

# Desert Health®

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

July/August 2015

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## Desert Health® WELLNESS AWARDS

### Proudly Presenting Our Winners

We are proud to recognize the winners of the first annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards.

In a festive celebration on May 20, over 230 health-conscious guests including doctors, health coaches, fitness instructors and wellness fans gathered to learn which finalist would take home the stunning trophy presented to those making a positive impact on the health and wellness of our community.

Winners included a landmark spa, a training center producing pro athletes, a local doctor who is prescribing wellness, a program that feeds thousands of Coachella Valley kids, and a non-profit that is saving lives started by a high school student.

Presented by Desert Regional Medical Center and JFK Memorial Hospital, the Desert Health® Wellness Awards received over 50 nominations from peers and community supporters in five categories: large business, small business, individual, event or program, and non-profit. Three finalists were selected in each category and winners were announced at the event.



The Desert Health® Wellness Award

The evening also featured integrative doctor and author Steven Gundry, M.D., who shared his personal journey from overweight surgeon to acclaimed preventative specialist and spoke on "The Future of Integrative Care in Medicine." Special guests included 103-year-old Edith Morrey and entertainer Carol Channing, both who have been featured in *Desert Health®* for the nutritional choices which have contributed to their longevity.

All enjoyed an array of dining stations such as sautéed spaghetti squash topped with mixed vegetables, fresh salmon with quinoa, and grass-fed beef. The "Health Is a Choice" American Classic station featured hamburgers, mac-n-cheese, and Twinkies, and we are sad to report that

all the Twinkies were consumed. :) A silent auction benefiting Coachella Valley's Volunteers in Medicine also helped to raise thousands for the valley's only free medical clinic.

The Desert Health® Wellness Awards were established to further elevate the focus on health and wellness in the Coachella Valley, encouraging all to

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**Doctors have the ability to heal.** Unfortunately, the current health care system has turned many away from their natural ability to do so. But things are changing.

A core aspect of integrative medicine is whole person care by doctors who take the time to listen and understand their patients, and a treatment protocol that incorporates therapies which enhance the body's ability to heal its self.

I was recently invited to attend Eisenhower Medical Center's Annual Primary Care Medical Conference specifically to hear their guest speaker. As I reviewed the agenda, I saw the anticipated topics of neurology, orthopedics, and gynecology, but was pleasantly surprised to also see lectures on integrative medicine, gut health and optimizing the GI ecosystem, and rejuvenation biology.

Their guest speaker, David Rakel, M.D., is director and founder of the University of Wisconsin Integrative Medicine program and associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Wisconsin School of Medical and Public Health. He is board certified by both the American Board of Family Medicine and the American Board of Integrative Holistic Medicine, and is co-editor of *Textbook of Family Medicine* and editor of the go-to textbook *Integrative Medicine*.

As the lead feature in one of our first issues was "U.S. Medical Schools Embrace Integrative Medicine" (March/April 2011), it was exciting to see things come full circle and the practices now taught in our medical schools coming to our local physicians.

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Desert Regional Medical Center's

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## The Picture of Health

I feel certain that it won't be long before integrative medicine becomes standard care.

Impressive progress has been made in the last five years: doctors can now get board certifications in Integrative, Holistic and/or Functional Medicine; clinicians and hospitals are becoming more accepting of what used to be called alternative therapies such as acupuncture, supplementation, and energy medicine; and medical students are now learning integrative medicine as part of their standard curriculum, which is certain to produce a more well-rounded generation of doctors.

I had the privilege of sitting in on a lecture by David Rakel, M.D., editor of the go-to textbook *Integrative Medicine*, as he spoke to primary care physicians and residents at Eisenhower Medical Center. His encouraging words are shared in *Health is a Choice*, and I commend Dr. Joe Scherger for recruiting him to speak to his team.

Things are changing. And nothing is more apparent than the fact that in 2018, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are going to shift their reimbursement model so that 90% is "value over volume" which means physicians will be reimbursed for the number of people they keep well. So, the medical community is ready to listen. (We will write more about this in an upcoming issue).



Greeting special guest Edith Morrey (the picture of health at 103!) at the Desert Health® Wellness Awards. (See more p.22)

The enthusiastic group of new residents in the UCR/Desert Regional program certainly brings new perspectives with them. The 77 young residents now in our valley's two medical schools are sure to teach our local doctors as much as they will learn.

But don't forget... This whole movement started with us - the patients - who are taking control of our health, educating ourselves on all options available, and demanding more.

So keep it up! Let's help our doctors help us stay healthy. Who knows? Maybe one day our health care system will actually portray the picture of health.

*Lauren*  
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## Contagious Enthusiasm Will Serve Valley Well

**UCR Residents bring new perspectives and energy**

By Lauren Del Sarto

The inaugural class of residents in the Desert Regional Medical Center UCR School of Medicine program is an impressive group. Many were chosen because they are more likely to stay in an underserved area after graduation. Some participated in community service while in medical school while others come from a disadvantaged socioeconomic background. The group of 21 display cultural diversity and speak a total of ten different languages among them.

Of course, these qualifications are above and beyond their scholastic achievements; there were 500 applications for 8 positions in family medicine alone.

The expanded specialty program which was accredited by the American Osteopathic Association brings 12 residents, four each focusing in the areas of neurology, neurosurgery, and emergency medicine. These new graduates chose to study osteopathic medicine (DO), which considers a more holistic approach to reach a diagnosis, over allopathic medicine (MD), the more classic form which focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of human disease.

Their arrival from cities across the nation marks the culmination of years of work and time on behalf of both the residents and their mentors and program directors. At the welcome reception in June, the excitement, enthusiasm and pride of all involved were truly contagious.

"These eight (family medicine residents) truly exemplify our mission to improve access to care, expand and diversify our workforce, and address our community needs," said program director Gemma Kim, MD.

Javed Siddiqi, MD, who oversees the neurosurgery program, beamed with pride for those who will spend the next seven years under his direction and care. "When you are through with this program, my 8-year-old son will be 15. So we have adopted all of you for the next seven years. You have a lot of work ahead of you, but we will learn and grow together."

"This is a special day for the entire Coachella Valley because it changes the culture of the medical community," said Randy Culbertson, DO, director of medical education at Desert Regional. He reminded the residents that when this program is completed, it's not over. "When you are a physician, you are a lifelong learner. Don't ever forget that. I have been a doctor for 33 years and continue to learn something every single day."



Caldwell and Siddiqi with the four neurosurgery residents

century has been focused on the body: 'What is wrong with your body?' and 'What am I going to do to fix it?' Now we are thinking more mind, body and spirit, and starting to recognize that these other modalities are making a difference."

Both are very excited – and grateful – to be in the program. Fiani stated that the neurosurgery residency is very rare with only 18 spots throughout the entire country in the 2014 D.O. match. "I love that Desert Regional was able to offer the neurosurgery program in an area that has a strong need for the specialty." The local needs in neurology, neurosurgery, and emergency medicine help shaped the specialty program.

Starting this fall, the program will also see students from all over the country that will be doing 4-week rotations to audition for post-residency positions. Culbertson said hundreds have applied.

All of these brilliant minds with diverse backgrounds and contagious enthusiasm are certain to influence not only the doctors with whom they work, but the entire community.

If you get a chance to meet them along the way, please thank them for choosing the Coachella Valley, and let them know that they are making a difference.



Desert Regional CEO Carolyn Caldwell welcomes the new residents.



Javed Siddiqi, MD, will oversee the neurosurgery residency program.



Drs. Brian Fiani and Stephen Albano are excited to call the desert home for the next seven years (and hopefully longer!).

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### Health is a Choice

Continued from page 1

Although his accreditations are vast, Dr. Rakel focused on his work as a small town doctor. After medical school and a family practice residency in Greeley, Colorado, he spent five years in a rural practice as one of two physicians staffing a 14-bed hospital in Driggs, Idaho. He joked that the town was so small, you never used a blinker because everybody already knew where you were going.

"When you work in a small town, you really get to know about people's lives, and you realize that there are things we can do to really help facilitate complex systems to self-heal." The experience changed his perception of how he practiced medicine. "How can we facilitate change within a complex system so that a person is resilient, healthy and happy? It's a different focus."

"All doctors are trained in pathogenesis (the manner of development of a disease), but what we need to do is create a new expertise in salutogenesis," a term coined in the 1950s by Aaron Antonovsky, a professor of medical sociology to describe an approach focusing on factors that support human health and well-being, rather than on factors that cause disease. "Integrative medicine is a step towards this approach, and is what primary care really is all about."

How can this simply become good medicine? "We all know that this

is more complex than just treating the branch of the tree. We have to look at the dynamic uniqueness of every life within a changing environment. And that requires us to hear the story of every unique person that comes into our care."

**"The sorrow which has no vent in tears may make other organs weep."**

**– On listening to patients, Dr. Rakel quotes Henry Maudsley, a pioneering English psychiatrist in the early 1900s**

In his small practice one of the most effective drugs he prescribed for depression and anxiety was sertraline. "A patient would come into my office, they knew me well and felt comfortable talking about the chaos in their life and how they were feeling. I would listen – hopefully kindly and with compassion – and would say, 'Hey, it's not your fault. You have low serotonin levels. We have a drug for that! It will increase your levels and in a couple of weeks, you'll be back on your feet.' I would write out a prescription and the angels would sing!"

What he was doing was identifying a reason for the way his patient was feeling, creating positive expectations and putting the patient back in a position of control. Then a study on serotonin reuptake inhibitors (such as sertraline) was released showing very little effectiveness of the drug for mild to moderate depression over a placebo where both were effective in 58 percent of cases.

"After going back and looking at all the research, I found that I was fooling myself about the effectiveness

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## Advanced Treatment for Wet AMD

By Camille Harrison, MD

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a condition that can lead to the loss of central vision. For a long time, a patient that progressed to the more advanced “wet” form of the disease was inevitably going to lose the central vision in the eye. Prior to 2005, retina specialists would use laser to destroy the abnormal blood vessels that had grown into the nerve tissue layers. This treatment was effective at destroying the abnormal blood vessels, but it unfortunately also destroyed the overlying retinal tissue leaving patients with significant, often central, blind spots.

In 2005, the first reported cases of the use of a successful medication in the treatment of wet AMD changed everything. The medication was an antibody. An antibody is a protein molecule produced by the body to fight disease. The protein is designed to attach to a bacteria, virus or specific site on a cell. In the case of wet AMD, the antibody was anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF). What scientists had discovered was that in eyes with wet AMD, there was a protein being produced in the eye that stimulated new blood vessel growth. This protein is not found in a healthy eye. In 2004, an antibody to this protein was developed in the lab as a treatment for colon cancer. The therapy works in cancer by blocking the growth of the blood vessels needed for the growth of a tumor. The discovery that this same antibody could stop the growth of abnormal blood vessels in the eyes of animals, not with cancer but instead with wet AMD, was encouraging. The medication was tried in humans and was very successful in halting the progression of wet AMD and restoring vision. The medications that are currently available as anti-VEGF therapies for the eye are Avastin, Lucentis and Eylea.

For wet AMD, the antibodies have to be delivered directly into the eye. Once inside the eye, the antibodies circulate around and search for any molecules of the vascular growth factor that are being produced by the disease. When located, the antibodies attach to the vascular growth factor making it a much larger molecule. In order for the protein to stimulate the growth of new blood vessels, it must attach itself to the blood vessel wall. I explain to patients that this is like attaching to a docking station. When the antibody-protein complex tries to dock, it can no longer fit because it is too large. So, even though the vascular growth factor is in the eye, it is unrecognizable to the blood vessels since it can't attach. Without this growth factor, the newly growing blood vessels die. I liken this to turning off the water to newly sprouting plants. The result is rapid withering and death. This process allows your doctor to damage only the unwanted, abnormally growing blood vessels while leaving the healthy blood vessels and retinal tissue undamaged.

As a result of this remarkable treatment strategy, patients with wet macular degeneration can now look forward to a future without vision loss.

Dr. Harrison is a vitreoretinal specialist with Coachella Valley Retina in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 895.1993.

## AHA Student Program Success

Courtesy of the American Heart Association

Coachella Valley is home to an innovative program launched last summer by the American Heart Association, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership, and a group of enterprising students from Palm Desert High School and Cathedral City High School (*Desert Health*® Nov/Dec 2014).

The objective was to come up with a way to improve the heart and brain health of the student population, while at the same time turning the students into heart and brain health advocates who would take the message home to their families and loved ones.

One year later, organizers are excited to share that the program was an overwhelming success.



AHA's Charlie Shaeffer, M.D., and Steve Weiss with student lecturers Gianfranco Zena, Guadalupe Cervantes, Rafael Sanchez, Javier Romero, Guadalupe Guillen

“We provided these students with a leadership opportunity and the tools to improve the heart and brain health of their peers,” explained American Heart Association Coachella Valley Division Chair Steve Weiss. “But it was up to the students to truly make an impact. It was up to them to actually change lives.”

Those involved were optimistic about the impact the program could have. This optimism proved to be warranted.

In a survey of participants at both schools, 86% “strongly agreed” that the information on cardiovascular health was useful and beneficial, while 90% said they would recommend others attend the Cardiovascular Academy. And to top it off, almost half of those involved in the

program said they talked to 6 or more people about cardiovascular health.

The results were exactly what organizers were hoping to see - the type of results that they hope will lead to a healthier Coachella Valley.

Comments such as, “We learned things that could help us save someone... or ourselves.” And, “You made me change my eating plan diet – helped me know my body more...” reinforced the program's impact.

Those who advocated for the creation of the Health Academy were excited by the results, and the positive feedback.

“The American Heart Association Cardiovascular Academy is an example of the type of programs we need to see more of in our communities,” said Weiss, who was very involved in helping make the Health Academy a reality. “We have amazing students, amazing healthcare professionals, and great resources. We just need to connect them, to empower them, to give them the tools and opportunity to make an impact.”

Based on the results from the pilot program, we know it works.

As a bonus, 79% of students said they are willing to volunteer for other American Heart Association opportunities.

To learn more about the American Heart Association Health Academy or the American Heart Association, please contact executive director, Adrienne Barton, [Adrienne.barton@heart.org](mailto:Adrienne.barton@heart.org).



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# The Link between Oral and Whole Body Health

By Nicholas S. Baumann, DDS

The mouth truly is a window into the health of the rest of the body. Several current studies show a strong correlation between oral health and many of today's most common chronic diseases. In a time in which prescription pharmaceutical use in the United States is continually growing, the possibility of reducing the risk of common ailments through proper oral health is an exciting topic to discuss.

Cardiovascular disease is currently the number one cause of death in the United States. C-reactive protein (CRP) is found in the blood when inflammation is present and has been linked to risk of cardiovascular disease. Studies have also shown that higher CRP levels occur when a patient has active periodontitis (gum disease). Some of the main bacteria responsible for periodontitis have also been found in plaques depositing in the arteries around the heart. By controlling gum health, CRP levels can be lowered suggesting that we might be able to lower the risk of cardiovascular disease simply by taking care of our oral health.

For patients with type two diabetes, research shows a strong correlation between active periodontal disease and how well a patient's blood sugar level is controlled. The link goes both ways too. Patients with poorly controlled blood sugar tend to have higher levels of periodontal disease and those who do nothing other than

improve their periodontal health have shown a decrease in blood sugar levels and better diabetic control. The correlation is strong enough that periodontal disease is now considered the sixth complication of diabetes, and gum health needs to be closely monitored in anyone diagnosed with the condition.

So what can we do to keep our mouth as healthy as possible? It goes beyond what we've been told since we were kids, to brush 3x a day and floss. Now more products are available making it easier to reduce the level of bacteria in our mouths. Electric toothbrushes and water flossers such as Sonicare and Rotadent are great tools that help disrupt the bacteria better than regular brushes and floss do alone. I also believe that a mouth rinse should be a part of everyone's oral hygiene protocol, but be careful to use one that is alcohol free. Many popular brands still have alcohol in them, which can dry out and irritate the tissue. Gels that are peroxide based, such as Perio Protect also do a great job of killing bacteria below the gumline, where they most like to live. Beyond home care, your dentist and dental hygienist can use new technology such as lasers and ozone treatment to help further keep the mouth clean and healthy.

Finally, we can't forget that diet can play a role in bacteria levels in the mouth as well. High levels of sugar and carbohydrates allow harmful bacteria the support to proliferate and grow. Diets higher in protein and dairy take away the important food source from the bacteria. All of these strategies in combination can make a huge difference and lead to a happy, healthy mouth, which translates to better overall health.

Dr. Baumann is with Palm Desert Smiles and can be reached at (760) 568.3602.

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# Addressing Loss Through Psychotherapy

By Barbara Pedalino, PsyD

Psychotherapy generally focuses on change and growth. Why then, would senior adults seek treatment at this stage of their lives? Surely they have experienced decades of growth and change. Have not these unique dimensions of their lives been completed by now?

As a psychologist, I am always impressed when seniors quest new learning. Learning is a lifelong process; thereby, learning fosters growth and change. For seniors, I have found that psychotherapy can be the key to new understanding about loss.

By the time adults become seniors, they have experienced a variety of losses and anticipate further losses. Seniors in my practice describe dealing with the loss of spouses, partners, family members, friends, pets, life roles, and home life as they knew it. They often report feeling better as a result of sharing and being heard. Their careers may take on a new, different direction or they may face retirement. Decline can occur in health, vitality, memory, vision, hearing and mobility, and if not just for themselves, also for those around them. Many couples I work with feel frustrated by escalated arguments; accordingly, we work together on new skills to foster discussion and improve communication. Other loss issues addressed in therapy relate to self sufficiency, finances and independence.

For some, managing loss is very challenging. It can spur the loss of self esteem and feelings of anxiety, grief and depression. Seniors can feel estranged from themselves. This is a time when new coping skills, support systems, novel interests and alternate perspectives can provide relief and revitalization. Thus begins the process for seniors to seek out psychotherapy and learn to transform their current struggles with loss from depression to acceptance and moving forward.

The psychotherapy process for seniors involves a combination of cognitive behavior therapy and reminiscence therapy. It ensues by developing a trusting, supportive relationship with a psychologist or other mental health professional that genuinely cares about their welfare. Cognitive therapy focuses on thoughts and feelings, often negative, with the goal of becoming more positive and hopeful.

Behavior therapy guides clients to explore what they can do successfully, what fresh ingredients they can add, and ways to help themselves feel better in some way. One senior with whom I worked registered for lifelong learning classes, attended concerts, participated in physical activities commensurate with his capabilities, wrote his memoirs and joined a choir. It was not long before he developed friendships, socialized more, discovered his worries had subsided, and felt a renewed sense of accomplishment and purpose.

The goal of reminiscence therapy is to enable stories to unfold - stories of youth to maturation and all the life experiences in between. A treasure chest opens and the richness of history, antics, relics, delights, woes, misgivings and wisdom sparkles once again.

Thus, through the process of psychotherapy, seniors' thoughts and feelings that were triggered by loss can evolve into a rich and meaningful gain.

Dr. Pedalino is a licensed clinical psychologist in Palm Desert whose interest in self-esteem spans all ages. She may be contacted at (760) 702.0878.



## Heartburn (or GERD): When Do I See My Doctor?

By Gary Annunziata, DO

The majority of Americans experience heartburn at one time or another, leading to the real question, "When should you see a health care professional for this condition?"

Heartburn, acid reflux and indigestion are all interchangeable words describing acid entering the esophagus and causing a burning sensation or pain. Another commonly used term for heartburn is GERD which stands for gastro esophageal reflux disease.

The symptoms are usually very distressing and result in taking something such as an over-the-counter antacid to relieve the symptoms, but not all heartburn is alike. Some people describe belching, chest pain or even sinus symptoms. A sore tongue or bitter taste in the mouth can also be symptoms of heartburn.

### How do I prevent heartburn?

The most important factor in the prevention of heartburn or GERD is dietary modification. Being overweight is frequently associated with heartburn. Eating a meal within two hours of bedtime will frequently produce heartburn, especially if the meal was large or included spicy foods, high fat content foods, or carbohydrates. Alcohol intake and coffee are also associated with heartburn.

So prevention is to limit these factors and drink plenty of water. Water creates more saliva which is a natural antacid.

If the dietary changes fail, then over-the-counter medicines are the next step. There are many over-the-counter medicines that are very effective to control heartburn. Even prescription doses of Prilosec are now available and are very effective at controlling heartburn; however, it is important to

note that many of these medications are not designed to take long-term, so be certain to read and follow label instructions. In contrast, long-term use may be needed and should be monitored by a physician.

**So the burning question is when should I see my doctor?**

If diet and medications have not resulted in relief of the symptoms, it may be time to talk to your doctor or other health care professional and seek professional help.

If you have experienced long-standing heartburn, there is a risk of developing cancer of the esophagus. Esophageal cancer can be prevented by new procedures available to reverse the damage of gastroesophageal reflux.

Dr. Gary M. Annunziata is board certified in Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology and can be reached at Desert Gastroenterology Consultants (760) 321.2500. [www.desertgastro.net](http://www.desertgastro.net). He is also a member of Desert Valley Independent Physicians [www.DesertDoctors.org](http://www.DesertDoctors.org); (760) 232.4646.



Heartburn can lead to serious conditions and should not go untreated.

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### Sport Medicine Programs in the Coachella Valley

The Healthcare Industry Council (HIC) is one of three industry councils facilitated by the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP). The primary goal for the HIC is to invite business leaders in the field of health care to help shape the course of career specific learning. Ultimately, the HIC efforts connect the appropriate people from the community, business and education to mentor and help prepare students to be successful in college, career and life.

The Sports Medicine Work Group was developed to bring career awareness to the HIC. Local leaders in the community participate in this work group through a speaker series, advising health academy students and leadership on curriculum, sharing knowledge of the rapidly changing health care environment, and facilitating work-based learning opportunities for students interested in sports medicine careers.

The Palm Springs High School Academy For Learning Medicine (PALM) is a great example of how this works locally. PALM offers students the opportunity to study allied health careers. Academic courses integrate health-related concepts into the approved curriculum. Career Technical Education courses allow students to develop hands-on skills and receive certifications. High school students then continue their education at the post-secondary level in pursuit of their health care career.

Many of the PALM students are also involved with the sports medicine program, where they get "hands-on experience" working with high school athletes under the direction of Michael Ventura, a certified athletic trainer and CTE instructor with PALM. One of the specialty fields in the allied health career path is athletic training. Certified athletic trainers are considered a valuable member of the sports medicine team, specializing in athletic injury management at all levels. While they are

considered by several notable medical authorities to be "the most appropriate professional to manage the concussed athlete," certified athletic trainers are seldom seen in high schools throughout California, as California is the ONLY state that does not have licensure or title protection for certified athletic trainers. Consequently, those who live, work and play sports in the state have little knowledge or understanding about this career - or who is taking care of their children.

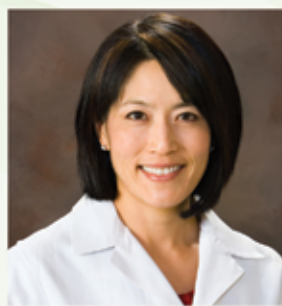
This presents a statewide health issue of utmost concern since there has been an alarming rise in concussions among young athletes. It is estimated that 3.8 million concussions occur each year in the U S as a result of sport and physical activity (NATA 2014). The rate of concussion among high school athletes has more than doubled between 2005 and 2012, the trend likely due to increased awareness and more legislation (*Journal of Sports Medicine* 2014).

The Sports Medicine Work Group is developing an "Alliance for Sports Medicine Professionals" which will be vetted and approved by the HIC and shared with each high school's health academy, staff, athletic officials and parents. Professionals who are part of this alliance will become more actively involved in each health academy as advisors, and share their expertise on hot topics in sports medicine and sports safety for high school athletes. Once high school officials and parents become aware of the need, the allied health care workforce will start to establish a better supply of sports medicine professionals to care for all athletes.

For more information on how to get involved with the HIC Sports Medicine work group, please contact Patty Curtiss, Athletic Health Advocacy, [pcurtiss@sporthhealth@gmail.com](mailto:pcurtiss@sporthhealth@gmail.com) or Donna Sturgeon, CVEP Health Industry Council, [Donna@cvep.com](mailto:Donna@cvep.com).

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## Top 5 Supplements Anyone Can Take

By Sonja N. Fung, ND

Ideally, we should be getting our vitamins, minerals, and nutrients from our food intake alone. However, in this day and age, our food production is completely different from that of 50 to 100 years ago, and the sad reality is that most people eat calorie-rich but nutrient-poor foods.

Because of the world in which we live, most people need some sort of oral nutrient supplementation, and sometimes even IV nutrient repletion. This does not mean you should buy every supplement on the shelf that looks good to you or that you read about on the internet.

Remember, food = medicine. Supplements are supplemental to your food.

That being said, for a generally “healthy” person, here are some highly important nutrients in which many people are deficient, and therefore may need to supplement in their diet.

### Vitamin D3

Vitamin D is not only essential for bone health, but also to combat seasonal depression and to strengthen our immune system. Optimal vitamin D levels also reduce your risk of cancer and helps reduce joint pain. Make sure you have optimal levels of vitamin D3 by asking your doctor to test your 25-OH vitamin D levels. Optimal levels should be between 50-80 ng/ml. An adult dose of vitamin D3 is up to 10,000 IU/day and a child's dose is up to 2,000 IU/day depending on their need.



Make sure your doctor tests your vitamin D levels.

### Magnesium

Magnesium deficiency is pervasive. Magnesium, a critical mineral, is used in more than 300 bodily functions and can be obtained through foods such as dark leafy greens and mixed nuts. Magnesium can be used in the treatment of high blood pressure, angina, and arrhythmia. Magnesium has been shown to be most effective in males with heart disease.

### Essential Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are a group of essential fats that includes eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). These fatty acids cannot be produced internally by the human body and must be consumed through outside sources, like fish or a nutritional oil supplement. Omega-6s and Omega-9s are also fatty acids and are found more abundantly in the oil of nuts, seeds, and meats. Most western diets have too much omega-6 and 9 and too little omega-3 fatty acids. Research has shown that fish oils are anti-inflammatory, can lower triglyceride and cholesterol fats, decrease risk of blood clots, decrease progression of hardening of the arteries, and improve function of the blood vessel walls. Adding at least 2 servings a week of cold-water fatty fish such as salmon, sardines, tuna, mackerel, and halibut can provide Omega-3 in your body.

### B Vitamins

B vitamins are one of the most commonly deficient nutrients in Americans. We can attribute this trend to the use of medications we consume and our stressed out lifestyles. Very common pharmaceuticals such as cholesterol lowering medication (statins), oral contraceptives, antibiotics, and antacids rob our body of B vitamins. When we think of the side-effects of a medication, it is often due to its nutrient depletion and not the actual drug itself. B vitamins are essential co-factors in your body's many functions such as maintaining energy, mood, immunity, and nervous system. You can restore optimal B vitamin levels through B vitamin injections and with B vitamin supplements, especially with the methylated forms of B12 and Folate.

### Probiotics

Probiotics are the good bugs found in your digestive tract. They enhance the immune system by preventing unfriendly organisms from gaining a foothold in the body. They prevent the overgrowth of yeast and harmful bacteria and produce substances that can lower cholesterol. Poor eating habits, stress and disease, and the use of antibiotics can wreak havoc in the gastrointestinal tract by destroying good bacteria and allowing undesirable bacteria to multiply. When the ratio of good bacteria to bad is lowered, digestive symptoms begin to arise such as excessive gas, bloating, constipation, and poor absorption of nutrients. When the beneficial intestinal bacteria are outnumbered, the chance you may become ill is significantly increased.

Even with these basic supplements, there are instances when taking the most benign supplement can be inappropriate for your health condition. Inappropriate supplementation not only is expensive, but can sometimes be harmful to your body or interfere with other medications. The best thing to do before taking supplements is to consult a doctor or pharmacist knowledgeable in nutrition and supplementation.

Dr. Sonja Fung is a naturopathic primary care doctor and co-owner of Live Well Clinic. She has a focus on integrative cancer care and IV nutrient therapies. For more information on integrative cancer care, go to [www.livewellclinic.org](http://www.livewellclinic.org) or call (760) 771.5970.



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# Physical Signs of Nutritional Deficiencies

By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

Nutritional deficiencies often go unnoticed or undiscovered in routine lab work and annual physicals. However, each vitamin, mineral, and nutrient has specific deficiency signs and symptoms that commonly occur. By paying attention to changes in our body’s physical health, deficiencies can be assessed before any long-term complications. A list of common nutritional deficiencies below is a helpful reminder of how small changes in the body can indicate changes in nutritional status.<sup>1</sup>

Vitamin A	night blindness, dry eyes, poor wound healing, reduced immunity
Vitamin B1 (Thiamin)	mental confusion, muscle weakness and wasting, poor appetite
Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	swollen or painful tongue or mouth, cracks in sides of mouth
Vitamin B3 (Niacin)	dementia, irritability, headaches, diarrhea, skin inflammation
Vitamin B6	irritability, depression, nausea, heightened PMS symptoms
Vitamin B12	anemia, fatigue, enhanced peripheral neuropathies, depression, confusion
Vitamin C	fatigue, weakness, muscle cramps, easy bruising
Vitamin D	osteoporosis, depression, reduced immunity
Vitamin E	dry skin, easy bruising, bone pain, nighttime leg cramping
Omega 3 Fatty Acids	dry skin, dandruff, cracking or peeling fingertips, allergy prone
Calcium	muscle spasms, anxiety, insomnia
Magnesium	fatigue, irritability, weakness, muscle spasms, insomnia
Zinc	decreased taste and smell, delayed wound healing, inflammation at corners of mouth, chronic skin irritation

Nutritional deficiencies result from key diet and health issues. A poor quality diet, low in plant-based foods or high in processed foods, can quickly lead to a decline in nutritional status. Sub-optimal digestion with limited digestive enzyme activity, or low probiotic content, can limit nutrient absorption from the diet. Long-term pharmaceutical medication use can reduce certain nutrients, such as lowered vitamin B6 levels from taking oral birth control pills.

Optimizing nutrient uptake comes from maintaining an organic, plant-based whole foods diet, good digestion, and correcting nutritional deficiencies caused by medications.

In addition to physical signs and symptoms of nutritional deficiencies, functional lab tests can be ordered to assess complete nutritional status. Yearly assessment of nutritional status with labs and appropriate physical exams offers highly preventative care. It also guides individualized nutritional supplemental protocols and dietary plans. Visit with a qualified healthcare provider for optimal nutritional assessment and treatment recommendations.

Dr. Sinsheimer is a Naturopathic Doctor with Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568.2598.

Reference: 1) Russel Marz, ND, Medical Nutrition from Marz (Portland, OR: Omni-Press 2002)

# Take Your Workout with You

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AH, VACATION. A time to take a break from the daily grind. But just because you’re away from home and work doesn’t mean you should give up on your exercise regimen. If you do, you may find it hard to get back in action once your trip is over.

In fact, your body can respond negatively to drastic changes in your day-to-day routine, so the best way to truly relax on your time off is to continue with your exact exercise regimen during your travels. Avoid a motivation slump by maintaining your healthy habits on the road. Here are some helpful tips:

### Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

And then prepare some more. “The best way to set yourself up for success is to do research online before setting off on a trip,” says Anthony Wall, director of professional education for the American Council on Exercise. “Know what to expect: Does the hotel have a fitness facility? What kind of equipment and/or classes does it have? Is there a pool?”

If you know what to expect from your destination, it’s a lot easier to plan accordingly. Once you know what’s available, come up with a routine that will be doable-and stick to it.

### No Equipment? No Problem!

If your destination is totally gym-free, you may have to get a little more creative.

“If you work with a trainer at home, ask them to compose a workout that you can do anywhere, whether it’s in your hotel room or a nearby park or beach,” Wall says.

If you’re a runner, tap into resources like MapMyRun.com, where you can find recommended running routes in locations worldwide.

If you dig group classes, ask the concierge at your hotel to recommend nearby studios. “You can call ahead of time and get a list of studios. Then you’ll be able to check out their schedules online before you go,” Wall says.

### Know Your Schedule

In addition to researching the gym options where you’re staying, it doesn’t hurt to know your daily schedule and when the optimal time to fit in a workout would be.

The best time to schedule your exercise is probably in the morning. You’ll most likely be busy during the day, either with business or leisure activities, and when the end of the day rolls around you might feel too tired or unmotivated to start your workout.

Even waking up just a little earlier to begin your day with exercise will help you to stay on track.

Don’t let your vacation turn into an excuse to let good habits go by the wayside. Following these simple steps can help you incorporate a healthy exercise routine into your travel plans.

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What Is Qi?

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

The concept of Qi dates back to the beginning of Chinese civilization. It has been translated as “vital energy,” “life force,” or “breath” but no single English word will suffice, perhaps because the nature of Qi is that it can have different manifestations in different situations.

The Chinese character for Qi means vapor, gas, air or steam which indicates that it is something which is material and immaterial at the same time. In Chinese thought, Qi accounts for the workings of nature and all phenomena in the universe and provides continuity between the immaterial and the material. This is not so far from the concepts of the interchangeability of matter and energy in modern physics as elegantly expressed in Einstein’s famous theorem, E=MC2. Maybe we could envision formula that states (E=MC2)=Qi.

Qi is the central underlying principle in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and martial arts. In the Asian martial arts, focusing, channeling and enhancing Qi are vital to successful performance. TCM asserts that Qi energy flows around and through the body, forming a cohesive and functioning unit, and that the body has natural patterns of Qi that circulate in channels called meridians. These meridians were first delineated in the Huangdi Weijing, or The Yellow Emperors Book of Internal Medicine about 2,500 years ago. Two major aspects of Qi were noted, Defensive Qi which circulates primarily in the exterior to protect the body, and Nutritive Qi which circulates in the interior, to nourish the organs. When either is unable to perform its functions, due to being disrupted, blocked, or unbalanced (deficient or excessive), specific pathological symptoms will result. We call these symptoms disease.

In pathology, when Qi flow slows down and stagnates, masses, lumps or tumors can appear. TCM seeks to free these blockages and relieve these imbalances by adjusting the circulation of Qi using a variety of techniques including herbology, physical training regimens, tui na, and acupuncture. It is important to note that most acupuncture points are located along the meridians.

Interestingly, if Qi is thought of as gas (although in strict sense it is not), it can be said that Chinese medicine has long recognized that gasses (Qi) within the body play a major role in warming, holding, energizing and providing communication within the human body.

In Western science gasotransmitters were discovered in the early 1990s, and their discovery is redefining the way we think about medicine. They are small molecules of gas such as nitric oxide, hydrogen sulfide and carbon monoxide which can pass freely through membranes and transmit signals from neurons to target cells.

It is now understood that gasotransmitters are involved with nearly every process in the body. They have well-defined functions. Some send messages to tell cells how much energy they should be producing. When the right proportion of gasotransmitters reaches fat stores, they begin to transform fat into useable energy and heat. Others control bodily functions and can be vasodilators or constrictors, regulating blood pressure.

It seems ancient wisdom and modern science continue to grow ever closer together.

Diane Sheppard is the founding 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](http://www.AcQPoint.com).



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## The Movement Towards Personalized Medicine

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

Thanks to new science called gene sequencing, researchers have discovered 1,800 disease genes. This information is part of what was learned with the conclusion of the Human Genome Project in 2003. Additionally, hundreds of genes have been discovered that influence the way we metabolize nutrients, perceive taste, regulate hunger and respond to exercise.

Your diet and genes most definitely interact with one another. Depending on which gene variants (single nucleotide polymorphism or SNPs) you have, you may be better suited for a higher fat diet or a low fat diet. Some variants interfere with the absorption of vitamin D and C or Omega 3s and people with these might consider taking supplements.

Other gene variants like one called ACTN may indicate you are better suited for endurance sports, while persons with others are better suited for strength training. Many genome testing companies are offering gene-based weight-management systems which are available through physicians. Patients have their saliva analyzed for SNPs related to diet and exercise. Then the patient is assigned a daily calorie count and one of several diets based on their particular gene uniqueness. Five years ago it cost \$300,000 for genome mapping or full sequencing; today several companies offer this service for between \$1,000-\$3,000. Smaller pieces of particular genes can be mapped for as little as \$100.

With these new advancements, a growing number of healthcare providers, medical researchers, and patients are calling for a more personalized approach to healthcare. This approach has been termed personalized medicine, genomic medicine, or precision medicine. It's an approach that emphasizes the ways in which your disease risks are unique and different, just like your other more obvious characteristics. Those disease risks are based on your predisposition written into your genome at birth, combined with your lifestyle and environment.

This movement focuses on knowledge of the individual's unique genome and variants-mutations that occur. Based on the results of your particular genomic testing, treatments are tailored to your unique findings. These findings are then combined with lifestyle changes to create personalized diets, nutritional supplement plans, exercise programs, and if necessary, medication recommendations.

In contrast to this approach, the current medical model is based on what most doctors would prescribe to anyone with a similar condition. This is because traditional medicine revolves around what is called 'standards of care' or medical protocols which are based on

the average person and are assumed to be the best course of action for everyone with the same diagnosis.

Personalized medicine's greatest strides have been made in cancer detection and treatment. It is creating tremendous breakthroughs in selecting therapies based on the genetics and biology of certain tumor types. Many genomic testing companies now offer panels for risk assessment for breast cancer including the BRCA1 and BRCA2 variants, colon cancer, cardiovascular diseases and obesity. There are also several new prenatal DNA screening tests. Most of these companies require the tests to be ordered by a licensed health care provider because interpretation of the results can be a bit overwhelming.

There is little doubt that personalized-lifestyle medicine is booming. We are also beginning to see genomics and technology intersecting on center stage. The information obtained from wearable fitness tracking devices that monitor everything from sleep habits, heart rate, and physical activity can be combined with genetic information. Armed with this information patients are becoming increasingly aware of their own biologic strengths and weaknesses. Patients are beginning to say to their doctors, "I'm not an average patient. I know who I am. You need to understand who I am before you prescribe whatever treatment you plan to prescribe. Do you have the expectation that this treatment will work for ME?"

It is important to remember that genes are not your destiny, but they do provide information that can lead us to make more informed decisions about our health and health care. If you get sick, knowing your genome or the molecular basis of your disease can be an important piece of evidence for doctors seeking the most favorable treatment plan specifically for you. Ideally in the future, doctors will be able to tap into a single large database filled with anonymous genetic information - biomarkers tied to patient demographics and treatments - to help them make the best evidence-based plans for their individual patient.

With all this new genomic data come new questions, ethical and practical challenges about privacy, access, ownership, and more. Insurance companies are more likely to reimburse for evidence-based testing as in a person with a family history of breast cancer seeking genetic testing for the BRCA1 variant.

Personalized medicine is not yet mainstream, but it most certainly will be, and hopefully soon.

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

Sources: 1) Genome, spring 2014; 2) Nutrition Business Journal, April 2015



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## Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco



### True Expressions of Grit

Almost daily, we witness 'stick-to-itiveness' and perseverance expressed as "true grit." Personally, I am attracted to the word "grit" which suggests to me courage, resolve, firmness of character, and an indomitable spirit. These are all lofty personality traits to pursue. The elusive mystery resides in how we achieve the qualities of this simple, yet weighty, word.

By analyzing the character of true grit and the qualities associated with it, the more we realize that it is essential for personal wellness. The presence of grit can be contagious, helping to propel us to success in reaching our healthy goals and aspirations.

On May 9th I witnessed the effect of true grit firsthand as I led fifteen Toscana Country Club members up the San Jacinto Mountain on what is known as the "Skyline Trail" or "Cactus to Clouds." Both hiking options are noteworthy bucket-list hikes that rank as two of the most difficult hikes in the country. Skyline challenges hikers starting from the desert floor and ascending to the top of the tram requiring an 8,500-foot elevation gain in 9 miles. Cactus to Clouds commands even more intensity with a 10,834-foot elevation gain in 17.5 miles.

Regardless of which trail is chosen, those hiking must commence before sunrise to bypass heat and make a commitment to hike for 7 to 12 hours. In addition, there are a myriad of other preparations to master, such as hiking efficiently, identifying essential gear, staying hydrated, and recovering after the hike. The most important preparation that cannot be planned is the "true grit" which must be harnessed step-by-step. The moment we commit to the challenge, grit naturally unveils itself. You can see it in the faces of those hiking.

Our group (ages 30 to 70) joined together on a day devoted to team support, courage and tenacity. Fathers and sons, husbands and wives, best friends and solo hikers formed a hiking train. At 4:00am with headlights on, our train started up the hill like a thread of light weaving up the mountain. As the day progressed, amidst a rising sun, bonds were formed between some finding a kindred connection. Others, who are personally motivated, pushed up the hill independently. Upon reaching the top, there were mixed triumphant reactions. Some displayed tears, others surprise, and many a warm embrace with another to affirm the completion of a monumental achievement.

Regardless of each personal journey, the day was an overall success. The next day ended with not only physical recovery, but also mental renewal. Some of our hikers experienced somewhat of a "let down" as the energy and excitement of the previous day dissipated. The aftermath was quiet and the question was posed, "What's next?"

Eleanor Roosevelt advised, "Do something that scares you every day." Courage is like a muscle and it has to be exercised daily. If not, it will atrophy. Courage helps fuel "grit." The two are symbiotic. Finding a long-term, physical goal and attaining it provides meaning and value to long-term efforts. One's practice towards a goal must have purpose. This achievement cultivates drive, passion, stamina...In a nutshell—"true grit."

## When a Family Member is Addicted, the Whole Family Must Recover

By Scott Kiloby

It's easy to mistake addiction as a condition that a person develops all by him or herself. "He made bad choices." "She can't put the bottle down." "He uses heroin because of low self-esteem." But no man is an island; rather, we live in a world that is truly a web of relationships, where each of us is shaped by the interactions within this web. Until we dig much deeper into these patterns of relationships, we are often blind to how much our family relationships are a contributing factor in self-destructive behavior such as addiction and alcoholism.

Addiction as a brain disease is not the only theory out there. One of the prevailing views around how addiction is formed, and how it continues unabated, deals with the family system. In the last few decades, family therapy has seen an explosion of interest among addiction treatment professionals. The basic premise is that an addict is created partly out of the dynamics within the family. The roles he or she plays within the multigenerational family help set the course for addiction.

During the 1980s, addiction professionals began to recognize more than ever that addiction is a family disease. Individuals in close relationships with addicts or alcoholics often suffer from a disease of codependency. Their feelings of self-worth and personal identities are enmeshed with the addict or alcoholic. There are all sorts of thorny issues that arise within family units that both create and maintain active addiction or alcoholism in a person's life including enabling, rescuing, early trauma, abuse, overly-critical parents, people-pleasing and blaming - just to name a few.

There are many types of family therapy these days in the field of addiction treatment. One therapy that has gained a lot of recognition is Family Systems Therapy in which families are viewed as an emotional and interactional system. Therefore, the problems of one family member cannot be understood apart from those of all other members. The focus is on identifying certain negative family interactions and then helping individual family members dissolve the patterns of relating to each other that keep certain family members addicted and others co-dependent. Members of the family begin to take personal responsibility for their contribution to the disease within the entire family unit. With the application of this therapy, familial relationships can begin to harmonize themselves, which creates an atmosphere of healthy boundary-setting and positive transformation - not only for the addicted member but also the entire family unit.

Even if the family member struggling with alcoholism or addiction is not yet ready to seek treatment, it is never too early to begin to help the entire family heal. Evidence shows that when family members begin to take proactive steps as a unit towards healing negative patterns, the addict or alcoholic may, in turn, become much more open to treatment.

Scott Kiloby is a noted author, international speaker and the director of the Kiloby Center for Recovery in Rancho Mirage, the first addiction, anxiety and depression treatment center in the U.S. to focus primarily on mindfulness. For more information visit [KilobyCenter.com](http://KilobyCenter.com) or call (442) 666.8526.

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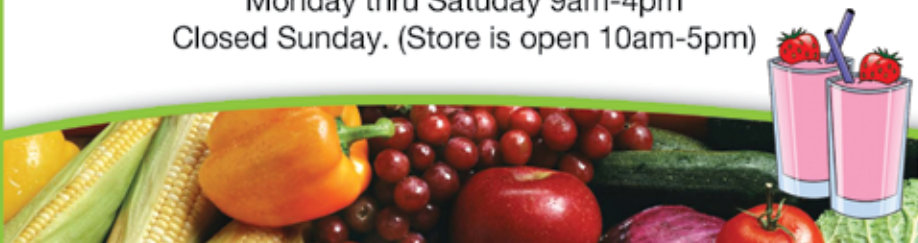
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## Gluten-Free with Tiffany



### High Fiber Gluten-free and Grain-free Foods

Constipation and weight gain are common complaints during the initial transition to a gluten-free diet. Most don't realize that merely changing to a gluten-free bread or grain may result in lowering your dietary fiber intake.

The recommended daily allowance (RDA) of fiber is 28-35 grams, but the average American's intake is only 10-12 grams,<sup>1</sup> and this is on a non-restricted diet. A gluten-free diet can make it more challenging because it must remove America's most popular choices of fiber: gluten-filled whole grains.

An easy solution is to increase your plant-based foods.

The benefits of fiber include detoxification, improved digestion, feeding the good gut bacteria, regular bowel movements, lower cholesterol, weight management, and less risk of certain diseases including diabetes and cancer.<sup>2</sup> Fiber is broken down into soluble and insoluble fibers. Soluble is gel-like; it ferments and absorbs liquid in the digestive tract. Insoluble is commonly known as roughage and provides bulk.

Dr. S. Boyd Eaton's research points out that our ancestor's fiber consumption was likely more than 100 grams/day.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Andrew Weil believes the optimum modern diet should provide around 40 grams of fiber a day.<sup>4</sup> To reach these recommendations, it is important to expand the variety and sources of fiber, focusing on plants, and not relying so much on grains.

You are likely familiar with common fiber sources such as beans and oats; but non-starchy vegetables, root vegetables (tubers), fruits, nuts, and seeds all provide an optimal balance of the various types of fiber needed. Here is a list of healthy, grain-free, gluten-free sources of fiber for you to pile onto your plate this summer:

#### Nuts - grams per one-ounce serving:

- Almonds - 4
- Brazil nuts - 12
- Cashews - 1
- Pine nuts - 12
- Pistachios - 3
- Walnuts - 2

#### Seeds - in grams:

- Chia (2 Tbsp) - 10
- Flaxseeds (2 Tbsp) - 4
- Hempseeds (2 Tbsp) - 2
- Pumpkin seeds (1/2 cup) - 3
- Sunflower seeds (1/2 cup) - 6
- Sesame seeds (1/4 cup) - 4

#### Fruits and vegetables - in grams per cup:

- Apple (small) - 2.8
- Blackberries - 8
- Blueberries - 4
- Raspberries - 8
- Strawberries - 3
- Collard greens - 5
- Kale - 2.6
- Sweet Potato - 4
- Spinach - 5
- Swiss chard - 4
- Mushrooms - .8
- Spaghetti squash - 2
- Summer squash - 5
- Acorn squash - 9
- Butternut squash - 6
- Zucchini squash - 3

Fiber supplements are not the best way to reach the RDA, as these products are usually processed, and include questionable fillers, such as gluten. However, some restricted diets require fiber supplementation. In these cases, it is recommended that the fiber source come from organic acacia fiber, or modified citrus pectin fiber. If you choose psyllium husk, please use with caution as it can obstruct the colon, or cause choking. Fiber intake should be slowly increased to avoid digestive problems, and note that all fiber will lower blood sugar levels.

Tiffany is a Certified Nutrition Consultant and Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner and can be reached at (760)285.1221 [www.GlutenFreeWithTiffany.com](http://www.GlutenFreeWithTiffany.com)

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## Bacteria That's Good For You

**A Desert Health® review of Perlmutter's Brain Maker**

By Pam Salvatore

It's a fact that the brain controls the body, but what controls the brain? In his new book, *Brain Maker*, David Perlmutter, MD, describes an emerging field of science that contends that the gut controls the health of the body, including the health of the brain.

As you may recall from Dr. Perlmutter's first book on the subject, *Grain Brain*, the impact of grains in the diet was shown to influence the gut's microbiota and, subsequently, the body's health. While *Grain Brain* focused exclusively on the impact of grains, *Brain Maker* goes one step further by directly connecting all outside influences to the state of the gut's microbiota, and showing the profound impact an unhealthy microbiome has - especially on the brain.

The gut, comprised of both the large and small intestines, is responsible for the metabolism of food and subsequent distribution of nutrients to the organs and cells of the human body. The gut is also home to our unique microbiome: a microbiome that consists of millions of flora (aka bacteria), each one with a specific job or function. According to Dr. Perlmutter, these bacteria perform vital functions: they provide the first line of defense in helping filter out toxins from our system; they control our immune response, especially that of inflammation; they create and influence hormones, telling our endocrine system how to react to stress; and they create neurotransmitters, such as GABA and glutamate, that are vital to brain function. Dr. Perlmutter believes that "what's taking place in your intestines today is determining your risk for any number of neurological conditions."

Given this information, it is important to know what a healthy microbiome is. A healthy microbiome contains a balance of both good and bad bacteria. Neither exists exclusive of the other; however, maintaining balance is the key. For example, some of the most important bacteria present are Firmicutes, whose job it is to extract energy from food and regulate fat absorption. If Firmicutes dominate the microbiome, they hoard calories and the weight packs on. An overwhelming population of Firmicutes can also hijack your body's immune responses by keeping other vital bacteria from doing their jobs. Hence, keeping Firmicutes in balance is essential.

Bacteria in the microbiome is also responsible for maintaining the permeability of the intestinal lining. In a healthy microbiome, the lining of the intestine is made up of tightly fitting cells that allow nutrients to pass, but are too tightly packed to allow disease or infection to get through. With the

nutrients absorbed and infection passed along, this normal balance tells the body that no immune response or hormonal adjustment is needed. Your health remains intact. Should the bacteria become unbalanced, infection and irritating particles leak through intestinal walls and into the bloodstream, causing your body to mount an immune response most notably marked by inflammation.

Inflammation is a proven contributor to not only brain disease, but many other diseases of the human body as well.

Perlmutter explains that we attained our initial microbiome at birth, as we passed through the birth canal. After this initial setting, Perlmutter believes that outside influences such as whether or not we are breast fed, the influence of antibiotics, the ingestion of hormone-regulating medications,

and even the food we eat contribute to whether our microbiota thrive or shift to an unhealthy balance. He cites numerous studies that connect an unhealthy microbiome to diseases such as Alzheimer's, depression, anxiety, obesity, autism, and diabetes, and also introduces studies that show a positive correlation between the restoration of healthy balance to the microbiome and the reduction and elimination of disease. *Brain Maker* is full of success stories from both

Perlmutter's patients and colleagues' patients around the world.

Given all of these findings which establish a scientific link between gut health and the state of disease in our bodies, Perlmutter uses the remainder of the book to discuss resetting an unhealthy microbiome, and the tools it takes to maintain its health and reverse any damage already done. He gives concrete steps, such as repopulating

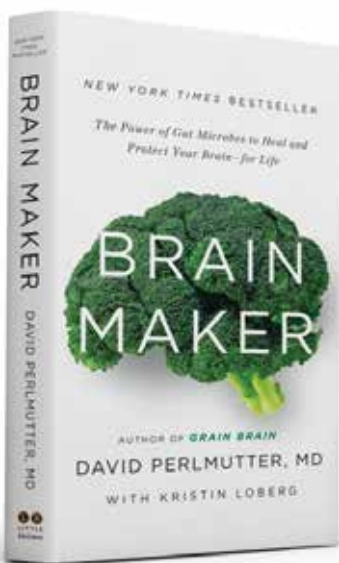
the microbiome with the correct balance of good and bad bacteria, and includes instruction on how to feed these new found friends, keeping the correct percentages flourishing while ushering out any negative intruders. Perlmutter details what supplementation to consider, which tests to take, significant signs for which to look, and the type of exercise that works to help microbiota flourish.

The book concludes with a complete list of recipes, resources, and links to the studies quoted. *Brain Maker* provides a good resource for anyone looking to restore health to their own body. There are no radical ideas here, just proven scientific links and logical nutritional solutions.

David Perlmutter, MD, is a board-certified neurologist and Fellow of the American College of Nutrition. *Brain Maker* is available at national book retailers, online and in e-book. For more information visit [www.drperlmutter.com](http://www.drperlmutter.com).



David Perlmutter, MD, author of *Grain Brain* and *Brain Maker*



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# THE Paradigm Shift in Medicine Today

By Jeralyn Brossfield, MD



The “Dietary Guidelines for Americans” are revised every five years to fulfill a mission of identifying foods and beverages that support Americans in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, promoting health and preventing disease. The 2015 Guidelines reflect “two fundamental realities. First, about half of all American adults – 117 million individuals - have one or more preventable, chronic diseases, and about two-thirds of U.S. adults – nearly 155 million individuals – are overweight or obese.”

To achieve better health the U.S. population is encouraged to “consume dietary patterns that are rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, legumes, and nuts; moderate in low-and-non-fat dairy products and alcohol (among adults); lower in red and processed meat; and low in sugar-sweetened foods and beverages and refined grains.”

Of particular interest are the following specifics from the Guidelines:

The warnings about dietary cholesterol have been eliminated, as there is no association with ingesting cholesterol and elevation of one’s blood level of cholesterol. The report states, “Cholesterol is not a nutrient of concern for overconsumption.”

The Guidelines recommend keeping trans fat and saturated fat at no more than 10% of one’s daily calories. While the evidence is clear that trans fat is associated with heart disease, there is ample evidence that saturated fat is not. In numerous studies, the content of saturated fat in the diet has no correlation to increasing blood cholesterol or cardiac events.

Extensive review supported a continued recommendation of less than 2,300 mg of dietary sodium per day for the general population. We now know that in some people there is a relationship between sodium and elevated blood pressure, whereas there is a significant part of the

population who is not “salt sensitive.” In addition, the use of natural salts such as Celtic sea salt or Himalayan salts contain trace levels of minerals that are beneficial for health.

The Guidelines suggest added sugars be reduced in the diet with a maximum of 10 percent of total calories from added sugars per day. They also state that, “At the level that the U.S. population consumes aspartame, it appears to be safe.” While I believe that aspartame should actually be removed from our diets completely, there is at least an acknowledgement in The Guidelines that artificial sweeteners should not be promoted for weight loss.

The Guidelines recommend limiting refined grains which is a major step toward health for most Americans. I believe that starches are the main culprits in our diets becoming imbalanced. Minimizing or eliminating grains has a profound impact on reducing inflammation and disease and so should be considered by anyone seeking health.

The Guidelines conclude that, “It will take concerted, bold actions on the part of individuals, families, communities, industry, and government to achieve and maintain the healthy diet patterns and the levels of physical activity needed to promote the health of the U.S. population. These actions will require a paradigm shift to an environment in which population health is a national priority and where individuals and organizations, private business, and communities work together to achieve a population-wide ‘culture of health’ in which healthy lifestyle choices are easy, accessible, affordable, and normative—both at home and away from home.”

Dr. Brossfield is the medical director at the Eisenhower Wellness Institute and can be reached at (760) 610.3760.

Source: “Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee.” United States Department of Agriculture, 1 Feb. 2015. Web. 18 June 2015.

## Health is a Choice

Continued from page 4

of this drug. My true belief now is that the healing effect comes in the ceremony and ritual of caring enough to hear someone, to give them an understanding of their illness, and to say ‘we are going to get through this together.’”

Those actions stimulate the healing in the brain and body that helps someone overcome their depressed mood he says, “And that, I truly believe, is the main healing influence.”

He tells the audience that as doctors, we need to look beyond the disease and prescription, because in instances like this, “the ceremony that you create is more important than the pills you prescribe.” And this ceremony can enhance the effect of a pill.

Recognizing that exercise and mindfulness therapy are also an important and effective part of long-term healing, he describes the benefit of belly breathing for chronic bowel conditions (one of the toughest conditions to treat). “Breathing exercises stimulate the vagus nerve which stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system allowing the pancreas to secrete digestive juices that digest food. That is why one of my favorite treatments is teaching people how to do the relaxing slow deep breathing. What if you eat while relaxed with people you love? If you take a few

deep breaths before you start your meal - through prayer or just taking a moment - I guarantee that you are going to digest your food much better than if you are stressed out and eating on the run - as many of us do in between patients.”

Supporting the fact that there is no separation between mind and body, Rakel states a study of 200 people with chronic bowel conditions who underwent 12 one-hour sessions of hypnotherapy. 71 percent responded positively, and the benefits lasted up to 5 years. The treatment also reduced their anxiety, depression, medications and number of doctor’s visits.

He added that he has never prescribed a drug for irritable bowel because it is too simple. “This is a complex, dynamic body-mind we are dealing with.” For those patients who feel that he is just another doctor stating the problem is ‘all in their head,’ he tells them, “No. We want to use hypnotherapy as a therapeutic ally and stack the deck in favor of your body’s ability to heal itself - so you need less things. One of the most effective treatments is to use this as part of your medication regiment.”

Rakel understands that the system doesn’t always allow for doctors to give this type of care, but it is



David Rakel, MD, is editor of the go-to textbook Integrative Medicine.

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Health is a Choice

Continued from page 16

compassionate doctors who will help change the system.

“Why is there so much burn-out in primary care? How many times are we forced to go in and out without having the time or systematic support to really go deeper into that person’s story? And we wonder why that hurts so much and leads to burn-out. We need to connect with our patients. Connecting stacks the deck in favor of healing.”

He encourages his audience to create time and intention for specific clinical appointments just to do healing work. He referenced an intriguing study he authored that showed patients who saw a caring, empathetic doctor for the common cold actually got better sooner than those who saw a ‘burned-out doc’ who didn’t connect. The intriguing part was that not seeing a doctor at all actually showed better improvement than seeing the burned-out doctor. “So the patient is better off staying home than seeing a doctor who doesn’t have the energy to care!”

“This study and countless others support the trend that health is more about what we do than what we take.”

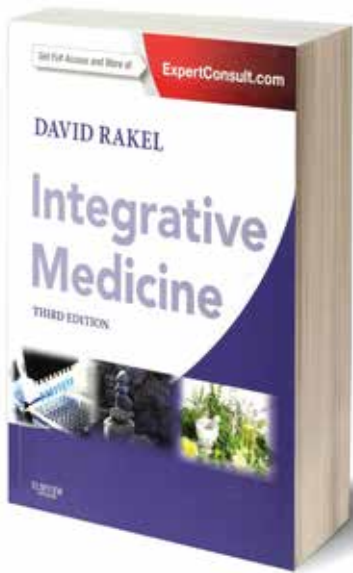
“How do we create a perception for our patients so they believe that they can get better?” By listening

and understanding their individual concerns and goals. “Non-compliance is two people working towards different goals. If your patient is non-compliant, you haven’t listened to them long enough to understand what their goals are.” He adds that so often doctors try to project what they know onto their patients, when value-based care is really what you want your health for, and how we can help you achieve it.

He reminds us that in 2018, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are going to shift their reimbursement model so that 90% is value over volume which means physicians will be reimbursed for the number of people they keep well. “We are not going to be paid by how much we do in the future; we are going to be paid on how much we keep people out of the hospital.”

“That is the shift: putting the patient in control, and that’s why primary care is a 15-fold return on investment because hopefully we know the story and can go a little deeper.”

Dr. Rakel closes by saying, “It really gives me hope as a physician because the art of medicine can really improve these outcomes just with your ability to sit, listen - and care.”



## Understanding Addiction

By Suzanne Jessee MA, CHt

Every day in millions of homes throughout the country, those who love another addicted to drugs or alcohol asks, “Why are they addicted?” “Why can’t they just stop?” “Don’t they see what it’s doing to them - and to me?” “Why doesn’t treatment work for us?” These are sincere and valid questions about the insidious disease of addiction.

Perhaps I can shed some hope and understanding from a very personal, as well as professional, viewpoint.

### Why are they addicted?

The vast majority of people who end up addicted to alcohol or drugs never intended to do so. It’s not one of those “bucket list” items we hope to accomplish in our lives. Some are genetically predisposed to addiction, and others are environmentally influenced. A doctor I used to work with at Brighton Hospital in Michigan said that “genetics load the gun, and the environment pulls the trigger.” Environment may include the unintentional dependence on opiate pain relievers originally prescribed for a chronic condition or post-surgery, or, being around family and peers who influence the use of drugs and alcohol as a social or emotional coping tool.

### Why can’t they just stop?

For a person who has never had an addiction, this is the most frustrating and baffling question of all. It is hard to comprehend why someone can’t simply stop doing something that is clearly destroying their lives. The greatest differentiator between an addicted and a non-addicted brain is the phenomenon of craving. I’m not talking about craving a piece of chocolate; I’m talking about a craving that is akin to craving water just before you die of dehydration. Make no mistake about it, this is real and extremely painful, particularly for the heroin and opiate addicts and those in the advanced stages of alcoholism.

### Why don’t the doctors do something about it?

The truth is, some of them are, but most are not. You may be shocked to learn that roughly 10 percent of a traditional doctoral study curriculum is dedicated to addiction education. And until very recently, the drugs available to combat the disease of addiction were either adding to the problem - like methadone for opiate addiction - or missing the core issue as with nausea-inducing drugs for alcoholism.

### Why doesn’t treatment work for us?

In my experience, treatment centers are working as hard and as fast as they possibly can with the resources they have to offer for the best chances of successful recovery. However, it also takes a willingness of the client to do what it takes to recover, which may also mean working on the underlying contributing factors like depression and anxiety. Treatment doesn’t work when there is lack of willingness, lack of emotional stability, and an inability to overcome the power of the craving phenomenon.

Today, there are some exciting groundbreaking advances in addiction medicine. As a person who has had a front row seat to the emotional, relational, financial, and loss-of-life devastation that accompanies the disease of addiction, I can tell you that I am excited to see these advancements. I truly believe that when a person is willing to do what it takes to get what they want, and is given the proper tools, they can succeed.

*Suzanne Jessee is the author of Escape Anxiety: 8 Steps to Freedom Through Meditative Therapies and an addictions and anxiety specialist at RecoverySupport.Help. She welcomes your call and can be reached at (760) 442.7281.*



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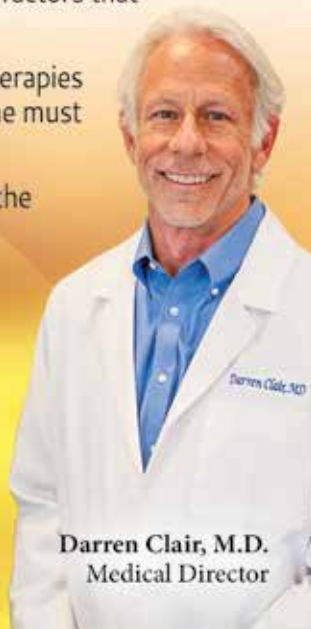
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### Avoiding Children's Exposure to Toxic Plastics

There are no safe plastics. Products made with plastics contain harmful chemicals, and exposure to plastics and their toxic constituents can cause long-term health consequences in developing babies and children.

Certain types of plastics, such as BPA, have been banned in bottle nipples because of health concerns associated with BPA toxicity in infants.<sup>1</sup> However, when BPA is removed from a product, it is often replaced with plastics just as harmful, but without as much research justifying its removal from exposure to children.<sup>2</sup>

Health concerns in children with higher exposure to plastics have been researched with conclusive evidence showing that exposure to plastics can cause behavioral, mood, hormone, and immune issues.<sup>3</sup> Plastic made products, plastic coatings inside canned food, plastic water bottles, food wrap and food containers all leach harmful chemicals into the food they contain and are absorbed through the skin that touches them. The softer the plastic is, such as saran wrap, the more toxic and absorbable the chemicals in the plastic tend to be. Children's products contain a range of types of plastics, and exposure to each type offers the risk of exposure to harmful chemicals.

Unfortunately, plastics are prevalent in all types of children's products from toys to bed covers to food and beverage containers. Fortunately, there are now alternatives that are durable, lightweight, and non-toxic. It can be challenging and time consuming to replace children's plastic products with less toxic, safer alternatives. Bamboo, a renewable environmental resource with little to no toxicity issues, is now being used in children's wares such as cups, plates, and utensils. Bamboo wares have a natural coating that makes them easy to clean; they are lightweight, unbreakable and do not crack like glass or ceramics. Silicone-made bottle nipples and glass bottles are an alternative to typical plastic nipples and bottles. Thin stainless steel food storage containers, dry snack containers, and water bottles are convenient and non-breakable. Reusable fabric bags for snacks, sandwiches, and transporting wet items are not only easy to use and have low toxicity; they are also eco-friendly. Wood toys with low toxicity paints from companies such as Haba contain no plastic.

Today, toxic plastic exposure in children has become a greater concern to parents, scientific researchers, government agencies, and health care providers. It is important to pay attention not only to food quality, water quality, and the general safety of children, but also to their environmental chemical exposure. This begins first with replacing softer plastics used to store and transport food and beverages, then looking deeper at alternative toy and play products, plastic coated bedding products, and plastic coatings found in items like canned food. With some attention to avoiding plastics, and minimal research, there are many more convenient children's products geared at reducing environmental toxic risk exposure in children.

Any amount of reducing a child's daily exposure to plastic toxins can improve their long-term health.

Dr. Sinsheimer is a naturopathic doctor with Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568.2598.

References: 1) "FDA bans BPA from baby bottles" [www.onegreenplanet.org](http://www.onegreenplanet.org), (July 18, 2012). 2) Mariah Blake, "The New Scary Evidence on BPA-free Plastic" [www.motherjones.com](http://www.motherjones.com) (April 2014). 3) Center for the Risks of Human Reproduction, NTP-CERHR Monograph on the Potential Harmful Reproductive and Developmental Effects of Bisphenol A (September 2008).

## Giving Children in Need a Voice

By Doris Steadman, MEd, MSW

The Coachella Valley has a tremendous resource available for local children experiencing speech and language challenges. It is the Scottish Rite Childhood Language and Learning Center in Palm Desert. Since its inception in 2004, the center has graduated more than 250 children who receive free one-on-one speech therapy with certified professionals.

Many people do not see speech and language challenges as being a priority; however, if children do not receive help with speech impediments, they may never reach their full potential. Jens Petersen, Board President of the Center, explains that there are as many as 40 to 50 different reasons for speech challenges, including a brain defect or damage or inaccurate formation of the mouth or tongue. All children are screened to ensure that therapists at the center can address and meet each child's individual needs before they are accepted into the program.

"When a child is unable to speak or understand language, they have less of a chance of leading a successful life," says Petersen, who is passionately dedicated to the program as he experienced speech challenges in his own youth. A stutterer at an early age made him a victim to teasing

at school. He remembers coming home and hiding under the dining room table. Fortunately, his great uncle was a forerunner in the field of speech and language therapy and worked diligently with Petersen and his mother to overcome the challenge. He became successful in the field of public relations and notes another success in former President Clinton, who also overcame speech difficulties in his youth.



Mirrors help children with the formation of sounds.

The Learning Center has three paid state certified speech therapists who work part time. As some also work for local school districts, the center's hours during the school year are 3:30pm to 7pm, Monday through Thursday, with some flexibility based on therapist and parent availability. The summer sessions will begin at 1pm.

Charlie Ash, a Mason's Scottish Rite member and volunteer at the center, emphasized the importance of the parents' participation in the therapy program. The Center is set up with two therapy rooms and a separate room where the parents can view and hear the sessions via a closed circuit television. Parents accompany their children, who come 1 or 2 times per week for a 45-minute session, to understand how to model the speech patterns being learned, which is a very important aspect. They

Continued on page 26

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# What is Pilates?

By Nikki Alstedter & Lora Anderson

The Pilates Method is an approach in mind & body integration that was created by Joseph Pilates in the 1920s. The fundamental principles focus on balance, concentration, control, centered awareness, fluid movements, and breath.

Pilates enhances a core strength that increases flexibility, coordination and special awareness. The repertoire is performed as a mat class or on specialized equipment utilizing springs for resistance. Pilates engages the whole person, not just the muscles. For everybody from an athlete to mother, Pilates will develop and enhance stamina, posture, alignment and core strength for elite performance or everyday activities.

**How is this done?** The Pilates method uses specifically designed equipment and floor exercises to promote uniform development of the body. This allows weaker muscles to develop instead of the body continuously relying on the stronger muscles to do the work. Pilates focuses on the core muscles first, specifically stomach, butt and back, in a sense, working the muscles from the inside out. This achieves and maintains a balanced aligned body.

**What are the benefits of Pilates?**

- Elongates muscles without building bulk.
- Slims and tones problem areas – Hips, buttocks, thighs and arms.
- Strengthens the back by building support in the abdominals.
- Increases flexibility while building strength.
- Improves posture, coordination, circulation and overall health.
- Lowers risk of injury by eliminating tension and stress on joints, back, and neck.
- Increases range of motion.
- Promotes relaxation and a sense of well being.
- Is fun and challenging to do!

**Who can benefit from Pilates?** People needing special consideration to injured and problem areas including back pain, scoliosis, shoulder issues, fibromyalgia and much more.

- The super fit: athletes, dancers, and martial artists.
- Women who are pre- and post-natal.
- Anyone wanting to shape and define their body.

**Points of interest.** In Pilates, every movement originates from the core, with a breath, and stays within a defined and safe range of motion.

Pilates equipment was created long before Nautilus equipment and has remained unchanged for 70 years. Joseph Pilates was definitely ahead of his time.

Joseph Pilates' guiding philosophy was his belief that the body must be exercised in its entirety to achieve good health. He had a profound reverence for the simplicity of movement and the mind/body connection.

Joseph Pilates combined the breathing and meditation of yoga, the weight bearing aspects of weight training and the balancing elements of tai chi, which has a sequence of movements, each building upon the last and increasing in difficulty.

Nikki Alstedter and Lora Anderson are co-owners of Pilates Studio City. This editorial was submitted with the authors' permission by Jane Snyder, a certified Pilates instructor with Fit & Flex in Palm Desert. Jane can be reached at (310) 729.1112.

# For Optimum Results, Have a Plan

By Michael K Butler BA; PTA; CSCS\*D;RSCC\*D; NMT

When I go to the gym for a workout, I always have a plan or a specific goal for that day. As I wander around during rest periods, I can't help but notice how most people aimlessly go about their workouts. They jump from machine to machine, not paying attention to whether the machine is for upper body or lower. Others will be on their cell phones or texting friends during long rest periods.

These are all clues that they are lacking a plan.

To develop a plan, you must have goals that you want to accomplish: both short-term and long-term. Short-term goals can be as simple as wanting to lose 10 pounds in 4 weeks, or wanting to gain muscle tone. A long-term goal might be running your first marathon in 6 months, or wanting to improve your overall health because you have some conditions that your doctor said need to be addressed.

Once you have a goal in mind, the next item to consider is how to set up your workout plan. It is always best to consult with a qualified trainer to help set a plan into motion - especially if you are just beginning a workout regimen. Following are some helpful guidelines:

1. If losing weight is your goal, your workout program needs to be set up so that you are doing low weight and high repetitions. Also, your rest periods need to be no longer than 30 seconds. This can be done one exercise at a time or in a circuit of four. Burst training is another popular method to jump start weight loss and is done with a rower, elliptical, sled, bike or treadmill. This is done in bursts of 30 seconds at high intensity followed by a recovery of one minute, not allowing your heart rate to drop down too far, but enough to be able to carry on to the next burst.
2. If getting stronger is your goal, then your program needs to be set up so that you are doing moderate to heavy weight and low repetitions with at least 1.5 minutes of rest between sets. You can alternate days between upper and lower body, or work out the entire body with a rest day in between.
3. If you have orthopedic issues and need to get back into shape, it is always best to be guided by your physical therapist so that they can communicate with your trainer on the best program for you.
4. If you don't want to work out with a trainer and would rather do it on your own, then remember safety first. Don't underestimate the weights by lifting too much; do free weights versus machines because of the posture benefits you will receive; always watch your form; and never be caught bending from your back or rotating to one side while in a flexed position, as this could cause a back injury.

Just remember, it is always best to have a plan before attempting an exercise program so that you are assured of reaching your goals!

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

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## The Beauty of Your Genes

By Darren Clair, MD

Since the unraveling of the human genome project concluded in 2003, genetic scientists and researchers have been studying human genes to determine how we age. The fact is, our cells age, and they begin to age from just moments after we are born. After 30 years or so, our cells begin to produce physical signs of aging such as graying hair and wrinkling of skin.

Consumers are constantly seeking ways to slow down this aging process. The sale of creams and pills to reduce the physical signs of aging has created a multi-billion dollar industry in the U.S. alone. We have become obsessed with trying to remain younger looking. We dye our graying hair. We spread creams on our skin. We have skilled surgeons alter our physical appearance with tummy tucks, liposuction, and facelifts: all in a frantic attempt to maintain that youthful appearance just a little longer.

All of these attempts to regain our youth are missing the vital point towards which real science is pointing us. The National Institute on Aging advocates diet and exercise and other natural ways to slow the aging process.

Due to advances in the science of genomics, we are beginning to learn how genes affect the aging process. The theory is to identify the gene, or genes, that affect aging and study them to see what genetic pathways they follow. Then by altering either the gene itself, or its genetic pathway, or both, we can actually change the way the body looks and acts.

Professor Judith Campisi of the Buck Institute for Research on Aging is one of those studying the role of genes on the aging process. She notes that the process of doing nothing more than breathing causes genetic damage. We breathe in pollutants in parts per million that damage our genes every day. We eat foods that are altered by chemicals that damage our genes. Further, cells can simply “make mistakes” when they divide all on their own. We have lots of cells in our bodies, so mistakes happen.

There are several estimates on the number of cells we have in our bodies. Depending upon whether we measure by volume or weight the estimate is either 15 trillion or 70 trillion cells. So, let’s assume that we have around 37.5 trillion. To put this in perspective, the population of the entire world is currently 7.3 billion. So doing the math, one human body has the same number of cells equal to 5,137 times the population of the entire world!

Science is now realizing that if we treat our genes well, we can extend their lives. Healthy genes mean a healthy body.

So, here’s what we can do: eat fruits and vegetables, nuts and whole grains, and foods that are high in healthy fats, like fish which is high in omega 3 fatty oils as well as anti-oxidants. Avoid sugar, and “junk” or processed foods. Avoid smoking, drinking, and drugs. Exercise regularly by walking to increase blood circulation. Get at least 7 hours of sleep and take time to relax every day.

Smile and be happy. Your genes are counting on you to take care of them.

Dr. Clair is founder and medical director of Vibrance Rejuvenation Center in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 324.4872.

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That Sneaky Desert Sun

Okay, I will admit it; I am trying to scare you. The big, bad summer is here and with it comes the threat of too much heat, too much sun, and the danger and risk that accompanies both. You might say, “I know, I know. I wear sun block” or “I’ll become prematurely aged and get skin cancer someday.”

If aging and cancer were the only things showing up in my office as the downside of having fun in the sun, it wouldn’t be so bad. But it doesn’t end there, unfortunately.

Remember your mother’s warning, “You’ll go blind!” if you did certain things? Well, long-term sun exposure can cause exactly that, with corneal opacities. The cornea of the eye thickens and whitens, creating a cataract. Even though cataract surgery is routine and predictably successful, it’s best to avoid if you can. That means wearing polarized lens sunglasses at all times when the sun is out. I recommend wearing them especially when driving or doing outdoor sports. (A side benefit is less crow’s feet from squinting in the bright sunlight).



We love the sun, but the sun doesn’t always love us.



Overheating can result in prickly heat which usually appears on the clothed regions of the body.

One of the acute, sudden effects of summer in the desert is prickly heat, or miliaria. It is caused by overheating of the skin and overexposure to the sun. It usually surfaces on the clothed regions of the body like armpits, back, upper chest, groin or abdomen, which can throw you off, since those are not the primary areas of sun exposure. It can present as tiny blisters spread over the top of the arms, neck and back. Anyone can get it at any age, from infants in incubators to

elderly, bedridden patients with high fever and inadequate temperature control. It begins with excessive perspiration, which tends to damage the cells on the surface of the skin. This forms a barrier and traps the sweat beneath the skin, resulting in characteristic bumps. When these bumps burst, sweat is released causing a prickly, stinging, or burning feeling.

For desert dwellers, the way to avoid prickly heat is to use sunscreen with a minimum SPF15 (30 is even better) applied at least 20 minutes prior to going out in the sun, and reapplied hourly. Be especially careful in humid environments and avoid strenuous physical activity. Wear loose fitting, breathable cotton or natural fiber clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to protect your skin against the sun. Drink a lot of water. If you aren’t going to the bathroom every hour or so, you are not drinking enough. And as always, don’t let things go too far before seeking medical help if the symptoms arise.



Polarized sun glasses are an essential desert accessory.

Another consequence of too much sun and heat is sun allergy. It affects sun sensitive people, and you probably already know who you are if you are one of those at risk. I often see a bright red V-shape or redness on the neck and outer part of the legs in people with sun allergy. I usually see it in visitors to the desert who aren’t used to our intense June, July and August sun. The sun causes changes in the skin to which the body reacts, as if it is foreign material. Then the allergic response begins. Steroids are the usual remedy.

I am not saying all sun is bad. The sun helps your skin form essential vitamin D. But there are other ways to get this important vitamin such as in food rich in vitamin D like salmon and fortified milk. The recommendation for supplemental vitamin D is 600 International Units (IU) daily for all age groups between 1 and 70 years old.



Many foods contain vitamin D, however, supplementation is recommended.

So play outside. I am a big fan of regular exercise, both indoors and out. But definitely watch out for these lesser known dangers of sun and heat.

Dr. Chopra is medical director of The Plastic Surgery Institute in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 568.2211. Please send your ideas and recommended topics for his column via email to [csmith@roxosurgery.com](mailto:csmith@roxosurgery.com).



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- 1) The Palm Springs High School string quartet welcomed guests.
- 2) Guests enjoyed a beautiful dinner on the veranda.
- 3) Guest speaker Steven Gundry, MD, received an honorary award for his work in integrative medicine.
- 4) Guests enjoyed sautéed spaghetti squash and ratatouille at one of five dining stations.
- 5) Executive committee members Donna Sturgeon, Tricia Gehrlein, Lisa Ford and Margot Nelligan with Lauren Del Sarto
- 6) The silent auction raised thousands for CV Volunteers in Medicine.
- 7) All guests received a Desert Health® tote with wellness goodies.
- 8) Steve and Reesa Manning
- 9) Bronwyn Ison and Vince Battaglia
- 10) Jayne Robertson and Ed Trost
- 11) Janet Zappala of KMIR with Rich Ramhoff of Desert Regional Medical Center
- 12) Guests were offered bushels of fresh vegetables to take home at the end of the evening compliments of Jeff Taylor with Prime Time Produce.
- 13) Working Women's Hiking Club members (left to right) Sandy Martin, Linda Riggs, Isabella Smith, Deborah Tryon, Mayor Linda Evans, Susan Grahame, Tracy Smith
- 14) Special guests Carol Channing and Gloria Greer

A special Thank You to photographer Lani Garfield. Photosbylani.com



## Winners of the first annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards

Continued from page 1

get involved, and awarding those who are making a difference.

2015 finalists included (in alphabetical order): Large Business: Massage Envy of the Coachella Valley, Two Bunch Palms, The Vintage Club of Indian Wells; Small Business: Kinetix Health and Performance, Klein and Clark Sports Production, Next Level Fitness; Non-Profit: The Melanoma Awareness Project of the Desert, Neighbors 4 Neighbors by Desert Village Initiative Sun City Palm Desert, Neuro Vitality Center (formerly the Stroke Recovery Center); Event or Program: The Drive Against Hunger Golf Tournament, FIND Food Bank's Kids' Summer Feeding Program, City of Palm Springs Mayor's Healthy Planet, Healthy You Race and Wellness Festival; Individual Category: Jeralyn Brossfield, MD, Alexa Palmer, and Cathy Serif.

The challenging job of selecting winners belonged to the event's executive committee, including Tricia Gehrein, Clinton Health Matters Initiative; Donna Sturgeon, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership Health Council; Margot Nelligan, The Desert Look and Act for MS; and Lisa Ford, Desert Medical Imaging and Desert Valley Independent Physicians.

## AND THE WINNERS ARE...

### Large Business: Two Bunch Palms

This renowned resort destination located in Desert Hot Springs operates on four pillars: healing waters, therapeutic spa treatments, healthy cuisine and movement. Established in the 1930s, the resort has offered healing therapies to hundreds of thousands. Now in its 75th year, Two Bunch Palms has expanded their focus to incorporate community and natural resources. Their recent renovation added a 3.5-acre solar field dramatically reducing carbon emissions and water usage, and establishing Two Bunch as the first "Sustainable Wellness Resort" in North America, and the first carbon-neutral resort.

Beyond their world-renowned waters, guests now enjoy over 35 wellness activities, such as meditation, art classes, tai chi, qigong and yoga in their beautiful new dome, and farm-to-table cuisine at their acclaimed restaurant, Essense.

A legacy that spans several generations of guests—from notorious gangsters to Hollywood elite to romantic spa seekers — Two Bunch Palms is a gift to our community and now, to our environment.

### Small Business: Kinetix Health and Performance Center

Kinetix is a state-of-the-art sports performance center in Palm Desert. Owners Michael and Susan Butler share a passion for both individualized fitness programs and youth enhancement and training. Their center offers top-of-the-line equipment and highly credentialed staff, as well as, a spa-like wellness wing for muscle and body work with many specialized services that have aided thousands back - or into - health.

The Butlers have dedicated countless volunteer hours to local high school athletic programs and have proudly trained more than 70 athletes to either Division 1 or 2 scholarships, many who have turned pro. For the past 14 years, they have also operated youth sports performance camps which not only build athleticism but also character, through their focus on hard work and commitment to reaching goals.

Mike is also on the board for two local high school health academies and on the medical staff for La Quinta football. Together Susan and Mike offer a free community lecture series on various health topics and conduct internships for students pursuing careers in Kinesiology. Each of the six persons who nominated Kinetix spoke of their dedication and tireless contribution to members of our community.

### Event or Program: FIND Food Bank's Kids' Summer Feeding Program

In the Coachella Valley, 4 out of 5 school-age kids are eligible for free and reduced-price meal programs. So as schools let out for the summer and heat intensifies, so do the hunger pangs of many children who lose access to the meals and snacks they get at school. The result is a seasonal nutritional deficit that hinders academic, social, and personal growth for these students, year after year.

To help fill this critical hunger gap, FIND has been building their summer programming to increase access to supplemental nutrition for low-income children and their families. By partnering with a growing number of organizations including the Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and low-income housing partners, FIND provides fresh produce and kid-friendly snacks for upwards of 11,000 children each summer. Their free and educational experiences include mini farmers markets which are often coupled with a cooking class and take-home menus for kids and their families.

FIND Food Bank's Kids' Summer Feeding Program is focused on providing supplemental nutrition while creating a sense of community and allowing kids who face food insecurity to return to school ready to learn.

### Individual Category: Jeralyn Brossfield, RN, MD, FACOG, NCMP, Diplomate ASBP, Certified Health Coach

As Medical Director at the Eisenhower Wellness Institute, Dr. Jeralyn Brossfield has integrated wellness programs such as yoga, qigong and meditation into the hospital setting. Under her leadership, Eisenhower now has a mind-body manager, and doctors and nurses are encouraged to take meditation breaks throughout the day. Her team manages required health screenings for employees with incentives and programs to improve health, and the hospital has even opened a yoga studio off campus for the entire community.

Through the Wellness Institute, these services are offered to the entire community and start with education, which is Dr. Brossfield's passion. She often speaks with students, organizations, and other practitioners on the importance of preventative health and its place in medicine. She also leads a team of Take Shape for Life Health Coaches who are committed to empowering



John Trudeau, General Manager of Two Bunch Palms



Susan and Mike Butler of Kinetix



Blair Moss representing FIND Food Bank



Dr. Jeralyn Brossfield

individuals along their own path towards health.

Dr. Brossfield feels honored to be in the position to create new ways to empower choices for wellness, and lucky to have the opportunity to set big goals which make a true difference for people in our community.

### Non-profit: The Melanoma Awareness Project of the Desert ("MAP")

After learning that 19 out of 20 melanoma deaths could possibly be prevented through education, William Lavin started MAP in 2008 while still in high school. With the goal of making a difference, he developed a website, a slideshow lecture, awareness bracelets and brochures targeting young people. The peer-to-peer program trains volunteer high schoolers who then reach out to others in high school and middle school. To date, MAP has educated over 14,000 students throughout the Coachella Valley.

MAP has also been a great extracurricular activity for their young volunteers, helping them build friendships, become better public speakers, pursue their academic interests, and serve their local community.

MAP fans include numerous doctors and countless self-diagnosed patients. Students often approach MAP volunteers to report that they have identified pre-cancerous moles thanks to the program. Wills Lavin also established free screening clinics targeting those without insurance. Thanks to this young man, what MAP does is without a doubt making a positive impact on preventing skin cancer in the Coachella Valley.



Wills Lavin of MAP

### Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors



Nominations for the second annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards will be accepted starting September 1, 2015.

The awards ceremony will take place May 18, 2016.

For more information visit [www.DesertHealthNews.com](http://www.DesertHealthNews.com)

## We are Proud to Support These Desert Events

**Sept. 18 • Break the Stigma Golf Tournament.** Heroes in Recovery and Michael's House invite you and your friends to a fun round of golf at Escena Golf Course to benefit the Safe House of the Desert. The Cost is \$75 per person or \$300 for a foursome and includes golf and lunch. Renee.Baribeau@frn.com (760) 464.2138. [www.breakthestigmagolf.eventbrite.com](http://www.breakthestigmagolf.eventbrite.com)

**Nov. 7 • Step Out for Diabetes.** Bring your family and friends to walk and help raise funds to change the future of those living with diabetes. La Quinta Resort and The Club at PGA West. [www.diabete.org/stepoutlaquinta](http://www.diabete.org/stepoutlaquinta); [Msoliman@diabetes.org](mailto:Msoliman@diabetes.org)

**Nov. 12-15 • Palm Springs International Health & Fitness Festival** Marlo Productions presents this new expo featuring the Survival of the Fittest Desert Decathlon. Browse booths, hear speakers or compete in the decathlon! Palm Springs Air Museum. Vendor and guest info: [info@MarloProductions.com](mailto:info@MarloProductions.com). (760) 285.3903

**Nov. 21 • Coachella Valley Heart & Stroke Walk.** The non-competitive 5k walk encourages the community to take the pledge to live a healthier lifestyle. Start a team or bring family and friends! Palm Desert Civic Center Park. Registration/Health Fair begins at 7am; walk begins at 8:30 am. [www.cvheartwalk.org](http://www.cvheartwalk.org).

### 2016 Save the Date!

**Jan. 13 • Eisenhower Wellness Institute Speakers Series** presents Denise Minger, author of *Death by Food Pyramid*. Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower. [www.emc.org/wellness](http://www.emc.org/wellness) (760) 610.3760

**Jan. 16 & 17 • Desert Woman's Show.** Agua Caliente Resort. [www.DesertWomansShow.com](http://www.DesertWomansShow.com). [info@MarloProductions.com](mailto:info@MarloProductions.com). (760) 285.3903

**Jan. 24 • City of Palm Springs Mayors Race & Wellness Festival** [www.HealthyPlanetHealthyYouPS.com](http://www.HealthyPlanetHealthyYouPS.com). (760) 409.1530

**Jan. 29 • Women Leaders Forum's Women Who Rule!** Agua Caliente Resort. [www.WLFDesert.org](http://www.WLFDesert.org) (760) 837.7222

**Feb. 3 • Eisenhower Wellness Institute Speakers Series** presents prevention doctor Tara L. Dall, MD. Annenberg Center for Health Sciences. [www.emc.org/wellness](http://www.emc.org/wellness) (760) 610.3760

**Feb. 19 • Go Red For Women Luncheon.** The Westin Mission Hills. [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org). [Adrienne.Barton@heart.org](mailto:Adrienne.Barton@heart.org)

**Feb. 27 • Day of Hope for Diabetes.** [emc.org/ddc](http://emc.org/ddc) (760) 773.1578

**Feb. 27 & 28 • Canada/Snowbird Fest** Agua Caliente Resort. [www.bettekingproductions.com](http://www.bettekingproductions.com). (760) 202.4007

**March 9 • Eisenhower Wellness Institute Speakers Series** presents gluten-sensitivity expert Dr. Tom O'Bryan. Annenberg Center for Health Sciences. [www.emc.org/wellness](http://www.emc.org/wellness) (760) 610.3760.

**April 14 • Women Leaders Forum's Health Panel Lunch & Learn.** Agua Caliente Resort. [www.WLFDesert.org](http://www.WLFDesert.org) (760) 837.7222

**May 18 • Desert Health® Wellness Awards** [www.DesertHealthNews.com](http://www.DesertHealthNews.com). (760) 238.0245



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# City of La Quinta Working for Wellness

## La Quinta Is Building a Wellness Community

It's no secret that the City of La Quinta has been embracing its Healthy Eating Active Living status for a number of years, particularly when it won the Coachella Valley Health Collaborative's Healthy City Advocate Award not only once, but three times. However, the real secret is that La Quinta has had a focus on wellness since the 1920s when Walter Morgan came to the desert to build the La Quinta Resort...a relaxing escape from his business in San Francisco.

Nestled among the Santa Rosa Mountains, La Quinta is a natural destination for tranquility, peace and spiritual renewal, and offers a variety of physical activity as well. Biking, hiking, walking paths and over 348 days of sunshine beckon residents and visitors alike to "get physical." To that end, La Quinta City Council has endeavored to create a city that encompasses physical, social, intellectual, nutritional, as well as artistic and cultural wellness. They work to develop La Quinta not just as another desert community, but as a lifestyle.

Creating a "wellness community" takes a great deal of collaboration with a variety of local public and private organizations to enhance existing services and offer new ones. The city acts as a catalyst to provide services desired by residents. While it doesn't always directly provide services, it does provide a framework or infrastructure in the case of buildings and parks, financial support or marketing and promotional support.

In collaboration with the YMCA of the Desert, La Quinta's Fritz Burns public pool offers summer classes including water aerobics, shallow water exercise, swim lessons and swim teams, in addition to fun family events with \$1 per person movie nights at the pool.

Another city partner, the La Quinta Boys and Girls Club, provides free open gym nights four nights a week through shared use at their facility located on Moon River Drive and Avenue 50. They offer evening volleyball and basketball which is open to all ages.

Each summer, the City also works with 13 prime golf courses in the valley to provide an affordable Summer Golf League. Courses include Escena, Marriott Shadow Ridge, The Classic Club, and Nicklaus Tournament Course and TPC Stadium at PGA WEST.

More partnerships have blossomed with the recent transformation of the La Quinta Senior Center into the Wellness Center, complete with a state-of-the-art fitness center available to La Quinta residents for the very low price of \$50 per year (non-residents \$75). The Wellness Center was designed to host a variety of classes, lectures and opportunities for all ages to engage in and/or increase knowledge about health, fitness, art and physical fitness. The Live Well Clinic has been on site to offer weekly Vitamin B12 shots and healthy lecture presentations, and Eisenhower Medical Center has provided a lecture series and health screenings.

La Quinta is building a healthy foundation for its residents one partnership at a time, and the benefits of cooperation have multiplied each year. Summer is no longer a time to hibernate, but a time to explore the many health and wellness opportunities offered.

For more information on activities and opportunities offered, visit [www.playinlaquinta.com](http://www.playinlaquinta.com) or call (760) 777.7000.

## Avoid These Common Investor Mistakes

By Reesa Manning, Vice President & Senior Financial Advisor

- Chasing performance.** Investors often move out of sectors that are not performing well, investing that money in high-performing investments. But the market is cyclical; and often those high performers are poised to underperform, while the sectors just sold are ready to outperform. Rather than trying to guess which sector is going to outperform, broadly diversify your portfolio.
  - Looking for get-rich-quick investments.** When your expectations are too high, you have a tendency to chase after high-risk investments. Your goal should be to earn reasonable returns over the long term, investing in high-quality investments.
  - Avoiding the sale of an investment with a loss.** When selling a stock with a loss, an investor must admit he/she made a mistake, something that is difficult to do. When evaluating your investments, objectively review the prospects of each one, making decisions to hold or sell on that basis.
  - Selecting investments that don't add diversification benefits to your portfolio.** Diversification helps reduce your portfolio's volatility, since various investments respond differently to economic events and market factors. Yet, it's common for investors to keep adding investments that are similar in nature. This does not add much in the way of diversification, while making the portfolio more difficult to monitor.
  - Not checking your portfolio's performance periodically.** While everyone likes to think their portfolio is beating the market, many investors simply don't know for sure. So analyze your portfolio's performance periodically.
  - Letting market predictions cause inaction.** No one has shown a consistent ability to predict where the market is headed in the future. So don't pay attention to either gloomy or optimistic predictions. Instead, approach investing with a plan.
  - Expecting the market to continue in its current direction.** Investors have a tendency to make investment decisions based on current trends in the market. However, there is a tendency for markets to revert back to the average return when they have an extended period of above- or below-average returns.
  - Not understanding that saving and investing are two different concepts.** Saving involves not spending current income, while investing requires you to take those savings and invest them to earn a return. Saving often becomes easier when separated from the choice of where to invest. Find ways to make saving as automatic as possible, then take your time to research and select specific investments.
  - Considering only pretax returns.** One of the most significant expenses that can erode your portfolio's value is income taxes. Thus, don't just consider your pretax returns, but look at after-tax returns. If too much of your portfolio is going to pay taxes, look at strategies that can help reduce those taxes.
- Reesa Manning is Senior Vice President and 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](mailto:Reesa@IWMgmt.com).

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## Okinawa: A Study in Longevity

By Nikhil Mehta

The last fifty years have seen major advances in modern medicine and nutrition knowledge which have extended the number of years we can expect to live, and the quality of life we can hope to enjoy. While retirement age used to be about stopping, now it is about going.

Considerable research has been done to determine the factors which enable some adults to live longer, happier and healthier lives than others. While there is no single explanation, there is one place on earth that has been called the ideal place for aging: Okinawa, Japan.

Okinawa is an island in Japan where the average life expectancy is just over 82 years (almost 78 for men and 86 for women). This is almost 4.5 years longer than the average U.S. lifespan. Okinawans are 3 to 7 times more likely to live to 100 than Americans. As impressive as the long lives lived is, the quality of health most elders of Okinawa enjoy is even more extraordinary. Heart disease, cancer, dementia, diabetes, and other conditions are rare in Okinawan elders. Studies have found that genetic factors only account for about one-third of the extraordinary health and long life spans. Two-thirds of this enviable good health appears to be the result of diet, exercise, low stress levels, familial and community ties, social practices and spiritual beliefs.

Excellent physical health, mental awareness and inner calm are common among the studied elders. Their philosophy can be summed up in two words: moderation and variety.

The following is a summary of the findings of gerontologist Greg Wilcox, who studied longevity in Okinawa for fifteen years:

**Dietary Factors.** A major factor that results in the extraordinary health enjoyed by Okinawan elders is their diet. It is plant-based, low in protein and high in fiber, omega-3 fatty acids and flavonoids. It includes low to moderate alcohol intake, plenty of fruits and vegetables and very low levels of saturated fat and sodium.

**Exercise Factors.** Okinawan elders have life-long routines of moderate exercise and physical activity. They walk most places they go, keep up daily tasks like housework and gardening and practice the soft martial art of tai chi. They report that these physical activities also give them a sense of calmness and psychological wholeness.

**Sense of Purpose and Active Social Ties.** The remarkable life spans and health in Okinawa can be further explained by the extent to which their lives are also low stress, socially rich, purposeful and spiritual. Their inner calm and desire to remain productive into older age offers Okinawan elders substantial stress relief, a sense of social connection and purpose, and a respected, important role in their community.

We can all learn from these findings as we age, and as we interact with those aging in our community. As noted in the book *Happy to 102*, with community awareness, we can expect to see bigger birthday cakes or thinner candles in the decades ahead!

Nikhil Mehta is Owner/CEO of Home Care Assistance Palm Desert, a revolutionary in-home care group which offers clients *The Balanced Care Method™* developed by professors and medical professionals from Wilcox's research. For more information visit [www.HomeCareAssistancePalmDesert.com](http://www.HomeCareAssistancePalmDesert.com) or call (760) 345.0001.

## Keeping Safe from Senior Scams

By Doris Steadman, MEd, MSW

I recently attended a forum on elder abuse at the Jocelyn Center in Palm Desert and was surprised to learn that scams and cons targeting seniors fall under the category of elder abuse.

Geri Crippen Richardson of the county C.A.R.E. Program (Curtailling Abuse Related to the Elderly) stated that the Coachella Valley has more reports of sweepstakes fraud than all of the other districts combined. Our valley is considered an affluent retirement community, but those conducting fraud don't care whether you are earning \$600 a month or \$6 million. They are out to get whatever they can.

Fraud may come through the mail, the internet, over the phone and in person. People calling you have a script, with alternative answers for whatever your response may be. The longer you stay on the phone with them, the more information they are likely to get from you. Richardson emphasized that it is important to do your due diligence before you hand over any money in any aspect of your life.

Bob Elias of the Jocelyn Center added that a lot of seniors don't want people to know they have made a mistake, so they will not report situations which could be harmful physically or financially to them.

A member of the audience shared a phone call she had received the week before. The caller sounded very angry, stating she was with the IRS and the member owed them \$6,000. The caller gave her a phone number to call back, which she gave to a staff member at the Jocelyn Center. This is the time to call C.A.R.E., Adult Protective Services or Law Enforcement. They will follow up with the information. The IRS does not call on the telephone; they will send you information in the mail.

Remember scammers operate with a fear factor, telling you that you may be sued or jailed, or that a family member may be in trouble if you do not provide the funds requested. Research what you can and talk with someone you trust before making any decisions.

You may have recently read about post office boxes being broken into. The people doing this are looking for items which could result in identity theft.

If you have a credit card offer, they steal the form, put the card address as their own, but keep it in your name. You don't discover this until you hear from the credit card company.

Bob Elias began the day with some simple, yet important advice: "We are each other's protectors. Get to know your neighbors, be a kind neighbor, watch who comes and goes into their homes." After hearing about the growing number of scams, and the fraud which may occur anywhere, this is the best way to help keep ourselves, and our community members, safe.

If you suspect fraud, you are encouraged to reach out to Adult Protective Services (800) 491.7123 or the C.A.R.E. Program (800) 476.7506. For more information on Jocelyn Center programs, visit [www.JocelynCenter.org](http://www.JocelynCenter.org) or call (760) 340.3220.

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# TIME FLIES...

## Tempus Fugit

WITH **GEORGE ADOLPH**

### Dog and Man

*"Dogs need just you and love, that's all."*  
- Jennifer Westfield

Two yellow Labradors took our senior neighbor for a walk every morning and evening. We waved and smiled but never met. With sadness I noticed lately, one dog was missing. Surely because of the dog's age, the owner had to come to the mournful decision to help his companion through the transition. We know how it aches.

*"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole."* - Roger Caras

For more than forty years we have bred, trained, cherished their companionship, and deeply loved our dogs. To realize when it was time to leave meant agony, yet it is also an act of love.

Our thoughts and words are dedicated to our neighbor, in memory of his dogs and his recently departed wife.

*"The only creatures that evolved enough to convey pure love are dogs and children."*  
- Johnny Depp

For seniors, dogs offer comfort and companionship with both physical and mental benefits. People with pet dogs exercise considerably more, with increased survival rates from coronary heart disease. Studies have shown that people who keep pet dogs or cats are in better physical and mental health, with fewer doctor visits and less medication.

The ancestor of the dog is the wolf. Remains found in the Altai Mountains of southern Siberia date back approximately 33,000 years ago. At least 13,000 years ago, the present lineage of dogs evolved from the wolf. The oldest remnants of a domesticated dog in the Americas were found in Texas dating back 9,400 years ago. Today there are 340 breeds recognized worldwide.

*"I looked up my family tree and found three dogs using it."* - Rodney Dangerfield

The wolf is a carnivore. Humans eating meats goes back 2.5 million or so years ago. Today, both humans and dogs are omnivores. What happened?

Imagine our early ancestors sitting and eating around a campfire. The fine sense of smell of food attracts wolves. They shy away from the human smell. A scrap of food, a bone is tossed their way. A wolf rushes in and grabs it, and it tastes really good. This event repeats itself until the wolves lost their fear and became domesticated.

Humans soon learned the enormous benefits from living with the wolf-dogs. Dogs improved sanitation by cleaning up food scraps. They alerted the camp to the presence of predators and strangers. Dogs provided warmth in cold nights. With their exceptional sense of smell, they hunted and tracked game. It was the primary reason for the domestication of the wolf into today's dog.

Perhaps when you now see a toy poodle and a Great Dane and read a little of their canine history, you may be awed by the power of evolution and how we all benefit from it.

*"Dogs are our link to paradise. They don't know evil, jealousy or discontent."* - Milan Kundera

George can be reached at [ugadolph@live.com](mailto:ugadolph@live.com).

Giving Children in Need a Voice

Continued from page 18

are observing, asking questions, and participating. Each therapy room is colorful with games and toys as well as charts with pictures of the formation of sounds, and a mirror so children can observe their own formation of words and sentences.

A therapist at the center noted that it is better for a child to start at a younger age if possible. "Generally they are here for a year to a year and a half, but sometimes they are ready to go sooner." When a child's goals have been met, they are ready to graduate.

Patty brings her grandson Nathan. Her other grandson previously graduated from the program and no longer needs therapy. "Nathan is 6 and did not start talking until he was 3 years old," she says. "The program has been a lifesaver for us; it has helped so much to prepare both boys for their grade level." She adds that Nathan is learning the tools to help him when he is not understood which is very frustrating for him. "He has learned to say, 'say it after me,' so he knows that we know what he is saying."

Nicole brings her son Brody who is 10 years old. He has been in speech

therapy in school for a while, but is not able to get the one-on-one attention that he receives at the center. Brody stated that being at the center can be both fun and challenging. It is hard work and includes homework which he fits into his busy schedule of sports and school, but he plans to continue at the center until he graduates.



Brody with his mom, Nicole

The Palm Springs Scottish Rite Childhood Language and Learning Center operates on private funding from corporations and the community which pays for therapists and the facility. Petersen hopes to increase awareness of the valuable services the center provides.

"We had a 5 year-old come in who could only speak about 25 words," he says. "Two years later, he was talking your leg off! His parents were so happy that we gave their son a voice."



Scottish Rite members Charlie Ash and James Petersen

And that is why the Palm Springs Scottish Rite Childhood Language and Learning Center is here.

The Palm Springs Scottish Rite Learning Center is located at 44-100 Monterey Ave., Suite 218 in Palm Desert. For more information visit [www.PSSR.net](http://www.PSSR.net) or call (760) 341.6208.

Exercise Your Power

By Lauren Del Sarto

With the exciting CV Link groundbreaking scheduled for next year, it's time to start thinking about alternative modes of transportation that provide both convenience and fun.

How great will it be to jump on your wheeled vehicle in Palm Springs and take the winding path to meet friends for lunch in Palm Desert – without having to worry about the traffic on 111?

Why not choose an option that also provides exercise along the way? Sure a bike is great, but it doesn't always protect you from the elements and you are out of luck if you lose your energy along the way.

Karen Evans of Evans Eye Care introduced us to this fun little urban commuter called the ELF (Electric, Light, Fun). This covered bike can travel 20mph on electric power only and up to 30mph when combined with pedaling. It can hold more than a dozen bags of groceries and an amazing 350-lb payload. It comes in a single or two-seater which can hold two adults or one adult and two children.

It's a healthy, economical weather protecting commuter that seems perfect for our valley terrain. It also makes good use of our desert sunshine with built-in 100 watt solar panels which allow it to self-charge. At 1800 empg fuel efficiency, an ELF is also one of the cleanest possible modes of transportation for the environment.

When thinking about buying a commuter vehicle, safety should be a top concern. The ELF has LED headlights, brake lights and turn signals along with a four-foot wide, five-foot tall brightly colored footprint, so they are not easily missed. The lights help signal the intentions of the rider and in the event of an accident, the rider is already positioned lower to the ground with a crumple zone around him or her that is not provided by a standard golf cart.

More good news... Because the ELF is a bike, it requires no insurance, registration and license fees. Of course, bikes do require new tires and some basic maintenance, but little compared to an electric or gas vehicle. And you can't forget the health benefits that come



The ELF bike can travel 20mph on electric power only and up to 30mph when combined with pedaling.

along with the journey!

We are privileged to have municipal governments that are active proponents of alternative transportation. CV Link is not only about safety and convenience; it allows us to rethink our connected community and is certain to bring us closer together than ever before.

For more information on CV Link visit [coachellavalleylink.com](http://coachellavalleylink.com). For more information on the ELF, visit [elfbikes.com](http://elfbikes.com) or contact Karen Evans at [elfbikesales@gmail.com](mailto:elfbikesales@gmail.com). (760) 636.3345.



# DESERT CLINIC PAIN INSTITUTE

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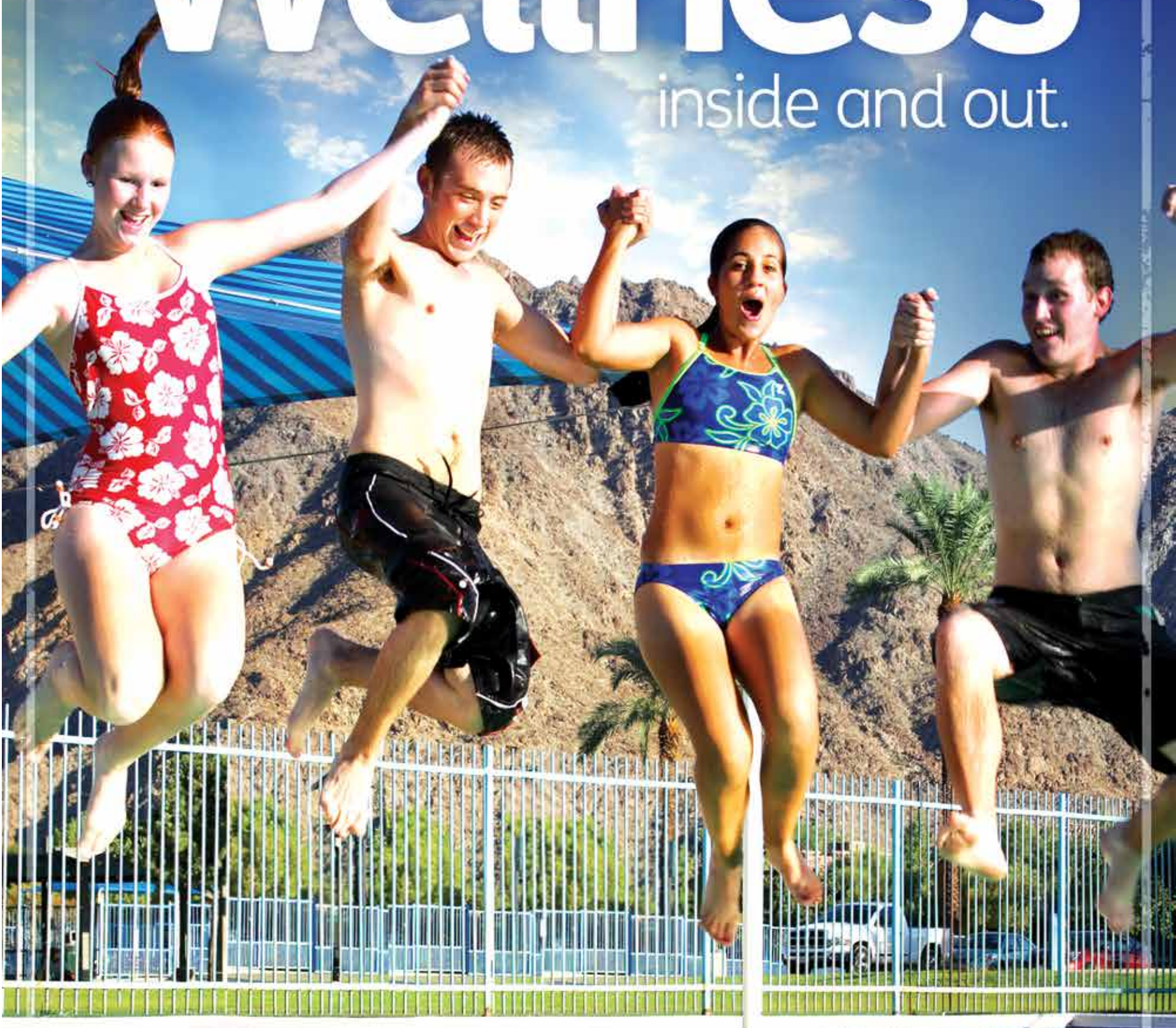
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