

Desert Health®

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

September/October 2015

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Happy Bugs Healthy Body

"What are you writing about next?" This frequently asked question is inspiring and always met with great enthusiasm. But leading up to this issue when I proudly proclaimed "body bugs," the most frequent response was "eww!"

So in the name of science (and in hopes of getting you through this article), let's address our subject title first, because as it turns out, we are more bug than human, and accepting these little guys and understanding how to keep them happy is important to our health.

The community of tiny microorganisms (bugs) living in our body is now commonly referred to as microbiota or microbiome. Over the past ten years, science has confirmed that the human body contains trillions of microorganisms outnumbering human cells 10 to 1. These little guys contribute more genes responsible for human survival than humans contribute! Genes carried by bacteria in the gastro-intestinal tract, for example, allow humans to digest foods and absorb nutrients that otherwise would pass through us. It's not our bodies doing so; it's the bugs in our bodies.

These living, breathing creatures inhabit just about every part of us, living on the skin, in the gut, and up the nose. Sometimes they cause illness, but most of the time, they live in harmony with their human hosts, providing vital functions essential for human survival.



In 2011, I was interviewing Steven Gundry, M.D., for an editorial on diabetes when he started talking body bugs. It struck me the same way you are probably feeling right now, and when I asked Dr. Gundry if we should instead write about this fascinating concept, he kindly advised, "the human race is not ready to hear that their body is merely a bug colony."

However, it wasn't long before the industry was buzzing about bugs. This is due mainly to the Human Microbiome Project (HMP), a consortium of 200 members from nearly 80 universities and scientific institutions launched in 2007 by the National Institutes of Health. Their astonishing results published in 2012 have both science and medicine rethinking common beliefs about what creates good health and what creates disease.

"Like 15th century explorers describing the outline of a new continent, HMP researchers employed a new technological strategy to define, for the first time, the normal microbial makeup of the human body," said NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D. The new technology referenced is recently developed genome sequencing methods which now provide a powerful lens for looking at the human microbiome.

Where science had previously isolated only a few hundred bacterial species from the body, HMP researchers now calculate that more than 10,000 microbial species

Continued on page 4



Recharging Your Batteries.

What did you do this summer to recharge your batteries? Hopefully you got away from the heat, spent time with friends and family, and simply checked out for a while. No matter how full your plate may seem, taking time away from the everyday is an important choice for good health.

However, health care practitioners can be the worst at taking care of themselves. So for this "back to season" issue, we checked in with some of our regular contributors to see what they did this summer to reset their start buttons.

While it was a busy summer for most, many got away and shared their secret escapes. The effervescence of their renewed energy is displayed around their photos in the color they see for themselves. We hope you recharged...and by the way, what is the color of your energy?

Dr. Diane Sheppard, AcQpoint Wellness Center

Getting back to nature and hanging out with my CVRH rescue pony Sundae helps clear my mind and awaken the child in me.



Continued on page 10

September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Is Screening Right for You? [Read more on page 3](#)

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How Was Your Summer?

We hope you made some time to recharge your batteries and create lifelong memories.

Tom and I had a fun-filled summer that included a first-time trip to British Columbia. We were enthralled by Vancouver, Whistler, Victoria and the little beach town of Tofino and brought back a new appreciation for western Canada.

While we expected unprecedented beauty and a laid back style, we had no idea how progressive the region was when it comes to farm-to-table cuisine and eco-consciousness. Every restaurant we visited offered organic food and grass-fed meat (and the choices were plenty!). There was not one piece of trash on the side of the road, and both old and new buildings were stunningly presented with pride. It was a wonderful journey and we will certainly return.

For this issue, we checked in with some of our contributing practitioners to see how they recharged their batteries this summer (*Health is a Choice* pg. 1).

We also talk about body bugs... I know, but I held onto this one for four years until I finally felt readers were ready for the topic. In addition to our lead feature, we have editorial contributions on the timely subject from an M.D., an N.D., and a nutritionist. Now is the time to join the conversation and better understand how embracing your bugs can improve your health.

We have a new section, Through the Generations, which combines our Family and Senior Health sections. Our thought is that each person reading these articles is either a parent, grandparent or has someone younger, or older, in their life, so we wanted to ensure that these important editorials were seen by *all* those related. Let us know what you think.

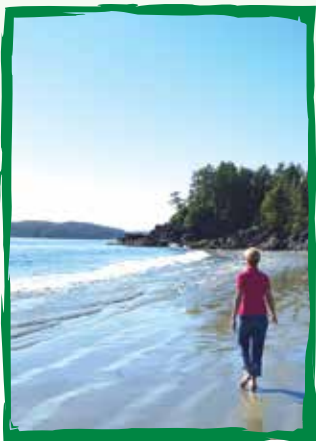
A special note that, while recharging his batteries, George Adolph took a break from his column for this issue, but don't worry, he'll be back for the next issue.

We cannot thank you enough for reading *Desert Health®*. Your enthusiasm and feedback keep us going and are greatly appreciated.

May your energy shine bright this season!

Here's to your health ~

Lauren
Lauren Del Sarto
Publisher



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

Oct. 10 • Paint El Paseo Pink. Desert Cancer Foundation's 9th annual charitable walk down El Paseo raises funds for community residents who are uninsured or underinsured and in need of breast cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment. Join us at The Gardens on El Paseo at 9:30am. Register today at www.desertcancerfoundation.org or call (760) 773.6554.

Oct. 17 • Desert AIDS Walk. A grassroots, community fundraising event that supports client services at Desert AIDS Project and other local nonprofit partners. Join the 600+ individual walkers, nearly 2000 donors, and 95+ volunteers for a day of fun and fundraising to end the spread of HIV. Register today! www.desertaidswalk.org

Oct. 28 • Joslyn Center Health Fair. Join us for a day of health and education! FREE flu shots and many exhibitors offering information and services, exercise demonstrations, and speakers to help set you on your path to health. 9am – 1pm. 73-750 Catalina Way Palm Desert. Visit JoslynCenter.com or call (760) 340.3220.

Nov. 13-15 • Palm Springs International Health & Fitness Festival A Marlo Productions event featuring interactive fitness including the Desert CrossFit obstacle course, yoga classes, the Palm Springs Police bicycle agility course, speakers, an NFL players panel and autograph session, and the Tasting Adventures Zone with samples and organic wines. Get your FREE ticket courtesy of Desert Regional Medical Center online at www.PSHealthFest.com. 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.

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 (760) 610.3760

Jan. 16 & 17 • Desert Woman's Show. Agua Caliente Resort. www.DesertWomansShow.com. info@MarloProductions.com. (760) 285.3903

Jan. 24 • City of Palm Springs Mayors Race & Wellness Festival www.HealthyPlanetHealthyYouPS.com. (760) 409.1530

Jan. 28 • Healing Waters Spa Tour. *NEW* Discover the many unique spa hideaways on the Desert Hot Springs Aquifer. Sip wine and soak in these internationally-acclaimed resorts representing mid-century modern, Moroccan, restored hacienda, B&B, casual, classic, clothing optional and more. VIP, guided, and self-guided tours available. 4pm – 8pm. For more information visit www.HealingWatersSpaTour.com (760) 285.3903.

Jan. 29 • Women Leaders Forum's Women Who Rule! Presented by Desert Regional Medical Center. Agua Caliente Resort. www.WLFDesert.org (760) 837.7222

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January 13, 2016: "Death by Food Pyramid: How Shoddy Science, Sketchy Politics and Shady Special Interests Have Ruined Our Health" Denise Minger

February 3, 2016: "Game-Changing Tests for Early Detection of Heart Disease and Diabetes" Tara Dall, MD

March 9, 2016: "Gluten and Your Gut – What's the big deal?" Tom O'Bryan, DC, CCN, DACBN

Events held at 7 pm at Annenberg Center for Health Sciences
For ticket info visit emc.org/wellness or call (760) 610.7360



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Prostate Cancer Screening: A Very Individual Choice

By Lauren Del Sarto

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. The campaign was established in 1999 by the American Foundation for Urological Disease to educate about risk factors and symptoms of prostate related diseases, to provide easily accessible prostate health, and to advocate for further research on prostate health issues.

Over the past two decades, we have seen much progress and change, but also uncertainty. Doctors and professional organizations began encouraging yearly PSA screening for men 50-70 and while the number of cases detected early significantly increased, so did the concerns of over-diagnosis and over-treatment. Were all early stage tumors harmful and in need of treatment? Was the option of watchful waiting worth the stress and uncertainty for patients? Were the costs and often-debilitating side effects worth the treatment?

Research continues in an attempt to establish definite answers to these questions, but leading organizations are often in disagreement on recommended protocol. However, all seem to agree that any man who is considering getting tested should first be thoroughly informed about the potential benefits - and the potential risks.

There is a significant amount of information available and people need to advocate for themselves, says Amir Lavaf, M.D., a radiation oncologist with Desert Regional Medical Center's Comprehensive Cancer Center. "Educate yourself, get a second opinion, and don't go on one physician's recommendation." He notes the benefit of a multi-disciplinary center where you will receive multiple points of view on your individual case from different practitioners: oncologists, surgeons, and radiologists. "Get as much information as possible to make an educated decision for yourself."

Dr. Lavaf, who has trained in the management of prostate cancer at multiple institutions including New York Methodist Hospital, MD Anderson Cancer Center and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, emphasizes that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to this disease. "Many factors are considered including family history, age, overall health and even ethnicity."

When deciding if prostate cancer screening is for you, there are many pros and cons to consider: PSA screening may help detect prostate cancer early, but some prostate cancers are slow growing and never spread beyond the prostate gland; cancer is easier to treat and more likely to be cured if diagnosed in the early stages, but not all prostate cancers need treatment and there are potential side effects to consider such as incontinence and erectile or bowel dysfunction; PSA testing can be done with a simple blood test, but false positives are common and PSA counts can be elevated for reasons other than cancer.¹

For some men, knowing is better than not knowing and for others, a diagnosis of prostate cancer can provoke anxiety and confusion.

Dr. Lavaf is a proponent of screening based on forty years of research by the American Cancer Society that shows an increase in survival rates due to screenings. "Whenever we find prostate cancer earlier, we are at an almost 99% 5-year survival rate across the board except for stage 4 cancer. We got there because of early detection."

"When prostate cancer is detected and treated early, we have a high success rate," he adds. "Once it gets to bones, which is one of the first places it likes to go, and it begins to cause symptoms and fractures, the treatment and everything involved can be devastating, so you want to catch it before it becomes systemic. When it's local and we can manage it locally, that is when we can treat it most effectively."

Most proponents of PSA screening will recommend starting at 55 except for men at higher risk, including African Americans who often present at an earlier age and in more aggressive forms, and those whose father or brother had prostate cancer; their screening is recommended at 40 or 45.² The standard recommendation also indicates that patients over 70 should not be tested or treated, but those standards are based on average life expectancy and don't apply to our local population says Dr. Lavaf.

"Here in Palm Springs, we are in a microcosm of super healthy seniors who at 85 may still be playing 18 holes of golf on a regular basis. This is not a guy who is going to pass away in the next couple of years and doesn't need to have his prostate cancer treated." Therefore, if an advanced-age patient presents with prostate cancer that could positively be treated with radiation, Dr. Lavaf offers and recommends it. "Again, it's all based on that individual and his specific case and factors."

According to Dr. Lavaf, diagnosis and treatment have both come a long way in the past decade. He and his team are contributing to the research and currently running Phase III clinical trials addressing standard of care for intermediate and high risk cases. The NRG Oncology project has brought together leading organizations in the industry to conduct oncologic clinical research and to broadly disseminate study results for informing clinical decision-making and health care policy. When patients are enrolled in the trial, their data and treatment plan is sent to MD Anderson which critiques and must approve the standard of care being recommended.

National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month has done more than simply evoke the conversation; it is helping to create both change and options that previously did not exist. When it comes to PSA testing, do your homework, speak with multiple professionals, and know your options in deciding what is right for you.

Dr. Amir Lavaf is a radiation oncologist with Desert Regional Medical Center's Comprehensive Cancer Center in Palm Springs and can be reached at (760) 416.4800.

References: 1) MayoClinic.com, Diseases and Conditions: Prostate Cancer; 2) National Institutes of Health: National Cancer Institute. Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) Test.



Dr. Amir Lavaf of Desert Regional's Comprehensive Cancer Center

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occupy the human ecosystem.¹

According to the NIH, the research produced numerous insights and even a few surprises. It was determined that nearly everyone routinely carries pathogens, microorganisms known to cause illnesses. In healthy individuals, pathogens cause no disease; they simply coexist with their host and the rest of the microorganisms living in the human body. In others, they wreak havoc causing disease and illness.

As their work continues, researchers must now figure out why some pathogens turn deadly and under what conditions, likely revising current concepts of how these microorganisms cause disease.¹

Much of the focus is on “gut flora” and the microbiome of the gut has been characterized as a “forgotten organ.”² Many now believe that the human immune system, which seems to be designed to control microorganisms, is in fact controlled by microorganisms.³ Others report that the human microbiome may have a role in autoimmune diseases like diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, and perhaps some cancers.⁴

So you can understand why keeping these bugs happy can contribute to a healthy body - and also why major manufacturers are jumping on the probiotic bandwagon. Probiotics are “good bugs” and are recommended for regular consumption (best from uncooked fermented foods like raw sauerkraut, sour pickles, kefir) and in supplemented, larger doses when taking antibiotics (which kill both the good and bad bugs in your gut).

I sat down once again with Dr. Gundry who in October will present for the third year at the World Congress Conference on Targeting Microbiota at the Institut Pasteur in Paris. As usual, Gundry proved to be ahead of his time, and I was curious to know when his interest in body bugs began.

“When I was a medical student in the dark ages (1970s), broad spectrum antibiotics had just come out and we saw

Continued from page 1

a new disease we had never seen before called Clostridium difficile (C. difficile, the bug that causes inflammation known as colitis). We didn’t know the bug back then, but one of my mentors was certain that we had killed off all of the normal bugs that lived in the bowel and that an abnormal bug had taken over. It would be like a bunch of gang members moving into a very nice community and breaking windows, shattering glass and shooting anyone in sight. He reasoned that the answer was not to give them more antibiotics but the give them material to fight the crazy gang members.”

His advisor’s idea was to replace the bad bugs with good bugs using somewhat unorthodox methods not considered scientific at the time; however, the results worked. “People thought he was absolutely crazy, but it worked, and that was my introduction to bugs long before anyone ever thought about this.”

In true Gundry fashion, he explains that we are merely a condo for our bugs, with bacteria, molds, and fungi constituting 90% of the cells that make a human human. “We are beginning to realize that we are their home. Fortunately, they are not freeloaders; in exchange for giving them a place to live, they are intimately involved with the upkeep and maintenance of their home.”

What we have done in the last 50 years is to try to run them out of their home through the use of antibiotics, coupled with the good old American diet. “Bugs that are good for you are always there; they are never totally wiped out so what you really want to do is to give the good guys the things that they can eat better than the bad guys.”

These microorganisms compete for food sources. They all have different foods they can digest better than their neighbor, and they all fight for territory. “As in real estate, it’s location, location, location. Where they all want to live is right next to the wall of your intestine because that is where all the great nourishment can be found.”

Continued on page 5

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Technology in Dentistry:
The Future is Now

By Nicholas S. Baumann, DDS

More and more often we are hearing of 3D printing, lasers, and computer-driven procedures. Usually it is in relation to industry and production, however, they are also the future of medicine and dentistry, and their use is being integrated today.

Clinicians are always trying to provide the best and safest care for patients, and dentistry is no different. In a world where days and microns can make the difference between success and failure, the use of cutting edge technology gives us an advantage in the quest to provide the best treatment.

One great example of the digital revolution in dentistry is the use of Cad/Cam technology. Instead of taking gooey, messy impressions, a special camera can now be used to scan the teeth and create a 3D digital model of the mouth that is quicker and more accurate than traditional methods. These models can be used to evaluate dental problems and to fabricate dental restorations such as crowns and fillings. In addition, computer programs can now design and customize restorations and the final product can then be milled on site from a solid block of porcelain. The days of having to wait two weeks for a crown to be made are over. In as little as two hours, the entire procedure can be completed start to finish, all due to the amazing advancements in technology!



Advanced technology like the Cerec Digital Impression Model significantly aid in diagnosis and treatment.

Another example of technology that enhances capability is cone beam computed tomography (CBCT). With names like ICAT, Galileos, and Carestream, these machines provide 3D x-rays similar to a traditional CT scan with a fraction of the radiation and with much more detail than traditional dental x-rays. They can help us diagnose issues much earlier than ever before, resulting in earlier intervention and therapy, better outcomes and more conservative treatment.

CBCT can further be utilized to preplan dental surgeries such as implant placement. Implants can be planned in the digital environment before the surgery day arrives. Care can be taken to choose the optimal placement and to avoid vital structures. This file can then be used to fabricate a surgical guide, which allows the dentist or surgeon to place the implant in the precise location planned in the computer program. The result is more predictable and accurate placement, often less discomfort, reduced complications and expedited healing time because in many cases, large incisions are no longer required.

As a dentist and a health care professional, I'm thrilled with how far we've come and eager to see what the future holds. Without a doubt, the use of technology allows dentists to be better clinicians. For all in the health care field, it comes down to one shared goal, providing the best possible care for our patients and utilizing all the tools available to do so.

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



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Happy Bugs, Healthy Body

The bugs that live closest to our gut wall seem to be critical in telling our immune system what to do. "We have always thought that these bugs communicate telepathically (sort of like text messages), but we now have shown that certain bugs actually drill into the gut and make cell to cell contact with us. They are us and we are them; they are not foreigners, they are very much a part of us."

How do we get these bugs? We now know that our set of bugs comes from our mother who inoculates the baby as it comes through the birth canal. Organisms that don't standardly live in the birth canal even migrate there prior to delivery to ensure the baby receives the large variety of microbiota needed for proper health. And we start feeding the baby bugs right away, says Gundry. 10% of breast milk has sugars called oligosaccharides that our body has no ability to digest, but our gut bugs require it. So this organism invests 10% of the calories going into milk not to feed the baby, but to feed the baby bugs who will eventually, of course, make up 90% of who that baby is.

"Once you realize that 90% of you is not you, but bugs, you realize that you want to eat what they like, not what you like, because if you keep them happy, they will keep you happy; if you feed them things that the gang members like, then they will become more powerful and will run the good guys out of town."

So what do the good guys like? According to Gundry, the good guys like soluble or fermentable fibers which are different from what most people think of good fibers. "Things like bran are insoluble fibers, and one of the worst things that you can eat." Soluble fiber foods include artichokes, asparagus, mushrooms, avocados, blueberries, broccoli, and arugula. Also, resistant starches, which means that we can't digest them, but our gut bugs "think they are See's Candies." He notes that cultures of longevity consist on diets rich (80%) in resistant starches (plantains, green bananas, jicama, taro root, yucca).

Continued from page 4

Gundry warns that when people are first introduced to fermentable fibers, the bugs are so happy that they produce a lot of gas often creating cramps or bloating. "We coach people through the fact that for the first couple of weeks, you may feel horrible, but hang in there, because it's just your bugs celebrating and they will calm down."

What do the bad guys like? "The bad guys love simple sugars (junk food, fruit, dairy), and that is unfortunately all we eat. Good guys can't use or eat these."

Other facts Dr. Gundry shared:


- It can take over a year to restore your gut flora after one round of antibiotics.
- All artificial sweeteners dramatically alter gut flora. One packet of Splenda will kill off 50% of the normal flora in your gut.⁵
- Feel good hormones like serotonin are produced by bugs, so happy bugs make happy people.
- There are no such things as antioxidant food, he says. Evidence shows that the bugs in your mouth eat all the antioxidants before they even leave your mouth, then produce the beneficial compounds that help us function. So it's not the foods but what these foods do to the bugs.

This revolutionary science is certain to change the way we look at medicine and health. In the meantime, learn all you can to honor your bugs and feed them well, because happy bugs equal a healthy body.

For more information on the Human MicrobiomeProject, visit www.commonfund.nih.gov/hmp. For daily applications, Dr. Gundry recommends a user-friendly blogger named MrHeisenbug ("Respect the Microbiota") or visit DrGundry.com.

References: 1) National Institutes of Health, NIH Human Microbiome Project defines normal bacterial makeup of the body <http://www.genome.gov/27549144>; 2) O'Hara, A. M. and Shanahan, F. (2006). "The gut flora as a forgotten organ. EMBO reports", 7 (7): 688-693. doi:10.1038/sj.embor.7400731; 3) Round, J. L. and Mazmanian, S. K. (2009). "The gut microbiota shapes intestinal immune responses during health and disease". Nature Reviews: Immunology, 9 (5): 313-323. doi:10.1038/nri2515; 4) Wu, Shaoguang et al. "A Human Colonic Commensal Promotes Colon Tumorigenesis via Activation of T Helper Type 17 T Cell Responses." Nature medicine 15.9 (2009): 1016-1022. PMC. Web. 21 May 2015; 5) J Toxicol Environ Health A. Splenda alters gut microflora and increases intestinal p-glycoprotein and cytochrome p-450 in male rats 2008; 71(21):1415-29. Department of Pharmacology, Duke University Medical School

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Genetic Markers in Prostate Cancer Management

How they help your doctor help you

By Bernadette M. Greenwood, BSRS, RT(R)(MR)

When a prostate biopsy is performed, tiny thread-like "cores" are obtained through the tip of a needle attached to a biopsy gun. These tiny specimens are sent to a highly trained pathologist to examine the tissue under a high-powered microscope. The appearance of prostate cells and their architecture help determine the presence or absence of cancer. If cancer is seen, a Gleason score is assigned based on the degree of disruption of cellular size, shape and architecture. Beyond the Gleason score, genetic information can be obtained from the biopsy specimen by performing biomarker assays on the sampled tissue.

Two important markers, ERG and PTEN, also known as ProstaVysion, can be used in men with diagnosed prostate cancer to predict the behavior of the cancer and the patient's ability to fight it. This information is useful in making treatment decisions, especially if the patient is considering watchful waiting or a focal treatment.

ERG (ETS-gene) is a protein that is found infrequently in prostate cells. Its over-expression in prostate cancer cells has been linked to cancers with aggressive behavior. This type of cancer is referred to as "ERG positive." The severity of this gene mutation tends to be worse with the presence of PTEN mutation at the same time.

PTEN (phosphatase and tensin homologue deleted on chromosome-10) is among the most common gene mutations in human cancer and is responsible for cell growth control or the patient's individual ability to fight the growth of the cancer. Both sets of this gene help control cancer growth so if one or both are missing it can allow for uncontrolled growth of the cancer.

If we liken prostate cancer to a bicycle, view it as either a leisurely tour through the countryside: a slow-growing, or indolent cancer OR a wild, back-country mountain-bike ride: an aggressive, fast-growing cancer. ERG is like the bike and how fast it's going. Presence or absence of each set of PTEN genes is like the front brakes, back brakes or both. If one set fails there could be trouble, but if both fail, the bike can speed out of control.

Examining the DNA from the cancer cells collected at the time of biopsy can provide you and your doctor with additional prognostic information about your cancer. The genetic profile of a cancer can be helpful in decision-making as it reveals information about that cancer's likelihood of progression and aggressiveness. This information is in addition to the Gleason score and can be obtained from the same biopsy cores that were taken at the time the Gleason score was determined. A new biopsy does not have to be performed if the tissue from the initial biopsy is accessible.

Patients who are considering waiting for treatment or selecting a minimally invasive, focal therapy may wish to consider discussing biomarker assays with their care provider to get as much information as possible about both their cancer and their immunosuppressive ability to fight it.

Bernadette Greenwood is director of clinical services at Desert Medical Imaging (DMI), as well as an author and educator. For more information visit www.DesertMedicalImaging.com or call (760) 694.9559.

Why the Increase in Traumatic Brain Injuries?

By Diana Huffman PT, DPT

Traumatic brain injuries (TBI) cause over 1 million emergency room visits per year in the United States and over 50,000 deaths annually.

The number of TBI incidents is increasing and affects all ages. According to the Centers of Disease Control (CDC), falls cause 55% of TBI for children under the age of 14 and 81% for adults over the age of 65.

Motor vehicle accidents are the number one cause of TBI for ages 5-24 and the second leading cause of TBI-related deaths in the United States.

Recent studies have shown that concussions (TBI) are responsible for 8-12% of injuries in high school and collegiate athletes; contact sports are responsible for 19% of TBI injuries in athletes.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) defined as a temporary and fully reversible metabolic brain injury with no structural damage identifiable through imaging.

Symptoms of a concussion may present initially as subtle and seemingly unrelated to head trauma, such as lack of coordination, imbalance, light or sound sensitivity or visual changes (i.e. doubling, bouncing or blurry vision). Concussions are diagnosed by a history of head trauma with at least 3 symptoms of the following present:

- Dizziness or vertigo
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Irritability or aggression with little or no provocation
- Disordered sleep: either too much or too little
- Anxiety, depression, affective lability, or reduced tolerance to stress
- Impaired memory, especially short-term or events surrounding incident

Complete concussion recovery occurs within 21 days in 80% of cases, with the other 20% of cases having a lengthy (protracted) recovery lasting from 5 weeks to 5 months. The number one initial symptom correlated

with a protracted recovery is dizziness. Other indicators include:

- Previous concussions
- History of migraines
- History of motion sensitivity
- Concurrent whiplash injury
- Returning to play/work immediately following concussion or prior to full recovery

On the other hand, loss of consciousness and vomiting indicate a speedy recovery secondary to the suspected neural reset that occurs at the time of the injury.

A qualified health care professional can diagnose a TBI with the initial diagnostic screen taking place at the site of the injury. In sports-related injuries a certified athletic trainer, physical therapist or physician should perform the initial testing.

Current protocol includes a 5 minute vestibular/ocular motor screening (VOMS) to help diagnose concussions accurately during the athletic or accident event. In addition, computed tomography (CT) scans and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans can be utilized to rule out serious injuries including brain bleeding, brain lesions, skull fractures and white matter damage.

There is no quick fix or miracle medication to prevent nerve damage or improve brain function following a TBI. Physical therapy from a qualified specialist can help speed the recovery.

This is the first of a series of articles focusing on TBI and vestibular disorders including vertigo, dizziness, motion sickness, postural instability, hearing and vision changes and difficulty concentrating and forgetfulness.

Diana Huffman PT, DPT, is a certified vestibular specialist at Avid Physical Therapy. She has extensive training as a Doctor of Physical Therapy in vestibular therapy and can be reached at (760) 347.6195 or visit avidphysicaltherapy.com



New Lens Options for Aging Patient Needs

By Greg Evans, OD

During the past 20 years, numerous studies have shown a contact lens drop-out rate around 20 percent, most often due to discomfort from dryness. The incidence of dry eye increases with age and to help keep patients comfortable in lenses doctors must first address the underlying dry eye.

Fortunately, there are now newer options in contact lenses to help address aspects of comfort/drying as well as improve visual outcomes. These can be broken down into subgroups as follows:

Material Changes – Silicone hydrogels: These lenses now account for more than 80% of new toric soft lenses prescribed. They are a popular option because silicone materials have been shown to decrease complications such as hyperemia, dryness and discomfort. Silicone is naturally more oxygen permeable so these lenses can prevent corneal neovascularization due to low oxygen at the cornea.

Non-HEMA Materials: These lens materials, although not standardly soft or silicone, have improved wetting and less drying properties. A typical soft lens will dehydrate 6-8% during a normal 10-hour day. Newer materials lose only 2-3% of their typical hydration.

Modality: Changing from more prolonged wear to daily disposables creates fewer problems with accumulation of surface deposits. This enhances tear spreading over the corneal surface and improves wettability. It also reduces the risk of infection. Controlled studies have shown a high bacterial colonization rate in cases when ulcers and infectious keratitis is present. A daily replacement lens is not stored so it reduces the infection risk as well as reduces drying.

Expanded Parameters: Newer designs of lenses have a wider variety of both multifocal (presbyopic) and astigmatism corrections. This shows maturity of the current market and an expansion of newer materials to better address more difficult prescriptions or more specific tasks.

Previously patients with astigmatism had few options but to wear reading glasses over their contact lenses. Today doctors have more freedom to incorporate both into a prescription.

Scleral lenses: With technical advancements and the knowledge gained through scanning laser topography there has been a resurgence in the use of scleral lens designs. Scleral lenses used to be quite uncomfortable. New designs are now comparable to soft lenses in comfort. Scleral lenses have the advantage of vaulting the cornea; they are much larger than standard soft or gas-permeable lenses providing a tear film which in effect bathes the cornea in tears. That principal allows the lenses to be used for both diseased corneas such as dry eye, keratoconus as well as astigmatism. The highly polished surfaces give more stable vision correction for patients with astigmatism.

Gas-Permeable: Reverse geometry lenses: These new lenses have oblate (think dipping down like a bowl) versus prolate (think curved like a cone) surfaces. They fit remarkably well for patients that have had corneal surgery such as lasik, radial keratotomy, and photo-refractive keratotomy. In these cases the vision improvement can be quite remarkable as the lenses really replace small optic zones with larger improved optic zones.

Semi-scleral lenses: These lenses are bigger than normal gas-permeable lenses but smaller than scleral lenses. They correct really well for irregular corneal surfaces as well as edge-to-edge astigmatism. Like scleral lenses, they are also very comfortable.

With newer approaches and solutions contact lens wearers can successfully continue on much later in life and for more varied vision environments.

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

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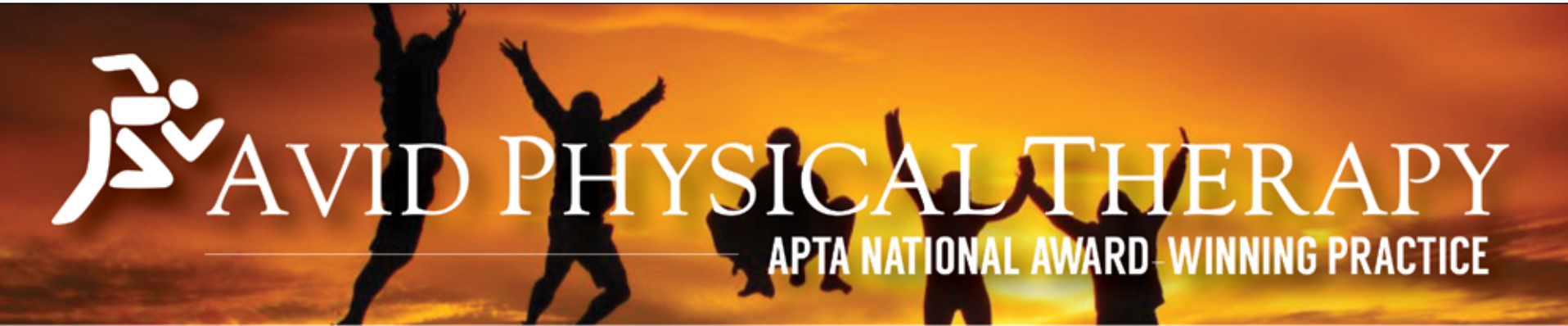
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Diana Huffman, PT, DPT, Certified Vestibular Specialist has extensive training in the following vestibular disorders:

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CVEP/Health Career Connection Interns – Where Are They Now?

Health Career Connection (HCC) is a national nonprofit that provides college students, recent graduates and alumni with paid, full-time internships in healthcare fields. This unique internship program is offered in the Coachella Valley in partnership with the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP). The HCC/CVEP ten-week internship program provides underrepresented local college students with opportunities to gain hands-on experience, mentoring and networking connections with health professionals.

The gold-standard program provides host organizations with dynamic and talented interns. "In 2014, more than 3,000 students applied for 272 national placements."¹ Students undergo a rigorous screening process to ensure host internship sites are matched with interns that best fit the needs and projects of the organization. "Among intern hosts: 100% of preceptors recommend the program to colleagues. 95% repeat as host sites, many with multiple interns."¹

The collaborative effort by HCC/CVEP and partnering internship sites is yielding a pipeline of students committed to addressing the health challenges in this region. Now in its sixth year, HCC and CVEP are taking a closer look at alumni accomplishments. Following are brief narratives of three alumni: Joshue Leyva, Khoa Nguyen, and Anayeli Zavala.

Joshue Leyva graduated from Desert Hot Springs High School and the University of California, Los Angeles with a molecular biology degree in 2013. He interned at Eisenhower Medical Center where he developed a stroke educational manual for patients and hospital staff. Upon graduating, Joshue worked as an office manager for Congressman Raul Ruiz. He is now an EMT taking part in forming a medical brigade in Mexico. Through this medical contingent, he is providing medical care to people in disenfranchised and remote communities. Joshue plans to attend medical school in the future.

Khoa Nguyen graduated from Cathedral City High School. He moved on to the University of California, Riverside (UCR) and earned a neuroscience degree in 2012. He interned with Congressman Ruiz at the UCR School of Medicine. As an intern, he worked in tandem with medical students to create a community health resource manual. After graduating from UCR, Khoa worked for our Congressman as both a call manager and an office manager. He is now attending the UCR School of Medicine.

Anayeli Zavala graduated from Desert Hot Springs High School and the University of California, Los Angeles with a psychology degree in 2012. She completed two HCC internship programs, one locally and one in Washington, DC. As a policy intern for The Praxis Project, she created a model policy database for a national comprehensive healthy school policy campaign. Locally, she managed health programming for NOVA Academy High School of Coachella where she wrote a grant for \$55,000 to build an outdoor fitness facility. She is now with the HCC/CVEP internship program aiding in the coordination of this year's internship cohort.

CVEP is generating a base of "locally grown professionals" to fill careers in healthcare management and policy, health education, community health, and other public health careers in the Coachella Valley.

For information on participating as a host organization or an intern, please contact Donna Sturgeon at Donna@cvep.com (760) 340-1575.

References: 1) "Host an Intern, Prepare a Student for a Career." Coachella Valley Economic Partnership.

Do you experience Migraine Headaches?

- Are you between 18-65 years old?
- Have a history of Migraines?



Desert Valley Research is Currently Conducting a Clinical Research Study to Determine the Effectiveness and safety of an Investigational Drug for Migraine Headache Prevention.

If you are 18-65 years old and qualify as a Participant for this Clinical Research Trial, you will receive Clinical Research Study Related Procedures and the Investigational Study Drug at No Cost to you. You may also receive Compensation for Time and Travel.

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Preventing Shingles

By Lee W. Erlendson, MD, DABIPP

Our focus is to promote well-being and not ignore painful disorders that can be prevented. The benefits of knowing about shingles and doing something before it strikes can help alleviate pain that may alter your life and leave you with severe chronic pain.

Herpes zoster, or shingles, is a viral disorder that can strike at any time, but especially with advanced age. This painful malady can occur anywhere in your body but is most common around either side of the torso. Sometimes, it may be seen around one side of the face or eye.

Symptoms of shingles usually begin with a painful episode over a specific region of your body, which may suddenly become more visual. Painful, pus-filled blisters, clumped together and scattered over that specific area develop from what was simply burning, shooting pain a day or two earlier. You now have shingles caused by the varicella-zoster virus. And unfortunately, it could mean chronic pain in that region for the remainder of your years.

You actually may have been acquainted with the herpes varicella-zoster virus when you got chicken pox as a child (commonly at the age of 6 or 7). As your healthy immune system mounted a defense, the virus began to be eradicated. Unfortunately, a few of them found protection in your nervous system. Most commonly they can hide in the dorsal root ganglion of your spinal nerves, and they stay there until your sixth or seventh decade of life. As your immune system becomes weaker or less sensitive to the antigen markers that identify the chicken pox virus, they can break out of their captive cell.

Once it reactivates, it can shoot down that nerve tearing almost every nerve fiber in that spinal or cranial nerve with viral particles produced just from those few hiding chicken pox virus that have been isolated for decades.

Prevention and Treatment

The shingles vaccine is recommended for those 60 +, but has also shown to be about 70% effective in preventing the disease in those in their 50s. Studies also found that even when vaccinated 50-somethings did get shingles, they suffered far less pain and far shorter bouts of the sometimes disabling disease.

If you get an acute shingles attack, it is best to see your doctor, urgent care center, or pain physician, and get started on antivirals; antibiotics targeting bacterial infections will not work. Treatment needs to be early to lessen the severity of the illness. Evolution of a chronic pain syndrome can occur in as many as 40% of elderly patients who get an acute shingles attack. Chronic pain management then becomes highly advised.

Being forewarned is forearmed. Get your shingles vaccine and prevent a chronic and often debilitating pain syndrome! And if you get an acute shingles attack, do not wait; see a health care provider ASAP.

Dr. Erlendson is a pain management physician with Rancho Mirage Pain Associates and can be reached at (760) 773-3075. For more information on shingles visit www.CDC.gov/shingles.



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A Caring Hand for Youth in Crisis

SafeHouse celebrates 25 years

By Doris Steadman, MEd, MSW

Imagine being a teenager in a troubled home where daily life is all about survival; or a pre-teen caught up in drugs and looking for a way out; or a young girl coerced down the wrong path and fearful of those maintaining a strong hold on your life.

How do you get out?

In Riverside County, troubled youth fortunately can go to SafeHouse, which this year celebrates 25 years. Dedicated to the safety and well-being of young runaways, homeless and other youth in crisis, their two locations in Riverside and Thousand Palms have assisted over 15,000 young people get onto a safer, more productive and rewarding path.

The organization offers troubled youth a secure destination in their time of need with structure, stability, counseling and most importantly, understanding and a caring hand. Their primary goal is reunification with the family which in most incidents is involved in the three-week counseling program offered.

There are several components to SafeHouse. The primary facility offers those 11 to 17 shelter and services 24 hours a day. Through local partnerships, a teen may get on any SunLine Transit bus in the valley and ask to be taken to SafeHouse, or they can go into a local McDonald's or Starbuck's and arrangements will be made to get them there.

While youth are sometimes brought in by law enforcement, it's a voluntary program and participants are free to come and go as they wish. However, while in the program, there are strict rules and education is continued on campus with teachers from the Palm Springs Unified School District.

A second component to SafeHouse is Harrison House, a transitional program for youth 18 to 24 seeking the ability and motivation to become productive, independent, and self-sufficient citizens. One- and two-bedroom apartments are offered rent free; however, jobs are a priority and a percentage of income is put into savings so at the end of the 18-month program, enough is saved for a down payment on their own apartment. Staff and volunteers work with these young adults to enhance education, develop financial stability, maintain positive relationships, and set appropriate goals for future self-sufficiency.

The third component to SafeHouse is unfathomable to most, but according to Mary Battin, SafeHouse's sustainability officer, sex trafficking has become a trade some find more lucrative than drugs. "Traffickers prey on young girls who are missing something in their lives such as love, affection, or guidance from someone older and once they get hooked in, it's like a drug." SafeHouse has a home for six girls to whom they provide certified counseling, education and guidance while they recover from their experiences.

SafeHouse is also in the process of developing a phone app which will allow youth to call in anonymously to report issues and concerns about themselves or their friends. The caller is immediately connected to a therapist, but the number and identity are scrambled to maintain the anonymity of the caller. SafeHouse hopes to launch this free app this year and is raising funds through their Break the Stigma Golf Tournament on September 18 at Escena Golf Course (see calendar on page 2).

If you are interested in helping SafeHouse and their youth, there are many opportunities to do so. Volunteers are needed to teach life skills, exercise classes, and even hobbies. Or if you have a talent or interest in art, music, science, or even business, simply spending time and sharing your experience can have a significant impact.

In an effort to keep the teens busy and mentally stimulated, many excursions are planned to places like the Living Desert, movies, museums, etc., so tickets to venues and events are always welcomed. There is also a need for clothing, says Battin, as many of the youth come in with only the clothes on their back.

"We really encourage adults to come in and share their gifts and talents with the kids," says Battin. "While their appreciation may not be extremely apparent, it truly makes a difference for them to know that people in their community want to see them get better and become successful."

For volunteer opportunities, please contact Julia Jensen (760) 343.3211 or jjensen@operationsafehouse.org. For tours and donations, contact Mary Battin (760) 567.9421 and for more information on SafeHouse of the Desert visit www.SafeHouseoftheDesert.com.



Wall tiles bear affirmations from SafeHouse youth

Health is a Choice

Continued from page 1



Bronwyn Ison, Evolve Yoga

Escaping the triple digits and spending time at the beach with my daughters and friends. A few days of heaven to relax and rejuvenate!



Dr. Greg Evans, Evans Eye Care

Hiking up Signal Hill in St. Johns, Newfoundland and going cod fishing in Bay Roberts.



Bernadette M. Greenwood, Desert Medical Imaging

A good hike in the beautiful desert hills while streaming my favorite radio station, 88.9 in Milwaukee. When too hot to hike, taking in a flick in the coolness of Cinemas Palme d'Or provides a nice recharge.



Dr. Sonja Fung, Live Well Clinic

Enjoying the outdoors... I went white water rafting for the first time in Colorado. 8 ft. rapids are invigorating!



Continued on page 14



Gluten-Free with Tiffany



Is Gluten a Hidden Catalyst for Your Disease?

As of 2012, half of all adults in the U.S. reported one or more chronic health conditions. Approximately 117 million adults (one in four) had two or more chronic health conditions with heart disease and cancer at the top of the list.¹ It is also reported that over 50 million Americans suffer from multiple autoimmune conditions.²

Decades of work by scientific researchers to identify commonalities between these pervasive conditions has successfully linked inflammation to many chronic health conditions.³

Recent research has also identified that the components within certain grains, such as gliadin, gluten, and lectins, play a significant role in chronic disease due to the inflammatory responses they cause. In gluten-sensitive and celiac individuals, various degrees of inflammation can occur in and out of the gastrointestinal tract.^{4,5} The ability to identify these grains as a piece of the puzzle in autoimmunity and chronic conditions⁶ has been extremely helpful in closing the gap between diagnosis and treatment of disease.

Well documented gluten-related disorders include anemia, infertility, some cancers, and some autoimmune conditions. *The New England Journal of Medicine* listed over 55 "diseases" which were not commonly known to be associated with eating gluten including osteoporosis, irritable bowel disease, inflammatory bowel disease, most cancers, chronic fatigue syndrome, and most autoimmune conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and multiple sclerosis. Gluten has also been linked to many psychiatric and neurological diseases, while other controversial research reports gluten connections to autism and schizophrenia with remission by implementing a gluten-free diet.^{9,10}

Pioneers in the research of gluten-related disorders, like Dr. Alessio Fasano, are very

transparent with the fact that the research is still in its infancy. Dr. Fasano explains, "Our research has shown that the immune system responds to gluten in different ways depending on genetic disposition and other factors, such as bacteria in the gut. This is important because, for the first time, we can help people who test negative for celiac disease but still react badly to gluten. In general, reactions to gluten fall along a spectrum that ranges from wheat allergy to celiac disease to gluten sensitivity."¹¹

Simply bringing awareness to the complexity of gluten's interaction is offering us new insights in treating a broad range of diseases.

According to Mark Hyman, MD, an estimated 99 percent of people who have notable inflammatory responses to gluten have no idea it is happening.¹² Commonly, chronic and mild symptoms are ignored or misdiagnosed with conditions that have overlapping symptoms.¹³ In other words, celiac disease and gluten sensitivity masquerade as dozens of other diseases with different names, likely representing a significant percentage of our chronic disease statistics.

Focusing on celiac disease diagnosis alone misses the bigger picture. There's a spectrum of gluten intolerance. Just because you don't have celiac disease doesn't mean you're immune to gluten's harmful effects. Understanding there is a connection between gluten, inflammation, and disease should inspire anyone with a chronic condition to explore the possibility of gluten as a cause or catalyst, despite previous diagnoses related to gluten.

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

References upon request.

The Ancient Ayurveda Practice of Shirodhara

By Kathleen Shyptycki, CMT, HHP

Ayurveda is an ancient practice of healing which views health and disease from a unique perspective. According to Ayurveda, there are five components that can change or influence our energy flow: the food we eat, the quality of our thoughts, the quality of movement (exercise), compassionate touch and most importantly, the giving and receiving of love.

With these five things in balance, we bring our energy body to a very high frequency and experience an abundance of health and wellness. Should a person choose to work with an Ayurveda practitioner, that practitioner will work with that person to find where and what is creating the imbalance or blockage of the flow of energy. Shirodhara is a unique treatment used to bring these life forces back into balance.

Shirodhara is one of the most profoundly relaxing and rejuvenating sessions in Ayurvedic therapeutic modalities. Typically, a shirodhara session begins with the gentle stimulation of marma points on the face, scalp and neck. Marma points are vital energy points throughout the body that can be accessed through touch. These points are considered vital because they are infused with prana, or life force. Marma points serve as a bridge between or doorway into the body, mind, and soul.

Stimulation of the marma points is followed by the application of warm herbal oil gently streamed over the forehead which flows down the scalp and back of the head. Stimulation of the marma points combined with the warmed oil cascading down the forehead disarms the defensive and protective nervous system, allowing the recipient to



A shirodhara session is often described as a soul moving experience.

"let go" and experience deep relaxation.

The recipient's comfort during shirodhara is crucial to the success of this session. First, the oil must be warmed to 100 degrees. If the oil is too hot or too cold it limits or eliminates the benefits of the therapeutic qualities. The recipient's lower back and neck must be supported appropriately, freeing the body of any structural tension. The room must also be warm and quiet to maximize the rest and relaxation the treatment provides.

When these conditions are met, a shirodhara session is often described as a soul moving experience. The mind that once held trapped emotional stress and tensions accumulated from a lifetime of experiences is gracefully replaced with feelings of love and compassion from the heart. This may take several sessions to achieve, but it is the predicted result of shirodhara.

Kathleen Shyptycki is a certified massage therapist, holistic health practitioner and certified clinical Ayurvedic specialist with Somatherapy Institute School of Massage. For more information visit www.somatherapy.com (760) 321.9214.



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D for Depression

By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

Vitamin D is a nutrient present in almost every single cell in the body. It is primarily used to regulate calcium and mineral uptake, mineral metabolism, and bone growth. However, the abundance of vitamin D in the body's cells indicates it has much broader actions than may be entirely known.

One main role of vitamin D is presumed to be the regulation of depression as data and clinical associations have observed low vitamin D levels in a high percentage of patients with reported depression. Low levels of vitamin D may even be a predictor of increased propensity to depression. Vitamin D receptors are present in the same areas of the brain linked with depression, and vitamin D is known to assist in the release of dopamine and serotonin, essential mood modulating neurotransmitters. Vitamin D clearly has a role in mood regulation, even if the mechanism of its actions in regulation is not entirely clear.

The good news is that enhancing vitamin D absorption or supplementation has been demonstrated to improve mood and alleviate depression.

Vitamin D deficiencies can go undetected because the symptoms are largely internal without any specific disease associations, except childhood rickets or bone softening. Low vitamin D levels are often found in individuals with low immunity, chronic colds and flus, asthma, poor digestion, psoriasis, mood disorders, cardiovascular disease, and periodontal disease. However, each of these conditions has a multitude of causes and is not linked solely with vitamin D deficiency.

Factors that can contribute to increased risk of vitamin D deficiencies include increased melanin in the skin, daily sunscreen use, obesity, digestive or liver issues, advanced age, or low dietary Vitamin D intake in infants. In each of these health conditions, and as part of a yearly wellness and prevention exam, vitamin D should be tested; the most accurate test for active vitamin D is 25-hydroxy vitamin D.

Correcting vitamin D deficiency can be easily addressed with simple diet, supplementation, and lifestyle adjustments. Even though vitamin D is made by sunshine hitting the skin, individuals living in abundantly sunny areas like our valley can actually be at risk for deficiency as sunscreen use, which blocks vitamin D production, is more common. Sitting in direct sunlight without sunscreen for 15 minutes per day can raise vitamin D levels. Taking a daily vitamin D3 supplement of 2000 iu (or more as needed) is recommended to prevent and treat vitamin D deficiencies.

Dietary sources of vitamin D include mushrooms, wild fish, organic pasture-fed dairy, and organic free-range eggs which can increase vitamin D body stores.

Depression has many causes, and a deficiency in vitamin D can be a cause or exacerbating factor. Even in cases where depression is present and vitamin D levels are within normal range, raising vitamin D levels within a safe range can still be very helpful and useful in alleviating depression symptoms.

With chronic health issues and for prevention and wellness, have 25-hydroxy vitamin D tested annually or more frequently as needed by a qualified health provider.

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

Sources: 1) <http://www.vivo.colostate.edu/hbooks/pathophys/endocrine/otherendo/vitaminD.html>; 2) <http://www.webmd.com/diet/guide/vitamin-d-deficiency?page=2>; 3) <http://io9.com/5921580/vitamin-d-could-cure-your-depression-but-also-make-you-miserable>; 4) <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-breakthrough-depression-solution/201111/psychological-consequences-vitamin-d-deficiency>



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Western Science Confirms Acupuncture Meridians

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

The foundational belief of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) relies on a system of pathways called meridians that transport Qi, or energy, throughout the body and upon which acupuncture points are located. This system and the paths it follows were first delineated around 2,500 BCE, and are still referred to, largely unchanged, today.

However, Western science has never been able to find or confirm the existence of these channels, which has naturally led to skepticism that TCM is as much superstition as science, and thus to be discounted by modern medicine, regardless of all the empirical and clinical evidence of its effectiveness.

That is, until now. Modern research and modern scientific techniques such as electron spectroscopy and CT scans have now actually identified and mapped physical structures that closely correspond to the traditional meridians. In the 1960s a Korean named Kim Bonghan published papers describing them. Although his discoveries were confirmed by the Japanese researchers in 1967, his work was discounted by other scientists because he never revealed his formula for the staining dye that revealed these structures, thus preventing replication of his findings. Now, over 40 years later, Kim's discoveries have been confirmed by a variety of studies with rats, rabbits and pigs. Stereo-microscopic photographs and images from transmission of electron microscopy show assemblies of tubular structures nearly exactly where they were first postulated to be 5,000 years ago.

Now that they have been rediscovered, researchers are investigating their composition and function. Researchers at the Seoul National University found the tubular structures that make up these Bonghan channels contain a flowing liquid

that includes abundant hyaluronic acid, a substance that cushions and lubricates the joints, eyes, skin and even heart valves. Also visible in the photographs are small granules of DNA or microcells that contain chromosomal material highly reactive to stem-cell antibody stains.

Even more interesting, a 2004 paper describes how biophotons produced by animal tissues (the most recognizable examples of which are lightning bugs and deep water fish that glow) may be emitted by DNA molecules to produce a laser-like coherent light capable of carrying an enormous volume of information through the Bonghan channels. The idea that acupuncture channels conduct light has already been substantiated by Russian research published as early as 1991 which found that the light-conducting ability of the human body exists only along the meridians, and can enter and exit only along the acupuncture points. This finding was confirmed in 1992 and again in a 2005 study published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.

The implications are clear. With these discoveries, and certainly with research yet to come, the physical existence of meridians and acupuncture points becomes more certain and their importance in the functioning of the body better understood. Therefore, the basis of TCM is more amenable to understanding and acceptance by the Western scientific and medical community.

And, it only took science 5,000 years to catch up to what was intuitively discovered and empirically tested long, long ago.

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.



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2016 nomination categories include: Business, Individual, Integrative Practitioners (licensed health care professionals), Fitness Professional, and youth (18 and under) in our Next Generation category.

All approved nominees will be recognized in issues of *Desert Health®* leading up to event which will take place May 18, 2016 at a larger indoor/outdoor location, the beautiful Pavilion at Indian Wells. Three finalists will be selected in each category and winners will be announced the evening of the event.

Over fifty individuals and organizations were nominated by their peers and supporters for the first annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards and five deserving winners took home "The Welly": Two Bunch Palms, Kinetix Health & Performance Center, FIND Food Bank's Kids' Summer Feeding Program, The Melanoma Awareness Project of the Desert, and Jeralyn Brossfield, MD.

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For more information on how to submit your nominations, please visit www.DesertHealthNews.com.

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Health is a Choice

Continued from page 10



George Adolph, Columnist

Positive change recharges your life. "I hope that everyone reading this is having a really good day. And if you are not, just know that in every minute that passes you have an opportunity to change that." — Gillian Anderson



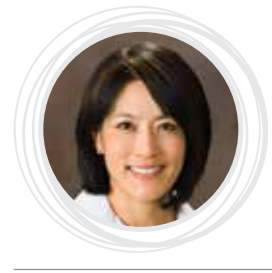
Dr. Jeralyn Brossfield, Eisenhower Wellness Institute

Part of my recharge this summer was trying out new recipes. I love having a bit more leisure time to create healthy, tasty meals like these vegan tacos on eggplant rounds... Yum!



Jennifer Di Francesco, Columnist

Living in the moment and "unplugged" while on vacation in Vail. This conscious act allowed me to focus on every moment I was living instead of what was going on in my absence.



Dr. Maya Kato, The Ear Institute & Aesthetic Art

I took an exciting cruise to Bermuda with my family (and learned the difference between the break and throttle on a scooter – the hard way!)



Tiffany Dalton, Columnist

The magical island of Maui where the culture focuses on enjoying life with family, spending time in nature, and truly respecting mother earth. There is nothing better than digging your feet in the sand and diving into warm ocean waters to renew your spirit.



Lauren Del Sarto, Publisher

I started "Brain Training," a true test of how well you nourish your body and mind. Fascinating, fun, invigorating and strangely astonishing (you'll read more on this in our Nov/Dec issue!)



Dr. Steven Gundry

I went back to work. And worked Saturdays.



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Tips for Helping a Loved One into Addiction Treatment

By Scott Kiloby

Some of the most challenging times in our lives can be helping a loved one get help for drug or alcohol addiction. There can be many hurdles before they get help, including their reluctance or refusal to go, and finding the center most appropriate for your loved one. Here are a few tips to help you help them:

1. Encourage them not to quit alone or “cold turkey.” Not only is stopping cold turkey very difficult, it can have serious health effects ranging from mild discomfort to seizure or death, depending on the substance the person is ingesting and his or her history of abuse. Sometimes medical or other detox is necessary. It’s also important that your loved one goes straight to a recovery center right after detox. Many people relapse because they gain a false confidence after leaving a detox unit.
2. Do your research. Choose a treatment center that has an approach that will resonate with your loved one. Also, don’t just show up at a treatment center expecting admittance without first contacting them.
3. Pay attention to how staff members from a center treat you when you call them. If you call a center and the staff does not speak to you about a plan, find another center. If staff members treat you rudely, dismiss your questions, or fail to call you back within a reasonable time, they may not be able to provide the services and attention your loved one needs.
4. If your loved one is suffering from trauma, anxiety or depression along with addiction, make sure you find a substance abuse center which deals with co-occurring disorders. Treatment of addiction alone is not enough in cases where there are other issues underlying and fueling the addictive behaviors.
5. If the loved one is not willing or ready to enter treatment, seek help for yourself through a group support program or treatment facility. Family members often experience serious mental and emotional issues around an addict who will not seek help.
6. Encourage the loved one to be honest during any initial assessments. Let them know about every drug or chemical that has been ingested within the last two weeks and the amounts including the last time they used. Be sure the treatment facility knows about any suicidal tendencies.
7. Sometimes an intervention is necessary when a friend or family member will not willingly enter treatment. An intervention is a process by which a trained professional meets with the family and creates a plan to intervene in the addict’s life and “raise the bottom” for the addict. Make sure you find a trained interventionist who will communicate with the detox unit and the recovery center and create a long term plan.

Scott Kiloby is a noted author, international speaker and the director of the Kiloby Center for Recovery, Inc. in Rancho Mirage, the first addiction, anxiety and depression treatment center in U.S. to focus primarily on mindfulness. (442) 666.8526.

What is Functional Medicine?

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

The term ‘Functional Medicine’ grew out of the vision and energy of a group of scientists, medical doctors, chiropractors, naturopaths, nutritionists and other health professionals that began meeting in the late 1990s. Under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Bland, these practitioners began holding regular conferences which eventually led to the formation of The Institute for Functional Medicine.

The providers sought a new clinical model for the assessment, treatment, and prevention of chronic disease and to replace the outdated and ineffective acute-care models carried forward from the 20th century. These new approaches reflect the movement away from the ‘one-size-fits-all’ and the ‘one-disease-one-drug’ models of allopathic medicine to a systems-based treatment centered around a patient’s individual biochemistry and uniqueness.

Functional medicine addresses the underlying causes of disease engaging both patient and practitioner in a therapeutic partnership. It focuses on the whole person, not just an isolated set of symptoms. Functional medicine practitioners attempt to understand the underlying common pathways to a disease, as well as the individual expression of disease created by the unique, ongoing interactions among genetics, environment and lifestyle that shape our lives.

There is little doubt that the United States is in the midst of a national healthcare crisis. Our society is experiencing a sharp increase in the number of people who suffer from complex, chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s, and autoimmune disorders like rheumatoid arthritis. The epidemic of chronic diseases threatens the health and economic well being of our nation. We know with certainty that rapidly rising rates of complex, chronic diseases are creating an unsustainable burden on our national economy in both direct (treatment) and indirect (lost productivity) costs. Furthermore, alarming projections suggest that if current trends continue unchecked, future generations will live shorter and less healthy lives than the adults of today.

Chronic diseases are usually not amenable to heroic intervention treatments. They require thoughtful ‘detective work’ to unravel their complex matrix of causes. Understanding the causes of chronic disease necessitates extensive knowledge regarding the physiology and biochemistry of the human body. The scientific community has made great strides in helping practitioners understand not only the most basic of bodily functions but also how environmental and lifestyle influences, when combined with an individual’s genetic make-up and psychosocial experiences, can impair those functions.

Functional medicine treatments are based on a large and expanding volume of scientific evidence regarding the therapeutic effects of nutrition (including both the clinical use of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients such as fish oil, and one’s dietary choices), botanicals, exercise, stress management, detoxification, acupuncture, manual medicine (chiropractic and osteopathic manipulation), and mind/body techniques.

Functional medicine incorporates the latest in genetic science, systems biology, and the understanding of how diet, lifestyles and exposure to toxins influence the emergence and progression of disease. It enables providers to practice proactive and predictive healthcare, and empowers patients to take an active role in their own health.

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

Source: Textbook of Functional Medicine, Jones et al, 2005

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Understanding the HCG Diet Program and the Importance of Phase 2

By Darren FX Clair, MD

The HCG Diet is a much talked about plan for weight loss. There are many professionals and successful dieters who favor it, as well as professionals who have questioned its effectiveness. Knowing what the HCG diet program entails, you will be better able to decide whether it is for you.

The underlying purpose of this diet program is to help you change eating habits; no special food purchases are required.

Once you are clear about this purpose, you need to know the following: The duration of a comprehensive HCG diet program should be 42 days (6 weeks) for Phase 1 and should include weekly visits with your medical doctor. During the 6-week program, patients should expect average weight loss of 20 – 30 pounds for women and 25 – 40 pounds for men.

Phase 2 of a comprehensive HCG diet program is the real heart of the program. It consists of a 3-week transition phase following the initial 6-week program. During Phase 2, no HCG is used. Instead, the patient resets his/her metabolic requirements. The food allowed is similar, though with more choices and increased calories. Patients must continue the good eating habits and lifestyle changes they have made during the first 6 weeks, and if they have been found to have an under-active thyroid, continue their thyroid support.

Before we look more deeply into the all-important Phase 2, here are the major components of a comprehensive HCG diet program:

1. Initial consultation and subsequent visits
2. Thyroid evaluation, and therapy if necessary
3. HCG injections drawn up specifically for each individual on a weekly basis

4. Weekly vitamin B12 injections to maximize metabolism

5. Weekly weigh-ins, progress monitoring, counseling/coaching, etc.

6. Weekly MIC Plus Injections (fat burning amino acids + B12 shots)

7. Optional DNA genomic testing

After finishing your HCG drops or injections, you should be instructed to remain on 500 calories for two more days. On the third day, Phase 2 actually begins during which you are resetting your metabolic requirements to a new set point that will allow you to permanently keep off the fat you have lost. You must perform Phase 2 correctly. Skipping this step almost guarantees you will regain the weight lost. Phase 2 lasts for three weeks and consists of continued weekly B12 + MIC injection for energy, and eating the same types of food you have been eating: lean protein, vegetables and fruits, but in larger quantities. It's suggested that 2200 calories/day for women and 2500 calories/day for men works best. This number becomes your new set point (calories/day). After the three weeks, you can reintroduce other foods that you have been avoiding; as long as your daily caloric intake is no more than your new set point, you will not start gaining weight.

Be sure to work with your medical doctor to set your calories/day high enough. If your set point is too low, then after Phase 2 is completed and you start eating more typical American food, you will find you are eating more than the allocated calories/day and will start gaining weight back.

Taking these simple steps is easy and if followed properly will result in permanent weight loss and increased health and wellness.

Dr. Clair is an integrative medicine doctor and founder of Vibrance Rejuvenation Center in Rancho Mirage. He can be reached at (760) 324.4872.

Eliminating Diabetes – Diseases of Mal-nutrition

By Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH

Diabetes mellitus is a group of diseases that have in common an elevated blood sugar. They are disorders of carbohydrate metabolism. The frequency of diabetes has increased exponentially since 1980 along with the increase in overweight and obesity, and emerging scientific evidence points to malnutrition (not the starvation type, but rather eating the wrong foods) as the dominant cause of diabetes. There is a genetic component to developing diabetes, but this is small in comparison to the impact of nutrition.

This article describes the impact of what we eat on the development of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. Diabetes that develops during pregnancy, gestational diabetes, will be lumped with type 2 diabetes because they have essentially the same mechanisms that result in high blood sugar. The information in this article draws mainly from the work of two physicians, William Davis (Wheat Belly and Wheat Belly Total Health) and David Perlmutter (Grain Brain and Brain Maker).

As a group, the diseases of diabetes have a tremendous impact on the health of Americans causing heart disease, stroke, organ failure, blindness, neuropathy, dementia and premature death. Collectively we spend more money treating diabetes than any other group of diseases, including cancer and heart disease. Eliminating diabetes, or making it very rare, would be an enormous benefit to our collective health. This may seem far-fetched, but eliminating diabetes is easily within our reach. All we need to do is to eat the right foods.

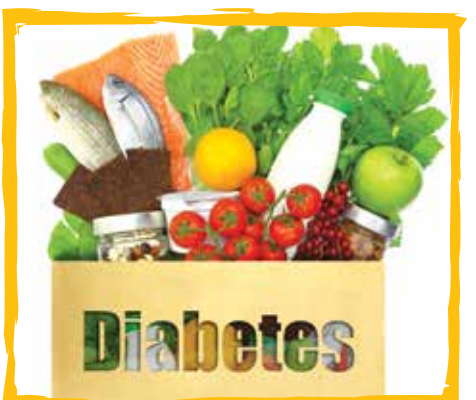
Inside the body, the mechanisms of diabetes are highly complex; drugs used to treat diabetes attempt to manipulate these mechanisms. However, the triggers of diabetes are not complex. Unfortunately they remain largely hidden in plain sight.

Inflammatory proteins, auto-immunity & type 1 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes is one of many auto-immune diseases that rob us of our health. In the case of type 1 diabetes, we form antibodies that attack and destroy the cells in the pancreas that make insulin. Without insulin we cannot metabolize sugar and we die. All type 1 diabetics must take insulin to live. The complications of type 1 diabetes even treated with insulin include reduced circulation to many parts of the body, blindness, kidney failure, neuropathy and heart disease. Without optimal treatment, people with type 1 diabetes die prematurely.

What causes us to form these auto-antibodies that destroy our own tissues? For years this was thought to be due to viruses that reprogram our DNA. We now know

Continued on page 18



Nutrition outweighs genetics in diabetes development and elimination, says Scherger.



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SIBO: Small Intestinal Bacteria Overgrowth

By Brian J Myers, ND

As discussed in this issue, the bacteria in our gut are essential to our health. They perform important functions and even have a compelling impact on our mental health and general brain function. And they are normally present in our gut throughout the large and small intestine, but in very different amounts. The large intestine typically has at least 1 trillion bacteria per milliliter of fluid, whereas the small intestine has only 10 thousand bacteria per milliliter of fluid – significantly less by comparison. While it is vital to have a healthy microbiome in intestines, overgrowth, or even an imbalance of good versus bad bacteria in the small intestines can lead to leaky gut and a number of other symptoms. This imbalance, or overgrowth, has been termed SIBO, which stands for small intestinal bacterial overgrowth.

The small bowel, which connects the stomach to the large bowel, is approximately 20 feet long and plays an important role in digesting food and absorbing nutrients as well as maintaining normal muscular activity. The small intestine also has an impressive network of cells that help fight infections and regulate our immune system. In playing such an important role in digestion and our immune system as well as in simply moving food through our intestinal track, any dysfunction has the potential to lead to major consequences. SIBO has been shown to significantly interfere with the digestion of food, absorption of nutrients, and the structure of the small bowel. All of this can lead to allergic reactions to food, inflammation, and autoimmune disease.

It is believed that SIBO goes largely under-diagnosed in part because people don't seek medical attention for their SIBO symptoms and because many doctors are unaware of how common SIBO is. Some studies suggest 6 to 15% of healthy, asymptomatic people have SIBO and up to 80% of people with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) have SIBO.

The most common symptoms include:

- Abdominal pain
- Bloating and abdominal distension
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Excessive gas and belching
- Chronic illnesses including fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, autoimmune diseases, inflammatory bowel disease
- Vitamin and mineral deficiencies

The cause of SIBO is often multifactorial, but some of the contributing factors include moderate alcohol consumption; medications such as acid blockers, antibiotics, and steroids; a diet high in sugar or refined carbohydrates; oral contraceptive pills (OCPs), and diabetes. Unlike many other bacterial infections, SIBO is not contagious.

The standard treatment for SIBO is either an antibiotic or herbal antibiotic protocol. Unfortunately, the likelihood of recurrence has been shown to be high emphasizing the importance of making good nutritional choices afterward. One study demonstrated that patients with SIBO have significant delays in bowel transit time (the amount of time it takes for something to move through the small bowel). It's possible that this contributes to the high rate of recurrence and that post-SIBO treatment should include an agent that helps with muscle contractures.

As research continues to shed light on this complex disease we will continue to learn how to maximize success by tailoring improved treatment and preventing recurrence.

Dr. Brian Myers is a naturopathic primary care doctor with a focus on pediatric and family medicine at Live Well Clinic in La Quinta. www.livewellclinic.org or call (760) 771.5970.

Sources: 1) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2890937/>; 2) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3099351/>; 3) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22109896>; 4) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18684177>; 5) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18802998>; 6) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25319735>; 7) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22472730>

Eliminating Diabetes – Diseases of Mal-nutrition

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that “leaky gut” from food substances, mainly proteins, which get into blood stream are considered foreign by our immune system. We form antibodies against these proteins, a type of inflammatory reaction, that also attack and destroy our tissues, in this case the insulin-making cells of our pancreas.

Where do these inflammatory proteins come from? Mainly from eating grains such as wheat and other foods made with flour. Grains such as wheat and oats contain prolamin proteins, such as the gluten protein complex, that are inflammatory to the human body and increase intestinal permeability or “leaky gut.” It appears to be that the entire spectrum of auto-immune disease: hypothyroidism, rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory arthritis, multiple sclerosis and other neurodegenerative diseases, and many allergies are the result of eating inflammatory proteins. These diseases are for the most part unique to humans and are not seen in the animal kingdom.

Excess carbohydrates, increased body fat & type 2 and gestational diabetes

Body fat is much more than the storage of energy. Fat is hormonally active in the body and causes inflammation and changes in carbohydrate metabolism. While genetics play a role in susceptibility, there is a level of body fat that would result in almost everyone developing type 2 diabetes.

What causes increased body fat? We now understand it is not from the fatty foods we eat. In general, fats satisfy us and reduce hunger. Increased body fat comes mainly from eating carbohydrates – grains, sweets and alcohol that drive up hunger and cause us to eat more. Carbohydrates and fats are energy foods and the body will try to use the carbohydrates first. All the excess carbohydrates we consume that are not used for energy are stored as body fat through a mechanism called lipogenesis.

Carbohydrates are sugars and starches and come mainly from grains and sweets. Starches such as grains are simply chains of sugar. The amount of sugar in a carbohydrate food is called the glycemic load. It turns out the grains such as the wheat in bread, muffins, cookies, cakes and pizza crust have the highest glycemic load, along with sweets such as ice cream.

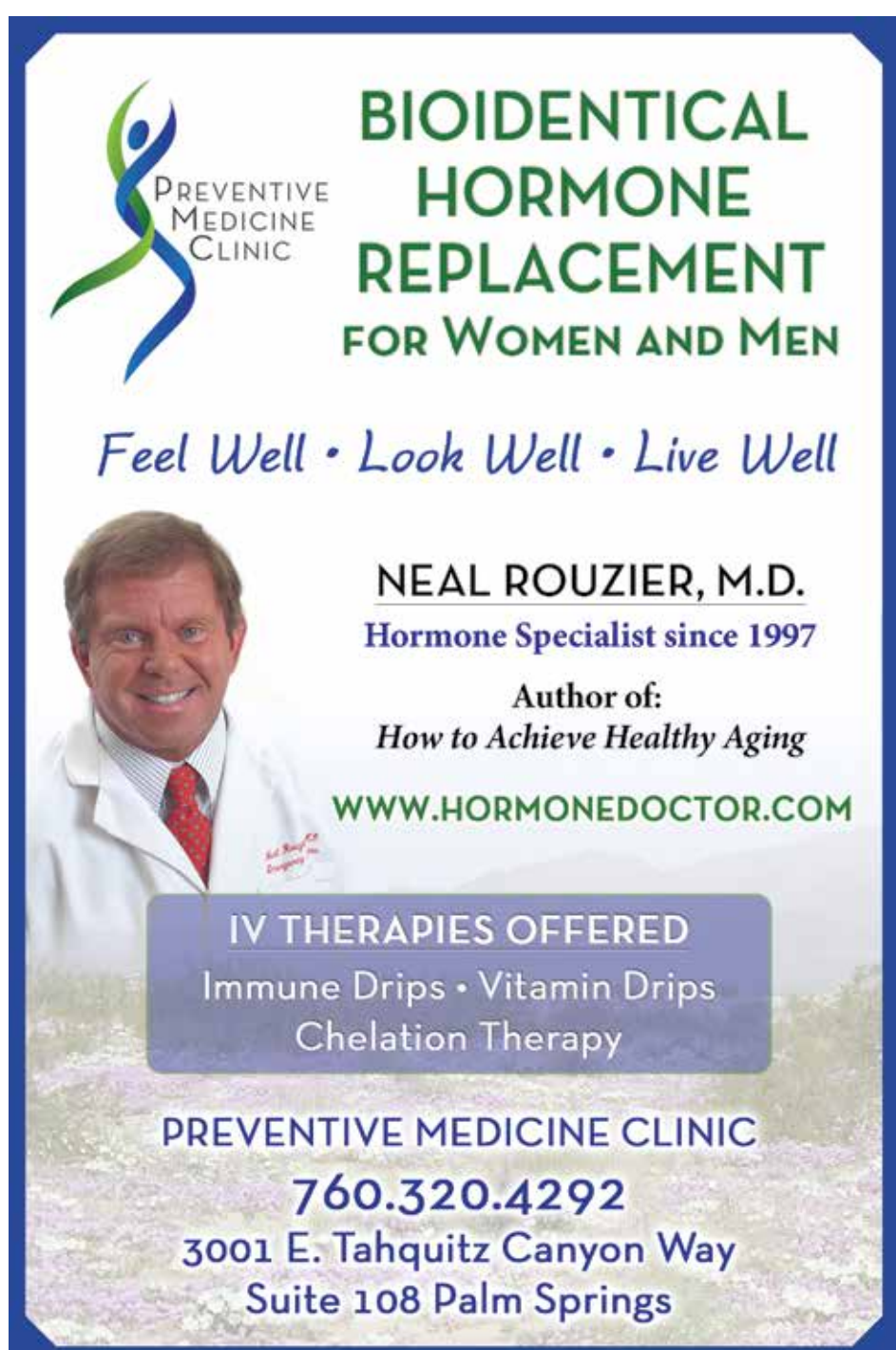
During pregnancy women eat much more and if excess carbohydrates are consumed, gestational diabetes is often the result, putting the baby and the mother at risk.

You are what you eat

This old phrase has new meaning now that the gut microbiome, the 100 trillion organisms in our intestines that determine much of our health, is being understood. Eating the whole foods of nature -- nuts, vegetables, fruit, seeds, healthy fish and meat - results in a healthy gut flora and healthy intestines.

Diabetes would be very rare if this is all we ate. Inflammatory proteins and excess sugars result in an unhealthy gut flora, leaky gut, inflammation and a staggering burden of disease, including the diseases of diabetes. Stop this malnutrition and we can stop diabetes.

Dr. Scherger is Vice President of Primary Care at Eisenhower Medical Center. He is also the Marie E. Pinizzotto, MD, Chair of Academic Affairs, and the Clinical Professor of Family Medicine at both the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine, and the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine.



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THE **Paradigm Shift** in Medicine Today

By Jeralyn Brossfield, MD



Recently, I was privileged to train with a leading brain specialist who repeatedly reviewed with our team that *the brain always does the best it can with the resources it has available*. She demonstrated clinical examples how water intake, excellent nutrition, sleep, and listening to body cues alter brain function.

Brain disorders affect 1 in 4 Americans and are the second most common cause of disability in our country. The numbers drastically increase when we expand our definition to include common experiences such as anxiety, headaches, foggy-thinking or insomnia. Research studies and clinical evidence point to the significant effects of dietary choices on mental health and well-being. While it is common to look for medical treatment for brain dysfunction, it is imperative that we alter diet as a first step in any treatment plan for neurological and other disorders, and the most drastic change we can make to prevent brain dysfunction is to remove gluten-containing grains from our diet.

More than 40 neurological and mental disorders are linked to gluten intolerance. From anxiety, Alzheimer's disease and ADD, to headaches, Parkinson's and schizophrenia, there is now evidence of gluten intolerance as the source of inflammation. Gluten has unique properties allowing it to cross the blood-brain barrier and attach to our opioid receptors instigating an addictive loop. Foods containing gluten such as whole-wheat bread raise our blood sugar 70% as much as pure sugar, leading to unstable blood sugars and elevated insulin. These effects promote a spiral of inflammation, the cause of almost every brain disorder.

The Archives of Neurology reported in 2012 that poor blood sugar control was correlated with increased cognitive impairment. The New England Journal

of Medicine followed suit in 2013 by presenting a study demonstrating that repeated small blood sugar elevations could lead to higher incidence of dementia. In 2008, Dr. Briani reported in *The Journal of Neuroimmunology* that "depression is found in more than 52% of gluten-sensitive individuals." While studies demonstrate the impact of gluten and sugar on our brain, the literature is also becoming clear about how to benefit our brains. It's tempting to hope for one magic food, or a list of brain super-foods that will prevent disease. However, the impact is greatest by sustaining the following actions:

- Eat plenty of healthy fats, especially omega-3: found in fish, nuts, olive oil, and coconut oil.
- Avoid trans-fats or fat-free foods.
- Eat high quality protein to stabilize your blood sugar.
- Eat small snacks between meals throughout the day, as this also stabilizes blood sugar.
- Avoid gluten-containing grains, and processed starches and sugars
- Eat across the rainbow of fruits and vegetables – color indicates higher levels of anti-oxidants. These should make up the most volume of your food intake (5-9 cups daily).
- Enjoy daily cups of tea or coffee for their anti-oxidant boosts.
- Maintain upper-normal range Vitamin D levels through sun or supplementation.

Know that if you are committed to brain health and over-all wellness, you will be joining a community that is happy to have you!

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



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Creating Healthy School Lunches

It's the start of a new school year, and parents are faced with the same challenge: how to prepare healthy, easy, and nutritious school lunches every day.

Healthy school lunches do not need to be time consuming, or expensive. The key to creating nutritious lunch options is staying well stocked and thinking ahead. Maintaining a well-balanced meal is about sticking to a simple formula of proteins, carbs, fruits, and veggies.

Prepare ahead of time. There is nothing harder than trying to scour the pantry after bedtime or early in the morning to throw together a nutritious meal. By shopping and thinking of options before the week begins, the last minute stress of what to put in the lunchbox is reduced. Leftovers also make great next day lunches. To eliminate extra cooking and effort, consider dinners that can easily be turned into great lunchbox items. Make extra chicken the night before and cut it into slices to go on a sandwich or with some veggies. Additionally, make extra veggies that can complement a protein choice or top a salad. By increasing dinner portions, lunch is easily made the next day.

When leftovers aren't available, use nature's 'fast food'- fruits, veggies, nuts, and seeds - that require little to no cutting and chopping. Kids love cherry tomatoes as a snack or a veggie side, and baby carrots, snap peas, bananas, and berries are all perfect for little or big kids. Non-allergenic nuts such as almonds and cashews, and seeds such as sunflower are good protein sources and don't require refrigeration.

Buying ahead, making large portions of meals that can be turned into left overs, and thinking of natural snacks that require limited preparation, can help avoid pre-packaged, over processed snacks.

To help you stick to a simple formula of proteins, carbs, and veggies/fruits, take your child's lunch box and divide it into 4 quadrants. Each quadrant will contain a different food group and equal portions of protein, carbs, fruit, and veggies are ideal.

A typical young child's lunch may look something like this: 2 oz. diced chicken, 4 whole grain crackers, ½ sliced apple and 5 cherry tomatoes. Protein options for lunches are fresh deli sliced meat, cut up meat, poultry or fish from leftovers, hard boiled eggs, organic cheese, nuts, seeds, or beans. Carb options are sweet potato, whole grain crackers or bread, quinoa, or brown rice. Veggie and fruit options are endless and taste best when seasonal, fresh, and organic. Pair lunches with water, or flavor the water by adding a few slices of fresh cut up strawberries, oranges, or favorite fruit.

Consider all the benefits a fresh, healthy, and nutritious lunch has for your children. A lunch made of protein, whole grains, fruits, and veggies without packaged, processed snacks and sugar can increase mental and emotional development. Children who eat balanced meals are better behaved, are more emotionally stable, and consistently show higher test scores. Eating well daily is essential to having a positive, happy, and rewarding classroom experience.

Dr. Shannon Sinsheimer is state licensed naturopathic doctor with a focus on fertility, family wellness, and pre-conception health. She can be reached at Optimal Health Center (760) 568.2598.

Back to School Emotions

By Barbara Pedalino, PsyD

Back to school butterflies are a natural phenomenon. The two most frequent words I am hearing in my practice about back to school are "excited" and "anxious." They are both uttered simultaneously and related to unknowns. When I ask children what they mean by these words, they explain excited to mean seeing friends, discovering their classmates and new school supplies. Anxiety is described as worries of academic challenges, whether they will be liked, and uncertainty about their teacher's temperament. When anxiety seems overly intense and symptoms manifest such as separation anxiety or physical complaints, psychological intervention may prove helpful.

For some children, back-to-school transitions will be compounded by new schools, rather than solely different classrooms. Whether preschool, kindergarten, first grade, middle school, high school or college, newness is experienced with excitement and anxiety. Regardless of the child's age, the questions seem similar.

- Will I be accepted or rejected?
- What will my teacher(s) be like?
- Will I feel lost in my surroundings or enjoy the adventure?
- Will I be challenged in a good way or too much?
- Will I get good grades?

Praising children for their good thoughts and wanting to protect them from their fears are reasonable responses from adults. Yet, as well-meaning as these reactions are, I would like to offer some words of caution. When we praise children for their ideas, we are unintentionally creating a dependency that they need our stamp of approval. How then, do we show our love, caring and support? I advise parents and teachers to lead with empathy. Rather than saying "That's a good idea," with a warm smile, try "You sound very enthusiastic" or "You seem very proud of your idea." Instead of needing the adult to approve, you will be supporting the child's internal process. It is a subtle but meaningful distinction.

Protecting children from their worries and fears is more complex. If we solve problems for them, even though it comes from a place of care and concern, we are actually implying that they cannot handle their own problems, that they need us to do it for them. In essence, we have perpetuated dependency again. In my practice, I like to model for parents how to guide children to solve their own problems and how to convey faith that children can learn to cope with their trepidations. They may not always be successful. They may make mistakes. But don't we learn from our mistakes? When we empathize and say, "It sounds like you are really worried" or "Good luck," they are left with feeling that parents understand their emotions and believe in their abilities. Regardless of the outcome, this builds strong character and self-reliance.

Prior to the onset of school, I encourage children to get together with new or former classmates. School doors are generally open a few days early, enabling students to familiarize themselves with the surroundings and possibly meet their teacher(s). Listen to your children's ideas about routines and schedules. The more children actively participate in their planning and future, the better prepared they will be and feel.

As Benjamin Franklin stated, "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

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.

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City of La Quinta Working for Wellness

Youth Sports and the Quest for Health A Collaborative Effort

La Quinta is most commonly known for its beautiful golf courses and annual La Quinta Arts Festival; however, it is much more than that. Over the years, it has transformed from a sleepy desert resort community into one that is full of life, action and activities for its residents and visitors. Dotted with walking trails and biking paths, La Quinta laid the foundation for building greater healthy living opportunities, and continues the quest to encourage residents to be the healthiest they can be by getting out of their homes, away from the t.v., and moving!

With a population close to 40,000, a quarter of which are children, the City was eager to engage its youth in recreational sports leagues. Through collaborative partnerships with a variety of agencies and organizations including the American Youth Soccer Organization, La Quinta Youth Sports Association, Friday Night Lights Youth Flag Football, Palm Desert/La Quinta Roadrunners, Family YMCA of the Desert, and the Desert Sands Unified School District, hundreds of La Quinta children are now enrolled in various low-cost sports programs throughout the year.

The City established these ongoing partnerships to provide sports program management, program volunteers, and registration assistance, while the City provides field space and lighting, field maintenance, and marketing efforts. Through a memorandum of understanding, the City has established a cooperative effort with the Desert Sands Unified School District to use field space at the La Quinta Sports Complex and Colonel Mitchell Paige Middle School (the school district maintains control of irrigation, while the City provides field maintenance, field lighting, and janitorial services).

The list of offered activities is long, including programs for children ages three through teens. Adult sports programs have also benefited by cooperative efforts with outside agencies. Through a Facilities Use Agreement with the Boys and Girls Club of La Quinta, adults can participate in free volleyball and basketball four nights a week (open gym night). Other adult activities include the summer golf league with 13 different golf courses (including private courses) agreeing to host and reduce green fees for the City, free nature walks and hikes (some quite vigorous) sponsored by the City with volunteer guides from the Stewards of the Cove, and disc golf (adults/youth) offered six times per year in cooperation with Helix Disc Golf, which supplies the nets and scorecards, while the City provides on-site staff and prizes.

La Quinta Community Services Department is staffed with 9 full-time and 15 part-time/seasonal employees, and is tasked with manning the Wellness Center, which includes a state-of-the-art fitness center, park and facility rentals, park and facilities maintenance, City special events, youth and adult sports programs, sports field rentals, and summer aquatics programs. While the department is also able to offer annual events in addition to its regular tasks, such as the Youth Triathlon, Desert Youth Olympics and the Summer Golf League, year-round programs would not exist without the mutual cooperation of others.

La Quinta's passion for health and wellness propelled its outreach to other agencies and organizations to create collaborative partnerships that, together, provide La Quinta residents with the opportunity to keep moving, be healthy and enjoy camaraderie through sports.

Golf is a Sport and Preparation is Key

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

For the most part, golf is an athletic event. Hitting that little ball off the tee, keeping it in the fairway and dropping it into that little hole is a lot of work. However, golf isn't always viewed this way. It's often considered a day in the park hanging with friends and enjoying the beautiful outdoors.

Let's consider the movement required. The average golfer's driver club head speed is approximately 85-90 mph while a touring pro can average 112-120 mph. Ball speed respectively is 125-165 mph. On the down swing, the body can be in three different planes of motion all at once. These are merely a few of the factors that contribute to the reality of the game: golf is a sport, and as with all sports, it can be tough on the body, producing many injuries with the back, shoulder, elbow and wrist at the top of the list.



Proper alignment and structure can help alleviate injury.

A lot is invested in this game with ever-changing technology in clubs, ball design, shoe and outerwear, but the bottom line is that the golfer is the most important part of the game and if he or she is broken, the outing will be miserable. And we all know golfers often have the obsession of wanting to play every day no matter what is going on with the weather, playing conditions, or their body.

Thus, preparing your body to play the game is an important factor that many overlook. A good place to start is a functional movement screen (FMS) which can help identify a physical problem before it occurs. FMS is a physical screen conducted by a certified trainer or therapist. The philosophy was first introduced in 1995 by

Gray Cook, MPT, and Lee Burton as a means of identifying asymmetries in functional movement patterns that could potentially lead to injury. For those with existing pain, there is a more advanced system called SFMA (selected functional movement assessment).

The FMS has 7 screens: 1) The overhead squat; 2) hurdle step; 3) inline lunge; 4) shoulder mobility movement pattern; 5) straight leg raise; 6) trunk stability push-up test; 7) rotary stability test, and two clearing tests. Each test is graded separately from 0-3. If the client receives a 0 there was pain with the movement; a 1 means they were unable to perform the test with the criteria given; 2 indicates that the client was able to complete the test but it was modified; and 3 means they passed the test with perfect form.

Once the scores are tallied, a corrective exercise program is developed to correct the worst scored functional pattern followed by the next area that needs improvement and so on.

Restoring movement before painful patterns are identified can help keep you on course for many healthy years ahead. The best news? The screen not only improves your health and form, but can also improve your game.

Michael K Butler is co owner of Kinetix Health and Performance Center in Palm Desert and is certified with distinction honors as a strength coach through the NSCA. He is also a full body Active Release Therapist and a level 2 TPI medical trainer. (760) 200.1719. KinetixCenter.com.

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Choosing the One

By Amy Austin, RN, PSY.D., LMFT

How often do you think about finding “The One?” Or, if you are in a relationship with someone, questioning whether another more appropriate could be on the horizon? Whatever situation in which you find yourself, the quest for love is an intrinsic and innate part of our lives.

Many people decide on a love quickly and enter into a relationship without fully addressing not only what makes them happy in the moment, but what qualities a person must have in order to maintain a healthy relationship for the long haul. The “I want it, and I want it now” philosophy can trip people up and cause angst later on. Here are some insights about finding a lasting and fulfilling relationship even during times when the love meter is low.

1. When you decide that you’d like to enter into a relationship, write down the qualities of a person that would suit you. These may include intellectual, geographic, occupational, humor, attraction, religious and/or spiritual beliefs, education and whether children are in the picture. Endorphins can chemically attract for the short-term, but a thought out and thought through relationship plan can work successfully for a lifetime.

2. The divorce rates for blended families are higher than those getting married or partnering for the first time. When children are involved, just remember that while you may have a new love interest, your children may make your life miserable bringing different DNA into the family system because they feel threatened, don’t want to share, and/or may have an alliance with their other biological parent who they think needs protection. Children also may have negative feelings visiting a parent who is married to someone with kids, feeling that they are merely a visitor watching their biological parent live with and parent the step parent’s kids. They can build resentments that can impact their future relationships.

3. Online love is huge these days. But, it can be dangerous. Make sure to find out all you can and meet the person in a public place. Meeting a potential love match through good friends and/or activities you enjoy could be your best bet.

4. Ask the opinion of those who are close to you about your potential love choice. Keep an open mind. Pre-marital counseling can ensure that you move into a relationship with open eyes and clarity rather than blinded by physical attraction and fantasy.

5. Enter into some self-exploration before venturing into a relationship. The more whole you are, the greater the chances of meeting someone of the same mindset. If you enter into a relationship feeling like an empty vessel, you might just meet another empty vessel needing to be filled.

A mentor once told me, “It’s not about finding ‘the one.’ It’s about finding someone really appropriate and creating ‘the one.’” How to do that? With very conscious and random daily acts of kindness for one another. Mature love is quite different from a head first impulsive jump that may be based on childhood needs and wants, or what has been familiar, but possibly dysfunctional.

When you are proactive about finding love, love can blossom and flourish at any age.

Dr. Amy Austin is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFC # 41252) and Doctor of Clinical Psychology in Rancho Mirage. Dr. Amy can be reached at (760) 774.0047.

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Dementia and Alzheimer's Caregiving *It's all about the "Ls"*

By Kae Hammond

Did you know that 70% of the family members caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or other dementia will develop a chronic, life-altering condition or succumb before their loved one?

This is a fact from the National Alzheimer's Association. I know first-hand how daunting the role of family caregiver/partner is as my father, and too many others I have known in this role, are included in that shocking statistic.

Your ability to cope with and survive the all-consuming role of caregiver/partner for a loved one with Alzheimer's or related dementia depends on many things. Here are proven steps for thriving in this role.

Discover

LEARN everything you can about the disease your loved one is suspected of having or doctors have diagnosed. Draw upon the knowledge and experience of the professionals in the world of dementia and Alzheimer's. Read their books, blogs and websites; attend lectures and workshops.

LINK with other family caregivers through support groups. No one will "get it" or support you like they will; nothing you ever say will shock or surprise them. Support groups will become your most valued lifeline. The facilitator sets the tone for the group and each has their own personality and style—so feel free to "shop" around. A strong group will keep you accountable to yourself and that's just what you need to ultimately thrive in this ordeal.

Survive

LISTEN to your body; it never lies. There is already one victim of this disease; don't let there be two. You must put yourself first—yes, first—and for many reasons: Who will care for your loved one if you become

ill or die from the stress? You deserve to thrive, not just survive. Taking care of your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual self is not ignoring or depriving your loved one. It is just the opposite—you will be even stronger. And nothing is more important than that.

LOVE, PATIENCE AND TOLERANCE will be redefined by this disease. You will have to forget your assumptions and always be bigger than the situation. As the caregiver/partner, you may experience anger, resentment, loneliness, emotional exhaustion, and general fatigue. However, your loved one won't understand any of your issues. Your relationship must be redefined in order to survive this long, heart-wrenching ordeal.

Thrive

LAUGH together at the funny, sometimes crazy, things that happen as a result of your loved one's skipping memory. Just don't make fun of them—that's of no value to anyone.

LIVE in the present and boldly embrace it. There are no good diseases, yet there are many years ahead for you and your loved one to enjoy. These are progressive diseases, so starting now—take full advantage of the mental and physical abilities your loved one has and go forth. It is certain that you will both benefit and you will draw on those memories down the road.

Kae Hammond is founder and president of Dementia Help Center; author of Pathways: A Guidebook for Dementia & Alzheimer's Family Caregivers and host of "Care for the Family Caregiver" on 95.9FM KJJZ every Sunday at 7AM. For more information visit www.dementiahelpcenter.com or call (877) 699-3456.

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The Power of Non-Pharmacological Interventions in Improving Brain Health

By Nikhil Mehta

Pharmacological intervention has traditionally been the first-line treatment for individuals with neurocognitive disorders, but the benefits of medications currently on the market are generally minimal and/or temporary. In recent years, however, numerous scientific studies have shown that various types of behavioral and cognitive interventions may slow the progression of degenerative neurocognitive disorders. For one, the ACTIVE study funded by the National Institutes of Health showed that older adults who participated in certain cognitive training exercises reported long-term benefits of decreased functional decline.

Activities that focus on overall brain health can benefit everyone – from those who are cognitively healthy and want to maintain their mental acuity to those who are currently experiencing cognitive decline. The MacArthur Foundation Study of Successful Aging suggests that genetics are responsible for only one-third of the equation with respect to the development of Alzheimer's disease. In light of such research findings, a comprehensive approach to brain health, encompassing behaviors that positively influence overall health and quality of life, may help build reserves in people who are cognitively healthy or may slow down the decline of cognitive health. Such activities should target various cognitive and non-cognitive domains, and should be personalized based on an individual's history, strengths and weaknesses, personality and interests with adjustments over time to meet the individual's changing needs.

Cognitive activities can be in the form of puzzles, games and mental exercises which have varying levels of difficulty and, while being challenging, should also be enjoyable. The focus of the activities should be on the thought process rather than on finding the right answer. The person undergoing such activities should be having fun and feeling confident.

A holistic approach to brain health grounded in scientific research should also include non-cognitive activities that support brain health and quality of life in addition to cognitive stimulation and rehabilitation.

Cognitive activities should engage the following five domains: memory, or the ability to retain information and utilize it later; executive functioning of abilities such as reasoning, problem solving, judgement and thought flexibility; attention, or the ability to focus on a specific piece of information for a long period of time while ignoring distractions; language, which includes the ability to execute verbal functions such as spontaneous speech, speech repetition, speech comprehension, naming, reading and writing; and visual-spatial perception, which involves the ability to accurately perceive an object's physical location and to understand the relationships between objects.

Non-cognitive activities should include coping, social engagement, sensory activities, recreational activities, physical activities and diet: Coping activities such as reminiscing help manage stress levels and promote emotional stability; social engagement (conversation) helps us feel connected to the world and reduces stress; sensory activities can be auditory, visual, olfactory, tactile or mobile in nature, or engage multiple senses; recreational activities can improve mood and quality of life; physical exercise can reduce the risk of cognitive decline and helps improve mood; and diet should include brain-healthy foods including Omega-3 rich fish, nuts and green leafy vegetables.

Nikhil Mehta is Owner/CEO of Home Care Assistance Palm Desert, a revolutionary in-home care group which offers clients The Cognitive Therapeutic Method™, a non-pharmacological program developed by professors and medical professionals. For more information visit www.HomeCareAssistancePalmDesert.com or call (760) 345.0001.

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Top 5 Supplements to Increase Strength


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


The fitness industry is flooded with supplements that claim to make you stronger. There are websites, magazines, books and of course, your friends to show you the way to more muscle. The problem is that many of these supplements are not healthy for the average gym guy and may even contain illegal performance-enhancing ingredients. Some supplements on the market have been known to cause kidney and liver failure, impotence or infertility, and other intestinal related problems. You need to be careful in your selection and should consider consulting with a credentialed professional.


In my 30 years of research and experience, I have established a list of safe and effective supplements that should help you achieve greater strength and energy and keep you healthy - and hopefully youthful.

 **Creatine Monohydrate.** This muscle-building powerhouse is already produced and available through the body; its efficacy and safety is backed by 25 years of research. Creatine supplementation works by increasing the availability of creatine and phosphocreatine (PCr) within the muscle, helping to increase energy through high intensity training. Basically, water is stored within the muscle to give you that pumped-up feeling and allows for greater endurance throughout your workout. When purchasing creatine, make sure it's creatine monohydrate as it is the most researched form.

 **Branched chain amino acids (BCAAs).** BCAAs are essential nutrients that the body obtains from proteins which help to aid in recovery and tissue breakdown. These BCAAs are not found in the body and so must be taken as a supplement; they are very safe and very effective. The supplement forms are leucine, isoleucine and valine and have been researched to help improve protein synthesis and suppressing protein degradation. Taking the BCAA supplement in pill form is most effective before, during and after workouts.

 **Whey protein.** This is a fast-digesting protein from the milk family and is an optimal post-workout supplement to improve the ability of muscles to recover and diminish delayed onset muscle soreness. Research supports that six weeks of whey protein supplementation while doing resistance training can lead to a greater increase of muscular mass compared to non-protein supplementation. It is great to have in a shake with various fruits and almond milk.

 **Glutamine.** This is a non-essential amino acid that might not give you earth shattering strength, but I can't say enough for its important role in tissue repair and recovery. Glutamine works by removing excess ammonia which can accumulate during intense exercise, helping to regulate your body's acid base balance. It is one of the most important amino acids for this purpose.

 **Fish oil.** This comes in many forms, but the Omega 3's are what you want to take. This is excellent for reducing inflammation and aiding in tissue recovery. It also has excellent antioxidant properties and is very healthy for circulation and your heart.

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.

Health & Fitness Festival for All Ages
Attendees encouraged to take part and try something new

Desert Health® is proud to sponsor the first annual Palm Springs International Health & Fitness Festival produced by Marlo Productions on November 13-15. This interactive event will offer festival goers the opportunity to take part in obstacle courses, yoga classes, educational lectures, paleo cooking classes, and so much more!

Over 60 health-focused vendors will be on hand including holistic therapies, medical resources, and breakthrough products and programs that encourage and support individuals and families to make active and healthy lifestyle choices.

On Friday, festival ticket holders can register online for experiential activities taking place throughout Palm Springs including morning yoga, indoor rock wall climbing, a scenic guided hike in Indian Canyons, sustainable vehicle test drives, and the all new golf-boarding to name a few.

Saturday and Sunday, November 14 and 15, activities take place at the Palm Springs Air Museum from 10 am – 4 pm kicking off with a Desert CrossFit obstacle course, followed by a yoga class with Kim Tang of Bikram University Village and a cycle spin class. Saturday afternoon join sportscaster Julie Buehler and some NFL greats including Kansas City Chief's Hall of Fame Kicker, Nick Lowery; All-Pro Running Back, Christian "The Nigerian Nightmare" Okoye; along with actor and fitness trainer Pete Koch as they explore the topic of concussions and how the latest technology can help keep our players safe on the field. NFL guests will be available for autographs and photos for a donation fee of \$20 per person benefitting the Nick Lowery Youth Foundation.

On Sunday, enjoy a medical panel with Dr. Andrew Ordon (CBS/The Doctors), Desert Health® columnist Dr. Ritu Chopra and host Patti Gribow as they discuss the latest advances in cosmetic and reconstructive surgery.

Health seekers can visit with informative wellness and fitness experts and enjoy classes and lectures on nutrition, bicycle safety, bio-identical hormones, mindful meditation, fresh juicing, and organic makeovers, or enjoy a relaxing chair massage and visit with lovable, calming therapy dogs.

The Tasting Adventures zone will include healthy samplings of delectable gourmet specialties from local restaurants, complemented by organic wines. Attendees will also enjoy lively music with a magnificent view of Mount San Jacinto from the comfort of the Palm Springs Air Museum.

A generous thank you to event sponsors including the City of Palm Springs, Palm Springs Office of Sustainability, Desert Regional Medical Center, Clark's Nutrition, PS-Resorts and Harold Matzner, Palm Springs Police Department, Desert CrossFit, Palm Springs Air Museum and First Foundation Bank.

Festival passes start at \$15 per day and registration for participation in the festival is now open. Children under 12 are free of charge. A limited number of complimentary festival tickets are available on a first-come, first-serve basis courtesy of Desert Regional Medical Center. For more information visit www.PSHealthFest.com or Diana@MarloProductions.com (760) 285.3903.



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Living Wellness

with Jennifer Di Francesco



There is Always Someone Doing More

The concept of “grit” and “digging in” was the theme of my July/August article. Further inspired by this theme, I successfully hiked Mt. Whitney in one day this summer. This is the tallest mountain in the continental USA starting at an 8,000 ft. elevation and peaking at 14,505 over a total distance of 22 miles. Undoubtedly, it ranks as the most difficult physical challenge I have ever tackled. Upon returning home, I read that 70% of individuals who attempt to hike Mt. Whitney in one day are unsuccessful. The feat required physical conditioning, altitude exposure training, teamwork, a hefty dose of strong mental fortitude - and “grit.” There can be many life lessons taken from this experience. One of the most resonating and universal lessons I learned on the trail was this:

“The universe always places someone before you who is doing more and seemingly reaching greater heights.”

Before starting the most extensive hike to which I have ever committed, meeting Crazy Jack was my message from the universe. Jack Northam is a 66-year-old San Diego resident who has climbed Mt. Whitney 117 times. On some occasions he achieves what is called a “yo-yo” which means he hikes the trail two full times – a makeup of 44 miles. I met Crazy Jack the night before this Bucket List hike. From the moment I met him, to the next day hiking, I was in awe of his accomplishments. A deluge of thoughts flooded my consciousness: amazement, frustration and disbelief. I wondered how in the world he was able to do the hike twice in a day when it took me 15 hours to complete one ascent?



Di Francesco and Toscana trainer Chet Sheehan ascend Mt. Whitney in a single day.

After questioning his integrity, I realized the larger lesson. Instead of questioning Crazy Jack, or minimizing my own capabilities as compared to Jack’s more lofty accomplishment, I had to look at the inspiration of what is humanly possible not only for myself, but everyone around me.

Sometimes we can be so very hard on ourselves. We tend to use others as a measurement of our own capabilities. Regardless of what one accomplishes, there will always be greater achievements that “up the bar.” This is the universe’s way of inspiring us, not making us feel dejected or questioning our personal accomplishments.

Our wellness and highest level of radiant health can be achieved by setting a myriad of life goals such as weight loss, overcoming unhealthy habits, fitness challenges, and positive financial goals. As we navigate the roadmap of life, we will inevitably witness others who seem more self-actualized, having achieved something that we have not. This is our opportunity to thank the universe for the inspiration and ability to forge ahead to break barriers to achieve greater personal accomplishment.

Kudos to Crazy Jack for his inspiration and for encompassing the vision that life begins and ends on the trail. I’m certain my next adventure will surely unearth another superior adventurer to whom I can tip my hat in admiration and inspiration.

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Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes

Be part of the movement!

This year more than 1,000 Coachella Valley residents will take part in the Stop Diabetes® movement by participating in the American Diabetes Association’s signature event, Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes taking place Saturday, November 7 at La Quinta Resort & Club.



Every dollar raised through Step Out plays an important role in supporting the Association’s mission: to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

Today, there are nearly 30 million Americans—including over 850,000 in Riverside County—who have diabetes. While an estimated 21 million have been diagnosed, unfortunately, 8.1 million people are unaware that they have the disease.

If current trends continue, one in three American adults will have diabetes by 2050.

Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes provides an opportunity for employees, friends and family to come together for a fun-filled, healthy activity. It’s an event for anyone who wants to support the association and raise critical funds that will help Stop Diabetes. And this year is more special than ever because it’s the 75th Anniversary of the American Diabetes Association.

There is no better time than now to join us in celebrating 75 years of continuous progress working to improve the lives of people with diabetes through research, advocacy and education.

Walking is a great way to get fit. It improves circulation and mobility, promotes weight loss and even helps reduce stress. Begin your walking routine today. If you’re not used to being active, start with 10 minutes each day and build as your energy increases. When you begin, find a comfortable pace and try to add about three to five minutes to your walking time each week. A good target goal is to walk 30 to 45 minutes five days a week.

Together we can Stop Diabetes. One step at a time.

Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes is a beautiful 5k (3.1 miles) route with an alternative 1 mile route. Registration and Wellness Expo begin at 8:00am; the walk begins at 9:30am. To register, volunteer or find out more information, please visit diabetes.org/stepoutlaquinta or call 1-888-DIABETES.



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STEP OUT WALK TO STOP DIABETES

Saturday, November 7, 2015

La Quinta Resort & Club



Come Paint El Paseo Pink!

It's time to gather a team of family, friends and co-workers, don pink attire, and help raise funds for those in need of breast cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment.

Join the Desert Cancer Foundation's 9th Annual Paint El Paseo Pink Charitable Walk Saturday, October 10. This impactful event brings the Coachella Valley together to support our uninsured or underinsured community members in need of breast cancer screening and care; to honor and support those diagnosed with breast cancer; and to provide education on the importance of screenings.

The opening ceremonies begin at The Gardens on El Paseo at 9:30 am, kicking off the walk down El Paseo and back to The Gardens.

Desert Cancer Foundation (DCF) was founded in 1994 with the mission of helping Coachella Valley residents in need of financial assistance with medical costs associated with cancer screenings, diagnosis and treatment. Through their two Patients Assistance Programs (Patients Assistance and Suzanne Jackson Breast Cancer Fund), DCF has funded more than \$56.5 million in cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment at a billable cost of \$8 million. Impressively, DCF has fostered valuable partnerships with Desert Regional Comprehensive Cancer Center, Eisenhower Lucy Curci Cancer Center, physicians, imaging centers, and other health care professionals who, sharing our vision and mission, provide medical care at a reduced rate.

"Thank God my friend told me about

the Susan Jackson Breast Fund," says a 43-year-old client we'll call Jill, whose doctor found lump on her right breast and advised her to get a diagnostic mammogram. Upon hearing this, she worried excessively as she could not afford the much needed service. "Thanks to the Desert Cancer Foundation, I was able to get the diagnostic mammogram at no cost. Knowing that there is a program that helps women in the Coachella Valley get free mammograms to help prevent breast cancer gave me relief," she says adding that the lump turned out to be benign and she was able to sleep peacefully once again. Jill plans to return to DCF as a volunteer.

Desert Cancer Foundation has become an important partner in our local health care system as service providers refer patients in need of financial assistance. A

model program in cancer care, DCF is one of only a few organizations in the nation which pay for an individual's cancer treatment including biopsies, surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation and prescriptions through their Patient Assistance program. In 2005, DCF expanded its assistance programs to include funding breast cancer screenings and diagnostic services for low-income, uninsured residents.

So come help support this much needed cause and Paint El Paseo Pink!

Register today at www.desertcancerfoundation.org or call (760) 773-6554 for further information on registration and sponsorship opportunities.



Rally the Troops for Nine Weekly Walks

Program prepares teams for Tram Road Challenge

For the fourth consecutive year, the United Way of the Desert will host Nine Weekly Walks across nine cities in the Coachella Valley. The free community 5k walks take place each Saturday morning for 9 weeks at 7am now through October 17 and culminate with the Palm Springs Aerial Tram Road Challenge 6k on October 24.

Leading the weekly walks this year is former NFL player, La Quinta native, and owner of 101 Athletics Training Facility, Jeff Webb.

More than a warm-up to the iconic 6k race, the Nine Weekly Walks serve as a community call to action. Each Saturday, United Way will count on the generosity of participants in requesting donations of crucial items for partner agencies. Last year, the walks gathered over 100 citizens and community leaders, producing a total of 4,000+ pounds of food for local food banks, toiletry items for shelters, books and school supplies for kids.

A free program is being launched in accord with the walks aimed at engaging employees and increasing participation in health activities, with the ultimate goal of promoting wellness in the workplace. The program calls on businesses to register with United Way of the Desert, granting employees access to a microsite where they can signup, form teams, and sync fitness applications to track progress and earn points. At the end of the Nine Weekly Walks the data will be compiled and teams with the most points will be recognized and rewarded at Desert Regional Medical Center's Make a Difference Day post-race awards ceremony and health and fitness fair.

The hugely collaborative effort concludes in the 30th anniversary of the Tram Road Challenge 6k, where partners, volunteers, agencies and caring individuals come together to get fit and give back to the community. In partnership with the Desert Sun, Klein Clark Sports will host the race, televised LIVE by KMIR, as part of USA Today's Make a Difference Day and benefitting the United Way of the Desert.

To register for the Workplace Wellness Challenge, please contact United Way of the Desert directly at (760) 323-2731 or email eevet@uwdesert.org. Once your business is added to the <http://www.wellable.co/tramroadchallenge> site, teams may be formed, activities recorded and progress measured for this wellness challenge and opportunity make a difference. To register for the Tram Road Challenge, please visit desertsun.com/makeadifferenceday.



There is still time to register your group or company for the Weekly Walk challenge.

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The Evolution of Microneedling Therapy

Adding volume to skin surface improvements

By B. Maya Kato, MD

In today's busy world, people are looking for aesthetic procedures that can make them look and feel rejuvenated with minimal downtime. The number of cosmetic surgical procedures remains at a steady plateau, but the number of non-surgical cosmetic injectable procedures continues to rise every year. These office procedures have become exceedingly popular, as patients can often return to work the same day while achieving similar youthful results without undergoing surgery.

Neurotoxins (such as Botox and Dysport), dermal fillers (Restylane, Juvederm, Voluma, etc.) are well established in the field of aesthetics. Neurotoxins diminish wrinkles by reducing contraction of the muscles that produce facial lines. Dermal fillers are gelatin-like substances that smooth out facial wrinkles by restoring lost volume. These can be placed at varying depths into and beneath the skin.

Skin needling, also called microneedling therapy, is a minimally invasive skin-rejuvenation procedure using a device that contains fine needles. The needles are used to puncture the skin to create a controlled skin injury. Each microscopic wound triggers the body to heal by producing new collagen and elastin. Through the process of neovascularization and neocollagenesis, there is improvement in skin texture and firmness, as well as reduction in scars, pore size, and stretch marks.

As a fairly new technique, microneedling therapy is being further redefined and the latest products such as the AquaGold fine touch now offer volume in addition to skin surface improvements. While the application is the same, this new technique differs vastly as it also delivers small droplets of customized treatment solution (prescribed by a physician) into the dermis, thus producing more than a simple puncture wound as other microneedles do. A common treatment solution is made up of a combination of botulinum toxin and hyaluronic acid fillers. For those who are disinclined to use a neurotoxin, the customized solution can be made up of hyaluronic acid fillers and saline solution alone. Thus, in addition to stimulating new collagen growth, active hyaluronic acid and saline can add volume to the tissue while micro amounts of neurotoxin can also improve pore size. Because treatment is delivered to the dermal layer of the skin, it is a nice adjunctive treatment to traditional fillers (which treat below the skin) and topical skin treatment regimens.

Areas commonly treated with this innovative technique include the face, neck, décolletage, and the back of the hands. Often, improvement can be seen immediately with increased radiance and a moisturized glow to the skin; however, optimal results are achieved through a series of treatments, as determined by your physician. Improvements in skin appearance and texture can continue over several months, as the action of collagen production builds and augments the deposition of the filler into the dermis.

Procedures take between 15-30 minutes. Patients receive a topical anesthetic cream first and generally experience minimal to no discomfort. Like other microneedling procedures, normal activities can be resumed immediately afterwards.

Dr. Maya Kato is the founder of Aesthetic Art and can be reached at (760) 610.5558. For more information visit www.drmayakato.com.

Sources: 1. Multiple microneedling sessions for minimally invasive facial rejuvenation: an objective assessment. El-Domyati M, Barakat M, et al. Int J Dermatol. 2015 Jun 20; 2) Microneedle applications in improving skin appearance. McCrudden MT, McAlister E, et al. Exp Dermatol. 2015 Aug;24(8):561-6; 3) Skin cell proliferation stimulated by microneedles. Liebi H, Kloth LC. J Am Coll Clin Wound Spec. 2012 Dec 25;4(1):2-6.

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BEAUTY Inside & Out

Ritu Chopra, MS, MD

Lasers have always seemed futuristic. But they are a daily phenomenon at any plastic surgeon's office or medical spa. As with any technology, cosmetic laser technology advances quickly and can be challenging to keep up with. And with so many advertisements and promotional pitches, the promises of minimal downtime and amazing results are easy to doubt.

There is a lot of hype out there, so let me give you the low down.

Hair Removal Lasers

In years past, hair removal laser treatments hurt. A lot. They worked best on very fair people who had very dark hair. Fine hair and blonde hair was hard to treat. The newest technology such as the ICON laser works with any hair color and any skin type, with significantly less discomfort than before. It emits a dual pulse (one long and one short) simultaneously and the treatment is very quick.

Ablative Lasers

These lasers gently remove the surface of the skin helping to diminish fine lines. The latest technology delivers dual purpose "fractional resurfacing." Products like the F/X fractional CO2 laser accelerate recovery and also tighten the skin at the same time. There are other lasers that do a lighter job (such as erbium resurfacing lasers) that deliver even faster recovery, but are less effective.

The fractional laser means exactly what it sounds like it means. A fraction of the face is resurfaced. The treatment lasers many, many tiny dots with a little space in between that doesn't get lasered. These spared areas accelerate the recovery, reduce down time and reduce the chance of complications associated with the old, non-fractional resurfacing techniques like older lasers and deep chemical peels. Those treatments treated every square inch and could alter pigmentation either 'positively' creating dark areas referred to as hyperpigmentation, and or 'negatively' causing white areas called hypopigmentation.

With the fractional lasers, the spots that do get laser are treated with a variable amount of energy and depth. Areas with thicker skin, like the forehead and around the mouth, get treated at higher settings for a deeper treatment with more challenging lines; areas with thinner skin, such as beneath the eyes, are done at a reduced setting but still get a fantastic correction. The skill of the operator is what ensures that these areas become blended smoothly so that the result is satisfactory all over the face. We even do the neck and chest in some cases, if sun damage in those areas indicate it.

Non-Ablative Lasers

The neat thing about this family of lasers is downtime that is measured in hours, not days. Non-ablative lasers penetrate to the deep layer of skin to stimulate collagen deposition which thickens and tightens the skin over time. If done regularly, a person may appear to be aging in reverse: getting younger and smoother over time. It also helps acne and other types of scarring. The most advanced technology measures the skin type and does not allow for settings that are too high and can burn.

Intense Pulse Light and Dye Lasers

Wouldn't it be cool if a laser could attack just one color, and leave the other tissue alone? Well, now it can. Various lasers can be set to eliminate specific colors such as red for capillaries and blood vessels, or brown for moles or discoloration such as melisma. These targeted areas are treated while surrounding tissue is untouched. Tattoo colors can also be targeted.

Newest Laser for Stretch Marks

The FDA has recently approved the ICON laser for striae, commonly known as stretch marks. This laser penetrates the scar, contracts the width and smooths the texture on the surface, making this problem (for the very first time) much less noticeable. Typically, patients require between three and five treatments to restore skin smoothness and consistency. The procedure is very quick – each treatment can be performed in as little as 30 minutes – and there is little to no downtime.

As you can see, laser technology continues to rapidly advance with patient comfort and results in mind. Prior to selecting a treatment, do your homework and consult with qualified professionals to ensure that you are receiving the procedure that best meets your individual objectives.

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.

MEET THE DOCTORS

Meet **Dr. Chopra** and his partner, **Dr. Andrew Ordon** (The Doctors TV) at the Palm Springs International Health & Fitness Festival at 1:30 pm on Sunday, November 15th at the Palm Springs Air Museum. The doctors will join host Patti Gribow on the main stage for an informative panel discussion on prevention, analysis and treatment of skin conditions. They will also review various rejuvenating procedures as well as the use of the ICON laser for treatment on age spots, sun damage, wrinkles, scars, stretch marks and hair removal. For festival information visit PSHealthFest.com or call (760) 285.3903.





Incorporating Growth Factors Into Treatment Modalities

By Paul Malkin, RN, BSN

When considering factors that contribute to improving the properties of skin tightening, skin rejuvenation, wrinkle reduction, acne and acne scar reduction, smaller pores and generally fighting the effects of aging and gravity, one of the newest, most innovative treatments is the introduction of growth factor technology.

A growth factor is a naturally occurring substance capable of stimulating cellular growth, proliferation, healing, and cellular differentiation. Usually it is a protein or a steroid hormone. Growth factor for skin is already produced by human skin. Facial rejuvenation techniques such as micro-needling and radiofrequency purposefully injure the collagen of skin in a controlled environment. Fibroblasts producing new growth factors activate cellular proliferation and differentiation – in other words, cell repair. Adding an application of an overabundance of naturally produced, concentrated skin growth factors helps to boost the healing process, naturally.

Growth factors are all about skin and tissue repair, as they are proteins that help the healing process of skin. Added growth factors injected into skin during the micro-needling process and other treatments supplement the skin to repair signs of aging and encourage healing after clinical skin resurfacing procedures. Growth factors also calm inflammation and irritation caused by many skin treatments.

Here are some things to consider about growth factors:

1. The benefit of growth factors is that they have the ability to turn essential cellular activities “on” and “off.” They play a role in increasing cell functions, which include cell division, blood vessel formation, and collagen and elastin production. The application of growth factor technology to skincare is using nature’s processes to help achieve a more youthful and vibrant look.
2. The best source of growth factor for skin is fibroblast cells. This finding has been supported by numerous scientific publications; they are considered the key cells in wound healing.
3. One would be hard pressed to find a scientific publication supporting the claim that stem cells produce growth factors beneficial to the skin.
4. Plants produce growth factors, but plant growth factors do not work on human skin.

There is a large variety of mechanical and light-bearing technology to effectively enhance facial rejuvenation. Adding growth factor technology can assist in maximizing nature’s healing process during cosmetic procedures and skin rejuvenation.

Paul Malkin is the corporate manager of the Vein Institute of the Desert. For more information visit www.VeinInstituteOfTheDesert.com or call (760) 610.5573.

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Vision for Retirement

By Reesa M. Manning, Senior Vice President & Financial Advisor

You can make the difficult transition into retirement easier by exploring your expectations and desires. With some careful prioritizing, you can design a working plan for retirement that may surpass all your expectations.

When most people think of retirement, they imagine leaving a job they're tired of, getting out of the rat race, and leaving the pressures of employment behind. Often retirement is viewed as a reward for time in the workforce and a benefit of successful financial planning.

But retirement is so much more than giving up a job and relaxing. Retirees are entering one of the most exciting and challenging stages of their life. It can be a time to draw on personal and professional experiences to open new doors of opportunity and education. It can also be a time to realize potential and accomplish goals previously delayed by careers and raising a family.

Although the opportunities are endless, a successful retirement doesn't come without its hurdles. There are many things to consider in order to get it right, such as living on a reduced income, creating a health and wellness strategy, and evaluating relationships. Also important is allocating personal time, determining living arrangements, and recognizing change in social roles. There is also the unfortunate, but necessary, adjustment to the eventual death of loved ones.

During the first days, weeks, or maybe even months of retirement, people often experience a blissful honeymoon-like feeling. No boss, no job, no worries! Just time to sit around and do whatever crosses your mind. During this period, people generally have little motivation to plan for the future. But as the honeymoon period winds down, a number of newly minted retirees report a feeling of disenchantment. Retirement no longer feels like an extended holiday. Time begins to weigh heavily on their shoulders. Playing golf five times a week begins to feel like a chore. Projects around the house lose their appeal, and there can be a feeling that causes retirees to ask the question, "Is this all there is?" Frustration and disappointment can mount as some retirees get caught in this vortex and are unable to get out.

The life we lead is a result of the choices we make. That means in pre-retirement and retirement years, it is important to make the right choices—ones that build a fulfilling and energized retirement. The majority of successful retirees recognize the power of creating a realistic retirement vision and an action plan to achieve it. Armed with this mental model, they are able to make sound choices and progress toward their desired results.

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

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Biggest Loser Resort Comes to the Desert

Nationally acclaimed program delivers international draw

By Lauren Del Sarto

Palm Desert's J.W. Marriott is now home to the Biggest Loser Resort's newest venture which opens its doors to guests this September. Palm Desert joins Niagara, NY, Amelia Island, FL, and Chicago, IL, as an option for those looking to transform their life, lose weight and get on the path to good health.

"We chose the desert because of the community's focus on health and wellness, and because it is within the drive market from San Diego and Los Angeles," said President Lesley Carey who worked in the valley for five years during her extensive career in hospitality. She and her executive staff are working closely with the J.W. Marriott to build their team of trainers, nutritionists, health coaches and program directors which will be hired from within the community. "We realize there is a lot of great talent in the Coachella Valley and feel confident we will build a solid team," she adds.

The resort is certain to contribute to the local economy as guests are expected from not only Southern California, but across the country and beyond. "The Biggest Loser television show is filmed nationally and in Europe, and our resorts attract many international clients who usually book extended stays," says Carey.

The standard 7-day program can serve up to 50 guests per week and is certain to introduce many first-timers to the valley and all it has to offer. Packages include accommodations, fitness classes,

lectures, all program content and food, but guests also have the time and opportunity to shop, hike and sightsee. "Our average length of stay right now is three weeks, and we have clients who stay as long as six months."



The Biggest Loser Resort's program is built around a five-point philosophy: fitness, relaxation and restoration, nutrition, wellness education, community and camaraderie. Guests begin their day at 6am with an array of programming that ends at 6pm. Meals are

based on a 1,500 calorie/day count and cooking demonstrations enable guests to take what they have learned home with them. There is a significant focus on community and working together, and those who go through the program often create lifelong friendships.

"When you leave the program, you feel great," adds Carey. "It's pretty incredible to see the transformation in people - not only in weight loss, but internally. We change people's lives and give them the tools to make healthier choices along the way."

Carey is very fond of the valley and feels it is a special place to live and work. "We are excited to add the J.W. Marriott and Palm Desert to our family of resorts. With all the valley has to offer, it really is the perfect fit."

For more information on visit www.BiggestLoserResort.com or call (877) 825.8878.

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There are up-front costs associated with a reverse mortgage, so you may want to consider other options if you plan to stay in your home for only 2 to 3 more years. Since every senior situation is unique, it is important that you talk to someone you can trust when exploring your reverse mortgage options, the various types available or to simply get answers.

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