



Desert Health[®]

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

May/June 2014

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BEATING MS & Other Autoimmune Diseases

Terry Wahls, MD, is an Assistant Chief of Staff at Iowa City VA Health Care and clinical professor of medicine at the University of Iowa. She has practiced medicine for over 30 years and is board-certified in internal medicine.

Like most physicians, Dr. Wahls treated her patients' ailments with drugs and surgical procedures, until she herself was diagnosed with primary progressive multiple sclerosis in 2000, and conventional medicine began to fail her.

Even though she was working with top specialists in the field at the Cleveland Clinic and had tried numerous medications, by 2007 she was confined to a recliner or bed and could walk only a few steps with two canes.

As a decorated athlete in her youth, Dr. Wahls could not accept what her life had become and throughout her decline continued to research and look for answers. She focused on animal studies that had not yet progressed to human trial related to brain biology, biochemistry, and autoimmune disease. She tried dietary changes, adding meat and Paleo principles after being a vegetarian for twenty years, and supplements based on specific nutrients she had identified that are commonly

lacking in those with autoimmune diseases such as MS.

She added electrical stimulation therapy (e-stim) after researching this protocol as used on paralysis due to acute spinal injury, and eliminated toxins from her environment.

Her decline slowed, and in November of 2007, her online research led her to the Institute for Functional Medicine. Functional medicine differs from mainstream medicine in its willingness to employ treatments which may not be well evidenced by clinical research.¹ Its goal is to provide clinicians with a better way to care for people with complex chronic disease by looking at the interaction between genetics, diet, hormone balance, toxin exposure, infections and psychological factors which contribute to the development of disease or improvement of one's health and vitality.²

"Although it wasn't the way I was trained," says Wahls, "it made sense to me. It was all logical and scientifically supported, so it resonated with me as a doctor, but it also fit into the context of my experience as an MS patient."

She learned that she could improve the condition of

Continued on page 16



Terry Wahls, MD: From wheelchair to wellness through nutrition and exercise



Health is a Choice

Health is a choice, but when access to health care is a challenge, that choice can become a luxury. For some, the choice comes down to a dental filling for your child or food on the table; a pair of glasses for your spouse or paying rent; a doctor's appointment co-pay or bus fare for the week.

The Affordable Care Act is working to change that, but experts estimate that in 2024 when the ACA is fully implemented, there will still be 31 million without insurance they can afford (for more on this see page 7).

To ease that burden and offer a bit of relief to Valley residents in need, California CareForce and Goldenvoice have established an annual

4-day free medical clinic entitled the Coachella Valley Expedition. This past April, over 500 health care professionals came together with over 700 general volunteers to provide close to 2,000 people with over \$900,000 in medical, dental, vision, acupuncture, and chiropractic care.

For Goldenvoice, it is a way to give back to the local people and community that support their world-renowned festivals; for California CareForce, an extension of the California Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, it is the first in many they hope to do statewide; for the over 1,200 volunteers who turned out, the work was rewarding and uplifting; and for the 1,964

Continued on page 10



Mayor Pro Tem Sam Torres welcomes CVE to Indio and is fit for new pair of glasses



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Feeling Grateful



When amazing things come together with great ease, you know they were meant to be. And with awareness, you become overwhelmed with gratitude.

A year ago, I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Terry Wahls and to hear her incredible story. I knew we had to feature her in *Desert Health*®, and planned it for this issue. Little did I know that this timing would present the opportunity to bring her to the Desert for both a public and a clinicians' presentation – at no cost to attendees. Over 1.6 million have viewed her Tedx Talk, and she has thousands of followers and hundreds of success stories for *The Wahls Protocol*.

If you know anyone with an autoimmune deficiency – or who treats those who do – please encourage them to attend this life-changing event.

I feel the same gratitude towards the growth of integrated health care here in the Valley, and with this issue, we are proud to welcome a new column by Jeralyn Brossfield, MD: *The Paradigm Shift in Medicine Today*. Her first editorial features her presentation to Eisenhower's Trustees and Board of Directors on the necessity of incorporating wellness in the medical center's business model.

One organization which knows the power of integrated health care

is Desert AIDS Project, and to share the perspective of those affected, we welcome Steve Bolerjack in *Living with HIV*.

I also feel amazingly grateful for the large number of you who are making personal choices to improve your own health. Our past issue on *Wheat Belly* was so well-received, we brought on nutritionist Tiffany Dalton to provide you with tips and ideas in *Gluten-Free with Tiffany*.

In researching our lead feature on MS, I found Act for MS, the Desert's only support organization for locals affected with this condition (see page 25). I would be remiss not to mention this wonderful organization and its many inspiring members. The large number of serendipitous events that occurred between us introduced me to many of them, and makes the opportunity to bring Dr. Wahls to our Valley that much more special for me.

We hope you find many inspiring and informational words on our pages. Thank you so very much for reading *Desert Health*®. Please keep your calls and messages coming.

We love hearing from you!

With appreciation ~

Lauren
Lauren Del Sarto
Publisher

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@

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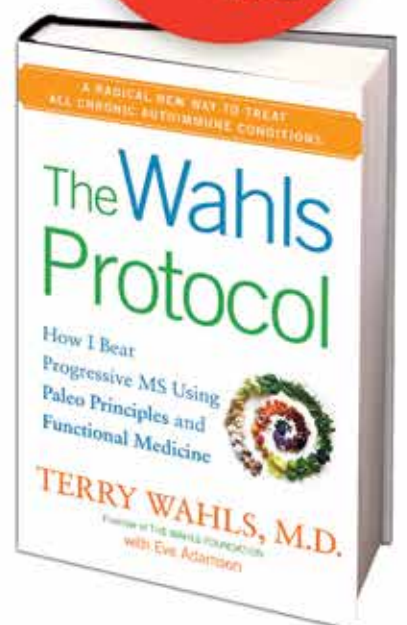
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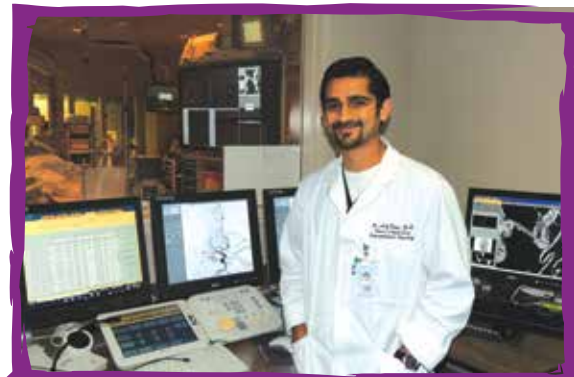
May is Stroke Awareness Month

Are you aware of how lucky we are?

By Lauren Del Sarto

Randal Bonnell of Banning went to bed at 11:30pm on a Thursday night and awoke the next morning with half his body paralyzed. His wife, Vickie, heard a noise around 4:45am and realized that her 55 year-old husband had fallen out of bed. Although he said he felt fine, Randall wasn't speaking clearly and couldn't lift his arm. Recognizing the signs of stroke, Vickie dialed 911.

Although there were closer hospitals, Vickie, an occupational therapist, knew that Desert Regional Medical Center had a state-of-the-art stroke center and requested that he be taken there instead.



The Valley is lucky to have Dr. Asif Taqi and his expert team at Desert Regional's high-tech Stroke Center

Upon arrival, they met Dr. Asif Taqi and his team of neuroscience professionals. Because they couldn't identify the exact time of Randall's stroke, he was not a candidate for IV-tPA, medication that when administered within 3 hours of a stroke can minimize, and even reverse, damage. However, using the Stroke Center's advanced neuroimaging, Dr. Taqi was able to promptly identify a significant area of Randall's brain that was still salvageable if the clot could be removed by a thrombectomy, a procedure that goes through the groin artery into the brain and removes the clot to potentially reverse the happening stroke.

Randal underwent an emergency thrombectomy in Desert Regional's advanced bi-plane angiosuite which proved successful. His speech and mobility were restored.

"We used to have only three hours to treat a stroke in hopes of restoring full capacity," says Dr. Taqi. "This technology has given us a much longer window to reverse the effects of stroke."

Dr. Taqi, the director of neurointervention and critical care neurology, is one of the many neuro sub-specialists the hospital has brought on board. This talent, coupled with the new technology, has earned Desert Regional's Stroke Center the designation of a Stroke Receiving Center by the Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA). Desert Regional is also the Advanced Intervention Stroke Center for Riverside Emergency Medical Services Agency (REMSA). As such, they are now receiving critical care patients from a larger region and saving more lives.

As May is Stroke Awareness Month, it is important to be aware of the fact that we have this service in our own backyard. *And this makes us lucky*, as many of the 795,000 Americans who suffered a stroke last year alone did not get the proper lifesaving treatment in time.

Dr. Taqi and his team understand that education and awareness are key when it comes to saving lives from strokes. "Only 1% of stroke victims are receiving IVtPA in this community, and the national average is 7%, which means that 6% of locals who suffer a stroke are not receiving timely and maximum care," he says. "This is mostly due to lack of education in the community on recognizing the signs and symptoms of stroke in a timely fashion."

He adds that educating first responders like EMS and emergency room staff is also important. Dr. Taqi hopes to change these stats and keeps busy speaking with community and medical groups to spread the word on the signs of stroke and the technology now available to save lives.

The three areas of education on which they focus are prevention; acute treatment (IV-tPA and thrombectomy); and recovery from a completed stroke (rehabilitation). They have also established a Neurointervention Fellowship which will train one to two fellows a year at Desert Regional. Their first fellow graduates this year.

Taqi and his team are also hosting the First Annual Neurovascular Symposium to be held May 31 at the Riviera Hotel in Palm Springs. In addition to their Desert Regional Medical Center team, the symposium will feature neurosurgeons, neurologists, radiologists and other stroke experts from throughout the country to educate attendees on the many advances that have been made in stroke awareness, diagnosis and treatment.

"Stroke care has changed drastically in the past decade," he states. "Ten years ago, there was nothing available for acute care; and the treatment was to give patients an aspirin and see what happened." He adds that five years ago it used to take several hours to remove a clot from the brain. "Now it takes us as little as 20 minutes to open the arteries."

During this symposium, he and his team hope to educate local medical professionals on how to better diagnose a stroke patient; the advanced stroke treatments available based on scientific data; and how and where to properly triage and treat patients.

More than ever before, he adds, stroke is treatable, and potentially reversible if a patient gets the proper care in a timely manner. "It's not uncommon now to have patients arrive unable to walk and talk, and get discharged home with minimal or no deficits."

No one knows that better than Randal and Vickie Bonnell. "Dr. Taqi is our hero," said Vickie, who remained close to her husband in the ICU for six days and then following in acute rehab. "He would stop and speak with us in the halls, and just seemed like an old friend. It was a challenging time for us, and his knowledge, expertise and friendly personality put us at ease through the entire process."

"Vickie is the real hero," says Dr. Taqi, "because she recognized the signs of stroke and knew what to do."

Desert Regional Medical Center's Stroke Center can be reached at (760) 323.6511. For more information on the First Annual Neurovascular Symposium, contact Toni Rowe at (760) 323.6563 or visit <http://drmcmedstaff.org/event/2014-palm-springs-neurology-symposium>.

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OH! My Back! *What Do I Do Now?*

By Alan Eldridge, PT, DPT, OCS

Bending forward to put on shoes, a quick reach to catch a falling pencil, or even simply rolling over in bed. Typically, the onset of new low back pain is initiated by a seemingly harmless activity; all of a sudden you go from high functioning to debilitating pain.

As you begin to contemplate skipping work or missing your exercise routine, the notion of when you should go see a doctor typically runs through your head. Is this something that will go away on its own? Will pain relievers make it go away and allow me to return to my daily tasks? How long should I be resting?

Let's take a look at all the standard options, starting with the wait and see approach. It is important to realize that approximately 80% of individuals will have low back pain at some point in their life, with only 1-2% requiring surgery and 5% progressing to chronic low back pain (pain for over three months). Common risk factors for the progression of acute low back pain to chronic pain include fear avoidance, or avoiding movement due to fear of increasing pain. However, studies show that the earlier one begins movement and exercise, the earlier they can return to their desired activities.

Next, let's examine the option of visiting a medical provider for low back pain. Low back pain is the second most common reason to see a medical provider in the United States - just behind the common cold. Observation of treatment of individuals with low back pain shows a wide variety of treatment including prescribing medications, ordering imaging, referring to a specialist, and prescribing time off work and rest. Again, exercise has been shown to be the most effective treatment, and the earlier the exercise is performed, the better the overall outcome. Avoiding exercise and movement while waiting for provider appointments, injections and/or pain medication, referrals to specialists, and imaging may delay the patient in receiving optimal and timely treatment. Physical therapy by a qualified practitioner may be an effective option while waiting for these ancillary services.

So, let's examine the physical therapy approach. A doctor of physical therapy follows a clinical prediction rule when working with individuals for new low back pain to determine which types of treatment will work best for each individual. Based on how you present your symptoms, your therapist will be able to determine if mobilizing and stretching your back, strengthening the supporting musculature around your back, and/or developing a conditioning program is best for you. All treatment options are designed to avoid bed rest and get you back to work, back to exercise, or back to lifting your children or grandchildren.

Starting in 2014, the physical therapy practice in California has changed. If you are a Medicare patient you can now see a doctor of physical therapy at the onset of your back pain. There is no longer any reason you have to wait to see your physical therapy movement specialist to get on the road to a quick and efficient recovery.

Alan Eldridge is a Board Certified Orthopedic Specialist with the Avid Physical Therapy clinics of the Coachella Valley. He also works with the Loma Linda Orthopedic Residency Program and has conducted several areas of research that have been presented at the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) annual conference. Alan can be reached at (760) 202.0368 or aeldridge@avidphysicaltherapy.com.

Sources: 1) Delitto et al. Clinical Practice Guidelines Linked to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health From the Orthopaedic Section of the American Physical Therapy Association (J Orthop Sports Phys Ther 2012;42(4):A1-A57. doi:10.2519/jospt.2012.0301); 2) Childs J, Flynn T, Wainner R. Pain. Do the Right Thing and do it Now. Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy, 2012, Volume: 42 Issue: 4 Pages: 296-299 doi:10.2519/jospt.2012.0105

Living with Diabetes

Brought to you by the Joslin Diabetes Center, Boston, Mass., and the Joslin Diabetes Center Affiliate at Desert Regional Medical Center

What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is a chronic condition in which the body fails to properly use and store glucose. Formerly called ‘adult-onset’ or ‘non insulin-dependent’, Type 2 diabetes results when the body doesn’t produce enough insulin and/or is unable to use insulin properly (insulin resistance). This form of diabetes usually occurs in people who are over 40 years of age, overweight, and have a family history of diabetes, although today it is increasingly found in younger people.

What are the symptoms of type 2 diabetes?

Common symptoms include extreme thirst, frequent urination, blurry vision, irritability, tingling or numbness in the hands or feet, frequent skin, bladder or gum infections, wounds that don’t heal and extreme unexplained fatigue.

Who gets type 2 diabetes?

Risk factors include obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and physical inactivity. Diabetes is more common among Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders. Also, women who develop diabetes while pregnant (a condition called gestational diabetes) are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes later in life.

How is type 2 diabetes treated?

Type 2 diabetes is often treated with oral medication because many people with this type of diabetes make some insulin on their own. The pills people take to control type 2 diabetes do not contain insulin; instead, these medications are used to make the insulin that the body still produces more effective.

Some people with type 2 diabetes are treated with insulin injected with a syringe

several times per day or delivered via an insulin pump. The goal of insulin therapy is to mimic the way the pancreas would produce and distribute its own insulin, if it were able to manufacture it.

One of the key factors in Joslin’s treatment of diabetes is tight blood glucose control to get blood glucose readings as close to normal as safely possible.

What kind of complications are people with diabetes susceptible to?

Blood travels throughout your body, and when too much glucose (sugar) is present, it disrupts the normal environment that the organ systems function within. If this problem—caused by a variety of factors—is left untreated, it can lead to a number of damaging complications such as heart attacks, strokes, blindness, kidney failure, and blood vessel disease that may require an amputation, nerve damage, and impotence in men.

The good news is that prevention plays an important role in warding off these complications. By maintaining tight control of your blood glucose, you’ll help your body function in the way that it would if you did not have diabetes.

Can diabetes be prevented?

Research has shown that there are some ways of preventing type 2 diabetes, or at least delaying its onset. Lifestyle changes such as becoming more active - or staying active - and making sure your weight stays in a healthy range are two ways to help ward off type 2 diabetes.

The Joslin Diabetes Center Affiliate at Desert Regional Medical Center provides a variety of diabetes self-management education programs. For more information about classes, individual training, and community programs such as Just A Start, please call (760) 323.6881.

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Patients Benefit From In-Office Testing CLIA labs offer more accurate assessment and rapid diagnosis

By Greg Evans, OD

CLIA, short for Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments, is a federal regulatory body that oversees laboratory processes and testing on humans. It also grants waivers for testing that may be done in-office. There are hundreds of CLIA waived tests utilized by different specialties to provide better care, and it is important that these tests be performed correctly, by trained personnel, and in an environment where good laboratory practices are followed. CLIA registered practices are overseen by the CLIA regulatory body.

In the eye care industry, the newest test to obtain a CLIA waiver is called InflammDry (March 2014), which is good news for those suffering with dry eye. InflammDry is an immunoassay test that detects elevated levels of matrix metalloproteinase 9 (MMP9), an inflammatory marker that is typically elevated in patients with ocular inflammation associated with dry eye. It can also be elevated in other disease processes and we expect it to be approved for other diseases such as seasonal allergic conjunctivitis and chemical/contact conjunctivitis. The test requires only a small sample of tears and takes less than 2 minutes to perform. Results are available within ten minutes, allowing a treatment plan to be established on a patient's initial visit (as compared to waiting for lab results).

There are a number of other tests utilized in eye care that are CLIA-waived and can be performed in-office including:

- RPS Adeo Detector – infectious agent antigen detection for adenovirus (pink eye)
- Tear Osmolarity – tear salt concentration for dry eye testing (elevated osmolarity correlates well with dry eyes)

- Tear lactoferrin – elevated in evaporative dry eye
- Tear IgE (immunoglobulin E) – elevated in allergy mediated inflammation

Other in-office tests often used by your eye doctor include Hemoglobin A1c for eye care practices related to diabetic eye disease, and light microscopes to differentiate fungal versus bacterial eye infections.

The advantages to all these tests are that they can provide a more accurate assessment and rapid diagnosis, usually right in the office. For example when using these tests, your doctor is able to diagnose your red eye as pink eye (non-responsive to antibiotics) versus a bacterial virus. If viral in etiology you will be better served with a treatment plan that avoids antibiotics. It also saves patients money since the in office test costs about \$15, typically far less expensive than antibiotics.

For allergy cases, in-office testing allows the doctor to rule out infectious disease and prescribe anti-inflammatories or allergy medication. Both prevent the inadvertent use (or overuse) of antibiotics.

Individual practices must apply for and obtain a CLIA lab license prior to performing these tests. They must also follow particular guidelines and record keeping when performing them. Most insurances cover these tests when used for a specific diagnosis; a practice cannot bill Medicare or insurances without first being CLIA- approved practice. There are over 400 different CLIA waived tests and over 25 branches of medicine are affected.

Dr. Evans is the founding owner of Evans Eye Care in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 674.8806 or online at www.evanseyecare.com.



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DR. DAVID S. JOHNSON



Dr. Johnson, I have had GERD for twenty years and have taken PPIs (proton pump inhibitors) for many of those years. However, last year my symptoms returned and my physician doubled my dose. I'm still having issues today and think it might be time to consider surgery on my valve. I would really like to learn more. I don't want my symptoms to get worse and I am very afraid of getting Barrett's or cancer in the future.

Dear GERD Sufferer:

This is a topic I am discussing more and more frequently with my patients. The "valve" you describe is the lower esophageal sphincter (LES), which is a muscle designed to keep the contents of your stomach from reaching the esophagus. Unfortunately, when the valve becomes damaged or weak, its barrier function fails, creating regurgitation that is often accompanied by significant pain.

I'm sure you know by now that medications only reduce acid reflux symptoms; they do not stop reflux and cannot stop the progression of your disease. Since GERD (acid reflux) is a problem with the anatomy of the esophagus, only a surgical treatment can honestly stop both the symptoms and the progression of the disease. Fortunately, there are some very good choices you can consider.

Nissen Fundoplication. This is considered the "gold standard" of surgical antireflux therapy. A Nissen restores the function of the LES by wrapping a portion of the upper stomach loosely around the LES. It is performed under general anesthesia using minimally invasive techniques. It requires several small incisions and typically a one-day hospital stay. This operation stops the reflux in approximately 80%+ of patients and eliminates the need for medications. Side effects include swallowing difficulty (< 5%), bloating (10-20%), and the inability to belch and vomit (30%). However, this procedure has a very high patient satisfaction rate around 90%.

LINX Reflux Management System. This procedure places a ring with magnetized titanium beads around the failed LES. This 30-minute procedure is also minimally invasive and can be reversed if necessary. A recent study found 85% eliminated PPI use after 3 to 5 years, and 94% would recommend the procedure. Only 2% reported swallowing difficulty (which is easily amended). This procedure cannot be performed for anyone with a moderate to large hiatal hernia and there are no studies to validate long-term effectiveness.

TIF and Stretta. These two procedures do not require surgical incisions since the esophagus is accessed via the mouth. TIF is similar to a traditional Nissen in that a portion of the stomach is wrapped around the LES. Stretta uses radiofrequency energy delivered via a catheter to stimulate the fibers in the LES muscle. The long-term effectiveness of these two procedures is still being evaluated; however, the lack of any surgical incisions is very attractive to many.

Finally, your concern about the potential for serious complications and a reduced quality of life from GERD should lead you to learn more about proven surgical options to stop reflux.

Dr. Johnson welcomes your questions and can be reached at (760) 424.8224. For more information, visit www.palmspringsdesertsurgeons.com or www.RefluxMD.com where there is an abundance of information on GERD and antireflux surgical procedures.

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LIVING with HIV

By Steve Bolerjack



Desert AIDS Project

The Coachella Valley has two prominent demographic characteristics: a larger-than-average senior population and one of the highest per capita rates of persons living with HIV/AIDS. You may know one of those people, whether they know their status or not. Nationally, one in five people who have HIV are unaware of it; that rate is likely higher in our area.

HIV has long been associated with gay men, and we do comprise a significant portion of the Valley's senior population. But that doesn't mean that all older gay men here are HIV-positive; nor does it mean anyone with HIV is by definition an older gay man. In fact, rates of HIV infection around the Valley are increasingly alarming among Hispanics, young and older alike. This may be due to lack of information; religious, social and cultural stigma; misperception of risk level; limited access to health care; and combinations of those factors. Certainly, younger gay men remain a high risk group, but uninformed, risky sexual activity among heterosexual minorities, youths and yes, seniors, is a significant concern and is driving up infection rates.

I've lived with and written about HIV for more than 25 years (which still amazes me). I had no symptoms until around 1995, making it just under the wire to benefit from the first medications, indeed to survive. HIV treatments continue to be refined today. They came too late for the earliest victims, but have since saved hundreds of thousands of people.

Still, living with HIV as a "manageable" chronic condition, utterly reliant on those medications and bound to a regular schedule of bloodwork, checkups and drug side-effects, can be daunting. Adherence to the meds schedule is crucial. And over time, they still may fail or create cumulative, intolerable side-effects that require a

change of the regimen. The virus can mutate. One is never cured, only managed.

I'm also one of the baby boomers who comprise the largest group in the U.S. living with HIV. We never expected to be geriatric guinea pigs. No one ever got old with HIV before and no one is sure what to expect. There is rapidly accumulating evidence that simply living with HIV over time, ingesting drugs which are relatively new and therefore untested over long periods, may accelerate aging processes. Premature organ function problems and cognitive issues in some patients have been connected to both the virus and the meds. "Aging with HIV" is now a major section of HIV publications.

Desert AIDS Project is an excellent local resource for HIV information, offering free and confidential HIV testing on a regular basis at a variety of locations. Check its website at desertaidsproject.org. D.A.P. is the lead partner on Get Tested Coachella Valley that President Clinton recently praised as "a public/private partnership creating positive change." It's the nation's first region-wide HIV testing effort, encouraging everyone to know their status and, if HIV positive, become connected to care.

D.A.P. has many clients of all genders and ages for whom HIV diagnosis was the biggest surprise of their lives. Manageable disease or not, if you are uninfected, trust me, you want to do all you can to stay that way.

Desert AIDS Project takes a holistic approach to health providing primary and HIV-specialty medical and dental care, as well as complementary therapies such as reiki, acupuncture, and yoga, and support services like food, housing, and behavioral health counseling. For more information visit desertaidsproject.org.

Improvement Takes Practice... Especially with Stroke

By Stacy Hennis, PT

May is National Stroke Awareness Month. Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death with approximately 795,000 strokes occurring annually according to the National Stroke Association. These are big numbers, but there is good news. Despite the damage to brain cells, there is room for improvement, thanks to neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to rewire itself for improvement, no matter how long it's been since the stroke.

To illustrate this principle of neuroplasticity, I'd like to share a story about a man (we will call him Ben) who has been recovering from a stroke five years ago. Ben has atrial fibrillation, an irregular heartbeat which can increase the risk of stroke by five times. His stroke occurred in the right side of his brain, affecting the left side of his body. He doesn't use his left arm in functional movement and wasn't able to move it at all by himself for the first 3 years.

Ben spends hours each night thinking about his arm moving. He thinks about it, visualizes it, and attempts to move it. Each year, he has been able to do a little bit more. In this year alone, he is now able to lift his arm from beside him on or off his lap. He can move his fingers up and down and can squeeze something in his hand. He can move his wrist up and down and is starting to be able to move his forearm to rotate it palm up or down. He can slide his hand up and down his thigh – all improvements within five years after his stroke.

This is the perfect example of neuroplasticity. The brain can make new pathways, new connections, in response to behavior and environment. The new pathways take a lot of repetition, which requires several hours a day of physical therapy. Ben practices for a couple of hours a day minimum, and his body responds.

Unfortunately, in our health care system, stroke survivors get intensive therapy initially after the stroke, then are left on their own to continue their recovery. They are often told that they have "plateaued." Paul Bach-y-Rita, a neuroscientist whose most notable work was in the field of neuroplasticity, was one of the first to say that these plateaus are temporary. He began to explain that these are consolidation stages where the brain internalizes, and biological changes occur. There may not be many outward changes evident during this stage, but it is part of the learning process. Activity needs to be continued for the changes to be ingrained.

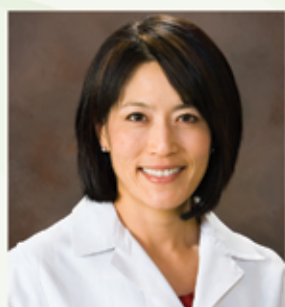
Ben experiences periods of time that he doesn't see progress, which is frustrating, but then, there are times of sudden changes and improvements. These occur because he has continued practicing, visualizing, and doing his exercises. His brain continues to process and learn, even when it's not outwardly evident to him.

As with anything, the more you practice, the better you will get. Is the progress as fast as Ben would like? No. Is he done yet? No. Recovering from a stroke is a lifelong process, but thanks to neuroplasticity, it is possible to continually make improvements.

Stacy Hennis is a physical therapist and the owner of New Beginning Physical Therapy, Inc., an in-home therapy company. She has advanced certifications in treating people with neurological issues, especially stroke and brain injuries, and can be reached at (760) 218.9961 or online at NewBeginningPT.com.

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ACA: "Insurance for All" So why do we still need free clinics?

By Doris Steadman

The Affordable Health Care Act (ACA) has been described as offering universal health care coverage to all Americans. As such, some may ask, "If everyone is required to buy health insurance, and sliding scale rates are now available, why do we still need free medical clinics?"

While the ACA is significantly decreasing the number of uninsured, and will continue to do so each year moving forward, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that when the ACA is fully implemented in 2024, that number will still be 31 million.¹

"Free health care clinics will continue to be in demand to serve the uninsured for many years to come," says Amy Hamlin, national executive director of Volunteers in Medicine (VIM). The Coachella Valley's VIM is the only free medical clinic in our community. They see patients only if they have no other insurance coverage, and because California elected to extend the Medi-Cal eligibility categories, many of their patients have signed up and now receive this coverage. This has eased a bit of the burden on CVVIM's patient load.

So who will free clinics continue to serve?

Loss of Income.

There will be those who sign up and receive subsidized insurance, but may lose their job or their ability to pay insurance fees or co-pays. They may become temporarily uninsured, and are not subject to the mandate until their income allows for affordable coverage. Those who "fall into the gap" may need medical attention until new insurance becomes available and effective once again.

Low Income. There is a portion of the population who doesn't file income tax as they don't make enough, or have unreported income such as service industry personnel. It is estimated that between 18 and 19 million people will be exempt from the mandate to buy coverage as their incomes are so low that they cannot purchase the coverage through the ACA exchanges, or they may find the cost sharing unaffordable, particularly at certain times of the month.² Medi-Cal may be an option for this population.

Late Starters. The Urban Institute estimates that in 2010, 40% of the uninsured were Americans who were eligible for Medicaid, but failed to enroll.² Family eligibility may be determined when they show up at a hospital for care, but it may only be for catastrophic coverage, and their primary and chronic care will not be covered.² During their time of need, a free clinic may be their only option. There are now numerous organizations within the community (including CVVIM) which discuss and encourage eligible patients to sign up for Medi-Cal.

Undocumented Individuals and families.

As an agricultural community, we have many undocumented residents who work our fields to put produce on our tables. Living in the United States, this group does not receive coverage through their jobs; is not eligible to purchase health coverage through the exchanges; and is not eligible to purchase private insurance with their own money. Free medical clinics will continue to be the best option for them, especially over our emergency rooms. Bruce Yeager, executive director of CVVIM, estimates this population to be 20-25% of CVVIM's current patient base.

Due to the influx of those now receiving insurance coverage, and locally coupled with the shortage of primary care physicians and specialists in our valley, there is the concern that not all patients who now have insurance will receive adequate and timely care. Where this overflow will turn is yet to be determined.

CVVIM has recently opened their patient coverage to include people ages 18 through 21.

Ron Hare, chairman of the board and founder of CVVIM, believes that with all the expert projections, Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine will continue to have many patients far into the future.

Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine can be reached at (760) 342.4414.

References: 1) Congressional Budget Office. (2014, February). Effects of the Affordable Care Act on Health Insurance Coverage – Baseline Projections. www.cbo.gov; 2) Professor Timothy Jost, JD, member of the Institute of Medicine; teleconference notes via VIM member portal www.volunteersinmedicine.org.



Access to health care is a luxury for some



Eye exam stations are set at the 2014 Coachella Valley Expedition

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Don't Ignore That Lingering Cough!

Here in the Desert many symptoms are attributed to allergies, but pneumonia is more common than you think. Early diagnosis and treatment can save you a trip to the hospital and ultimately a visit from me.

Symptoms. The most common symptoms of pneumonia include a cough which may produce greenish, yellow, or bloody mucus; fever; chills; shortness of breath; headache; and excessive sweating and clammy skin. You may also have sharp or stabbing chest pain that gets worse when you breathe deeply or cough. Often there is a loss of appetite, low energy, and fatigue. Older patients may also experience confusion.

Symptoms also can vary, depending on whether your pneumonia is bacterial or viral. In bacterial pneumonia, your temperature may rise to 105 degrees F. The pneumonia causes profuse sweating and rapidly increased breathing and pulse rate. Lips and nail beds may have a bluish color due to lack of oxygen in the blood. A patient's mental state may be confused or delirious.

The initial symptoms of viral pneumonia are the same as influenza: fever, a dry cough, headache, muscle pain, and weakness. Within 12 to 36 hours, there is increasing breathlessness, the cough becomes worse and produces a small amount of mucus. There is a high fever and there may be blueness of the lips.

Diagnosis. With diagnosis, your doctor will listen to your lungs with a stethoscope. If you have pneumonia, your lungs may make crackling, bubbling, and rumbling sounds when you inhale, or there may be decreased or no breath sounds as the result of your lung being collapsed.

In addition to a chest x-ray, some patients may need other tests, including white blood cell count, arterial blood gases, CT scan, sputum tests, pleural fluid culture, and pulse oximetry to measure oxygen

moving through the bloodstream. If you are hospitalized and antibiotics are not working well, your doctor may order a bronchoscopy to look into the lungs' airways.

Treatment.

Treatment for pneumonia depends on the type and severity of your pneumonia, and if you have other chronic diseases. The goals of treatment are to cure the infection and prevent complications.

Most people can be treated at home by drinking plenty of fluids to help loosen secretions and bring up phlegm, and getting a lot of rest. Fever can be controlled with aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS such as ibuprofen or naproxen), or acetaminophen. DO NOT give aspirin to children. Avoid cough medicines as they may make it harder for you to cough up the extra sputum.

If your pneumonia becomes so severe that you are treated in the hospital, you may receive fluids and antibiotics in your veins, oxygen therapy, and possibly breathing treatments. Sometimes the chest cavity needs to be cleaned out to allow the lung to completely re-expand. The best treatment for any infection is drainage using minimally invasive techniques and antibiotics.

Recovery. With pneumonia, you never want to rush recovery. Adequate rest is important to maintain progress toward full recovery, and to avoid relapse. And if those antibiotics aren't working, insist on at least a chest x-ray.

Dr. Presser is a board certified thoracic surgeon specializing in minimally invasive procedures. He is an advocate for prevention and welcomes your questions. Dr. Presser can be reached at (760) 424.8224.



Clinton Health Matters Initiative: Substance Abuse Committee Formed

By Doris Steadman

There is a new group in the Coachella Valley created to address the issues of substance abuse in our community. As part of the Clinton Health Matters Initiative and led by the California State University San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus, the Substance Abuse Advisory Committee (SAAC) has identified four areas of focus: alcohol abuse, marijuana abuse, prescription drug abuse, and the use and abuse of e-cigarettes.

At their most recent meeting, SAAC members agreed to focus their time and resources on one primary area of concern, alcohol abuse, which results in a disproportionate number of DUIs and alcohol-related incidents throughout the valley.

With supporting statistics from the most recent HARC community survey, the committee identified an elevated concern here in the Coachella Valley - not only with visitors - but also with the permanent population. The alcohol-related problems identified include: drinking and driving, underage drinking, social hosting of parties (not only underage, but all ages), and elderly drinking. The elderly population is of specific concern due to health complications which may result from mixing alcohol with medications.

Working with the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) as a major partner, the committee set a goal to reduce DUIs in the Coachella Valley through education, laws (creating, changing and enforcing of them), and rehabilitation.

The educational messages will be presented through a vast media campaign to include public service announcements on local television, radio and newspapers;

billboards, both stationary and mobile; and social media.

Working together, Riverside County's Office of Probation and the District Attorney's office will also create DUI awareness programming for area schools.

A sub-committee is developing workshops related to healthy parenting, along with parent information packets addressing healthy child development. The emphasis will be on educating parents about the issues of alcohol abuse.

The campaign is also fortunate to have the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation as a partner. They are currently working to expand their educational resources and services, making them more accessible to all Coachella Valley residents.

The committee stated that future plans include classes and educational programs for people and groups that host private parties in their homes, as well as programs aimed at educating those in the hospitality industry on laws and liabilities related to over-serving in their establishments.

"The varied backgrounds of the members of this committee will help provide valuable information and education for the public regarding the issues of substance abuse and how to address them," says committee chair Albert Angelo, a faculty member and health educator at CSUSB - Palm Desert Campus. "The future looks very positive, with more ideas to come to help the valley address (in a meaningful way) the concerns related to substance abuse."

For more information on this program, please contact Albert Angelo at aangelo@csusb.edu.

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- HARC Survey
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If your athletic plan doesn't go as planned, it's important to note that sports massage can also help accelerate the healing process during rehabilitation. To ensure that there are no restrictions on the type or duration of massage, please talk with your doctor before starting any sports massage rehabilitation therapy.



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Understanding and Coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

By Jan Silver Maguire

Last November I had the privilege of working on Homeward Bound, a national fundraising telethon presented by Haven from the Storm Foundation that supports military veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury. Programs and organizations like these are vital, as the incidence of PTSD among our military veterans is truly alarming. Recent studies reveal that approximately one in five veterans serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are diagnosed with PTSD.

For those unfamiliar with post-traumatic stress disorder - also called post-traumatic stress injury - it is an anxiety disorder most likely to occur after an individual experiences a traumatic event. Military combat, child abuse, sexual assault, a major car accident, terrorist attack or natural disaster such as an earthquake are all crises that can trigger PTSD. Approximately 8% of Americans will struggle with PTSD at some point in their lives, and women are twice as likely as men to develop the condition.

Many individuals who live through or witness severe trauma can experience stress-related reactions or difficulty coping, but do eventually improve. People with PTSD, however, get trapped in a chronic "fight-or-flight" response, a primitive physiological reflex that prepares the body to fight, flee or freeze in the face of life-threatening danger even when the danger has long passed. Some individuals are also more susceptible to developing PTSD than others. Risk factors that have been identified include family instability, lack of social support after the event, a previous history of mental illness, a prior traumatic event, and a biological or genetic predisposition.

A person struggling with PTSD may experience a variety of symptoms including reliving the event in the form of flashbacks, recurring dreams or nightmares, and fearful thoughts. Exposure to certain words, sounds or situations can also elicit reliving the trauma. For example, the sound of a helicopter or car backfiring may bring back frightening memories for a combat veteran. An individual with PTSD may feel emotionally numb, guilty, or depressed, and have an inability or lack of desire to engage in relationships. They may also avoid crowds or places that evoke memories of the event. Additional manifestations of PTSD include hyper-arousal symptoms like extreme vigilance, tension, irritability, rage, sleep disturbances, difficulty concentrating or retaining a job, as well as substance abuse.

If you think that you or someone you know is struggling with PTSD, take heart – there are a number of effective treatments available. One first line-treatment is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, or CBT, a psychotherapeutic intervention that focuses on thoughts and beliefs to discourage self-destructive behavior and improve coping skills. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is a trauma-focused treatment which combines cognitive, exposure and body-centered approaches. EMDR is said to be particularly useful for clients who have difficulty discussing their experiences. Antidepressants have also proven effective for treating PTSD, particularly selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) like paroxetine (Paxil) and sertraline (Zoloft).

Several research studies indicate that complementary and alternative therapies such as acupuncture, yoga, meditation and mindfulness-based stress reduction may also help alleviate symptoms of PTSD.

Jan Silver Maguire is a freelance copywriter specializing in mental health and wellness. She has a master's degree in social work from Loyola University-Chicago. Visit her website at www.jansilvermaguire.com.



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That Time Of Year Is Here...Once Again!

By Karen McElhatton

May is here and many of our local residents have left, or will be going back to their main homes all over the country and Canada. I actually get a little sad saying “good-bye until next season,” although I realize there are more year-rounders than ever here in the Coachella Valley. And many of us will be escaping the heat for extended vacations during hot summer months.

As a professional organizer, “the season” has always been the busiest time of the year for organizing people’s homes and small offices. Clients want to put their places in order before leaving for the summer, and it makes them feel good to think about returning to a sense of order in their home. They can jump right in and begin enjoying their time on the golf course, tennis courts, or just relaxing in their Desert home.

Whether you are leaving for the season or going on an extended vacation, I am sure you know the recommended routine you must go through when closing up your home. There is always a long list of items to accomplish to bring peace of mind, so be sure to remember these key items:

1. **Do not** stop your pest control service in the summer months, please!
2. Close or cover all drains, close all toilet seats and cover with plastic so rodents don’t creep into your home.
3. Have your AC serviced. The condenser line needs to be clear (prevents home floods) and put in a clean filter before you leave for the summer.
4. Make sure if you plan on turning off your water in your home that you are not also turning off the water in the yard or garden.
5. **Do not** turn your thermostat off! Keep the temperature 84° or lower. Buckets of water are ineffective. You need humidity for the wood in your home and for your artwork.
6. If possible, donate your all your food to a shelter or local friend.
7. Bring your patio furniture into your garage for storage (no need to cover).
8. Keep your blinds and shutters cracked for two reasons. First, it becomes so hot in the home that if you have wood blinds or shutters, they can crack if they are **completely** closed. Secondly, when window coverings are completely closed, everyone knows you are gone for the summer (set a light on a timer for evenings).

There are companies that will check your home once or twice a month, and it is worth looking into these services. It is important to keep an eye out for any potential problems that may arise in the hot summer months.

Happy summer to all!

Karen McElhatton is a professional organizer with Let’s Organize Now. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers and can be reached at (760) 899.5444 or Organizer@LetsOrganizeNow.biz

Health is a Choice

patients who received services, the appreciation was apparently abundant.

Richard Cervantes of Indio heard about the clinic from a friend and came to get an aching tooth extracted. “You’ve got some very special people here who are at the top of their game, and it really benefits a lot of people, especially with dental care which is expensive.” While there, he decided to have a chiropractor look at his shoulder which has been hurting him for a while. He had x-rays taken, but his doctor was too booked to see him right away, so he thought he would get a second opinion. “This is unbelievable – truly a great service,” he adds. “Everyone is so nice and you move quickly through the lines.”



Penelope of Desert Hot Springs (with mom Bridgette) smiles with her new cavity-filled teeth

Bridgette of Desert Hot Springs brought her daughter Penelope in to get her two front teeth filled and a physical for school. Penelope, who just turned 3 couldn’t be added to her family’s dental plan until November. “I took her to the dentist a month ago to get her teeth cleaned and they told me it would cost almost \$400 for the cavity to be filled,” said Bridgette, adding that this was not in the family budget. “The (CVE) dentist was great with her and both the dental and medical services were very fast. It’s pretty amazing.”



Medical volunteers review the eyewear equipment at Coachella Valley Expedition

Alan is a general volunteer who commuted an hour and a half from Upland each day to take part. This is his second year, and he plans to return next year. “It’s good for your soul to be here,” he says. “I have problems, but after being here, I realize that my problems are good problems to have, and that others’ problems can be so much more. We take it all for granted sometimes.”

Volunteers come from all over the country, yet more and more local professionals

Continued from page 1

are taking part as recognition for the annual clinic grows. “This is an extraordinary event to provide services for patients that don’t have access otherwise,” states local doctor Maureen Strohm, MD. “I have noticed there are some patients here with access to some services, but not others, and it is very apparent that the biggest challenge for people here in the Valley is dental services.”



Volunteer students from the SBB School of Nursing show their appreciation

Dental services provided at the clinic include general cleaning, cavity fillings, x-rays, and extractions. This section was by far the busiest with 70 stations set up. Those that were manned by dentists, hygienist, and oral surgeons continued to be busy.

In the medical section, care was given for a variety of ailments and conditions. “We are identifying high blood pressure and diabetes in patients who didn’t know they had these conditions,” adds Strohm. “We can then connect them to local services available such as Volunteers in Medicine (for those that don’t qualify for insurance) or other community partners like Borrego Health.” She indicated that they were also seeing people who had run out medications or couldn’t afford them. Limited supplies of medications were available onsite.



A volunteer dental team works on a patient

The Coachella Valley Expedition will return in March 2015. They hope to increase both the number of volunteers that participate and the number of patients they see.

For the incredible effort put forth, this year the City of Indio presented California CareForce and Goldenvoice with a city proclamation honoring their work and the many benefits they provide to the community.

For more information on how you can get involved, please contact www.CaliforniaCareForce.org or call (916) 749.4170.



Growing A Home Garden

By Audrey Reed, Ph.D.

Last Spring, I had a neighborhood garden with some friends at a friend's house. Although just 10 minutes away, once planted, I didn't visit it very often.

My husband and I wanted to plant more than herbs in our backyard garden, so last November we looked at the area around our pool. The soil was not good, the sun beat down on it during the summer, and tomatoes had never survived, even when protected by a shade cover.

I went on a memory and internet search. My grandparents had always had a garden; they had lived in Tarrytown, New York where the soil is black loam and hardy with the nutrients on which plants flourish. We had poor soil that barely grew annual flowers.

For our garden to work, we could build garden boxes or recreate the soil. We turned the soil over and over with bags of Happy Frog nutrient rich soil with worm casing. Then we consulted a local Gabrielle Gaul, of plants.

She started our slowly with two types lettuce, speckled With their success, we (which did not do so well), strawberries (still looking at a better location for them), and jalapeno peppers and cabbage (which are still growing).

Due to the extra nourishment of our soil, our herbs are doing better than ever: sage, thyme, rosemary, a variety of basil (lemon, Thai, and sweet), parsley, lemon grass and cilantro. We also have a few aloe plants for medicinal use, and my husband loves project plants, so he is growing white sage which we use for smudging and clearing.

We give our garden the standard care with a little extra love: we have covered the plants when frost came; hand watered areas to supplement sprinklers; prayed over it, and played music for the garden.

We planted little white flowers around the edge to keep the rabbits out, and we brush our Jack Russell around the perimeter to gently remind the rabbits there is a rabbit-loving hunting dog in the yard.

Our garden is doing so well that next season, we plan to use our flower beds to plant more vegetables. We love watching them grow, producing flowers and then fruit, and delight in the fact that we are nourishing our bodies with homegrown fare.

Happy gardening!

Dr. Audrey Reed can be reached at draudrey@mac.com. For more information on growing a garden contact Gabrielle Gaul at Herbivore2u@gmail.com or visit the certified farmers markets in Palm Springs, Palm Desert, and La Quinta.



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winter garden out of kale, Romaine lettuce, and beets. added sweet peas



Audrey Reed of La Quinta enjoys the serenity – and bounty – from her backyard garden

Gluten-Free with Tiffany



Do you suffer from IBS, bloating, dermatitis, migraines, an autoimmune disorder, or anxiety? Perhaps you've been diagnosed with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity. There are over 200 symptoms associated with gluten, and if you have been diagnosed, you may have been given a simple prescription: go gluten-free.

With high hopes of feeling and looking better, the diagnosis causes a mad dash to fill our grocery cart with gluten-free labels. After a few months, however, we feel no different or better.

It's vital we recognize this fact: a processed diet - even though gluten-free - doesn't make it any better for you than the nutrient poor, gluten-full, standard American diet.

Many of us fell into the marketing ploys of manufacturers, purchasing anything with a gluten-free label on it, from pizza to doughnuts. The explosion of gluten-free junk food has left us feeling disappointed in our efforts to feel and eat better. We can escape the gluten-free trap by living a gluten-free lifestyle with a more natural approach.

Going gluten-free for any reason requires a thoughtful and balanced approach. A healthy gluten-free diet incorporates *real* food high in nutrients. We want each bite full of vitamins and minerals. Naturally fiber-rich foods like vegetables, fruits, some whole grains, good fats, and quality proteins are basic essential elements for all humans. They're natural. The box of cereal on aisle four doesn't quite fit the bill.

When selecting a real whole grain, the grain is not processed or refined in anyway. Many "gluten-free" products are made with refined grains and starches, which contain plenty of calories but very few vitamins or minerals. Your positive choices of gluten-free whole grains include brown rice, whole

corn, gluten-free oats, millet, teff, sorghum, wild rice, buckwheat, amaranth, and quinoa.

If we are truly determined to feel and look better, we need to shift our focus away from gluten-free grains and processed products, redirecting our forks to nutrient dense, natural foods like seasonal fruits and vegetables. We should focus on quality fats like avocado, coconut, olives, and even grass-fed butter, being careful to avoid canola, soybean, and safflower oil, which is often highly processed and inflammatory. Quality protein is also essential, whether it be from well-raised animals or vegan sources like beans, nuts, and seeds.

When transitioning to a nutrient dense diet (where grains are minimized), many are concerned about proper carbohydrate intake for sustained energy levels. Fear not! Grains are not the only carbohydrate source in our diet. *All fruits and vegetables are carbohydrates.* In fact, there are superior calorie-dense carbohydrate options like squashes, sweet potatoes, and root vegetables that can be added to any meal.

On any diet, good nutrition is not simply based on calories, carbs, fat, or by the addition or exclusion of a single ingredient. You can take better control of your health by eating food in its original form, filling up on the life-giving nutrients of foods that are grown and picked, not boxed or bagged. By returning to food the way nature intended, you're allowing your body to heal.

A nutrient dense diet allows you to effortlessly shed pounds, regain energy, and find your way back to your best self, naturally.

Tiffany is a Certified Nutrition Consultant and Functional Diagnostic Nutrition® Practitioner specializing in digestive disorders and weight management. She can be reached at (760) 285.1221 or online at www.GlutenFreeWithTiffany.com.



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Massage Therapy: A Rewarding and Expanding Career

By Margaret Hines, MBA & Kathleen Shyptycki, CMT, HHP

Therapeutic Massage has come into its own as an industry. With alternative medicine accepted in more and more mainstream health establishments, bodywork has emerged as a rewarding, financially sound career. It's especially well suited for people who want to prosper while remaining close to core beliefs about the true source of health and well-being.

Locally, the Coachella Valley offers many employment opportunities for massage therapists at resorts, spas, chiropractic and physical therapy clinics, country clubs and retirement communities. It is not unusual for our local spas and resorts to have 15 to 20 - and as many as 30 - massage therapists on staff during the high season.

Proof Positive of a Growing Need for Therapists

According to the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA), 16% of adult Americans had at least one massage in the last twelve months with 43% doing so for medical reasons and 32% for relaxation and stress relief. The AMTA research report also states that more consumers received referrals from physicians for massage therapy than any other health care source in 2012. Overall, 89 percent of Americans believe that massage can be effective in reducing pain, and 87 percent believe that massage can be beneficial to health and wellness.

Furthermore, major health systems throughout the US are supporting the integration of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments, which includes massage therapy, into treatment plans for patients. Duke Integrative Medicine, Mayo Clinic's Complementary and Integrative Medicine Program, Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, and our very own Eisenhower Medical Center's Wellness Institute each use massage therapists and are proof-positive of this proactive whole person approach in treating patients.

Of course, spa and resort work is the mainstay of massage therapy and an important part of our local economy. AMTA research indicates that, nationally, the average number of employees per spa increased 5.6 percent in 2012. As the economy improves, visits to independent spas and resorts are on the rise. Furthermore, massage chains are being used more commonly by consumers, and offer a consistent experience and increased access to massage with affordable rates.

Massage Therapy - Finding An Authentic Path

Current massage student Tammy Tash confirms the idea that a career as a massage therapist offers an authentic path: "For me it's all about the independence and finding a stress-free life. Doing this type of work is relaxing; I stay completely stress free and can't imagine going another direction. I'm going to live a long, happy and healthy life and finish every student clinic feeling good, and helping people is rewarding."

While helping people is typically the primary motivator for those choosing the profession, pay can be important to therapists as well. Massage therapists typically earn between \$25-\$85 per hour or more depending upon their practice environment (sole practitioners may be above that range).

Variety Spells Opportunity

The range of modalities practiced in massage is expanding. As the general public becomes better educated about the therapeutic benefits to complex muscular, skeletal and mental health issues, the massage therapist works with new modalities to alleviate these symptoms. Everything from sports, deep-tissue and neuromuscular therapy to traditional styles like shiatsu, reflexology, polarity, reiki, manual lymphatic drainage and cranial-sacral are applied based on a client's particular requirements. Specialty massage treatments are also available for the special needs of niche populations such as cancer, geriatric, post-surgical patients, and pre-natal populations.

Training, Certification and Licensing Requirements

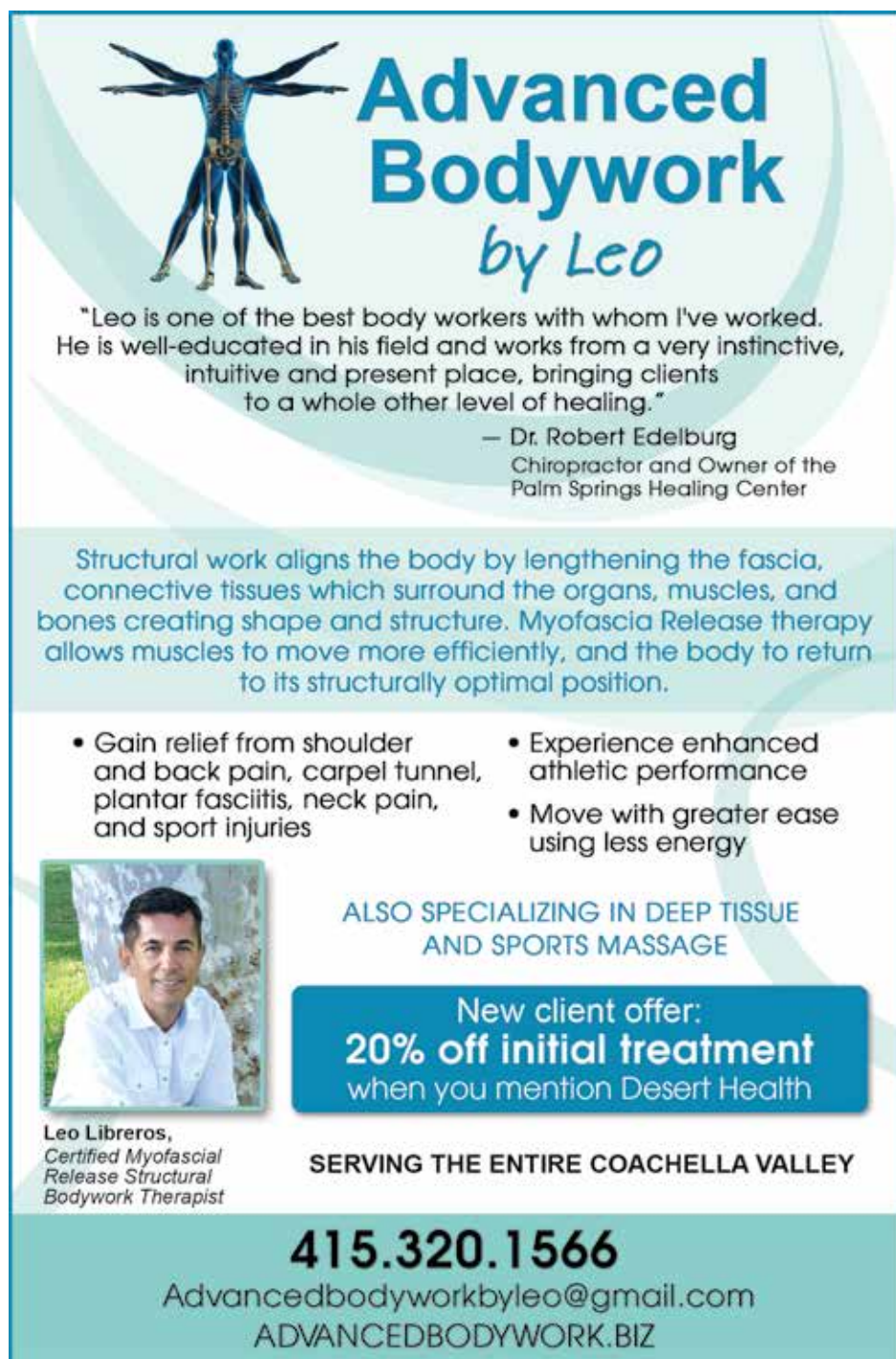
Currently California offers two levels of certification for massage therapy. The California Massage Therapy Council (CAMTC) and state legislature are reviewing current state licensing rules and will be updating these rules in 2015. Currently CAMTC is the administrator for state certification. The Certified Massage Practitioner Program (CMP) is a 250-hour program with specific requirements in certain subjects. The CMP certification is a good stepping stone for the Certified Massage Therapist License, which entails 500 hours of training and is the preferred certification among employers. Individual cities often have their own requirements, but most follow the state licensing rules. Current practitioners and massage school graduates should always check with their prospective business city regulations and/or employer to understand their specific licensing requirements.

There are a few massage schools here in the Coachella Valley. New students will want to evaluate their choices based on training quality, schedule flexibility, and getting a "good-feel" for the school.

For those interested in a career as a massage therapist, now is the time to start training (most programs take less than one year to finish). Becoming a certified massage therapist is a great complement to many other holistic health and wellness careers and a skillset that lasts a lifetime.

For those who hear the call, it's a great time to become a massage therapist.

Margaret Hines is the founding owner of Somatherapy Massage Institute in Rancho Mirage which offers therapist certifications, classes for individuals and couples, and discounted massage services at their student clinic. For more information, contact at (760) 904.0912. www.somatherapy.com.



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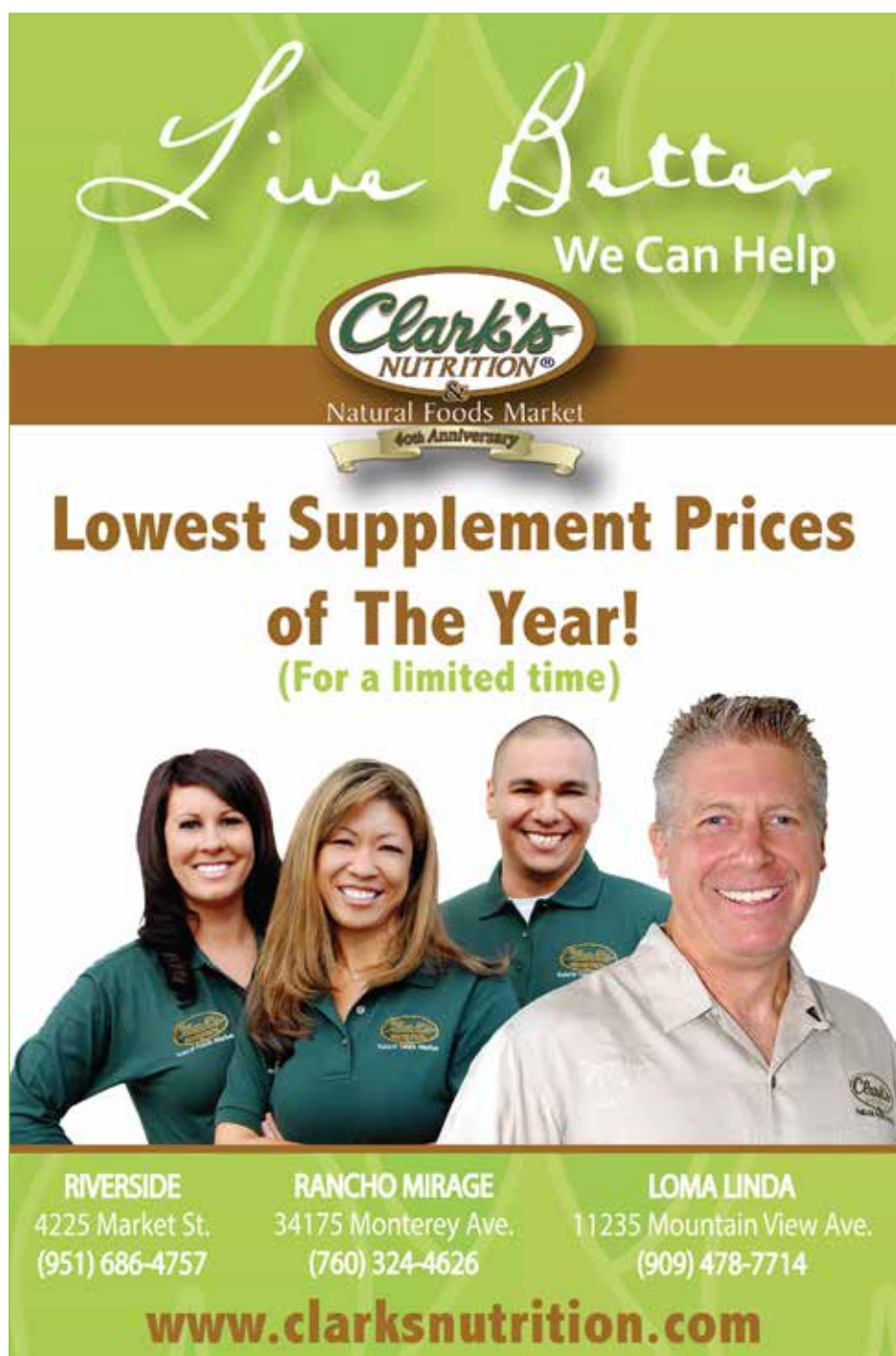
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Eat Fats, Lose Weight: The Ketogenic Mediterranean Diet

By John R. Dixon, DC, CCN, Dipl.Ac

Over the past ten years, numerous scientific studies have emerged forcing many doctors and nutritionists to revise their thinking of what is considered a “healthy diet.”

Researchers have discovered more about the causes and mechanisms underlying diseases like diabetes, cancer, and arteriosclerosis, and for this reason, many previously held concepts of a healthy food pyramid have been disregarded. No longer are grains, breads, beans and starchy vegetables being used as the basis for a healthy diet.



At the forefront of new scientific data is the continuing evidence of the importance of healthy fat in the diet. This concept is now being combined with principles from the Mediterranean diet (which includes healthy amounts of nuts and fresh vegetables) and is called the ketogenic Mediterranean diet.

The traditional Mediterranean diet features liberal consumption of olive oil, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, potatoes and nuts, along with moderate amounts of lean red meat, abundant fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs, and moderate amounts of red wine. The emphasis is placed on consuming fresh, whole foods and minimizing processed foods such as those packaged in a box, jar or can.

A traditional ketogenic diet is one that requires about 50-70 percent of your food intake to come from beneficial fats such as coconut oil, butter, eggs, avocado, raw nuts, red meats, poultry, shellfish, cheese and fish. It is devoid of sugar, flour, whole grains, starchy vegetables and beans. Ketosis is a term that describes how the body will breakdown and liberate stored body fat for energy in the absence of carbohydrate consumption. This breakdown of fat causes the formation of what are called ketone bodies, which are used for energy, thus the name ketogenic diet. To arrive at a state of ketosis, the diet must contain less than 50 grams of carbohydrates per day. That would mean that less than 200 calories per day will come from carbohydrates. The average American diet contains literally hundreds of grams of carbohydrates, and this diet cannot lead to ketogenic fat burning.



The ketogenic Mediterranean diet features generous amounts of olive oil, coconut oil, avocado, moderate red wine, green vegetables and salads, fish as the primary protein, lean meat, fowl, eggs, and cheese. This diet totally eliminates whole grains, legumes, starchy vegetables like corn, potatoes, peas and all foods containing flour and sugar. Fruit is not included, although fruit can be a healthy food choice in most instances. The emphasis on olive oil, fish, red wine and healthier fat choices make this diet different than other low carbohydrate and ketogenic diet plans.

There is strong evidence suggesting that the ketogenic Mediterranean diet is excellent for weight and appetite reduction. This same evidence suggests that ketogenic diets are the appropriate diet for patients with diabetes, heart disease, and epilepsy. There is also emerging evidence supporting a ketogenic diet for use in patients with acne, headaches, neurotrauma, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, sleep disorders, autism, multiple sclerosis, and cancer. Research has shown that the ketogenic Mediterranean diet reduces fasting glucose levels and prevents insulin resistance. There is also scientific evidence

that this diet significantly decreases total cholesterol, triglycerides and LDL cholesterol.

No single diet is right for everyone as we are all genetically unique. You may have sensitivities, allergies and digestive issues which dictate a different dietary path. Persons with gall bladder disease may find a high fat diet undesirable. However, most people should strive for a diet high in healthy fats - as much as 50-70 percent of the calories you consume - with moderate amounts of high quality protein, preferably fresh deep water fish, and abundant green or brightly colored vegetables. Starchy vegetables, grains, and other flour products should be minimal. Sugar, artificial sweeteners, and high fructose corn syrup in particular should be avoided as these up regulate fasting blood sugar and insulin resistance, and increase body inflammatory burdens which are responsible for many chronic degenerative diseases.



In addition, several nutritional supplements are helpful for blood sugar and anti-inflammatory effects including omega 3 fatty acids (fish oil), magnesium, chromium, lipoic acid, curcumin, vitamin D and resveratrol. It may also be beneficial to supplement any high fat diet with digestive and or pancreatic enzymes, as well as a good whole food fiber supplement (be sure to choose a fiber supplement that does not contain added sugar or artificial sweeteners).

Remember to be proactive and informed when making your health care decisions.

Dr. John Dixon can be reached at the Natural Medicine Group (760) 345.7300.

Sources: 1) www.advancedmediterranean.com; 2) www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2586625

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Allergy Relief with TMC

By Diane Sheppard, Ph.D, L.Ac.

As spring flowers blossom and release pollen, our allergies awaken, resulting in a variety of symptoms. For us desert dwellers the winds can not only blow these allergens around, but also dry our sinuses, causing sneezing, congestion, watery eyes and a runny nose.

Spring is traditionally the main season when allergies blossom because of new growth on trees and weeds. However, fall ushers in a whole different set of blooming plants, and is also a time of increased leaf mold, so it is the second-worst season for allergy sufferers.

While there are many medications to treat seasonal allergies, these treatments can cause unwanted side effects, such as drowsiness and immune system suppression, as well as an over-reliance on medications. Because of these side effects, many search for alternative approaches to manage their allergies.

Fortunately for sufferers, acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) have been used to treat allergies for centuries, including allergic rhinitis, asthma, eczema, hives and even food allergies.

When treating with TCM, underlying imbalances within the body are addressed. A treatment plan is developed to relieve the acute symptoms of allergic rhinitis while also treating the root problems that are contributing to the body's reaction to allergens. Treatments often include dietary modification, the use of specifically chosen herbal formulas, and acupuncture.

In fact, herbs are particularly effective in dealing with allergies, especially once acute symptoms have been relieved with acupuncture. Many of the formulas contain Angelica root, magnolia flower buds, honeysuckle, and Xanthium, tangerine peel and mint.

Diet also can play an important part in controlling seasonal allergies. Sweets, dairy products, and cold foods all tend to increase mucus buildup, putting ice cream and yogurt at the top of the list of foods to avoid during allergy season. When excessive mucus accumulates in the system, allergens stimulate a much stronger allergic reaction. Foods which increase resistance include green tea and chrysanthemum tea made from dried flowers. Radishes are cool and moist, which makes them ideal for treating dry, itchy allergy eyes. They can also help clear the sinuses, drain mucous and ease sore throats.

Honey may be one of the best foods to help with allergies. The prevailing theory is that it works like a vaccination. Local honey contains a variety of the same pollen spores that give allergy sufferers so much trouble. Introducing these spores into the body in small amounts by eating local honey may make the body accustomed to their presence and decrease the chance of immune system responses that are responsible for allergy symptoms.

Those who wait until they start sneezing or suffer from a sinus headache may find they've acted too late. Being proactive is always a good policy. Avoid known allergens, stay indoors if possible on windy days, and maintain a good diet and healthy immune system. Visit a qualified practitioner at the first signs of allergy and enjoy a healthy, sneeze-free spring.

Diane Sheppard is owner of AcQpoint Wellness Center in La Quinta. She is a licensed acupuncturist with a Ph.D. in Oriental Medicine and can be reached at (760) 775.7900. www.AcQPoint.com.

Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco



Changing Your Rhythm For A Different Season

Living in the Coachella Valley, we can be remiss in witnessing the pronounced entry and exit of the four seasons. Yet, the dramatic shift into summer is one we all experience.

While the desert landscape transitions, plants and wildflowers lose their color and become dormant. The desert floor dries up and the sun emerges at its strongest. Physiologically, for any desert dweller or visitor, there are pronounced changes that occur from within, and we must be mindful and aware of our body the minute there is an onset of heat.

There is a circadian rhythm to which our bodies innately react daily and monthly from one season to the next. It is amazing how nature sends messages of preparedness in our environment for the impending climate change. Within animals, this automatic adjustment results in slowing down with the onset of summer. The Cahuilla Indians of this desert knew to relax and do less during the summer months, as their lives were rooted in nature.

I recently returned from Havasupai in the West Grand Canyon where an elder medicine woman spoke of honoring nature. She spoke of the fact that village horses grow a thicker coat of hair before the onset of winter. We know as well, what we need in preparation for the summer months: to slow down and to listen to subtle, internal messages.

However, summer's heat also offers the opportunity to optimize your body's conditioning. When the temperature heats up, the blood's capacity to carry oxygen increases. Red blood cells carry oxygen and allow us to acclimate. This is

the same training that an athlete experiences when going into high altitudes.

If you approach our warmer weather with this mindset, it is important to follow a few simple steps:

- Infuse water with electrolyte tablets that contain sodium, potassium and magnesium such as NUUN tablets.
- Cool off with a weekly or daily cold water ice bath for the feet. As a vaso-constrictor, this practice assists with the reduction of swelling, and the feet are a perfect conduit for cooling off the entire body.
- Wear cotton and UV resistant clothing.
- Use a sun protection with the 3 necessities: Zinc, titanium and sweat proof.
- Wean the body into an earlier wake-up time.
- Eat less and introduce what are referred to in ayurvedic medicine as 'air- element' foods: salads, veggies, and other light fare.

As the temperature spikes over 100 degrees, allow 10 to 14 days for your body to acclimate. Allow 2 hours of outdoor exposure each day. In the first 5 days of heat acclimation, your body improves its cardiovascular functions. During the first 8 days, your body's core temperature is adjusted.

Staying positive during this climate change is a useful heat remedy as well. Realize that we are all part of nature's seasonal ebb and flow. Enjoy the change, stay positive, and remember, next season will be here before you know it!



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Is Testosterone Therapy in Men Harmful?

A critical review of recent television advertising

By Neal Rouzier, MD

You might have been alarmed by recent television commercials by law firms soliciting patients that have taken testosterone and suffered a heart attack. Unfortunately, these campaigns have been influenced by one or two negative observational studies of weak power and poor design.

Fortunately, there is over 40 years of well-designed, randomized controlled trials and laboratory research that support the safety and efficacy of testosterone administration. The most recent negative observation, which reported an association between the use of testosterone therapy and increased risk of death and heart attacks, appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, causing legal zealots to jump on the bandwagon to condemn all physicians - and patients - taking prescribed testosterone.

I do not change my prescribed therapy based on any study of weak data and design that goes against a plethora of data showing safety and benefit. I base my therapy on a composite of many studies over several decades of research.

It helps to understand the difference between a randomized controlled study (RCTs) and an observational study. In an RCT, subjects are screened to remove those that might influence the data, and groups are given different interventions to study outcome. To simplify, there is a treated and a placebo group. In observational studies, existing studies and reports (which may or may not be RCTs) are selectively reviewed. Reviewers pick and choose from the studies without randomization or control from other influencing factors.

A post by three professional medical societies, along with an international group of 130 scientists and physicians, have petitioned JAMA to retract this recent article (JAMA 2013; 310:1829-36). In a letter addressed to JAMA editors, the newly formed Androgen Study Group cites "gross data mismanagement thereby rendering the article no longer credible." The article was one of two studies that prompted the FDA to issue a safety bulletin on the use of testosterone products. However, this warning from the FDA is only an advisory as the FDA has cautioned both patients and physicians not to stop testosterone therapy.

This article has already undergone two published corrections. The first was published in January due to misreporting of primary results. A second correction published in March revealed what the group called "major errors" in the article's text and figures. Translation: the statistical analysis utilized was not appropriate and other statistical methods actually show opposite (beneficial) results. Also, the numbers used for the statistical analysis were different from the numbers published in their tables. The raw numbers in their tables actually proved protection against myocardial infarction (heart attack) and not an increase. It is not until their data is plugged into a complex analytical scheme that it shows harm, and thus the insistence that the study be recalled by JAMA. The letter was signed by the International Society for Sexual Medicine, the Sexual Medicine Society of North America, and the International Society for the Study of the Aging Male, along with more than 125 scientists and physicians (of which I am one).

"This is an extraordinary event," said Abraham Morgentaler, MD, of Harvard University who is chairman of the Androgen Study Group. "In my 25 years in academic medicine, I have never witnessed anything like this response to a journal article." He adds that the call for retraction of an article is exceedingly rare. "To have several professional societies and so many of the most accomplished experts in the field unite in this action indicates the seriousness of the article's errors, and the magnitude of damage this article has caused to the public's perception of testosterone therapy."

He goes on to say that, "Lost in the media frenzy that followed this article's publication is the fact that substantial evidence accumulated over 30 years has repeatedly shown that higher testosterone levels are associated with better cardiovascular outcomes. In the interests of medical science and the public good, JAMA should do the right thing and retract the article."

Many of my patients stopped taking testosterone because of the JAMA article, even those who had experienced substantial benefits. And now we find out it was all based on nothing but sloppy science. We are talking about real consequences on individuals' health and quality of life. The Androgen Study Group says it is dedicated to education and accurate reporting on the science of testosterone deficiency and treatment in men. It was organized specifically to respond to the "recent unwarranted, unscientific attacks" on testosterone therapy in the medical and public media.

I cannot emphasize the importance of realizing that one or two weak and negative studies do not negate 40 years of positive, beneficial studies. RCTs have more power and predictive value. A recent statement from the American Academy of Clinical Endocrinologists supports these facts suggesting that physicians and patients not jump to conclusions and stop their testosterone prescription based on one poorly done study. Patients should continue taking testosterone until further evaluation and review is complete. The FDA, knowing the history of 40 years of positive studies demonstrating protection against heart disease, has also recommended that men not stop their testosterone prescriptions based on just two poorly done studies.


The facts, according to 40 years of studies, state that not only is there no risk in men with testosterone replacement therapy, but that there is significant benefit. Many of these studies support that low endogenous levels of testosterone may be positively associated with cardiovascular disease and heart attacks. Testosterone has been shown to prevent plaque deposition (atherosclerosis), which is the primary cause of heart attacks. Our goal should be preventing the plaque from forming in the first place.

Despite the negative press seen on television, science and the experts recommend testosterone for cardiovascular protection, as well as for quality of life benefits as demonstrated in 40 years of solid research. I agree.

Dr. Neal Rouzier is a physician specializing in bio-identical hormone replacement therapy, and the Medical Director of the Preventive Medicine Clinic of the Desert. He can be reached at (760) 320.4292.

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Anemia: Natural Treatments for a Common Condition

By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

Anemia is typically characterized by low iron levels in the blood. It is commonly known that anemia can cause fatigue, muscle weakness, and dizziness. The more uncommonly known facts are that often anemia stems from using certain pharmaceutical medications, improper digestion, irritation in the stomach lining, abnormal bacteria in the digestive tract, and nutritional deficiencies.

A well-known treatment for anemia is iron supplementation; however, there are additional ways to address and treat the underlying cause of the issue.

The most common causes of anemia are nutritional deficiencies of iron, vitamin B12, or folic acid, but at the root of the issue are many reasons why these deficiencies occur, and each should be considered for a tailored treatment plan.

Nutritional deficiencies can be part of one's genetic make-up, especially when it comes to anemia, but it can also be a disruption in the absorption process. Medications called NSAIDs, which are common anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen, Tylenol, and Aleve, can cause an irritation in the stomach lining when taken long-term which affects absorption of certain nutrients.

Stomach and intestinal inflammation from acid reflux, low digestive enzyme production, irritable bowel disease, and general irritation can also cause nutrient deficiencies.

The most effective way to remedy digestive irritation and inflammation is through diet and supplements. By reducing the intake of irritating and acidic foods such as excessive coffee and alcohol, citrus, tomatoes, red meat, and gluten, and increasing simple, easy to digest foods such as free range organic poultry, fish, and green vegetables, you allow the GI system to take a break and to heal.

Introducing supplements that calm an irritated digestive system and improve digestion can repair digestive tissue that is not breaking down food and absorbing nutrients correctly. Recommended supplements include probiotics, digestive enzymes, slippery elm bark, aloe vera juice, and licorice.

Anemia can also be caused by overgrowth of unwanted bacteria in the digestive system. Common problematic bacteria such as H. Pylori can proliferate and cause secondary issues such as anemia. H. Pylori can go undiagnosed as it often causes minimal symptoms at onset.

Treating H. Pylori can involve pharmaceutical medication; however, it can also be controlled with probiotics, digestive enzymes, garlic capsules, and the herb called goldenseal.

In the absence of any known disease, improper digestion, or bacterial overgrowth, anemia can simply be caused by a nutritional deficiency. Focusing on foods rich in iron, vitamin B12, and folic acid such as green leafy vegetables, beets, legumes, whole eggs, and nuts, can increase nutritional intake of these vitamins. Vitamin B12 may additionally be supplemented with nutritional yeast added to food. To enhance absorption of nutrients from these foods, eat fermented foods such as sauerkraut, pickled vegetables, and kombucha drinks at the same time. Supplementing with Vitamin C can specifically enhance iron absorption as can foods rich in Vitamin C like strawberries, peppers, and broccoli.

It is not advised to treat an undiagnosed condition, or to treat it prophylactically; however, it is good to understand the various causes of a health issue and means of alleviating that condition naturally. There are many ways to address the body naturally, and to heal the root of the issue.

Dr. Sinsheimer is Optimal Health Center's naturopathic doctor and can be reached at (760) 568.2598.

BEATING MS & Other Autoimmune Diseases

Continued from page 1

her mitochondria (which fuel the body's cells) and brain cells by providing them with the nutrients they so badly needed. And although the functional medicine studies helped her identify those nutrients, it didn't tell her how to get them. Was she to take a huge fistful of supplements every day?

"I knew that if I could get those nutrients from the foods I was eating, it would be more effective than taking the synthetic version, and that I might also pick up additional compounds – maybe thousands of compounds yet to be identified – that contribute synergistically to the effectiveness of those vitamins and minerals."

Incorporating Paleo principles, functional medicine concepts, and her own research, Wahls devised an eating plan specifically designed to maximize her mitochondrial and brain function.

"Physician self-experimentation sometimes does not go as anticipated," states Wahls. "I had wanted to only slow my descent; I had no hope of recovery. However, the unthinkable - the unimaginable - happened, stunning me, my family, and my physicians."

She immediately experienced more energy and enhanced mental clarity; in three months, she was walking with a cane; at six months she was walking without a cane and riding a bike; at nine months, she did an 18-mile bike ride, and the following year, a trail ride on horseback in the Canadian Rockies.

Her progress rapidly continued and in 2010, she started her clinical trials with patients. This year, she launched *The Wahls Protocol*, an educational book that details her transformation, and outlines recommended treatment plans based on diet and lifestyle. The book includes both

her own and current medical research on MS, and possibly most importantly, how patients can work with their own medical team on a comprehensive plan.

In an interview with *Desert Health*®, Dr. Wahls shared some of the answers to questions of interest to both the medical community and those who may benefit personally from *The Wahls Protocol*.

What was the response of your medical peers when you started employing functional medicine?

TW: My peers saw me looking awful and regress to a wheelchair, and suddenly I'm walking around and looking better. I did a grand round (case study presentation) to the department of medicine, and as a result, interested scientists joined my study team to help refine our study design and secure

a grant proposal. We then got funding and started our clinical trials in 2010.

Since then, my peers in both the Department of Medicine and the College of Medicine have seen my lab present data on both the first 10 subjects in our study, and now the full 20, with results that are really very exciting. Now I am going around to other university departments presenting our research findings.

In speaking with other clinicians (who get to see the before and after videos), I discuss how I am incorporating *The Wahls Protocol* into my clinical practice, and how the public is reacting to this.

Why is this not common knowledge in the medical community?

TW: Most members of the medical community who are working with MS patients have been taught a lot about very sophisticated medication which suppresses the immune system, but not a lot about the

Continued on page 19



Dr. Wahls in 2007



THE Paradigm Shift in Medicine Today

By Jeralyn Brossfield, MD



On April 15th the Board of Eisenhower Medical Center held its annual Trustee meeting and installation of the new Board President, Greg Renker. I was honored to speak on the topic of "Wellness: Improving the Economics of Illness." The commitment of our medical center to lead the way by incorporating integrative care with traditional western medicine is an expansion of the long-standing paradigm of separation of healing practices. We are part of a definite shift in society's view on health and recognize that there is no one viewpoint that provides all the answers. In our quest for wellness, we need each other.

The following is my address to the Board:

Above the entrance of this building, the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences, is the inscription "Medicine for the 21st Century." In 1981 at the building's inauguration, Walter Annenberg made a statement as to why this motto was chosen. He described the responsibility we have to mankind to "Improve the economics of illness." So today, I am going to talk about why "Wellness" is a key to this task.

Let's talk about the "Big Four." Now I'm not talking about the culmination of March Madness that left our house feeling a bit sad last night as Kentucky fans. I'm talking about the "big four" causes of death, and the "big four" components of wellness.

The big four in causes of death in our country are heart disease, cancer, lung disease and Alzheimer's disease. These four disease states cost us 1 billion dollars a day. And 50% of that is spent on 5% of our population.

Now, notice the big four initiatives in wellness: nutrition, fitness, tobacco cessation, and stress reduction. When we compare the common risk factors for the leading killers it is notable that these factors can be fully reversed by the "big four" in the world of wellness. In other words, hypertension, smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity and sedentary living are risk factors that are countered by nutrition, fitness, tobacco cessation and stress reduction.

The big four of wellness wield their power by lowering inflammation. Chronic inflammation has been found to be the instigating factor in 90 percent of our disease states. All of these diseases have a common origin. Inflammation is the instigator.

When we look for the causes of inflammation, we end up back at lifestyle and multiple simple choices.

The realization that lifestyle is the kingpin, or the first domino in a domino effect towards disease, offers an alternative key to the health care crisis facing this country - and our hospital. The bottom line is, we hold so much more power than we can imagine - yes, genetics have a role - they have about a 30% impact on whether we will get

a disease or not. But lifestyle choices, the day-in, day-out tiny choices we make; these have a greater than 40% impact on whether we will develop a diagnosis or disease.

At Eisenhower Wellness Institute, our mission is to provide a platform for integration of the best of alternative practices and lifestyle medicine. We believe that the individual is capable of healing and that maximum wellness means maximum adaptability.

The Wellness Institute has committed to four service lines to our community. These are Employee Wellness, Community Wellness, Executive Health Services and Satellite Services.

By leading with Employee Wellness, we are committed to creating a culture of health within our institution. As the largest employer in the valley, the impact of supporting our employees' health is pivotal. By offering the option for our employees to experience the best and be our best ambassadors, our patients will also benefit.

This season we have built a foundation of practitioners who offer a variety of alternative health practices both in our home site in the Argyros Building, but also in Palm Desert and next season in Palm Springs. Using a team approach where each client benefits from a group review of their needs, clients are offered services ranging from acupuncture to kinesiology.

Our Executive Health Programs offer efficient, comprehensive health assessments along with the most advanced testing and alternative laboratory tests. Examples of testing include genetic, inflammatory, and nutritional markers, which can be used to customize lifestyle recommendations for participants.

Satellite programs in our community include partnerships with country clubs to impact their member's health, and partnerships with our cities to provide education and interactive programming in the areas of nutrition, fitness and stress reduction.

At Eisenhower we provide exceptional acute medical care, and when those services are needed, we are never more grateful for these resources and the visionaries who built this institution.

However, the time has come to lead the way in prevention and lifestyle and to expand our services to include the best in integrative care as well.

As Albert Einstein wisely foresaw, "The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest her or his patients in the care of the human frame, in a proper diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease."

Dr. Jeralyn Brossfield is the Director of the Eisenhower Wellness Institute and can be reached at (760) 610.7360.



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Cryo for Insomnia: "Like Night & Day"

By Lauren Del Sarto

For most of her life, Connie Sandoval of La Quinta slept 3-4 hours a night. Her insomnia began at age 7 and became her way of life. Now 34, she has tried everything recommended and prescribed from melatonin, lavender, teas, and homeopathy, to sleeping pills, new mattresses, and targeted exercise. Nothing worked, until she found Cryotherapy.

According to *The Lancet*, a medical journal, up to 25 percent of all adults have irregular sleep patterns, while as many as 10 percent experience all the symptoms of insomnia. If left unaddressed, insomnia may contribute to the development of depression, diabetes, and numerous other ailments.

Connie is very healthy and has worked with a nutritionist since age 14. She cooks most meals at home, doesn't eat junk food, and rarely eats out. She is fit and does cardio and/or free weights 3-4 times a week. Yet despite her healthy lifestyle, Connie's lack of sleep affects every part of her life causing her inability to concentrate, fatigue and even blurred vision.

The science behind Cryotherapy's special chamber is that it significantly lowers skin temperature for a brief period of 2.5-3 minutes. "The extreme vasoconstriction of the blood vessels throughout the body, followed by the rapid dilation (or rush) of blood, creates a calming effect on a very deep level," says Susan Butler of Kinetix Performance in Palm Desert. "It's as if the treatment resets the body, allowing it to go into repair mode. The results can increase circulation, metabolism, detoxification, tissue repair and immune function. "Because of its calming effects, those who suffer from insomnia may receive the greatest benefit."

"After my first session, I noticed that I felt calm right away," says Connie. "After the second session, I slept through the entire night - deep sleep - and awoke feeling rested. I can't remember the last time I did that."

Butler manages Connie's treatment plan recommending three times a week for the first two weeks, then two times a week for the next two weeks working up to a twice a month maintenance plan. "We are thrilled to see that the benefits are holding on a long-term basis," says Butler.

Connie's vision has improved, and her aches and pain are gone. During the day, she has more energy, and at night, she now falls into a peaceful sleep. Her stress level at work has increased, yet it hasn't affected her sleep. In fact, it's the other way around; her ability to sleep enables her to handle the stress much better.

"It's very strange to me," says Connie. "I've lived with the insomnia for so long that I had come to accept that it was something I had to live with. And the difference I now feel after sleeping soundly for a whole month - from 3-minute Cryo treatments - is truly like night and day."

Her only regret is that she didn't find it earlier in life. "If I hear anyone talk about insomnia, I say 'you need to try Cryo. It can only help.'"

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So, Your Diet Isn't Working?

By Nicole Ortiz, ND

I am writing yet another weight loss article, not because I want to tell you about the latest diet trends, but actually to illuminate the opposite perspective. I want to explain why your diet isn't working.

This article is intended to help you understand why – despite your dedication, perseverance, and sweat – those pounds of fat keep sticking to you like glue. The statement that is repeated DAILY in my office goes something like, “I just don't understand why I cannot lose weight even with all the hard work I do.” My hope is that this article will shed some light on why your diet and exercise routine is failing you.

8 Reasons Why You Can't Win the Battle of the Bulge:

1. You love the treadmill and are afraid that weights will make you bulky.

Long cardio sessions (45+ minutes) can actually work against your weight loss efforts. The prolonged cardio burn is the same as a prolonged stress response, increasing the production and utilization of cortisol in your body. In the long-term, this response promotes insulin resistance and the loss of muscle, not fat. A better option? HIIT, or High Intensity Interval Training (over a shorter period of time), which is characterized by alternating between periods of high- and low-intensity activity during a workout. For example, instead of running on the treadmill at a moderate pace for 30 minutes, you could alternate between sprinting for one minute and then jogging for two minutes.

There is evidence that this alternating intensity technique maximizes fat burning. According to a study published in the Journal of American Physiology, participants who engaged in HIIT activities regularly burned greater amounts of fat and improved their overall cardiovascular fitness. HIIT may work by training the cell's energy centers to burn fat calories before carbohydrate calories.

2. You believe eating fat will make you fat.

All fat is not created equal. There is very healthy fat and very unhealthy fat, and the two should never be confused. The “bad” kind of fat consists of trans-fats, omega 6 fats, and the processed fats that are used to manufacture processed foods. Healthy fats are found in fresh, wild fish; nuts and coconut; grass fed animal meats and pasture raised eggs; avocados and olives. Eating healthy fats in lieu of sugar actually gives us sustained energy, satiation, and more burning of fat for our fuel source.

3. You think fruit is a healthy “go to” snack.

Fruit is not evil, but it does break down into glucose, or sugar, in your intestine. Your body does not care if the sugar is from a healthy source or not. Its very presence causes insulin to be released, and when excess glucose is present, the insulin will direct its storage into fat. Fruit intake should be moderated, like all sweets. The best choices are antioxidant-rich berries and pitted fruits.

4. You think DIET soda doesn't count.

Most diet foods register as little or zero calories but still cause a spike in insulin levels, which causes the body to store fat. Other chemicals in diet foods, like MSG, have also been shown to induce obesity.

5. You think happy hour doesn't count because you are eating small portions.

It is easy to underestimate the metabolic changes that occur after a drink (or two), especially when you are rationalizing the money saved from the happy hour discount. Add a small plate of fried food and you have just sent your metabolism reeling into a tailspin before dinner has even started.

6. You're stressed and have been for years.

Any type of stress, whether internal or external, causes the body to enter into a state of self-preservation. This results in altered hormone levels, especially cortisol. Prolonged stimulation of the fight or flight response results in increased fat storage in the mid-section.

7. You eat gluten-free but don't limit your grains.

As mentioned above, processed carbohydrates manipulate your blood sugar and insulin levels. Over time, your cells become insulin resistant, which makes it very difficult for your body to burn fat effectively, regardless of exercise and caloric intake.

8. You skip naps for the gym and stay up late to watch your favorite program.

Lack of sleep is a constantly overlooked source of weight gain. Our sleep patterns have a significant impact on our hormone levels, in particular, cortisol and growth hormone. Disruptions in these hormones lead to weight gain by changing your metabolism, increasing cravings and your emotional relationship with food.

In the end, the best way to lose weight is to adopt a balanced lifestyle. This includes eating good fats and non-processed, non-diet foods, moving your body regularly and effectively, obtaining adequate amounts of sleep, and finding healthy ways to manage stress. Although there is, unfortunately, no miracle diet which is true and permanent, the tips mentioned above can guide you to a healthier, fitter lifestyle which will continue even after the extra pounds melt away.

Dr. Nicole Ortiz is the co-owner of Live Well Clinic and a Naturopathic Doctor with a focus in preventative cardiology. For more information call (760) 771-5970 or visit www.livewellclinic.org.

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BEATING MS & Other Autoimmune Diseases

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environmental factors like diet and lifestyle which accounts for 70-95% of the risks for getting MS.

If you have two parents with MS, it has been scientifically determined that you have a 30% risk of getting the disease. That leaves at least 70% due to environmental factors that are often within your control. Hundreds of scientific studies and papers indicate that diet and lifestyle issues account for 70-97% of the risk for acquiring MS, and for the risk of the relative disease severity.

What is standard care for autoimmune disease and MS?

TW: Standard care is some kind of immune suppressing drug, and because the immune cell function is critical to the normal working of our cells, these drugs usually come with a long list of side effects that can be mild to life threatening.

And there is usually a large impact on the quality of life. So you trade off feeling worse today – which you are happy to do – because you are afraid of being totally disabled tomorrow.

The beauty of *The Wahls Protocol* is that the quality of life significantly improves. People's energy and mental clarity steadily improve, and they look more youthful.

This is what I see in all my clinics, that the major side effect in following this protocol is that you actually feel better.

Why aren't more people with MS turning to diet and lifestyle to help control symptoms?

TW: People have to be ready, and to be ready, you need to understand how diet, toxins, exercise and flow balance influence the biochemistry in your cells and create health from an inflamed and

sickly diseased state.

Once people understand, they are usually surprised that there is so much within their own means that they can do to get better.

We are going to eat things that taste good and feel good, so we are going to eat a lot of refined sugar, white flour and casein. We are addicted to all of these things; they release dopamine (stimulating our pleasure center in the brain). So in order for anyone to get over this addiction, they need to understand why particular foods can be harmful, and why particular foods can be incredibly nourishing.

This understanding is necessary for people to make significant lifestyle changes.

What role do nutraceuticals (dietary supplements, herbal products, and or isolated nutrient formulas) play in

The Wahls Protocol?

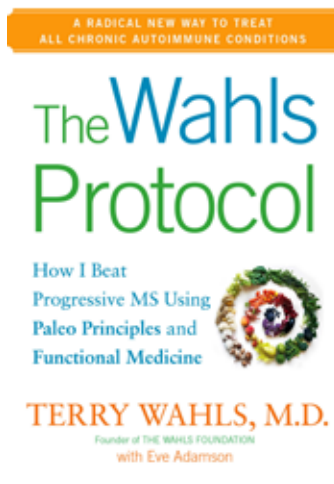
TW: Nutraceuticals do have a place, but should not replace nutrient-dense foods. I think a very thoughtful approach to supplements can be helpful. In my book, I tell people how to work with their primary care physician. I don't do any functional medicine testing in my clinical practice, and I get incredible results. If we don't get the results we were hoping for, then I do turn to functional medicine evaluation because the patient may need to be evaluated for parasites or more excessive toxin issues.

I feel that it is better to spend your money on nutritional food and learn how to work with your primary care physician than to buy your vitamins and minerals in nutraceutical form.

What happens now if you eat foods you have removed from your diet?

TW: If I eat gluten, within 48 hours my

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New Breast Implants Add Shape and Longevity

By Lauren Del Sarto

The first silicone breast prosthesis was introduced in 1961. Since then, implants have gone through five generations of design to make them feel and look more like natural breasts without compromising safety.

Silicone breast implants (which resemble a rounded translucent or semi-opaque jelly fish) were designed to add volume and shape to the breast, but some of their less desirable attributes included scarring around the implant and folding of the implant shell.

These attributes have been reduced with the newest generation of "shaped" prosthesis now on the market (think tear drop over rounded). These FDA-approved implants, which come in a variety of shapes and sizes, are made of a more high-strength cohesive silicone gel and a thicker shell to preserve the shape.

"Early on 1 out of 3 patients would get a capsular contracture around the breast implant, which if left in place for long periods of time would actually calcify becoming the consistency of thick egg shell," says board-certified plastic surgeon, Dr. Maja Ruetschi who has seen many technological advances in her thirty-plus years of practice. She adds that all of the shaped implants are textured (versus smooth) since they have to be properly oriented in the breast pocket and stay in place perfectly. "It has been shown that scarring is minimized with the use of textured surfaces – another advantage of these shaped implants."

"A palpable edge of a silicone gel implant, sometimes even folds of the implant edge, can be of concern," adds Ruetschi, "especially at the fold of the breast where the tissue is thin."

Ruetschi feels that this new generation of shaped implants addresses two important issues. "It is not only the different shapes from which my patients and I can now choose; it is also the difference of the gel that is used within these implants. While still soft to the touch, it is a little bit firmer, which helps keep the shape and alleviate folding."

Because of their tear drop design, the implants can only be placed in one direction and must not turn around in the implant cavity. "These improvements will be most beneficial for thin people who have less breast tissue to hide folds," she adds. "And thin people are the ones most likely to get implants for augmentation due to lack of breast tissue."

There are only three companies who provide FDA-approved breast implants in the United States: Allergan, Mentor, and Sientra. The first to introduce these new textured, shaped implants, Sientra sells their products only to board-certified plastic surgeons. The products are approved for breast augmentation in women 22 years or older, or for breast reconstruction due to cancer, birth defects, trauma, or revision of previous breast implant surgery.

Dr. Maja Ruetschi welcomes your questions and can be reached at (760) 340.1199 or aesthdoc@aol.com. For more information visit www.sientra.com.

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BEATING MS & Other Autoimmune Diseases

Continued from page 19

face pain will turn on and I will probably have some other neurological deficit. If I am exposed to proteins to which I will have an immune reaction, the inflammation in my body sharply increases and I have neurological symptoms. That will be this way forever.

What is the status of your clinical studies?

TW: The Wahls Protocol elements are such radical new ways of treating MS that the review committee granted 10 subjects initially and required a safety and feasibility study upon which they would decide if we could add 10 more.

This report was written and published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* and answered the standard questions: Can people do it? Yes. Did we hurt anyone? No. There were very minor side effects, such as, if you were overweight, you lost weight without being hungry and got back to an ideal body mass.

All 20 of our subjects have finished 12 months of the program, and papers will be coming within the next year and a half on the impacts on fatigue, walking and balance, thinking and memory, MRI results (brain size and lesions, which are common with MS), and nutritional status change.

We also have studies on e-stim and exercise and one using nutrition only which will finish up in December.

What is the greatest knowledge you have learned and can share with others struggling with autoimmune disease, and their doctors?

TW: Life is a series of self-correcting chemical reactions. When that stops, you die. So the key to recovery when you have a chronic disease is to flood yourself with the vitamins, minerals and essential antioxidants you need, and to lose the things that are toxic to your cells, or that cause abnormal immune responses, and to let that self-correcting chemistry do its magic.

For many disease states, you can arrest the disease progression, and then when you keep flooding the cells with good

nutrition and taking away the toxins, that self-correcting chemistry will 'youthen' the person. Their chronic symptoms will diminish, and then their need for medication - for things like blood pressure, blood sugar and fatigue - will diminish. If you are on a disease modifying immunosuppressant drug and start to show functional improvement and are doing extremely well, that is when we can have the conversation with the treating physician on whether or not you want to try very slowly tapering off those disease-modifying drugs (If you have healed enough that you no longer need them).

This has to be done slowly and cautiously and only after there is evidence of healing at the cellular level.

Where is your progress now?

TW: I don't have the physical capabilities of a fully healthy 58 year-old, but I continue to get further and further into more normal capabilities.

Seven years into my protocol, and standing for two hours can be challenging, but then again, I was unable to stand at all. My goal is to become athletic again. I have been working out every day of my life since I was 18. I competed nationally in Tae Kwon Do back then, and although I will probably not return to that sport, I would like to go mountain biking with my spouse one day.

I still have multiple sclerosis, but now I have life back.

Desert Health® is honored to be bringing Dr. Terry Wahls to the Desert Monday, May 19. The event is free and open to the public; however, space is limited and RSVPs are required. This special presentation is part of the Eisenhower Wellness Institute's Wellness Speakers Series and will be held at the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences on the Eisenhower campus in Rancho Mirage. To reserve your seat, please call (760) 610.7360. The Wahls Protocol will be available for purchase, and a book signing will follow the presentation and Q&A.

References: 1) www.wikipedia.org. Def Functional Medicine, 2) Terry Wahls, MD, The Wahls Protocol (Penguin Group NY, 2014) p.10



Retirement Planning – Start Now.

By Reesa Manning, Vice President & Senior Financial Advisor

After 40 or 50 years of working, you could find yourself retired for another 20 or 30. To support yourself without a job for 20 or 30 years, you should be planning for retirement during your entire working life. However, your concerns and strategies for retirement will change as you age.

In Your 20's. While you may just be getting started in your career, don't squander the long time period before retirement that can help your retirement funds grow and compound. Saving even small amounts can help you accumulate significant sums by retirement age. For instance, if you invest \$2,000 per year from age 25 to age 65 in a tax-deferred account earning 8% annually; you could potentially accumulate \$518,113 by age 65. (This example is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to project the performance of a specific investment vehicle.)

In Your 30's. Typically, even though your income is rising, your expenses are also growing as you buy a home and start a family. However, don't lose sight of retirement, since you still have significant time before retirement to help your funds grow. Look for ways to remain committed to saving, even as your expenses are increasing. For instance, whenever you receive a raise, put some of it into your 401(k) plan so you don't get used to spending that money.

In Your 40's. While you still have quite a while before retirement, it's time to get serious about saving for retirement. If you haven't saved much during your 20's and 30's, you need to really commit to saving for retirement. Make sure you are saving the maximum in your 401(k) plan and also look at contributing to an IRA.

In Your 50's. Retirement is no longer that far away. It's time to assess where you stand and whether your retirement plans are realistic.

Make sure you have an accurate assessment of how much money you'll

need in retirement and compare that to your estimated retirement income sources. If you are short, consider revising your plans. You may need to work longer, scale back your retirement plans, or save more.

Take advantage of catch-up contributions once you turn 50. In 2014, you can make a \$5,500 catch-up contribution to your 401(k) plan, if permitted by the plan. An individual IRA allows a \$5,500 contribution plus a \$1,000 catch up contribution.

In Your 60's and Beyond. Go through your expenses and expected retirement income sources one more time to make sure you haven't forgotten anything. Determine when you can start drawing retirement benefits, such as Social Security, Medicare, and pension plans. Before you start withdrawals from your 401(k) plans and IRAs, consider all relevant factors. You don't want to drain those funds too quickly.

Consider working on at least a part-time basis during the early years of your retirement. This will help keep you active while also supplementing your retirement savings. It is better to work now than to find out late in retirement, when your health may not permit you to work, that you have run out of retirement savings.

It's never too early to start your retirement planning.

Reesa Manning is Vice President and Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management, specializing in retirement and income planning. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834.7200, or reesa@IWMgmt.com.

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Got New Health Care? Wait, There's More...
Keeping thorough records may earn you money back

By Randy Foulds

Now that you enrolled in a new health insurance plan, it is up to you to get the most out of it - including tax deductions.

California led the way in enrolling previously uninsured Americans during the recent ACA open enrollment. It didn't go smoothly, and it sure wasn't easy. In the end, over one million Americans enrolled in private health insurance plans through Covered CA and another 2 million were added to Medi-Cal. But that's not the end of your responsibility.

If you enrolled through Covered CA, you must report any significant changes during the year ahead: changes in income, jobs, family members, marital status, names, addresses, etc. All must be reported to Covered CA, preferably online or through your health insurance agent. Many changes, especially income, may affect your subsidy amount. It is important these changes are reported so that the amounts are correct at year-end tax time.

Keep a record of how much you pay for your health insurance premiums and how much subsidy you receive. Remember, the subsidy is an advance tax credit. You will need these amounts when you file your 2014 tax return. Even if you didn't receive the advance tax credit, you may receive the credit at year end if your taxable income is less than you estimated. In other words, if you paid more than you had to in health insurance premiums, the tax credit may be available to you at year-end.

If you are over 65, your Medicare supplement premiums and your long-term care premiums may also be tax deductible. Keep your records current each month and have those amounts handy at year end. As you age, the tax deduction limit increases. For many, this adds up to a deduction well into the thousands.

If you are under 65, this year will be a tough haul finding doctors, specialists and facilities that all fall under the "in-network" part of your new plan. Your primary care physician can usually help with this, but it's up to you to ensure you have utilized your physician's network to maximize your benefits. If you are scheduled for any procedure, don't assume everyone is in-network. Radiologist, anesthesiologist, day surgery - maybe even skilled nursing facility - all have to be coordinated and you may end up having to choose between more convenience or better coverage.


Insurers and Covered California are already very optimistic about next year's open enrollment. Premium adjustments will be calculated, benefits may be added or reduced, and, we hope, provider networks will be expanded or even consolidated.

We are in the infancy of major changes in access to affordable health care. Let us know how it's working for you, and what you think needs to be changed.

Randy Foulds is a Certified California Exchange Health Insurance Agent (license #0G69218) with Feldmann Insurance and can be reached at (760) 346.6565.




ACA: If your taxable income is less than you estimated, you may receive a year-end tax credit



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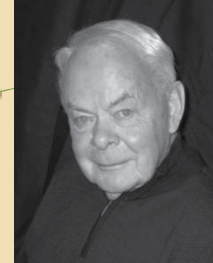
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MEDITATION

Stalingrad 1942 was one of the most savage battles in military history. My father, a reluctant German infantry soldier (the other option would have been execution) was wounded and sent back from the front. That saved his life and for me, the guide of my life. He never talked about what it was like. Except that an old Russian mamushka rubbed him back to life before he froze to death. His hair had turned from blond to white and his face was etched by suffering.

After the war he returned to a totally destroyed country, just ruins, hardly any food, no coal or wood, no work, no money for his family – a nation mired in shame. Survival is a powerful instinct. We survived somehow. After years, Germany rose from the ashes, as we witness it in the present.

I was too young at 12 years to know about my father's affinity for Eastern religions. It was an instinct in him, a feeling. It must have given him hope, strength and a connection to the universe.

My father meditated. Much later did I learn what that meant. Today, I know that his resilience and wisdom came from his study of Buddhism, a peaceful, nature-oriented, deeply contemplative religion. It saved his life and the life of his family. Meditation is powerful.

Meditation has been with us as long as humanity. It includes guidance to promote relaxation, build energy of life force, and develop compassion, peace, love, patience, generosity and forgiveness.

Meditation originated with Eastern religions where it is an integral part of life. In a universal sense, one can meditate or contemplate in any religion, or no religion, in nature, under the stars, a tent, a house, a church, a temple – just about anywhere. The health benefits are numerous. It also helps us to cope with life in our later years.

The rapid advances of technology have propelled our minds and bodies into extreme stress. We are in the midst of an epidemic of hypertension (the medical term for high blood pressure) which predisposes us to atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), heart attacks and strokes. Meditation has clinically proven to lower hypertension and control it, with young and old patients alike.

Companies such as Google, Facebook, and Twitter are teaching their employees meditation and mindfulness to better adjust to a wired world. That is a huge testimony and example.

There are many types of meditation practices: yoga, Transcendental Meditation (TM), vipassana, Mahayana, Sufism, and Taoism to name a few. If you choose to try meditation, study and follow the one which suits you best.

For me, a combination of self-hypnosis and meditation offers simplicity – and it works. It is taught locally by Michael Meyers (visit www.MichaelMyersHypnotherapist.com). I also recommend the book *The Relaxation Response* by Herbert Benson, MD.

George can be reached at ugadolph@live.com.

My Head Is Spinning

Dizziness with Dr. Kato

Dear Dr. Kato: My wife is 77 years old. She is having increasing problems with her balance and has fallen several times. I'm very concerned that something serious may happen. Is this vertigo?

Dear Reader: Balance disorders are common in the elderly, not only resulting in distressing sensations, but also leading to reduced activity levels and quality of life. It is estimated that 30% of seniors experience a balance disorder. Abnormalities of balance are associated with falls – a major cause of morbidity and mortality for the elderly.

Presbystasis ("prez-bee-stay-sis") is a diagnosis also known as "disequilibrium of aging." Individuals with this disorder have generalized imbalance, but do not have spinning vertigo. The imbalance is primarily noticed when walking. Those affected complain of unsteadiness and often hold onto walls or other objects to steady themselves. They typically do not have any imbalance when sitting or lying down.

There are several factors that contribute to this aging-related balance dysfunction:

1. Decline in vestibular (inner ear) function;
2. Eye disorders (glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration);
3. Disorders of peripheral sensory organs (peripheral vascular disease, neuropathy, etc.);
4. Arthritis disorders (particularly of the cervical spine);
5. Multi-sensory disorders (e.g., diabetes).

The diagnosis of presbystasis is made by a thorough history and physical examination, typically by an ear specialist (neurotologist). Inner ear testing, including an audiogram and a battery of vestibular tests are helpful in making the diagnosis. Radiologic scans may or may not be necessary.

The primary treatment for presbystasis is balance rehabilitative therapy (vestibular rehab). The goal of therapy is to rehabilitate individuals to the maximum extent possible, and to combine this rehabilitation with other strategies, e.g., canes or walkers, as necessary so that individuals can try to regain their independence and ability to walk with confidence. Fall prevention is a critical goal, as the consequences of a fall can be serious: broken bones, concussions, or even death.

Vestibular rehab therapy is an individualized intervention strategy. Therapy is customized to address each person's needs, and includes:

1. Exercises to improve visual and inner ear neurological connections;
2. Exercises to maximize the use of visual and sensory inputs;
3. Exercises to diminish pathological responses;
4. Exercises to strengthen the musculoskeletal system.

Balance therapy has been shown to be effective at reducing fall risk for both young and old. Individual therapy sessions as mentioned above, and even group balance therapy programs have been proven to improve balance in patients over the age of 65.

Dr. Maya Kato is the founder of The Ear Institute in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 565.3900.

Sources upon request.



Taking on New Challenges, One Brush Stroke at a Time

Stroke survivor Madelina Agawin lets nothing stand in her way

By Nicky Valle

Facing challenges and problem solving are strengths that Madelina Agawin has relied upon since she was a young woman, and they have formed the complex mosaic of who she is as a person today.

Early on, Madelina's father instilled in her the importance of education and being disciplined in her approach to achieving her goals. Inspired by that upbringing, she began college at the age of 16, and earned an MS in Civil Engineering before moving to the United States with her soon to be husband in 1967. Madelina continued her education while raising a son, and earned an MBA in Civil Engineering.

In 1984, Madelina accepted a job with General Dynamics and moved from Chicago to Groton, Connecticut (the submarine capital of the world). She worked as a Project Engineer for nuclear submarine programs, and under General Dynamics' direction, pursued a certification in Nuclear Engineering.

It was during her employment there in 1991 that Madelina suffered a cerebral aneurysm, resulting in a hemorrhagic stroke that left her paralyzed on her right side and aphasic. After several years of physical rehabilitation, she relocated to the desert to be closer to her son. Not long after, Madelina became a client and guest speaker at the Stroke Recovery Center in Palm Springs, where she talked candidly about the arduous process of healing.

"The value of the Stroke Recovery Center is that we treat the whole person, not just their presenting physical need," says Beverly Greer, the organization's Chief Executive Officer and a recognized expert in healthcare administration. "There are four pillars of treatment that we use in helping patients return to living productive lives: exercise therapy and recreation therapy, including speech, nutrition, and socialization. This comprehensive approach to healing is unique in the United States, and we are proud to have achieved continued positive results for clients like Madelina."

In typical fashion, Madelina faced her physical and speech limitations as challenges. To her, they were merely problems that she needed to solve, and with this attitude, she managed to thrive in spite of her physical ordeal.

"Although I couldn't speak, my brain was intact!" she explains. "The engineer in me wanted to figure out how I could do it by myself. I know I will never be the way I once was, but I have slowly

figured out a way to live well, and I am thriving in a new normal."

Over time, Madelina's speech improved. She learned to use her non-dominant left hand and taught herself how to work a computer. Having to use a wheelchair for most activities has not restricted her drive to experience as much as possible in life, and in her own words, "I go everywhere."

That is an understatement. In March 2005, Madelina boarded a bus for Arizona and embarked upon a three-day trip (alone) to tour the Grand Canyon. To date, she has written three books. As if she wasn't already enjoying a full and independent life, Madelina decided to take up painting three years ago, an activity that she admits she never would have considered before her stroke.

"I find great pleasure in the challenge that painting portraits provides me," she says. "I met an artist who encouraged me to try it, and when I decided I wanted to learn, I asked to be shown how to do the most challenging

type of painting, which is portraiture. Much to my surprise, I found that I really love it and it transports me to another place."

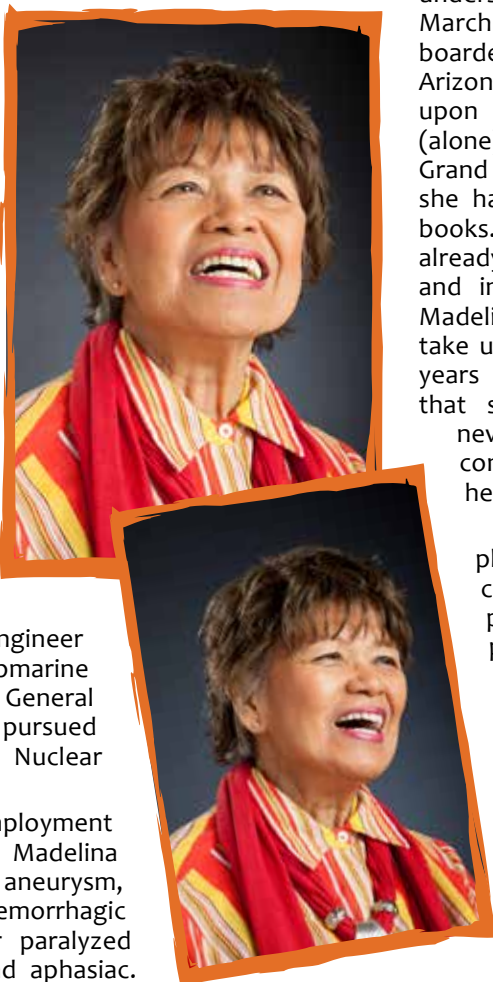
Whether she is using acrylics or pastels, Madelina approaches her art with the same concentration and discipline she has applied to all aspects of her life: education, career, motherhood and stroke recovery. She is happy to say that she's found the secret to 'living well,' post-stroke.

"I live alone and I'm fiercely independent. It was very important for me to maintain that sense of independence, and I knew I didn't want a caregiver. It's a daily challenge to me, but I wouldn't have it any other way."

Founded in 1978 by Dr. Irving Hirschleifer, the Stroke Recovery Center offers long-term rehabilitation to the survivors of stroke and TBI, along with support for their families, caregivers, and loved ones. Services are structured to each client's need and also include counseling,

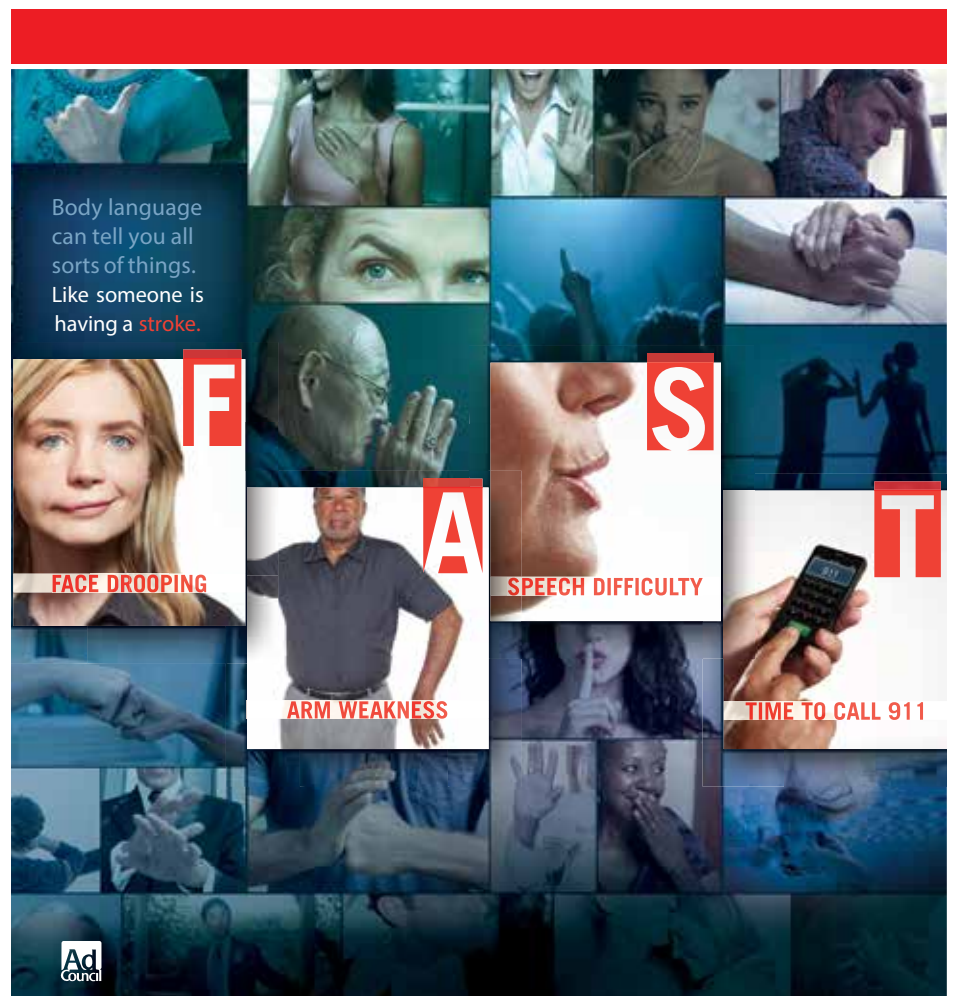
education, nutrition, socialization, and just plain fun. All services are free, since insurance coverage does not currently exist for the long-term treatment of stroke or TBI.

For more information, please call (760) 323-7676 or visit www.StrokeRecoveryCenter.org.



"The engineer in me wanted to figure out how I could do it by myself. I know I will never be the way I once was, but I have slowly figured out a way to live well, and I am thriving in a new normal."

— Madelina



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The Flavor or Essence Two Bunch Palms will take you away

A Desert Health Review

For my birthday, my husband surprised me with a weekend getaway to Two Bunch Palms. We had heard about their renovation and renewed focus on wellness, so we were excited to check it out.

We always enjoyed visiting Casino, the resort's 1920s-style restaurant with its fireplace, dark wood and velvet chairs; however, Casino brought to mind cigars and whiskey, not spa and wellness.

Before we even checked in, we peeked at the transformation and were WOWED. Gone is the cherry wood and velvet, replaced with blonde wood floors and a variety of organic, earthy materials. The new Essence is absolutely spectacular, a true work of art!

We checked in and were warned about the "overly friendly inhabitants" at the pond. That sparked my interest and I circled it on the map. On the way to our room, I couldn't help but feel the serenity of this place. While only 15 minutes above the valley floor, you feel worlds away in this lush wooded retreat. It is so very quiet; you quickly come to appreciate their silent cell phone policy.

We threw on our bathing suits, wrapped in robes, and headed to the grotto to enjoy the mineral hot spring. As we soaked, the weight of the world immediately started to melt away and you begin to relax. We heard languages from around the world and realized that the mineral waters of Desert Hot Springs are a luxury we locals don't enjoy as often as we should.

As the sun began to set, we took a stroll and found ourselves at the pond. Walking to the edge, we were greeted by a menagerie of ducks, turtles and even fish that came out of the water to welcome us. I couldn't stop smiling - they just kept coming! Note to self... bring treats next time.

We continued our stroll to Essence for dinner. (That is one of the great things about Two Bunch, you can go anywhere in your robes, and many do). From the thoughtful lounge bites to the beautifully crafted cuisine on the main menu, the biggest challenge was wrapping

our relaxed brains around a choice. There are so many healthy, organic options, I was glad we had more than one meal to enjoy!

Sharing was a given and we settled on autumn local squash bisque and the beet salad with organic honey, local goat cheese, oranges and almonds to start; followed by the wild Alaskan salmon with pickled vegetable slaw, and a gluten-free pasta with fall squash, Brussels sprouts, local beans, cranberries and hazelnuts. Our meal was accented by an organic white wine. Life never tasted so good!

Every bite of each dish produced a myriad of flavors. It was "to die for" good - not only because of the unique combinations of ingredients, but also because we knew each forkful was nourishing our bodies.

These unique creations are hand-crafted by Chef Thomas Hogan who brings his dedication to fresh ingredients and talent for blending flavors to Essence. "Chef Tom" honed his style working with top chefs like Elka Gilmore, a pioneer chef in fusion cuisine, and raw vegan chef Roxanne Klein, from whom his signature style in raw, vegan, and fusion cuisine would evolve.

After a peaceful night's sleep, we awoke rested and ready to see what breakfast would bring. We started with a "hand crafted healing drink" from the organic juice bar (The Green Bull with pineapple, spinach, kale, celery, broccoli, wheat grass and spirulina - YUM!). It was so good that we ordered a second (Hani's Magic with kale, celery, spinach, beet, apple and ginger) and saved our appetites for lunch...the beet and lentil burger (with almond butter inside) and the certified grass-fed Angus beef burger - beyond exceptional!

This time I saved some lettuce and sweet potato fries for my little friends at the pond. Needless to say, I was a hit.

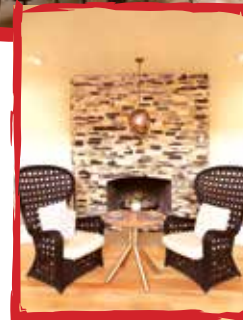
Leaving Two Bunch Palms, we felt revitalized, nourished, and in touch with nature. I can't remember ever having that many tasty, nutritious meals in a row - or going to a single restaurant resort and looking forward to each meal.

Take a day and visit Two Bunch Palms. They have a variety of "day pass" packages offering grotto soaking, spa treatments and even movement classes. This way you will be able to enjoy more than one meal at the incomparable Essence.

Essence is located at Two Bunch Palms (67425 Two Bunch Palms Trail) in Desert Hot Springs. They serve breakfast, lunch and dinner 7 days a week and are open to the public. Essence can be reached at (760) 329.8791 or visit www.twobunchpalms.com.



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Kinesiotape™: A Cutting Edge Modality for Treating Injuries

By Michael K Butler B.A.;P.T.A.;CSCS*D;RSCC*D NMT

If you were watching the 2012 Summer Olympics, you saw many athletes walking around with colorful tape applied to various parts of their bodies. Many were experiencing aches and pains, while others just needed a little protective security for muscular support. This trendy looking modality is called Kinesiotape™. In 1973, Dr. Kenzo Kase, a well-known and respected Japanese chiropractor, developed the miraculous tape and formed the Kinesiotaping Association International.

What is the tape useful for? Kinesiotape™ is useful for many acute injuries such as ligament sprains (ankles, knees and hips), muscle strains (epicondylitis, hamstring strain, trochanteric bursitis rotator cuff tears), and is also helpful with lymphatic and myofascial problems. Basically, it can be helpful with most skin and musculoskeletal issues. It has also been useful for joint protection during athletic events as it provides a mental security blanket for some athletes recovering from an injury/surgery/rehab.

What is the property of the tape? Kinesiotape™ is comprised of 100% cotton fibers which allow for evaporation of body moisture. Because the tape lifts the skin from the surface, this also allows for increased blood flow and quicker healing time from injuries. It has been designed to allow for a longitudinal stretch of 40% of its resting length based upon 2 inches of width. But it can stretch up to 60% and its effectiveness can last 3-5 days.

Is it expensive? Kinesiotape™ is inexpensive compared to other tapes. A normal roll that is 16.5' long costs about \$12 a roll, while Rocktape costs \$18-20 for the same size roll.

How does it work? One of the unique qualities of Kinesiotape™ is that it can be used for all stages of injury from initial (acute), to subacute, chronic, and to rehabilitation stages of clinical presentations. Dr. Kase believed the elastic therapeutic tape should mimic the qualities of the skin, so he designed the tape to stretch between 40-60% of its resting length, which is approximately the stretch capability of the skin in areas such as the knee and cervical spine. The tape is applied to the selected structure of choice and will mimic the movement without restriction of that particular region.

Are there other tapes on the market that provide the same effect? Rock tape, KT Tape and Spidertech are the 3 most popular brands on the market. However, Kinesiotape™ is the only company with a multilevel practitioner program on education and proper application of the tape. Research (although limited to 98 studies over 40 years) has shown great benefits and use of the tape for inflammation and support. The unique qualities of the tape: 1) that it allows for quick absorption of sweat, and bonding time to the structure; 2) the wearability of up to 5 days; and 3) the fact that it does not limit motion, make Kinesiotape™ the choice of champions!

Michael Butler is co-owner of Kinetix Health and Performance Center and can be reached at (760) 200.1719 or at michael@kinetixcenter.com.



The elastic therapeutic tape mimics the qualities of the skin and is unrestricting

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Michael K. Butler,
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See the CryoTherapy Chill Pass on page 17!

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Managing MS Through Movement

By Lauren Del Sarto

Lynne Risdon of Palm Desert has an energetic spirit and enthusiastic smile. She speaks with determination and grace and appears much younger than her 62 years.

You would never know that Lynne has lived with the diagnosis of multiple sclerosis for 22 years. She attributes her fit condition to exercise and nutrition and is grateful for the support she receives through Act for MS, the valley's only resource exclusively for locals living with MS. The organization provides programs aimed at improving quality of life such as fitness, yoga, massage therapy, social interaction, and counseling – all at no cost to clients.

They share Lynne's philosophy on research and understand that nutrition and movement help manage MS symptoms. "Because of the fatigue that accompanies MS, clinicians once questioned whether exercise was good for patients," says Program Director Anne Pope, who adds that research now encourages exercise.

Act for MS offers individually customized programs with personal trainers at Next Level Fitness, Zach's Fitness (formerly Creek's) and World Gym of Palm Springs. Lynne is an active member at Zach's Fitness which also has two vibration plates specifically purchased for MS therapy.

Lynne also makes sure she gets 8-9 hours of sleep a night, and since last year, has been gluten, dairy and sugar free. She eats organic foods, drinks large quantities of water, and takes supplements. She hasn't taken medication in several years.

For Lynne, her nutritional choices and fitness have helped reduce symptoms. "The stabbings in my back and burning on my skin have disappeared," she says, as has the fibromyalgia with which she was also diagnosed. Her body more readily eliminates toxins and she feels healthy.

Lynne is grateful for the friendships and services that Act for MS provides. Anne returns the appreciation calling Lynne "a definite inspiration" to others in their organization.

Act for MS is located in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 773.9806. For more information visit www.ActforMS.org.



Lynne Risdon, determined and fit at 62



The Act for MS exercise team (from top left): Marilyn Yeates, Lynne Risdon, Mariellen Boss; trainers Zach Adams, Crystal West, and Creek Williams. (Front row): Amy Zendle, Maria Scribner, Pat Harabedian, and Rene Hurtado



“Operation Splash” Scholarships Available through May 30
Swim lessons and open swim passes offered to Valley kids

For the seventh consecutive year, residents in the Coachella Valley can enjoy the benefits of swim lessons or open swim passes at no charge, thanks to a \$55,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente to the Desert Recreation District.

Scholarships for swim lessons, open swim passes and Jr. Lifeguard Programs will be awarded to local residents as part of Kaiser Permanente’s Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) program. The programs will be offered at all Desert Recreation District managed facilities which include Pawley Pool Family Aquatic Complex in Indio, Bagdouma Pool in Coachella, and Mecca Pool in Mecca. Swim passes can be used at the pools for which the scholarship is awarded.

Applications for scholarships are being accepted now through May 30th and are available at Desert Recreation District Community Centers in Indio, Coachella, Mecca, Palm Desert and La Quinta, or online at MyRecreationDistrict.com.

Open swim passes and swim lesson confirmations will be distributed at the Operation Splash kick-off event on June 14 at Pawley Pool, 46-350 S. Jackson Street in Indio. The event is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. and will feature open swim followed by a short presentation by Kaiser Permanente at 10:00 a.m. Pool passes and lesson confirmations will be distributed after the presentation.

The Desert Recreation District supports communities throughout the Coachella Valley by partnering with them to encourage healthy lifestyles, wellness activities and positive out-of-school programs. The District maintains quality park and recreation facilities and trails; initiates and delivers programs and services; and facilitates leisure opportunities for residents of all ages. Programs vary by community.

For more information, contact Desert Recreation District at (760) 347-3484 or visit MyRecreationDistrict.com. Para informacion en Español (760) 396.0257.



Coachella Valley’s Health Care Industry
MENTORING THE FUTURE
Brought to you by CVEP’s Health Care Council



Palm Springs High School (PSHS) Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) Chapter: The Future Looks Bright

Palm Springs High School Academy of Learning Medicine (PALM) students are learning skills not often seen in the traditional classroom, thanks to advisory meetings with local business partners.

With input from local health care practitioners, PALM staff members have incorporated lessons into their curriculum which emphasize career-related soft skills, such as verbal communication and presentation for the work place. Medical professionals have emphasized that they can teach employees the practical or hands-on skills needed, but employees must arrive already possessing the basics.

Each year, the health academy students of Palm Springs High School are involved in either job shadowing, interning at local hospitals or doctor’s offices, or as student athletic trainers as part of the PSHS Sports Medicine Team.

But these additional classroom lessons help take them a step further, as shown at the recent HOSA California state competition.

HOSA is a national professional organization for high school and college students pursuing a career in the health

field. The organization offers students programs to develop and practice leadership and soft skills needed for success in their chosen career field. As part of the program, PALM students present at local school board and Rotary club meetings, and serve as mentors to middle school students involved in the JUMP (Junior Upcoming Medical Professionals) program.

At the competition, twenty-seven out of fifty-nine PSHS students were top ten finalists in their respective events, and seven of the top ten finalists in the Sports Medicine Competition were PALM students.

As a recent PALM guest speaker related to our students, “In order to be selected for employment, you must find a way to set yourself apart from the competition.” Interaction with the medical professionals within our community and association with HOSA place all Valley students involved in a medical career pathway program a step above the rest.

For more information please contact Donna Sturgeon, CVEP Work-Based Learning Director, at Donna@cvep.com (760) 340.1575



Palm Springs High School’s HOSA Chapter

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Chuck, D.A.P. client

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