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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

August 2020

Manatee/Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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Is My Rotator Cuff Tear the Cause of My Shoulder Pain?

By: Regenexx Tampa Bay, Regenerative Medicine

What's causing your shoulder pain? Is it due to instability? Could it be a rotator cuff tear? A labral tear? Arthritis? Inflammation? Swelling? Bone edema? Tendinosis (tendon degeneration)? A pinched nerve? More and more studies continue to show that shoulder MRI results often cannot predict why the patient is experiencing pain.

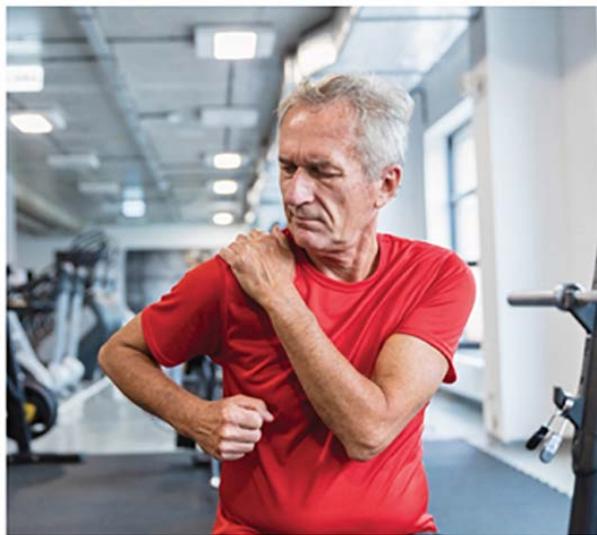
This is the case for various body areas including the lumbar spine, knee, and certainly shoulder. The MRI can provide a lot of good information, but it has been repeatedly shown not to substitute for a thorough history, exam and a diagnostic ultrasound by the physician. This takes time and focus.

Although most patients and providers will blame the rotator cuff tear as the cause of pain, it is never a given that a rotator cuff tear is actually the source of the pain. In fact, the studies we will cover in this article show that it is often inaccurate to assume that a rotator cuff tear is what is causing your shoulder pain despite what is seen on an MRI. Let's dive a bit deeper into rotator cuff tears, surgery, and determining the cause of your shoulder pain.

What is a Rotator Cuff Tear?

The rotator cuff is a complex series of muscles and tendons that surround the shoulder and help lift the arm and stabilize the shoulder joint. A rotator cuff tear is simply a tear in the tendon usually close to where it attaches to the bone. While some rotator cuff tears result from trauma, the vast majority happen from wear and tear as we age- this is referred to as a degenerative tear.

The most common cause of a rotator cuff tear is simply a slightly more demanding movement than usual. How might this happen? It has been known for a considerable amount of time that the rotator cuff does not have a great blood supply which makes it harder for the body to heal an injury in that area.



So, what is the problem? It is likely to be a lack of healthy progenitor cells and stem cells to repair the damage as it occurs over time, and at some point with little provocation, the unhealthy tissue simply fails and a tear occurs.

What Happens During Rotator Cuff Surgery?

Rotator cuff surgery involves cutting into the shoulder and stitching the tear back together. Recovery time from surgery can be lengthy and there is a good amount of research showing that this surgery is often ineffective for many types of rotator cuff tears. The tissue is often too weak to stay together with a stitch.

In larger tears, approximately 6 in 10 do not heal properly, even with surgery. For patients over 60, shoulder surgery recovery is even more difficult, with 1 in 3 rotator cuff tears not healing.

It is also notable that a good number of surgical patients never return to their full range of motion following surgery and pain can linger. Additionally, many studies show that shoulder pain prior to surgery actually has little to no correlation with the rotator cuff tear or the severity of the tear. So, what is causing the pain?

Shoulder Pain and Inflammation

One study performed in Japan analyzed joint fluid obtained from 38 patients before and after orthopedic rotator cuff surgery for various chemical messenger molecules (cytokines). These cytokines work for the immune system and call our immune cells into action when there is inflammation, infection, or trauma.

Imagine that our immune cells are like firefighters, always ready and waiting. The firefighters might be at the station cleaning trucks, training, or stocking their equipment, but when that alarm sounds, they jump into action and race to the fire. For us, that alarm is our cytokines, and when it sounds, our immune cells race straight to the inflammatory fire as our first responders.

Interestingly enough, the study that we referenced earlier concluded that larger rotator cuff tears were associated with less pain and that more pain was accurately predicted by more IL-8 (interleukin 8) in the joint fluid. IL-8 is an inflammatory cytokine or an alarm sounding when inflammation is present. The pain that was studied in this study was due to the inflammation and not the tear itself.

Another study states that "the prevalence of full-thickness rotator cuff tears increases with age [and] many patients are asymptomatic and may not require surgical repair." Even while there was pain present, the study concluded that physical therapy rather than surgery should be sufficient to address the symptoms in most cases.

Does Rotator Cuff Repair Surgery Fix Pain?

Unfortunately, the answer is no. One study proved this disappointing result that rotator cuff repair does not fix pain or function in the shoulder. This should be eyeopening for patients, whose primary goal for undergoing a rotator cuff repair is to reduce or eliminate their pain. There are countless studies showing that shoulder pain is often not due to the presence of

a rotator cuff tear. If a surgeon repairs a tear in your rotator cuff to eliminate your pain, but your tear is not the actual source of your pain, why was it necessary to have the surgery? It may be that the tear caused inflammation which thereby causes the pain. Sewing up the tear may not get rid of the inflammation.

Why not use Cortisone or Anti-inflammatories to get rid of Inflammation?

The problem is that cortisone gets rid of inflammation at a cost. The tissue gets even weaker and unhealthier. The local stem cells are damaged or killed leaving the tissue in worse condition than it already was in. If someone receives a cortisone injection within a year of a rotator cuff repair, it is more likely to fail and need a revision.

In regards to NSAIDS, aside from the myriad of systemic problems they can cause (gastrointestinal bleeding, kidney damage, stroke and heart attack to name a few), they also have been shown to inhibit tendon healing and in Regenexx's laboratory, they have been shown to negatively impact stem cells.

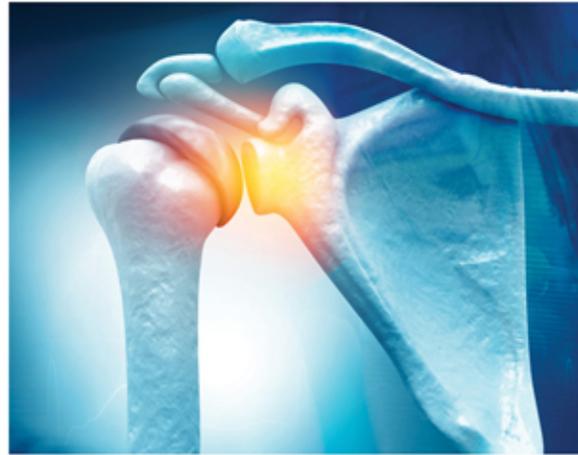
The Best Alternative

If the reason that the rotator cuff fails in the first place is a lack of local stem cells, doesn't it make logical sense that replacing those cells is critical to get the structure as healthy as possible?

What if you could avoid rotator cuff surgery and have a much quicker recovery? Well, for about 70-80% of rotator cuff tears, you can. We have pioneered a procedure to do just that over the last 14 years that includes an ultra-precise injection of your own stem cells under image guidance using a patented protocol.

Rotator cuff tears are one of the most commonly treated conditions at Regenexx Tampa Bay, and we consistently see successful outcomes in these patients. With that said, while most tears will heal with just a precise injection, there are a few massive tears that are unlikely to be helped without surgery. Keep in mind that even after surgery to repair a massively damaged rotator cuff, stem cell injections may assist in the healing and improvement of the tissue. For example, one study showed that using stem cells after surgery reduced the retear rate by half.

The Regenexx procedure addresses more than just the rotator cuff tear. Precise injections of the surrounding ligaments improve stability, injections of the



other nontorn rotator cuff tendons and biceps tendons improve their strength and function, injections of the labral tissue, when there is evidence of damage, strengthens that tissue and injections of the joint and cartilage can improve any arthritis that is present.

In some cases, when there is edema (swelling) in the bone itself seen on MRI (which represents small microfractures), injections will help heal the bone. There may even be a component of a pinched nerve in the neck that is contributing to the pain and accelerated degeneration of the tissue in the shoulder. In these cases, platelet lysate injections around the nerve (epidurals) can help as well.

Following the procedure, skilled physical therapy will likely be recommended. For our patients in the Tampa Bay region, we recommend physical therapy at our Tampa location with EXOS. As you can see, this is a comprehensive plan to get you back to the activities you love to do.

Whether you've had surgery to repair your rotator cuff or not, Regenexx may be able to help you with your shoulder pain. Contact us today to find out how.

ABOUT US



Dr. James Leiber

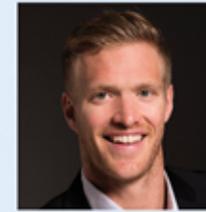
James Leiber, DO, is the founder and medical director of Regenexx Tampa Bay. He is a former officer, physician, and educator in the Air Force, including personal physician to the vice president and president at the White House. He is triple board certified in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine (AOBNMM), Pain Medicine (CAQPM), and Family Medicine (ABFM), as well registered in Musculoskeletal Sonography (RMSK).

Dr. Leiber specializes in Interventional Regenerative Orthopedics with years of experience and is honored to have been the first Regenexx Network Provider in Florida. In 2012, Dr. Leiber began offering the nation's most advanced non-surgical stem cell and platelet treatments (PRP) for injuries and arthritis under image guidance utilizing ultrasound and fluoroscopy (X-ray).

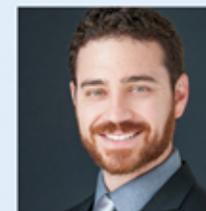
He is a published author, presenter, and is currently the program director for the Interventional Orthopedic Foundation.

He lives in Sarasota, Florida with his wife and teenage daughter. Dr Leiber travels regularly to Denver, to teach regenerative orthopedic techniques to fellow doctors, and to Grand Cayman, where he is also licensed to treat patients.

The other physicians at Regenexx Tampa Bay are:



Ron Torrance II, D.O. - Board Certified in Sports Medicine and recent co-author of *Exercise 2.0* for Regenexx and author of the 2018 best paper of the year on *The Concussed Athlete*. Dr. Torrance has achieved semi-professional ranking as a beach volleyball player and trains as a competitive CrossFit athlete.



Ignatios Papas, D.O. - Specializes in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He is a research collaborator with Columbia and Cornell University on multiple projects. Dr. Papas enjoys spending time with his wife and son, playing soccer, practicing guitar, and listening to historical podcasts.



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It's a Family Affair

Mom, dad and daughter pursue healthy weight and lifestyle together.

By Heidi Smith, Contributor

In 2012 before moving to Florida, Idriss Belghali underwent a sleeve gastrectomy – a type of metabolic/bariatric surgery – and lost considerable weight. But he says he didn't manage his nutrition properly and re-gained substantial weight. He also developed severe acid reflux and had such bad knee pain he gave up playing pickleball, a sport he loved.

"I was at almost 400 pounds and was looking at potential knee replacement surgery," said the 51-year-old Venice resident. "I knew that (metabolic/bariatric) surgery could help with weight loss, but didn't think I'd be a candidate since I had the sleeve." The sleeve is a "banana-shaped" reservoir fashioned from the native stomach.

A physician told him there was a surgeon in Venice with expertise in bariatric surgery, including "conversions," where the surgeon converts the sleeve to a gastric bypass. So Idriss consulted with Joseph Chebli, M.D., an independent bariatric surgeon on the medical staff at Venice Regional Bayfront Health.

While individual results may vary, a number of surgical alternatives can help a person lose weight and may even resolve conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, infertility, and sleep apnea associated with obesity. Dr. Chebli has performed more than 1,000 metabolic/bariatric procedures at Venice Regional, which is accredited as a Center of Excellence by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program.

"Often after this surgery, obese patients see their conditions improve dramatically, even before substantial weight loss occurs," Dr. Chebli said. "Type 2 diabetes patients may no longer need insulin or medication. Nonalcoholic fatty-liver disease can be halted or even reversed. Blood pressure medications can be reduced or even eliminated. And for



The Belghali family - Kaitlyn, Melissa and Idriss - before and after metabolic/bariatric surgery.

women, it can resolve problems with conceiving and carrying a baby to term. Individual results may vary, but for many patients, it really is life-changing."

"In Idriss' case, we found that his acid reflux had progressed to a precancerous condition in the esophagus," Dr. Chebli said. "I recommended converting his sleeve to gastric bypass to resolve the reflux issue while helping Idriss achieve a healthy weight."

Idriss discussed Dr. Chebli's advice with his wife, Melissa, and daughter, Kaitlyn, who both had their own issues with being overweight. At 21, Kaitlyn was 120 pounds overweight. She decided to see Dr. Chebli, and he found that she

had non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, which can lead to end stage liver disease, cirrhosis, or liver transplantation. She also was diagnosed with sleep apnea and advised to use a forced-air machine when sleeping.

On Dec. 31, 2018, both Idriss and Kaitlyn had metabolic/bariatric surgery at Venice Regional. Dr. Chebli performed a gastric bypass on Idriss and a sleeve gastrectomy and hiatal hernia repair on Kaitlyn.

Courtesy Venice Regional Bayfront Health

Both Idriss and Kaitlyn dropped weight rapidly after surgery. Working with Venice Regional's nutritional counselor, they learned more about healthy eating. Idriss became the family expert on food planning and preparation. They bicycled together and Idriss was able to return to pickleball.

"I feel great!" said Kaitlyn. "I have lost over 100 pounds. I love the improvement I see and the confidence I gained from it."

Melissa, 56, saw her husband and daughter lose weight and keep it off. She had been struggling with weight gain following a hysterectomy and hoped that Dr. Chebli could help. She also had sleep apnea. Dr. Chebli recommended a sleeve gastrectomy for Melissa, which she underwent in March 2020, just before the COVID-19 "safer-at-home" lockdown.

The family continued to receive support from Dr. Chebli and Venice Regional's metabolic/bariatric program throughout the quarantine using virtual consultations and a Facebook support group for the

program's patients. Since their surgeries, the Belghalis have lost a combined total of 269 pounds, sleep apnea has been resolved, and everyone is able to be more active. Idriss' acid reflux is gone, too.

Metabolic/bariatric surgery changes the way the body digests food and takes up nutrients so maintaining a healthy weight requires lifelong behavioral and nutritional changes, Dr. Chebli said.

"I've had many families as patients, and they tend to have better outcomes because they support each other and hold one another accountable," Dr. Chebli said. "That built-in support system is extremely valuable as patients learn to change their nutrition and become more active. The Belghali

family is a fine example of making the most of the second chance that metabolic/bariatric surgery offers."

"I feel it's the best decision I've ever made," said Melissa. "It changes your whole life. We all received a second chance to have good health, so collectively, we're making good choices. It's a family affair."

For more information about approaches to achieving a healthy weight, please visit <http://bit.ly/IsWeightLossSurgeryForMe>



Joseph Chebli, M.D., FACS, FASMB, is a Center of Excellence metabolic surgeon and chair-elect of the State of Florida Diabetes Advisory Council. Dr. Chebli performs life-changing metabolic and bariatric

surgery for obese patients as an independent physician at Venice Regional Bayfront Health.



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Being on Your Feet All Day Can Cause Serious Complications



By Federico M. Richter, MD

Standing on your feet all day can cause a lot more than aches and pain. If your job or lifestyle requires you to stand for a majority of the day, your circulation will be affected; when this happens, you have a higher risk of venous insufficiency. Venous insufficiency is inadequate functioning of the vein valves in the leg, causing swelling, pain, varicose veins and skin issues.

One of the most effective, natural ways to achieve healthy circulatory functioning is to exercise. Along with resistance training, any form of cardiovascular activity will improve the blood flow and dispersion of nutrients. Increasing your heart rate with cardiovascular exercise is essential, as it contracts the heartbeats at a higher rate, increasing blood and oxygen volume, which improves the circulatory system. In Addition, cardiovascular exercise improves the function of the veins and arteries, which alleviates venous insufficiency flare-ups.

Depending on your level of health, fitness, and wellness, you will need to modify how you incorporate exercise into your routine. Walking is the best place to start when you're adding in activity for the first time, or if it's been a while since you've worked out. It's imperative to speak to your physician first to discuss safe ways for you to add exercise into your routine. If the heat is too much for you to bear, exercising in a pool is also very helpful and a safer way to get your heart rate up.

The resistance of the water against the body increases cardiovascular circulation. Not only is aquatic therapy easy on the joints and muscles, but also the buoyancy allows individuals to exercise for longer periods of time, with more intensity than that of land-based physical therapy, especially in the heat.

There have been significant studies on the benefits of aquatic therapy for individuals that suffer from cardiac diseases and disorders. These cases have proven that the level of oxygen in the blood increases in water, which is ideal for most vascular issues. The oxygen consumption (VO₂) is three times greater in water than on land. Working large muscle groups leads to this uptake of oxygen or VO₂,

but doing a lot of running and legwork on land increases the heart rate at a greater level than with water-based therapy.

Compression Stockings can help to improve blood flow in your legs and prevent leg swelling. If you have varicose veins, spider veins, or have just had surgery.

Sometimes exercise is NOT enough!

Various forms of venous issues affect 25 million Americans. Their legs are swollen, achy and they have a heavy sensation. When our veins are working correctly, they pump blood back to the heart. Valves in the veins are made to open and close in one direction if these valves or the wall of the veins are damaged, the blood is unable to work against gravity, and the result is a pooling of the blood in our legs. This pooling is called stasis and can present significant risks to our health.

Varicose veins are one of the indicators of major damage to your circulatory system; venous symptoms should not be taken lightly. A medical professional will be able to report whether or not your symptoms are superficial, moderate or severely dangerous and in need treatment.

Symptoms of venous insufficiency:

- Leg pain while standing or sitting, which subsides after resting for an extended period of time
- Sensations of tightness & burning may occur in the leg or foot
- Swelling of the calves, which dissipates after elevation
- Dark veins
- Varicose Veins
- Dry, itchy skin
- Ulcer near the ankle (often painless, but with a dark rim)



Federico M. Richter, MD
American Board of
Venous and Lymphatic
Medicine Diplomate

About Federico M. Richter, MD

Dr. Richter was born and raised in Argentina and grew up in a family of vein doctors. His Grandfather, one of the first vein specialists in Argentina, helped pioneer sclerotherapy for treatment of varicose and spider veins in the 1940s. His Father has been treating veins for over 45 years.

Dr. Richter recently re-located from the busy suburbs of Indianapolis where he completed his residency and practiced for 5 years. Since completion of his residency here in the United States, he has also focused on the newest developments in minimally invasive vein treatments. Dr. Richter received his medical degree in Argentina in 2003 from Universidad Nacional de Cordoba. He then completed a year of general surgery and a 3-year Fellowship in vein and lymphatic disorders in 2007. As a venous and lymphatic medicine specialist, he is dedicated to treating varicose and spider veins and their underlying causes.

With over a decade of experience in the specialized medical field of diagnosing and treating vein disease, Dr. Richter was one of the first doctors to use lasers to treat a variety of vein diseases in Argentina. Certified by the American Board of Venous and Lymphatic Medicine and an active member of the American College Of Phlebology, Dr. Richter has also accumulated an impressive list of qualifications and educational accomplishments during the course of his career.

Dr. Richter's 1st priority is the well-being and quality of life his patients in the Bradenton, Sarasota, Sun City, Ruskin, and surrounding areas.



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TESTOSTERONE AND MEN'S HEALTH

Tired? Is your endurance and strength declining? Have you noticed a decline in your sexual function and lost interest in your sex life?

Every man could answer yes to some or all of the above at some time or another after the age of 40. These can be common symptoms of low testosterone, but they can also occur from a myriad of other lifestyle and behavior issues as well as social and relationship issues. It is the physician's goal to "treat the whole patient," so we try to identify which of these issues is most relevant in causing the patient's symptoms.

The dogma in medical training for decades was that low testosterone could be responsible for the above but not much else. As physicians we were also taught that a decline in testosterone was "normal" as men aged. These beliefs have substantially changed in the last five years.

We now know that a condition known as "Metabolic Syndrome" is intimately linked to low testosterone.

The syndrome is a constellation of diabetes (or insulin resistance), hypertension, elevated triglycerides (fat levels in the blood), abdominal obesity and low testosterone. Estimates range from 25% to 45% of American men over 40 fulfill the criteria for this syndrome that carries a significantly elevated risk of stroke and heart attack. A University of California study showed that men with a low testosterone had a 33% higher risk of death over an 18 year period than men with normal testosterone. How testosterone interacts with obesity, diabetes and cholesterol is not fully understood. It is also unclear if the low testosterone is the cause of these health risks or is involved in some other way. Clearly, low testosterone is much more important to overall health than simply a factor in declining strength and sexual performance.

Testosterone is essential for male development, libido (or sexual drive), and erections. Low testosterone is often overlooked in the evaluation of



erectile dysfunction (ED) because of the effectiveness of Viagra-type medications. Low testosterone, however, is a common cause of poor or declining response from these medications and should always be checked in the evaluation of ED. Testosterone replacement may also be all that the patient needs to restore his sexual function, not Viagra-type medication.

Managing low testosterone has also become much simpler and easier for patients. Ten years ago, almost all testosterone replacement was by a painful deep muscle injection with oil-based testosterone that required doses every two weeks. Testosterone levels were also difficult to manage and did not mimic normal levels, with dramatic swings in levels that were too high for a week, then too low for a week. Now, more physiologic preparations are available in creams that are applied to the skin daily. These creams provide better, even absorption and steady testosterone levels in the blood. There are also small implants that are inserted beneath the skin every 8-10 months, by a simple office procedure, that provide steady release of testosterone into the blood stream.

Testosterone management requires a thorough knowledge of the risk and benefits from the treatment. Individuals with prostate enlargement may have increased risk of prostate obstruction of the urine flow if excess testosterone stimulates faster prostate growth. Testosterone supplementation should be considered only if prostate cancer is not present, or has been successfully treated. Baseline testosterone levels should be checked in the early morning as levels normally decline to their lowest levels at late afternoon or evening. A thorough physical examination and additional blood test are indicated in the evaluation of low testosterone to determine the cause. Urologists are specialized in the evaluation and treatment of low testosterone, because he/she also receives specialized training in prostate, voiding, erection and testicular health. All of which can be influenced by testosterone levels.

Don't underestimate the importance of a normal testosterone level. It has clinical effects that may modify serious medical conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. If left unmanaged, it may increase your risk of heart attack, stroke and even death. For years, testosterone levels have been recognized to be the key to some important quality of life issues such as libido, sexual performance and even our sense of wellbeing. Identifying low testosterone is as simple as a blood test, and modern management is as simple as a daily application of a skin cream.

Every man should know his testosterone level. A normal testosterone level can be an important aspect of maximizing longevity and maintaining quality of life.

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Freedom Village of Bradenton: Mary Jane's Story

Before moving into Freedom Village Bradenton, about four years ago, Mary Jane Handlin was having lunch with a few residents, Elmer and Donna Claussen. They were enjoying friendly conversation over a delicious lunch in one of Freedom Villages restaurants. They had some common interests, which consisted of swimming. Elmer brought up that he loves to play pool volleyball and how it is an excellent way to meet new friends while getting in quality exercise. Elmer was passionate about pool volleyball and wanted to bring it to Freedom Village. He and a few other residents brought it up to Katie Penta in activities. Activities got the supplies for them, and the residents took off with the idea.

In the meantime, Mary Jane had decided to become a resident of Freedom Village, and she also decided pool volleyball was something she was interested in, too, so she decided to join them. They typically play three times a week and have reached a record of 147 volleys. Recently, they even got to 106 volleys, and regularly, eight people attend daily matches. In addition to being a great workout, it's a great way to socialize and meet new people.

Mary Jane says it's exceptional from a physical and social aspect. You get to mingle with fascinating people from all different backgrounds and levels of fitness, and she feels that it is especially useful when you are new to the community. Although, sometimes people don't want to wake up that early to play at 8:30 am. However, Mary Jane does attend every day they play and works her schedule around it because of how much fun she has, and because of the energy and joy that it brings her and her friends.

Pool volleyball helps work all parts of the body without causing stress on the joints. In order for Mary Jane to get her heart pumping, she does about a quarter to a third of a mile lap of swimming before pool volleyball even starts! They use their hands and arms to hit the ball and their legs to jump in the water. "Sometimes, we even use our heads to hit the ball, not on purpose, of course." Mary Jane mentions while laughing.

Mary Jane has been an asset to this team as well as an asset to our community. She goes above and beyond in everything she does and is one of the most reliable people this community has. She has participated in pool volleyball for four years and plans to continue playing for as long as possible.



Freedom Village is a place that offers stages of living, meaning that they have independent living for those who are active but want socialization and activities with like-minded seniors, without the responsibilities of maintaining a home. They also have assisted living and memory care for those individuals that might require additional medical treatment and specialized care. Freedom Village is committed to enriching the lives of each resident by providing personalized care, welcoming living spaces, remarkable amenities, and customized services within the phases of living arrangements that many senior communities fail to offer. Freedom Village is a CCRC, Continuing Care Retirement Community.

Independent Living at Freedom Village of Bradenton
At Freedom Village, their independent living is for seniors who are able to live on their own and desire the conveniences of life that provide top-of-the-line amenities and services, such as social activities, chef-inspired dining, transportation, and security within a community that feels like family. Independent Living is where many individuals and couples begin their journey, and if they ever need to transition into the higher level care, it is conveniently located within the same comfortable and family-oriented community.

Freedom Village's senior living commitment and expertise are to help residents thrive in a vibrant environment through socialization, personalized care, comfortable and inviting living spaces, numerous amenities, and incomparable services for the aging population.

You'll experience maintenance-free living as part of a lovely, secure community. Stay close to friends and enjoy a host of social, recreational, spiritual, and educational activities. The staff will ensure the movers place everything in the correct area and leave everything else in your capable hands.

You'll feel right at home as the community and staff strive to give you a warm welcome, including making personal introductions, encouraging visits from other residents, inviting you to social events, and more. Your family and friends are always welcome and will quickly become a part of the community as well.

As a CCRC, Freedom Village of Bradenton offers multiple phases of living for your specific needs, which include Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care and Skilled Nursing.

At Freedom Village of Bradenton, they are committed to doing everything they can to make their senior living community the best it can be. That is why they are excited to announce that Freedom Village's management team will now be working with Life Care Services®, an LCS® Company*, the nationwide leader in senior living that provides management support to over 140 communities across the country. It is the same strong Freedom Village team with even better resources for a vibrant, active community! Freedom Village of Bradenton has been part of the Bradenton, Florida, community for over 30 years.

Your Life, Your Way, Every Day—Contact Freedom Village of Bradenton Today to Find Out More at 941-798-8122 or visit fvbradenton.com.



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**Life Care Services received the highest score in the J.D. Power 2019 Senior Living Satisfaction Study of resident/family member/friend's satisfaction with senior living communities. Visit jdpower.com/awards*

CANCER RESEARCH CONTINUES TO PROVIDE HOPE EVEN IN THE MIDST OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) recently held its annual scientific meeting in a three-day virtual event. One of the major topics addressed at the meeting was the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on cancer patients. As one might expect, ASCO reported, “In patients with cancer and COVID-19, cancer that is progressing was independently associated with an increased risk of death, according to an analysis of 928 patients.”

According to data from the COVID-19 and Cancer Consortium (CCC19) registry, which included a variety of cancer types, the 30-day mortality and severe illness rates in this group of patients studied were significantly higher than previously reported for the general population. The report concluded that longer follow-up is needed ... “to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on outcomes in patients with cancer, including the ability to continue specific cancer treatments.”

As a result of this crisis, Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) has instituted many new protocols to help protect the safety and well-being of our patients and clinical staff. These include offering telehealth video appointments to patients when appropriate, visitor restrictions at our clinics, daily health screenings for patients and staff, as well as the use of masks, social distancing and other safety measures.

Despite the concerns COVID-19 is causing, FCS is continuing to pursue cancer research through its strategic partnership with Sarah Cannon Research Institute, one of the leading clinical trial organizations in the world. The clinical research program at FCS encompasses Phase I, Phase II and Phase III trials for a wide range of cancer types; the majority of new cancer treatments approved for use in the U.S. were first studied in clinical trials with FCS participation, prior to approval.



Advances Continue in Immunotherapy Research

One of the major areas of research continues to be immunotherapy. More than a dozen types of cancer are now receiving FDA-approved immunotherapies, and there are a variety of clinical trials for even more types of cancer. There are several different types of immunotherapy treatment; however, all of these therapies use the body’s own immune system to attack cancer cells. Specifically, at the ASCO scientific meeting, presentations were made on novel immunotherapies for glioma (a type of brain cancer), kidney and bladder cancers, as well as melanoma skin cancer, among others.

Advances in Diagnosing Cancer

An increasing understanding of the molecular basis of cancer has enabled advances in detecting and diagnosing cancer, as well as determining which patients are likely to benefit from certain types of targeted therapies. The term “molecular diagnostics” describes a group of tests that can identify certain biomarkers from blood, urine, tumor or other samples that could help identify cancer cells earlier. New tests continue to be developed that offer much promise for detecting disease at a very early stage and for implementing personalized patient care.

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 locations throughout Florida. FCS is also a strategic partner of the Sarah Cannon Research Institute, one of the leading clinical trial organizations in the world. This alliance provides FCS patients access to the newest, most innovative and most promising new treatments.

Florida Cancer Specialists treats patients with all types of cancer and offers a number of services, including an in-house specialty pharmacy, an in-house pathology lab, financial counselors at every location and 24/7 access to care managers, who help deliver the most advanced and personalized care in your local community.



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For more information, visit FLCancer.com

Ketamine for Pain Management

In the U.S., over 100 million people reportedly suffer from some form of chronic pain. Most people can relate to having experienced physical pain in their lifetime, but to have to live with. That pain on a daily basis can become intolerable. Neuropathic pain syndromes are the root cause of many individuals' chronic discomfort. Neuropathic pain syndromes are related to disorders like diabetes, fibromyalgia, CRPS, Lyme disease, and migraines, to name a few.

The most common treatment for neuropathy is to mask it with narcotic prescription pain medications. Narcotics like opioids are highly addictive, and our state is currently leading the country in abusing the drug and overdose episodes. The CDC reports that nearly half of all opioid-related deaths are due to the narcotic being prescribed for pain related circumstances.

Pain medications have adverse side effects and also, in many cases, show signs of cognitive decline in long-term use. The other issue with standard pain medication is that they, more often than not, become ineffective and are unable to mask the pain signals. This is called treatment resistance.

Opioids fool the body by binding to the opioid receptors in the brain, spine, and other areas of the body. They DON'T treat the health condition; They merely mask the pain by disrupting the signals to the brain. Opioids are one of the most highly addictive classes of drugs available.

ONE OF THE MOST PROMISING ALTERNATIVE METHODS IS KETAMINE IV THERAPY

How does ketamine work?

Ketamine is an NMDA receptor antagonist. Through this mechanism, it is able to modulate the neurotransmitter glutamate. This, in turn, leads to a cascade of events that can allow for "hardwired" changes in the brain which may result in lifting of depression, reductions in anxiety as well as improvements in other mood disorders. It also allows for a "resetting" of the pathways responsible for central pain, which is a large component of chronic pain in many patients.

A recent study conducted at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital involved 61 patients with intractable migraines. Of the 61 patients in the study, 75% showed a decrease in the intensity of their headaches after receiving low dose IV ketamine infusions over five days.



On a scale of zero to 10 (10 being the highest), the self-reported pain score from patients was an average 7.5 before the initiation of the study and 3.4 at the conclusion of the IV ketamine infusions.

IV ketamine is currently used to help treat neuropathic pain syndromes such as CRPS, fibromyalgia, trigeminal neuralgia, migraines and herpetic neuralgia's. There is a growing body of evidence to support that it may have long term effects for pain relief.

In recent FDA and other professional associated studies, patient results with ketamine show:

- Reduced pain
- Decrease depression
- Diminished suicidal thoughts and episodes
- Rapid ability to reverse depression and symptoms

How is ketamine administered?

In our office, ketamine is administered intravenously. The initial series of infusions are completed over a one week. For pain and over a two week. For mental health and mood disorders.

Ketamine IV therapy impacts pain relief, mood, and anxiety and can result in positive treatment outcomes for the following disorders:

- Severe or chronic depression
- Chronic pain
- Bipolar disorder
- Obsessive compulsive disorder OCD
- Post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD
- Produces rapid onset of neural connections

With our ongoing drug related epidemic, ketamine therapy can reduce the risk of opioids, benzodiazepines, and other narcotic addictions. Physicians are often over prescribing these types of highly addictive drugs to help minimize or mask patients chronic pain, depression or other ailments. With ketamine therapy, the treatment is safe, non-habit forming and highly effective.

Gulf Coast Ketamine Center

Gulf Coast Ketamine Center works closely with a therapist well-versed in Ketamine therapy to maximize the benefits of the therapy in patients who are appropriate for this particular treatment. The uses of IV Ketamine keep expanding as far as the mental health field is concerned; selecting a practitioner with a significant amount of Ketamine experience who follows and practices evidence-based medicine, and who tailors each patient's individual protocol as best suited to their clinical situation is essential.

Dr. Steven Reichbach states, "In our opinion, IV Ketamine infusions are the gold standard for patients with severe mood disorders or those suffering from chronic pain. It is now purported as viable option for those that suffer from addictions as well.

"IV ketamine provides 100% bioavailability meaning that 100% of the drug administered, gets where it needs to go (the brain). This provides easier titration and a higher likelihood for a positive response. At the end of the day, the out of pocket cost to the patient may be more than the IV infusions depending on an individual's insurance coverage, not to mention the time convenience advantage for the patient of the IV ketamine infusions."

Steven Reichbach, MD, Board-Certified Anesthesiologist, specializes in pain management. For more information, please contact their office today at 941-213-4444, or visit their website at findpainrelief.com.



Steven Reichbach, MD
Board-Certified Anesthesiologist
President and Founder,
Gulf Coast Ketamine Center



Lolita Borges, RN
Clinical Director, Gulf Coast
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Diagnostic Imaging Saves Lives

Medical imaging technology has revolutionized health care over the past 30 years, allowing doctors to find disease earlier and improve patient outcomes. Whether you are a young child with cancer or a grandmother who just wants to make sure she's in good health, medical imaging helps you detect and diagnose disease at its earliest, most treatable stages and guides physicians and patients in determining the most appropriate and effective care.

Radiology Associates physicians are board certified radiologists with training in all aspects of diagnostic imaging, including CT, Mammography, MRI, Ultrasound, X-ray, and Nuclear Medicine. Additionally, each has advanced subspecialty training in one or more areas of medical imaging or interventional radiology that we believe provides the basis for providing the highest level of patient care.

Our goal is to provide high quality patient care in a comfortable environment, using the latest imaging and interventional technology and working in close collaboration with referring physicians.

Radiology Associates of Venice and Englewood is pleased to offer the following diagnostic imaging services:

MRI Scan

Magnetic resonance imaging, commonly known as MRI is a medical test that aids physicians in diagnosis and treating medical conditions. This is a non-invasive and typically painless test.

Breast MRI

Breast MRI uses Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to look specifically at the breast. It is a non-invasive procedure that doctors can use to determine what the inside of the breast looks like without having to do surgery or flatten the breast (as in a mammogram).

MRA

Magnetic Resonance Angiography - Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA) uses the same MRI scanner to get its images, however it is a special type of MRI scan that looks at blood vessels and blood flow. MRA can help diagnose aneurysms, and also detect narrowing or blockages of blood vessels. If there is decreased or blocked flow leading to the



brain this can be the cause of a stroke. Additionally, it can be an ideal aid to the physician for surgical planning. Some MRA's, as with MRI's, require a contrast medium.

CT Scan

CT Scan sometimes called CAT scanning is a painless and a non-invasive medical test that helps physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions.

Ultrasound

A process that uses high-frequency sound waves to produce pictures of the inside of the body. Because ultrasound images are captured in real time, they are able to show blood flowing through the blood vessels, as well as the movement of the body's organs and its structure.

Nuclear Medicine

Nuclear medicine is a specialized form of radiology. Patients are given a radioactive substance either by mouth or intravenously that collects in specific body organs. Then the gamma camera detects the energy being emitted from that substance and an image can then be captured.

Digital X-Ray & Fluoroscopy

An X-ray is a painless and quick test for the patient to endure. It involves exposing the part of the body that is being examined to a small dose of ionizing radiation to produce pictures of the inside of the body.

3D Mammography

3D mammography is a new technology in the fight against breast cancer that allows doctors to examine your breast tissue one layer at a time. 3D mammography uses high-powered computing to convert digital breast images into a stack of very thin layers or "slices"- building what is essentially a "3-dimensional mammogram".

Bone Density DEXA

Bone density scanning, also called dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) or bone densitometry, is an enhanced form of x-ray technology that is used to measure bone loss.

PET Scan

Positron emission tomography, also called PET imaging or a PET scan, is a type of nuclear medicine imaging.

For more information about the diagnostic imaging services available at Radiology Associates of Venice, Englewood and Sarasota. Call the Venice office at 941-488-7781 or the Englewood office at 941-475-5471 or the Sarasota office at 941-342-7283.



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Passport Health Sarasota Offers In-Depth Respiratory Screening Panels & Pneumonia Vaccinations

Panels Include COVID-19

Acute Respiratory Infections (ARIs) are responsible for 4.25 million deaths annually and are the third largest cause of mortality in the world.¹ The symptoms of viral and bacterial respiratory illnesses are often similar and may require testing to differentiate between them. Comprehensive molecular screening panels help clinicians accurately diagnose and appropriately treat their patients within an acceptable time frame.

Our nasal swab test looks for the DNA of 47 different pathogens causing infection of the respiratory tract. Because nothing is grown in a lab, results are sent to your primary care physician within 36 hours of testing, allowing your physician a more accurate and timely way to treat any infection. Your physician will know what harmful pathogens are present and in what quantities-providing you with a more specific treatment for your condition.

Testing with this panel has determined that more than 40% of patients that test positive for Flu or the COVID-19 virus also have a significant bacterial infection that requires treatment with antibiotics. These co-infections can make outcomes worse. Treating and eliminating these harmful pathogens prior to or while being exposed to a viral infection should also allow the body to respond more effectively.

The test is a simple nasal swab performed in office or curbside by a trained health professional. Insurance is accepted and submitted by the laboratory. The only out-of-pocket cost is the standard co-pay/office visit fee at our office, and Most major insurance carriers and Medicare are accepted.

Appointments are limited. Please call our office to schedule an appointment for your screening.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, we are all trying to stay healthy, but for many individuals, the pneumonia vaccine can provide extra protection.

Pneumonia is a lung infection that can affect people of all ages. It is often treated with medication, but it can be prevented with vaccination. Pneumonia infection can come from different sources including influenza, coronavirus, bacteria, fungi and various other viruses.

How does pneumonia factor in with viruses such as Coronavirus?

It is well known that bacterial pneumonia infections are a common cause of influenza-related hospitalization in

otherwise healthy individuals. Analysis of the influenza pandemic of 1957 showed that more than two thirds of the fatal cases were associated with bacterial pneumonia.¹

Bacterial pathogens work in two ways to cause a worsened outcome when a viral infection is also involved. If a viral and bacterial infection are present at the same time, the inflammation caused by the bacterial infection can allow the virus to spread without response from the body. Pneumonia causing bacteria can spread undetected by the body causing a super infection even when the viral infection has been taken care of by the immune system.²

Initial studies of Coronavirus show that this virus behaves similarly to other respiratory viruses. The pneumonia vaccine can prevent bacterial pneumonia from becoming part of a co-infection complicating the condition.

What Is the Pneumonia Vaccine?

The pneumonia vaccine provides protection against all forms of bacterial pneumonia. It is primarily designed for use in seniors, to help protect against potentially deadly or life-altering infection. The vaccine does not protect against influenza, coronavirus or fungal pneumonia.

Who Should Get the Pneumonia Vaccine?

Pneumonia vaccination is recommended for all adults 65 or over. Other individuals should consider pneumonia vaccination. These include:

- Adults with chronic illness like liver or heart disease
- People with a weakened immune system over the age of 2
- Individuals with cochlear implants
- Those who smoke
- People with asthma
- People with who are immunocompromised (Cancer, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, Lupus, HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.)
- Those with a previous history of respiratory infections
- Individuals with diabetes
- People who have COPD or emphysema
- Anyone on oxygen therapy for medical conditions



While the pneumonia vaccine may not be covered by insurance if you are under 65, everyone can elect to get the vaccine if it is not medically contraindicated. To schedule an appointment with one of our travel health specialists, call one of our office locations listed. They can assist you in determining if this vaccine is recommended for you.

Passport Health is the largest and leading provider of travel medicine and immunization services in North America. With 270+ travel clinic locations, a commitment to first-class medical care, and rigorously trained medical staff, Passport Health sets the immunization industry standard. Our deep vaccine inventory and vast clinic network provides clients with what they need, when they need it. We strive to be all travelers' one-stop-shop for all their vaccination, travel document and travel supply needs.

Passport Health was founded in 1994 in Baltimore, Maryland, and now operates 270+ clinic locations across North America. Each travel clinic serves its local community via convenient locations where the public can access travel medicine specialists who have received rigorous training in the fields of travel medicine and immunology.

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"My Doctor Said There Was No Help For Neuropathy...Until Now!"

Neuropathy Treatment Breakthrough Proves Highly Effective at Reversing Neuropathy Pain and Symptoms

Brought to you by The Foundation for Wellness Professionals

Finally, after all these years of research there is a Medical Breakthrough Treatment for Neuropathy. 10-20 Million Americans suffer from Neuropathy. Many suffering do not even realize that the symptoms listed below could be due to Peripheral Neuropathy.

Do you suffer from:

- 1. Numbness**
- 2. Burning Pain**
- 3. Restless Legs**
- 4. Sharp, electric pain**
- 5. Difficulty sleeping**
- 6. Prickling/tingling feeling**
- 7. Balance & walking difficulty**

If you suffer from one or more of these problems, you may have Peripheral Neuropathy and if you do, you're not alone. Often, these good people have been frustrated by taking prescribed medication such as Lyrica®, Neurotin®, Gabapentin®, or Cymbalta® for these terrible problems.



Do you suffer with pain, burning, numbness and tingling in your feet?

Many patients are still seeking help. Platinum Healthcare has studied 10 years of research on "peripheral neuropathies." In fact, helping people with these problems has become their primary focus.

Discover the Answer to Defeating Neuropathy Pain



This unique individualized program has already helped hundreds of neuropathy pain sufferers nationwide.

It's not unusual for them to hear stories from patients who've suffered for years with terrible symptoms. For many, they are missing out on the things they love to do. They aren't enjoying life as they once did.

Platinum Healthcare utilizes a unique approach to the treatment of pain that only a select group of medical physicians have been trained to treat your neuropathy symptoms. Their "Peripheral Neuropathy Optimal Therapy System" consists of a complete treatment plan that provides a non-surgical and non-narcotic therapy that provides relief by increasing oxygen and blood directly to the nerve-the cause of your pain/burning/numbness/tingling at the source. This type of therapy reduces swelling around the nerve and helps repair nerve function. This type of Neuropathy Treatment system and other progressive treatments attacks the source of the pain in multiple ways. These therapies work together to provide far superior results than anyone could on its own resulting in their high success rates.

Are You A Candidate for this Neuropathy Medical Breakthrough?

There is a treatment for anyone suffering from the symptoms of peripheral neuropathy pain. And, the beautiful thing is that when these health situations are resolved, people have great improvements in the quality of their lives.

Do not let peripheral neuropathy keep you from simply walking or even wearing shoes. Don't let tingling legs keep you up at night.

If all else has failed you may still benefit from this remarkable treatment.

Platinum Healthcare is now accepting 23 patient cases who suffer from these conditions, who will receive a NO COST Screening to determine if you are a candidate for this life altering program. They recommend immediate action as these slots fill up quickly.

Call (941) 927-1123 today to determine if you are a good candidate for acceptance into their program.

When you call, tell the receptionist you'd like to come in for the Neuropathy Screening so she can get you on the schedule and make sure you receive proper credit for this special offer.

The Platinum Healthcare Center is located at:
5560 Bee Ridge Rd. suite 7, Sarasota.
(In Centergate Office Park)

Add some peace to your life or the life of someone you love.

Call today to make an appointment.
(941) 927-1123

There is Hope.

P.S. Does your spouse, family member, or friend suffer from peripheral neuropathy? This offer is also available to them too. You can even come together. Their lack of health affects your life also. Maybe this will be your chance to really give them the help they need.

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*Rick M. Age 66
Sarasota, FL*

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Why Compounded Cannabidiol Might Suit Your Needs Better:

Gerry Letendre, RPh, MBA, CHC

What Patients and Physicians Should Know About CBD Purity

Sarasota Specialty Pharmacy and Wellness Center are proud members with PCCA (Professional Compounding Centers of America), which means they have access to and use the highest-quality ingredients for all of their compounded pharmaceutical formulations. Only members of PCCA have access, and they are one of very few in the area that have access via PCCA. This includes their prescription Cannabidiol. Why should you care? Well, the answer to that question will most likely enlighten you and make you think twice about where and who you buy your “CBD” products from.

Numerous individuals using Cannabidiol for specific health needs and personal health goals find it to be beneficial for a gamut of conditions, but a few common uses for cannabidiol are as follows:

- Pain
- Anxiety
- Stress
- PTSD
- IBS
- Crohn’s Disease

Sarasota Specialty Pharmacy and Wellness Center uses Pure Cannabidiol that is closely monitored and regulated at >98% powder. It’s critical to know what you’re getting when you purchase CBD products. For example, when buying CBD Oil at a gas station or hair salon, purity of product is very questionable. They may contain harmful contaminants, chemicals and fungi. The majority of CBD products on the market are not regulated, so the manufacturer can essentially label the bottle any way they want to in order to market or commercialize the product and potentially use false claims.

With Sarasota Specialty Pharmacy and Wellness Center, you can always trust quality, dose and usage are pure and correct, and their products are prescribed specific to each patient’s needs, not a one size fit all in a bottle.

References:

1. Gus Bassani, PharmD, PCCA Chief Scientific Officer, Cannabidiol Is Now Available For Pharmacy Compounding. <https://pccarx.com/Blog/cannabidiol-is-now-available-for-pharmacy-compounding>, 4/9/20, Houston, TX

ATTENTION PHYSICIANS

If you are a physician and would like to know more about prescribing CBD for your patients, please contact Gerry (owner and lead pharmacist) directly for more information or recommendations on formulas.

WARNING: NOT ALL CANNABIDIOL IS THE SAME

Details on the Differences in CBD Products

The following information is provided by the Professional Compounding Centers of America (PCCA):

What Is Cannabidiol?¹

There have been so many nomenclature errors in the media, various industries and medical literature with regard to cannabinoids that it is easy to get confused. Much of the confusion comes from the misuse of the term “CBD.” Technically, “CBD” refers only to cannabidiol, which is a single cannabinoid among a sea of cannabinoids. Unfortunately, so many hemp-based products on the shelves of stores prominently display the term “CBD,” despite the fact that they are not just cannabidiol but contain a mixture of cannabinoids and other phytochemicals found in the hemp plant. Additionally, the FDA views CBD as a drug and thus not legal to be marketed in the manner most of these retail products are marketed. Compounding pharmacists were also not allowed to use any of these cannabinoids as an API (active pharmaceutical ingredients) in compounded preparations because they did not meet the requirements of section 503A of the FD&C Act — until now.¹

Section 503A of the FD&C Act states that a bulk drug substance can be used in compounding if:

- It is manufactured by an FDA-registered manufacturer
- It is accompanied by a valid certificate of analysis
- It is contained within an FDA-approved product, has an applicable USP/NF monograph or is on one of the bulk drug substance lists generated by the FDA (Category 1 of the interim list or the official “positive list”)¹

PCCA Cannabidiol (>98% Powder) is an API that can be used in prescription compounding because it fulfills these requirements:

- It is made by an FDA-registered and -inspected manufacturer in full compliance with CGMPs
- It is contained within an FDA-approved product (Epidiolex®)
- It is a pharmaceutical-grade, high-purity, synthetic cannabidiol powder with a minimum assay (purity) of 98% that is accompanied by a valid certificate of analysis¹

Additionally, it is not a controlled substance according to the U.S. DEA, and it has a delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content specification of less than 0.1%. Because our cannabidiol powder is synthetic, there is not a concern that it would contain pesticides or other plant components. The assay on our most recent lot showed 100.3% cannabidiol. Because PCCA’s Cannabidiol (>98% Powder) is a drug, it is for prescription compounding only.¹

For the purposes of clarity, PCCA’s Cannabidiol (>98% Powder) is:

- Not hemp oil
- Not medical marijuana and is not extracted from marijuana
- Not a full-spectrum mixture of cannabinoids
- Not an over-the-counter (OTC) drug and not for OTC compounding
- Not a dietary supplement¹

It is an API, just like any of the other prescription drugs used as active ingredients in compounding.¹

Having cannabidiol powder available for use as an API in compounding is valuable to patients, prescribers and pharmacists. Finally, prescribers can have confidence in the quality and dosing accuracy of the cannabidiol being used by their patients and can be more personalized in their approach. Most importantly, the patient will be treated under medical supervision and can be monitored appropriately.¹

To find out more, please contact Sarasota Specialty Pharmacy and Wellness Center today at 941.366.0880, or visit www.sarasotarx.com

Cannabidiol is by Prescription ONLY



Monday - Friday 9:30am - 5:30pm

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HELPING PATIENTS LIVE WITH PARKINSON'S

Each year, doctors diagnose 60,000 new cases of Parkinson's disease (PD). With advances in pharmacology and surgery giving PD patients longer lives and increased motor function, interventions to prepare family caregivers, empower patients in their daily lives, and improve patient peace of mind become more involved. While many patients live more than 20 years after the diagnosis, the median survival has been measured at 12 years.¹ The speed of progression underscores the value of that time and the importance of promoting quality of life during this important time of life. It's obvious but noteworthy that Parkinson's is more than a nigrostriatal disorder. While dopaminergic therapy improves rigidity, tremor, and bradykinesia, other symptoms do not respond. These include hypersomnolence, imbalance, dysphagia, dysarthria, and autonomic failure. Most notably, this includes cognitive decline, dementia, and drug-related hallucinations. These latter symptoms create the most concern for families. In Parkinson's, these symptoms progress more rapidly with age.

Among the many recommendations doctors make for families with Parkinson's, consider long-term home care, especially that from McKenney Home Care. Intermittent skilled care such as physical therapy can modulate the progression of Parkinson's disease and comorbidities,^{2,3} but needs for more daily living assistance persist and advance insidiously. For instance, every year, approximately 71% of people living with PD experience a near fall, 59% have an accidental fall, and 20% have a fall injury.⁴ In spite of active interventions with physical therapy, walking aids, and home modifications, 35% of people living with Parkinson's have experienced a fall-related fracture.¹ Long-term home care can assist patients with transfers and mobility (especially in the bathroom where most fall injuries occur). At-home aides will also increase the likelihood of a rapid response to falls. Aide support not only works to reduce the risk of fall injury but also to increase patient confidence, so patients can participate more confidently in more activities. The same could be said for activities as basic as eating, as patients with dysphagia often worry and put off eating in the absence of a caregiver who can respond to choking.

With McKenney Home Care, the level of service can increase gradually as the need increases. For the first few years, tremors may only merit transportation assistance, so patients can get to their appointments.



This can progress to personal care up to 24-hours per day according to patient needs and the family situation. Finally, with McKenney, long-term home care can progress to private-duty nursing to help with medication administration. In Parkinson's, the insidious nature of dementia makes it easy for families to underestimate the need for assistance. Some evidence suggests that dementia is under-diagnosed in Parkinson's. Researchers have commented that unless dementia is actively sought and excluded, it should not be assumed to be absent. Thorough neuropsychological assessments find dementia present in 39% of patients initially diagnosed with Parkinson's at age 40 to 69. This prevalence progresses to 83% over the next 20 years.¹ Especially when dementia is subtly present, it can interfere with driving, medication adherence, participation in medical treatment, visuospatial problems that contribute to fall risk, etc. By the 20th year of living with Parkinson's, symptom burden progresses to excessive daytime sleepiness (70%), falls (87%), freezing (81%), fractures (35%), choking (48%), and hallucinations (74%). A well-trained, professionally managed home care aide can improve safety and quality of life in the face of each of these burdens.

References: 1. Hely M, Reid W, Adena M, et al. The Sydney Multicenter Study of Parkinson's Disease: The inevitability of dementia at 20 years. *Movement Disorders*. 2008; 23 (6): 837-844. 2. Tomlinson C, Patel S, Meek C, et al. Physiotherapy versus placebo or no intervention in Parkinson's disease (Review). *The Cochrane Library*. 2013; 8 (8). 3. Petzinger G, Fisher B, McEwen S, et al. Exercise-enhanced neuroplasticity targeting motor and cognitive circuitry in Parkinson's disease. *The Lancet Neurology*. 2013 Jul 31; 12 (7): 716-26. 4. Wang H, Lin C, Lau C, et al. Risk of accidental injuries amongst Parkinson disease patients. *European Journal of Neurology*. 2014; 21 (6): 907-13.

McKenney Home Care in Naples, FL hosts a Lewy Body Dementia Support Group on the first Wednesday of every month. This ongoing support group is approved by the Lewy Body Dementia Association in Atlanta and is in affiliation with the Parkinson's Association of SWFL and the Alzheimer's Support Network.

McKenney Home Care provides exceptional in-home health services and client-centered care. With a passion for maximizing the quality of life of their clients and their families, they are driven to ensure social engagement and specialty services during all stages of life.

For Individuals with neurodegenerative disorders, McKenney Home Care delivers enriched specialized training for its caregivers working with Dementia Patients. In addition to specialized videos and manuals, McKenney educates the caregivers through the use of the Virtual Alzheimer's App. This virtual reality experience helps caregivers understand the feelings and experience of those suffering from Alzheimer's and other forms of Dementia.

Along with their medical expertise, McKenney Home Care is a certified Music & Memory Agency. Providing help for Dementia Patients; this specialized music therapy program is highly personalized and has been shown to reduce the need for anti-anxiety and antipsychotic drugs by up to 50%, while bringing joy to the lives of patients who have Dementia.

If you or someone you know would like more information about McKenney Home Care or the LBD Support Group, please call McKenney Home Care at 239-325-2273, or visit mckenneyhomecare.com.



CALL US TODAY!

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An Alternative Approach to Optimal Aging

Dr. James Williams of Florida Integrative Medicine Weighs in on NAD IV Therapy

With its ability to bypass the intestines and limit the breakdown that digestion produces (or lack thereof), IV infusion of vitamins and minerals may seem like the latest craze, but a John's Hopkins physician actually developed the popular Myers Cocktail almost 60 years ago. Due to IV infusions efficacy and remarkable outcomes for various conditions like autoimmune disorders, fatigue, chronic pain, and increased energy or physical performance, IV infusions are on the rise. We caught up with Dr. Williams of Florida Integrative Medicine to find out more about an optimal aging treatment called NAD (Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide).

Q: Dr. Williams, what should we know about NAD IV Infusion Therapy?

A: In 2003, I published a book titled, *Prolonging Health*. In the book I show my personal research on how one can extend well-being as we grow older by using the best of natural medicine. This includes NAD, which has been used and studied since the early 1900's.

There are three aging premises currently being followed. The first is medicinal. In standard medicine, the anti-aging disorders are not treated biologically, and often these medicines are aimed at addressing multiple age-related diseases under one umbrella.

The second is prevention. People in developed countries are living longer, but not outside the average lifespan of humans. We're seeing people live 6 to 10 years longer on average, but many times they are sick and have chronic disease states. The costs of health-care are increasing, but we know that we can alleviate much of this by preventing chronic diseases and the degeneration associated with aging through natural "medicine" and treatment protocols.

The third premise is procedural. Research is showing that slowing down the aging process by modifying the cellular responses creates healthier more robust individuals that are able to age well. Even the oldest people in our world that live to 120 years of age are usually frail and suffer from multiple health declining conditions, but with specific integrative approaches, we can alleviate many disorders and help individuals live longer healthier lives.

There are several procedural approaches. We can modify growth hormone, which entails much more than an injection of growth hormones. We also recommend dietary restriction and calorie restriction.



The state of fasting and limiting calories stimulates an increase in protective proteins called sirtuins. Sirtuins help to modulate metabolism and makes the cells less prone to oxidative stress. These sirtuins are dependent on NAD. Currently, there is a substantial amount of research on sirtuins to help fight chronic diseases and the overall aging process.

Another area of research is, of course, in modulating chronic inflammation and keeping glucose levels down. These two processes also influence sirtuins and NAD stimulation.

NAD is an ancient molecular coenzyme found in the body. It improves sirtuin pathways. Years ago, our ancestors, during famine or fasting had to fight off animals and continue to hunt, gather, and take care of their families or tribe. Their molecules were stimulated and triggered by calorie restriction, fasting and the increase in their NAD production.

Today, people who take NAD supplements increase their nicotinic acid or B3 production and metabolism significantly, much more so than what the body can produce. In aging NAD decreases rapidly and therefore, we see deterioration, and various health conditions taking place.

In the early 1900's science took NAD and developed studies showing cellular renewal and DNA repair. They later tried this on fruit flies, worms, monkeys and mice. In recent years there has been a resurgence of NAD interest, and we are seeing multiple trials in humans for various disorders. Studies on the effects of NAD and alcohol withdrawal, schizophrenia, depression, neurodegenerative disease, chronic conditions, and aging are of growing interest.

Different forms of NAD can be taken, and several companies make NAD supplements. Mostly due to the absorption and digestive functionality in the gut, these work well to a certain extent and for limited conditions.

Q: How is IV NAD Infusion different than oral supplementation?

A: We see 50 to 100 people in our infusion center per day. We offer several vitamins, minerals, and pharmaceutical IV treatments. I introduced NAD to our clinic because I had been studying its effects for years. I'd been prescribing it to many of my patients in oral form, but with the revival of NAD in IV infusion therapy, I knew our patients would benefit at a much higher rate if we offered it intravenously. It was offered in a few metropolitan areas, and we were able to track down a high-quality manufacturer and implement it into our protocol here at the clinic.

If you are deficient in vitamin B and you get B12 or B complex injection, you will immediately feel energized. However, if you are not deficient in B vitamins and you take them orally or get an injection, you usually don't feel much of a difference.

With NAD, if you take it orally, you typically don't feel much, but if you get it through IV infusion, there is a big boost in an overall feeling of wellbeing. With myself, and our patients that get NAD IV, the results are immediate. The feeling of being more alert, relaxed, energized, less tired, and healthier is our patient consensus. We can pair it with CoQ10 enzyme or resveratrol for an increase in mitochondrial energy. Mitochondria are the powerhouse inside our cells.

Q: What are some of the specific benefits?

A: NAD regulates how quickly your cells age. With basic cellular metabolic processing, multiple benefits prevail, which include cellular repair, improved nervous system function, reduced pain, arterial healing, improved cognitive function, and muscular conditions to name a few. I've been using it on my patients with Parkinson's disease, and their speech is improving, their mobility is increasing; the results are impressive.

The big question for many people is if our bodies produce it, why do I need to take it? The answer is simple. NAD declines drastically with age. Healthy older adults have more NAD in their cells naturally, but it's still on a decline from our younger selves. Supplementing with NAD is fundamental for ideal aging.

For people who want to be proactive about aging, taking NAD or getting NAD infusions will help to increase the healthspan and promote wellness as they age. For those that are facing illness, chronic disease or other adverse conditions, getting NAD infusions is proving to reverse DNA damage, increase antioxidant intake, modulates inflammation and acts as a neurodegenerative treatment.



This is a life-extending protocol that offers better health. Depending on your specific needs; the treatment protocols will vary. We typically treat patients for a one-week course every other day, once every quarter, or for those with a condition, we might do a 20-day cycle. It varies depending on their availability and their specific needs.

Q: Any last thoughts on NAD?

A: As we discussed, people are living longer, but that doesn't mean healthier. If you want to age well and have less chronic conditions, be independent and reach 100 years or more, you may want to consider NAD infusions along with other healthy lifestyle changes and protocols. We have numerous options, and we tailor each one individually to your particular situation. We offer personalized medicine to help you reach your most optimal healthy aging.

James E. Williams, OMD, LAc is a Fellow of the American Association of Integrative Medicine and is Board Certified in Naturopathic Medicine, and is licensed as an Acupuncture Physician in Florida and California. With over thirty-five years of experience in integrative medicine, he is an internationally known expert on the immune system's role in health, disease, and aging. He is the author of numerous scientific papers and articles on sustainable medicine, ethnobotany, and has written five books including the classic, *Viral Immunity*. He teaches at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Division of Complementary and Integrative Medicine.

Dr. Williams' focus is on Hepatitis C Virus, HHV6, and Epstein-Barr Virus and immune system imbalances including autoimmune disorders, especially chronic fatigue immune deficiency syndrome (CFIDS), MS, and hypothyroidism. He is also experienced in chronic pain and inflammation, which he treats with acupuncture and specialized injection therapies. Dr. Williams not only treats disease, but is dedicated to the personal growth, prolonging health, and high energy aging of his patients. In his purpose driven and results-oriented, evidence-based practice, he provides his patients with a comprehensive plan of organized integrative solutions for even the most confounding conditions.

Getting Well & Staying Healthy Naturally is the philosophy of practice that has earned Florida Integrative Medical Center (FLIMC) the reputation as the premier destination for holistic and integrative health care on the Gulf Coast.

Florida Integrative Medical Center treats the full spectrum of chronic health conditions including: aging, chronic viral illness, immune system regeneration, autoimmune conditions, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, and more. Our diagnostic and treatment services help to promote healthier cells and tissues for a better quality of life by improving energy and promoting overall wellbeing.

To find out more about Florida Integrative Medical Center or to schedule an appointment please contact them today at (941) 955-6220.



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Effective & Proven Chronic Pain Relief with VAX-D®

By Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC

VAX-D, short for Vertebral Axial Decompression, is a patented non-surgical therapy proven to successfully treat chronic low back pain, caused by prolapsed, bulging, herniated or degenerative discs, facet syndrome, stenosis and sciatica. Even post-surgical patients and those suffering from central canal or foraminal stenosis have reported significant pain relief with VAX-D therapy. Over a series of relaxing treatment sessions, patients experience powerful pain reduction and healing. Some patients even notice relief after just one visit.

VAX-D's proven and patented technology is currently being utilized by leading physicians in orthopedic medicine, pain medicine, neurology and other specialties in hundreds of clinics around the world. Many doctors choose VAX-D over other devices because it employs the original, patented technology from which decompression therapy was born. VAX-D effectiveness is backed by clinical research. Back pain has grown to be a \$54 billion industry and has literally become a national epidemic. Due to the astounding array of varied treatment options, finding a back pain solution can be a daunting task. Knowing that a product backs its claims with clinical research makes all the difference, and that is what VAX-D offers. A recently completed 2 1/2 year study has demonstrated that VAX-D achieved a remarkable 88% success rate in the 283 chronic back pain patients studied! The patients selected for the study had been unsuccessful at finding relief with at least two previous non-surgical treatments.

VAX-D is not to be confused with traction. VAX-D lengthens and decompresses the spine, reversing high intradiscal pressure through the application of negative pressure via a patented "slow ramp-up" process. This reversal of pressure creates a vacuum inside the discs that not only takes pressure off of pinched nerves, but helps to reposition bulging discs and pull extruded disc material back into place. Simultaneously, nutrients, oxygen and fluids are drawn into the disc to create a revitalized environment conducive to healing. VAX-D stimulates the body's repair mechanism, providing the building blocks needed to actually mend injured and degenerated discs. VAX-D's process is the only patented treatment clinically proven to decrease disc pressures to the negative levels needed to facilitate healing!

How does VAX-D work?

High intradiscal pressures cause discs to bulge out and press painfully on nerve roots. They also make for a compressed, anaerobic environment unsuitable for healing. Decompression produces and sustains negative pressures within the disc, creating a vacuum effect which draws in nutrients and fluids to promote the repair of injured discs and surrounding tissues. This vacuum has also been shown to aid in the retraction of escaped cushioning gel from herniated discs. Much like gauging the air pressure in a car tire, scientists have been able to use pressure sensors to



measure the various pressures put on spinal discs while lifting, standing, sitting, lying down, undergoing traction, and during VAX-D Therapy. Like other pressures found in the body such as blood pressure, intradiscal pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg). While traction, physical therapy and manipulation may reduce disc pressures to as low as 40mmHg, only VAX-D has been shown to achieve negative pressures within the spine. Clinical studies have shown that, with VAX-D Therapy, negative pressures as low as -160 mmHg* are created within the injured disc during the treatment session!

The key to the "distraction" of VAX-D is achieved through an intricately timed series of pulls, holds, and releases over the course of a treatment session. VAX-D's biofeedback system adjusts this curve of tension specifically to each patient's needs, making every session a truly individualized treatment.

VAX-D Therapy involves three phases that repeat fifteen times throughout a treatment session: the Decompression Phase, the Retraction Phase, and finally, the Rest Phase. During the Decompression Phase, tension slowly mounts, lengthening the spine; up to 99 pounds of tension may be exerted directly on the injured discs. This is where spinal pressures drop and decompression actually occurs. During the Retraction Phase, tension is slowly decreased and the spine is retracted slowly. This is followed by a short Rest Phase.

Is VAX-D Right for Me?

You may be a candidate for VAX-D if:

- You have chronic and/or severe back and/or neck pain caused by bulging or herniated discs. Degenerative disc disease, sciatica, and/or facet syndrome.
- You have been diagnosed with a clinically unstable low back.
- You have failed back surgery syndrome.
- You have been told to consider surgery.

Many patients have experienced more than a 50% reduction in pain after their first treatment! For those suffering from herniated and degenerated discs, the escaped nucleus pulposus may be partially or completely retracted back into the disc after just the first session (though usually it takes longer), relieving a great deal of pain. However, pain reduction does not indicate full recovery, and a full

recovery is essential to preventing re-injury. Each treatment session lasts approximately 45 minutes. A typical VAX-D treatment regimen consists of about 20 sessions. Some conditions require fewer visits; some require more. Many patients report relief from their pain and other symptoms during the first few treatment sessions, and most experience dramatic pain relief after completion of their prescribed VAX-D Therapy program.

VAX-D therapy is a non-surgical procedure to reduce pain by decompressing your spine and reducing the stress and pressure on your discs and spinal nerves. Contact Dr. Craig Aderholdt, at 941-756-5528 for a **free consultation** to see if you are a candidate for this revolutionary procedure. We hope you enjoy the information within and share it with others.

Contact Dr. Aderholdt today to find out if you can finally relieve your pain and suffering with this proven safe and effective nonsurgical breakthrough for neck and back pain.

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Dr. Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC



At Back Pain Institute of West Florida, located in Bradenton, FL, our number one concern is to help our patients with a natural approach to pain treatment. Dr. Craig Aderholdt, BSc, DC, received his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania

State University State College, and his Doctor of Chiropractic from life University School of Chiropractic in Marietta, GA. He then later graduated Cum Laude.

Dr. Aderholdt also holds certification in chiropractic adjunctive physiotherapy from New York Chiropractic College and completed extensive postgraduate training in therapeutic modalities at National-Lincoln School. He is a member of the Florida Chiropractic Association and American Chiropractic Association and is a certified VAX-D consultant. He was also voted a Bradenton Herald People's Choice Awards Winner for 2008 and is the Manatee Herald-Tribune Awards winner for 2015, 2016 and is the Sarasota Herald-Tribune Awards winner for 2019.



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GAINSWave is Making Headlines Due to its Ability to Prevent & Treat ED

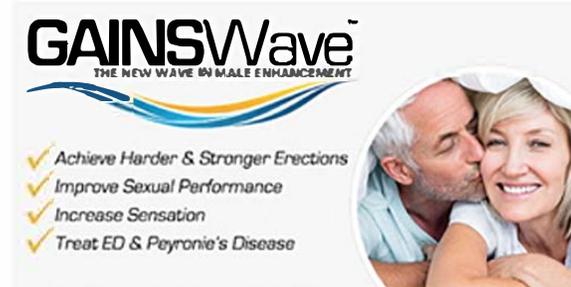
By Dr. David S. Zamikoff

With remarkable outcomes, GAINSWave is growing in popularity in regard to treating erectile dysfunction (ED) and Peyronies Disease, yet it's also used as a preventative treatment. GAINSWave treatment is available for any man looking to enhance sexual health and performance. A medical condition like ED or Peyronies disease does not have to be present for men to benefit. In fact, many healthy men without an issue opt for treatment to "biohack" or optimize their performance as a prevention method.¹

How Can GAINSWave Prevent & Treat ED?

The GAINSWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINSWave uses scientifically proven technology through soundwaves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. These soundwaves or 'shockwaves' also are beneficial in preventing the buildup of plaque and increasing blood vessel growth and circulation. Traditional treatments for ED, such as pills or injections, lose effectiveness over time and have to be used every time a man wants to engage in sexual activity. GAINSWave helps men to feel like themselves again and to enjoy their lives.

GAINSWave utilizes high frequency, low-intensity soundwaves to improve blood flow to the penis, remove micro-plaque, and stimulates the growth of



new blood vessels. GAINSWave uses a specific protocol designed to optimize efficacy, safety, and results. Over 80% of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) issues are caused by reduced blood flow. GAINSWave has developed a protocol to treat ED and Peyronies disease (scar tissue) as well as enhance sexual performance.

Younger Men Should Seek Treatment Early

Men who are just beginning to see ED warning indicators should seek the earliest treatment possible. The reason is that it has been well documented that if early diagnosis and treatment are started when a man is younger (the 30s, 40s, 50s) there is an increased chance that the ED will very likely no longer need medical treatment and their arteriosclerosis can dissipate. There have been multiple peer-reviewed studies that indicate that GAINSWave treatment can potentially cure ED in some patients. The sooner you intervene with treatment, the better your outcome will be.

Men are Preventing ED with GAINSWave

Many men are now understanding the importance of this technology and how it can benefit them in the long term. GAINSWave offers immediate results that are cumulative. Much like living a healthy lifestyle, starting GAINSWave treatments early is another way men can be proactive about their health.

SEEK EARLY TREATMENT & DON'T JUST MASK YOUR SYMPTOMS—TREAT THE ROOT CAUSE!

Source: GainesWave
<https://www.biospace.com/article/releases/mobility-spine-and-sports-is-helping-men-wave-goodbye-to-erectile-dysfunction-with-cutting-edge-gainswave-treatment/>

Natural Healing Arts Medical Center

Dr. David Zamikoff and Natural Healing Arts Medical Center - a professional Bradenton Chiropractic and Medical office. In practice as well as online, Bradenton Florida 34209 chiropractor Dr. Zamikoff strives for excellence through superior patient treatment, education and satisfaction.

To schedule your consultation, please call **(941) 761-4994** or visit myofficeinfo.com.



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Freedom Rehab Aquatic Therapy and Balance Center—New Clinic—New Therapies

1. Are you searching for answers to your health problems?
2. Have you tried everything to reduce pain?
3. Are you getting weaker?
4. Are you worried about falls and safety at home?
5. Are you wondering what exercises you could do at home?

If you've answered yes to any of these questions, then FREEDOM REHAB AQUATIC THERAPY AND BALANCE CENTER has some simple solutions that will allow you to stay healthy and safe while you adjust to your new stay at home reality.

What is Aquatic Therapy?

Aquatic therapy is a beneficial exercise and rehabilitative program performed in a pool, and can help various medical conditions by reducing pain, improving balance and increasing strength and range of motion.

Benefits of Aquatic Therapy

1. Water reduces weight bearing on your joints and spine making exercise pain free and enjoyable.
2. Our talented staff are skilled, licensed therapists that will focus your total body exercise program to reduce your pain
3. Our aquatic therapy program will improve your endurance, muscle strength and balance

Back Pain

We at Freedom Rehab Aquatic Therapy AND BALANCE CENTER, believe the water's properties are perfectly suited to treat back pain. When you are in chest deep water you are only 20% weightbearing on your spine. This makes exercising your back muscles pain free and enjoyable. We target the core heavily in our deep water segment of our program while the patient is wearing a floatation belt and holding dumbbells. If needed a gentle spinal traction can be applied thus decreasing the pressure between the vertebrae often present in the spine.

Balance Program in the Water

We believe strongly in the benefits of addressing balance in the water. When performing traditional land based balance exercises in the water the risk of

injury is not present. If you fall on land you may incur injuries such as a hip fracture. In the water, not only are you supported with a floatation belt, you have the safety of the water if you lose your balance. If you stumble you will simply get wet. Our therapists can identify at risk patients and provide hands on assistance when needed.

Land-Based Balance Program

Freedom Rehab Aquatic Therapy and Balance Center has heard the calls of the community and we are rolling out our solution with our *land-based balance program Freedom from Falls*. Our Freedom from Falls Program entails a cutting edge and scientifically backed balance training program that is designed to target the three balance centers of your body; your eyes, ears, and feet.

With the Freedom From Falls Program you can:

- Stay home as long as you desire and age in place
- Stay out of the hospital and nursing home
- Give your friends and family peace of mind
- Restore your confidence and hope for a healthy future
- Give you a stronger body, better balance and improved endurance for everyday activities

Bad Ragaz Ring Method

Developed in Switzerland, the Bad Ragaz Method is a technique where the therapist supports the patient through a series of flowing movements and stretches designed to induce deep relaxation, increase range of motion, increase mobility of myofascial tissues and improve muscle function. The technique is based on proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF).

The patient's extremities, neck and trunk are supported with a floatation device. The "ring" portion of the name of this water therapy technique

refers to the ring-shaped flotation devices used to support the client as they move across the water's surface. During the session, the client is lying supine in waist- or shoulder-deep water.

Out of a Pandemic, a New Therapy is Created!

Outpatient on Wheels

Freedom Rehab Aquatic Therapy and Balance Center was conducting business from the YMCA in Port Charlotte. On March 10th the YMCA closed its doors due to the pandemic. We were left without a pool! I knew there was a need out there for therapy, what were our deconditioned and frail patients going to do? The media was reporting a prediction of several months of isolation. So I decided to open a homecare division that I called our Outpatient on Wheels Program. Within two weeks of the shutdown we had a couple of dozen patients. As you can imagine this was only a small percent of what we were used to, but it prevented me from having to shut my business down completely. We designed the program to include aquatic therapy in the home, adapted our *Freedom From Falls* program for the home, used our therapist's vast experience and offered home safety training, energy conservation training and of course did ambulation and strengthening with our patients. They say something good comes out of everything. I never would have started the Outpatient on Wheels Program had this not happened. Not only did we serve the community, but I added a whole new revenue stream into my business that I had not intended on and will continue to grow. We are in phase two now, so things are getting back to normal.

Freedom Rehab Aquatic Therapy and Balance Center New Clinic Limited Time Special For Those Who Qualify:

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Hydrating Your Soul

By Ross Johnson, Lead Pastor, Gathering Pointe Church

It was sometime during the summer of 2001. We had just moved our family from LaCrosse, WI where I served as a youth pastor for almost five years to Sellersville, PA to begin my Master of Divinity degree at Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary. I had about a month and a half of free time before my new job and classes started, so we decided to travel back to my home town of Council Bluffs, Iowa to see my parents. At that time, my father was running his small general contracting business and had several roofs to finish before the winter months began. So we went back to help him finish those roofs and make some extra money.

I had just turned 29 in June; obviously much younger than I am now...and in considerable better shape and condition (the last seventeen years haven't been kind!). Years before, I had worked with my dad for a few years roofing so I knew what I was getting into. If you have ever done that line of work, you know it is not the easiest job in the world and while I was in pretty good shape, I wasn't in "roofing" shape.

If my memory serves me correct, were finishing up our fourth roof in three and half weeks of work. It was getting later in the day, it was hot and humid with little to no breeze and I just wasn't feeling well. I told my dad that I wasn't feeling well and thought it might be a good idea for me to get off the roof for a while. Little did I know that when I climbed down



off the ladder that day, I would no longer be able to help him finish; not just that roof, but the remaining roofs he had left.

The next thing I remember, my wife was helping me get out of my truck in front of my sister's house. I don't remember driving home and I had blacked out in the street with the truck still running. I have only two more memories of that day. I remember my brother in law helping me into a cold shower to help cool my core temperature and then I remember waking up in the hospital with all kinds of tubes, IV's plugged into me and ice packs placed all over my body. I was told that when I arrived at the hospital that my core body temp had reached closed to 107 degrees. I had suffered a severe exertional heat stroke due to strenuous activity in hot weather and dehydration. It was not a good situation and quite honestly, I was pretty scared.

Since that day, I have taken the topic of hydration much more serious. Dehydration is a serious issue that can creep up on you extremely quick and have

life altering ramifications. The Mayo Clinic's website informs us that one of the causes of heat stroke is dehydration and can cause your brain or other vital organs to swell, possibly resulting in permanent damage and without prompt and adequate treatment, can lead to death.

As dangerous as physical dehydration can be...I want to close out our time in this article to discuss another type of dehydration – that of spiritual dehydration.

During the summer months it is quite natural for families to take time for travel and family vacations. It is part of life...one that we all look forward to. But as a pastor, I fear many of us take a spiritual vacation as well. It is easy in the midst of our traveling and time away to rehydrate our physical lives to neglect our spiritual lives and become spiritually dehydrated. We miss church. We miss community. We miss those quite moments in our Bible reading and prayer.

In Psalm 42:1-2, the Psalmist writes, "As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." The Psalmist had a deep desire to have his spiritual thirst quenched by the things of God. He was in a rough spot in this period of his life and he knew it would be easy to become spiritually dehydrated and so he sought out the life giving streams that flow from the presence of God.

During the remaining weeks of summer be sure to stay hydrated; hydrate your body and hydrate your soul. Drink plenty of water. But perhaps more important, stay connected to our Heavenly Father and drink in His presence and blessings.

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