to reduce exposure to the virus. Beyond these measures, Florida Cancer Specialists has instituted visitor restrictions and other safety protocols at all of its clinics across the state and is providing telehealth visits to continue vital cancer care for those patients who are not required to come into the clinic for treatment.

## Telehealth Helps Reduce Risk of Exposure

Using video chat, FCS providers consult with patients remotely to share their laboratory results, treatment plans and more. To date, more than 600 providers, including physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, social workers and nutritionists, have embraced the adoption telehealth not only to fulfill immediate healthcare needs in response to the outbreak, but also to support the delivery of high-quality patient-centered care. Telehealth visits are now covered by most insurance plans; patients may pay the same or possibly less than an in-office visit.



Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, telehealth did not play a significant role in oncology; however, due to the relaxation and updating of previous guidelines from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), we have now been able to introduce video meetings with our patients that maintain the high level of care and experiences our patients deserve and expect.

## Technology Makes Telehealth Simple for Patients and Physicians

Connecting providers and patients is easy, thanks to advanced technologies, which allow FCS to successfully integrate multiple electronic platforms to ensure our patients have the critical access needed for their continuation of care and communication. Further, and most importantly, personal health information is protected and secure in virtual visits, just as it is with an office visit. While telehealth is not suitable for every patient served by FCS, physicians can identify appropriate patients who are a good fit.

This virtual care solution plays a vital role in response to the pandemic crisis, maintaining patient access to care directly from home for cancer patients who are among the most immunocompromised populations. FCS was among the first cancer care groups in Florida to launch telehealth resources to cancer patients during the pandemic.

## WORLD-CLASS CANCER TREATMENT CLOSE TO HOME

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) has a statewide network of expert, board-certified physicians who bring world-class cancer treatments to local communities, both large and small, in nearly 100 locations throughout Florida. FCS is also on the leading edge of clinical trial research that provides FCS patients with access to the newest, most innovative and promising new treatments.

Florida Cancer Specialists treats patients with all types of cancer and offers a number of services, such as an in-house specialty pharmacy, an in-house pathology lab and financial counselors at every location, that deliver the most advanced and personalized care in your local community.



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## 21st Century Oncology Offers Local Services for Veterans.

### Veterans Initiative Provides Convenient Access To Healthcare, Resources & Education



Integrated cancer care leader, 21st Century Oncology, offers services to veterans to assure they get the cancer care they need and deserve. The company works in conjunction with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide veterans with equal access to healthcare at the time they need it most.

While the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can provide core in a VA facility, there are some instances in which the VA is unable to provide services in certain specialties close to home. Non-VA care is medical care provided outside of the VA to eligible veterans when VA facilities are not locally available or accessible or when the required specialty, technology, or physicians are unavailable to patients.

At the local level, we provide educational efforts to local veterans through our "lunch & learn" programs at American Legion and VFW posts. We also host an annual "Homeless Veterans Collection Drive" and support local events such as Memorial Day picnics, Veterans Day parades, Salute to Troops Ball, Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall and many others. We are proud to support and give back to these American Heroes who serve and have served our country.

Veterans, VA caregivers, or family members may contact a member of our VA clinical care team for assistance in navigating the VA system to obtain Non-VA care.

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For more information visit [21co.com/veterans](http://21co.com/veterans) or contact us at 855.728.4282 or [veterans@21co.com](mailto:veterans@21co.com).



Alex Hnatov, MD

As our community wrestles with an imposing enemy in COVID-19, at 21st Century Oncology we have not relented in our own battle against cancer. Supported by a capable and motivated team of health care providers, we continue to see new cancer patients daily, and we have not had to interrupt patient care due to the coronavirus. Following CDC guidelines, we are taking all necessary precautions to protect our vulnerable patient pool and our employees from COVID exposure. This includes simple measures such as social distancing and hand washing, but also more advanced precautions such as taking the temperatures of all patients and employees and sanitizing our medical offices multiple times per day. If you need a telemedicine appointment or would like more information, please contact your local office.

**BE safe, and we look forward to continuing to care for your oncology needs!**



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## RADIOLOGY REGIONAL Remains Open For All Of Your Imaging Needs

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unusual adjustments in our daily lives. With these changes, and unforeseen circumstances, you can rest assured that all of Radiology Regional's locations remain open. During this unprecedented time, patients and physicians will continue to have a need to rely upon imaging centers, and Radiology Regional is providing all diagnostic imaging needs, including mammogram screenings.

### Radiology Regional Has Elevated their Infection Control Protocol

The safety and well-being of Radiology Regional's patients and staff is their primary focus, which is why they are utilizing extra precautions to ensure the safest possible environment for their services. Radiology Regional has elevated their infection control procedures to minimize the risk of COVID-19 contamination at all of their centers by sanitizing exam rooms and equipment thoroughly after each patient, utilizing safe distances, washing hands, and sterilizing patient areas routinely. They've installed sneeze guards at the front desk to protect their receptionists, and their team wears gloves and face masks. Hand sanitizer is also readily available to everyone.

As Radiology Regional continues to take precautionary measures to keep their centers accessible to you, please be advised of these new patient guidelines:

- To limit the number of people in waiting areas, nonessential guests who accompany patients must wait outside.
- The waiting areas are arranged, so that you can comfortably sit at a safe distance away from other patients.
- Patients who have traveled outside Lee, Collier, or Charlotte must reschedule their appointment until 14 days after their return.
- Patients who are experiencing symptoms consistent with Covid-19 must cancel their appointment and contact their primary physician for further direction. These symptoms include cough, fever, body aches, and shortness of breath.
- Hand Sanitizer is available for patients being treated.
- Please wear a face covering while entering the facility.



While Radiology Regional is operating a little differently these days, some things will always remain the same. You will feel welcomed by their friendly, compassionate, and professional staff, and you can trust that they're committed to providing the highest quality radiology services in Lee, Collier, and Charlotte counties.

### Patient Testimonials:

*"Staff was super friendly, despite the things that are going and the risk they are taking! Thanks again to you guys! Everyone was super helpful and nice!"*

*"I was nervous going out during this pandemic but everyone there made me feel safe and took all the necessary precautions!"*

*"Despite the unusual COVID-19 circumstances - everyone was welcoming, processing time was quick, and the entire experience was painless. Hats off to all of these professionals."*

*"Due to Covid-19, I got a friendly greeting outside with a squirt of hand sanitizer...nice touch. Doors were opened by staff, coming and going, front desk and tech in masks. All very professional."*

*"Felt comfortable and safe during these scary times. Very professionally handled. Everyone I met on the staff had 1 thing in mind, Everybody's Safety! Job well done; I'm impressed ..."*

*"I was impressed with the caution taken about the corona virus. A pleasant young man greeted me on your patio and asked me a number of questions regarding the possibility I had been exposed to the virus, my current heart status and my recent travels. Afterwards, he poured some disinfectant in my cupped hands and held the door open for me. The people inside were wearing masks and gloves and plenty of hand disinfectant was available for patient's usage. The receptionists were extremely courteous and efficient. After a reasonable waiting period, a lovely knowledgeable and efficient X-ray tech quickly took about 6 images of my neck area. Great professional service all around! It is obvious that Radiological Regional imposes a "can-do", let's get the job done efficiently and with a professional manner and friendly culture on its entire organization. Good luck and thank you very much. A lot of organizations can learn a lot from the way that you do business."*

### Radiology Regional

For over 50 years, Radiology Regional has expanded its scope of services and number of out-patient facilities to meet the growing needs of their patients and referring physicians. Radiology Regional has twelve, ACR accredited and convenient locations from Naples to Port Charlotte to serve you. Their dedicated team of board-certified radiologists, registered technologists, and other specialists are committed to providing their patients with exceptional care utilizing the most advanced technology and techniques available.

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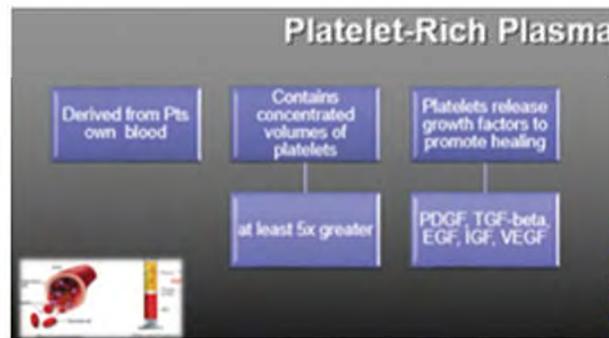
# What is Platelet-Rich Plasma-PRP

I'm sure many of you have heard of Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP). It has been a hot topic in the medical community with rising use in orthopedics, podiatry, sport medicine as well as pain management. Many famous athletes like Tiger Woods and NFL players have been treated with PRP. Some of these famous athletes have even credited PRP for allowing them to rapidly return to their competitive sport. Despite PRPs publicity in the main stream media, many still don't know exactly what PRP is, how it works, and what conditions PRP can be used for as well as its effectiveness.

## So what is PRP and how is it used?

PRP is prepared from taking a sample of your blood, then centrifuging it at varying speeds until the blood separates into 3 layers: platelet poor plasma (PPP), platelet rich plasma (PRP), and red blood cells. Usually 2 spins are used. The first spin separates the platelet poor plasma (PPP) from the red fraction and platelet rich plasma (PRP). The second spin separates the red fraction from the PRP. The material with the highest specific gravity (the PRP) will be at the bottom of the tube. The PRP is separated and will be used for treatment. Prior to the application of the PRP, a platelet activator/agonist (topical bovine thrombin) is added to activate the clotting cascade, producing a platelet gel. The process to prepare the PRP takes about 15 minutes and produces a concentration of platelets that is 3-5 times greater.

Platelets are important because they are a natural source of growth factors. The release of these growth factors is triggered by activating the clotting cascade/activating the platelets. Thrombin, calcium chloride or collagen all can be used to activate the platelets. Growth factors are important because they are critical to wound healing and regenerative processes. PRP has an increased concentration of these important growth factors. The doctor will then use this PRP (with a concentrated amount of growth factors) to inject the area of concern/area of pain. PRP can be used on arthritic joints, ligament damage and tendon injuries. Examples include: peroneal tendinitis, posterior tibial tendinitis, plantar fasciitis, ankle sprains, and Achilles tendon injuries. PRP is not used if there is a complete tear of a ligament or tendon. PRP can also be used to treat painful joints depending on the cause of the joint



pain. Multiple treatments may or may not be required. Ultrasound guided injection is encouraged. Using an ultrasound ensures the PRP is injection in the exact area of pain/injury. Combining PRP with other treatments like physical therapy can also improve the effectiveness.

## How to maximize effectiveness?

There are new studies that have emerged describing why the medical community may experience varying degrees of effectiveness with PRP. Studies have shown that there are many variables that can affect the quality of the growth factors that are released. Understanding these variables will allow your provider to maximize the effectiveness of your PRP treatment. There are 2 major variables that account for the observed difference in PRP efficacy. The first is the PRP composition- differs depending on the device used to prepare the PRP. The second variable is the method of PRP application. Consistent results will only be seen once these variables associated with PRP preparation and application are addressed. Other variables that need to be considered include: the physiological status of the patient, platelet activation method, and type of tissue and injury.

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Variable affecting the potential efficacy of PRP in promoting chronic pain relief	
Whole blood platelet count	Affected by the separation device Affects the factors released by the platelets within in the PRP
Blood pressure	Lowering patients blood pressure ideal (high BP decreases platelet #)
Metal and physical stress	Stress induces platelets to release their bioactive compounds Reduce prior PRP → PRP with full complement of bioactive compounds
Diet	Reduce saturated fats, caffeine, quercetin & sugar
Drugs	Alcohol, smoking, SSRIs, NSAIDS,
Preparation techniques	Different preparation devices yield PRP with platelet concentrations vary greatly PRP leukocyte count → contain inflammatory and catabolic cytokines
Platelet activation methods	Thrombin shown to be the best
Application technique	Ultrasound guided

These variables determine if the platelets aggregate and release their growth factors at the pain site.

Understanding these variables and accounting for them prior to administration of PRP will result in optimal results with PRP treatment. It is also important to follow your provider's guidelines following treatment to ensure optimal results.

To learn more about PRP and its application please contact your local foot and ankle specialist.

*Zhejiang Xingyue Biotechnology Co. L. Impact of Autologous Pure Platelet-rich Plasma in the Treatment of Tendon Disease. <http://proxy.westernu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsclt&AN=edsclt.NCT03300531&site=eds-live>. Accessed February 19, 2019.*

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# A "NEW NORMAL" WITH COVID-19: Doing Your Part

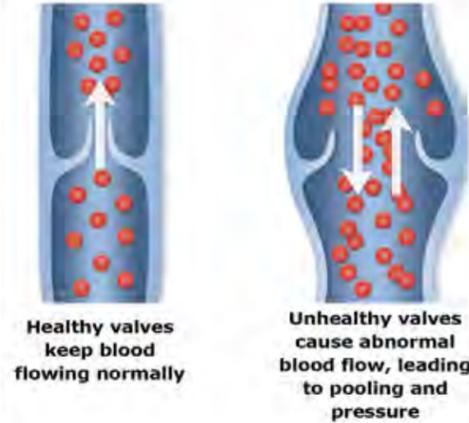
By Joseph Magnant, MD, FACS, RPVI and Jill Layman, MSN, FNP-BC

**W**ith authorities proclaiming our present state to be the "new normal," we must assess what that means. Many people have had to transition to self-isolation as they work from home and have limited contact with the public. While this isolation is essential for decreasing the spread of COVID-19, it can result in a more sedentary lifestyle that limits the opportunity for healthy activities and may lead to increased weight gain. For people with venous disease, sitting or standing for prolonged periods of time may lead to weight gain and result in significant pain and discomfort due to venous disease.

Veins are blood vessels that are specially designed to pump blood toward the heart against the force of gravity. Inside the veins, there are a series of one way or check valves that open and close with the rhythm of muscle contractions. Healthy valves close tightly, keeping blood moving upward toward the heart. With vein disease, or venous insufficiency, the valves do not properly close. This allows blood to flow back down the legs and pool in the veins. The pooled blood can lead to bothersome symptoms, such as swollen, achy legs and leg cramping, most commonly worse by the end of the day. More severe venous disease cases may manifest or present as varicose veins and skin changes that may process to bleeding veins and leg ulcers.

Venous insufficiency is a very common and underdiagnosed condition affecting millions of Americans. Heredity is a major risk factor and the disease becomes more prevalent in both men and women after age 50. Other risk factors include a history of blood clots or DVT, obesity, standing or sedentary occupation, and female gender and prior pregnancies.

Times of stress and change can disrupt healthy behaviors. It's possible to take charge and make healthy habits at home by continuing to eat nutritious foods and engaging in physical activity. Furthermore, certain habits will help lessen the symptoms associated with venous disease.



- **Regular exercise**
  - Walking or biking for 30 minutes per day, 5-7 days per week will help reduce aching, pain, or tiredness in your legs
- **Elevate your legs**
  - Elevating your legs above your heart for ten minutes once or twice daily may diminish aching and swelling
- **Maintain a proper weight**
  - Even moderate weight loss may reduce aching in the legs due to varicose veins
- **Wear compression hose**
  - Its best to wear compression hose that are labeled as "graduated," as this benefits vein function the most
- **Move your legs frequently**
  - Flexing your ankles ten times will pump the blood out of your veins like walking does. Repeat this every ten minutes when standing or sitting. Also, try to walk at least two minutes every half hour.

Navigating this "new normal" may seem daunting at times, but it's important to be proactive in your personal health by keeping your lifestyle active even when at home.

## 50 Million Americans have Treatable Vein Disease!

**Risks**

- Genetics
- Long Periods of Standing
- Long Periods of Sitting
- Pregnancy
- Age
- Obesity

**Signs**

- Spider Veins
- Varicose Veins
- Leg Swelling
- Leg Skin Discoloration
- Leg Vein Bleeding
- Leg Ulcers

**Symptoms**

- Heavy Legs
- Swollen Achy Legs
- Itchy Leg Skin
- Restless Legs
- Charlie Horses
- Neuropathy

**FACTS**

**1 out of 3 men and 1 out of 2 women will have vein problems!**

### May Thurner Syndrome / Pelvic Congestion Syndrome

Pelvic Pain • Painful Intercourse • Buttock Pain • Posterior Thigh Pain • Labial/Gluteal Varicosities

Left common iliac vein pinched by right common iliac artery.



Vein pinched by artery



Stent placed



**Patient Case Study:** For example, take C.D., a 58 year old female who presented through a podiatrist for a evaluation of venous insufficiency. She had been told by several physicians that she had "fat and swollen legs", and since she did not have any visible bulging varicose veins, venous insufficiency was never considered as a potential cause. Clinically, her legs were swollen, red, tender and extremely tight to the point that she could not perform activities of daily living. She decided to search further for a curable cause and her podiatrist astutely referred her for a venous evaluation. Her ultrasound subsequently confirmed severe superficial venous insufficiency. Endovenous closures were performed on both legs, 2 weeks apart and she returned for her post-op follow-up, smiling from ear to ear, with ankle bones that she could actually see for the first time in many months. The swelling had resolved, and she remarked that she was wearing tennis shoes, rather than slippers, for the first time in nine months.



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Whether you are recently retired or heading off to college, if you are concerned about your lower extremity symptoms of fatigue and achiness, or if you have obvious signs of venous disease such as varicose veins, swelling or skin discoloration, please consider a venous evaluation. Remember, you do not have to have visible signs to have venous disease. For more information please visit our website at [WeKnowVeins.com](http://WeKnowVeins.com) or contact our office at 239-694-VEIN (8346).



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# ESSENTIAL AND ADAPTING: HOW TELEHEALTH IS BENEFICIAL TO YOUR HEALTH

By Dr. Chris Mulvey, PT

## COVID-19 forced many businesses to temporarily close this spring.

FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers, however, was not one of them. Physical therapy is an essential service that is medically proven to relieve chronic pain, improve recovery after surgeries or falls, improve balance, eliminate headaches and more.

The origins of physical therapy date back more than 200 years. As research and training improves, physical therapists have evolved to provide more comprehensive and holistic services.

The coronavirus, however, may have launched another evolution at FYZICAL – telehealth.

Although video communications aren't new, telehealth hasn't necessarily been embraced across the medical spectrum and among insurance providers. Many patients need or prefer the interaction of a traditional in-person appointment, but certain at-risk individuals – like patients undergoing cancer treatments or those with underlying medical conditions and compromised immune systems – might not feel comfortable venturing into a public setting for treatment, especially as COVID-19 lingers in our communities.

Across our company, patients can still see a physical therapist face-to-face, but now they can book appointments for visits through video teleconferencing. FYZICAL quickly rolled out training programs that showed therapists and clinicians how to effectively deliver telehealth services over video while still creating a customized plan of care. Training sessions also highlighted protocols for managing paperwork, patient safety and home program development.

Telehealth provides patients with access to the health care they need without putting them, or their therapists, at risk. Here is what a telehealth visit looks like:

- Patients call their local FYZICAL office to make an appointment, like usual, but specify they are requesting a telehealth visit.
- FYZICAL will provide a link that launches a secure video connection for a private, one-on-one conversation via a computer, tablet or smartphone.
- A clinician will discuss a patient's current treatment plan, persistent issues and any new pain or symptoms that have arisen.
- Patients will be shown exercises or activities to complete at home so they continue enhancing their health and wellbeing.

"It's actually been a fun experience," said Luke Gumpert, a telehealth patient under the care of Dr. Jeremy Beasley in Fort Myers. "I'm still sticking with Dr. Beasley even though I moved back to Naples."

The availability of telehealth means Luke doesn't have to drive 45 minutes or more each way for physical therapy appointments. It also allows continuity of care since he and Dr. Beasley already established a solid patient-doctor relationship.

Physical therapy is much like going on a diet. Skipping a visit compares to hitting up a buffet or having a "cheat day" – it can derail progress.

Recently, major insurers have begun allowing physical therapists to bill for most therapy procedures delivered through telehealth. This is a big win for patients and removes an obstacle that often impedes recovery.

For generations, innovation has been the key to delivering high-quality health care. The early success of FYZICAL's telehealth program is a strong indication that the future of health care might have already arrived.

To learn more about FYZICAL or find the nearest location, please visit [FYZICAL.com](http://FYZICAL.com).



FYZICAL's telehealth service isn't a dial-a-doc program offered through insurance companies that patch you through to a physician or nurse practitioner one call at the time. Instead, you'll connect virtually with the same trusted clinicians you see at the local office. The only difference is that they are providing counsel through electronic means instead of face-to-face.

### About the Author

Dr. Chris Mulvey, PT, is president for company-owned operations at FYZICAL Therapy and Balance Centers, which has 427 locations in 45 states.





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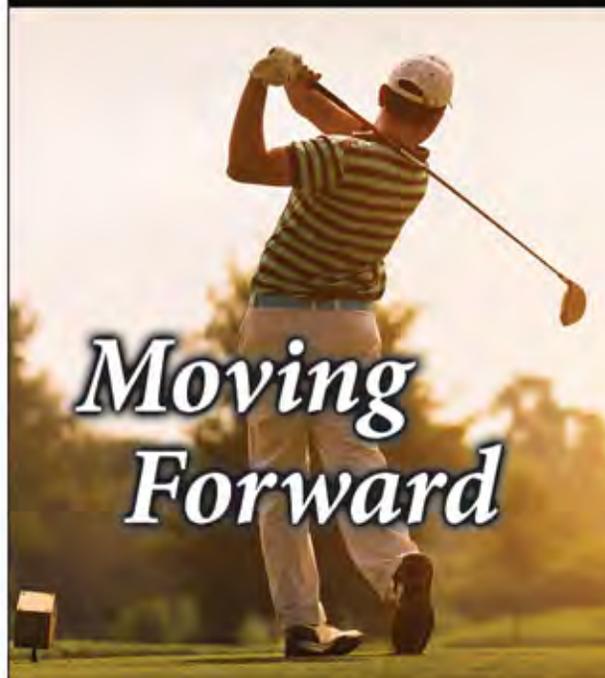
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**4** Top pickleball injuries seen include foot fractures from ankle sprains.

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**Moving Forward**

# RAVE IMAGING IS HERE FOR YOU WITH YOUR SAFETY IN MIND

One of the most shared and common concerns today is wondering about the safety, cleanliness, and risk factors involved as we venture out. Some of the most populated places like markets, stores, gas stations, and beaches are thought to be the most dangerous due to crowds and cross-contamination. However, for those that need medical care, you should not put off any screenings or treatment due to these fears. Why? Because medical facilities, especially ones such as RAVE Imaging, are trained in rigorous protocols to keep everyone safe (patients and staff), and in a time like this, the methods RAVE uses are amplified with stringent guidelines.

## RAVE Imaging continues to make you and your family's safety their top priority

### RAVE's Advanced safety protocols to keep you safe

- RAVE will continue to meet or exceed the CDC guidelines
- All patients will be screened with a temperature check and COVID19 specific questionnaire before being seen.
- Social distancing will continue in all lobbies
- Daily deep cleaning/sanitizing of all areas within every building
- All RAVE Team Members are required to wear protective masks and encourage all patients to do so as well
- Plexiglass barriers at all check-in desks
- Additional time between patients for added sanitizing protocols in all exam rooms and on equipment

RAVE Imaging continues to be here for you, and if you have any concerns or questions, please speak to a RAVE Team member. RAVE appreciates your continued trust in their 40 years of experience and service to the local communities they serve.

### RAVE Imaging

RAVE Imaging, Radiology Associates of Venice & Englewood, understands the importance of providing the best technology and the most advanced diagnostic tools for their patients.

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- Digital Mammography
- Nuclear Medicine
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- Osteoporosis (Bone Density/DEXA) Evaluation
- Diagnostic Radiology/X-ray
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Interventional Radiology is a subspecialty of radiology in which minimally invasive procedures are performed using imaging guidance. Some of these procedures are done for purely diagnostic purposes, while others are done for treatment purposes. Pictures are used to direct these procedures, which are usually done with needles or other tiny instruments like small tubes called catheters. The images provide road maps that allow the Interventional Radiologist to guide these instruments through the body to the areas of interest.



As mentioned, it's imperative not to put off any screenings, such as breast mammography, lung CT's, Brain imaging, or any other services or surgical procedures that are crucial to monitor and maintain your health at the highest level. Some cancers and conditions can rapidly proliferate or wreak havoc on your health if they are not examined and evaluated in a timely manner.

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*To schedule your appointment or for more information, please visit their website at [www.RaveRad.com](http://www.RaveRad.com).*



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# Safety Awareness Month:

## Physical Therapist, Adam Pennell Offers Insight to Keep you Safe at Home

**G**rowing older has its set of challenges that, to some, might seem to snowball into multiple tasks and increased risks of injury. At any age, we know it's essential to ask for help, but for the elderly, it's critical to maintain safety within the home.

With issues such as low vision, loss of hearing, arthritis, decreased mobility, and imbalance, to name a few, there are multiple ways that Physical Therapist help their patients retrain and strengthen range-of-motion, balance, and muscle strength. However, one step that Adam Pennell, DPT, and his colleagues take further is evaluating the home and giving valuable tips to keep their patients' safe long term.

**We caught up with Millennium Physician Groups Doctor of Physical Therapy and Program Manager, Adam Pennell, to find out more about PT and Patient Safety Protocols.**

"The biggest thing we can do to improve home safety is to plan ahead," Pennell explains. "Doing an assessment of the home to look for trip hazards, installing nightlights, and performing home repairs in a timely manner can go a long way toward preventing catastrophe."

The most common fall hazards are power cords, rugs, uneven concrete, rolling chairs, and slippery surfaces. Taking the time to address these issues ahead of time could prevent disaster. You should also be aware of fall hazards that might not always be present such as tile flooring that gets slippery when wet, blankets that may hang off the bed at night, and pets that have a tendency to get underfoot.

"Another important aspect is planning ahead and making arrangements to ensure safety. Having a system in place to call for help, especially for people who live alone. Going to the restroom at night is the most common time people fall, and in addition to being tired and walking in the dark,



most people don't carry their cell phones with them. Having a friend or family member who checks in on regular intervals is also important to make sure people can get timely help when needed."

It's important to be proactive and seek out reputable PT if you've injured yourself, if you're suffering from a chronic issue or if you need assistance after a stroke, heart attack, surgery or hospitalization. If you have any musculoskeletal disorders, physical therapy can help to improve your condition significantly. Millennium Physician Group's Physical Therapy can be the solution to helping you get back to safely doing the things you love.

### Millennium Physician Group's PT

Millennium Physician Group has 9 offices from Venice to Naples. If patients are unclear if they have a balance issue, they can always get an order for a Physical Therapist to evaluate their balance and see if further therapy is needed. All of the therapists at Millennium are certified in treatment of balance disorders and vestibular rehabilitation.

### Adam Pennell, DPT

Adam W. Pennell is a Doctor of Physical Therapy and Manager of Millennium Physician Groups PT department. He graduated with honors in 2004 from Northwestern State University and has over 16 years of experience in patient care.

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# NEW IRA RULES – POTENTIAL LOSSES OF TAX DEFERRAL

By James W. Mallonee

**T**he old rules involving the transferring of your IRA to one of your children, spouse, partner or siblings has changed. The ability of deferring your IRA income over the remaining life time of a majority of beneficiaries has changed to 10 years. Thus, the ability to continue to defer the taxing (non-ROTH) of your IRA by stretching it through a beneficiary's life expectancy is gone. There are exceptions to this new rule which include the following persons categorized as "eligible designated beneficiaries:" 1) surviving spouses; 2) a beneficiary who is less than 10 years younger than the IRA owner; 3) a minor child; 4) a disabled person; or 5) a chronically ill person. These persons will continue to be eligible for the stretch IRA as in years past. The new rules only apply to persons who are named beneficiaries of an IRA owner who dies after January 1, 2020. Beneficiaries of persons who die before January 1, 2020, continue to enjoy the old IRA rules.

Surviving spouses continue to enjoy the most favorable treatment when inheriting an IRA account and may continue to withdraw over the original owners life expectancy or their own. The ability to roll the IRA into their own IRA still exists and gives the flexibility to begin taking the distributions when the spouse reaches age 72. (That's correct, the new rule is no longer 70 ½, but 72). Thus, a surviving spouse could benefit from increased growth within the account should he or she be significantly younger than the decedent without having to withdraw any funds.

A person who is less than 10 years younger than the decedent is a new category. This change is primarily directed at siblings or partners who are not married to the original IRA owner and would not otherwise meet the surviving spouse rules. These individuals can use the life expectancy payout method but not the ownership method like a surviving spouse. In essence the 10 year mandatory rule does not apply.



Disabled or chronically ill beneficiaries are determined at the death of the original owner. These persons can take advantage of the stretch IRA rules. A disabled person is an individual who is unable to engage in substantial gainful activity because of some physical or mental impairment over a long period of time. A chronically ill person is determined as an individual who is unable to perform at least two activities of daily living without substantial assistance for a period of at least 90 days. If a person is not disabled or chronically ill at the death of the original owner, he or she cannot make such claim later on should they meet the classification at a later date.

A minor child is also eligible to continue to have IRA required distributions deferred so long as they are a minor. However, the moment they reach the age of majority (usually 18), the ten-year rule takes effect.

Charities, Estates or Trust: These "non-designated beneficiaries," must take full possession within 5 years following the death of the IRA owner provided the owner died before the age of 72. If the owner died before his or her required beginning distribution date began of January 1, 2020, the non-designated beneficiaries may continue to take possession of the distributions over the life expectancy of the decedent. Remember that these rules apply after January 1, 2020. Thus, if an IRA owner was 70 on January 1, 2020, his or her IRA will not be required to begin distributions until they reach age 72.

"Designated beneficiaries" are now classified as persons (actual human beings) (including some limited see-through trusts) who must take the amount

of the remaining IRA over a 10 year period. The minimum amounts to be taken out over the 10 year period is not mandated as in years past. Thus, a designated beneficiary could withdraw all at once or a very small amount for 9 years and then all the remaining IRA before December 31 of the tenth anniversary of the original owner's death. However, the IRA must be exhausted before December 31 of the tenth anniversary of the original IRA owner's death.

Given the new rules, the persons who most likely will be impacted by the changes include those individuals with a large IRA balance and those whose number of beneficiaries are small. Grandchildren will also be impacted if the original owner was taking steps to maximize the stretching of the IRA over a longer period of time. The time will now be limited to 10 years unless such individuals fall into the eligible designated beneficiaries category.

The old days of accumulated and conduit trusts being an alternative method of distribution are gone. If you had one of these retirement benefit trusts prepared for you, you'll need to reconsider how your estate planning might be impacted by these new rules.

Whatever your estate strategy consists of, consider discussing it with the attorney of your choice or your certified financial planner. The retirement benefits landscape has changed for your loved ones and you need to be aware of these changes. It could save your beneficiaries thousands of dollars in future taxes.

*This article is intended for informational use only and is not for purposes of providing legal advice or association of a lawyer - client relationship.*

*James W. Mallonee (Jim Mallonee) is a graduate with a B.A. degree from the University of South Florida and a Master of Science degree from Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. He obtained his Juris Doctorate from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, California. Prior to returning to Florida to practice law, Mr. Mallonee was employed by Intel Corporation for 22 years in such locations as New Jersey, Florida and California.*

*In addition to being a member of the Florida Bar since 2003, Mr. Mallonee serves on the Charlotte Community Foundation Committee for asset allocation and teaches Business Law at State College of Florida. Mr. Mallonee is also on the Board of Directors for the Military Heritage Museum located in Charlotte County, Florida.*

*His firm practices law in the following areas: Probate, Wills & Trusts, Guardianships, and Litigation in the areas of Real Estate, Guardianships and Estates. The firm has two locations in Venice and Port Charlotte, Florida.*

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# Masks and Hearing Aids

The Covid-19 pandemic not only poses a health risk for our entire population, it also increases the risk of losing hearing aids for those of us who wear masks.

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

**T**he dynamics of communication has changed while protective masks are being worn. I encourage people to be mindful of those with hearing loss while wearing masks. Six feet away social distancing is difficult for everyone, especially those with hearing loss. The combination of protective masks and social distancing disrupts the vital visual and auditory input people with hearing loss need to communicate effectively. Here is a list of ideas that could make this difficult issue a little easier for everyone. Keep in mind there's no one-size-fits-all solution; different situations may require a unique mix of strategies and, even then, you might not achieve a satisfactory result.

**Prepare in advance to keep interactions short,** determine what can be handled or researched or purchased in advance and delivered to your home. Share information or ask your questions in advance by email, phone or video call. If safe and permitted, bring a trusted friend or family member.

**Determine how you want to self-disclose and advocate for your communication needs.** Prepare a handwritten sign or message on paper indicating you can't hear well when masks are worn so that others will be more apt to assist with your communication needs than assume you're ignoring them or being rude. Provide specific directions on how they can help your communication needs.

**Practice and exercise communication strategies.** Anticipate the types of communication exchanges that will likely happen given your setting and context. Ask the other person to communicate slightly louder and slower. Adjusting the volume of your hearing device higher or lower (if noisy) could help. Always bring paper and pens as a back up. Request rephrasing if you've already asked twice to have information repeated, use gestures and hand signs like "thumbs up." And, remember to look at the eyes for non-verbal clues.

**Try out and use smartphone apps that can help facilitate communication.** Consider using a speech-to-text app on your smartphone or pair your



phone with a wireless or a plug in microphone compatible with your device to improve its pickup of speech at distance.

**Prepopulate digital flashcard apps (or paper index cards) with information and phrases that can help minimize unexpected questions or comments.** This can be done with apps, for example, one phrase you may find helpful to have prepared in advance is "I read lips and cannot see your mouth. Please speak in the direction of my phone so the app can transcribe your speech."

**Consider using assistive listening devices that can extend a hearing aid or cochlear implant's range in picking up spoken language at a distance.** Some examples include a Phonak Roger Pen or a portable FM device. Contact your audiologist to learn more about what options would work best for you. is best for you.

**Prevent loss of your hearing device when mask wearing.** One of the best solutions is to fasten your mask behind your head, not over your ears. This can not only help prevent a hearing device from being dislodged when removing the mask, it may make your mask more comfortable to wear. I do have inexpensive plastic behind the head mask fasteners available for sale in my office.

You can also secure a hearing device on the ear with eye glass straps or OtoClips pinned or clipped to clothing on one end and the other end hooked to a behind-the-ear or receiver-in-canal hearing aid

style. Adhesives such as wig tape or other commercially available products designed to secure hearing aids might help as well.

During this challenging time, my advice is to take a moment to think of how we can be patient with those who are struggling with hearing loss. Keep in mind that the stress and anxiety level for those who have hearing loss has increased during this time of mask wearing and social distancing. Remember, practicing patience and kindness to everyone, not only those with hearing loss is quite important in today's world.

## We Are Open!

If you have a problem with your hearing aid we might be able to help!!!

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### PROFESSIONAL BIO

Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D., owner and audiologist at Advanced Hearing Solutions in Englewood, FL is a licensed professional whose 30 year career has been devoted to helping people of all ages hear and understand more clearly. Dr. Crosby received her BS and MS degrees from FSU and her Doctorate in Audiology from UF. Her credibility as an authority grew during her tenure as the Director of Audiology at the Silverstein Institute in Sarasota, FL from 1991-1998. Today, in addition to managing a successful audiology practice, Dr. Crosby is involved in creating hearing loss awareness through her jewelry and accessory company AuD-Bling.com. She has served and is serving on various professional boards and committees and was president of the Florida Academy of Audiology in 2000 and 2010. She has been married to Michael for 28 years and has one daughter.

# Medical Marijuana Delivery: A New Booming Sector in The Industry

**A**s of the lockdown, medical marijuana delivery and contact-free pick up services have seen a huge rise in popularity. The state of Florida saw a 40% increase in medical marijuana sales with delivery focused dispensaries such as One Plant potentially reaching even higher numbers. With the looming uncertainty of things returning to normal, many patients have stocked up on products as this also limits exposure by reducing the number of visits to the dispensaries. Most dispensaries have had delivery services for some time now, and that option was mostly used by those either too far from the dispensary or those who are homebound. But this sentiment has shifted, and the majority are resorting to safer, contact-free options such as this and taking advantage of telemedicine to recertify over the phone.

Unfortunately, while convenient, it does leave patients limited as they cannot go and drive to the storefront and mostly have to abide to the delivery window. To address this, dispensaries such as Grow Healthy have shown a game changing service with delivery times as short as a couple hours; now making it as quick and simple as ordering a pizza. As new standards are set through the upcoming months, time will tell whether or not the delivery sector will continue to see the same amount of growth within the industry as we enter uncharted territory.

## Why is Medical Marijuana so Effective and in Demand?

The endocannabinoid system (ECS) is a group of endogenous cannabinoid receptors located in the mammalian brain and throughout the central and

peripheral nervous systems, consisting of neuromodulatory lipids and their receptors. The endocannabinoid system can be found in nearly any mammal with a vertebrae. The endocannabinoid system is involved in regulating many key bodily processes, including blood pressure, immunity, stress, inflammation, neurotoxicity, and digestive functions. The endocannabinoid system within the human body is a network of cell receptors that respond to key molecules found in marijuana – THC and CBD in particular. CB1 receptors are most densely concentrated in parts of the brain and central nervous system, and less densely found throughout the rest of the body. CB2 receptors, on the other hand, are less densely located in the brain regions, and more concentrated in the peripheral nervous system and organs. The mapping of these receptors fits well with the diverse range of symptoms and conditions that are found to respond positively to medical marijuana.

In addition to regulating neuronal excitability and inflammation in pain circuits, the endocannabinoid system has been shown to play a regulatory role in movement, appetite, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis modulation, immunomodulation, mood, blood pressure, bone density, tumor surveillance,

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neuroprotection and reproduction. The endocannabinoid system has also been shown to affect sensory perception, cardiac output, cerebral blood flow and intraocular pressure.

## How to Become a Patient

You must first be Certified by a Licensed and Certified Marijuana Doctor who will provide a patient number for you to order your Medical Marijuana Card from the State of Florida Department of Health Office of Medical Marijuana Use.

**Patients with a qualifying medical condition can become a Florida Medical Marijuana Patient in two easy steps:**

1. Fill out the form above, or call us at (844) 420-7277 or call one of our Local Offices: Certified Medical Marijuana Doctors Offices
2. Once you are certified by one of the Medical Marijuana Doctors you will receive an email link to order your medical marijuana card from the State of Florida.

## Florida's Qualifying Conditions

- Cancer
- Epilepsy
- Glaucoma
- HIV
- AIDS
- Seizures
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Crohn's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Chronic nonmalignant pain caused by a qualifying medical condition or that originates from a qualifying medical condition and persists beyond the usual course of that qualifying medical condition
- Patients can be considered for alternative disorders

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# Defeat Gum Disease

**T**here is a silent oral disease affecting more than 80% of adults. Chances are you either have had or are currently battling periodontal (gum) disease. Unfortunately, in many cases, the disease goes undetected until painful symptoms begin occurring. At which time the disease and any adverse conditions have already set in. Because there are no early signs of periodontal disease, it often goes untreated until the physical symptoms surface and by then the concern is treatment not prevention. It is extremely important for everyone to have regular dental check ups at the recommended six month interval. Without these check ups and proper oral care, periodontal disease can silently cause not only oral health problems but can also contribute to other major health concerns.

Periodontal disease, also known as gum disease, is the chronic infection of the soft tissue around the teeth caused by plaque producing bacteria. The gums hold the teeth in place. As the gums become infected, they loosen their hold on the teeth and pockets are formed. These pockets collect debris and cause more infection and bone loss to the tooth. Gum disease is infectious and contagious. It can spread from tooth to tooth in the mouth and from one person's mouth to another through saliva.

As with other diseases, prevention is key to good oral health. It is important for everyone to practice diligent, thorough, and proper oral care by scheduling check ups every six months. At which time, your dentist will be able to detect and treat any signs of periodontal disease before symptoms begin to show and the damage is done. As mentioned earlier, most people do not know they have periodontal disease until they begin suffering from any combination of the following signs:

- Chronic bad breath
- Red or swollen gums
- Bleeding gums especially after tooth brushing
- Tender or sore gums
- Loose or shifting teeth
- Receding gums
- Sensitive teeth



If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, there are various treatment plans your dentist may recommend depending on the severity of your case. The most important action is meticulous at home daily oral care. Teeth must be brushed twice or more times each day for at least two minutes and flossed at least once per day. Other treatments include oral rinses, periodontal cleanings, and sometimes surgery.

Traditional periodontal surgery involves cutting and suturing of the gums and recovery time can be long and painful. With the advancement of modern laser technology, there is an alternative. Joseph H. Farag, DMD offers a better alternative for patients battling periodontal disease. Dr. Farag offers patients laser-assisted new attachment procedure (LANAP™) which is a no-cut, no-sew procedure to treat mild to advanced periodontal disease. The advancements in laser surgery techniques, have made treating periodontal faster and less painful. LANAP™ is much less invasive than traditional surgery, allowing patients to return to work the next day if desired.

Even with the benefits of LANAP™ it is obviously best to practice good oral care. The most important preventative measure to avoid the insidious gum disease is to take excellent care of your teeth. Proper cleaning at least twice a day is imperative. The goal is to keep the bacteria that cause the plaque at very low levels.

If your gums are painful, red, or swollen don't ignore the signs; make an appointment today that may save your teeth and gums. Treating periodontal disease sooner is always better than later.

## Benefits of LANAP™

**EASY** - LANAP™ is about as EASY as erasing a blackboard - unlike older techniques, there is no cutting and no suturing of the gums.

**MINIMAL DISCOMFORT** - Both during and post procedure, the patient experiences very minimal discomfort with LANAP™ than with prior standard surgery techniques.

**SHORTER PROCEDURE TIME** - It takes less time to complete LANAP™ than traditional surgery. Typically it takes is two 2-hour visits to the office and two follow up visits. Traditional surgery requires four sessions of about one hour each, with subsequent visits for suture removal and additional check-ups.

**LESS GUM LOSS** - LANAP™ minimizes the loss of gum tissue, traditional surgery often involves removing a significant amount of gum tissue. This tissue loss can lead to sensitive teeth since your roots are exposed. Also, if the treatment needs to be performed again in the future, you have not removed the bone and gums during the first LANAP™ treatment. Typically with LANAP™, any gum tissue shrinkage is actually due to reduced swelling of the area that was previously diseased and inflamed.

**SHORT RECOVERY** - Many patients fully recover from LANAP™ within 24 hours. In most cases, patients feel just fine post surgery and daily activities are not interrupted. On the other hand, recovery after traditional surgery can take up to 4 weeks during which patients can experience considerable pain and swelling.

**SAFE** - LANAP™ with the PerioLase is SAFE for patients with health concerns such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or those taking medications such as Coumadin or Cyclosporine.

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# SMOKING AND CORONAVIRUS SUSCEPTIBILITY

**A**s we all strive to stay healthy during this coronavirus pandemic, Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC) wanted to share this important update from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids® regarding how smoking and vaping leaves one susceptible to this serious respiratory disease.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) attacks the lungs, and behaviors that weaken the lungs put individuals at greater risk.

The harmful impact of smoking on the lungs is well-documented. There is conclusive evidence that smoking increases the risk for respiratory infections, weakens the immune system and is a major cause of a number of chronic health conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease and diabetes. In addition, there is a growing body of evidence that vaping can also harm lung health.

**These factors put smokers, and in all likelihood vapers, at greater risk when confronted with the coronavirus.**

**There has never been a better time for smokers to quit and for individuals to protect their health by avoiding use of all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.**

For more information, please see this recent blog post by Dr. Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. It includes the following:



*"Because it attacks the lungs, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 could be an especially serious threat to those who smoke tobacco or marijuana or who vape."*

*"It is therefore reasonable to be concerned that compromised lung function or lung disease related to smoking history, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), could put people at risk for serious complications of COVID-19."*

*"Vaping, like smoking, may also harm lung health. Whether it can lead to COPD is still unknown, but emerging evidence suggests that exposure to aerosols*

*from e-cigarettes harms the cells of the lung and diminishes the ability to respond to infection."*<sup>1</sup>

**Gulfcoast South AHEC (GSAHEC) can help you quit!**

In fact, GSAHEC is now offering free group quit classes virtually! Participants in this program receive free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges, participant workbook, and cessation materials. Call 866-534-7909 to register today (registration is required)!

Reference:  
1 Covid-19: Never Has It Been More Important For Smokers To Quit and For Individuals To Avoid Damaging Their Lungs By Vaping  
[https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press-releases/2020\\_03\\_20\\_covid-19](https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press-releases/2020_03_20_covid-19)

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# When You Are At Your Wits End

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



*Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church in Naples, Florida. Venture Church meets on the campus of FSW State College on Lely Cultural Blvd. in East Naples. For times and directions, visit [www.venturenaples.com](http://www.venturenaples.com).*



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