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OH, MY ACHY BONES

IMPROVING LIFE with ARTHRITIS

There are more than 120 arthritic conditions, so it is no wonder that most of us will experience symptoms at some point in our life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 1 in 2 people may develop symptomatic knee osteoarthritis, and 1 in 4 may develop painful hip arthritis. An estimated 50 million U.S. adults annually are advised that they have some form of arthritis, including 50% of adults 65 years or older.

While there is no cure for arthritis, healthy lifestyle changes can help reduce arthritic pain and keep you moving forward.

Understanding Your Arthritis

If you have debilitating pain, it is important to seek and secure a proper diagnosis in order to make educated treatment choices. Beyond common rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, arthritic conditions are vast and include fibromyalgia, gout, flat feet and myofascial pain syndrome, where pressure on sensitive muscle points causes pain in seemingly unrelated body parts.

Medications, treatment programs, exercise and even the foods you eat, can affect different forms of arthritis positively and negatively. Once you understand the cause of your pain, you are better prepared to manage it.

The most common types of arthritis are:

Osteoarthritis (OA) afflicts almost 27 million Americans and is the most common type of arthritis.¹

A chronic degenerative joint disease, it occurs as a result of wear and tear on a joint's cartilage, which causes bones to rub against each other. Stiffness, pain and loss of movement in the joint can result.

The condition can begin as early as age 40 (occurrence in younger people is often due to injury). Overuse and body weight influence OA's onset and treatment focuses on managing pain and improving function.²

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic inflammatory disorder that typically affects the small joints in your hands and feet. Unlike the wear-and-tear damage of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis affects the lining of your joints, causing a painful swelling that can eventually result in bone erosion and joint deformity.

An autoimmune disorder, RA occurs when your immune system mistakenly attacks your own body's tissues. RA is more common in women than in men, and generally occurs between the ages of 40 and 60.³ Treatment focuses on controlling symptoms, preventing joint damage, and reducing inflammation.

Gout usually affects only one or a few joints (frequently the big toe and ankle) and is reported by an estimated 6.1 million people.⁴ It is caused by the build-up of uric acid crystals within the joint resulting in a sudden onset of intense pain, swelling, warmth, and redness. Attacks frequently occur at night and can be triggered by stressful events, alcohol or drugs, or the

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Health is a Choice

When you have your health, anything is possible. When you don't, nothing else matters. This is the message at the bottom of Patti Wright's emails. And she certainly embodies this sentiment.

Patti was a successful professional who raised a son on her own and enjoyed good health. But in her 40's, things started going wrong. She contracted gum disease for which she had surgery, but thought little of it as the disease runs in her family. Over the next 8 years, she developed asthma, and then fibromyalgia. She tried medications and treatments for these conditions, but experienced only temporary relief. She felt her health deteriorating.

And then at 47, she got breast cancer. "Finally, I had enough," says Patti. "The medical community helped me up to that point, but I realized I needed to get to the root of my health problems and to take control."

She found an oncologist who supported both Eastern and Western medicine and was Patti's introduction to integrated health care. "I called everyone I knew and asked them to forward the names and numbers of those who made it through cancer. I wanted to know what worked for them in order to decide what may work for me." Answers included some diet changes, but mostly spirituality and family support. "The conversations were therapeutic," says Patti. "It gave me hope. I could do this."

Patti had a lumpectomy followed by chemotherapy and radiation. She complemented her therapy with herbs and supplements from a holistic doctor recommended by her oncologist. She changed her diet to include large

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Motivation & Movement

I was unaware of the prevalence of arthritis in this country until I started researching our lead feature. 50% of Americans over 65. That's 1 in 2. It's you or your spouse. Your Mom or your Dad. I have to admit that part of the inspiration for this topic was my own forty-something body starting to speak louder in the mornings. Hearing my parents talk about their consumption of over-the-counter pain killers didn't excite me either, so I was eager to learn about arthritis and alternative treatments for aches and pains.

In gathering information, we referenced reliable sources like the National Institutes of Health, major research hospitals and universities, and our local health care professionals. We discovered foods you can eat to help alleviate arthritic pain and inflammation, and those you should avoid. We found that some exercises are better for you than others, and many complementary modalities and supplements are proven effective.

Everyone agrees that we have to keep our achy bones moving—and yet that can be the hardest part. How do you get out and exercise, when the simplest tasks—like walking—hurt? We need motivation. And you will certainly find it in Patti Wright, our Health is a Choice story; or on page 25 where we feature local athletes Jim Scott (71) and Bill Bell (90), who just completed in the ITU World Triathlon Series in San Diego.

And that is why I proudly placed a photo of my husband, Tom, and daughters Diana and Erin here. Their Father's Day morning began with a full blown CrossFit training session which is no easy task for a fifty-something body. He survived and got to spend the rest of the day at a baseball game with his girls. For Tom, the best part was sharing their love of health and working out together.



Tom Del Sarto with daughters Diana and Erin

Motivation also comes from understanding the source of your aches and pains, and the treatment options available. We have many great resources here in the Desert to educate, take part, and help you manage arthritis pain and symptoms. We are very appreciative of the practitioners and organizations who have contributed information to

this issue. Their articles are noted by two tart cherries, which as you'll read in our lead feature appear to be a super food for symptom relief.

Implementing change is never easy, but simple lifestyle modifications can greatly improve the way you feel. We can make healthy choices. If you take away one small bit of information from these pages that helps improve your quality of life, then we have done our job. And so have you.

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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.

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DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT: Funding Programs that Improve Local Health Care Services

Rising to the Humana Challenge!

Grants Bring Two National Health Education Programs to Schools Valley Wide

The Directors of the Desert Healthcare District and Desert Healthcare Foundation approved two grant awards for a total of \$1,279,851 to HealthCorps, Inc. and Clinton's Alliance for a Healthier Generation to support health education efforts to reduce childhood obesity and help our local children live longer and healthier lives.

Following the Humana Challenge and Clinton conference in January, community partners, led by Desert Regional Medical Center who sponsored the conference, made a decision to continue the focus on health awareness and childhood obesity. They began by inviting key partners to meet with representatives of Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

The Healthy Schools Program, a key initiative of the Alliance, assists schools in creating healthier environments that promote nutritionally-sound eating and physical activity. The Desert Healthcare Foundation recognized a unique opportunity to include every school within the three (3) Coachella Valley public school districts (Palm Springs Unified, Desert Sands Unified, and Coachella Valley Unified). The program requires that schools follow very specific criteria for developing a healthier school environment and within the Healthy Schools Program Best Practices Framework, levels of achievement—bronze, gold, and platinum—can be achieved.

The Alliance was awarded a four-year grant from the Desert Healthcare Foundation to support a Relationship Manager position, associated program support, and an evaluation component. Funds raised at Mayor Pougnet's recent Palm Springs "Healthy Planet, Healthy You Race and Wellness Festival" and matched by the Desert Healthcare Foundation will support the Healthy Schools Program specific to the 26 schools in Palm Springs.

Approximately 71,000 students will be impacted, and school district policy change is anticipated by the end of the four-year period.

HealthCorps is a national health educational/peer mentoring program founded by heart surgeon Dr. Mehmet Oz. Its premise is to empower American students and their families to become health agents of change for their communities. HealthCorps Coordinators are recent college graduates who defer entry into medical school or graduate health programs to participate in public service through a two-year full time assignment at a designated public high school where they conduct approximately ten classes a week and lead after school and community programs. Funded by the Desert Healthcare District, the two-year grant supports the placement of three HealthCorps Coordinators at Palm Springs High School, Cathedral City High School, and Desert Hot Springs High School.

The HealthCorps Coordinators, in partnership with The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, will complete the Alliance's assessment to address gaps in each of the high school's policies and programming; create a Wellness Council (a committee of school staff, students, family and community members); and strive to gain Bronze Status in at least one category within the Alliance's Best Practices Framework.

Desert Healthcare District is a government agency, established by the state of California in 1948, to improve and support community health programs within a 457-square mile service area in the Coachella Valley. The District also owns and oversees the lease of Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs.





Arthritic Pain of the Hand and Wrist: Types and Treatment



By Desert Health with review by Ramin Pooyan, DO, MA

We often don't think about how much we use our hands until symptoms of arthritis start to affect them. The activities we enjoyed become challenging or even impossible. Hand arthritis imposes limitations on those afflicted. According to the Center for Disease Control, of the nearly 50 million Americans with arthritis, about 2 million say that arthritis limits their ability to grasp small objects, and about 3 million report difficulties lifting or carrying anything over 10 lbs.

You'll probably never notice the 19 bones in each hand, the 8 small bones that form the wrist, or the two forearm bones - until they start to hurt. Arthritis literally means "inflamed joint." A joint consists of two smooth, cartilage-covered bone surfaces that fit together as a matched set and move smoothly against one other. Arthritis results when these smooth surfaces become irregular and don't fit together well anymore and essentially "wear out."

Any joint in the body may be affected by arthritis, and it can be most noticeable when it appears in hands and fingers. Common forms of arthritis in the hand are osteoarthritis, post-traumatic arthritis (after an injury), and rheumatoid arthritis. Other causes of arthritis of the hand are infection, gout and psoriasis.

Recognizing Symptoms

Women are more likely than men to have arthritis in their hands. People often experience symptoms in their hands before other signs of arthritis show up. Different forms of arthritis affect the hands in different ways. For example, **psoriatic arthritis**, a type of arthritis related to the skin condition **psoriasis**, is most likely to cause pain in the joints closest to the fingernails (the distal joints.) In **osteoarthritis**, the most common form of arthritis, cartilage wears down in finger and thumb joints. Symptoms of arthritis in the hands may include:

- Pain in some or all of the joints, including joints of the fingers, wrists, and thumbs
- The growth of bony knobs on finger joints
- Swollen, red or warm joints
- "Grinding" sensation with movement of the joints
- Stiffness in the fingers, especially in the morning in patients who have **rheumatoid arthritis**
- Growth of lumps, or nodules, under the skin of the hands in patients with rheumatoid arthritis
- Fingers that look like "swollen sausages" in patients with psoriatic arthritis
- Difficulty with motions that require gripping and twisting

The progression of hand arthritis can be measured. With rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and psoriatic arthritis, patients lose bone density, which is measurable with bone-density scanning. The joint damage of osteoarthritis can usually be seen on X-rays.

Treatment

While there is no cure, treatment is designed to relieve pain and restore function. If you suffer symptoms of hand arthritis, it is important to keep both your hands and body active. Anti-inflammatory or other analgesic medication may be of benefit in relieving pain. Brief periods of rest may help if the arthritis has flared up. You may also be advised to wear finger or wrist splints at night and for selected activities. Heat modalities might be helpful for pain, but when severe swelling is present, cold therapies are recommended. A cortisone injection can often provide relief of symptoms. If these more conservative treatments fail, surgery may be an option.



"Because of the constant reliance on our hands, pain and stiffness associated with arthritis is especially disruptive to our daily lives," said Dr. Ramin Pooyan, an orthopedic surgeon at Desert Regional Medical Center who specializes in hand and upper extremity disorders. "Surgical intervention may provide pain relief and help improve function when more conservative treatments are unsuccessful."

The goal of surgery is to restore as much function as possible and to eliminate the pain or reduce it to a tolerable level. According to Dr. Pooyan, some of the common surgical procedures performed for hand and wrist arthritis include joint fusion, joint reconstruction or replacement, and tendon interposition arthroplasty.

With **joint fusion**, the arthritic surface is removed and the bones on each side of the joint are fused together. This eliminates motion from the problem joint, but can relieve pain and correct deformities that interfere with functioning. With **joint reconstruction**, the degenerated joint surface is removed in order to eliminate the rough, irregular bone-to-bone contact that causes pain and restricts motion. Once the degenerated portion is removed, it may be replaced with a joint replacement implant. With **tendon interposition arthroplasty**, once the degenerated joint surface is removed it is augmented with tendon obtained from the patient.

Which type of surgery is used depends on the particular joint(s) involved, your activities and individual needs. Your hand surgeon can help you decide which type of surgery is most appropriate for you. "There are exciting new technologies and implants available for the surgical treatment of hand and wrist arthritis," adds Dr. Pooyan. "These allow for faster healing after surgery, and earlier mobilization and functional recovery."

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Medications May Affect Eye Health

By Greg Evans, OD

Over the last two decades, prescription drug use has grown in the U.S. from an average of 7.3 prescriptions per person in 1992, to 11.6 per person in 2002, to 12.6 per person in 2009 (the latest statistic).

Along with increasing prescription drug use come many adverse symptoms that affect the eyes. When diagnosing symptoms, it is helpful to know what medications a patient is taking to properly identify the cause and prescribe the best treatment.

Following are the top 10 most commonly prescribed systemic drug classes and their ocular side effects:

Analgesics (ie Vicodin/Ibuprofen) – dry eye, diplopia (double vision), mydriasis, retinal hemorrhages, decreased vision, light sensitivity, eye pain

Antihyperlipidemics (Niacin/Zocor) – dry eye, lid edema, diplopia, retinal edema of the macula

Diuretics (Hydrochlorothiazide) – dry eye, conjunctivitis, retinal edema, choroidal effusion, decreased focusing ability (accommodation), reduced intra-ocular pressure, decreased vision, acute angle closure glaucoma

Beta Blockers (Atenolol) – dry eye, Ptosis (droopy eye), diplopia, retinal hemorrhages secondary to induced anemia, decreased intra-ocular pressure, light sensitivity and eye pain

Acid Reflux (Cimetidine) – redness of the conjunctiva, spontaneous anterior chamber hyphema (blood in the anterior chamber), decreased focusing ability

Antibiotics (Zithromax/Tetracyclines) – dry eye, pigment deposits on eyelids and conjunctiva, keratitis (corneal inflammation), intracranial hypertension

Antibiotics (Sulfonamides) – tearing, conjunctival swelling, loss of eyelashes or eye brows, keratitis, uveitis (inflammation of iris or choroid), optic neuritis, color distortion, blurred vision, angle closure glaucoma

Hyperglycemics (Glipizide, Metformin) – double vision, extra-ocular muscle paresis, reduced focusing, optic neuritis, forward placement of lens diaphragm

Thyroid Replacement (Synthroid) – redness of the conjunctiva, blurred vision, light sensitivity, open angle glaucoma

Anti-anxiety (Ambien) – double vision, reduced focusing, eye irritation, eye pain, inflammation of the sclera, light sensitivity, conjunctivitis (redness of eye)

One can see by this list that many prescription and over the counter medications can have significant ocular side effects.

When you are seen for an eye examination, make sure to bring a complete list of your medications with you. No drug-prescription or over the counter – is insignificant, so be sure to list them all. Your examination findings may be related to your systemic medication, and your doctor will be better informed to properly diagnose and treat you.

Dr. Evans is the founding owner of Evans Eye Care in Palm Desert and can be reached at 760.674.8806.

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New Guidelines for Lung Cancer Screening

By Christian H. Neumann, MD, PhD

Lung Cancer is the leading cause of death in both men and women in the United States and it is still on the rise. In 1964, the Surgeon General's report concluded that tobacco smoke was a cause of lung cancer. Today, smoking is thought to cause up to 90 percent of lung cancers.

Currently, the 5 year survival rate for lung cancer is 15%, as compared to breast, colon and prostate cancer which have more favorable rates between 65 and 99%. Survival rates for lung cancer generally improve with early diagnosis. The 5 year survival rate for lung cancer approaches 50% if it is still localized at the time of detection. However, only 1 in 4 lung cancer cases are diagnosed early.

Historically, physicians relied mainly on chest x-rays to screen for lung cancer, but this exam does not show small lesions in the lung sufficiently. Computed tomography (CT) is a specialized x-ray based imaging test that can detect lung cancer when it is still very small and localized. In August 2011, the National Cancer Institute released results from its National Lung Screening Trial (NLST) which randomly screened at-risk smokers with either low dose CT or standard chest x-ray. The study found that the improved ability of low dose CT scans to identify and diagnose lung cancer could reduce mortality from lung cancer by 20% compared to chest x-rays.

These findings led the American Lung Association (ALA) to re-examine their current policy on lung cancer screening. In April 2012, the ALA published new interim guidelines to assist physicians, their patients and the public in their discussions about lung cancer screening. The new recommendations are:

- The best way to prevent lung cancer caused by tobacco use is to never start or to quit smoking
- Low-dose CT screening should be recommended for those people who meet NLST criteria:
 - Current or former smokers, aged 55 to 74 years
 - A smoking history of a pack a day for 30 years or 2 packs a day for 15 years
 - No history of lung cancer
 - Individuals should not receive a chest x-ray for lung cancer screening
 - Low-dose CT screening should NOT be recommended for everyone
- ALA should develop public health materials describing the lung cancer screening process in order to assist patients in talking with their doctors. This educational portfolio should clarify:
 - The difference between a screening process and a diagnostic test
 - The benefits, risks and costs (emotional, physical and economic)
 - That not all lung cancers will be detected through use of low dose CT scanning

Other recommendations made in the report include referring patients to facilities that have experience in conducting low dose CT scans and that employ multidisciplinary teams with comprehensive follow up care.

Early detection and treatment can make the difference in the successful treatment of lung cancer and long term survival. New minimally invasive techniques are available to diagnose and treat lung cancer if the cancer is found at an early stage. This is especially important for individuals who do not demonstrate any symptoms but have a higher risk of acquiring lung cancer than the general population.

Dr. Neumann is a Board Certified Radiologist with Desert Medical Imaging which performs the CT screening exam at all four of their locations in Indian Wells, Palm Springs, Indio and Yucca Valley. For more information call 760-694-9559.

practitioner profile

Eric Presser, MD



Profession: Board Certified Thoracic Surgeon practicing minimally invasive non-cardiac surgical operations (in the chest cavity)

Studied: General surgery residency at St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center (NY, NY) after graduating from Ross University School of Medicine with honors

Cardiothoracic Fellow at LSU (New Orleans)

Cardiothoracic Fellowship at the University of Texas Health Science Center (San Antonio)

Practicing: Premier Surgical Associates in Palm Springs
On medical staff at Desert Regional Medical Center
Practicing in the North Shore/LIJ Health System on Long Island since 2006

Resident: Rancho Mirage with his wife and two children, 5 & 3

Dr. Presser is new to the Valley bringing with him modern surgical technology that only top universities are utilizing. While he performs the full spectrum of Thoracic and Esophageal surgery, Dr. Presser's main interest lies in minimally invasive lung and mediastinal surgery. He is also a tremendous supporter of lung cancer screening.

What made you choose the Coachella Valley? My wife is a California native and I always promised to get her back home. The Coachella Valley seems like a wonderful place to raise a family.

What new practices do you bring to the Valley? I routinely perform video assisted thoracic surgery which is minimally invasive as the incisions are smaller, there is less pain, and both recovery and hospitalization are shorter.

What are your thoughts on Integrated Health Care? I have always found a team approach to be most effective in patient care. I treat my patients like family and want the best for them, and am a fan of anything that helps achieve this goal.

Your best health advice? Don't ignore your body--no matter how scared you may be of finding out results. You cannot fight a disease until you know it exists.

Best life advice? Treat people the way you want to be treated (The Golden Rule). Always do your best and go to bed happy. It sounds corny I know, but it works.

What are your hobbies? Anything outside with my kids--swimming, riding bikes, golf. And who doesn't like football on Sundays?

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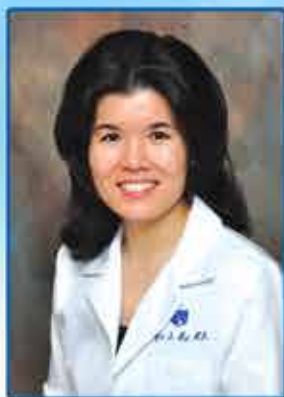
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Eyelid Misalignment: When Is It Time to See a Doctor For Those Red Eyes?

By Jennifer I. Hui, MD

The eyelids perform many vital functions in maintaining ocular health and comfort. Not only do they protect the globes from foreign bodies and serve as protective barriers, they are also responsible for production of the oily layer of the tear film. This outermost layer prevents premature evaporation of tears, and ensures that a healthy tear film is bathing the eyes. The eyelids must be in proper position to ensure optimal function.

The eyelids can become misaligned for a variety of reasons. Most commonly, they become loose over time and are unable to maintain their optimal position. This can be seen in patients who frequently rub their eyes or after prolonged contact lens use. Other causes of malposition include scarring after trauma or surgery (cicatricial changes).

Entropion occurs when the lid margin is turned inward. Consequently, the eyelashes are directed towards the cornea and can abrade the eye with each blink. The cornea can decompensate with this repeated trauma, causing significant discomfort and foreign body sensation. The eye is often watery and red as well. As the irritation increases, the patient may blink more forcefully, thus causing further inward rotation of the margin. This cycle of irritation and further misalignment causes a condition called spastic entropion, and primarily affects the lower eyelid.

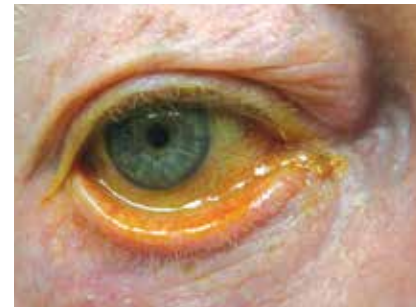
Alternatively, ectropion occurs when the lid margin is turned outward. Patients may notice that their eyelid looks red and irritated. Excessive tearing is also a

common finding as the opening to the tear drainage system is not in proper position. As the eyelid turns outward and the moist inner surface is exposed to the air, the eye becomes more uncomfortable. Ectropion alters the eyelid alignment, sometimes causing severe redness and pain and most commonly affects the lower eyelid.

Proper alignment should be restored to ensure ocular health and to alleviate symptoms. Both entropion and ectropion are repaired with outpatient procedures that produce long lasting results. Sutures can be used to rotate the eyelids into the correct position. Most patients will also need the outer corner of the eyelid tightened. A decrease in symptoms usually starts soon after surgery. Care must be taken to maintain the restored position, and patients should refrain from rubbing their eyelids.

There are a variety of conditions which may cause redness of the eyes, irritation and tearing. A thorough evaluation is the first step needed to identify the root cause and determine the best course of action.

Dr. Hui is the founder of The Eyelid Institute in Palm Desert. She is an Oculoplastic surgeon and has a special interest in helping patients with Eyelid, Lacrimal and Orbital conditions. An Oculoplastic surgeon is a physician with combined training in Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (Oculoplastics) and Ophthalmology who has unique abilities to perform a variety of delicate procedures around the eyes. Dr. Hui can be reached at 760.610.2677.



Ectropion: The patient notices redness of the lid and tearing as the drainage outlet is not in proper alignment

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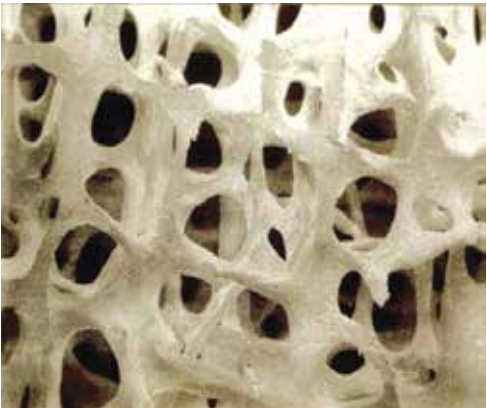


Osteoporosis: The Bone Breaking Facts

By Lisa Lindley, MD

Osteoporosis literally means “porous bones”. It is a systemic skeletal disease characterized by low bone mass and density, which makes the bones weaker and more prone to fracture. As bones become weak, they can break from minor everyday events such as sneezing or bumping into furniture. One out of every two women and one out of every four men over the age of 50 will experience an osteoporosis related fracture in their lifetime.

Looking at healthy bone tissue under a microscope, you can see a tight network of fibers. This network is the scaffolding that provides structural strength. In osteoporosis, there are gaps in the scaffolding that represent a loss of bone density and a corresponding loss of strength. This loss in bone density occurs without symptoms, making osteoporosis a silent disease until a fracture occurs.



Normal Bone

Osteoporosis is a serious national health problem currently affecting 10 million Americans, and while 8 million of these are women, 2 million are men. Because patients—and the media—tend to worry most about cancer and heart disease, **osteoporosis and its effects are often under-reported.** Here are some revealing facts about hip fractures:

- Women are 2-3 times more likely than men to experience a hip fracture
- One-year mortality is twice as high for men as for women
- 20% of patients die within one year of a hip fracture
- 30% of patients experience permanent disability; 40% are unable to walk independently post-fracture; and 80% are unable to carry out at least one independent activity of daily living
- Women who have a hip fracture are 4xs as likely to have another one
- A woman’s risk of hip fracture is equal to her risk of breast, uterine and ovarian cancer, **combined**

Building and maintaining healthy bones is our best defensive strategy. The majority of our adult bone mass (85-90%) is acquired by the age of 18 in girls and 20 in boys. Here are some recommendations from the National Osteoporosis Foundation of things we can do to protect our bones:

1) Get enough calcium and Vitamin D every day. It is recommended that women get 1000 mg of Calcium and at least 400 - 800 IU of Vitamin D if they are under age 50, and 1200 mg of Calcium with 400 – 800 IU of Vitamin D over age 50. It is recommended that men get 1000 mg of Calcium with 800 IU of Vitamin D up to age 70, and 1200 mg of calcium with 1000 IU of Vitamin D age 70 and over. For both men

and women, your doctor may recommend more Vitamin D as appropriate.

2) Get regular weight bearing and muscle building exercise. Weight bearing exercises make you move against gravity. Examples include: dancing, aerobics, hiking, jogging or running. Low impact examples are elliptical trainers, stair-step machines or walking on a treadmill or outside.

3) Don’t smoke and limit alcohol intake. Smoking negatively affects bone by damaging blood vessels and reducing the amount of available oxygen. It also causes an increase in cortisol. Cortisol increases bone breakdown. In addition, smoking releases free radicals, which damage the cells that build new bone. Excessive alcohol inhibits the actions of bone building cells and may also impair balance, thereby increasing the risk of falls.

4) Talk to your doctor about your risk of osteoporosis and a bone density test. Your doctor can review your personal and family history to assess your risk for bone loss. A Dual-energy X-ray Absorptiometry, or DXA, is the gold standard for diagnosing low bone density and predicting fracture risk. In the absence of risk factors women should start screening at age 65 and men at age 70. Your doctor may recommend screening earlier if you have risk factors. The DXA gives you a T score. This score, along with your age and other risk factors, is used to assess your risk for fracture.

5) Take a bone building medication if right for you. If your fracture risk assessment is high, your doctor will likely recommend treatment. There are many factors to consider and many different medications. Calcitonin and hormonal therapies (Estrogen, Evista and Prolia) are only approved for women. The Bisphosphonates (Fosamax, Actonel, Boniva, Reclast, Zometa) and Forteo are approved for both men and women. Other factors are age, menopausal status, medical conditions, and severity of bone loss. The Bisphosphonates have come under scrutiny recently with information on atypical femur fractures. Many experts now recommend stopping these medications after 3-5 years of therapy. It may be restarted after a 2-3 year drug holiday, or a different medication may be selected.



Osteoporotic Bone

Risk factors for osteoporosis. Major risks are age greater than 70, early menopause (younger than 45 for women), prior fracture, steroid use, and low body weight.

No medication is risk free. The goal is to balance informed risk vs. proven benefit for each individual patient.

Dr. Lindley is a board certified Gynecologist. She has been practicing since 2002 on the Eisenhower campus and is currently part of Eisenhower’s E365 program, providing gynecology and primary care for women. For information call 760- 837-3999.

Resources: 1) Davis, JL, The Effects of Smoking on Bone Health, WebMD, 2005, June 2012, <http://www.webmd.com> 2) Nat’l Osteoporosis Foundation, NOF, June 2012, <http://www.nof.org>; 3) Osteoporosis, The Free Dictionary, Farlex, Inc., June 2012, <http://www.medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com> 4) Sampson, HW, Alcohol and Other Factors Affecting Osteoporosis Risk in Women, Nat’l Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, NIH, USA.gov, 2003, June 2012, <http://www.pubs.niaaa.nih.gov>

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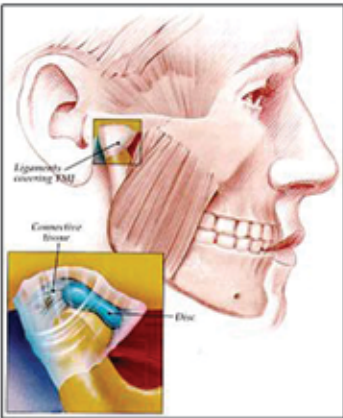
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Fibromyalgia Pain: Muscle, Nerve... or Both?

By Leonard J Feld, DDS

Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS) is a painful condition predominantly involving muscles, and the most common cause of chronic, widespread musculoskeletal pain. A diagnosis includes at least 11 of 18 specific tender points that hurt when pressed (with no reference pain elsewhere). The tender points must be present in all four quadrants of the body for more than three months.

In recent years it has become increasingly clear that FMS and several other chronic conditions including chronic fatigue syndrome, myofascial pain syndrome, headaches, irritable bowel syndrome, temporomandibular joint dysfunction syndrome and restless legs syndrome, are overlapping conditions with similar features.

In 1992, Dr. Mohammad Yunus, a Nobel Prize winner, collectively called these conditions 'central sensitivity syndromes' (CSS) based on an understanding of the current mechanisms of these syndromes that bind them.

In 1995, an important concept emerged that finds the final integrating and modulating mechanisms in CSS are central, rather than peripheral. For example, an initial trauma may cause regional soft tissue pain/ myofascial pain syndrome, but through the process of central nervous system (CNS) neuroplasticity, the pain may become centralized with subsequent spread of pain to other areas.^{2,3} As another example, migraine may initially have a peripheral component of vasodilatation, but the severe pain of migraine is orchestrated by a central mechanism.⁴ It now appears that irritable bowel syndrome is more a disease of CNS than bowel.⁵⁻¹⁰ Restless legs syndrome is another disease of the CNS, similar to the current understanding that FMS is a disease of CNS rather than muscle.

A relevant question that should be addressed is how one can explain the pain in fibromyalgia and similar CSS conditions in the absence of obvious active peripheral inflammation, or nerve injury. Many patients with fibromyalgia report onset of their symptoms following a trauma (e.g., an automobile accident or repetitive injury at work) or inflammation, such as a viral illness. The initial inflammation subsides, but the pain becomes centralized, persistent and chronic, even if the initial noxious inflammation ceases to exist.

Have we looked at all the possibilities for FMS and other CSS? It is possible that further pain perception input emanates from continuous cervical or lumbar spine strain due to poor posture, range of motion changes due to upper airway resistance, or trigeminal nerve insult because of a jaw misalignment causing joint dysfunction?

A large body of data supports that central mechanisms, including central sensitivity, play a significant role in both migraines and tension-type headaches. It is well known that during a migraine attack patients complain of hypersensitivity to light, smell and sound; and that pain of migraine may be felt in a widespread distribution, including arms and legs.⁴ Besides the role of extra cranial blood vessels, central mechanisms involving cortical events, hypothalamus, serotonin, excitatory amino acids and central trigeminal nerve pathways are also involved.^{4,11} Again, is involvement of the trigeminal nerve pathway related to a possible structural-physical insult of the jaw joint misalignment?

In chronic tension-type headaches, widespread distribution of pain as well as a qualitative difference in pain following a peripheral noxious stimulus would support such a CNS role.^{4,12} Bendtsen, et al, demonstrated decreased pain detection and tolerance thresholds in a widespread distribution in the pericranial muscles, as well as the fingers, suggesting a role of central sensitivity, in chronic tension-type headaches.¹³ Bendtsen, et al, has also demonstrated that there is qualitatively altered sensation in chronic myofascial pain syndrome, suggesting an aberrant central pain mechanism,¹⁴ possibly TMJ disorder.

Have we looked at all the pain mechanisms? It has been postulated that the trigeminal nerve pathways vascular component in migraines and the neuroplasticity of the trigeminal nerve can modulate all of these symptoms. Does it warrant another look at the jaw joint and TMJ disorder, which produces trigeminal nerve injury? The trigeminal nerve is insulted when stimulated by jaw misalignment (a bad bite) which can be created by external or internal derangement of the jaw joint. When this occurs, it is an ongoing physical structural misalignment altering sensation and pain. These central sensitizations have a continuous chronic pain induction. Could the cause be as simple as a misalignment of the jaw bone which is continuous and persists in the absence of what is pathologically looked at in the past as peripheral inflammation? Has this been overlooked as the cause, but considered a syndrome? Could this be the answer to many continuous chronic symptoms?

Summary: Fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) and similar other conditions, e.g., myofascial pain syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome, chronic fatigue syndrome, headaches, migraines and restless legs syndrome share several characteristics including pain, poor sleep, fatigue, hyperalgesia, and an absence of obvious tissue pathology. These syndromes are bound by a common pathophysiological mechanism (i.e., neurohormonal dysfunctions) which is generally different from those in psychiatric diseases. Central nervous system (CNS) sensitivity, either intrinsic or due to CNS neuroplasticity secondary to peripheral stimuli, results in amplified, widespread and persistent pain. This central sensitivity seems to be the most important aberration among the neuroendocrine dysfunctions. Thus, FMS and other overlapping syndromes have been called "central sensitivity syndromes" (CSS) as a group. An estimated 40 million Americans suffer from CSS. More research needs to address the ongoing chronic effect of trigeminal nerve disorder (or TMJD) and its contributions to CSS.

Dr. Leonard Feld is a TMJ-TMJ disorder Dentist with offices in Los Angeles, San Jose and Indian Wells. He is the co-founder of the TMJ & Sleep Medicine Network and his philosophy is always conservative, non-invasive and non-surgical treatment. Dr. Feld can be reached at (760) 341-2873. www.DocFeld.com

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Medications and Dizziness

By Greg Cox, PT and B. Maya Kato, MD

Medications are often the first line treatment for patients experiencing severe dizziness and vertigo. These medications are essentially “rescue” drugs that can greatly alleviate the symptom of debilitating vertigo. However, these “rescue” drugs are neither always effective nor appropriate for many types of dizziness, and they may have potentially serious side effects and drug interactions. We find that many patients come to us taking the wrong kind or wrong dosage of “anti-dizziness” medications. To make matters worse, many elderly patients who receive rescue drugs for dizziness don’t have symptoms of vertigo or dizziness; they actually have imbalance, which is a different symptom. Alarming, the side effects of rescue medications can actually make their balance worse!

When are medications appropriate? There are certain conditions that require medication:

Labyrinthitis is a bacterial or viral infection of the inner ear. The patient experiences severe, spinning vertigo that can last weeks. Medications such as Meclizine or Antivert are usually prescribed to help reduce the severity of dizziness. These medications are very helpful in the acute stage, but are not recommended for long-term use, as they actually slow the recovery process.

Meniere’s disease is due to an excess of fluid inside the inner ear. A patient experiences attacks of debilitating vertigo, hearing loss, and tinnitus, that last for hours or days. Prescribing a diuretic to remove the extra fluid from the inner ear, is essential in reducing the frequency and severity of attacks.

On the other hand, Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV) is a common type of vertigo affecting millions; however, medications are completely ineffective and inappropriate treatment. BPPV is a

mechanical disorder of the ear that requires a series of simple head-body maneuvers to return the offending loose crystals of the inner ear back to their original place. Treatment for most patients is usually a one-time clinic visit.

The Physicians’ Role: In order to correct dizziness, we must first understand the symptoms and make the correct diagnosis. Stroke, heart problems, and hypoglycemia are all very different conditions, yet they share seemingly similar symptoms of “dizziness”. Inner ear problems causing dizziness require completely different treatment. Finally, many medications themselves cause “dizziness”.

To establish the correct diagnosis, we must pay attention to the patient’s description of their symptoms, as this often establishes the cause. A thorough review of the medical history and medication list is performed. Patients are taken off rescue medications as soon as possible, because they are not appropriate for long-term management of most dizzy conditions. Medications serve as a panacea, but slow the recovery process

in the brain, ultimately making the patient’s balance worse. The good news is that there are highly effective treatment options. One is called Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT). VRT is rendered by a licensed Physical Therapist who specializes in the treatment of vestibular dysfunction. Therapy is highly successful in eliminating dizziness without medication, and is necessary for restoring balance and mobility in chronic inner ear conditions.

Dr. Kato is the founder of The Ear Institute in Palm Desert. Her top priority is improving the quality of life of her patients. Dr. Kato can be reached at: 760-565-3900.

Resources: 1) Overreliance on Symptom Quality in Diagnosing Dizziness: Results of a Multicenter Survey of Emergency Physicians Mayo Clinic Proc. November 2007 82(11):1319-1328; doi:10.4065/82.11.1319; 2) Physicians’ Desk Reference. Copyright © 2004-2008 Thomson Healthcare. Montvale, NJ. 3) Excellent review of medications for dizzy professionals: <http://www.dizziness-and-balance.com/practice/drugx.html>; 4) Cohen JS. Dose Discrepancies Between the Physicians’ Desk Reference and the Medical Literature, and Their Possible Role in the High Incidence of Dose-Related Adverse Drug Events. Arch Intern Med. 2001;161:957-964. 5) Mindel JS, Teich SA, Teich CM, Beam P. Editorial: Limitations of the Physicians’ Desk Reference 2007 Surv of Ophth 2008;53:82-84 ; 6) Williams M, Gentili A. Assessment of the Geriatric Patient: Gait and Balance CME/CE: Medscape.com, Oct 28, 2005; 7) Staab J, Ruckenstein M. Expanding the Differential Diagnosis of Chronic Dizziness. Arch Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg. 2007;133(2):170-176.

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Summer Blues a Concern for Some

By Eisenhower Medical Center

When you think of summer, what comes to mind? Vacations and getaways... hiking in the mountains... or enjoying a relaxing day by the pool?

For many, these are common summer time activities. But for some individuals — especially seniors 65 and older — summer in the desert can be a very isolated time that triggers a lack of motivation and persistent sadness. These changes in mood and thoughts could be the result of late-life depression and are common among seniors who have suffered chronic or serious health problems.

“The so-called ‘golden years’ can be a very difficult stage of life for many people. Particularly those in their 80s or 90s who live independently and alone, with no nearby relatives and extended families far away, and those whose spouse and close friends are no longer with us,” explains Anthony Bassanelli, MD, Board Certified Psychiatrist.

“Many of our seniors feel lonely and depressed. Who wouldn’t in this situation?” he continues. “And when you factor in the health issues that come with aging, life can be extremely difficult for many older adults.”

Other frequently observed scenarios involve seniors with a history of depression or bipolar disorder. Their condition may have worsened with age or when medications are no longer effective. This extends to individuals who just aren’t feeling or acting “right” — they may be anxious, and those close to them may be concerned the individuals are depressed or experiencing the early stages of dementia.

Family members and friends often identify changes in their loved ones first; noticing troubles with enjoyment, anxiety, sleep disturbances, feelings of worthlessness or helplessness. Depression may occur in the context of multiple physical problems; such as persistent complaints of pain, headaches, fatigue, gastrointestinal symptoms, arthritis and weight loss.

Treatment for senior age depression is achieved in a number of ways. Under most circumstances it is important to be treated by a mental health professional. A place for seniors to seek treatment in the Coachella Valley is Eisenhower’s Center for Geropsychiatry. At the Center, a biopsychosocial approach allows the treatment team to look at the whole person, utilizing an entire team of experts who are focused on each patient’s unique situation and needs.

The treatment team may include a psychiatrist, registered nurse, social worker and recreational therapist who meet with the patient as a group every day. Family members, significant others and care providers are frequently invited to attend these daily review sessions, and to participate, as those closest to the patient may observe symptoms that neither the professional team nor the patient recognize. “This level of attentiveness and comprehensive care is unique in geriatric mental health programs,” Dr. Bassanelli notes.

For many, aging often presents a range of complex issues. Some physical, some mental, and all important in maintaining whole body wellness throughout one’s ‘golden years’ and especially, our hot desert summers.

To find help for a senior who might be suffering from depression, please contact Eisenhower’s Center for Geropsychiatry 760-837-8767. Service is available 24 hours a day.

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H. David Sacks, D.O. Opens Wellness Center in Palm Desert

Focus on Integrated Health Care

By Lauren Del Sarto

Dr. H. David Sacks has spent his life taking care of people. Born in the Midwest, he promised his parents that he would always take care of his two sisters. And he always has. Now 70, Dr. Sacks continues an accomplished career in medicine that includes 35 years of work here in the desert. As a certified family practitioner, he is known for the little black bag he still carries with him on house calls, as well as the senior care facilities he established throughout the valley, many for which he is still the attending physician.

Ironically, the one person Sacks didn't take care of was himself and in middle age, he became overweight with deteriorating health. Ten years ago, he decided to turn things around. He began researching wellness programs nationwide, creating his own regimen and ultimately adopting a healthier lifestyle. Passing this new knowledge onto others became his passion.

"I was an overweight doctor too busy to take care of myself and realized that many my age were in the same situation," says Sacks. Meeting Dr. Michael Roizen, author and Chief Wellness Officer at the Cleveland Clinic near his hometown of Youngstown, inspired Sacks to create his own center here in the Desert. His dream is now recognized with the newly opened SACKS Wellness Center in Palm Desert.

"Wellness Centers and proactive health care are positive trends nationally. The Cleveland Clinic has changed the lives of many within their community. We hope to do the same here," says Sacks.

Sacks has brought together a team of experts in various health disciplines to offer clients a variety of services under one roof. Their mission is to empower men and women of all ages to optimize mental and physical health to live longer, healthier and happier lives. Options and programs are physician recommended and

based on the unique needs of the individual. Core services include natural and medical weight management, bio-identical hormone replacement therapy for men and women, stress reduction therapies, therapeutic exercise programs for general health and wellness, and nutraceutical supplementation.

Sacks and his team continue their education in Integrated Medicine through conferences and programs offered by leading organizations including Scripps Hospital in San Diego and the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine (referred to as A4M).

In addition to medical care, professional resources include nutritional consulting, massage therapy, chiropractic care, yoga, physical therapy, and skin care. Educational seminars will be held on a regular basis at the Center. "We plan to feature practitioners from different areas to help people understand the many options available to them on their road to greater health."

"We plan to feature practitioners from different areas to help people understand the many options available to them on their road to greater health."

– Dr. Sacks



The SACKS Wellness Center team: H. David Sacks D.O., Medical Director in coat, and from left to right: Patrick van Loon, DC Chiropractor; Diane Weeks, NC Nutritional Consultant; Carrol Madger, RN, LLB, DSD RN & Operations Manager; Barry Marder, CFO.; Michele "Shelly" Sheppard, Medical Esthetician; Mayumi "Mimi" Grover, Medical Assistant; and Christine Davis-Arden, Personal Trainer

Initial consultations often begin with reviewing clients' medications. "Many patients see numerous doctors who prescribe multiple medications, and no one sits down to review how these medications interact—or what supplements can support nutritional deficiencies, which are often a side effect," states Sacks. A review of specific needs, concerns and goals help to develop individual programs.

Sacks' personal health improvement came from adopting a plant based protein-rich diet, increasing physical activity, and taking vitamins and supplements. He soon weaned off three of his medications and lost over 70 pounds. "I love giving back, and look forward to working with people who want to learn how to relax, enjoy nutritious foods, and laugh more often," notes Sacks. "For me, the reward is seeing someone turn their life around by making lifestyle changes and a commitment to a healthier way of living."

Programs at SACKS Wellness Center range in cost. There are affordable annual memberships and monthly programs, and walk-ins are welcome. Insurance is accepted for covered expenses.

SACKS Wellness Center is located at 44751 Village Court in Palm Desert off Highway 111 near Cook Street. For more information call 760.779.9100 or visit www.SacksWellnessCenter.com

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Natural Supplements to Relieve Arthritis Pain



By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

Arthritic pain is often constant, unremitting discomfort managed solely by non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen and Tylenol. However, long-term use of NSAIDs and other pharmaceutical pain medication can cause health complications. These complications include stomach inflammation, ulcers, and increased risk of heart disease. Rather than simply managing pain with medication, and risking long-term side effects, there are multiple natural supplements that reduce inflammation naturally. Below is a list of common, effective supplements that, when used regularly, can significantly diminish arthritic pain and inflammation.

Tumeric: Also known as Curcuma longa, Tumeric is an herb typically used in Indian and Chinese cooking and is yellow in color. It contains the ingredient curcumin, which is a potent anti-oxidant as well as anti-inflammatory. When the rhizome, or rootstalk of the plant, is used, it displays anti-inflammatory benefits similar to that of NSAIDs without any of the side effects. This is the 'go to' herb for natural pain and inflammation relief, and it is even more effective when used in combination with other natural anti-inflammatories.

Bromelain: Extracted from the pineapple plant, Bromelain is a substance that enhances enzymatic activity in the body. It works by activating proteolytic enzymes (enzymes that break apart inflammatory molecules) at the localized site of inflammation, inhibiting activation of pro-inflammatory chemical messengers, and breaking down fibrous structures. Although you can obtain bromelain from eating pineapple, the required treatment dosages are typically higher than those found in foodstuffs.

Proteolytic Enzymes: Produced naturally in the human digestive system, Proteolytic enzymes break apart food bonds. When taken as a supplement on an empty stomach, they serve to break apart abnormal structures in the body. Proteolytic enzymes can be used to break apart inflammatory molecules, which in turn relieve pain from inflammation.

Fish Oil: Fish oil has anti-inflammatory properties that reduce cardiovascular inflammation, joint and skin inflammation, as well as inflammation from injuries. It has several mechanisms of action that create its powerful anti-inflammatory properties. The components of fish oil, EPA and DHA, can inhibit cyclooxygenase (COX), which provides relief from pain and inflammation in a similar manner to NSAIDs. It also suppresses several inflammatory mediators, reducing overall inflammation in certain conditions. In high doses, fish oil is exceptional for treating arthritic pain, and reducing whole body inflammation.

Vitamin C: Chemically known as ascorbic acid, Vitamin C is required for collagen formation in the joints. It helps protect muscles from damage during exercise, and reduces inflammation in joints. In addition to reducing inflammation, it protects the body from further damage and helps to repair damaged joints.

Glucosamine Sulfate: Although it does not have direct anti-inflammatory properties, glucosamine sulfate reduces inflammation by enhancing cartilage structure within degenerated joints. For arthritis caused by degeneration, glucosamine sulfate can help 'rebuild' the soft cartilage in between joints that wears down over time.

There are many aspects to relieving pain and inflammation naturally, such as dietary choices, body mechanics, sleep habits and hydration. However, even when organic supplements are used on their own, they can produce remarkable effects with little to no side effects. They should be taken in appropriate therapeutic doses, in optimal combinations, and taken at the right time of day to be most effective.

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

"Long-term use of pharmaceutical pain medication can cause health complications including stomach inflammation, ulcers, and increased risk of heart disease."

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Scoliosis in Children: What is the Right Treatment?

By Lauren Del Sarto

I have scoliosis, or curvature of the spine. It was discovered at age 12 after several hints. Horse show judges told me to “square your shoulders,” as one dropped lower than the other, and at school, I remember being frustrated that the back of my chair always seemed crooked. I had no idea it was me.

Someone told my mom, but she had never heard of scoliosis. Six months later, when she couldn’t hem my skirt straight (due to my uneven hips) she realized something might actually be wrong.

A trip to the doctor confirmed a 32 degree curve in my lower spine. I was put into a Boston Brace, a very tight plastic shell custom designed to immobilize the spine and keep the curve from getting worse. I was to wear it 23 hours every day. However, my body overcompensated creating two more curves in my middle and upper back. Metal plates that ran up the front and back and joined in a circle around my neck were added creating the Milwaukee Brace, which I wore for four years.

I survived high school incentivized to wear my brace by the alternative – an operation to permanently fuse my spine which would limit my ability to ride horses (among other high risk activities).

Fast forward 25 years. I met my husband who has three beautiful daughters and, ironically, all three were diagnosed with scoliosis. Their curves ranged from 20 to 30 degrees, but instead of being treated by the medical community, each was taken to a chiropractic doctor. Weekly visits for manipulative adjustments delivered positive results and maintained their curves.

Considering my treatment was 35 years ago, I was eager to find out what advancements have been made in patient care today. I sat down with Eric Davenport, DC of Gonstead Chiropractic; and Russell H. Molina, resident practitioner and Jose Ledezma, Certified Orthotist with Coachella Valley Orthopedics, which makes scoliosis braces.

According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, 1 to 2 of every 100 people has scoliosis. About 2 to 3 of every 1,000 people will need treatment for progressive scoliosis and one of every 1,000 people requires surgery. In about 80% of cases, the cause is unknown, but scoliosis tends to run in families. And although boys and girls are affected the same at the onset, girls are more likely to have curves that continue to worsen and require treatment.

Treatment for the condition depends on many factors including age, structural maturity, degree and cause of the curve, and activity level of the child. All three professionals agreed that the key to success is early detection.

“If a 15-20 degree curve is detected in a 13 year-old who has not started her menstrual cycle (a measurement of structural maturity), studies show there is a high probability that the curve will increase without treatment, and so we would brace,” states Molina.

“We have had great success in treating young patients whose curves are below 27 degrees,” states Davenport. “After that severity, we standardly recommend a bracing consult.”

“MDs and chiropractors look at x-rays differently,” explained Davenport. “Where a doctor may see a curved spine, I see the structural imbalances of the full body. And treatment for those two diagnoses can overlap and complement each other.”

How do chiropractors maintain the curve through adjustments? “We determine where the individual joints are functionally misaligned or not moving properly (called subluxation) and put motion into those specific joints. With scoliosis, we focus on counteracting the apex of the curve.”

All treatment programs recommend a complementary physical therapy regime.

“The problem with bracing is that it doesn’t allow the muscles to properly develop because the brace is doing the job of the muscles for 23 hours a day. That is why time out of the brace should be spent building your core muscles to help support your spine,” states Molina. “We work very closely with physical therapists on patient care.”

As you can imagine, compliance with bracing is a challenge. The emotional and psychological toll from having to wear a brace through your teenage years can be traumatic. But for some cases, the option is better than surgery.

It seems that to this day, medical and chiropractic professionals vary on their treatment recommendations, so it can be challenging for parents to determine which option is best for their child.

Molina, who has worked with his family’s business for many years, adds, “My father and I discuss how the education has changed for orthotists. They used to teach that bracing was the sole solution. Now they emphasize the team approach – collaboration - and the importance of integrated therapies: physical therapy, muscle strengthening exercises and flexibility.”

Davenport agrees, “When there are more professionals involved the quality of patient care increases.”

Everyone agreed that there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution. It was concluded that since chiropractic care is less invasive than bracing, it may be considered for curves under 25 degrees with close observation on progress. If bracing is the recommended option, then a night time brace would be of less impact psychologically and allow more hours in the day for muscle and core strengthening.

The good news is that parents have options. Seek opinions from both medical and chiropractic doctors familiar with scoliosis and then choose the treatment plan that you feel will work best for you and your child.

Dr. Davenport practices at Gonstead Family Chiropractic 760.863.0435. Coachella Valley Orthopedics & Prosthetics can be reached at 760.345.4779.



Scoliosis curves vary in degree and can occur in infants, children and adults

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The Power of Ancient Healing Found in Iron Moxa

By Toru Kodama, L.Ac. & Diane Sheppard, Ph.D, L.Ac.

Iron Moxa is a unique union of Japanese massage and moxibustion, a traditional Chinese therapy using moxa, or mugwort herb. Its significant benefits include relieving fatigue, improving circulation, easing neuralgia (nerve) and muscle pain, and boosting gastrointestinal function. Iron Moxa can also be used for facial rejuvenation treatment, as its combination of gentle heat and pressure can help to press out wrinkles ("Iron" Moxa relates to both the material of the tool and the idea of a press – think of a clothes iron).

Moxibustion is one of the oldest therapies used in Traditional Chinese Medicine and is based on the application of heat supplied by burning Chinese mugwort herb, a member of the daisy family and closely related to sage, common mugwort and wormwood. The mugwort is usually aged and ground up to a fluff. Practitioners can burn the fluff itself but it is usually processed further into a cigar-shaped stick. This is lit and can be used indirectly by holding over specific areas close to the skin, or attached to acupuncture needles, or small pieces directly applied on acupuncture points with an herbal ointment.

Moxa, with its heat and the release of the essential oils it contains (such as cineole and thujone, flavonoids, triterpenes and coumarin derivatives), changes the blood chemistry. White blood cell counts increase immediately after a moxa treatment, and peak 8 hours after the treatment. The levels will decline slightly, but remain elevated for up to five days after the treatment. Red blood cells and hemoglobin also increase. And moxa treatment produces histotoxin, a substance that is absorbed into the blood, and enhances immune function with an increase in leukocytes.

To practice Iron Moxa, the mugwort stick is lit and put inside a special tool. The bottom of the tool is smooth metal with a rounded, bell-like shape that conveys the warmth of the moxa. Attached to this is a hollow handle made of wood. The practitioner applies Iron Moxa by rubbing the tool over a patient's body and face like massage tool. Patients experience significant relief from tension.

The advantage of Iron Moxa is that it combines massage and moxa. Warmth from the moxa, along with the volatile medicinal oils released by the heat, infiltrate through the body, soothing and relaxing the patient. The warmth can penetrate to a deeper level in the body than other heat therapies, and this interior warming helps boost the immune system and purify blood into a weak alkaline state for enhanced cell metabolism.

Widely practiced in Japan, Iron Moxa is relatively new in the West and quickly gaining acceptance as a beneficial therapy.

Toru Kodama, licensed acupuncturist, is a new practitioner at AcQpoint Wellness Center in La Quinta. Owner Diane Sheppard is a licensed acupuncturist with a Ph.D. in Oriental Medicine and is now a staff practitioner at Eisenhower Wellness Institute. Contact: 760-775-7900 www.AcQpoint.com



Toru Kodama treats a patient with Iron Moxa

Arthritis and Intestinal Health

By Sonja Fung, ND

Arthritis can be a debilitating condition. Some of the easiest everyday activities seem challenging -- like putting on a shirt or placing one foot in front of the other. Did you know that your digestive health can be a critical factor in the treatment of arthritis?

Maintaining digestive health is a key to overall body wellness. Your intestines make up 70% of your immune system called GALT- Gut associated lymphatic tissue. For example, infection activates your immune system → intestinal immune cells present pieces of foreign cells to notify your body which cells to destroy → your immune cells find and destroy the foreign cells → your body gets better and keeps you from getting sick next time. This is the normal function of your immune system.

The question is...what happens when gut immunity breaks down? Intestinal inflammation allows foreign cells and proteins to slip into your blood stream. This triggers your body's immune system into action. Research has shown that gut microbes (bacteria, viruses, yeast, and parasites) are linked to autoimmune arthritis. Chronic infections from *Citrobacter*, *Klebsiella*, and *Proteus* bacteria from low-grade urinary tract infections, and Candidal yeast infections from the overuse of antibiotics, are associated with intestinal inflammation and possibly initiating rheumatoid arthritis.

These harmful gut bugs confuse your body's immune system by mimicking your body's cells. They are like wolves in sheep's clothing that travel through the blood anywhere in your body. The immune system then gets tricked into attacking its own body's cells in an attempt to destroy the bad bugs. This leads to autoimmune diseases that can affect specific areas, like the joints.

Protecting and healing your joints should start with healing your gut. Find out what is causing digestive imbalance. There are specialized stool and blood tests that determine intestinal inflammation, imbalance in your gut bugs, or intestinal infections. Remove inflammatory triggers and rebalance your intestinal bacteria by:

1) **Taking probiotics**—the “good bugs” found in your digestive tract. They enhance the immune system by preventing unfriendly organisms from gaining a foothold in the body. They stunt overgrowth of yeast and fungus, and produce substances that can lower cholesterol.

2) **Testing for food sensitivities/allergies.** Hidden food sensitivities can cause chronic low levels of inflammation in your intestines. Chronic inflammation decreases your ability to digest and absorb nutrients from your food, resulting in a disturbed gut and decreased immune strength.

3) **Initiating a complete digestive analysis.** This will assess your intestinal health including the ability to digest and absorb, the balance of gut bugs, and see if you have any bacterial, yeast or parasite infections.

Dr. Sonja Fung is a primary care naturopathic doctor at Live Well Clinic. Live Well Clinic is located on Washington and Hwy 111 in La Quinta at Point Happy Plaza. For more information you can visit www.livewellclinic.org or call 760-771-5970.

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An Integrative Approach to Heart Health

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

Nutritional deficiencies are very common in the general population and may be even more prevalent in people who suffer from hypertension (high blood pressure) and cardiovascular disease. Optimal nutrition—including vitamins, antioxidants and minerals, coupled with weight loss, increased exercise, smoking cessation and moderate restriction of alcohol and caffeine—can help prevent and control nutritional deficiencies in many patients.

An integrative approach that combines sound nutrition and lifestyle changes with proper pharmacologic agents as recommended by your cardiologist or primary health care provider, is the best way to regulate blood pressure in most patients.

Hypertension is the consequence of the interaction between your genetic makeup and your environment (referred to as 'your lifestyle'). Humans have evolved from a pre-agricultural, hunter-gatherer society to a commercially-based agricultural society yielding highly processed, packaged foods. These foods are generally devoid of quality nutrients. Our genetic makeup is 99.9% the same as our Paleolithic ancestors, yet our vitamin, mineral and antioxidant intake is vastly different.

Poor nutrition, coupled with rising rates of obesity and sedentary lifestyles, has resulted in an exponential increase in nutritionally related chronic diseases. Diets higher in sodium, lower in potassium and magnesium, low in omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids and high in saturated and trans fats, have contributed to an increased incidence of cardiovascular disease, hypertension and high cholesterol. These diet and lifestyle deficiencies can also lead to injury and damage to the blood vessel wall (called the endothelium). The normal endothelium promotes smooth muscle relaxation, inhibits platelet aggregation (clotting) and limits adhesions from autoimmune reactions. The dysfunctional endothelium is stiffer and prone to adhesions resulting in inflammation, oxidative stress and autoimmune reactions. This will eventually lead to a narrowing of the blood vessel wall lumen and promote plaque formation—much like a clogged pipe.

You have probably heard of the terms 'oxidative stress' and 'free radicals' as they pertain to health. Oxidative stress is well documented as a leading risk factor for hypertension. Oxidative stress results when free radicals damage components of a cell including proteins, fats and DNA. This can result in inflammation and premature aging of your blood vessels walls and other tissues contributing to hypertension. Hypertensive patients have impaired endogenous and exogenous antioxidant defenses. Antioxidant deficiency and excessive free radical production have been implicated in human hypertension in numerous studies.

Tiny components of cells known as mitochondria are where oxidative damage takes place. Coenzyme Q10 (CO-Q10) is a potent antioxidant and free radical scavenger. It is capable of lowering vascular resistance and blood pressure, thus protecting the myocardium and blood vessels from injury. Other antioxidants capable of decreasing oxidative injury to blood vessels and other tissues include alpha lipoic acid, L-Carnitine, N Acetyl Cysteine, D- ribose and Vitamin C which are available as supplements.

Increased dietary intake of potassium and magnesium and a reduction in sodium has been shown to reduce blood pressure. The average person in the USA consumes around 5000mg of sodium per day with some areas as high as 15,000-20,000mg per day. A normal and healthy intake is around 1500mg per day. High sodium consumption increases ratios of sodium to potassium and sodium to magnesium. This results in stiffer and more rigid blood vessels and higher blood pressure.

Several studies demonstrate that omega-3 polyunsaturated fats, primarily EPA and DHA, can also significantly lower blood pressure. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in cold water fish including salmon, cod, sardines and anchovies. These studies found that taking 3 or more grams of fish oil daily may reduce blood pressure. The beneficial role of omega-3's in most all cardiovascular disease is well established. This is primarily due to their natural ability to reduce the molecules that cause inflammation.

One of the emerging topics for nutritional treatment of high blood pressure is the use of L-arginine. L-arginine is an amino acid that does not require a prescription. It is the primary precursor for the production of a molecule called nitric oxide (NO). NO has numerous cardiovascular effects to improve endothelial function including reducing vascular tone (dilates blood vessels) and thus lowering blood pressure. There are studies that indicate consumption of 10grams of L-arginine daily can significantly decrease blood pressure. Although this dose of L-arginine appears to be safe, no long term studies have been done to date.

Other nutritional supplements important for maintaining healthy blood pressure including Vitamin D, Taurine, aged garlic, hawthorne berry, vitamin E, resveratrol, curcumin, green tea extract, probiotics and Vitamin K2 MK7. Keep in mind that the same destructive processes of inflammation, oxidative stress and autoimmune activation that cause premature aging in all other body tissues, are the same that cause premature aging and damage to your blood vessels. Ask your health care provider before stopping or changing any medications you are currently taking. Remember to be proactive and informed about your health.

Dr. John Dixon can be reached at the Natural Medicine Group 760.776.0022

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Ever Consider Teaching Yoga?

In October 2011, CNN reported that becoming a yoga teacher is a great job and one of the top ten for people over 50. As the medical community now supports the ancient practice, its popularity is booming and so is the need for qualified instructors. Fortunately, the Desert now has the Bodden Institute for

Yoga and Holistic Studies housed at the Joslyn Center in Palm Desert. The school is recognized by the International Yoga Alliance and offers 200 hour certification programs. For information and schedules contact renatebodden@aol.com 760.464.4718



Sticking It to Arthritis Pain

A landmark study by the National Institutes of Health confirmed that acupuncture provides pain relief and improves function for people with osteoarthritis of the knee. They concluded that the modality serves as an effective complement to standard care.

The study—the longest and largest randomized, controlled phase III clinical trial of acupuncture ever conducted—was funded by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) and the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), both components of the National Institutes of Health.

The multi-site study team, including rheumatologists and licensed acupuncturists, enrolled 570 patients, aged 50 or older with osteoarthritis of the knee. Participants had significant pain in their knee the month before joining the study, but had never experienced acupuncture, had not had knee surgery in the previous 6 months, and had not used steroid or similar injections. Participants were randomly assigned to receive one of three treatments: acupuncture, sham (fake) acupuncture, or participation in a control group that followed the Arthritis Foundation's self-help course for managing their condition. Patients continued to receive standard medical care from their primary physicians, including anti-inflammatory medications, such as COX-2 selective inhibitors, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, and opioid pain relievers.

"For the first time, a clinical trial with sufficient rigor, size, and duration has shown that acupuncture reduces the pain and functional impairment of osteoarthritis of the knee," said Stephen E. Straus, M.D., NCCAM Director. "These results also indicate that acupuncture can serve as an effective addition to a standard regimen of care and improve quality of life

for knee osteoarthritis sufferers. NCCAM has been building a portfolio of basic and clinical research that is now revealing the power and promise of applying stringent research methods to ancient practices like acupuncture."

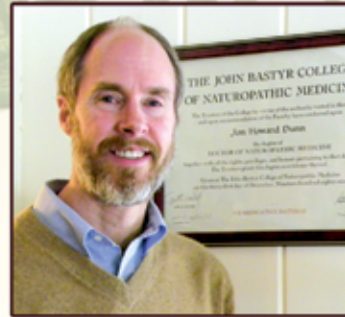
During the course of the study, led by Brian M. Berman, M.D., Director of the Center for Integrative Medicine and Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, 190 patients received true acupuncture and 191 patients received sham acupuncture for 24 treatment sessions over 26 weeks. Sham acupuncture is a procedure designed to prevent patients from being able to detect if needles are actually inserted at treatment points. In the education control group, 189 participants attended six, 2-hour group sessions over 12 weeks based on the Arthritis Foundation's Arthritis Self-Help Course, a proven, effective model.

On joining the study, patients' pain and knee function were assessed using standard arthritis research survey instruments and measurement tools. Patients' progress was assessed at 4, 8, 14, and 26 weeks. By week 8, participants receiving acupuncture were showing a significant increase in function and by week 14 a significant decrease in pain, compared with the sham and control groups. These results held through week 26.

Overall, those who received acupuncture had a 40% decrease in pain and a nearly 40% improvement in function compared to baseline assessments.

Dr. Berman concludes, "This trial, which builds upon our previous NCCAM-funded research, establishes that acupuncture is an effective complement to conventional arthritis treatment and can be successfully employed as part of a multidisciplinary approach to treating the symptoms of osteoarthritis."

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Living Wellness

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Diversity is Key to Desert Summer Fitness

Many of us get stuck in a rut when it comes to fitness routines. This is especially true in summer; a time when it seems hard to push the body physically in a high temperature climate.

Keeping physically fit has everything to do with surprising the body! If boredom sets in, we are more likely to want to skip a day of exertion. As soon as a fitness routine is treated as an adventure, we feel a vibrancy and attraction to daily exercise like never before.

Here are a few forms of exercise that can be incorporated into a desert lifestyle during the hot summer months:

Road and Mountain Cycling

During the desert summer, the coolest and most serene time is early morning (approx. 6:00 am). Take this time to cycle the streets for a peak caloric burn with no impact on the joints. There are a number of local cycling clubs with introductory rides. The best way to ensure a longlasting fitness program is to get involved with a club, community or group that supports your goals. Cycling can be one of the most social, energetic, and fun pastimes. From riding next to fellow enthusiasts to grabbing morning coffee mid-ride at a local coffee shop, cycling is an activity that is sure to sculpt the body and create a feeling of gratification. Many desert dwellers are not aware of a few amazing bike routes that are an hour away, provide cooler temperatures and the opportunity to ride bikes without the concern for traffic. The Santa Ana River Trail is just the right biking experience. Ride into Newport Beach, grab lunch and return to a stop off point such as Yorba Linda Park for an amazing day. If mountain biking is of interest the town of Idyllwild is the perfect destination. This mountain community has single- and double-track trails with the beauty of nature, cooler temperatures and the ability to rent a cabin to stay overnight!



Swimming Laps

Now is the time to take advantage of your local swim center. For a nominal fee, a swim lane for laps is always open. Swimming on average burns 600 calories per hour. It is also non-impact movement that is cooling and great for whole body toning. One idea—swim a half hour of laps at the Palm Desert Civic Park and then run around the park in your bathing suit to keep cool (you won't be the only one!). Every circle perimeter of the park is a mile, so push yourself! Putting two forms of movement together will produce great results. Our bodies are only as fit as the diversity reflected in our movement.



Hiking

Another desert landmark is our beautiful, tranquil mountains. Buy a season pass up the Tram and journey out on 54 miles of hiking with a level of hike for everyone. (Bring layers as the temperature differential is always approximately 30 degrees!) Hiking provides cardio benefits and helps relieve mental stress. With stress levels being at an all-time high, hiking allows us the "me time" we all need.

The natural environs of the Coachella Valley are an added benefit to many of these activities. Who says we must stay cooped up inside during the summer months? Get creative and get outside—provide yourself with a summer adventure each week to ensure there is a true diversity of movement. This will reflect in all aspects of personal joy and wellness.

Jennifer is a Desert native with 20 years of experience in the spa industry. She is the Spa and Sports Club Director at Toscana Country Club in Indian Wells.

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Arthritis and Essential Oils

By Julia Meadows

Over 100 forms of arthritis have been identified, and one in five (22%) of all adults in the United States report having doctor-diagnosed arthritis. 50% of people over age 65 are currently being treated for arthritis—a staggering statistic.

At the core of any natural treatment for arthritis is reduction of inflammation and effective control of chronic and often widespread pain. One simple and effective means of treating arthritis is with phytotherapy—the use of healing herbs and plants to address arthritic symptoms. When used correctly, essential oils—the concentrated steam-distilled extracts of specific plants—are the most potent weapon against the debilitating advances of arthritis.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an extremely common condition affecting the connective tissue of the body. Believed to be an auto-immune disease, rheumatoid arthritis is the result of the body's immune system attacking its own cells. Osteoarthritis (known as 'wear and tear' arthritis because it is viewed as an inevitable result of the aging of joints) causes considerable pain due to the loss of joint cushioning cartilage. The constant grating of bone on bone, often with the added pain of growing bone spurs, makes it a constant, every day issue. Psoriatic arthritis, which is currently grabbing much of the spotlight in arthritic treatment, is related to the skin condition psoriasis, and can include painful and often debilitating swelling of the joints in the spine, knees, hands and fingers.

Essential oils can be used in many ways to alleviate the symptoms of arthritis. Massage, baths and compresses are especially recommended. Analgesic oils such as eucalyptus (*eucalyptus globulus*), rosemary (*rosmarinus officinalis*) and clove bud (*eugenia caryophyllata*) are the ingredients of choice for chronic arthritis sufferers.

Anti-inflammatory oils such as juniper berry (*juniperus communis*), cypress (*cupressus sempervirens*), grapefruit (*citrus paradisi*) and lemon (*citrus limon*) relieve swelling and fluid retention.

Muscle relaxant oils such as lavender (*lavandula officinalis*) and Roman chamomile (*anthemis nobilis*) are extremely helpful for reducing pain and assisting in sleep and relaxation.

Finally, exciting research is unfolding that reveals that certain essential oils have even more potent anti-arthritis benefits. These oils include ginger (*zingiber officinalis*), cinnamon (*cinnamomum verum*), turmeric (*curcuma longa*) and certain varieties of frankincense (*boswellia carterii* and *boswellia serrata*.)

New, naturally soothing products for the treatment of arthritis are showing up on drugstore and natural product store shelves. Explain your symptoms exactly as identified by your natural health professional and engage the assistance of a knowledgeable staff member when making your selections. Resources exist to help you deal with—and often overcome—the challenges of arthritis. Incorporating therapeutic-grade essential oils into your holistic arthritis treatment program is a major step toward realizing longlasting health and wellness.

Julia Meadows of La Quinta is a European-trained phytotherapist and natural product formulator. Since 1986, using her Therapeutic Index, she has created therapeutic medical aromatherapy products for the treatment of many conditions.

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Health is a Choice

Continued from page 1

portions of raw fruits and vegetables, replacing dairy with coconut milk, and cutting down on meats. The results were almost immediate.

"I underwent daily treatments and saw other patients losing weight while I was gaining. I also maintained my energy for the full two months of treatment and never missed a day of work." She felt strong.

"When you change your diet and eat what your body really needs, I believe you become more spiritual. You enjoy more euphoria because you just feel better all the time. Nutritious food fuels your body, and you are elevated to another level."

Patti attributes a large portion of her successful treatment to her strong mindset and faith. Her son, who was 14 at the time and struggled with her illness, was a big inspiration. She had to be strong for herself and for him. "Every step of the way, I said to myself, 'I am not going to let this get me. I am going to beat this.'"

Once her treatments concluded, she had the standard bone density test as chemotherapy and radiation can damage your bones. Prior to starting therapy at 47, she had the bone density of a 45 year-old. At her post therapy appointment, the bone density doctor asked her what she had been doing. Her first thought was, 'oh no, bone cancer.' The doctor informed her that testing showed she had the bones of a 27 year-old. "He couldn't believe it. Neither could I. I just went through major toxic therapy and my bones got stronger." She could only attribute that to her diet changes and supplementation.



Patti Wright and her son Jeff
Photo by Melissa Lyn Photography

After treatment, Patti quit her corporate job and decided to spend time doing more things she loved. By 50, Patti had overcome major obstacles that she now considers gifts. She continued on a path of healthy eating and lifestyle and her greatest passion became helping others. But her story doesn't end there.

At 55, Patti was on the way to her own birthday party at The River and while crossing the street, was struck by a car. She broke both her legs, tore the meniscus in both her knees, and had a hematoma in her brain.

She was sent home from the hospital with removal casts. However, Patti made a conscious decision to heal on her own. She decided not to use the casts, opting for alternative therapies to rebuild and detoxify

including infrared sauna, Reiki (a form of energy healing), Rolfing (deep movement massage), and supplements including collagen and shark cartilage.

Her son left college for a semester to return home to help. He carried her from her bed as necessary until she could use a walker. "I remember pulling myself across the kitchen floor because I couldn't bend my legs." A month later, she walked into work. "My boss insisted that I take another month off. I agreed to three days and was back. It took me 4 months to get back to yoga and a full year to completely heal."

The brain trauma was her biggest challenge. She lost spatial cognition and some memory. "I didn't put my Christmas tree away for two years because I couldn't figure out how the balls would fit in those boxes," Patti said with a laugh. "And I forgot some simple things like how to boil an egg." The neurologists told her that full recovery would take about three years. "I told him one year. And it took one."

Today at 60, Patti is a beam of light and healthier than she has ever been. She is grateful for life and for what she has endured. "I believe with every situation, there are two emotions, fear and love. If you work at staying in your love quotient and not your fear quotient, you will conquer your obstacles. When you drift to your fear, don't judge it, just pull yourself back."

As for her treatment choices, Patti advises that her decisions are not for everyone and feels fortunate to have had a team of practitioners who worked together. "Do your homework and reach out to as many people as possible, and then follow your heart and do what you feel will be right for you."

"I think the world is starting to recognize that we have to get back to making healthier choices. Our society today consists primarily of foods that aren't good for us and with this has come the growth of disease at unprecedented rates," Patti concludes. "But we can turn it around. And it starts with each one of us making healthier choices."

Patti Wright is a Certified BiofeedbackTherapist and Nutritional Counselor in La Quinta and can be reached at 760.777.0606.

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Life Expectancy and Social Security: Extreme Longevity Maximizes Benefits

By Reesa Manning

Most people tend to underestimate their life expectancy. Thinking you might live to a very old age may lead to better planning.

Life expectancy is a critical element in Social Security planning. Because benefits continue for life, the total amount you stand to receive over your lifetime hinges on how long you and your spouse live. In fact, we could add a new strategy for maximizing Social Security benefits—to live a really long time. Nothing maximizes total Social Security benefits more than extreme longevity.

If a 62-year-old person with a primary insurance amount (PIA) of \$2,000 starts Social Security now, he will receive a total of \$444,032 if he lives to age 80, versus \$1,244,969 if he lives to 100, assuming 2.8% annual cost-of-living adjustments. He can essentially triple his take by living an extra 20 years. If he waits until age 70 to start Social Security, he'll receive \$500,891 by age 80, or \$1,910,540 by age 100, or nearly four times the earlier-death amount. This is in contrast to other retirement resources which diminish as the years go by.

According to the Society of Actuaries, most people think they will live to be around 80. But there is some evidence that you — yes, you — could be among those who will end up maximizing Social Security benefits through extreme longevity. A new book titled *The Longevity Project: Surprising Discoveries for Health and Long Life from the Landmark Eight-Decade Study* has discovered that the key to a healthy, long life is living a conscientious life. This means being prudent, persistent,

and well organized—the same traits that would lead a person to effectively plan for retirement.

I once heard an interviewer ask a very old woman how she managed to live such a long life. Her response: “You just keep waking up in the morning.”

So when planning for retirement, I urge you to envision yourself - not only in the golden years - but in the even older golden years. What if you get to be 90, 95, 100, 105?

I'll bet if you ask any person who has attained one of these advanced ages if he or she thought they would ever get here, they would say no. As Eubie Blake famously said at age 100: “If I'd known I was gonna live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself.” Many people contemplating Social Security may end up saying, “If I'd known I was gonna live this long, I'd have waited until I was 70 to apply for Social Security.”

As you know, delaying the onset of benefits is the very best way to maximize Social Security in the event of extreme longevity. It means forgoing a few years of benefits in your 60s, but you'll make it up on the other end.

So when planning your retirement, consider the value of Social Security over a very long lifetime, just in case you live that long.

Reesa Manning is a Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management providing expertise in planning, investing, and managing your assets for income distribution throughout retirement. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834-7200 or reesa@IWMgmt.com

Fresh Cuisine



Gourmet Vegetarian Served Up at Solano's
A Desert Health Review

Solano's Bistro used to be in a small space in La Quinta. Locals raved about their fresh cuisine, but size made getting a reservation difficult. This year, Solano's moved to a new location in Old Town that is three times larger, yet it maintains the same charming look and feel. Not only did their space expand, so did their menu which features local favorites like the 'famous' beef short ribs and apricot glazed pork chops, along with new vegan and vegetarian options.

Owners Alex and Paco have always been known for their tasty, locally sourced fare and Chef Paco's unique ability to combine ingredients normally not used together in dishes with outstanding flavor. Take the summer salad with grilled watermelon or the raspberry brie quesadilla. With mozzarella to cut the sharpness of the brie, the flavors blend perfectly for a creamy, almost pastry like taste.



The mouth watering vegetable wellington

fresh basil, sliced almonds and golden raisins tossed in a white balsamic vinaigrette.

“We offer organic seasonal ingredients from local farmers whenever possible,” says Paco, which is easy considering that the La Quinta Farmers Market takes place right outside their door on Sundays. Their direct relationships with producers minimize the eco footprint as well. They source free range meats, wild caught fish and serve fresh baked breads from L'Artisan Valley Baking Company in Thousand Palms.

Solano's has always offered a variety of tasty fish dishes. Specials the evening we dined included a pan seared Chilean sea bass with a pomegranate butter sauce and a pan seared Halibut with peach relish. Both were served with grilled asparagus and



Summer salad with grilled watermelon

choice of parmesan risotto, garlic mashed potatoes or roast fingerling potatoes (my recommendation). I asked Chef Paco how he seasoned the incredibly tasty potatoes and he replied 'salt, pepper and fresh herbs from our garden.' I was reminded what a difference fresh herbs can make. Paco and Alex built several stacked wooden herb gardens outside their dining room windows which adds to the charm—and certainly the quality—of their cuisine.

The ambiance is casual and sophisticated, which is also how I would describe their menu. Work of local artists covers the walls and their friendly staff wear matching black uniforms and ties. In the spacious bar, you can order a Kobe beef burger, coconut shrimp cocktail and Chef Paco's famous fish tacos...panko crusted fried halibut with cabbage, cilantro, carrots and chipotle mayonnaise, wrapped in a flour tortilla and served with homemade coleslaw. The best! I remember them from his days as Executive Chef at PGA WEST.

Solano's enticing selection of unique cocktails uses seasonal fruit and alternative sweeteners like agave. They have a diverse, carefully selected wine list (including Sonoma Cutrer by the glass) and both craft (Fat Tire) and import (Stella) beers. You can dine in the bar area, dining room or on the outdoor covered patio.

If you haven't been to Solano's in a while, Alex and Paco would love you to stop by to see their new location. A trip to Old Town La Quinta and Solano's Bistro is well worth it!

Lunch and bar menu selections range from \$6 - \$14. Dinner entrees \$11 - \$30. Summer hours are Tuesday – Sunday for lunch from 11a – 2p and for dinner from 5:30pm – close. The bar is open from 11am – close and happy hour is 3p – 5:30p. They are located at 78075 Main Street in Old Town and reservations are recommended for dinner. 760.771.6655.



Festive cocktail recipes start with fresh fruit and herbs



An array of fresh fish dishes are always featured



by Karina Chung, Spa Director at Agua Serena Spa

Incorporating specific foods into your lifestyle has beneficial health properties. They also may enhance your skincare regimen. Ever wonder why the beauty products you use aren't working? You may need to refocus on the foods you eat to keep your skin looking healthy and young.

Berry Healthy (Vaccinium Macrocarpon–Cranberry)

Cranberries are packed with antioxidants—perfect for protecting cells from damage and treating infection and bacteria. Cranberry and raspberry enzymes have natural fruit acids that aid in destroying unfriendly bacteria on the skin. You should look for a facial cleanser that contains cranberry enzymes to unclog and minimize pores. Similarly, when consumed, cranberries may increase levels of good cholesterol and destroy bacteria buildup in the urinary tract. Raspberries are rich in antioxidants and Vitamin C, which helps to keep skin glowing, and minimizes dark spots and discoloration due to aging and sun damage.



Try incorporating these powerful berries into a healthy smoothie. Blend unsweetened natural cranberry juice, fresh raspberries, fresh blueberries, non-fat vanilla Greek yogurt, ice and an extra boost of cranberry supplements for a true antioxidant shock! To refine and clarify skin, try Arcona's Cranberry Gommage to tone and decongest pores in the morning. The salicylic acid with cranberry and raspberry enzymes helps to exfoliate the skin and stimulate circulation. It is best to exfoliate or scrub twice a week to remove dead skin cells; then apply a lightweight lotion to provide protection from daily environmental aggressors. Try Primavera's Protective Lotion featuring organic cranberry extract and cassis seed oil which protects against damage caused by free radicals.

Poms and Seeds (Punica Granatum–Pomegranate)

Pomegranate extract and seed oil is extremely rich in antioxidants and protects against free radicals. It is particularly important for mature, dry skin to revitalize and promote graceful aging. Pomegranate tends to stimulate collagen production, which diminishes as we get older. Collagen restores elasticity, increases tone and coloration while diminishing fine lines.

Pomegranate juice has enhanced levels of antioxidants and contains vitamin C, B5, K and Potassium. If you do decide to drink pomegranate juice, be sure to purchase the pure juice without added sugars and mixtures of other juices. When sugar is added to juices, it increases the caloric count and diminishes the health benefits. Only ½ cup of pomegranate seeds contains 72 calories, what a treat! It is recommended that 8 ounces of unsweetened pomegranate juice be consumed daily, to lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL), also known as “bad” cholesterol. This anti-inflammatory super fruit juice can be added to any healthy smoothie as a liquid binder. Try a boost of replenishment after a cardio workout, with a blend of pomegranate juice, fresh berries, banana, almonds, protein powder and ice. Not into shakes? Add fresh pomegranate seeds onto a salad of iron-rich baby spinach, fresh dates, avocado, orange segments and a do-it yourself pomegranate vinaigrette with olive oil, pomegranate juice, balsamic vinegar and fresh pepper.

While feeding your body plenty of nutrients, you must nourish your skin from the outside in. Try incorporating seed oils into your skincare regimen as they contain the essence of plant life and are extremely concentrated. Ensure that the seed oils you select are cold-pressed so that it preserves the nutrients and poly-unsaturated fatty acids that give skin elasticity and glow. It's a myth that people with oily skin should avoid using oil products with the fear of breakouts. The right seed oil can actually support the skin's ability to regulate oil production and balance skin conditions. We tend to think that breakouts, blemishes and blackheads only occur during adolescence. Our bodies change throughout our lifetime and we must continue to treat with the appropriate products. Try Primavera's Revitalizing Rose Pomegranate Intensive Seed Oil Capsules to promote cell turnover, even out redness and reduce broken capillaries. After cleansing at night, open a capsule and massage gently onto the face for an instant natural glow in the morning.



Staying healthy and youthful is an everyday task. Be aware of the foods you eat and the products you use. Fresh, organic, locally grown fruits and vegetables will provide a wealth of nutrients. When choosing skin and body care products, ensure they contain quality natural and organic ingredients. Monthly professional facials combined with an at home-care regimen will help to achieve optimum health inside and out. You only have one face, and one body. It's never too late to start taking care of both!

Karina Chung is a desert native specializing in creating new spa experiences and working internationally with Hyatt Resorts. Karina has returned to the desert as Spa Director at the Hyatt Grand Champion's Agua Serena Spa. She is enthusiastic to introduce indigenous products with healing properties and to support local health for both individuals and businesses through this beautiful wellness facility. Contact Karina at 760.674.4100.

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Haley Loves Her Veggies

Kids Can Be Taught Healthy Habits

By Lauren Del Sarto

I stopped in for lunch the other day at Souplantation in La Quinta. As I browsed and collected from the '55 feet of farm fresh fare,' I overheard a Mom behind me ask her little girl if she wanted broccoli and then cucumber and then spinach. The answer to each was an enthusiastic "yes." I was impressed – and made a point of letting Mom and daughter know.

Souplantation's unmatched, single price salad bar is a wonderful concept that offers healthy affordable food. The only challenge can be resisting the temptation to indulge in the muffins, breads and pizzas that come with your meal. This goodie bar is where I usually see the kids. But not this little girl. She was happy with her veggies. I had to meet her.

"I'm Haley and I'm turning 6 tomorrow," she proudly stated. Haley and her mom recently moved to the area and live in Indio. Grandma Terry was with them visiting from Florida. "She's been eating like this all her life."

I had to ask Haley's Mom Erin her secret. "While eating, we have always made her try one of everything. She doesn't have to eat it, but she tries it. And she's just become accustomed to nutritious foods." Erin became aware of healthy eating habits later in life when Grandma Terry started researching and understanding what foods are really good for you and which ones are not. "I began to understand the immeasurable benefits of vegetables and greens." And she passed it on to her daughter and granddaughter.

Haley likes spinach, corn, tomatoes and broccoli ('but only with ranch'). Her favorites are bell peppers. "She eats them like apples."

I was so delighted to see this family dining together with three generations enjoying a healthy meal. Haley seemed like such a happy little girl. She eats nutritious food and it shows – a bright smile on her face and a bell pepper in her hand.

Souplantation, located on Hwy 111 at Jefferson in La Quinta, caters to families and is open for lunch and dinner Sunday – Thursday 11a -9p and 11a-10p Friday & Saturday. Lunch is a flat \$8.59 and dinner \$10.29 for ages 12+ (3-5 yo \$3.99; 6-12 \$4.99). Beverages are extra. 760.342.0555



Haley's favorites are bell peppers

Training Youth Athletes

ì The Formula For Successî

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

Parents and coaches come to me frequently asking, "What is the appropriate age for kids to start lifting weights?" I always answer—when they are mentally, emotionally and physically mature enough, that is when they should start. I've had boys and girls as young as 11 years old start to lift weights, and on the other hand had to kick a 15-year old out because he was more interested in goofing off then putting effort in to his work out.

A widely-held training myth is that weight lifting stunts growth. There have been many recent studies done by the National Strength and Conditioning Association that found strength training can maximize bone mineral density, reduce injuries and have no negative side effects regarding growth. It is critical that youth work with a competent trainer. In adolescents over the age of 13, the most common soft tissue injury is the lower back and trunk. Researchers suggest this is due to excessive loads, improper technique and lack of coaching.

National studies have been presented over the years stating that weight training, when performed correctly, is the safest sport in terms of injury risk. Sports like football, rugby, and basketball, show high rates of injury. So your child playing a sport is in more danger of getting injured than if he or she would participate in a weightlifting program under the supervision of a well-trained coach.



Kaelyn Brock, volleyball player at La Quinta High school, works out under supervision of Michael Butler at Kinetix in Palm Desert.

Training should be fun!

If you are working with a young athlete who has not trained before, keep to the basics. Work on building a solid foundation by doing exercises that will address posture and neuromuscular development. Most kids have issues with posture because of sitting in school all day and carrying heavy backpacks on one shoulder.

Start resistance training when applicable. Studies have shown that resistance training can help prevent non-sports related injuries. Working out consistently (2-3x a week) helps to develop the neuromuscular system, provides a good base of support and aids in increasing bone density.

Add dynamic stretching before workouts and into everyday life!

Dynamic stretching (also known as movement based warm-ups) can help reduce injuries, increase local circulation and prepare athletes for sports participation. Even if you don't participate in a sport, dynamic stretching is valuable to perform everyday. Evidence-based research shows that dynamic stretching is more valuable than static (holding stretch) because you can tear muscle fibers that are restricted and tight when they are cold vs. if they are warmed up.

Add plyometrics and running activities. Kids naturally want to run, skip, and jump but for obvious reasons stop doing so when they enter middle school. They get more absorbed by video games, texting and playing on the computer. We as a society are now more sedentary and as a result see more health issues such as poor circulation, high blood pressure, obesity, decreased lung volume, poor posture and musculoskeletal pain. Implementing developmental base movements such as bounding, leaping, skipping and jumping activities is a fun way to get young athletes moving and build strong bones, increase proprioception, healthy weight, circulation and reduce injuries.

Add Olympic lifting when the athlete has built a solid foundation.

Olympic lifting involves exercises like the snatch and clean and jerk. These are complicated movements that take years to perfect, but are highly explosive and transferrable to sport when done correctly and at the right times of the season. All too often, young athletes are rushed through resistance training programs and into Olympic lifts because they look cool and are challenging. Deadlifts, cleans and overhead squats should be perfected first and foremost.

Add recovery time to your programs. One critical component of this program design is the athlete down time. Injury rates will significantly decrease if volume, intensity and rest are varied. Athletes often work out at school, then go to the gym, and then to practice. They play 2 games a week and continue this process throughout the year... it's too much! Programs need to be varied throughout seasons in order to avoid injuries.

Watch supplement intake. Athletes naturally want to find the easiest and quickest way to get bigger and stronger, so they try popular supplements. Beware! Many ingredients outweigh the benefits. You should always read what is on the label and understand the ingredients before taking supplements. If athletes eat healthy, they most often don't need supplements. Most of the popular supplements contain either high doses of caffeine or have a series of additives that make you question their efficiency of absorption. In general, athletes need protein within 1 hour after a workout since the body is already repairing itself. Whey protein powder mixed with milk and fruit is the best source for quick absorption and effect.

Michael K Butler B.A.;P.T.A.;CSCS*D;RSCC*D NMT holds national certifications of distinction through the NSCA as a strength and conditioning coach; a state license as a physical therapist assistant; is a Poliquin International state coach; and a Full body Active Release Techniques Practitioner. He is co-owner of Kinetix Health and Performance Center in Palm Desert can be reached at 760-200-1719. michael @kinetixcenter.com. www.kinetixcenter.com

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Summer Reading with Kids A Great Gift to Share

By Bronwyn Caffrey

School is out for the summer and children are eager to expend their energy. While there may be many summer programs available in the desert, they may not suit your schedule or may exceed your budget. As a mother of two energetic and gregarious girls, I've created an exciting reading program with incentives to keep their minds fresh. It is important for our children to continue using the skills they learn in school as well as keep their brains active. Upon deciding to create a reading program for my daughters, I asked, "what if I did not know how to read?" I concluded this would be a tragedy... and I felt inspired to learn more about illiteracy in America and how it affects our children.

While researching illiteracy among Americans I was flabbergasted at the startling statistics. According to the National Illiteracy Action Project, approximately 90 million Americans over the age of 16 are functionally illiterate. Clearly this is impacting high school students and contributing to the increase in our national dropout rate.

If you are an American Idol fan, you may recall Fantasia Barrino, who won the competition in 2004. Barrino revealed she was a high school dropout and illiterate. Becoming a teen mother contributed to her decision to drop out of school. According to an ABC report, Barrino said, "You're illiterate to just about everything." She added, "Not being able to read to my 4-year-old son broke my heart." Barrino got help and can now read. Staying active with your children and exercising their minds through books can prevent future illiteracy.

The National Illiteracy Action Project shares the following:

- Parents with low literacy skills usually do not have access to written information to help them become better parents.
- A child who grows up in a home with one illiterate parent is twice as likely to be illiterate.
- The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success is an introduction to books at home prior to beginning school.
- Children who have not already developed some basic literacy practices when they enter school are three to four times more likely to drop out in later years.

The Coachella Valley offers programs within our local libraries. "Project Read with Me" was established in 2002. The program's objective is to expose thousands of children in their formative years (ages 0-5 years) to books. Research has proven when children are read to in early years, they are more likely to be successful in school. "Raising a Reader" is another organization achieving success among young readers as well as piquing their interests and curiosities.

Reading with your child 10-30 minutes per day will encourage, inspire, and educate your little reader. Plus, you are creating a memorable experience as a family. Read with your child – or volunteer to read with another. It's one of the best gifts you can share.

To learn more about local programs, visit: www.rivlib.net and www.raisingareader.org or call the Riverside County Libraries at (951) 369-3003



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Fifth-Graders Play Role in JFK Memorial Hospital's Pediatric Disaster Drill

On May 22nd on the campus of Dr. Carreon Academy, the scenario was a toxic chemical spill. On May 23rd, students and teachers survived a campus bomb threat.

These two mock scenarios were the basis of JFK Memorial Hospital's Pediatric Disaster Drill as part of a Career Explorations Program. Co-sponsored by the hospital, the Dr. Carreon Foundation, and the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP), the Career Explorations Program promotes health care careers to 5th Grade students through the Academy's medical magnet program.

The students learned about the hospital's history (Dr. Carreon's vision and donation of land), and assumed the roles of victims, hospital Disaster Team staff, and parents as they moved through the hospital's training drill process. The tour included a Decontamination Tent, K-9 Police Dog demonstration, a ride in an ambulance, and a walk through a medical rescue helicopter.

Students gained exposure to the hospital's Incident Command Center, and a variety of career opportunities in the health and allied health fields, as they donned vests and shadowed department heads in specific disaster drill roles.

The goal of this work-based learning activity is to motivate students to consider:

1. Pursuing additional coursework, volunteer and internship opportunities in these fields;
2. Enrolling in a higher educational institution for continued training and education in this growing industry cluster; and
3. Applying for scholarships from participating organizations to assist in the pursuit of careers in health care locally.

As students learn about protective measures that medical staff and community emergency teams put in place, they come to understand and appreciate these agencies. Furthermore, the fear of such events is demystified through the demonstration of this knowledge in action.

Mentor of the Month Linda Evans of JFK Memorial Hospital's Administrative staff coordinated and led the event on site. Thank you to all of the JFK Memorial Hospital department personnel for positively impacting our future health care workforce and Dr. Carreon Academy teachers in this annual event!

For more information contact Sheila Thornton sheila_thornton1@msn.com or @ 760-799-4137; Donna Sturgeon donnasturgeon@gmail.com or 760-861-8288.



As part of the Career Exploration Program, students experienced the Decontamination Tent at JFK Hospital's Disaster Drill day



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How to Prepare for the Loss of a Loved One...A Daughter's Perspective

By Patty Curtiss

My mother recently passed away at the age of 87. She started putting her affairs in order when she was 63. She was a wonderful woman for many reasons, and since her passing I've become aware of how fortunate we were to be able to "be present with her" during the end of her life.

My siblings and I refer to ourselves as "Team Joan". We have been actively preparing for that day for about 15 years. My mother was a breast cancer survivor. She had a heart problem and struggled with a misdiagnosed urinary tract infection (UTI) which gave her dementia like symptoms.

Health issues are not uncommon for the elderly, but I believe the way my family worked together is unique. My brother handled the finances, my oldest sister became the power of attorney (POA), my middle sister monitored her care in a nearby assisted living facility, and I coached from a distance over the last 10 years. Those who did not live close by were still very involved in her life, as she was the matriarch of the family. My middle sister Kathy spent 3 days per week with her, doing all of mom's favorite things; eating good food, playing with the animals (4 dogs and 3 cats), sitting by the fire pit, helping in the garden and watching her favorite sports on TV. The rest of the family would gather together during holidays and vacations as often as possible.

We also took the time every few years to review and update mom's wishes for the end of her life. The older she got, the more this changed. I feel grateful that we were so involved because in the end, we knew exactly what she wanted. We knew that she wanted to spend the end of her life with her family and "living" at my sister's beautiful home nearby. We knew she wanted to be cremated, where her ashes were to go, and the type of celebration she wanted ... including the music! I'm proud to say that Team Joan went into high gear after Mom started to experience shortness of breath, and we made her wishes happen quickly. We moved her to a different state, which required a change in doctors, hospice providers and the equipment that she urgently needed. Team Joan had this in place within two days.

I was with my mother, sleeping next to her bedside, talking and laughing with her the last eight days of her life. We had all the family members in and out of the home to say goodbye, and the hospice team encouraged each of us to let our mother know that it was "okay to leave," that "we will be fine" and "we will take care of each other." I was given the ultimate gift of holding her and bathing her as she took her last breath.

The best advice I can give the family is to be "proactive not reactive." Here is what else I've learned during this process:

- ♥ Prepare everything with your loved one, from the paperwork to the music, well in advance
- ♥ Notify all family members of their loved one's choices
- ♥ Expect conflict among family members, as emotions are high, but keep the focus on your loved one, especially near end of life
- ♥ Get hospice involved as soon as possible because they will take care of ordering equipment and medications allowing you to be with your loved one
- ♥ Understand that life goes on and you can't control the end of life
- ♥ Give your loved one permission to "let go"
- ♥ Delegate different tasks among family members; don't have one person do it all
- ♥ If your loved one is in the home, understand that privacy needs to be honored
- ♥ Keep talking with family members after your loved one is gone
- ♥ Keep life going as usual toward the end, as this is what your loved one wants to experience with you
- ♥ We come into this life wearing a diaper and often go out wearing a diaper, so don't let that bother you
- ♥ Hire professional help and allow them to take over, so you can enjoy the precious moments with your loved one and get much needed rest

Patty Curtiss is a devoted daughter and business partner in ElderCaring, Golf Rehab and Bounce You Back. Patty can be reached at 760.578.640.



Patty and her sisters with Mom on Mother's Day



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Improving Life with Arthritis

Continued from page 1

presence of another illness. Early attacks usually subside within 3 to 10 days, even without treatment, and the next attack may not occur for months or even years. The goals of treatment are to ease the pain and inflammation that come with sudden attacks, prevent future attacks, stop uric acid build-up in the tissues and joint space between two bones, and prevent kidney stones from forming.²

Avoid Foods That Enhance Symptoms

Many foods cause inflammation and small changes in your diet can yield big rewards. According to Dr. Hessa Mahdavi of Eisenhower's Wellness Institute, these foods include gluten, corn, dairy products, soy and sugar. Can't live without them? Great alternatives include many readily available gluten-free products, brown rice pasta and chips, almond milk, and fresh seasonal fruit.

Swap sunflower, safflower, corn and soybean oils, which are high in inflammation causing omega-6 fatty acids, for extra virgin olive oil which contains oleocanthal, an organic compound that blocks enzymes involved in inflammation.

Gout sufferers beware of shellfish, red meat, high fat dairy foods, and beer. Gout results from the build-up of uric acid in the blood, and purine, a compound that's abundant in these foods converts to uric acid. Opt for lean meat, poultry, fish and beans which also offer muscle-relaxing magnesium and bone-building calcium.⁵

Also realize that every pound you carry around your belly puts 10 pounds of pressure on your joints, so slimming down should be a priority.⁵

Eat Foods That Reduce Symptoms

Did you know that Omega-3s decrease the production of chemicals that spread inflammation and inhibit enzymes that trigger it?⁶ This is a primary reason to take your fish oil supplement and to eat foods rich in Omega-3s including walnuts, flax seeds, canola oil and pumpkin seeds—all great additions to your salad or cereal! Salmon and sardines are beneficial fatty fish also containing vitamin D, which is shown to prevent swelling and soreness.

Studies show that quercetin may also inhibit inflammatory chemicals, much like aspirin and ibuprofen.⁷ Foods rich in quercetin include onions, leeks, kale, cherry tomatoes and apples.

Raw nuts are a healthy snack, and Brazilian nuts may be especially beneficial to those with arthritis as they are particularly rich in selenium. Low levels of selenium have been linked to RA.⁵

Several studies suggest that an effective food for reducing chronic inflammation and easing pain is the tart cherry. Researchers from Oregon Health & Science University who studied a group of women ages 40 to 70 with inflammatory osteoarthritis found that those drinking tart cherry juice twice a day for three weeks experienced "significant reductions in important inflammation markers." Women with the highest inflammation markers at the beginning of the study showed the most notable changes. A 2009 study at Baylor Research Institute found that 56% of patients with osteoarthritis had more than 20% improvement in pain and function after taking cherry pills for eight weeks.⁸

Dr. Oz notes that the magic ingredient is anthocyanins, the pigments that give cherries their vibrancy. He adds that tart cherries also fight heart disease and act as a sleep aid by increasing melatonin in the brain and recommends a glass with dinner or at least 3 hours before bedtime.

Get Moving

The National Institutes of Health and the Arthritis Foundation both agree that movement is a key component in managing arthritis pain. But how do you exercise when walking or even opening a jar is challenging?

You may think exercise will aggravate your joint pain and stiffness but that's not the case. According to the Mayo Clinic, lack of exercise can actually make your joints more painful. Keeping your muscles and surrounding tissue strong is crucial to maintaining bone support. Not exercising weakens those supporting muscles, creating more stress on your joints and thus more pain.

"It's so important to move—even if it's only 10 minutes a day," said Shanna Hirschi, Director of the Arthritis Foundation's Coachella Valley division. "Once you start



Dr. Robert Haberkorn introduces Tai Chi to guests at the Arthritis Foundation's Senior Health Day held at the Joslyn Center in Palm Desert

exercising, your body will feel better." The Foundation offers over 200 exercise classes weekly throughout the valley.

Low impact exercises like swimming or walking are recommended and mind-body practices like yoga and tai chi are especially beneficial for improving muscle strength, flexibility, and balance.

The slow, graceful movements of Tai Chi, which has been practiced for thousands of years, can improve balance, reduce stress and offer pain relief. Researchers at Tufts Medical Center in Boston found that Tai Chi can specifically reduce the pain and physical impairment of people with severe knee OA.⁸

Arthritis pain does not have to control your life. Talk with your doctor or health care provider to understand your specific condition and the treatment options available. And start making lifestyle changes that minimize symptoms and maximize your quality of life.

For more information contact the Arthritis Foundation office in Palm Desert at 760.773.3076 or visit www.Arthritis.org.

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Why Every Athlete Should Do Yoga

By Rich Roll

Just the other day I was having dinner with an old swimming buddy of mine, Mark Henderson, a former world record holder and Olympic Gold Medalist at the Atlanta Games. In other words, a phenomenal athlete.

Sure, we talked about swimming. Then our conversation turned (quite unexpectedly) to yoga. Mark had begun practicing recently and was amazed by the results—increased strength, presence of mind and improved sleep, to name a few. The list goes on. Almost simultaneously, we spurted out the same lament: “Why didn’t we do this when we were competing?”

In truth, I wish I had discovered yoga during my prime swimming years in the 1980’s. There is no doubt in my mind that it would have made me a much better athlete, not to mention human being. Thankfully, I discovered it many years later. And it has improved my life in amazing and unpredictable ways – not just with respect to my career as a middle-aged ultra-distance triathlete, but in countless areas of my life.

In my opinion, EVERY athlete has the potential to enhance his or her ability by adopting a consistent yoga practice. I’d go so far as to say that if you’re not practicing yoga, you’re competing at a disadvantage and missing an opportunity to enhance peak performance.

Here are a few benefits I have reaped:

Improved Strength: Routine and consistent practice of the various yoga asanas (poses or postures) has helped me build strength and improve lean muscle mass. These gains have enhanced core body stability and significantly impeded overuse injury by strengthening the supportive muscles surrounding the more utilized muscles, creating a more balanced and optimally functional overall strength.

Balance: As a swimmer, I have always been rather flexible, but my balance is historically horrible. Through a consistent yoga practice, my coordination and balance have improved immensely. Why is this important? Better balance and coordination means enhanced control over how I move my body, which in turn leads to better technique, form and performance.

Flexibility: Yoga invariably improves joint and muscular flexibility, which is crucial to the body’s overall structural soundness. This translates to greater range of motion, and increase in the performance latitude for a particular movement. For example, a swimmer with supple shoulder and hip joints is able to capture and pull more water. The result is more forward movement per stroke as well as enhanced muscular economy. The more I work to maintain my flexibility (something that wanes with age), the less likely I am to suffer an overuse injury.

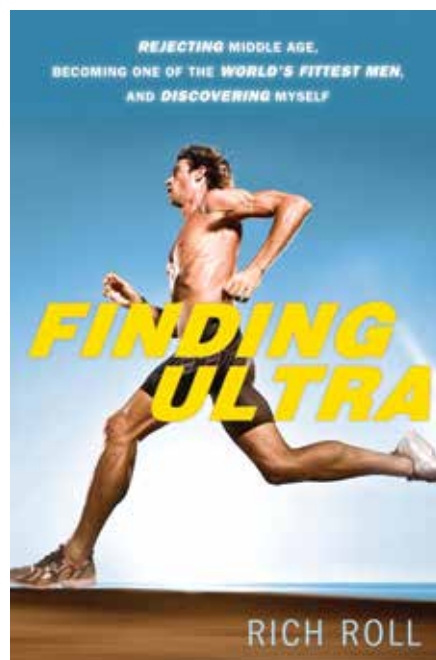
Mental Control: Most people, particularly athletes, tend to think of yoga as a great “workout” – a means to tighten the core, flatten the stomach and tone that butt. But the true benefits come at the end of class when it’s time for savasana (corpse pose), the meditative portion of the practice.

From a traditionalist point of view, the series of physically challenging yoga asanas were originally designed for a specific purpose that has nothing to do with the strength or flexibility. They were conceived and organized as a means to prepare the mind and body to reap maximum benefit from the important meditation that follows. To clean mental house, center focus and promote serenity by silencing the endless and seemingly unmanageable mental chatter that undermines the expression of our “best self” within.

What does this have to do with athletic performance? Everything. What distinguishes the Olympic champion from the also-ran? The mind. The guy or girl who wins typically knows he/she is going to win. Unrestrained by fear, free from negative thought patterns, and laser focused. They visualize success so completely that it literally becomes a foregone conclusion.

Much like a muscle, the mind can be trained. And consistent practice of the asanas when followed up with proper savasana is the best way I have found to improve my sleep, reduce stress, quell negative mental chatter, and manage my own fears.

I Met My Wife In Yoga: 14 years ago I met my wife in a yoga class. We’ve been together ever since. She has been instrumental in making me a better man and a better athlete. So there you go. Don’t underestimate the extent to which yoga can change your life—you just never know.



Rich is a two-time top finisher at the Ultraman World Championships. His inspirational memoir FINDING ULTRA: Rejecting Middle Age, Becoming One of the World’s Fittest Men, and Discovering Myself is available on Amazon.com. For more on Rich visit www.RichRoll.com



Athletic ability is a matter of mind, body and soul. Yoga enhances all three.



Valley Athletes Compete in the ITU World Triathlon Series

By Lauren Del Sarto

This past May, the International Triathlon Union's (ITU) World Triathlon Series was held in San Diego. Elite athletes from all over the world competed for international standings, and the final seats on the USA Olympic Team were awarded in both the men's and women's divisions.



Jim Scott (71) of Palm Desert

The competition was intense and featured 2,100 athletes from 16 countries and 42 states. The Coachella Valley was well represented with four athletes competing in the amateur division. 43 year-old Kimberly Dozier of Palm Desert and 36 year-old Ken Haskett of Palm Springs competed in the Olympic distance. 71 year-old Jim Scott of Palm Desert competed in the Sprint distance along with our local Iron Man Legend, 90 year-old Bill Bell of Palm Desert. Bell, who was featured in the January issue of Desert Health, was the oldest competitor and proud to say that he won first place in his division (90-94).

Jim Scott, whose family has lived in the desert since 1968, also has an inspiring story that we are proud to share.

Scott competed in his first triathlon at age 70 after his third operation for atrial flutter (abnormal heart rhythm). He had always been a multidiscipline athlete - biking, swimming and running - and had competed in many marathons. But in 2006, his diagnosis led to medications that limited his ability to exercise freely. Two partial ablation operations still didn't allow for full recovery, and Scott was determined to find a better solution.

Through research, networking and pure perseverance, he found the answer in May of 2010 and underwent a full ablation operation at UC San Diego Medical Center. The successful surgery allowed him to discontinue his medications and return to his normal exercise routine.

Four years of doctors, surgeries and medications inspired him to achieve even greater goals, and with encouragement from his daughter, Robin Lyon, herself an Ironman triathlete, Scott competed in his first triathlon. Last year, he successfully finished 8.

Scott proves that you can overcome many obstacles in life when you put your mind to it. And it is never too late to start.

"Jim is an inspiration to us all, and it runs in the family," says his wife Lynn. "His 99 year-old mother, Mary Scott, who also resides in the desert, gets out and swims or exercises every morning."

Scott proves that you can overcome many obstacles in life when you put your mind to it. And it is never too late to start. Look at Bill Bell. At 90 he is still competing and admired by many in the sport. Last time we spoke, his Powerbar sponsorship was up for renewal. When I asked the status, he said with a smile, "they signed me for another two years."

A special thanks to Michelle Soltesz of Level 3 Communications whose sponsorship of the event led to our invitation and recognition of these inspiring local athletes, and to Lagardere Unlimited, USA for their generous hospitality. For more information on the ITU World Triathlon Series visit www.triathlon.org.



Bill Bell (90) of Palm Desert proudly donning his Powerbar sponsorship

How Can Life Coaching Improve Fitness?

By Lew Bronstein, CFT, CPLC, CPNLP

Life Coaching is a fairly new and rapidly growing industry. According to a recent article in USA Today, there are now over 10,000 certified life coaches nationally with programs designed for personal, business, diet, health and fitness.

How does Life Coaching Work? Life Coaching differs from traditional psychological counseling because it is based on the premise that change can happen rapidly and be long-lasting. A fundamental tenet of most Life Coaching includes focusing a limited amount of time on the client's problem, and more time on guiding the client through steps of breaking (existing) negative beliefs or patterns rapidly and effectively. Once the old pattern or belief is eradicated, clients are guided to find a new and empowering belief or pattern, and taught how to incorporate these positive paths for lifelong change.

How can Life Coaching affect health and fitness? Following are a few areas of Life Coaching that relate directly to clients' overall health and fitness:

- ✓ Your beliefs about health and fitness affect what you are, and are not, willing to do. To follow through with a plan, you need to believe in that plan and mental roadblocks can hold you back from achieving your goals.
- ✓ Your beliefs about who you are and how you view the world can lead to success or failure. Do you truly believe you can reach your goals, or do you think it only happens for other people?
- ✓ Life Coaching tools such as visualization, positive affirmation, and goal setting can assist in maximizing your personal development around health and fitness. Can you picture what it would be like to be fit and healthy? Do you know the right things to say to yourself to motivate yourself to follow through? Do you have written goals and benchmarks?
- ✓ Eliminating beliefs that are holding you back will help you reach your goals faster and more effectively. For example, why do you overeat? Do you ever say "I know what I should be doing, but I can't seem to follow through"? Such thoughts limit your ability to succeed, and may be holding you back. Identifying and reconciling your beliefs can be curative.
- ✓ You can learn to make the best choices for yourself. Life Coaching is based upon individual needs and desires. Working with your Coach, you learn how to overcome obstacles when they present themselves.

One thing is certain, once you make the choice to become healthier, challenges will show up in your life. It is how you view, process and take action upon these challenges that will determine your quality of life.

Life Coaching is a very valuable tool in learning how to focus energy on developing yourself; how to tailor valuable information to meet your specific needs; and how to take action with the knowledge you have acquired to attain your goals. Once you combine knowledge with action, you secure life-lasting results.

Lew Bronstein is a Certified Fitness Trainer and Life Coach at Revitalize Life in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at 760.328.8080 www.revitalizelife.com



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Treatment Options for Osteoarthritis



By Anuj Gupta, M.D.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis and is a chronic disorder that gradually progresses over time. According to a study by the American College of Rheumatology, 70% of the population over the age of 70 show x-ray evidence of osteoarthritis. In the knee, the symptoms of osteoarthritis may include pain, stiffness, swelling, "locking," and "catching". These symptoms may progress to an eventual limitation of activities whether it is an inability to run, or an inability to walk up and down stairs.

The knee is one of the most common joints affected, particularly the articular cartilage. Articular cartilage is the smooth coating that covers the surface of the bones inside the knee. It also cushions and helps lubricate the joint surfaces. With osteoarthritis the articular cartilage begins to degrade and, over time, can thin or form cracks. Pieces of cartilage may come loose and float inside the knee, further irritating the joint. After a long period of time, this cartilage can become completely "worn away" and the bones then rub together.

Diagnosis

The clinical diagnosis of osteoarthritis typically relies on characteristic radiographic changes in the affected joint. The radiograph is the primary investigative resource in diagnosis and assessment of the severity of structural changes within the joint. In severe cases that may not be responding to treatment or depending on the extremity involved, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) technology may be used as it permits assessment of total cartilage content and integrity. MRI evaluates the cartilage as a positive image as opposed to radiographic techniques in which the cartilage is represented as the space between the opposing joint margins. Both technologies allow for the identification of specific landmarks, and repeat images can be aligned to allow a more precise determination of change.¹

In much of the world, the WOMAC index (with its attendant subscales) is the predominant means of assessing changes in pain, stiffness, and function in patients with osteoarthritis. Additional instruments are also available and validated but are not as widely utilized.²

Treatment Options

Every osteoarthritic condition is different, and there should be a team approach to treatment. Some available treatments include exercise, medication, education on activity modification, weight loss, hot and cold therapy, techniques for joint protection, injections and (in some cases) surgery. Doctors and physical therapists who specialize in treating people with osteoarthritis will outline a treatment program. There is no cure for osteoarthritis, and the therapies currently available are used only to treat the symptoms. The 3 main goals of treatment for osteoarthritis are:

1. Maintain or improve function (ability to climb stairs, play sports, etc.)
2. Decrease pain
3. Maintain or improve range of motion (ability to bend and straighten the joint)

Often, many different types of therapy are used together to improve symptoms. The severity of an individual's condition, level of activity and expectations for function, determine which treatment is best.

Education and Biomechanical Treatment Options

- Educational Resources
- Lifestyle Modifications
- Physical Therapy
- Supportive Devices (Canes, Braces, Orthotics)

Is Regular Exercise Good or Bad for Osteoarthritis? Many people believe that exercise wears away the joint cartilage even more. Adults in the United States are already very sedentary. Over half don't meet the minimum standard for physical activity. A diagnosis of osteoarthritis (OA) often pushes them toward greater inactivity. But the truth is that moderate exercise early on is one of the best ways to reduce hip or knee pain from OA. In fact, studies show that activity has the same effect on cartilage as it does on muscle and bone. It enhances and improves cartilage rather than wear it down. More research is needed to identify the optimum exercise program. For now, adults with an early diagnosis of OA are advised to stay active and exercise regularly.³

Surgical Treatment Options

- Arthroscopic Knee Surgery and Abrasion Arthroplasty
- Total Knee Replacement Surgery

- Partial Knee Replacement Surgery
- Articular Cartilage Transplantation and Cellular Implant Surgery

For very advanced cases of osteoarthritis, joint surgery may be recommended by your physician. According to the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons, fewer than two percent of people undergoing knee replacement surgery experience serious complications. Following are some of the risks associated with Total Knee Replacement according to the Mayo Clinic.⁴

- Infection
- Knee stiffness
- Blood clots in leg veins or lungs
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Nerve damage

Infection can be an ongoing concern even years after surgery as bacteria can travel through your bloodstream and infect the surgical site.

Medications and Nutritional Supplements

- Oral Medications (Pills)
- Topical Medications (Ointments and Creams)
- Injections

For mild arthritic conditions, medication alone may be a sufficient form of treatment. For more advanced cases, we have found success in programs that combine image-guided injections with tailored physical therapy programs and the temporary use of supportive devices. Integrative, non-surgical therapies such as these can prolong - and in some cases even eliminate - the need for Total Knee Replacement.

Dr. Gupta is Board Certified in both Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine. He is the Medical Director at The OsteoArthritis Center Rancho Mirage which specializes in the non-surgical treatment of Osteoarthritis, Degenerative Joint Disease and other musculoskeletal and chronic pain conditions. For more information contact Dr. Gupta and The OsteoArthritis Center at 760-321-1315.

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Desert Oasis Healthcare Takes on the Healthy Lifestyle Challenge

By Lauren Del Sarto

Implementing a company-wide wellness campaign is no easy task, but Desert Oasis Healthcare (DOHC) has taken on the Coachella Valley Health Collaborative's Healthy Lifestyle Challenge and employees are reaping the rewards.

"DOHC employees were eager for the Challenge to begin so they could start logging step counts and their physical activity," stated Keri Goodrich, Director of Provider and Community Relations. DOHC's first Challenge ran from February-April 2012 and approximately 120 employees took part. By the second Challenge in May, over 200 employees were on board.

To further motivate employees, DOHC created a prize structure. "At the end of each Challenge, the employee with the highest step count receives a trophy and gift card. The next ten runners up are awarded a certificate and gift card," adds Goodrich. In addition to recognizing individuals, they developed a team competition. 15 teams comprised of 116 employees compete each week for the highest average step count. "Many of our employees wear pedometers to track their daily step count; however, most participants are engaging in a variety of physical activity from hiking to cycling to strength training to earn their spot at the top."

DOHC is promoting the Challenge internally through e-blasts and printed flyers. Along with Challenge results updates, employees receive "Healthy Lifestyle Challenge Tip of the Day" e-mails containing fitness, diet and mental wellness tips. Lunchtime seminars such as the 'Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less' workshop, a 15-week program taught by one of their Registered Dietitians, shows employees how to make smart choices about diet and exercise. In April, a Healthy Workplace Fair was held providing employees an opportunity to visit with health and fitness companies in our community.

"During the past four months, I have received numerous messages from our employees thanking DOHC for caring about their individual health and wellness, and for rewarding employees for staying physically active," states Goodrich. "We've heard from employees who have achieved weight loss of over 20 lbs and attribute their success in part to the motivation received through the Healthy Lifestyle Challenge."

Desert Oasis Healthcare is one of many valley companies participating in the Collaborative's Healthy Lifestyle Challenge. For more information and to sign up your company, contact Gary Jeandron, Project Director, at 760.341.2883 x 78163. GJeandron@csusb.edu or visit <http://vchc.csusb.edu>.



Rosalina Navarro achieved the highest step count in DOHC's first challenge totaling 1,124,229 (approximately 530 miles!)



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