



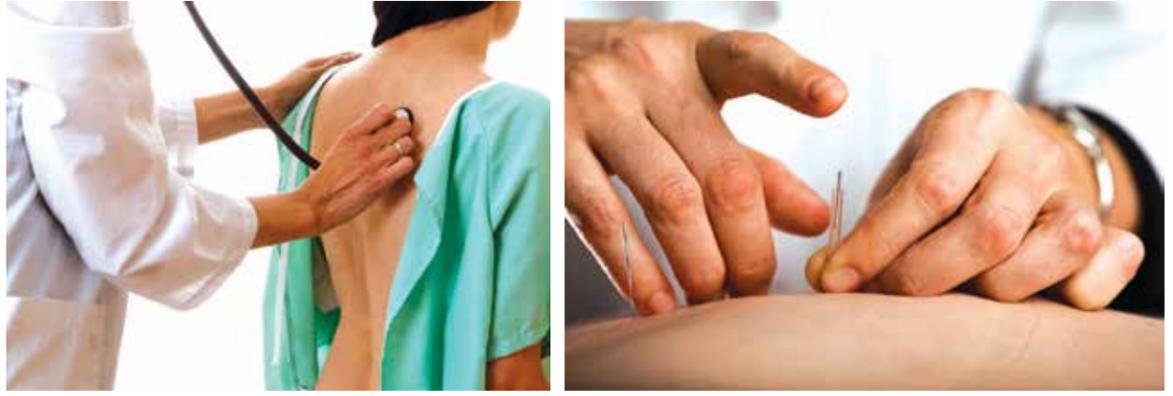
Desert Health™

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

January/February 2011

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What is Integrated Health Care?

By Lauren Del Sarto

The Coachella Valley's health care community is unique in that it is home to internationally-acclaimed medical establishments and world-renowned holistic and alternative healthcare practitioners. When conventional western medicine is practiced in conjunction with alternative modalities it is commonly referred to as integrated health care or "integrative medicine." A 1998 study showed that more than 40% of the US population is now using complementary and alternative therapies on a regular basis¹ and that number is most certainly higher today. Integrative medicine embraces the aspiration of both the public and medical profession for more compassionate, patient-centered

medicine. It has been defined as healing-oriented medicine that takes into account the whole person (body, mind, and spirit). It emphasizes the therapeutic relationship and makes use of all appropriate therapies, both conventional and alternative.² Practiced for generations by the holistic community, the "mind, body, spirit" movement is growing within conventional medicine, and more research is being done to quantify and validate holistic therapies. The Consortium of Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine has 42 academic members including the Osher Center at Harvard, the Stanford Center for Integrative Medicine, and similar entities at Columbia, Georgetown and Yale.

The Coachella Valley contributed to bringing integrative medicine to the forefront in the United States. In 1999, Desert Regional Medical Center's (DRMC) Comprehensive Cancer Center Pharmacy Director, Timothy Tyler, Pharm.D was asked by management to conduct a survey to determine the undisclosed use of alternative treatments by patients in conjunction with their conventional care. 155 patients were studied and when a multivitamin supplement was included, 80% were indeed practicing alternative therapies. When this factor was removed, it was determined that 40% of patients were still using some other form of alternative care in conjunction with their

Continued on page 17



Life Lessons From Indian Wells Councilwoman and Former Mayor, Mary T. Roche

This column features accomplished Valley residents who have made health a priority and credit integrative medicine for their happiness and longevity. In this inaugural issue, we are pleased to feature two-term Indian Wells Mayor and current City Councilwoman, Mary T. Roche, who has been a Desert resident since 1993.

Significant life changes are often driven by singular events and the knowledge gained while coping with them. This was certainly true for Mary Roche, whose life experiences resulted in her making long-term health and wellness a personal priority. Mary considers herself a perennial student. She holds a master's degree in education and taught at the collegiate level for many years before returning

to law school at the age of 56. But it was her young asthmatic son and an unhealthy 15 year marriage that started Mary on her quest to find answers about health and well being for herself and her children. When Mary's son was in sixth grade, he had a severe asthma attack, including head banging, one week after Halloween. Mary told the doctors she felt certain it was from excessive candy. They recommended glu-

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Welcome!

When my husband suggested moving to the Desert, two things came to mind --'heaven's waiting room' as the Desert has been referred for its older demographic and 'mystical healing powers' as are thought to exist in this region. It took only a couple of visits to realize that the thriving Desert community consists of many young families as well as many young-at-heart residents. I also felt the 'healing powers' in the crisp Desert air, warm sun, and beauty of the mountains.

Upon our move, I committed myself to learning more about the healing element and have come to understand the uniqueness of this place we call home. The Coachella Valley offers such a vast array of spa and wellness, preventive medicine, natural therapies, health care practitioners and world-class medical technology. I see people coming from all over the world to take advantage of these different practices.

There is also a growing trend of conventional medicine and alternative therapies working together as "integrated health care." Those leading this trend share a common goal --putting the patient first. The Consortium of Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine defines integrative medicine as "the practice of medicine that reaffirms the importance of the relationship between practitioner and patient, focuses on the whole person, is informed by evidence, and makes use of all appropriate therapeutic approaches, health care professionals, and disciplines to achieve health and healing."

Desert Health was created to specifically promote this convergence and the Valley's many medical facilities, modalities, practices, and practitioners, that help us prevent illness, maintain good health and provide healing. We will recognize accomplishments, celebrate

community, revel in sport and inform our readership to the best of our ability.

I would like to sincerely thank those who have supported the vision for Desert Health. Many members of the medical community as well as those practicing natural and alternative therapies understand the challenge of providing a communication medium in which both practices can co-exist. I respect their insight and do not take this responsibility lightly. Their support exists because they understand the importance of educating consumers.

A sincere thanks to Heather McKay for her graphic talent in presenting this publication and for taking a chance and joining our team; to Chanin and Doris for taking time out at all hours to edit; and a very special thanks to my husband, Tom, and all family and friends who have provided input, love and support to the launch of Desert Health. I could not have done it without them.

And I thank you, our readers! Desert Health is a complimentary paper for locals and visitors alike and we welcome your input and ideas.

Best of health ~



Photo by Simply English

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We welcome local health related news stories:

Please submit proposed editorial via email as a Word document with a bio and hi resolution photo of the writer. All submissions are subject to approval and editing at the Publisher's discretion and may or may not be published. Article and advertising deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Community photos on health & wellness:

We invite you to submit photos that portray health and wellness in the Coachella Valley. Email high resolution photos (minimum 300 dpi) to News@DesertHealthNews.com with photo caption and credit. Submitted photos may be published free of charge by Desert Health and will not be returned.

Distribution:

Desert Health is distributed at 350+ locations throughout the Coachella Valley including, but not limited to, grocery stores, doctors' offices, medical buildings, cafes and restaurants, spas, fitness centers and clubhouses.

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"Prevention is better than cure."
—Desiderius Erasmus 1466–1536

Recommended reading for this issue comes from **Dr. Elber S. Camacho**, Medical Director at Desert Regional Medical Center's Comprehensive Cancer Center



Dr. Gundry's Diet Evolution
Steven Gundry, M.D.

A Woman's Home Health Companion: A Guide to Wellness
Rita J. Stec, M.D.

Deadly Harvest: The Intimate Relationship Between Our Health and Our Food
Geoff Bond

Desert Health Life Quotes:

"Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react."

— Original Source Unknown

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Local Doctor Finds Treatment Eases Symptoms of Parkinson's

Scientific research often begins with a theory, idea or sometimes a coincidental discovery.

Such is the case for Dr. Leonard Feld, a dental surgeon and TMJD (Temporo-Mandibular (or "jaw") Joint Disorder) Diplomate with 37 years of clinical practice. Feld has worked with more than 80,000 patients.

In his work with TMJD, Dr. Feld helps patients by using a non-invasive, non-surgical series of custom plastic mouth appliances. His patients often experience instantaneous relief of symptoms such as imbalance, headaches, and chronic craniofacial pain in initial neurological tests and repositioning of the jaw or bite.

Yet when a patient came to him last year with balance issues and body tremors, no one was more surprised than Dr. Feld to see the patient's trembling hands stop moving. "It is scientifically proven that repositioning the jawbone can relieve pressure on the trigeminal nerve and reduce or diminish symptoms such as headaches and vertigo" states Feld, "But this was something I hadn't seen before."

Understanding these symptoms as characteristic of Parkinson's, Dr. Feld began researching. "After this experience, I knew I had to find previously documented discoveries and the theories behind them." He found several case studies documenting successful TMJ treatment in relation to body tremors. He also contacted the Parkinson's Resource Organization (PRO) in Palm Desert and invited founder Jo Rosen to one of his educational seminars.

Rosen was enthusiastic about what she saw. She contacted PRO member and team leader, Doug Bennett, the CEO of several companies and an acclaimed public speaker in his field. Five years ago,

Bennett was diagnosed with Parkinson's and listened with apprehension as Rosen described Dr. Feld's work. He attended Feld's seminar and volunteered to undergo a simple series of test. Bennett was impressed enough to schedule an appointment and has been working with Feld since March 2010.

"I have run across many treatments that claim to help Parkinson's symptoms," said Bennett. "I tried several to no avail. I consider myself a 'Doubting Dennis', but I can't deny the fact that Dr. Feld's treatment has significantly improved my life. Within 48 hours of wearing my appliance, I felt change. Within a week, I felt like a new man. Within two weeks, my wife said 'I don't think you have Parkinson's.'"

Bennett has a slow acting form of Parkinson's with tremors, balance problems and memory loss. "All of my symptoms disappeared 80-90% with the first TMJ appliance. At 9 months, the first phase brought me to a plateau with sustained improvement. I have had no remission and continue to see improvement."

Bennett's neurologist acknowledges his improvement and puts him through the standard paces for balance and memory. "He says he is amazed that I appear to be getting better. We have even decreased my Parkinson's medication by 40%."

Dr. Feld is currently working with 50 patients who have been clinically diagnosed with Parkinson's. Feld continues his research and is working with specialists in both the medical and dental fields. "There seems to be a correlation between the fluctuation of dopamine and substance P (SP) in body movement disorders," states Feld. "We know that jaw misalignment causes SP levels to become elevated. According to previously documented studies, SP levels have

been implicated in the development of Parkinson's disease."

"It is clear that more scientific research needs to be done, but that takes significant time and financial support," adds Feld. "Our treatment is non-surgical and non-evasive, so meanwhile, if we can use it to minimize symptoms that Parkinson's patients suffer, we are making progress to improve their quality of life."

58 year-old Pamela Alms of Cathedral City was diagnosed with Parkinson's 10 years ago and spent the first 5 trying to accept the disease which led to depression and severe anxiety. "No one can explain the disease. Doctor's prescribe drugs to help minimize symptoms, but the lack of scientific progress made me feel very isolated and alone."

This is not a cure for Parkinson's which Dr. Feld makes very clear with each patient. "This is an attempt, and in my case a very successful one, to modify...the ramifications of Parkinson's"

- Doug Bennett, Patient

Parkinson's symptoms vary from patient to patient. Alms' symptoms include tremors, body stiffness, numbness in her limbs, memory loss, insomnia and ringing in her ears. Through PRO, she met Dr. Feld and has been working with him since June 2010.

"My symptoms have improved dramatically," said Alms, "The ringing in my ears is gone as is the numbness, fatigue, and memory loss. I am sleeping through the night and for the first time in 10 years feel rested and optimistic. I never opened the bottle of Paxil prescribed to me 5 months ago."

Feld explains that TMJ treatments commonly address sleep disorders by opening airways and allowing patients to get more oxygen to their brain while sleeping resulting in better sleep, improved memory, and less fatigue.

Alms is an active tennis player who never gave up the sport. "Now I am winning again," she says with a smile. Bennett is also back to his active lifestyle. "I played golf for the first time in 5 years and shot a 45 on 9 holes. I couldn't believe it. He is also back to public speaking without notes. "Now they have to pull me off stage with a cane."

This is not a cure for Parkinson's which Dr. Feld makes very clear with each patient. Bennett sums it up, "This is an attempt, and in my case a very successful one, to modify, alter or deny the ramifications of Parkinson's disease that cause tremors, balance problems, etc..."

PRO founder Rosen states, "Our goal is to ease the pain that Parkinson's inflicts on patients and their families by providing resources which can improve quality of life. Dr. Feld is providing symptomatic relief for many of our members and we hope his work and the clinical research continues."

Bennett concludes by saying, "I'm 68, but feel 40 and my wife is just happy to see me and my smile return."

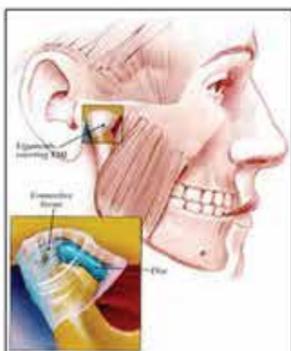
In conjunction with Dr. Feld and the American Academy of Craniofacial Pain, Rosen is organizing a symposium to discuss the correlation between TMJ and body movement disorders and treatments. "The Ultimate Quality of Life, Parkinson's: A Paradigm Shift" is scheduled for January 15 & 16 at the Renaissance Esmeralda. It is open to the public and members of the medical community, healthcare providers, caretakers and those diagnosed with Parkinson's or other body movement disorders are encouraged to attend.

For more information on the "Ultimate Quality of Life" Symposium visit: www.ParkinsonsResource.org or call 877-775-4111.

Dr. Leonard J. Feld



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Is It All In Your Head? Or Could it be Your Jaw?

Clinical research shows that TMJ (Temporomandibular or "jaw" joint) disorders are often the cause of migraines, headaches, back pain, dizziness, and vertigo in addition to ringing in the ears, jaw clicking, popping and pain or limitations in opening your mouth.

Living with these chronic symptoms can lead to depression, anxiety and chronic pain throughout the body.

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The New Face of Primary Care: Old Fashioned Accessibility

By Lauren Del Sarto

For many here in the Valley, booking doctor appointments a month in advance, sitting in a crowded waiting room for an hour, and then only getting 15 minutes with your doctor, is an unpleasant reality. No one likes this system, including local doctors who are making changes to provide better service.

How did the system get here? Many young students enter medical school with the vision of providing hands-on care to patients they know by name. But after eight or more years of education and residency, new physicians graduate with staggering debt. Offers come from hospitals and health care institutions with attractive, secure salaries or, if they seek independence, insurance companies offering large quantities of clients in exchange for agreements to accept that company's reduced rate plan. These agreements often restrict the time and pay per patient visit, so to make ends meet, doctors need to see as many patients as they can. The result is a practice with 3,000 - 4,000 patients and 25-50 appointments a day.

"You enter college with ideals of helping people and becoming an advocate for your patients," states Chris Flores, MD, a family practitioner in Palm Desert. "But the conventional system does not afford doctors the time to take ownership of a patient's well being."

With a desire to provide personal, "old fashioned" care, some doctors are breaking away from the system and starting practices that allow more time to offer "whole person" health care. However, this move is challenging and risky. Family practice physician Dr. Mark Foster recalls, "During my residency, I

would ask my mentors if they were happy with their work. Many wished they were allowed time to do more. When asked why they never started their own practice, most would admit that it is very hard to leave the system."

The American Academy of Physicians estimates that 3,500 - 5,000 doctors in the U.S. have retreated from convention-

"I am earning less than I would within the conventional system, but I enjoy significantly greater satisfaction."

—Dr. Chris Flores

al medical practices since the trend began in Seattle in 1996. This small number reflects the challenge. "It takes significant financing to start your own practice and managing an independent practice is not something commonly taught in medical school," Dr. Flores adds, "but with success comes the satisfaction that you are truly helping people and making a difference."

The benefits to patients are significant and may include hour long office visits, same day service, accompaniments to specialists, hospital visits, and direct phone and email access to your doctor. The greatest benefit may be the fact that your primary care physician is taking responsibility for your "whole person" care. They may refer you to specialists, but they monitor the big picture—like a project manager for your individual health care.

There are a variety of business models for these practices, but all share a similar objective—allowing doctors more time to spend with each patient. If a practice accepts insurance, they may limit the number of patients by requiring a monthly or annual retainer. Or a practice may decide not to accept insurance and offer cash payment plans. On the higher end, there is "concierge service" with a substantial annual fee and access to your doctor 24/7, 365 days a year. Some plans offer office visits only, others offer office and hospital, and some even house calls. Most physicians offer a variety of choices to fit different budgets.

Doctors who commit to this new style of practice have to work harder, but feel the gratification is priceless. "I am earning less than I would within the conventional system," Flores says, "but I enjoy significantly greater satisfaction."

Hearing the concerns from patients and doctors, Eisenhower's Primary Care division has developed similar options with doctor accessibility in mind. Their Executive Physical Program offered at the new George and Julia Argyros Health Center in La Quinta provides comprehensive assessments and preventive strategies at a premium cost. Their Primary Care 365 is offered throughout the Valley for a small annual fee. Benefits include online communication, convenient appointment scheduling, and a lower doctor patient ratio. This model is attracting new doctors like Sunnyline Vendiola, MD, "With this model, doctors will certainly feel more fulfilled and patients will better enjoy their health care experience. It makes for better medicine overall."

practitioner profile

Dr. Christopher V. Flores

Profession: Board Certified Family Practice
Studied: University of California Irvine Medical School (1990)
 Three year residency at Kaiser Permanente in Los Angeles
Practicing: 19 years
Hometown: Los Angeles



We are proud to feature Chris Flores, M.D. in our inaugural Practitioner Profile. Dr. Flores has a Family Practice in Palm Desert and is a staff physician at Eisenhower. He is well respected by both conventional and alternative practitioners in the Valley and is an avid educator on health and wellness. We thank Dr. Flores for his contributions to the community and support of Desert Health.

Professional Accreditations: Board-Certified in Family Medicine, Member of the California Association of Family Physicians Scientific Assembly Committee which plans and oversees medical education for practicing doctors

Community Contributions: Staff doctor at Eisenhower, Assistant Clinical Professor, Loma Linda University School of Medicine, Volunteer with YMCA, Alzheimer's Association, and Martha's Village, Community educator through Eisenhower's free Healthy Living lecture series

What made you choose the Coachella Valley? Family and lifestyle. My wife grew up here and her family is still here. My family is mainly in LA but we chose the slower, laid-back desert lifestyle instead of living in LA.

What are your hobbies? Hiking and playing guitar.

Biggest concern with our health care system? In general, the American population does not take enough responsibility for their own health, so poor diet, lack of exercise, obesity, smoking and/or excessive drinking all lead to disease. Then people expect the medical system to "fix them". I feel part of my job is to provide education to people, so they have the tools and knowledge to live healthy.

Your best health advice? Listen to your body. Pay attention to what foods feel best to you, what physical activities fit your personality and body the best, and what events and environmental factors throw you off balance. Learn all you can about health, wellness, and medicine so you can take care of your own body, mind, and spirit.

www.DrChrisFlores.com

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Foster adds, "After spending an hour with a patient reviewing his or her medical and personal history and addressing lifestyle elements that may be contributing to their health concerns, a great sense of relief comes over them. We sit down and make a plan together. I monitor their progress, make changes where necessary, and stay involved on the road to health or recovery. It's very rewarding for both of us."

They didn't want that to happen to their mom. I worked closely with the entire family and was by her side when she took her last breath. That day they said 'As soon as you arrived, we knew everything was going to be ok.'"

Such personal care sounds as if from days of old or only for the wealthy, but that is not the case. All doctors with whom we spoke offer packages for vari-



ous budgets with most fee-for-service doctors charging reasonable rates. Those who do not accept insurance can advise as to whether patients are able to submit medical claims directly to their insurance company for reimbursement.

"I often recommend patients consider catastrophic insurance coverage and then pay as you go for health care services." Foster concludes, "It can be a costs savings and you certainly receive more for the investment in your health."

Dr. Vinita Verghese of Palm Springs, who stopped taking insurance 4 years ago says, "My real passion is working with the families as they are the true heroes living day to day with patients. It takes time to build trust, but when they see you are truly there when they need you, it takes some of the weight off."

Verghese adds, "I had a family who signed up for boutique service for their mom because when their father was sick, he seemed to fall through the cracks. No one took ownership of his well being.

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Night Vision and Older Drivers

By Greg Evans, O.D.

One in seven drivers now is over 65, and by 2030 the number of drivers over 65 will have doubled. Reduced night vision is a serious traffic hazard for patients in this age group. The retina of an 80-year-old receives far less light than that of a 20-year-old. Older drivers may have a higher risk of motor accidents.

The U.S. Centers for Disease (CDC) statistics show that older motorists are more likely to be involved in traffic deaths. According to an American Medical Association statement, this large number of senior drivers is a public health issue due to age-related declines in vision, cognition and motor function. As we age, certain medical conditions may interfere with vision, including:

- Lens sclerosis or yellowing of the lens (cataract)
- Uncorrected refractive error (with age most eyes progress towards more hyperopic less myopic)
- Spherical aberration (a higher order aberration) increases with age
- Comma (another higher order aberration) increases with age
- Corneal dryness increases with age (particularly in women)
- Macular degeneration incidence increases with age
- Medications can impair night vision and corneal hydration
- Eye diseases such as glaucoma can reduce peripheral (and central) vision
- Pupil size reduces with age causing less light to enter the eye

Fortunately a number of things can be done to help older drivers. First, undergo routine health exams to ensure that diseases are diagnosed and treated.

Second, maintain an updated driving prescription. New lenses offer aberration correcting optics that are specific to an individual drivers eyes. These lenses



Improvement in night vision with proper eye care

improve night vision including recognition time which allows drivers to see objects sooner. Additionally, improved glare-free lens coatings now offer better performance and durability.

Third, Cataracts Aberration Correcting and Astigmatic Correcting lens implants are available for patients in need. Both of these can improve night driving performance.

Finally, if your ophthalmologist feels you shouldn't drive at night, he/she will explain why and help you find alternatives.

Over 60% of patients 65 and older are affected by cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy or macular degeneration, making regular vision care a necessity.

Dr. Greg Evans is the founding owner of Evans Eye Care in La Quinta. He can be reached at 760-564-4430.

Health is a Choice

continued from front page

cose testing, which she took along with her son. The tests were grueling and produced no strong conclusions. Mary began reading a book entitled "Body Mind Sugar" which compared the inability to properly process sugar in both asthmatics and diabetics. In lieu of additional medical testing, Mary decided to try the low carb diet recommended in the book. She saw dramatic change in her son after just one week. Within six months, his asthma was stabilized. Mary maintained the diet for her son who continued the practice into his adult life.

It was understanding that everyday factors like stress, environment, air and food could affect her son that drove Mary to make positive changes, including ending her marriage. She sought self improvement and alternative options with a focus on health and wellness, and building a positive life for herself.

Mary is 74 years young. Her library is full of books on everything from science to chakras. Those books are treasured resources. Mary credits her current well being to her decision to take control of her own health, learning all she could, and her willingness to try different therapies. She continues her quest to strengthen mind, body and spirit to this day.

"We are each responsible for our actions and what we do in life. Most people don't feel that way about their health.



Mary T. Roche

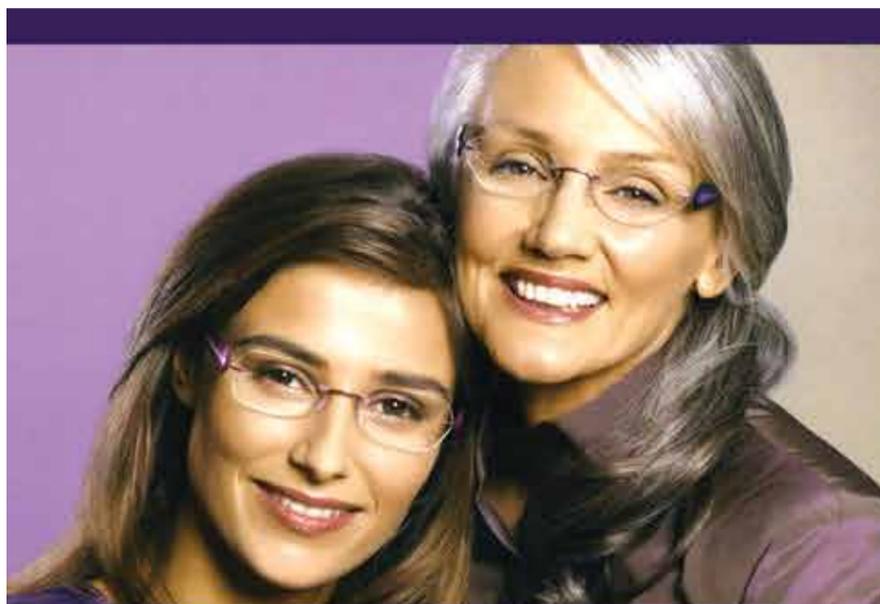
We are trained to give ourselves over to doctors to fix us when we are sick. In this sense, conventional medicine saves many lives. Yet the spectrum of health also includes emotional, mental, spiritual and nutritional components. I believe that one's longterm wellness plan should encompass all of these areas, and that we must take an active role in our individual health to ensure we live the most rewarding life we can."

Nutrition continues at the top of Mary's list. Her primary rule-of-thumb is no packaged nor processed foods. She shops at her neighborhood grocery store and avoids the middle aisles where processed foods tend to be. "I feel fully energized. It's amazing how one's body responds when you're not asking it to digest processed foods."

Mary uses her life lessons and experiences to help others. She is on the board of Shelter From the

Storm (aiding women in abusive relationships), and has been active in community politics and civic organizations for the past 15 years.

"I think it is my conscious efforts to take care of myself over the past 30-40 years that keeps me healthy at 74. Doctors are there when you need them, however, there are so many natural and alternative therapies available to help maintain and improve one's quality of life. You simply must make your health and wellness a top priority and it is never too late to start."



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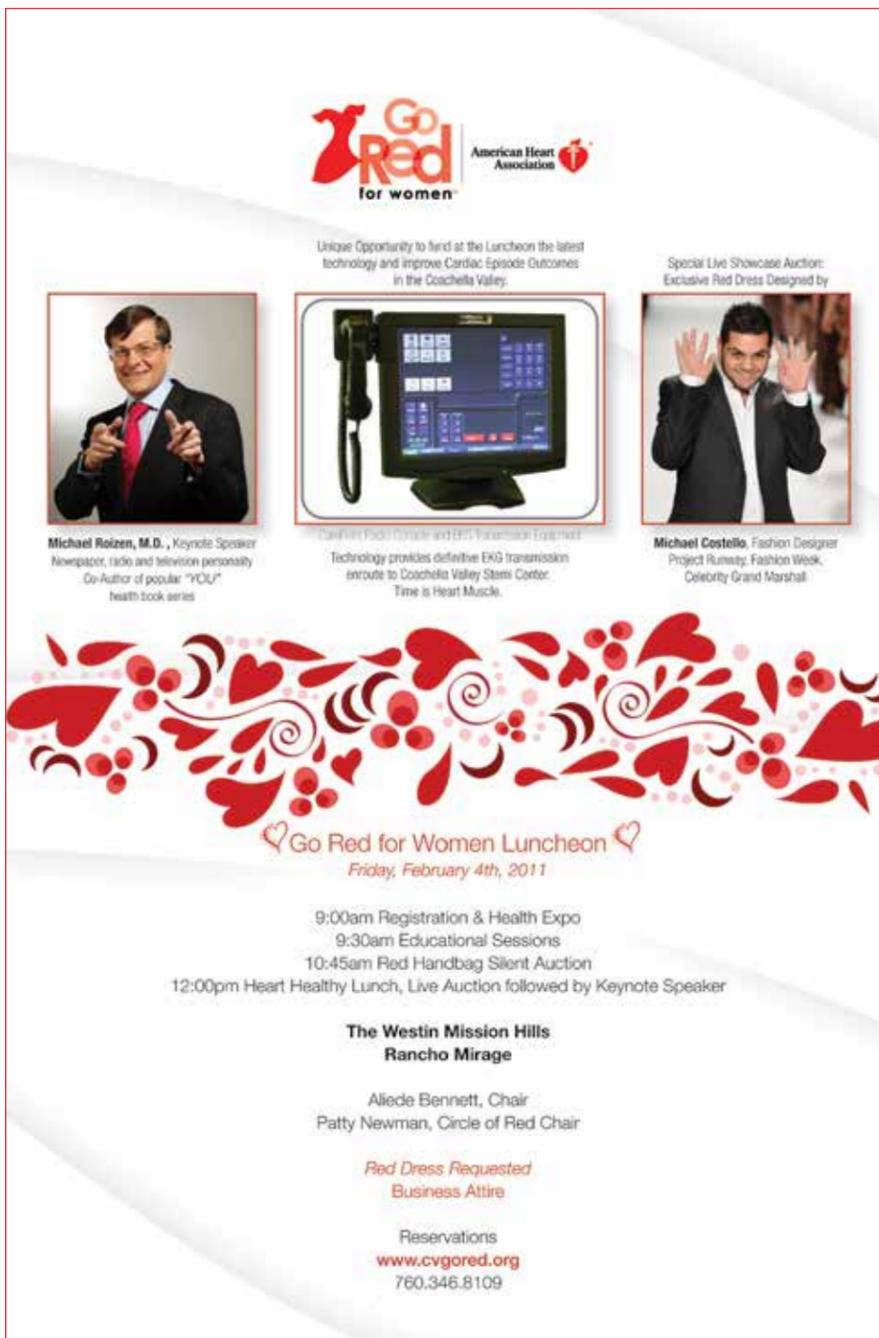
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Tasty Topics for Heart Health

presented by the American Heart Association

How many times in your life have you stopped, looked at the life choices you were making and thought, "I need to do better." Maybe you thought you should change your diet, exercise more, stop smoking, or be more careful about blood pressure or cholesterol. You had the best intentions, but never quite carried through with your plan. Maybe you weren't even sure how to get started with a plan.

Creating a plan and sticking to it isn't as hard as you might think. What if you had a guide...

- To guarantee you a longer life?
- To prevent heart disease?
- To feel stronger and healthier now and later?
- To provide a better quality of life as you invest in your relationships and life goals?

On behalf of the American Heart Association, I'd like to invite you to start a new life resolution. No matter what day it is, it's never too late for all of us to make better choices for health. Even if you start with only one small change today and another next week or next month – it all counts.

Maybe you're tired of trying to sort out all of the health advice you get. Do this today. Don't eat that tomorrow. The choices are plenty and the confusion can cause anyone to want to give up.

This is why the American Heart Association created Life's Simple Seven.

Thanks to the science and research volunteers of the American Heart Association, we have created a simple way for you to know where you stand on the road to good health through seven steps needed to live healthy.

1. Stop smoking
2. Maintain a healthy weight
3. Engage in physical activity
4. Eat a healthy diet
5. Manage your blood pressure
6. Take charge of your cholesterol; and
7. Keep your blood sugar, or glucose, at healthy levels

To find out where you stand with Life's Simple Seven, just take our assessment. In a few minutes, you will know how you're doing with each one; you will also get your own personal heart score and life plan.

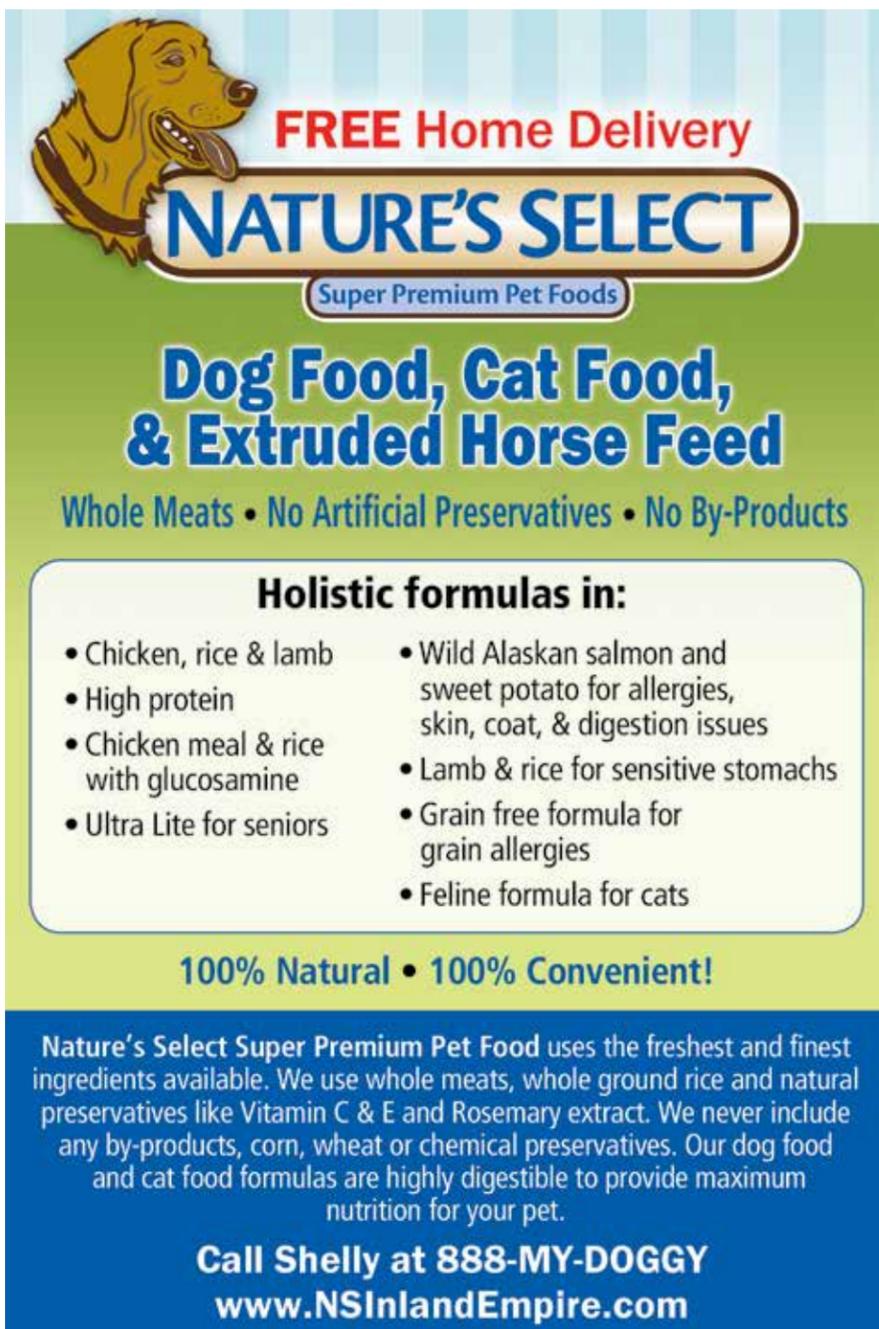
Remember, you can stop heart disease before it even starts. Start small and keep it simple. Make one change today and then you're ready to make another. Before you know it you've stopped making poor choices, and started making life choices!

So join me and make a new life resolution: Let's all take Life's Simple Seven to heart.

Visit <http://mylifecheck.heart.org> for more information



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Know the Scoop (& the Poop) on Your Dog's Food

By Shelly Weaver

Did you know that your pet's poop is the best way to determine his health? A dog under the weather will convince you he feels fine. This behavior comes from thousands of years in the wild where sick and weak animals are easy prey, so they do their best to cover their weakness.¹

Your dog's stool can also tell you about his diet. Fillers in a pet's food such as ground corn, corn gluten, wheat, and animal or poultry by-products can be linked to excessive waste. That's right, fillers will make pets poop more. Not only do fillers contribute to the bigger, messier stools, they can also lead to poor nutritional absorption and skin problems like hot spots, excessive scratching and hair loss.²

Corn actually metabolizes in dogs much the same way sugar does in people.³ 4 Paws University in Sacramento states that when you feed your dog a corn based diet, it is similar to feeding a child a diet high in corn syrup. If you have ever been around small children high on sugar, you know the impact it has. This holds true for our four-legged friends as well.

Research also shows that a corn-based diet makes pets eat more. The fillers do not "fill" them up. They pass through the system with little nutritional absorption leaving pets unsatisfied and hungry—and pooping more!

Animal by-products are another common pet food filler. "In Healing Animals with Nature's Cures," Henry Paternak states that chicken by-products include head, feet, entrails, lungs, spleen, kid-

neys, brain, liver stomach, intestines and any other part of the carcass not fit for human consumption. Meat by-products can contain a variety of things that we consider unacceptable for human consumption as well states Jessica Smith in a recent article entitled "The True Horrors of Pet Food Revealed". This is the unfortunate reality of pet foods on the market today.

Fortunately, there are also many holistic pet foods available that take care of our animals from the inside out. Look for foods that provide such wholesome ingredients as whole meats and brown rice, and do not list fillers. Also look for natural preservatives like Vitamin C, E and rosemary extract, instead of chemical preservatives.

This will provide your pet with a highly digestible food, maximum nutrition, and significantly less poop!



Shelly Weaver's lifetime passion for dogs led her to a career in pet health with Nature's Select Pet Food. She is the proud mom of two Golden Retrievers, Dixie and Delilah, and can be reached at 888-MY-DOGGY.

1) Veterinarypartner.com the canine behavior series. 2) Nature's Select manual. 3) 4 Paws University "What Are You Feeding Your Dog" article.



Fit After 50 Keeps Seniors Mobile

Seniors nationwide claim their independence as a “most valued possession.” For many, remaining independent means staying physically fit in order to take care of themselves, maintain their mobility and live a healthy active life.

With this in mind, Riverside County developed **Fit After 50**, a free fitness program for seniors, aimed at avoiding falls and prolonging independence. The program incorporates simple exercises that can increase strength, balance and flexibility.



Coordinator, Betty Robinson

Thirty three classes are offered weekly in various locations including the Stergios Building at Desert Regional Medical Center, the Mizell Senior Center in Palm Springs, the Joslyn Center in Palm Desert, and the Coachella Senior Center in Coachella.

The program is sponsored by the Riverside County Office on Aging and is managed by 84 year-old Palm Desert resident Betty Robinson, who also teaches classes and trains instructors. “It is never too late to rebuild muscle tissue. Exercise should be a priority in our lives. It is preventative medicine, and only two hours a week can help you regain strength and mobility,” says Robinson. **Fit After Fifty** currently has 500-550 participants from ages 55-97 years.

Started in 2003, **Fit After 50** was adopted from a statewide evidence based model program developed to ease the state’s financial burden from falls and injuries. Riverside County’s exercise guidelines were created by Sherri Lucas, MS and Jessie Jones, Ph.D of California State University, Fullerton. Classes are one hour long beginning with a warm up of abdominal breathing, stretching, and core & balance exercises; then followed by resistance core strength training exercises.

Nationwide, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths among older people according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “In 2007, the American Heart Association (AHA) added strength and balance training 2-3 days a week to their recommended weekly exercise regimen. **Fit After 50** meets AHA guidelines and offers members a positive social environment to exercise with their peers,” states Robinson.

Participants benefit from more than just increased physical fitness. “We bond through the program because we are all working towards the same goal—keeping our independence for as long as we can.”

In addition to new members, **Fit After 50** is looking for new Valley locations and volunteer instructors who will be certified by the program. Instructors currently range in age from 30 to 85.

For more information and a list of classes/locations, call 760-341-0401 or visit www.rcaging.org and click on **Fit After 50**, under “Programs and Services.”

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RSVP is a national volunteer program that offers Adults 55+ the opportunity to provide valuable skills to non-profit organizations throughout the Coachella Valley. We are a County sponsored program with 115 placement sites and more than 1,200 active volunteers. We fit your skill set and interests with the right organization including libraries, hospitals, food banks, schools, museums, law enforcement and the McCallum Theater to name just a few.



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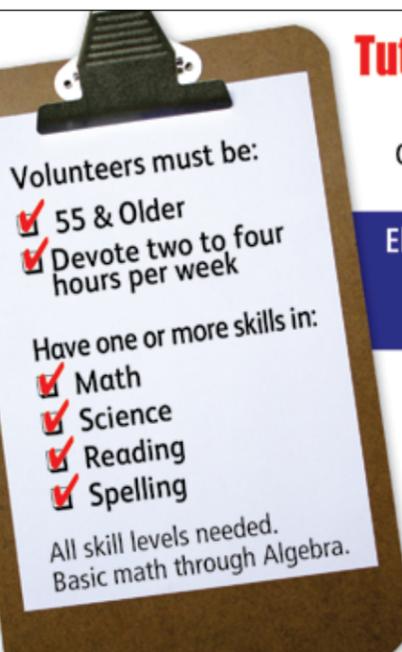
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Alzheimer's and the Brain

By Pamela Bieri

Keep Your Brain Healthy to Reduce the Risk of Alzheimer's Disease

When we think about staying fit, we generally think from the neck down. However, brain health plays a critical role in almost everything we do—thinking, feeling, reasoning, working, playing—even sleeping. The good news is we now know there are things we can do to keep our brain healthier as we age—and may reduce our risk of Alzheimer's disease.

Here are 10 ways to Maintain Your Brain:

- 1. Head First:** Good health starts with your brain. It's a vital body organ that needs care and maintenance so make brain health a priority.
- 2. Take Brain Health to Heart:** What's good for the heart is good for the brain. Do something every day to prevent heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and stroke—all of which can increase your risk of Alzheimer's.
- 3. Numbers Count:** Keep your body weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels within recommended ranges for your age, body mass and gender.
- 4. Feed your brain:** Stimulate your brain by eating less fatty and more antioxidant-rich foods.
- 5. Work your body:** Physical exercise keeps the blood flowing and may encourage new brain cells. Do what you can—like walking 30 minutes a day—to keep your body and mind active.
- 6. Jog your mind:** Keeping your brain engaged increases its vitality and builds reserves of brain cells. Read, write, play games, learn new things, do crossword puzzles.
- 7. Connect with others:** Leisure activities that combine physical, mental and so-

cial elements are likely to prevent dementia. Be social, converse, volunteer, join a club, take a class.

- 8. Heads up! Protect your brain:** Take precautions against head injuries. Buckle up with car seat belts, clear your house of obstacles to avoid falls and wear a helmet when cycling or skating.
- 9. Use your head:** Avoid unhealthy habits. Don't smoke, drink alcohol to excess or use illegal drugs.
- 10. Think ahead:** Don't wait for issues to arise. Do something today to protect your brain for tomorrow.

The Alzheimer's Association

With more than a decade of service to the Coachella Valley, the Alzheimer's Association provides family support programs, free and confidential services for those caring for someone at home, such as caregiver support groups; the Memory Makers Club for early stage Alzheimer's patients; a 24/7 Helpline; and educational programming for healthcare providers and the public. With an estimated 11,000 plus Alzheimer's families in the Coachella Valley, and a projected doubling of that number to more than 27,000 within 20 years, the Alzheimer's Association brings help and hope to those facing the challenges of Alzheimer's and related diseases. For more information, visit us online at www.alz.org/californiasouthland.

The 11th Annual Memory Walk that supports our local offices will take place on Saturday, March 5, 2011 at the Palm Desert Civic Center Park. To become a sponsor or to participate as an individual or team, visit our website at www.alzla.org/mw/cv. For more information call (888) 328-6767.

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Women in the United States today control 75 percent of the total personal wealth, fill more than half the jobs and earn more than half the college degrees. They make up the fastest growing sector of new business owners, the fastest growing sector of the U.S. investor base and, for the first time in history, nearly half of all substantial investors—those with more than 100 thousand dollars of investable assets are women.

The projected transfer of assets from the World War II generation to baby boomers will likely provide women with even more capital. Women stand

to inherit trillions of dollars in the next decade. Yet, most American women have not yet taken the steps to educate themselves regarding their own personal financial life situation. They have not initiated the legal mechanisms through estate planning that will protect their assets, their families and themselves.

As I thought about this statistic and tried to put it into perspective... my mind kept coming back to the complexities of women's lives... their financial awareness tends to take the "back burner" to their families children and careers... life just gets in the way.

And then reality strikes... the loss of a job; the death of a spouse; college education; retirement.

Unfortunately, when it comes to making decisions in unfamiliar territory, a lot of people tend to overlook the fact that they simply need to gather enough information on existing circumstances in order to make an intelligent decision. They instead assume that they are basically not intelligent enough to make that type of decision. When, in reality, all they probably need are just a few more facts.

As we start 2011, the average age that a woman is widowed is 56 and 80% of widows now living in poverty weren't poor when their husbands were alive. The national poverty rate for women 65 and older is almost twice that of men. Even in the financial industry there are so many fewer women than men.

These compelling statistics underscore a fundamental truth: As women, we need to do something to ensure our financial security. As many as 90% of us will be on our own financially, managing our own money, at some time in our lives.

My goal in this column will be to bring you knowledge, confidence and empowerment in regard to your financial health. Please join me for breakfast January 25th @ 7:30am. "How do I Guarantee My Retirement Income?" RSVP—Calista @ 760-834-7200

Reesa Manning is Vice President & Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management and can be reached at (760) 834-7200. Reesa@IWMgmt.com

Sources: National Center for Women and Retirement Research; US Bureau of the Census, 2005; Surviving Beyond-Happily Ever After by Joan Busick; Women & Money by Patricia M. Annino; Creating Wealth from the Inside Out by Kathleen Burns Kingsbury

Fitness

AT THE GYM WITH Casey

The Benefits of a Personal Trainer

It's that time of year when everyone thinks about finally getting into shape. If you are one of those people, then I recommend hiring a personal trainer for the following reasons:

Greater Results, Less Time

A personal trainer is educated in fitness with a greater understanding than the average person of how the body works. For this reason, they are more qualified to assess what type of exercises will be most beneficial

to you in achieving your personal fitness goals. You'll see faster results with less effort than you would if you simply started out on your own. Plus, less time at the gym equals more time to do other things. Working out shouldn't be a strain on your schedule and with the help of a personal trainer, you'll work out quicker and see results of your labor much sooner.

Injury Prevention

If you aren't used to working out, or have limited experience in the gym, safety is always a factor. Injury

can be common when exercising and not always physically apparent. Improper form reduces the effectiveness of the exercise and may result in muscle strains. Lifting too much weight can result in a dropped dumb-bell on your foot or chest. These common injuries can quickly end all your good intentions.

A personal trainer will start you on a safe program and will monitor your form and progress to ensure you are maximizing the effectiveness of your workout without injury.

Accountability

It takes dedication to maintain a workout routine and half of the people who start usually don't reach their goal. With a personal trainer, you'll always have someone "watching over

your shoulder" and ensuring you hit the gym regularly. They encourage you to keep on schedule and ensure a better return on your investment.

If getting in shape or losing weight has been an unsuccessful resolution in the past, make this the year you achieve your goals. A personal trainer can help you get there.

Casey Washack has been helping people achieve their goals as a certified personal trainer since 1999. He is certified in nutritional counseling through Precision Nutrition. He has trained a broad array of clients from US Marines to those with physical limitations or disorders. Casey is co-owner of Next Level Fitness in Palm Desert and can be reached at 760.413.9858 or casey@nextlevelfitness.org

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Farm (& Grove!) to Table Served at the Grove Artisan Kitchen

By Lauren Del Sarto

Walking the grounds of the Miramonte Resort & Spa, Chef Robert Nyerick discusses his focus on fresh cuisine at the Grove Artisan Kitchen. Many ingredients, like citrus and herbs, grow on the Miramonte grounds and are harvested daily by kitchen staff. As if on cue, guests visiting from Houston ask Robert about the Miramonte's "special" lemon tree with a taste above the others. "Try this," Chef Robert said walking over to a cumquat tree and picking a handful of the small orange fruit. "Just pop them in your mouth—they are naturally sweet, yet tart and full of flavor." After a chat about the virtues of fruit fresh off the tree, the guests head over to pick lemons to take back to their room exclaiming "You live in paradise!"



Localvore cuisine at the Grove Artisan Kitchen

Our next stop on this walking tour is the Miramonte's fresh herb garden with chocolate mint, thyme, rosemary, oregano, chives, and sage. These herbs are featured throughout the resort—on the Grove Artisan Kitchen menu; in specialized spa treatments and behind the bar to accent beverages. "We like to create a shared experience for our guests," Chef Robert explains. "You may enjoy a citrus scrub or lavender mask at the spa served with a scoop of lemon sorbet and tea with lavender sprig. All of these ingredients are grown here on the property, so you may smell them on the way back to your room. It makes the guest experience very unique."



The fresh herb garden at the Miramonte

Formerly of the Four Seasons Beverly Wilshire, Chef Robert came to the Miramonte four years ago and developed the Grove Artisan Kitchen to focus on fresh seasonal foods. "Some of the most fertile ground

in California is right here in the Coachella Valley. Produce ripens faster due to lack of rain and humidity, and plenty of sunshine. We aimed to create a menu that utilizes local fruit and produce and changes regularly as new items become available. Food produced locally is naturally better tasting and offers the greatest nutritional value."

The Miramonte buys produce from a network of local farmers. Each morning Chef Robert receives an email list of produce available that day and from which growers. This real-time inventory allows for meals to be prepared based on the freshest foods available. "We order in the morning and it arrives that afternoon." The growers resourced are within a 50 mile radius from upper San Diego County, which offers great high county produce, down to Imperial County and up to Ventura where different crops are planted according to time and season. Using a local network of growers results in less trucking and fuel for a smaller carbon footprint.



Grove salad with farm fresh ingredients

"I create menus based on what is currently available," Robert explains. His farm-to-table or "localvore" philosophy results in such succulent dishes as grilled salmon served with roasted root vegetables, preserved lemon herb reduction and organic tiny greens; and fat-toush salad with romaine lettuce, feta cheese, red onions, pear tomatoes, lemon oregano vinaigrette and house cured olives grown on property.

In addition to their selection of organic vegetable and "wellness inspired" dishes, the Grove features Black Angus filet mignon, oven roasted rack of lamb and Kurabota pork tenderloin saltimbocca. A variety of Pacific Coast fish and seafood is offered fresh daily. All dishes feature ingredients from the local groves and herb garden. As Robert says, "With freshness, the one thing that always comes through is the quality of the ingredients."

Miramonte's Grove Artisan Kitchen is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner from 6am-10pm with Sunday brunch served from 7am-2pm. For reservations call 760.341.7200.



Mint garnishes a Miramonte Mojito

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Slow Food Desert Cities Helps Build Vegetable Gardens in Public Schools

By Janet Newcomb

Initiated in Rome in 1986, the Slow Food movement was formalized in 1989 when the founding Manifesto of the International Slow Food Movement was signed in Paris by delegates from 15 countries. Today there are more than 100,000 members in 132 countries who are focused on traditional and sustainable foods, healthy families, food politics, saving endangered foods, and in-school projects.

There are 200 chapters in the U.S., and the local Desert Cities Chapter was formed in 2007. The chapter's monthly meetings, which are often potluck suppers featuring produce from the local Certified Farmers Markets, often feature speakers or cooking demonstrations.

Members and nonmembers are equally welcome at the monthly meetings, which have a fee of \$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers. The proceeds, along with those from the annual Farm to Table fundraising celebration, are used to help create vegetable gardens in Coachella Valley schools. To date, the chapter supports gardens at Agua Caliente Elementary in Cathedral City and Palm Springs High School. By planning, implementing and maintaining the school gardens, kids not only learn how to grow edibles, but exercise their math and reading skills and strengthen their community bonds.

To learn more about Slow Food Desert Cities and sign up for email announcements, visit www.slowfooddesertcities.org.



World Class Competition Returns to the 20th Annual HITS Desert Circuit Horse Show in Thermal

This season horses from all over the world will once again travel to the Coachella Valley for the 20th annual HITS Desert Circuit horse show. The event takes place over a six week period from January 25 – March 13 and will attract 10,500 competitors and 3,500 horses.

Many may be surprised to hear that the city of Thermal is home to a 230 acre, \$20 million state-of-the-art horseshow facility. Built by HITS in 2007 when it moved from its former location in Indio, the grounds include 14 competition rings, stabling for 3,400 horses, a grand covered arena, an outpatient vet clinic, a restaurant, and even "The School Station" where young competitors can study curriculum while competing on the road.



Karen Cudmore on course in the \$25,000 HITS Grand Prix, presented by Pfizer Animal Health.

The Desert Circuit Hunter/Jumper show awards more than \$1 million in prize money annually and attracts competitors from Germany, Mexico, Canada, and Columbia to name a few. Classes include 16 Grand Prix events of which four are FEI World Cup Qualifiers held in the indoor arena on Saturday nights. Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) is the international governing body of the equestrian sport and riders compete in these classes for the \$50,000 prize money and the chance to qualify for the FEI World Cup Games. All 16 Grand Prix events qualify top riders for the Pfizer \$1 million Grand Prix class held in New York in September.

This year, the show will also host three qualifying events for the 2011 European Youngster Cup Jumping Series' new "Super Final" to be held in Germany in April. This is the first time the US will host qualifiers for this event.



Jill Henselwood and Bottom Line on course in Sunday's \$300,000 Lamborghini Grand Prix of the Desert, presented by Pfizer Animal Health, at HITS Thermal.

The HITS Desert Circuit includes hundreds of classes for novice to advanced riders concluding on the final weekend with the \$25,000 Devoucoux Hunter Prix and the \$200,000 Lamborghini Grand Prix of the Desert, presented by Lamborghini of Newport Beach.

Whether you come to see little kids and their ponies riding and jumping for the joy of the sport or world class riders competing for money and stature, the HITS Desert Circuit Show is not to be missed. Admission is free Tuesday through Friday. On Saturday nights and Sundays admission is \$5 for adults and senior citizens and children under 12 are free. Parking is \$5. For a show schedule and directions visit www.HITSShows.com

A couple of young equestrians give each other kudos for a job well done.



Photos by Flying Horse Photography

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Full Stable of Practitioners Keep Equine Athletes in Shape

By Lauren Del Sarto

The 20th annual HITS (Horse Shows In The Sun) Desert Circuit Horse Show will attract world class competitors to the Valley over an eight week period. There may be a debate as to who works harder, the equestrians or their four legged companions, but no one questions the fact that both need to remain in top shape for the competition.

Fortunately, the Desert offers a variety of practitioners for riders and the show provides a comprehensive outpatient clinic on-site for equine care. When building the facility four years ago, HITS management consulted with one of the

a significant difference. In addition, we have horses being transported from Florida, Colorado and the East Coast. The long haul can be a strain on them, so we evaluate their health upon arrival and are here as needed."

Hagyard's team consists of Peters, a second vet and 2 technicians. The clinic was designed for the show's many visiting vets as well. In addition to local vets who visit the show grounds for their clients, many of the competitors have vets who travel with them from LA, San Diego and as far away as Canada and the East Coast. "We act as a supporting cast



Dr. Kevin Fenton applies chiropractic treatment to patient, Bubsy

country's top facilities, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute of Lexington, KY. Hagyard was founded in 1876 and is located directly across from the Kentucky Horse Park. The Hagyard Sport Horse Program, a specialized department at the practice, serves the nation's top sport horse athletes and brings the same level of care to high performance horses that the institute has provided for the race horse and breeding industries for over 125 years.

Hagyard practitioner Duncan Peters and his team come to the Desert for 10 weeks to manage HITS' on-site clinic. The facility gives Hagyard and visiting vets the capability to perform lameness exams, diagnostics, ultrasound, endoscopy, nerve blocks, and more in a safe, clean environment.

"The most common ailments we see with these athletes are leg strains and colic (stomach aches) for which immediate care is required," states Peters, "The availability of on-site response can make

for all vets on-site," adds Peters. "The clinic provides a centralized location for all practitioners."

Peters also manages the special requirements dictated for horses coming from overseas and those competing in the World Cup qualifying events. "There is a special stabling area sequestered away from other horses for those competing in the FEI qualifying events. Horses are monitored for soundness and health upon arrival and then per FEI requirements, are evaluated before and after each competition."

With horses coming from overseas, there is even further care required by the US Department of Agriculture. "There is a current risk of a highly transmittable disease called Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) found in Europe. To be safe, these horses are placed in a separate stabling area and monitored closely."

The HITS on-site clinic also offers education to veterinary school students

from across the country through externships. "Externships, or on-site observation, are offered by most schools to final year students. Those interested in the Sport Horse industry come for a one to two week stay. It is fun for us as practitioners to educate and the opportunity to observe at a show of this caliber is very valuable for the students."

Integrated Equine Health Care

Integrated health care exists within the animal world as well. Holistic medicine and alternative therapies are practiced alongside conventional veterinary practices throughout the country. The Desert is no exception with homeopathy, acupuncture, and chiropractic care commonly used on horses and household pets alike.

Dr. Kevin Fenton from All Creatures Veterinary Care in La Quinta practices both conventional and alternative treatments. "I call it the best of multiple worlds and have found that these different treatments work synergistically to enhance the health of my patients."

Fenton graduated from the University of Bologna Veterinary School in Italy in 1982. "Going to vet school in Europe was at times both overwhelming and exhilarating; I worked with veterinarians in Italy, Switzerland, Ireland, England and Spain and saw multiple approaches to the art of veterinary medicine."

He started an equine health care practice in Indio in 1986. "I looked into acupuncture as a skeptic and took a course in 1987 through the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society. I was so impressed with the results, I continued my education and now incorporate integrated health care as often as I can in my practice."

Fenton's practice is 75% small animal care ("almost all critters") and 25% holistic equine care. He further explains integrated vet care by citing examples, "A



Duncan Peters ultrasounds a competitor at the 2010 HITS horseshow

point on the stomach meridian (ST36) on the lateral aspect of the knee can be used for vomiting and local knee arthritis. Combining acupuncture with chiropractic manipulations seems to improve the beneficial effects of either one alone, which is good example of synergism. So problems like arthritis and degenerative joint disease are treated on multiple levels with acupuncture and chiropractic, while adding nutritional supplements and massage to nurture the entire critter. In conditions of chronic disease where traditional drug treatments are causing problematic side effects (vomiting, incontinence, etc.), homeopathy offers hope."

For the Sport Horses at HITS, it is good to know that top notch health care is a priority and that integrated care is readily available.

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Getting the Right Thyroid Diagnosis

By Dr. Shannon Sinsheimer

The thyroid gland and thyroid hormones predominantly affect metabolism in our bodies (protein, fat, and carbohydrate metabolism). The thyroid hormones can also affect the way in which our body uses and processes other important hormones. Thus, our thyroid gland is an integral part of our total body system functions.

Many patients are concerned about their thyroid function most specifically when it comes to weight management, energy, bowel function, and an overall feeling of wellness. When an individual is told 'there is nothing wrong with your thyroid', it is disappointing as they may assume that low thyroid function is the root cause of their health concerns. Additionally, a person with a diagnosed low functioning thyroid may feel that their medications are not relieving their symptoms. In these cases, it is important

to look at a detailed set of lab exams in conjunction with a comprehensive medical intake of individual symptoms.

Thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) is the lab marker most commonly used to evaluate total thyroid function. TSH will indicate how much 'stimulation' the thyroid needs to release the two most active thyroid hormones, T3 and T4. Current medical standard dictates that a person has a thyroid function issue only if they fall outside the TSH range of 0.5-4.5.¹ However, there are individuals, approximately 6-8% of the population,² with a seemingly normal TSH lab range of 2.5-4.0 that are still symptomatic of a low functioning thyroid. In the case where the patient has symptoms of low thyroid function, yet 'normal' labs, we must run further lab tests to assess the potential for 'subclinical hypothyroidism'.

To fully assess thyroid function, lab

tests for specific thyroid function and active thyroid hormones are run including: Free T3, Free T4, Free Thyroxine Index (FTI) and Reverse T3 (rT3). Free T3 and Free T4 are markers for the level of active, unbound thyroid hormone available in the body. It is essential to run both values, as often the treatment for low thyroid is to supplement with T4 hormone and in many cases some amount of T3 hormone is necessary. FTI is an indirect measurement of active T4, which, is analyzed alongside Free T4 values, and rT3 is an additional marker of potentially active T3 in the peripheral tissues of the body.³ Correlating these lab results with the patient's medical history and symptoms will indicate if subclinical hypothyroidism is an issue.

Treatment for subclinical hypothyroidism will most often include a compounded prescription for T4 and T3, specifically tailored to the patient. A prescription of armour or generic desiccated porcine thyroid can also be used, depending on the individual's needs. In a patient with

a current diagnosis of hypothyroidism who still feels symptomatic, the labs mentioned above and a prescription change to armour thyroid or added T3 may assist in relieving these symptoms.

To assess total thyroid health, and the potential for subclinical hypothyroidism, a complete lab panel and a comprehensive physical exam are required. Additionally we look at underlying factors affecting thyroid function such as stress, exercise, dietary irritants, and environmental exposure, to get a patient's total health picture. Thyroid health should only be evaluated and treated by a qualified health practitioner.

Dr. Shannon Sinsheimer is a Naturopathic Doctor at Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568-2598.

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New Year, Clean Plate

By Elizabeth Quigley, RD

The first of the year typically brings resolutions that include losing weight or exercising more. Both of these resolutions are based on the common knowledge that each act will go far in promoting health and wellness. In fact, they are the two most important things that we can do for ourselves.

Making changes in your diet can be difficult. What else do you do at least three times a day, seven days a week, fifty two weeks a year? The temptation to eat more than you should, or to eat foods that are not healthy, is strong and constant.

Where can you turn for help to sort through nutrition/diet information, resist temptation and determine what is right for you? Enter the Registered Dietitian or other qualified health professional. Just as a trainer at the gym can guide you through the maze of weights and equipment, so can a qualified nutrition professional help steer you on the path of healthy eating. This professional will assess your nutritional needs and provide the necessary 12-16 weeks of coaching to establish a "new nutrition menu" based on your lifestyle, medical history and personal goals. When looking for a

"nutrition coach", ask about education, qualifications and how they will create a nutrition plan that is right for you.

As a Registered Dietitian, I find it curious that individuals plan vacations, careers, retirement... but then eat whatever is put in front of them or what is convenient. Similarly, most Americans obtain nutritional information from the food companies who are trying to sell their product, not make us healthier! Nutrition is a cornerstone of good health. Shouldn't decisions about what you eat come from a reliable, objective source and be based on scientific fact?

Recent reports have revealed that by 2020 (that's just nine years away!) 50% of the US population will have or be on the verge of type II diabetes. Healthy eating and exercise are the prescription to prevent this epidemic. It is up to each one of us to take responsibility for our own health. Make 2011 the year you finally get the education and guidance you need to put you at the top of your game. Nutrition matters and so do you!

Elizabeth (Libby) Quigley is a Registered Dietitian and owner of EQ Consulting. She can be reached at 760-773-1796 or eqrd@dc.rr.com. Visit www.ElizabethQuigleyRD.com

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Mindfulness and Life Coaching—Coping Skills to Manage Eating Disorders

By Jaime Carlo-Casellas, Ph.D.

In the United States, eating disorders are taking their toll emotionally and financially. It is estimated that 34% of adults and 17% of children are obese.¹ And anorexia is estimated to be between 0.5% and 1.0% of the general population, with 95% of these being women.² The incidence in men is increasing significantly.³

Ours is an unhealthy nation, too busy with video games, texting, television, and cell phones to focus on health and nutrition. Besides the emotional and financial impact, eating disorders lead to other problems, including disadvantages in employment and increased business costs.

Let's face it, we live in a country where food is cheap. Our hectic lives set the stage for eating faster and in greater amounts. We have developed eating habits that increase the risk of many physical and men-

tal conditions, such as clinical depression, diabetes, high blood pressure, and coronary heart disease.⁴

That we are desperately trying to deal with the epidemic is reflected in the expenditures on physical fitness programs and diet products (estimated to be between \$40 and \$100 billion annually).⁵ Yet, research shows that there are no easy answers. Eating disorders are considered to be addictions, with food as the "drug of choice."⁶ These addictions are attributable to psychosocial determinants, eating habits, sedentary lifestyles, genetics, and medical and psychiatric illnesses that the affected individual is not equipped to handle on his or her own.

Recovery requires digging deeply into one's past to identify the reasons for the addiction. Building confidence and self-es-

teem is essential to changing an individual's negative body image or life in general. The treatment protocol should include modalities to build confidence, self-esteem, and particularly, mindfulness. Life coaching, yoga, and meditation are modalities that do so—modalities that encourage mindful eating, healthy eating, reducing the likelihood of eating too fast, and overeating.

With life coaching and a regular regimen of yoga and meditation, eating becomes a delightful, conscious experience. By learning how to eat mindfully:

- We become aware of what, how, and how much we eat.
- We begin to enjoy meals without guilt.
- We are able to stop eating before feeling stuffed and depressed.
- We are aware of the nutritional value of the food we eat.
- We exercise, not to get rid of weight, but to strengthen the mind and body.

The key is to develop a weight control program that includes uncovering and managing the reasons for the food addic-

tion. Good nutrition, physical exercise, behavior modification, and development of mindful eating habits will enable the individual to maintain a healthy weight.

With the conventional treatment outlined above, life coaching, yoga, and meditation, the affected individual will be able to set and achieve goals to start building a happier, more productive, and healthier life.

Jaime Carlo-Casellas, Ph.D. is a Stress Management Specialist, a Certified Life Coach, a Registered Yoga Instructor, and founding director of the Stress Management & Prevention Clinic in Rancho Mirage. For more on Jaime Carlo-Casellas, visit www.stressprevention.org. His book, *Chaos & Bliss—A Journey to Happiness*, is available at Amazon.com.

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Jaime Carlo-Casellas, Ph.D. is a Stress Management Specialist, Certified Life Coach, Registered Yoga Instructor, and founding director of the Stress Management & Prevention Clinic in Rancho Mirage. Jaime studied at the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

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Jim Harris
Naturopath & Nutritionist

Jim Harris is a graduate of the University of Toronto, School of Dentistry and the American Naturopathic Medical Institute. He is a licensed doctor in Canada and brings over twenty years of clinical experience to his clients in the Coachella Valley. His focus as a naturopath and nutritionist is on offering only natural and holistic methods for achieving optimal health.

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Nutritional Health Care: Q&A

with Jim Harris
Naturopath and Nutritional Consultant

Digestive issues affect a wide range of people in today's society. The most common symptoms I see in my practice include acid reflux or GERD, constipation, bloating or gas and diarrhea. Following is my list of frequently asked Questions and Answers on digestive issues:

Q: What is a probiotic and do I need to take them?

A: A healthy digestive system has a balance of friendly or beneficial bacteria living within the intestines. The term dysbiosis describes the condition when the gut bacteria are out of balance with too few beneficial bacteria and an excess of undesirable organisms. Probiotics are the friendly bacteria that can be consumed to restore gut bacteria balance, and can have very positive health benefits for those in need. So while beneficial in many instances, not all probiotics are alike and not everyone's intestines are in need of additional bacterial flora.

Many factors in our modern hurried lifestyle can disrupt the balance of the friendly bacteria and lead to gut dysbiosis and poorer health. These include: using antibiotics which can also destroy friendly gut bacteria; relying on antacids and gastric acid blockers; a high fat low fiber diet; traveling abroad which increases the risk of contracting foreign organisms; and consumption of food and water contaminants such as pesticides found in fruits and vegetables.

In contrast, there are many benefits to having a proper balance of gut bacteria:

- Detoxifying the colon and promoting regular bowel movements
- Manufacturing certain vitamins and essential fatty acids
- Producing natural antimicrobials to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria and fungi
- Stimulating immune functions
- Promoting a healthy intestinal pH
- Helping to maintain healthy cholesterol levels

Proper balance may be achieved with Probiotics by some individuals, but they are not beneficial to everyone and individual diagnosis is recommended.

Q: I have acid reflux so should I take antacids?

A: I discourage the indiscriminate use of acid blocking or acid neutralizing products. Although it is believed by many that acid reflux is caused by excessive stomach acids, my experience indicates the vast majority of acid reflux conditions are associated with insufficient stomach acid, digestive enzymes, pepsin or other naturally-produced substances required for proper food digestion. Antacids neutralize stomach acids. By neutralizing the stomach acids (or blocking the production of sufficient stomach acid) one can suffer serious long-term health consequences if in fact there was not an excess of stomach acids to begin with. Too little or insufficient stomach acid will result in the improper digestion of food and the lack of absorption of essential nutrients for maintaining good health.

Q: When I eat certain foods I bloat up like I am pregnant. What should I do?

A: There was an old TV commercial depicting a cab driver who developed gastric distress after eating a pastrami sandwich. The cabbie immediately reaches for a bottle of medication in his cab's glove box. It didn't occur to him that the pastrami sandwich might have been the problem, or that he might have a more serious health issue that didn't allow him to eat the sandwich without distress. Medication was his cure (or so the commercial would have us believe!)

Bloating is from the production of gases in the stomach or intestines from food that has undergone insufficient breakdown or is a local irritant to the gut lining. There are a number of potential reasons for the bloating including an improperly functioning autonomic nervous system, or a lack of stomach acids, digestive enzymes or other substances required in proper digestion. In the case of the cabbie, there is also the possibility that some food source within the sandwich was the cause.

My point is that reaching for a bottle in the glove box may relieve the symptoms but is not a cure. For long-term wellness, one should work with a professional to develop a plan to correct the problem.

Jim Harris is located at The Art of Wellness Center in Palm Springs. Please submit your nutrition questions to Jim via email: theartofwellness@earthlink.net. www.TheArtOfWellnessCenter.com



An In-depth Look at the HCG Diet: Fad or Fantastic?

By Dr. Sonja N. Fung, ND

Discovered in the 1920's, HCG is a hormone produced by women only during early pregnancy which peaks at 14 weeks¹ to sequester calories and nutrients for the fetus regardless of how much or how little the mother eats. How does this work? HCG is reported to selectively metabolize calories from areas with high fat stores, such as the abdomen, hips, and thighs.

This hormone was first used for dietary support in the 1950's² and has recently become very popular for its effectiveness. The diet consist of a small amount of HCG given via injection or sublingual tablet daily along with following a strict very low calorie diet (800-1000 per day recommended by our clinic) for a period of 23 days. During that period, your body will go into a fat burning, or ketotic, state which will shrink your fat stores from "problem areas" such as the abdomen or thighs. Your body will then use the calories from the fat to sustain your energy, giving you the ability to adhere to the VLC diet. Most patients report losing between ½ to 2 pounds a day. The maximum weight allowed to lose in a 23 day period is between 35-40 pounds. If the desired weight is not reached, another round can be completed after a 6 week resting period.

As with any prescription medication, HCG has side effects which may include headaches, mood swings, depression, anxiety, insomnia, sluggishness, and weight rebounding. HCG should not be used during menstruation due to the potential for ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS)³, a possible complication in in-vitro fertilization. People with serious medical issues such as severe

heart disease and uncontrolled diabetes would not be a candidate for this treatment. Also, HCG is not FDA approved for weight loss. HCG is only approved as a fertility aide due to the increased number of cases of women on HCG getting pregnant. This being said, there have been very few reports of any adverse reactions to the HCG diet and many success stories.

The HCG diet, along with naturopathic stress management, diet modification, and detoxification of toxins and pesticides, is a potentially powerful tool for people struggling with weight loss. Incorporating a stress management routine can also decrease the abdominal "pouch" created by chronic elevations of cortisol (stress hormone) in your body.⁴ Gentle detoxification before the start of an HCG diet can minimize side effects of the pesticides and toxins being released from the fat stores.⁵ Using the HCG diet in addition to a complete naturopathic stress reduction and detoxification program can be a jump start for effective, lasting weight loss and optimal health.

Dr. Sonja Fung is a naturopathic doctor at the Live Well Clinic. If you are interested in HCG treatments and weight loss, go to www.livewellclinic.org or call 760-771-5970. Live Well Clinic is located at 78370 Hwy 111, Ste 100 at Point Happy Plaza in La Quinta.

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The Use of HCG for Weight Loss: A Second Point of View

By Lauren Del Sarto

When contended therapies are presented, Desert Health will attempt to publish two viewpoints for reader consideration.

The use of HCG as a dietary treatment was first published in 1954¹ by Dr. A. Simeons and has been controversial ever since. Early studies published in the 60's and 70's supported Simeons' claims that HCG, when administered with a very low calorie diet, had numerous advantages including rapid weight loss with minimal hunger, no weakness, and dramatic loss of fat in the stomach, hips, thighs, and upper arms.^{2,3} The diet was popular in the 70's, but fell from favor after a series of clinical trials disputed the early evidence and proved that the HCG in the Simeons method was ineffectual and that the weight loss was due to the diet.^{4,7}

Popular demand for HCG in the treatment of obesity has recently resurfaced in the United States. However, the National Institute for Health states that: "HCG has not been demonstrated to be an effective adjunctive therapy in the treatment of obesity. There is no substantial evidence that it increases weight loss beyond that resulting from caloric restriction, that it causes a more attractive or "normal" distribution of fat, or that it decreases the hunger and discomfort associated with calorie-restricted diets."

The American Society of Bariatric Physicians (ASBP) released a statement this year concluding that the use of HCG for weight loss is not recommended as a dietary treatment. Their statement notes that "A meta-analysis review in 1995 of

prior studies concluded that there is no scientific evidence that HCG is effective in the treatment of obesity.⁸ The meta-analysis found insufficient evidence supporting the claims that HCG is effective in altering fat-distribution, hunger reduction or in inducing a feeling of well-being. PubMed and Google Scholar searches (on December 2, 2009) revealed no favorable reports on the Simeons method since the 1995 meta-analysis. On the other hand, no significant harmful effects of HCG injections have been described in the medical literature."

Some bariatric surgeons feel that HCG does have a place. Dr. Ramy A. Awad, a Board-Certified minimally invasive surgeon specializing in bariatric surgery here in the Desert states, "We do make HCG available for patients who are not candidates for surgical weight loss; however, we do not feel it is a singular method for sustainable weight loss as results are short lived. In addition, HCG should always be administered under medical supervision."

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Rediscovering the Mineral Spring Spas of Desert Hot Springs

When was the last time you visited the mineral spas of Desert Hot Springs? We tend to forget that just up the road are some of nature's most therapeutic healing waters that each year draw thousands of visitors from all over the world.

Europeans have flocked to hot spring spas for centuries to experience the restorative and curative values of the mineral waters. The practice of "taking the waters" for therapeutic purposes is as popular today as it was in the days of the Roman baths.

Within Desert Hot Springs exists one of the greatest thermal water areas in the world. These natural hot springs have been compared to the famous healing waters of Baden-Baden, Vichy and Evian. The very word "spa" means a place providing therapeutic mineral springs, but while the number of spas continues to grow in the United States, very few offer the real nature of a spa—the healing powers of natural mineral water.

The health benefits of mineral-rich hot springs have been well-documented over the years. While stress is relieved by the thermal heat, minerals absorbed through the skin rejuvenate the body. Mineral spas have been used for years to relieve sore muscles and treat stiffness that accompanies arthritis. The Desert Hot Springs are also especially rich in silica leaving the skin soft and smooth.



The Spring at night

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"The mineral water here is some of the best in America..."

—Travel & Leisure Magazine 2001



Accommodations at Sagewater Spa

A plaque at the first commercial bath house in Desert Hot Springs reads, "This bath house erected 1947 by L.W. Coffee and Lillian T. Coffee who developed these God given curative hot mineral waters, so long hidden beneath the sands of the desert, waiting for the time to arrive when suffering humanity could enjoy nature's benefits, the wealth of health."

Now several resorts, inns, boutique retreats and hotels offer guests the opportunity to enjoy this "wealth of health" by soaking in their pools or taking advantage of

spa treatments ranging from salt scrubs to spice massages, Finnish saunas, facials, Ayurveda, aromatherapy, power polishes, poolside pedicures, waxing and wraps (with clay, mud, seaweed and even chocolate).

These Desert resorts offer many styles of lodging including mid-century modern, Moroccan, restored hacienda, B&B, Tuscan, classic, clothing optional and more. They range from small, sophisticated properties to large, casual hotels.

If you are not sure where to start, join the 2nd Annual Spa Tour taking place February 3rd from 4pm–8pm.

Hosted by the DHS Chamber of Commerce, Cabot's Pueblo Museum and The Hotelier's Association, the Tour introduces you to a dozen properties including the renowned Two Bunch Palms and the newly opened Dog Spa Resort.

The tour starts with a reception at Cabot's Museum and refreshments will be served at each property. Tickets include the option of a premium motor coach (\$25) or self guided tour (\$20). The 2011 Spa Tour will sell out so buy tickets early. Be sure to register to win tickets from Desert Health! For more information on the tour visit www.VisitDesertHotSprings.com or call 760-329-6403



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What is Integrated Health Care?

continued from front page

conventional cancer treatment. These therapies included mega doses of A, C, or E vitamins, shark cartilage (popular at the time), coffee enemas, reflexology, acupuncture, spiritual touch or healing and massage therapy.

"This got our medical staff's attention," stated Dr. Tyler. "We felt we needed to become knowledgeable in order to best advise our patients based on scientific research and studies."

Tyler presented his findings at a medical conference in Prague which intrigued the largely European audience, not just for the information being shared, but the fact that Americans were actually studying the role of alternative care. "Many said, 'this information is folklore here and whether it works or not, we have used it for hundreds of years. You Americans are actually studying the science behind it,'" adds Tyler.

In 2001, Anita Chatigny, Ph.D. launched the Comprehensive Cancer Center program based on Tyler's study. "We wanted to create something that would garner respect from both the medical community and the people who had come to embrace complementary modalities. It takes a very special alternative specialist to be able to respect traditional medical care and vice versa."

Today, the program continues to grow offering patients an open forum in which to discuss all types of treatment. Support teams provide patients with resources and research in addition to therapies such as Tai-chi, visualization and meditation, massage therapy, nutrition, and evidence based herbal and natural remedies. Dr. Chatigny adds, "I am proud of our ability to normalize these modalities within the medical profession."

Eisenhower Medical Center is recognizing the movement as well. Three of their physicians attended this year's Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine Conference and development of a referral program to qualified local holistic practitioners is underway. The Eisenhower Wellness Institute is slated to open in February.

"The availability of supporting research has grown, but remains the concern," states DRMC's Tyler. "Whereas research for synthetic drugs is commonly funded by pharmaceutical companies who stand to gain from product sales, the entities researching natural modalities are limited." Leading the charge are the Federal Government's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) and individual universities.

Many local doctors embrace the movement and continue their education on integrative medicine. Carol Renke, M.D. of Rancho Mirage states, "As you practice, you start to realize that there is more to healing than what you are taught in medical school. When ten patients tell you something helps, you start to listen."

Dr. Chris Flores, a family practitioner in Palm Desert observes, "The movement is growing because educated consumers are requesting it. They are doing their own research and want their doctors to know or at least be open to information on supplements and alternative therapies that work for them and improve their quality of life."

"We wanted to create something that would garner respect from both the medical community and the people who had come to embrace complementary modalities. It takes a very special alternative specialist to be able to respect traditional medical care and vice versa."

—Anita Chatigny, Ph.D.
Director of Oncology Supportive Care Services,
DRMC's Comprehensive Cancer Center

Flores and Renke both commonly refer patients to local acupuncturists, massage therapists, nutritionists, chiropractors and naturopaths to name a few.

Dr. Neal Rouzier is a physician at the Preventive Medicine Center in Palm Springs. He practices both conventional and alternative medicine and is an integrative educator internationally. "This is an extremely important movement as alternative medicines often enable patients to heal more quickly with fewer side effects. Alternative modalities provide additional tools and options that we as doctors can use to help individual patients."

"My passion is teaching," adds Rouzier, "I was a typical doctor resistant to things I hadn't learned in medical school. My patients initially opened my eyes to learning and research and continue to do so. Our educational program teaches science-based integrative medicine to a variety of doctors including cardiovascular surgeons, neurosurgeons, family and general practitioners throughout the United States and around the world. It is a slow evolution, but a positive one of which I am proud to be a part."

1) Eisenberg DM, Davis R, Ettner S, et al. Trends in alternative medicine use in the United States, 1990-1997. JAMA 1998; 280:1569-1575. 2) 21Maizes V, Schneider P, Bell I, Weil A. Integrative Medical Education: Development and implementation of a comprehensive curriculum at the University of Arizona. Acad Med 2002; 77:851-860.

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Living Wellness

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It's the New Year and a time of new beginnings. The number one priority for the population is health and wellness. This usually consists of joining a gym and starting the New Year focused on fitness goals. Unfortunately, this focus often falters. Statistics show that 50% of all new health club members quit within the first 6 months. How can this be avoided and the New Year become a time for lifestyle modifications that "stick" as new healthy habits?

Think S.M.A.R.T: Specific and Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Results Oriented, and Time Bound. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Is the goal strategic and specific?
2. Can success in meeting the goal be measured?
3. Is it realistic for the goal to be attained in a certain timeframe?
4. Have you set a target deadline to accomplish the goal? (Taking the entire year is too long of a time frame!)

In addition to employing the SMART approach, keep in mind that fitness is all about creating a sense of community for yourself. When each of us is tied into an activity that creates a sense of community, we feel tied into a larger purpose and cause.

Fitness communities take different shapes. There are cyclists who meet in the morning to ride as a group across our desert landscape. And hard-core attendees of the cross-fit culture who wake up to challenge themselves in unexpected ways with a trainer. There are people who join a yoga studio and

become woven into the fabric of yoga practice. Go to the park and see a group that has joined to play their weekly ritual game of soccer or basketball. These are all examples of people coming together in healthy ways.

Studies show that people who go to gyms where they have relationships and connections keep going back. Ask yourself if you have connected with an inspiring form of movement beyond the physicality of where and why you exercise. This type of commitment will lead to a healthy habit that may last a lifetime.

Your body craves varying forms of movement so make sure there is variety in your fitness program. The monotony of doing the same movement day every on a machine in a fitness center is boring. From flexion to extension, to cardio and strength, your body needs engagement in all of these areas to feel alive. Find a few activities that are different in their effect and weave the community of "being there" into the joy of your fitness program. This will create a deeper, lasting meaning to your New Year's resolution.

Jennifer is a Desert native with 20 years of experience in the spa industry. She is the Director at the Hyatt's Agua Serena Spa in Indian Wells and has a Tuesday morning wellness segment as ZenJen on 100.5 fm radio.

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Look in the Right Direction

To look for tropical fruit in the arctic is a waste of time. If you wish to see soaring birds, you must lift your eyes from the ground. Without knowing where to look, you can't expect to find what you're looking for. Why are you **still looking** for ways to be stronger than those situations which overwhelm you? The problem is you're looking for answers in the wrong places. The solution is to look in a new direction.

When we find ourselves feeling angry or worried in some way, we tend to ask familiar questions. But these personal inquiries are not what they seem. They are really answers disguised as questions...not actually **asking** anything, but instead just confirming that we already know where to look—for whom—or what—is to blame for our shaky feelings. And in that instant when we're able to **name** the cause of our conflicted feelings, there's something else that's secretly confirmed: the source of what's making us shake, or ache, rests outside of us.

And it's **this** self deception which keeps us looking in the wrong direction; where we remain a perpetual victim in search of victory never found.

Try this—When faced with shaky, achy, conflicted feelings, look within. Ignore those pointed thoughts telling you where to lay the blame. Let your attention fall back upon yourself. To look in the right direction, consider these questions:

Stop asking in secret defeat: When will these unpleasant circumstances in my life finally change?

Start consciously asking: What is it in me that only feels worthwhile when circumstances warrant it? What is it that I have to change? What action steps do I have to take?

Stop asking in secret defeat: Why can't you see that you're wrong?

Start consciously asking: What is it in me that just doesn't feel right until it's certain someone else knows it is? What is it in me that only knows how right it is by the measure of its anger?

Stop asking in secret defeat: Where is this scary situation going to lead?

Start consciously asking: What is it in me that can only hear what fear has to say about a possible event?

Ask yourself your own questions which you sense may point you in the wrong direction and then turn them around to point yourself in the right direction! Upcoming workshops January 15 & 23. www.coachingtovision.com

Jasenka Sabanovic is a Certified Life Coach and owner of Coaching to Vision offering individual life coaching and group workshops. For additional information call 760-799-0523.



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