



Desert Health[®]

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

September/October 2012

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Are You VEGGINS? How To Eat More Veggies

It is wonderful to see our government actively promoting the importance of eating more fresh fruits and vegetables. In March 2007, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) launched the "Fruits & Veggies—More Matters" campaign promoting the benefits of fruits and vegetables in a way that will sustain consumers' eating behavior in the long term.

As we now live with the successful – yet debilitating – results of Washington's 70 year-old national push to eat more grain, we can only hope that the Fruits & Veggies message gains even greater momentum and mass appeal.

In 2010, a study on America's consumption of fruits and vegetables entitled "State of the Plate" was conducted by the Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) in association with the CDC. Their findings concluded that:

- Only 6% of Americans eat their recommended veggies each day
- Americans eat 2/3 of their veggies at dinner
- Children ages 2-12, males 18-34, and females 18-54 have increased fruit and vegetable consumption by at least 5% since 2004
- Teens and those 65 and older appear to be eating less fruits and veggies
- The average American consumes less than 2 cups of fruits and veggies each day while it should be 4-5 cups!

Most of us weren't raised to consider vegetables a primary part of each meal. They were always the sidekick, and in today's society of "fast and easy," veggies don't always make the cut. But the mindset can change, and it begins with changing daily habits.

Here are a few easy tips to get you started:
Drink your vegetables

For a nutritious snack or light meal, throw your veggies into a blender. Adding a handful of spinach or kale to frozen fruit, almond milk, protein powder, and a banana or spoonful of Greek yogurt (to thicken) is a wonderful, sweet snack. Add a bit of granola so you chew your smoothie (see page 15). And the secret ingredient to cut the veggie taste? A few dashes of cinnamon! For a grab and go, try Evolution Fresh beverages 'Sweet Greens and Lemon' now readily available at places like Starbucks.

Build your meal around the vegetable

We have grown up building our meals around the protein (chicken, fish, meat). Change your mindset and think first of your vegetable. Center the vegetable on your plate and give it the largest portion. Use whatever you have readily available! If you have zucchinis, onions, mushrooms and broccoli, cut them up for a delicious stir fry served over rice or quinoa – and then add some diced chicken or beef. Have a couple of beefsteak tomatoes in the fridge? Hollow them out and stuff them with tuna or chicken salad.

Continued on page 14



September is Yoga Awareness Month. Most of us would admit that our muscles could use a little more stretching; however, we think 'yoga is for the young, or for tree huggers, and my body could never do those crazy positions.' But yoga is so much more than stretching, and how much you can do depends only on you, your mind, and your body.

Yoga originated over 3,000 years ago as a therapeutic practice used by early healers, and is still considered therapy today. To learn more about yoga's many benefits—and why each of us should give it a try this September – I spoke with Kim Tang, owner with partner Denise DuBarry-Hay, of Bikram Yoga University Village. Kim has a deep passion for yoga and is educated on the positive effects of the practice on the body and mind.

Kim started practicing yoga at 36. As an avid runner, she felt that she needed the cardio of long distance running to feel accomplished. She too believed yoga was merely stretching, until a friend convinced her to give it a try. It wasn't long before it became her life's passion. "As I started to understand the basis of yoga and to feel the positive changes, I lost my desire to run," says Kim. In four years, she became a certified trainer and at 41, won the California State Asana Yoga Championships. She attended nationals as a rarely seen 40-something mother of three. "What a tremendous honor and privilege to represent the state, as well as, a whole group who understands and realizes that yoga is ageless."

Continued on page 13

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Desert Health Comes to Your Club

We are entering a new season and with that we find inspiration, excitement, and a lot of things to do!

You know all too well that a healthy body will help you enjoy all these activities – as well as each and every day - to the fullest. So September and October are the perfect time to begin a new health regime.

Let's start by simply eating more vegetables or trying yoga (pg. 1); by chewing your nutritional smoothies (pg. 15) or exercising to improve balance (pg. 4) and help reduce the symptoms of Parkinson's disease (pg. 24); healing through water (pg. 22) or through song (pg.25); or learning about potential remedies for your migraines (pg. 12), autoimmune disorder (pg. 18) or sports injuries (pg. 21). These are just a few of the articles you'll find in this issue of *Desert Health*.

One of the greatest compliments we've received from readers is their surprise at how much free information our health care practitioners provide in *Desert Health*. We take great pride in this. It is a shared mindset of all involved in our publication to better the health of our community by providing medical, natural, fitness, and wellness information and services.

In addition to reading about it, *Desert Health* also provides the opportunity to meet many of our practitioners through Desert Health Fairs at country clubs and community centers throughout the Valley. Last season we produced successful events at PGA WEST, Trilogy of La Quinta, and Toscana Country Club in Indian Wells. We also had a very active pavilion at the Humana Challenge.



Desert Health Fair at PGA WEST in La Quinta.

These single day events are free to members (and/or the public) and provide hearing tests, eye exams, flu shots, B-12 shots, product samples, and/or blood pressure tests, and most importantly, the opportunity to meet many of the doctors and practitioners who provide the helpful information you find in our pages.

This season we would like to add three more clubs to our schedule. We are looking for clubs with active, participating members who value the benefits of health-related resources and information. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity and presenting your club for consideration, please give me a call or email.

As always, we thank you for reading *Desert Health* and look forward to seeing you out and about this season!

Lauren Del Sarto
Publisher

Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com
760.238.0245



PO Box 802
La Quinta CA 92253
760.238.0245

www.DesertHealthNews.com

PUBLISHER & MANAGING EDITOR

Lauren Del Sarto
Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Chanin Cook
Doris Steadman
Jo Ann Steadman

GRAPHIC DESIGN

M.Kay Design
m.kaydesign@mac.com

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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Be Still My Beating Heart



A Fleeting Flutter...Or A-Fib?

By Lauren Del Sarto

Atrial fibrillation (A-tre-al fi-bri-LA-shun), or “A-Fib,” is a problem with the heart’s electrical system which causes the heart to beat too fast, too slow, or with an irregular rhythm.

While many may consider their fluttering heart a strange but passing sensation, heart palpitations, coupled with dizziness and shortness of breath, are cause for concern. By pumping blood through your heart irregularly, and not getting enough oxygen to the body, A-Fib can lead to heart and valve diseases, anxiety, and chronic fatigue. More serious conditions include congestive heart failure and stroke.¹

Although A-Fib can occur at any age, the risk increases as you get older. Approximately 2.5 million Americans are affected, and that number is expected to increase with our aging population.²

If A-Fib goes untreated, you are five-to-six times more likely to have a stroke than the general population.³ And the condition is responsible for up to 25% of all strokes.⁴

“A-Fib may happen rarely or every now and then, or it may become an ongoing or long-term heart problem that lasts for years,” explains Hetal Bhakta, MD, an electrophysiologist (heart rhythm disorders specialist) at Desert Regional Medical Center. “Fixing it before it progresses is the key.”

Dr. Bhatka compares the condition to the wiring in your home. “Your heart has four chambers, like rooms in your house. Within the walls of your house, you have the plumbing, electrical, etc. A house that was built 50-60 years ago has more wear and tear than a house built ten years ago. If one day you enter a room and try to turn on the lights in that old house and they flicker, you know you have a small electrical problem to fix.” He compares this to episodes when you are going in and out of A-Fib. “Now if you don’t fix that electrical short, then next time, the lights may not turn on at all because that short has progressed and damaged additional electrical wiring.”

Bhatka indicates that when the disease is addressed early, areas of concern can be isolated and all the other wiring in the heart can be left alone to operate as is. “If you don’t, in years to come, you may find that the whole wiring system is damaged and your treatment options are limited.”

How is A-Fib detected?

“If a patient comes to us with concerns about their heart rate, we use a Holter monitor (a small wearable device that records heart rhythm) for a recommended duration ranging from 24 hours up to one month,” says Bhatka. “Patients can press a button when they feel symptoms and we can review the heart’s activity at that specific time. If the activity is normal, then something else is causing the symptoms, but if the heart is irregular, then we have identified the problem and further examine the extent.”

Treatment options

Treatment for A-Fib depends on how often you have symptoms, how severe they are, and whether you already have heart disease. General treatment options include medicines, medical procedures, and lifestyle changes. The primary goals of treatment are to prevent blood clots from forming, thus lowering the risk of stroke; controlling heart rate; restoring a normal heart rhythm; and treating any underlying disorder that’s causing or raising the risk of A-Fib.⁵

Bhatka states that the first treatment option is often cardioversion (or electric shock) that resets the heart “like a reboot on the computer.” Sometimes this is coupled with medication that soothes the heart and maintains a consistent rhythm. The longer one waits the less effective these treatments are.

If A-Fib reoccurs, the next step is usually endovascular or catheter ablation surgery which targets the specific faulty circuits in the heart and ‘scars’ the tissue to keep it from doing further damage. This procedure can be compared to a stent operation and is less invasive than the third option which is cardiothoracic (or open heart) surgery.

Treating underlying causes and reducing risk factors

There are many conditions known to raise the risk of A-Fib, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, hyperthyroidism (too much thyroid hormone), obesity, diabetes, and lung disease. Managing these conditions is an important part of treating A-Fib. Research also suggests that high-dose steroid therapy, such as for the treatment of asthma and other inflammatory conditions, may act as a trigger in people who have other A-Fib risk factors.⁵

Certain lifestyle factors can raise your risk for A-Fib as well. For example, drinking large amounts of alcohol, especially binge drinking, raises your risk. Even modest amounts of alcohol can trigger the disease in some people, as can caffeine or psychological stress. Moderating alcohol intake, following a healthy diet, cutting back on salt intake (to help lower blood pressure), quitting smoking, and reducing stress are recommended.


So when do you know if it is a passing flutter or A-Fib? “If heart palpitations or irregular heart beats are occurring frequently or concerning you, then it is worth checking out,” advises Bhatka. “By understanding atrial fibrillation, you can better care for your heart, and work with your health care provider in managing your heart health.”

To reach Dr. Bhakta, or for a free referral to another physician, call Desert Regional Medical Center’s referral line at 800-491-4990. Please mention that you read this article in Desert Health.

References: 1) National Institutes of Health; 2) Go AS. “Prevalence of Atrial Fibrillation in Adults: National Implications for Rhythm Management and Stroke Prevention: The Anticoagulation and Risk Factors in Atrial Fibrillation (ATRIA) Study.” Journal of American Medical Association. May 9, 2001-Vol 285, No. 18.; 3) Gillinov AM, Blackstone EH, et al. “Atrial Fibrillation: Current surgical options and their assessment.” Ann. Thorac. Surg. 2002; 74:2210-17.; 4) Andy C. Kiser, MD., FirstHealth Arrhythmia Center, Pinehurst, NC. <http://www.convergentprocedure.com/total-solution.htm>; 5) www.stopafib.org

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Exercise, Balance and Fall Prevention

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

Exercise is the single most important factor in maintaining healthy balance and preventing falls. In fact, exercise can also eliminate some types of chronic dizziness! The key is in knowing what kind of exercises to do.

Not all exercises are equally beneficial. Many people mistakenly believe that walking is the best form of exercise. Not so! Although walking is important for general mobility, and provides cardiovascular and joint health benefits, it also has limitations. A recent study looked at seniors who walked in the mall for exercise. The group used walking as their only source of exercise and averaged 1-2 miles a day for 4 days a week. Results? This group had the same amount of falls as sedentary seniors. What went wrong? Actually, nothing.

These seniors did enjoy health benefits from their walking such as lowered blood pressure, improved cardiac and lung function, and less arthritic pain. Yet when their balance was tested, there was no improvement in balance control that is important for fall avoidance. The message: improving one's balance requires specific exercises.

What are the best exercises for balance?

- Tai chi
- Dancing
- Bicycling
- Group exercise classes
- Free weight training (standing up)

These exercises share a theme: dynamic, challenging positions while

engaging balance sensory control systems. Interestingly, group exercise programs vary widely but the benefits are insurmountable. They incorporate a large variety of both upper and lower body exercise as well as balance, flexibility, cardiovascular, and strength.

Exercises “not so good” for balance

- Walking on flat surfaces
- Pool exercises
- Universal weight machines

Medical intervention

The Department of Health & Human Services issued a mandate, “The Elder Fall Prevention Act”, which calls for health care providers to identify patients at risk of falling, and implement evidence-based intervention programs. Physical Therapy is prescribed by the physician and rendered by a licensed therapist who specializes in balance disorders. Balance rehab must be

dynamic and challenging. Examples of ineffective therapy include: stationary biking and standing on foam with eyes closed. Proper balance rehabilitation involves specific progressive exercises, tailored to a patient's needs and generally lasting 4-12 weeks. The patients report significant improvements in their balance, leading to improved self-confidence, which contributes to their overall well-being. Once the target balance goals are met, the patient is referred to a fitness trainer to maintain and build on these balance skills. And maintenance is the key!

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.

Sources: Williams M, Gentili A. Assessment of the Geriatric Patient: Gait and Balance CME/CE: Medscape.com. Oct 28, 2005.; Sherrington C, et al. Effective exercise for the prevention of falls: J Am Geriatr Soc. 2008 Dec;56(12):2234-43.

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DRMC Launches Fellowship Program for Stroke Specialists

And Adds Cutting Edge Technology to Help Stroke Patients

Desert Regional Medical Center has launched an expansion of its stroke program which includes new technology and a new medical fellowship program.

“Desert Regional Medical Center has crossed the Rubicon in stroke care for our community,” said neurosurgeon Javed Siddiqi, MD PhD, medical director for the hospital's Institute of Clinical Orthopedics and Neurosciences. “Desert Regional can now provide all modalities of stroke care; that care can start within minutes of arriving in our ER; that stroke victim can count on our huge manpower and institutional resources at their disposal 24/7.”

The new fellowship program is a partnership between Desert Regional Medical Center and the Arrowhead Neuroscience Foundation, which received a grant from the Desert Healthcare District to expand this program into the Coachella Valley. The program will train physicians in the specialty areas of neuro-critical care and neuro-interventional medicine. In interventional neurology, physicians insert a tiny catheter into the blood vessels of the brain to either remove a clot, or insert a coil of wire to fill an aneurysm and prevent bleeding. Both clots and bleeding in the brain are causes of a stroke.

“You can rest assured in the knowledge that, God forbid, you or a loved one have a stroke, there is a place in your community where you will get cutting-edge therapies, by specialists who choose to devote their lives and careers to doing this work, and to training the next generation of neurological subspecialists who will carry on this fight,” Siddiqi said.

New technology to support stroke care includes the installation of a new biplane angiography suite, which provides interventional neurologists with advanced capabilities for visualizing and navigating blood vessels as they treat the causes of stroke.

One of the key benefits of interventional treatment is that it can extend the window of time in which a patient might be successfully treated following a stroke, said M. Asif Taqi, MD, medical director of neuro-critical care at Desert Regional Medical Center. Traditionally, patients have up to three hours after a stroke to receive a clot dissolving drug treatment—called IVtPA. However, interventional neurology procedures, which physically remove a clot, may help certain stroke patients who have gone 6 hours or even longer after having the initial stroke—depending on how much of the brain tissue has survived the initial attack.

“It's an exciting time for us as physicians,” said Taqi. “When I was a medical student, there was basically no treatment for stroke. From that, we have moved to clot-busting medications and now to this advanced technology. I cannot express enough my appreciation to Desert Regional Medical Center for helping to bring up the level of care.”

If you are having symptoms of stroke, call 911 immediately. For more information on Desert Regional Medical Center's stroke patient care call Patty Ryan at (760) 449-5291 or visit www.desertregional.com/stroke.



M. Asif Taqi, MD, explains the workings of the new biplane angiography suite as part of Desert Regional Medical Center's stroke program.



Finding Local Health Statistics is Easy Thanks to HARCSearch

By Desert Health

Do you ever wonder how many local people share your medical condition? Or are you a non-profit validating the need for your services for a grant application? Are you a teacher or student researching the socioeconomic profile of our local population? Or are you an employer wondering how the health of your employees stacks up to others?

Answers to these questions are now easier to find thanks to HARC, the Health Assessment Resource Center, which has recently launched a free online database to make this information user-friendly and accessible to all.

HARC compiles health statistics in Eastern Riverside County and the Coachella Valley every three years. HARCSearch provides current data on health and quality of life indicators for our community. This easy-to-use searchable database expands knowledge about the prevalence of local disease and mental health indicators, as well as the use of health prevention measures; supports public health and security planning; and aids businesses to meet customers' needs.

"Six months after launching the program, we surveyed how the database was helping our local community and businesses," said HARC CEO, Eileen Packer. "We determined that 53 non-profits had used our information to receive a total of \$4.7 million in grant funding." Educators can use it for classroom reports and projects, and health care providers can use it for business development.

The data is collected through extensive confidential telephone surveys conducted in both Spanish and English and presented in a clear tabular format that can be broken down by a range of demographics such as age, ethnicity, gender and income. Categories include searches that can be done by Eastern Riverside County or the Coachella Valley exclusively. Results from data compiled in 2007 and 2010 are currently available online and results of its 2013 Community Health Monitor survey will be added early 2014.

The data can tell you how many people have health care coverage, or who uses preventive measures; the percentage of people suffering from major disease; and even lifestyle considerations such as how many people drink alcohol, use drugs or take nutritional supplements.

"HARC is proud to present this resource," Packer adds. "It's a virtual desktop library open to all that fills a gap in knowledge about health and quality of life right here in the Coachella Valley and Eastern Riverside County."

Formed in 2006 by a consortium of more than 35 public and private healthcare agencies, HARC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization funded in part by contributions from community partners, as well as entities that contract with the agency for customized public health research.

Start your search by visiting: www.harcddata.org. For more information, contact HARC at (760) 404-1945.

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The Importance of an Accurate Gleason Score for the Treatment of Prostate Cancer

By John F. Feller, MD

Prostate cancer is the most common non-skin cancer in men. About 240,000 American men are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year, and in 130,000, the cancer is localized and low-risk. Although most prostate cancers are slow growing and unlikely to spread, most men receive immediate treatment with surgery or radiation. These therapeutic strategies are associated with short- and long-term complications, including impotence and urinary incontinence. Only a small number of men choose observational strategies, which may delay the initiation of curative therapy or avoid it completely.

Although the value of screening with a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) serum blood test has come under question recently, it is still the only widely available screening test for prostate cancer. While a single PSA value alone may have debatable value, PSA velocity (increase in PSA over time) and PSA density (PSA in ng/ml divided by prostate gland volume in cc's) can be indicators of change, good or bad. Biopsy of the prostate gland is frequently necessary to distinguish between the causes of an elevated serum PSA.

Currently, the best test biomarker and indicator of prognosis for prostate cancer that we have is the Gleason score. The Gleason score is a number derived from the biopsy specimen a pathologist sees under a microscope. He or she looks for the most prominent cell type, the primary Gleason grade, then the second most prominent cell type, the secondary Gleason grade. The sum of the primary grade plus the secondary grade equals the Gleason score. The lowest Gleason grade is 1 and the highest is 5, so theoretically

Gleason scores can range from 2 (1+1) to 10 (5+5). Years ago, doctors used to report Gleason scores from 2-10, but generally today any cancer found with biopsy that is a Gleason 6 is considered low-grade. A Gleason score of 7 is considered medium-grade cancer and Gleason 8 and above is high-grade cancer. The lower the Gleason score, the less likely the cancer is going to spread to the lymph nodes, bones or other organs. Interestingly, if two different

“Generally today any cancer found with biopsy that is a Gleason 6 is considered low-grade. A Gleason score of 7 is considered medium-grade, and Gleason 8 and above is high-grade cancer. The lower the Gleason score, the less likely the cancer is going to spread to the lymph nodes, bones or other organs.”

– Dr. Feller

patients have a Gleason score 7 cancer, and patient A's is 3+4=7 and patient B's is 4+3=7, even though they both have a Gleason score of 7, patient B's disease is more aggressive because the primary grade was 4. This is an important factor for determining prognosis and influencing treatment options, so it is paramount to accurately determine both your total Gleason score, as well as your primary and secondary Gleason grades.

In a study including 2,500 men with Gleason 6 cancer that had not spread beyond the prostate gland itself, it was observed that cancer recurrence only happened about 1% of the time fifteen years after prostatectomy surgery. Even

better news, fifteen years out from surgery the Gleason 6 cancer only spread beyond where it started in the gland less than 0.5% of the time. This has raised the question among researchers: “Is Gleason 6 prostate cancer really cancer or is it something else since it does not metastasize?” Studies continue to help answer this important question.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), when inserted appropriately in the diagnostic work-up of the patient suspected of having prostate cancer, has gained widespread acceptance in the medical community. MRI has adjustable parameters that allow a radiologist to see suspicious areas within the prostate gland that cannot be seen with ultrasound or CAT scan. This makes it possible to

rate of sexual dysfunction associated with radical prostatectomy is about 50% according to researchers in New York. Urinary incontinence can occur after surgery in 5%-30% of patients. Radiation therapy patients suffer similar side effects. Although the rate of urinary incontinence is less with radiation than surgery, it tends to worsen as the years go by following radiation. Sexual dysfunction rates are about the same as with surgery, but can vary depending on age.

When doctors are caring for patients with low- or medium-grade prostate cancer, they have a lot of choices to make together. Observational strategies include active surveillance and watchful waiting. Active surveillance is the monitoring of a patient and waiting to treat until progression is observed. Watchful waiting is delay of treatment until the patient has symptoms. If the disease progresses to a point where treatment is recommended, it is usually in the form of whole-gland therapy (surgery or radiation) or systemic therapy (hormones to shrink the cancer). What if there was a step in between? Like with breast cancer and cancer of other organs where only the diseased area is treated, doctors and scientists are investigating treating medium-grade prostate cancer with the same philosophy: focal treatment. Energy sources such as heat, cold or various types of non-ionizing radiation (RF, high-intensity focused ultrasound and laser) are being investigated as well as toxic agents applied directly to the prostate cancer, not the entire gland or the entire body. The results for focal therapy of low- or medium-grade prostate cancer are preliminary and investigational, but promising for select men who are unwilling to remain untreated and are unwilling to undergo whole gland therapy.

Dr. Feller is a Board Certified Radiologist at Desert Medical Imaging which has a MRI based prostate cancer program. Please visit their website www.desertmedicalimaging.com for more information or call 760.694.9559.

perform biopsies under MRI-guidance that target only the area of suspicion rather than randomly sampling areas under ultrasound guidance. Investigators from the Netherlands recently published their findings that trans-rectal ultrasound (TRUS)-guided biopsy underestimates the aggressiveness of prostate cancer (Gleason score) 46% of the time compared to only 5% for MRI-guided biopsy. This is an important consideration for patients when making a choice about how and where to have a prostate biopsy.

As a result of the known morbidity of whole gland therapy for prostate cancer, men are looking for alternatives to whole gland radical treatment. The

1 in 6 men
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TIME TO GIVE BLOOD

Desert Blood Bank Donations at 15 Year Low

By Doris Steadman, Desert Health

The other day I decided to give blood. I had recently heard that the two blood donor entities in the valley, Community Blood Bank and LifeStream, have combined resources to form one organization called Desert Blood Services. This united organization runs blood donation centers in La Quinta and Indio, with community blood drives at schools, businesses, churches and government offices throughout the Valley.

I am pleased to report what a pleasant experience I had! The staff was friendly, welcoming and the room very comfortable, putting donors like me at ease during the procedure. I later returned to speak with the director, Nicu Cocione, about the organization.

Did you know that Desert Blood Services is a non-profit organization which provides blood products for the hospitals from Blythe to Cabazon and from Joshua Tree to El Centro? On a monthly basis, the blood bank needs to average 2,000 donors per month, and there is a great need for blood right now.

The shortage at the present time is the worst in 15 years.

According to Cocione, red blood cells have a 'shelf life' of 42 days; however, most of the blood collected locally is transfused to a patient within a week's time. So the need for blood donation is urgent and ongoing. All blood types are needed. O negative is the most coveted because it's the 'universal donor' for

red blood cells. O negative is most often used in emergency situations because everyone's system can accept it.

"Donating blood is a simple way to stay aware of your health," said Cocione.

"Each person's blood is tested and if there is a problem, the blood bank notifies the donor and recommends a visit to their doctor."

There is no maximum age to donate and 15 is the minimum (15 and 16 year-olds do need parental permission.) Donors must have general good health and weigh at least 110 pounds. According to

Cocione, there are certain medications and disorders which may restrict a person's ability to donate.

Whole-blood donation takes about an hour. That includes registration, mini-physical, health questionnaire, collection and a refreshing snack. An automated procedure called apheresis can take around 2 ½ hours. Apheresis isolates one or more component(s) of blood (red cells, plasma or platelets) for collection, and returns the other component(s) to the donor's system.

Give a little bit of your time and donate blood. It is an easy way of saving someone's life – and giving back to our community.

Desert Blood Services, 79-215 Corporate Centre Drive, La Quinta, is open 12 to 7 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. For more information on how you can donate, please call 760-777-8844.



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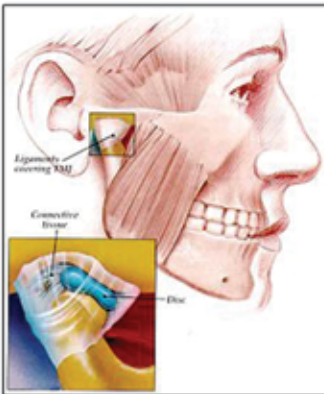


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Sleep Apnea a Risk Factor for A-Fib

By Lauren Del Sarto

Numerous studies in recent years reveal a strong correlation between obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), where breathing stops while you are sleeping, and atrial fibrillation or "A-Fib", a leading cause of stroke (see "A-Fib" page 3).

Two primary conclusions of these studies are:

- Those with obstructive sleep apnea are at greater risk of atrial fibrillation^{1,2}
- A-Fib patients with untreated sleep apnea are more likely to revert back into A-Fib after treatment than A-Fib patients without sleep apnea^{1,2,3}

What these findings suggest is that a lack of oxygen while sleeping, commonly recognized by snoring, restless sleep, or fatigue upon waking, can seriously damage the heart, causing irregular heart beat and possibly stroke.

According to StopAfib.org, a site from the American Foundation for Women's Health, approximately half of A-Fib patients also have OSA. There is a stronger correlation between A-Fib and OSA than any other risk factors.⁴

Although research hasn't confirmed OSA as a cause of A-Fib,⁴ studies show that A-Fib recurrence is higher following two common treatments: electrical cardioversion^{1,2} and ablation therapy³ in those whose sleep apnea has not been treated. This research also suggests that the longer one has OSA, the less likely ablation is to be successful;³ however, when sleep apnea is treated, A-Fib improves.

How is sleep apnea treated?

Sleep apnea is best treated by a knowledgeable sleep specialist. The goal of treatment is to maintain an open airway during sleep. The challenge for the clinician and the patient is to select an effective therapy that is appropriate for the patient's problem and that is acceptable for long term use.

Adjust sleep position—Adjusting sleep position (to stay off the back) may help improve sleep quality in people who have OSA when sleeping on the back. However, this is difficult to maintain throughout the night and is rarely an adequate solution.⁵

Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)—A CPAP device uses an air-tight attachment to the nose, typically a mask, connected to a tube and a blower which generates a constant pressure of oxygen. Devices that fit into the nasal opening, rather than over the nose, are also available. CPAP should be used any time the person sleeps (day or night). While the treatment may seem uncomfortable, noisy, or bulky at first, most people accept the treatment after experiencing better sleep. However, difficulty with mask comfort and nasal congestion prevent up to 50 percent of people from using the treatment on a regular basis.⁵

Nasal valves—Valves that retard expiratory flow can be inserted into each nostril during sleep. This raises the air pressure in the throat and may decrease airway narrowing. The treatment is attractive for travel and camping, and for patients who are unable to tolerate CPAP. However, some patients find the treatment uncomfortable and success is limited in others. Nasal valves are best used for mild cases of OSA when relief of snoring is the main goal.⁶

Dental devices—A dental device, called an oral appliance or mandibular advancement device, can reposition

the jaw (mandible), bringing the tongue and soft palate forward as well. This has been shown to relieve obstruction in some people. Many patients prefer a dental device to CPAP, and therefore compliance is significantly better. Side effects of dental devices are generally minor, but may include changes to the bite with prolonged use.⁷

Dr. Leonard Feld, DDS, member of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and sleep apnea specialist states that, "The first step in treatment is to conduct an ambulatory sleep study with a small, take home device which measures important factors like sleep position, oxygen intake and heart rate to determine if the OSA is mild to moderate, moderate to severe, or severe. Next we determine the location of the obstruction. If it has to do with the location of their tongue and the position of the jaw, then it is considered a TMJ disorder and an oral appliance is effective in moving the jaw forward into a more receptive position to maximize oxygen intake and flow."

Upon diagnosis, Feld confers with the patient's doctor to determine if an appliance is the preferred form of treatment. "The appliance is clinically proven to be very effective for mild to moderate and moderate to severe cases, but less effective in severe cases." If test results skew towards severe, a complete sleep study is often recommended.

Feld adds that studies show if the position of the tongue and jaw appear to be contributing factors, oxygen intake may be affected throughout the day as well. "We call it positional adaptation, and what we find with patients who have the appliance (which is worn at all times) is that oxygen intake increases 24/7, improving many aspects of their health." This would include oxygen to the heart.

"The biggest asset with the appliance is that it treats the cause and opens the airway, whereas the CPAP forces oxygen through the obstructed airway. The oral appliance is also comfortable and easy to wear, so compliance is significantly greater than with CPAP."

The correlation between A-Fib and sleep apnea is at the forefront of A-Fib research.⁴ Considering findings to date, it is recommended that if you have OSA, treat it before it possibly leads to a more serious condition. And if you have A-Fib and sleep apnea, be sure to address both conditions with your health care team to maximize treatment results.

For more information on A-Fib, see page 3 of this issue. For more information on sleep apnea, contact Dr. Leonard Feld at the Indian Wells Smile Center. Dr. Feld is the co-founder of the TMJ & Sleep Medicine Network and his philosophy is always conservative, non-invasive and non-surgical treatment. He can be reached at (760) 341-2873. www.DocFeld.com

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Common Ocular Myths and Misconceptions

By Jennifer I. Hui, MD



Excessive tearing is always caused by dry eyes

Excessive tearing (epiphora) affects many people and can be quite bothersome, interrupting activities of daily living routines. There are many causes of epiphora and a thorough examination is needed to determine the cause. Some patients may suffer from dry eyes and experience reflexive tearing. The body produces more tears in an attempt to keep the eyes healthy and well lubricated. Although dry eyes can be a cause of tearing, there are many other etiologies. A commonly overlooked cause is a mechanical obstruction of the tear drainage system itself. An office examination and a short irrigating procedure will often reveal the cause of excessive tearing.

Dry eyes are always caused by insufficient production of tears

Dry eye syndrome is also common, particularly among those living in arid conditions such as ours. Dry eye can be caused by insufficient tear production. In these cases, use of Restasis eye drops often brings relief.

The cause of dry eye syndrome may also be multifactorial. Blepharitis (inflammation of the eyelids) can exacerbate dryness. Routine eyelid hygiene, including lid scrubs and warm compresses, may help some sufferers. Mechanical factors play a role. Some patients may unknowingly have incomplete eyelid blink and closure. In these circumstances, tears prematurely evaporate from the eye surface, causing dryness and excessive (and reflexive) tearing. Incomplete blink and closure may occur after eyelid or facial surgery (both cosmetic and functional). It may also occur as we grow older and our tendons lose their anchoring strength and hold. Seemingly minute exposure (even less than 1 mm) may cause significant symptoms. Patients may notice irritation, foreign body sensation and tearing upon awakening or in heavily air conditioned or windy environments. A thorough office examination is needed to identify subtle findings and determine the cause of dry eyes.



Punctal plugs will treat excessive tearing

In patients who suffer from dry eye syndrome, punctal plugs may be placed to help alleviate symptoms. These plugs block the entrance to the tear drainage system and allow tears to remain on the eye surface for a longer duration of time. This is akin to placing a stopper in the sink. For those patients with truly dry eyes, this can decrease the amount of reflexive tears that are produced. However, in patients whose tearing is caused by a mechanical outflow obstruction, punctal plugs will worsen the epiphora because there would be two areas of drainage obstruction.

Loss of eyelashes is normal

Our eyelashes are similar to other types of hair on our bodies. They go through different cycles of growth, rest and turnover. Just as we routinely lose a few hairs daily, eyelashes may fall out as well. Normally, these lashes fall out in a random pattern. Concern may arise if a particular area of the eyelid experiences a focalized loss of lashes (known as madarosis). This may be a sign of an eyelid malignancy. The most common eyelid cancer is basal cell carcinoma, which is related to UV exposure. Basal cell carcinoma affects the lower eyelid more commonly. If you have an area of chronic eyelid irritation with loss of all or some lashes, a thorough eyelid examination is recommended.

My snoring cannot possibly be related to my eyes

Some patients may notice eye irritation in the morning upon awakening. In patients who snore, there may actually be an association with their eyes. Obstructive sleep apnea occurs when the soft tissues of the oropharynx collapse into the airway. This obstruction causes turbulent air flow, resulting in snoring. When the airflow is obstructed, a patient's oxygen saturation levels decrease and their body causes them to awaken in an attempt to increase oxygenation. Patients with sleep apnea will often sleep on their sides or stomach to decrease snoring. In these sleep positions, patients often bury their faces in their pillows. The eyelids experience



tractional forces, causing them to stretch, and increasing exposure of the eye to the surrounding air. The hypoxia induced from the apnea also exacerbates the eyelid changes. When oxygen levels drop, the body forms free radicals. These radicals alter and weaken the support structures of the eyelids. The eyelids become floppier and more prone to eversion when tractional forces are applied. With time, the lids may even evert during sleep, causing the inner surfaces to rub on the pillow. Consequently, patients experience significant eyelid irritation. Obstructive sleep apnea and floppy eyelid syndrome are closely related and

result in cyclical, additive changes to the body. The key is to address the underlying apnea itself. Additional comfort measures are also available to relieve the eye irritation.

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.



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Acupuncture for Impotence

By Toru Kodama, L.Ac.

A man's ability to achieve and sustain an erection depends on the healthy operation of a network of systems that cause vascular tissue in the penis to fill with blood. For an erection to take place, an adequate blood supply must circulate to the penis, the nerves must function properly, and they must receive stimuli from the brain. Erectile dysfunction (ED) is the term used to describe a malfunction in one of these systems. Approximately 15-30 million American men suffer from erectile dysfunction, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Erectile dysfunction is associated with a wide variety of physical and psychological conditions including diabetes, excess weight, stress, performance anxiety, and hormonal imbalances. Over 200 prescription medications can cause erectile dysfunction as a side effect, as can smoking, drinking alcohol and using illegal drugs.

Anatomically, there are two sponge-like chambers, called the corpora cavernosa, which run the length of the penis. To initiate an erection, the brain and body send signals that relax the muscles of the corpora cavernosa, allowing blood vessels to open up. Blood flows in, and the penis expands.

ED is closely related to lifestyle diseases. In diabetics for example, impairment of blood vessels and nerves are typical symptoms. The hardened blood vessels can not expand and sufficient blood inflows, essential for erection, do not occur. In hypertension, high blood pressure stresses the blood vessels, which become narrow and damaged. As with diabetics, damaged blood vessels reduce blood flow and cause ED.

Medications for ED can have positive results, and Sildenafil (Viagra) is one of the most popular. However, as with any medication, there may be side effects. Sildenafil must NOT be taken by anyone who is using nitrates because it can cause

the blood pressure to drop dangerously low. The most common adverse effects of sildenafil also include headache, dyspepsia (gastrointestinal distress), nasal congestion and impaired vision. Many sildenafil users have experienced red eyes, puffy faces, and hot flushing after taking it, which can make the patient feel less attractive.

Acupuncture addresses energy and blood flow in the body. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), energy (Qi) flows in channels called meridians. These channels course the entire body and supply energy and stimulate blood flow to all areas - including the penis. If a meridian is blocked, there will be stagnation and dysfunction. Acupuncture helps increase the circulation of your body's Qi energy and blood, encouraging your body to do what it should do naturally. Acupuncture is also a balancing therapy, returning the body, mind and spirit to a balanced state. Used for thousands of years to treat ED, Acupuncture, along with Chinese herbs, offer powerful tools. They can be safely used as a replacement for and along with Western therapies. TCM also recommends the following foods to help with impotence: scallions, lamb, sea cucumber, shrimp, bitter melon seeds, ginseng, black beans, kidney beans, yams and lychee fruit.

Many people may be concerned about the placement of needles, but they are not placed in or near sensitive private areas. Needles are placed in the extremities, back and stomach, according to whole body treatment principles. Acupuncture does not have any serious side effects, and because acupuncture reduces stress, you will look better and feel more relaxed.

Toru Kodama is a licensed acupuncturist specializing in men's health issues. Toru can be reached at AcQpoint Wellness Center in La Quinta 760.775.7900



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You Were Born with a Road Map to Health

By Eric Davenport, DC

The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.¹ Most Americans base their health on how they look or feel, referring to good health as a lack of disease. However, following this map has led the majority of the US population down an unhealthy road. Today, more Americans are starting to understand wellness care. The medical community and even insurance companies are now recognizing the value of a truly healthy population.

Heart disease and cancer, two of the top three killers in the US today, show few symptoms until it is too late. "The first manifestation of a heart problem often times is sudden death,"² states Alan Gertler, M.D., associate professor of medicine in the University of Alabama's Division of Cardiovascular Diseases. Jerry Balentine, DO, states that "Cancer gives most people no symptoms or signs that exclusively indicate the disease. Unfortunately, every complaint or symptom of cancer can be explained by a harmless condition as well."³

A shift in thinking must occur. Through science, we know that the brain is the master control center in the body; it is in control of every cell in our body and dictates all function.⁴ The brain communicates with these cells through the nervous system (spinal cord and nerves) and therein lies an innate map to lead us on down a healthy road. This innate intelligence is the reason each of us started out as 2 cells that grew into roughly 70 trillion cells in about 280 days, without any outside intervention.

Throughout our lives, this innate map is often detoured by poor habits. It takes conscious effort to maintain a healthy diet, physical activity or exercise, and proper posture and spinal function. Imagine putting diesel fuel in a car that requires regular or premium unleaded gasoline. We would expect the performance to diminish. This is the same as the human body. Most Americans will seek medication for lacking performance, believing it will fix the problem when in fact it typically only relieves the symptoms.

Thomas Edison stated in 1903, "The Doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet and the cause and prevention of disease."⁵ The profession of Chiropractic does just that. It treats the spine and related joints that make up the frame of our body, and actively teaches the need for proper nutrition and activity as the basic building blocks of good health.

You can seek a health plan that is congruent with your body's innate ability to care for itself, before disease sets in and limits your options. Chiropractors may be an intuitive part of your plan—for physical and mental wellness—to live a more harmonious life that provides for optimal well-being.

Eric Davenport is a Doctor of Chiropractic at Gonstead Chiropractic and can be reached at 760.863.0435

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Natural Treatments for Migraine Headaches

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

If you have ever suffered with a migraine headache or seen someone who has, you know firsthand how debilitating the pain can be. Migraines can occur anywhere from once or twice a year to several times per month. The cost of treating migraine patients in the United States is estimated at \$13 - \$17 billion per year.

According to The American College of Emergency Physicians Foundation, headaches and more specifically migraine headaches have consistently been the number one reason a person is seen in an emergency room. This is a huge problem in both direct and indirect costs. One study found that the annual cost to employers from migraine-related absenteeism is over \$15 billion annually. Migraine is usually managed by medication, but many patients do



Chiropractic adjustments can be beneficial for some forms of migraine

not tolerate migraine medication due to side effects. Others prefer seeking treatments that they believe may address the cause of migraines more directly and not just treat the symptoms. Non-pharmacological management is an option. This can include chiropractic care, exercise, massage therapy, an elimination diet, and/or nutritional supplements.

Although the symptoms of a migraine can vary from person to person, the most common include severe head pain with a feeling of expanding pressure in the head. Migraine symptoms sometimes begin with what is referred to as an aura. The aura begins as some sort of visual disturbance including blind spots and blurred vision. The aura can be accompanied by feelings of nausea, lightheadedness or dizziness, and sensitivity to light or loud noise. As these symptoms worsen, the person may experience vomiting, vertigo, severe fatigue, muscle tension, and pain on one side of the head or base of the skull. In a study of 144 people with migraines, 75% of patients reported neck pain associated with a migraine attack.

There are several types of migraine headaches including basilar, hemiplegic, abdominal, ocular, and cervicogenic. The exact mechanism of how migraines are caused is not fully understood and difficult to explain. The latest research is leading experts to believe that it is a neurovascular phenomenon initiated by inflammation. It appears certain inflammatory chemicals produced in the body in response to noxious chemical or mechanical stimuli irritate sensitive nerves at the base of the brain. This area is called the trigeminocervical nucleus. The inflammation of these nerves precipitates a cascade of events that results in alterations of the vascular dynamics and increased blood flow to the head. This results in what is known as migrainous activity.

Although the exact mechanisms that cause migraines are not well understood, several potential migraine triggers are well documented. Food allergies and

sensitivities can contribute to a buildup of inflammatory molecules and precipitate a migraine. It has been known for some time that certain chemicals found in processed foods can provoke the inflammatory mediated neurovascular response. Artificial sweeteners including aspartame, sucralose and alcohol sugars can induce these inflammatory changes. Food additives including MSG (Monosodium Glutamate), sodium bisulfite (a preservative found in wine, bottled drinks and dried fruit), sodium benzoate (a preservative found in soy sauce, soups, salad dressings and other

foods found in plastic or glass containers), all have the ability to provoke a migraine in susceptible individuals. These patients are often referred to as chemically sensitive people.

Chemical sensitivity is related to a genetic disorder whereby individuals have weaknesses

in their liver detoxification systems. This leads to a condition called impaired detoxification with migraine headaches and fatigue as some of the primary symptoms. Avoidance of preservatives, food additives and artificial sweeteners coupled with consumption of a nutritional supplement designed to assist in liver detoxification can be helpful for these migraine sufferers. Migraine activity has also been associated with low blood

magnesium status. There are several studies that suggest taking 600mg. of magnesium glycinate can help reduce migraine frequency.

Several published studies recently suggest that spinal manipulation and more specifically chiropractic care might be as effective as propranolol and topiramate (medications used to treat migraine) in the prophylactic management of migraine. This can best be explained by the misalignment of upper cervical vertebrae producing mechanical irritation of the

trigeminocervical nucleus and the resulting inflammatory neurovascular cascade previously mentioned.

It has been my experience that not all forms of migraine respond to spinal manipulation. However, when coupled with proper nutrition for improved liver detoxification, elimination of food allergens, magnesium supplementation, avoidance of neurotoxic food additives and preservatives, proper rest, and adequate exercise, improvement is possible. Successful treatment of migraines often requires an integrative approach to patient care that combines traditional medicine and holistic modalities working together to minimize migraine symptoms and provide long lasting relief.

Remember to be a proactive and informed health care consumer.

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

Sources: 1) Chaibi et. al. april 2011, The Journal of Headache and Pain. 2) University of Maryland Medical Center website, migraine headache. 3) JAOA journal, cervicogenic headache 2005. 4) The textbook of Functional Medicine, Bland et. al. 2006 5) Cervicogenic migraine treatment via cervical adjustment, www. logan. edu/mm



Health Is A Choice

Continued from page 1

Kim emphasizes that yoga has nothing to do with competition. "These events have very little to do with one person beating another. They are about inspiring others and demonstrating just how far you can take a posture, because most people don't know or understand that until they see it."

And yoga is not considered a sport. In fact, it is just the opposite. "We are not in the hot room to become yoga champions." The 'hot room' refers to Kim's chosen style of practice, Bikram, which takes place in a 104 degree room with 40% humidity. These elements provide added benefits for achy joints, tight muscles and circulation (and can be somewhat intense at first, but fans love it). "Yoga is about awareness of self and controlling the unruly mind. It teaches you to become present in the moment, to lose judgment in the mirror, and to silence the voice that does not serve you well, so you can hear the voice that does serve you well."



Kim Tang performs an advanced yoga posture (or 'asana')

There are approximately 20 different styles of yoga practiced today and although almost all are based on the same physical postures, each has a particular emphasis like flow, breath, alignment or meditation. Bikram adds the safety of warmth for tight muscles, and profuse sweating which is thought to cleanse the body. A Bikram class consists of 26 poses, repeated twice, with each posture preparing you for the next. When you have gone through the entire sequence, which is considered beginner level, you have worked every cell of the body inside out, bones to skin, and finger tips to toes. "It is a 90-minute breathing exercise, a 90-minute open-eyed meditation, and a 90-minute series of choices you make for yourself on your mat."

Kim explains that yoga is a scientific method of health from the inside out. "It is not just a stretch class. Yoga activates every muscle, ligament, tendon and bone, as well as every organ, gland and system in the body. The emphasis is on proper breathing which provides an exchange of oxygen rich blood through compressing and then stretching the internal organs. It is considered internal hygiene."

Kim goes on to talk about the biomechanics of Bikram. "You start with a breathing exercise that oxygenates the blood and gets the heart pumping, while the heat is dilating your blood vessels. So during the warm up, you have high pressure oxygen-rich blood pumping hard through dilated vessels. Then the practice brings you into postures that bend joints and restrict muscles, followed by relaxing postures that allow the oxygen-rich blood to be carried to that area of focus."

"People think that they can't do yoga because of an artificial knee or lower back pain. But those are the exact reasons TO do yoga. Everyone has some form of misalignment in their body, and when that misalignment presents itself, there is an opportunity to restore it to proper alignment. Each posture was created as a therapeutic position, so the goals of practice are breathing and proper form. You are working to strengthen the muscles that support a joint in its perfect alignment. You only go as far into a posture as you can with proper form and knowledge of your body."



"Yoga permeates every aspect of your life." (From left) daughter Devin (17), Kim, Dr. David Tang, and sons Ian (12) and David (14)

The physiological benefits are just as impressive. "All day long we are controlled by our thoughts and the emotional reaction that comes with that thought. Positive thoughts create upward motion of energy through the spine, and negative thoughts create a downward motion. Yoga teaches you to gain control of your thoughts to keep the energy moving in a more upward and positive direction. What happens in your yoga practice permeates every aspect of your life."

"A lot of people come in with a perceived limitation (i.e. lack of time, an injury, fear or inability). So they decide they will never be able to practice yoga. I choose to believe that those limitations are imaginary. They don't exist. We just need to believe in ourselves, and give it a try. You will never be asked to force your body into a position it is not prepared for. Through practice you are preparing the body for the position. And over time, your body will learn to embrace the postures."

Those who attend classes at Bikram Yoga University Village range from children to people in their mid-80s. "You are never too old, never too late, and never too sick to start from scratch."

For an overview of the different styles of yoga see the Yoga Style Guide at about.com (<http://yoga.about.com/od/typesofyoga/a/yogatypes.htm>). For a list of yoga studios in your area, visit yogafinder.com. Bikram Yoga University Village can be reached at 760.346.2988 or bikramyogauvpalmdesert.com.

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"I started classes at BYUVPD about 90 days ago as an out of shape, overweight, middle aged woman. I'm still middle aged — however I've already dropped 15 pounds and can see my body reshaping right before my eyes. Every instructor at BYUVPD is knowledgeable, welcoming and genuinely cares about each of our practices. I've only missed about 14 days since I started and am doing the 30-day challenge right now. I come out of each class stronger and with a huge grin on my face. Bikram Yoga is truly changing my life and I love it! Thank you BYUVPD!" — **Heni Watson, Palm Desert**

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How to Eat More Veggies

Continued from page 1

Replace something in your diet with vegetables

Do you like to snack? How about replacing packaged snacks with vegetables? Cut up raw zucchini, summer squash and cucumbers, and buy baby carrots and cherry tomatoes. Place them in small plastic bags for a quick and easy snack to grab and take with you. You now have a crunchy, finger food (just like chips) that is much better for you. Variety is key and you'll be surprised at how satisfying they are.

Side orders. When dining out, make vegetables your side order of choice. You'll feel better in the morning if you replace buttery mashed potatoes or french fries with a grilled veggie mix or steamed broccoli.

Give up meat. Vegetables then become your primary food and you'll enjoy a whole world of vegetarian delights. Most restaurants now offer vegetarian options above and beyond salads. You can obtain your protein through many other foods including fish, soy, eggs, beans, cheese and protein powders.

Eat veggies at every meal

Throw chopped veggies into your eggs (mince or grate if you'd rather not taste large chunks). Swap fruit juice for veggie juice in the morning. Add avocado to your sandwich – or replace that sandwich with a vegetable salad. For lunch, choose the salad bar over fast, fried food.

Give up Iceberg

Are you still eating iceberg lettuce? Go greener. Calorie for calorie, dark leafy greens are probably the most concentrated source of nutrition of any food. They are also shown to prevent many forms of disease including cancer.¹ Make your salads with these tasty super greens: baby kale (less bitter than regular kale), swiss chard, spinach, radicchio, shredded cabbage, and tatsoi. Organic Girl, available at Ralphs, provides prepackaged mixes for ready-to-go salads and to toss into smoothies.

Go vegetarian at least twice a week

Make a conscious effort to eat only vegetables a couple of times a week. This will encourage you to explore recipes and experiment with new vegetables to keep menus interesting and exciting.

Grill your veggies

What are we going to grill tonight? How about bell peppers,

halved tomatoes, onions and zucchini, and oh yeah, some tri tip on the side? Marinate big chunks of vegetables for easy flipping, or build tasty kabobs.

Don't like veggies?

Spice it up! Don't be afraid to dip, soak or sauce. Olive oil mixed with your favorite spices, curries, peanut sauce, or sesame are great additions to cooked vegetables. Hummus, low fat ranch dressing, and yogurt dips make raw veggies go down a lot easier.

Add veggies you almost like to dishes you already love. Layer zucchini slices, chopped spinach, or cooked carrots into lasagna. Stir broccoli florets into macaroni and cheese. Toss tomatoes, spinach, mushrooms, broccoli, or asparagus into an omelet or quesadilla. Add veggies to your pizza, pasta, or sauces.²

Know how to cook the stronger flavored veggies.

The strongest tasting vegetables are those in the cruciferous family (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and brussel sprouts), along with some greens, and raw eggplant. Keep in mind that generally, the longer you cook these veggies, the stronger their odor and flavor (however, eggplant actually becomes milder with cooking). To cut the bitterness of these veggies, add a little olive oil when stir-frying or sautéing; add something salty or sour like a drizzle of light soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, lemon, or shredded Parmesan; or glaze the vegetables with something sweet like a small spoonful of honey or orange marmalade.²

Eat quality vegetables... or grow your own!

If you've ever had a tomato right off the vine, you realize the difference quality can make. Three of the freshest options are to visit one of the Valley's Certified Farmers Markets or to buy a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) box consisting of new, freshly picked, organic produce from local farmers. Inland Empire CSA makes weekly deliveries to pickup locations throughout the Valley and boxes range from \$24-\$36 per week. Nutritional consultant, Libby Quigley, RD, recommends that you grow your own. "There is a great satisfaction in establishing, nurturing and enjoying the bounty from your very own garden."

Adopting just one of these healthy habits can significantly increase your daily veggie intake. It's important to think of incorporating these changes as a lifestyle choice, and not a diet. Realize that you are not eating more veggies to lose weight, but to live a longer, healthier and happier life!

References: 1) American Institute for Cancer Research. <http://preventcancer.aicr.org>. Foods That Fight Cancer; 2) By Elaine Magee, MPH, RD WebMD.com Eat Your Vegetables: 15 Tips for Veggie Haters



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Acupuncture: How Much Do You Need?

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

Many of my patients come in seeking relief from acute or chronic pain from neurological conditions or injuries. Often, we do not acknowledge our health until it is compromised and only then do we seek ways to regain it. Some will not try acupuncture until they're in so much pain the thought of a needle does not seem so scary or painful. Once they come, one of the first questions a patient will ask is, "how many treatments will I need to get relief?"

When patients begin acupuncture treatment to receive quick relief from pain, discomfort and other symptoms, we refer to this as 'acute' or 'relief' care. The goal is to make you feel better as fast as possible. Many patients experience immediate relief and about 1/4 are what I call "one-hit wonders," and just one session achieves their goal. However, most people - and those with more serious or chronic conditions - require more sessions. After the first visit, I ask patients to wait a few days and report how they are feeling. If the pain returns, I recommend more sessions before the pain spirals to the same or greater level as before. The idea is to chase the pain, relieve it, and then maintain relief. It often requires 2-4 visits to accurately assess a patient's condition and determine a course of treatment.

Each session builds upon the previous, working towards eliminating the initial problems and concerns. Often a course of treatments spaced two or three days apart and no longer than a week apart, is recommended until symptoms are dramatically reduced or eliminated. For example, a herniated disc can require 2-3 visits in the first 7 days, then 1 or 2 times a week for several weeks.

Once symptoms are reduced, we begin the next phase of recommended treatment (called 'corrective care') and visits are less frequent. This phase maintains and supports the relief achieved thus far, and is a foundation for deeper healing to occur. This is also the time when the underlying problems are addressed. Even though you may not be experiencing symptoms, or the symptoms are much less severe, it is important to continue treatment to strengthen, build and support your body. Stopping care could disrupt the healing process. Acupuncture treatment may be combined with herbs, cupping, moxabustion, massage, or light exercise and physical therapy.

The final phase of treatment is 'maintenance' or 'wellness' care. This care preserves all the progress made up to that point. Visits may be monthly, then every-other month or even seasonal. Just as we bring a car in for oil changes and tune-ups to keep it running smoothly, periodic visits will strengthen your body's resistance, build up immunity to colds and flu, and keep you healthy and balanced.

Wellness care is the root of healing. In ancient times, an acupuncturist was only compensated as long as the patient remained healthy. If they became ill, it was the doctor's duty to get them well again without compensation. Acupuncture, combined with regular exercise, a healthy diet, and other good habits can keep you looking, feeling, and performing at your best.

Diane Sheppard is a licensed acupuncturist with a Ph.D. in Oriental Medicine. Dr. Sheppard trained in both China and the U.S and is now a staff practitioner at Eisenhower Wellness Institute. She can be reached at AcQPoint Wellness Center in La Quinta. 760-775-7900 www.AcQPoint.com

Sulforaphane Super Food: Nutritional Value of Chewing Your Food

By Jon Dunn, ND

Cabbage, kale, collards, radishes...Each of these vegetables is packed with a host of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, plus the natural disease-fighting compound called sulforaphane.

Sulforaphane reduces inflammation, fights unhealthy bacteria and protects against carcinogenic toxins...and it only takes a few servings a month to realize the benefit. It is recommended in the prevention and treatment of cancer, diabetes, H. pylori (a nasty stomach bacteria that can lead to acid reflux and stomach ulcers), atherosclerosis, respiratory diseases, neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's, kidney disease, ocular disorders, and cardiovascular disease (plaque build-up, hypertension, etc.) The National Institutes of Health has an ongoing study investigating the benefits of sulforaphane for recurrent prostate cancer.^{1,5}

Broccoli sprouts have the highest vegetable concentration of sulforaphane. At three days old, broccoli sprouts contain 10 to 100 times more sulforaphane than mature broccoli.⁶ Sulforaphane is also found in Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, bok choy, Chinese broccoli, broccoli raab, kohlrabi, mustard, daikon, turnip, radish, capers, nasturtiums and watercress.

But there is a catch. Sulforaphane doesn't exist independently in plants; it must be created through a specific enzymatic process. The enzyme required is myrosinase. Myrosinase transforms the compound glucoraphanin (the inert form of sulforaphane), into sulforaphane upon damage to the plant. So, now you know why you need to properly chew before swallowing -- no chewing, no sulforaphane. It is this compound released upon chewing that gives the characteristic bitter flavor to cruciferous vegetables, and it is this compound that helps injured plants with repair and healing.⁷

If you are using a super green type food powder you need to do a little investigating. Does the powder have sulforaphane added

to it? If not, does it contain glucoraphanin and the enzyme myrosinase, and if you cook the vegetable until it is soft most of the myrosinase will be gone. There is still value from the well cooked food, but it won't yield any sulforaphane. You can complement cooked cruciferous vegetables with broccoli sprouts, mustard, horseradish, or wasabi. The latter three will create more sulforaphane because they are a rich source of myrosinase; the spicier the better as the spice is an indicator of myrosinase presence.⁸

Lightly steaming cruciferous vegetable will destroy some myrosinase, and if you cook the vegetable until it is soft most of the myrosinase will be gone. There is still value from the well cooked food, but it won't yield any sulforaphane. You can complement cooked cruciferous vegetables with broccoli sprouts, mustard, horseradish, or wasabi. The latter three will create more sulforaphane because they are a rich source of myrosinase; the spicier the better as the spice is an indicator of myrosinase presence.⁸

Making your own sprouts with broccoli, radish and other seeds is easy; it just takes a few minutes a day.⁹ The nutritional value of young sprouts shows greater concentrations of vitamins, minerals, proteins, enzymes, anti-oxidants, trace minerals, bioflavonoids and cancer protectors, than at any other point in the plant's life. Growing them will make you feel empowered, and eating sprouts will make you healthier!

Dr. Dunn is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor with over 20 years of experience. He is the author of the book *The Family Guide to Naturopathic Medicine* and has a private practice in Palm Desert. Contact: 760-341-6502 jon@drjondunn.com www.DrJonDunn.com www.facebook.com/DrJonDunn

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The Five-Part Nutritional Wellness Protocol

By Hessam Mahdavi, MD, DC

Patients often ask my advice on a basic, sound nutrition and supplementation regiment. Recommending a general rule of thumb for everyone can be difficult, but a discussion with one of my mentors, Dr. Alex Vasquez, DO, ND, DC, an expert in nutrition, introduced me to a five-part nutritional wellness protocol that can be utilized by most patients.

Elements of this protocol include:

#1 A Paleo-Mediterranean Diet

The Paleo-Mediterranean diet, which consists of fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and berries, meets the body's need for fiber, carbohydrates and most importantly, the 8000+ phytonutrients that have synergistic health benefits including antioxidants, anti-inflammatory and anticancer agents. These foods are also low in fat, sodium and simple sugars.

In the Paleo diet, high quality protein sources such as fish, poultry, eggs, and grass-fed meats are emphasized. Whey protein isolates are also recommended. Potatoes and other starchy vegetables, along with wheat and other grains (including wheat, barley rye and rice), are discouraged due to their high glycemic indexes and high glycemic loads. These foods also contain significantly less fiber and phytonutrients than fruits and vegetables.

Sources of simple sugars and foreign chemicals, such as sodas and high fructose corn syrup, as well as processed foods and manufactured snacks, are strictly forbidden. Chemical preservatives, colorants, artificial sweeteners, and flavored enhancers such as MSG and Carneegenan (as found in rice milk) should be avoided.

This diet plan provides plenty of variety as most dishes are comprised of poultry, fish, lean meats, fermented soy, eggs, fruits, vegetables, nuts, berries and seeds. The many health benefits include reducing hypertension, alleviating diabetes, and reducing migraine headaches and other inflammation-related conditions.

#2 Multivitamin & Multimineral Supplementation

Because most people do not consume an optimal amount of all vitamins and minerals through diet alone, it appears prudent for all adults to take supplements. Multivitamins have been scientifically proven to reduce inflammation as measured by CRP levels. A few cautions should be observed: 1) Ensure your multivitamin does not contain more than 10,000 to 25,000 IU of Vitamin A; 2) Your multivitamin should not contain iron unless you need iron supplementation as recommended by your health care provider.

#3 Vitamin D3

Studies show that more than 40 to 80% of the population is deficient in D3. This vitamin has been shown to help treat many different conditions including

hypertension, migraines, inflammation, autoimmunity and low back pain. It is also thought to help prevent osteoporosis and (in many cases) cancer, as reported in several peer-reviewed biomedical journals including the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Lancet Cancer Research and the International Journal of Cancer.

Vitamin D levels can be measured through simple blood tests. The quantity of Vitamin D recommended depends on age, race, lifestyle and where you live. The National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine recommends a range of 2000 IU per day for adults, but higher levels may be recommended based on health conditions and test results.

#4 Balanced and Complete Fatty Acid Supplementation

Omega fatty acids, found in fish oils and extra virgin olive oils, are shown to have many disease prevention benefits and should be incorporated into the daily diet -- and regularly consumed as a dietary supplement.

Omega fatty acids are proven to help inflammatory disorders such as cardiovascular disease, arthritis, autoimmunity, depression and mood disorders. Fish that are especially rich in omega-3 fatty acids include mackerel, tuna, salmon, sturgeon, mullet, bluefish, anchovy, sardines, herring, trout, and menhaden. They provide about 1 gram of omega-3 fatty acids in about 3.5 ounces of fish. Educated consumers will note that many grocery staples (eggs, milk, etc.) now show Omega-3 fatty acids as an added ingredient. Using olive oil for salads and cooking provides additional omega 9.

As for supplements, it is very important to have a balance of fish oils that provide omega-3, 6 and 9 and to ensure that your fish oil supplement is from a quality source. Your health food store will gladly assist with brand recommendations.

Different quantities of fish oil are recommended for different health conditions; however a solid rule of thumb is a minimum of 2 grams per day with a meal.

#5 Probiotics

Probiotics are live microorganisms which, when administered in adequate amounts, promote intestinal balance and encourage overall health. Our digestive system normally has what we call "good" bacteria and "bad" bacteria. Maintaining the correct balance between the "good" bacteria and the "bad" bacteria is necessary for optimal health. Intestinal flora can become imbalanced by poor diets, excessive stress, immunosuppressive drugs, and antibiotics - factors that are increasingly common in the U.S. population.

Often this simple protocol is all that is needed for the effective treatment of a wide range of clinical problems, even those that have had medical failures for many years.

In conclusion, we must always remember that the attainment and preservation of health requires that we first meet the body's basic nutritional and physiological needs. I believe this five-step protocol begins the process of meeting those needs for better health and disease prevention.

Dr. Mahdavi is a Primary Care Physician and Integrative Medicine Specialist at Eisenhower's Wellness Institute in La Quinta. EWI can be reached at 760.610.7360.



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Weight Loss: An Added Benefit of Testosterone Therapy

By Shelly Sheppard, MA

A five-year study presented at the annual Meeting of The Endocrine Society by Dr. Farid Saad shows that testosterone therapy can help men with hormone deficiencies reduce body weight and waist circumference. 225 men were treated with long-term testosterone replacement therapy over the five-year study, and 90% lost an average of 36 lbs from their baseline weight and 97% saw a drop in waist circumference, with 46% of that reduction being greater than 3.5 inches. Not many therapies can boast a 90% success rate in patients, particularly when it comes to weight loss.

A second study by Dr. Youssef El Douaily of Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY, confirmed that men can experience significant weight loss. His seven-year compilation of data showed that (on average) men lost 13 % of their initial body weight and experienced an average loss of 4 inches in waist circumference.

A third 15-year study presented by Dr. Michael Zitzmann of the University of Munster in Germany also showed a significant reduction in metabolic syndrome among male patients, dropping from 88% to 52% within the first two years. Significant reductions in blood pressure, resting heart rate, body weight and body mass index, waist circumference, fasting blood glucose, LDL cholesterol and triglycerides were also reported.

It is believed that the normalization of testosterone levels in men is relevant to the progressive weight loss because testosterone increases fat-free mass, and enhances vitality, virility and a patient's drive to change. Men are motivated when they see their

testosterone levels go up, their body mass go down; energy levels increase, depression decrease; alleviated erectile dysfunction and reduced frequent night urination. Testosterone deficiencies can be measured by a simple blood test administered by a physician.

The relationship between excess fat and decreased testosterone seems to be a vicious cycle. Some studies suggest that obesity (especially abdominal obesity) is associated with lower levels of testosterone and a reduction in muscle mass. It should also be noted that men with testosterone deficiencies are at a higher risk for osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Interestingly enough, the positive effects of testosterone therapy come with a reciprocal benefit. Natural testosterone production can actually recover itself after a deficiency is corrected because excess adipose tissue or fat is actually a powerful suppressor of testosterone production. Patients lose weight and testosterone levels can normalize.

None of the three studies focused on testosterone therapy as a treatment for weight loss. All of the men were being treated for hormone deficiencies and a range of problems from ED to fatigue and a related lack of energy. However, an added benefit of the therapy was weight loss.

Shelly Sheppard is a Medical Esthetician and wellness professional at SACKS Wellness Center in Indian Wells. For more information about hormone replacement therapy, contact SACKS at (760) 779-9100 or visit www.SacksWellnessCenter.com

The Relationship Between Anxiety and Hypoglycemia

By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

The number of individuals suffering from anxiety has been on the rise for years. Like many conditions, there are multiple reasons for anxiety and anxiety attacks to occur. From a naturopathic perspective, anxiety can stem from adrenal fatigue, food sensitivities, nutritional deficiencies, or hypoglycemia.

Hypoglycemia is a condition in which the blood sugar drops to a lower than normal level. Blood sugar rises when we eat and decreases as time lapses between meals. The symptoms of hypoglycemia are light-headedness, dizziness, shaking, sweating, irritability and nervousness. A significant symptom is uncontrollable irritability when hungry, which most people have experienced. The irritability usually goes away with food, but if it is a common or even daily occurrence (coupled with other symptoms), it may mean you are hypoglycemic.

When frequent anxiety is a patient's primary concern, I begin with dietary questions to decipher if the anxiety is related to the occurrence of low blood sugar. Are feelings of anxiety appearing at certain times of the day? Do you eat on a regularly scheduled basis? Is your diet high in carbs and low in protein? This can mean that the drops in blood sugar are being mistaken for anxiety or simply exacerbating underlying anxiety. There is also a correlation with hypoglycemia, anxiety, and people who smoke and/or have a higher than average desire for alcohol.

To treat anxiety caused or worsened by hypoglycemia, you must begin with regularly scheduled meals and snacks. Eat breakfast every day, beginning with a protein rich meal. Schedule a protein rich snack every 2 hours between meals. Meals should be eaten every 4-5 hours with snacks every 2-3 hours in-between. Eating right for hypoglycemia does not mean consuming more calories or food. It means eating smarter for your body. Protein rich meals consist of nuts, fish, soy, eggs and or healthy, lean meats. A smoothie made with protein powder is also a filling, nutritious snack or light meal.

By eating regularly and adding adequate amounts of protein, you keep blood sugar at a stable and consistent level. It is ok to snack on a piece of fruit or a handful of carrots, but be consistent with adequate amounts of protein in your diet throughout the day so as not to cause a blood sugar crash. Caffeine and alcohol will also cause blood sugar irregularities. Drinking caffeine will 'use up' your blood glucose causing low blood sugar, and alcohol will cause elevated blood sugar that then crashes too low.

Nutritional supplementation may also be useful. Chromium picolinate taken at each meal can help regulate blood sugar levels. For those individuals who feel nauseous in the morning or are unable to tolerate the breakfast meal, taking chromium picolinate at bedtime may alleviate these morning symptoms. Gaba (a supplement used to induce relaxation, analgesia, and sleep) taken in regular, daily doses can help decrease feelings of anxiety. Magnesium taken at bedtime can also decrease nighttime anxiety that leads to difficulty sleeping.

Although anxiety is pervasive and affects many individuals, there are multiple naturopathic approaches that can decrease and alleviate anxious feelings. Diet and regulating blood sugar levels is a great place to start.

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

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When The Body Turns On Itself

The Rising Auto-Immune Incidence in America

By Nicole Ortiz, ND

The National Institutes of Health reports 23 million Americans suffer from auto-immune disease. It lands on the list of top 10 causes of death in women under 64 years of age and children.

Our immune system is like our protective army, diligently patrolling the body, looking for any molecular marker that does not belong. When it finds something foreign such as bacteria, infected cells, or undigested food particles, it initiates a war on the unwanted foreign invader. While the army is patrolling throughout the body, immune cells are also ensuring that molecules like your blood cells, skin cells, or cartilage cells are normal. Just as immunological identification of invaders is important, recognizing that normal body cells are not invaders is equally crucial.

When a person develops autoimmunity (AI), the loss of normal-cell-recognition occurs. The incidence of auto-immune disease has increased at an alarming rate over the last decade in America. There are several theories as to why the body develops auto-immune disease.

What does current research in the field of epigenetics tell us about AI disease?

Epigenetics is the study of how genes change from external influences. Instead of determining if you have a “bad” or “good” gene, epigenetics is a dynamic study of what and how external sources physically CHANGE your genes and trigger autoimmune disease. Using the epigenetic theory, autoimmune disease is understood as a combination of factors. First, there is genetic predisposition. Second, there is an accumulation of external influences that overburden the system. Third, there is a triggering event that “turns-on” the gene and subsequent loss of self-recognition. Just because you have the genetic predisposition to autoimmunity, does not mean you are destined to have AI disease. The AI process may stay inactive because there has not been a combination of factors to trigger the disease activation.

What are possible triggers of auto-immune disease?

Physiological stress—such as illness, foods eaten, and even long term emotional stress (such as depression)—affect the body's ability to adapt. Your body has a threshold of how many stressors it can handle. When your body becomes overwhelmed, it is unable to adapt to further ‘stressors’ in a healthy manner. At that point, symptoms of illness begin to appear. The overwhelmed body is now predisposed for an event to trigger the autoimmune process.

There is also a correlation between chronic infections (even the common cold) and the trigger of autoimmune disease. The correlation implies that when the bacteria or virus leave the normal healthy cell (host cell) after infecting it, they take part of the normal cell with them, which confuses the immune system into thinking that the normal cell is now part of the infection. In addition, some microorganisms may carry certain proteins that look identical to the proteins carried on normal cells, which again tricks the immune system and triggers the immune system to respond.

What can we do to prevent autoimmunity?

The best way to reduce one's chance of developing autoimmunity is through diet, adequate sleep, and stress management. It seems overly simple, but truly, the root of health is founded in the fundamental basics of wellness. When the body is under chronic stress, whether from external factors such as a job or a strained relationship, or internal factors such as lack of sleep and poor diet, the body is more susceptible to illness.

What treatment options are there for autoimmune disease?

The role of diet in autoimmunity

For thousands of years, man has known that food can be our medicine, but food can also be our poison. Identifying and eliminating food intolerances and allergies is a fundamental component of AI disease management. When we eat foods to which we have an intolerance or allergy, inflammation occurs in the gastrointestinal tract or “gut.” As the gut becomes inflamed, its defense barriers start to break down and become “leaky,” allowing [incompletely digested] food particles to escape into the blood stream. When the immune system encounters the strange molecule, it creates an inflammatory reaction. If this occurs for a prolonged period, the chances of immune deregulation from food increases and autoimmunity can ensue. Both research studies and my clinical experience have shown that food intolerance and allergy elimination in patients with autoimmune conditions result in significant improvement in their symptoms.

The role of naturopathic therapies in treatment of AI disease

Most doctors believe there are no cures for auto-immune disease. Despite this fact, there are ways to manage the symptoms for a better quality of life. Many patients lead full, happy lives despite being affected by auto-immune disease. The key to symptom management is controlling flare-ups. Each patient's flare-ups may be triggered by different events, and a naturopathic doctor can help identify those triggers. All too often, certain foods trigger episodes of pain and discomfort. Sensitivities or allergies to food can worsen the symptoms of auto-immune disease. There are very reliable tests available to check for these adverse food reactions.

The complex nature of autoimmune conditions usually requires more than one practitioner to assist patients in staying well. Working with doctors who appreciate the benefits of an integrative model of care is the best option. Auto-immune disease cannot be managed with food alone or with drugs alone. It is the synergy of an integrative treatment that will likely provide the patient a full, happy, and healthy life.

Dr. Ortiz is a primary care naturopathic doctor at the Live Well Clinic in La Quinta. Live Well's new Integrative Clinic will be opening in October. For more information call 760-771-5970 or visit www.livewellclinic.org.

Sources: 1) Francesca Meda, 1.2 Marco Folci, 1 Andrea Baccarelli, 3 and Carlo Selmi, 1.2 The Epigenetics of autoimmunity. Cell Mol Immunol. 2011 May; 8(3): 226–236. Published online 2011 January 31. doi: 10.1038/cmi.2010.78; 2) Hewagama A, Richardson B. The genetics and epigenetics of autoimmune diseases. J Autoimmun. 2009 Aug;33(1):3–11. Epub 2009 Apr 5.

“Our immune system is like our protective army, diligently patrolling the body looking for any molecular marker that does not belong. When a person develops autoimmunity (AI), the loss of normal-cell-recognition occurs.”

– Dr. Ortiz



What Happens When Harry Dies?

By Reesa Manning

The death of a spouse or life partner is one of the toughest events you can go through. Along with the emotional adjustment of continuing on without your best friend, there is additional stress involved in facing the relevant financial issues while you are still grieving. But there are things you can do now that will help you through this difficult time. The following lists provide a framework for keeping your finances organized before and after the loss of your loved one.

Preparing now to minimize stress later

- Keep a list of insurance companies, policy numbers and social security numbers on hand.
- Store important documents—such as your marriage certificate, wills and trusts and children's birth or adoption certificates—in a safe location for easy accessibility.
- Ensure that each spouse has a credit card in his or her own name or that you have a joint bank account in both your names.

During and after the loss

- Notify others and seek advice. In addition to notifying your employer and your spouse's employer, be sure to contact the funeral director and your attorney, insurance professional, financial advisor and accountant, so they can get started on paperwork and financial matters.
- Obtain at least 10 certified copies of the death certificate, so you can file for various benefits and change the ownership of investments.
- Continue to pay bills so you don't incur late fees.
- Cancel unwanted club memberships and magazine subscriptions.

- Retrieve your spouse's belongings from his or her workplace, and collect any salary, vacation, or sick pay owed to your spouse.
- Check with your credit card, bank, and loan companies regarding eligible death benefits.
- Change the ownership of bank and brokerage accounts.
- Discuss what to do with IRA's and employer retirement plans with your financial advisor.
- Contact the Social Security Administration to discuss eligibility for benefits.
- Obtain tax identification numbers.
- Talk with your attorney and accountant before transferring accounts or distributing assets, as you may or may not incur additional tax penalties upon your spouse's death.
- Take advantage of health insurance benefits, such as COBRA.

Addressing personal financial affairs

Every life passage or major life event has financial implications. Taking charge of financial issues as you move through these passages is an important part of ensuring your own financial future and good health. Working with a financial planner who understands these economic curveballs can often help minimize the inevitable stress and anxiety.

Reesa Manning is a Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management, specializing in retirement and income planning. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834-7200, or Reesa@IWMgmt.com

Coachella Valley Economic Partnership Interns Create *Emerging Health Professionals Program*

In the summer of 2011, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership's (CVEP) Workforce Excellence Program, in collaboration with the Health Career Connection Program, hosted undergraduate health science college interns, Janel Samuels and Faith Villanueva. These two interns have worked directly with CVEP's Health Industry Council (HIC) to create a leadership program that would allow students to voice their opinion and to actively participate in activities that directly affect their journey towards a promising career.

HIC was created in 2006 to alleviate the Valley's health care workforce shortage by addressing educational and career obstacles. The council realized that the most effective way of improving a student's educational experience was to involve them in those efforts.

Faith and Janel's project was to create the framework of a program that would unite Coachella Valley students who are on the path towards health careers. This program would allow select students from the Valley's health academies to serve on a student-led advisory group.


With guidance and input from CVEP Health Career Connection Preceptors Donna Sturgeon and Sheila Thornton, Janel and Faith were able to construct what is now referred to as the "Emerging Health Professionals Workgroup." The key components include the students' regular attendance at monthly HIC meetings, contribution of youth feedback, participation in workshops, organization of activities within academy programs, and leading conferences. This program provides students with the tools to build strong relationships with health care professionals and skills that will lead to advancement in their chosen health profession.

Faith and Janel, Program Coordinators, are on target to launch the Emerging Health Professionals Workgroup this September. The initial EHP cohort will be made up of a total of 18 students: one sophomore, junior, and senior from each of the six health academy programs. One of the objectives of this workgroup is to lead an annual unifying event for students pursuing a career in health care. For their first event, the Emerging Health Professionals is hosting a conference in January 2013 featuring local health professionals from targeted health care professions: dentistry, nutrition, physical therapy, pharmacy, nursing, and medicine. Work groups for each of these professions are also underway within the scope of CVEP's Health Industry Council. The January 2013 conference will also include a local academy student competition to showcase academic achievements in each of these professional work groups.


For more information on the Emerging Health Professionals Program contact Janel Samuels: jsamuels12313@yahoo.com 760-831-1645 or Faith Villanueva: fvillanueva13@yahoo.com 714-290-5749.



Cal State Fullerton students Janel Samuels (L) and Faith Villanueva (R) coordinate CVEP Health Industry Council's Emerging Health Professionals program.



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Where is the True Balance in Fitness?

By Lew Bronstein CFT, CLPC, FPC

Some fitness professionals will tell you that true balance is all about how much you exercise to feel good, while others will say it is based on your diet coupled with exercise – and then some will tell you that the true balance in fitness is achieved when stress reduction is achieved. Which advisor is correct? Actually, they all are.

Health and fitness is a balance of exercise, good nutrition, proper hydration, rest, proper breathing and stress reduction. Let us look at your fitness factors...

Exercise is integral to maintaining the strength of the muscles that support the body, maintaining a healthy cardio pulmonary system, and maintaining a strong skeletal system. A sound exercise program mixes cardio and strength training, along with balance and core training.

Good nutrition is important to provide your body with the fuel it needs to stay active and perform well in everyday life. Let's compare a candy bar to spinach: according to the USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, one cup of spinach provides only 7 calories, and contains a bounty of nutrients, including: .86 g of protein, .7 g fiber, .81 mg of iron, 167 mg potassium, 30 mg calcium, 8.4 mg vitamin C, 58 mcg folate and 2,813 IU vitamin A per cup. By comparison a 2-oz. candy bar contains 273 calories, 14 g of fat, 5 g of which are saturated, 7 mg of cholesterol, 152 mg of sodium, 185 mg of potassium, 1 g of protein. It contains almost 34 g of carbohydrates and contains a whopping 35-50g of sugar! What are we saying? Always learn to make the best choices that will nourish your body and provide it with the energy it needs to keep moving!

Another factor in your fitness balance is **proper hydration**. The human body is made up of 60-65% water and every day we lose water through sweating and urination. Each individual has a different need for water consumption based on climate, activity level and body weight. Proper hydration is often achieved by drinking water regularly, and consuming water-rich foods like fresh fruits and vegetables.

Rest can be elusive in our busy world and its importance is often overlooked. Your body needs rest to regenerate from the day's activities. The amount of sleep you need varies from person to person. Try testing yourself on the eve of a "nothing planned" day, by not setting your alarm and seeing how long you sleep before you awake feeling refreshed... You may be surprised by the results!

One of the key components to **stress reduction** is **proper breathing**. It enables – and teaches you - to inhale more oxygen and exhale more carbon dioxide. Deep, slow and diaphragmatic breaths are the best way to help you maximize your oxygen intake. Feeling oxygenated will help relieve feelings of stress, and stress reduction is integral to a balanced life style. Stress relief – and sometimes unconsciously, relaxed breathing – are often positive benefits of such pleasurable activities as massage, meditation, music and reading. It is also important to note that stress releases cortisol, a hormone directly related to belly fat and a myriad of other health ailments. So stress reduction can contribute to weight loss.

As you can see, fitness balance truly equates to life balance... and requires taking care of your whole being–body, mind and spirit!

Lew Bronstein CFT, CLPC, FPC is a Certified Personal Fitness Trainer and Life Coach at Revitalize Life. 760.609.4539 or online www.revitalizelife.com

Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco



Chasing Your Athletic Dreams

In the recent London Olympics, we observed many examples of excellence in individuals from around the world devoting their entire lives to an athletic goal. These acclaimed athletes are a great inspiration for us all. We don't need to be categorized as athletes in our day-to-day lives to have athletic pursuits. Each of us has some internal craving and desire to do something physical. In the last Desert Health issue, I discussed beat-the-heat options for enjoying physical activity throughout our summer months. From hiking at the tram to swimming laps at your local center, there are alternatives. The biggest feat is training your mind and creating a fitness plan with attainable goals. There is a fitness goal waiting to be manifested inside each of us. And these goals provide direction, motivation and a way to measure our progress.

An ancient term in sturdy row boat that sailboat anchor as the difference In approaching stuck, this the steam

the world of sailing called "kedging" refers to a can withstand high winds and tows the line of the far as it can go. This pulling technique can mean between the rowboat losing the sailboat or not. a hostile shore or with the likelihood of getting technique was the trick before the invention of engine. Just like the sailboat, each one of us has situations in our day-to-day struggle with wellness, where the journey towards our athletic goals gets stuck. Kedging was the answer in days past. "Kedging" involves climbing out of the ordinary, setting intention and working like crazy to get there. Determine your goals, make a plan and stick to it. A plan puts a sail and rudder in your fitness ship.

Your fitness plan may be one of many things. It may be signing up for an adventure vacation–such as a bike trip, ski trip or a yoga retreat. These types of planned events are great fun and have an inspirational component to them. The memory lingers for months. Another plan to incentivize one in the right direction (believe it or not) is to invest in fitness gear; such as a high-end bike or ski equipment to give you a new lease on life! The investment will hopefully be the necessary nudge in the right direction. Another more straightforward goal is to sign-up for a near-future 5k or 10k run or walk (5k = 3.1 miles and a 10k = 6.2 miles). From there the sky is the limit! The surge of excitement, group participation, energy, and satisfaction of the accomplished event is the perfect kedge!

After determining your goal, start making progress in each area of training: Endurance (adapting to longer duration work), building (developing longer intervals), peaking (shorter and harder workouts) and tapering (reducing volume by 50% before the event). A support group, coach or personal trainer can help significantly with each of these concepts. If you go with a fitness professional, be sure to select someone with a good reputation and proven track record. Your trainer must have your best interest in mind and be certified and qualified for what they are teaching. This support will help set your compass and avoid common pitfalls – over training, under training, improper equipment, and an unrealistic goal.

No matter how small or grand the goal, an athletic pursuit in one's life can foster a sense of achievement, allowing the discovery of freeing yourself of limitations, building abilities, and developing a new appreciation for life. This is what Olympians do each and every day, and it is within each of us to discover for ourselves.



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Active Release Techniques: Pain Relief and Improved Sports Performance

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

Picture being on the 8th hole with your friends playing one of your favorite desert courses on a warm sunny day, when all of a sudden you feel a sharp pain in your back from trying to sink an 18-foot putt.

Holding your back and in obvious pain, you can't move. You look back in time and realize that the frequency of this situation has increased. Your day of golf is ruined, and your pain becomes your top priority. So you call your doctor who prescribes pain medication and tells you to rest for a couple of days. Three days pass, you miss work, the pain is still there and everyday life becomes very frustrating. After a couple of weeks, the pain is resolved, you go back to work and all seems fine again. You then go to the range to hit some balls and after 15 minutes the pain returns and you can't straighten your back.

You are now very concerned and frustrated. You make another appointment with your doctor; he takes x rays, gives you more medicine and says that nothing is showing up on the tests. "What do I do now?" you ask yourself.

Over 85% of Americans will experience several episodes of back pain during their lifetime. It is too common a problem in the United States today. There is a solution with growing popularity over the past 10 years called Active Release Technique or A.R.T.

Active Release is a patented state-of-the-art soft tissue movement system invented by Michael Leahy, DC, 25 years ago. A.R.T. treats problems involving muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves and fascia. Conditions like sciatica, carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, rotator cuff problems, headaches and TMJ, (just to mention a few) can often be resolved quickly and permanently with A.R.T. All of these conditions have something in common – overused muscles.

Treatment begins with evaluating tissue texture, tightness and movement, by the use of the practitioner's hands. Certified practitioners are educated on how to locate and feel different tissue textures, and to determine how a patient's movement is affected and range of motion restricted, which may eventually lead to weakness and dysfunction.

The procedure for treating soft tissue injuries or nerve entrapments is to first locate from where the problem originates as this is sometimes not at the pain site, but from another area. After finding a restrictive muscle or structure, the practitioner applies tension to the

tissue in the direction of the fibers and then stretches it, helping to breakdown scar tissue. This allows the tissue to begin healing by delivering oxygen and fresh blood to the area. When you have small muscle tears (sprains), the matrix (foundation) of how new tissue lays down evenly is impeded. If you have an injury, scar tissue forms and the matrix tissue lays down unevenly. This must be addressed so that the new tissue can lay down evenly and adjacent structures don't stick together creating a dysfunction.

Active Release Therapy is different from massage because the patient is actively involved in the therapy. If you want to get pampered and lay there, you should find a massage therapist; but if you want long-lasting results and relief from pain to continue being active in your life, then Active Release therapy may be the solution.



Mike Butler performs Active Release Technique on a client.

From a sports performance perspective, it's a huge advantage to have someone onsite that can provide this service. Many professional sports teams, in the NFL, MLB, NHL, PGA, LPGA, and ATP, have A.R.T. practitioners on staff. As

an example, a football player comes hobbling over to the sidelines grabbing at his neck. The practitioner identifies it as a "stinger" which feels like a paralysis to the player. Using the patented technique, the practitioner performs a few moves on the player's neck, and within minutes he is back on the field.

If properly evaluated and treated, most conditions are permanently resolved within 6 visits. This doesn't mean that another injury won't occur unless you do the prescribed A.R.T. home program protocol faithfully. If billed under a soft tissue code, most insurance companies cover the procedure. If A.R.T. keeps you off the operating table, eliminates the need for prescription medications, and avoids the need for shots, it will save you time, money - and your health - in the long run.

Michael K. Butler is co-owner of Kinetix Health and Performance center in Palm Desert. He holds a state license as a physical therapist assistant, national certifications of distinction through the NSCA as a strength and conditioning coach, Poliquin International state coach and as a Full body Active Release Techniques Practitioner. He is the fitness expert on a sports radio talk show (1010 KXPS) three times a week. He can be reached at 760-200-1719 or at michael@kinetixcenter.com.

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Healing Through Water

By Karina Chung, Spa Director at Agua Serena Spa

After spending a relaxing week in Curacao in the Dutch Caribbean, we realized this tropical paradise contained a secret of life. And it may be found in the turquoise clear waters that surround this tranquil island.

Locals will tell you that the sea can cure any ailment. In fact, the Arawak Indians, the first inhabitants of the island, utilized the oceanic caves' natural spring waters for their healing powers. If you are ridden with the flu, a sprained ankle or even suffering from sadness, they say, 'jump into the ocean and all will be healed.'

In the definition of SPA—"sanitas per aguam" which is Latin for healing through waters—I find that there is merit in taking a plunge. The number one cause of illness is stress—whether from work, relationships, or finances. There must be something we can do to ease the stress and promote healing from within. So do as the Romans do! The Romans took baths and used hot thermal waters to detoxify and relieve many symptoms including arthritis and other joint issues. It was more than just your simple bath, salts and bubbles. The Romans created a bathing ritual that included bathing, sweating, steaming, massage and relaxation. Fortunately here in the Desert, we can enjoy a similar ritual at one of many local spas to achieve a peaceful mind and body.



Start off by feeling comfortable in your body, enveloped in a cozy robe. The spa is one place you can be yourself: no discrimination, no comparison to the person next to you. The spa accepts people of all shapes, sizes, gender and occupation. It invites you to come as you are and let go of stress in your life. Sit quietly on a chaise lounge and explore the outdoors, or take refuge in a dim relaxation room while allowing your thoughts to wander freely.

Begin with a Eucalyptus steam to sweat and draw out toxins, while applying a chilled washcloth to cool down your face and neck. Next, enter a dry sauna,

to raise body temperature and create dry heat of relief. Add to the experience with a tightening facial mask while lying in the steam or sauna, chilled cucumbers on the eyes, and a Moroccan Oil mask on your hair.

Then step into the healing waters of a warm bath filled with aromatic sea salts that encourage your soul to leave the body. The hot waters surround, bringing relief to the back, neck, shoulders, legs and arms. It allows you moments to reflect on yourself and start the healing process. Escape to a stress-free world and become enveloped in water. The minerals found in Dead Sea salts include Bromide, Sodium, Magnesium, Calcium and Potassium. Over thousands of years, since the ancient Egyptians, people have utilized the sea for therapy to relieve joint disorders, skin conditions, allergies and to promote anti-aging. These special minerals assist in calming the nervous system, increasing blood circulation, relaxing stiff muscles and promoting lymphatic drainage. Typically we look to expensive medicines to cure ailments, when natural resources are often less than \$2.00 per ounce.



Enhance your spa experience with more hydrotherapy by partaking in an outdoor rain shower. Close your eyes and imagine you are standing in a waterfall of cool water rushing down from head to toe. This will lower body temperature and cause blood vessels to contract, creating an awakening experience. Wash away your worries, along with facial masks and hair products, for a deep cleanse. By the end of this spa hydrotherapy ritual, you will feel relaxed and rejuvenated.

Enjoy the spa facilities once a month along with a therapeutic massage to relieve tension and stress. The spa is not only about pampering. It helps take care of one's mind, body and soul. You may find that healing waters will help to relieve back and body pain and banish stress from your life.

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 Regency Indian Wells Resort & 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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5th Annual Desert Woman's Show Bigger, Better and More Charitable Than Ever

One of the largest expos for women in California, the 5th Annual Desert Woman's Show, takes place November 17th & 18th featuring Home, Health, Wellness, Art, Fashion and Beauty at the Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa in Rancho Mirage.

The weekend-long expo is expected to attract thousands of visitors to shine a spotlight on women's issues and focus on improvement and enlightenment in every aspect of life.

In Home, Health & Wellness pavilion, Desert Regional Medical Center will offer complimentary health screenings and demonstrations of the new daVinci Robot. There will be fitness demonstrations and over 100 enticing, life-enhancing exhibits featuring everything from home decor to chiropractic services, rejuvenating massage, holistic solutions, nutritional supplements

and renowned physicians, including Dr. Andrew Ordon, of "The Doctors".

The Art & Fashion pavilion will showcase fine jewelry, fall fashion trends and local artists including many captivating sculptures from pop artists, Karen & Tony Barone.

Macy's Center Stage, hosted by local TV personality Patti Gribow, will offer inspiring stories with a "Women of Influence" panel discussion as well as dynamic fashion shows featuring celebrity Michael Costello ("Project Runway"), Macy's Palm Desert and V&G Hipwear.

Local financial guru, Reesa Manning with Integrated Wealth Management will host 'a financial bootcamp' and on Sunday, The Holistic Network presents an "Awakening the Goddess Within" series with The Practical Shaman, Renee Baribeau, and

Lori Ann Lothian, a popular blogger and relationship writer/editor. Other speakers include co-developer of Thought Field Therapy Joanne Callahan, and Dr. Karen Vizer with "Eating for Energy & Beauty."

The Desert Woman's Show also welcomes men with a luxury and classic car display, a Taste of the Valley including 20 local restaurants and a beer garden with an outdoor, solar-powered "Healthy Lifestyles Stage" spotlighting organic gardening and healthy living demonstrations.

Other attractions include the author of "Sexy in Your Sixties" Joan Bunney, local fashion editor, Susan Stein, and authors and fitness experts, the Alberici Sisters, members of the original "Dean Martin Goldiggers", who will perform with the All-Stars Band throughout the weekend.

"We are delighted to offer so much for our ladies—and the men who love them—to indulge in," said Diana Marlo of Marlo Productions. "This unique event offers something for everyone; it is an informative,

fun and inspiring weekend."

Sponsors include Macy's, Cosmetic Surgery Institute, Hot Purple Energy, Desert Regional Medical Center, Rabobank, Integrated Wealth Management, Time Warner Cable, the City of Rancho Mirage, Palm Springs Life, and Agua Caliente Casino Resort.

Advance general admission tickets are \$15/day, with proceeds supporting local charities, including: American Heart Association, Loving All Animals, The First Tee, American Business Women Association, The Unforgettables and Women Leaders Forum.

The 5th Annual Desert Women's Show will be open Saturday and Sunday, November 17 & 18 from 10:00am to 5:00pm. For exhibit & program information, call (760) 285-3903. Tickets available from all participating charities and online at www.DesertWomansShow.com, and find them on Twitter and Facebook.

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Exercise is Medicine for Parkinson's Patients

By Stacy Hennis, PT, C/NDT

About 60,000 Americans are diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease (PD) each year. Currently, an estimated 7 to 10 million people are living with PD worldwide. This devastating disease impacts many, negatively affecting quality of life for the patient, as well as the family.

There is no cure for PD. Symptoms are standardly treated with medication to provide relief. Recent research is proving that exercise can slow or reverse some of the physical decline associated with PD. Data from the Department of Neurology at the Pittsburgh Institute for Neurodegenerative Disease, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, shows in animals that exercise helps to protect remaining dopamine cells by increasing GDNF, a substance important in protecting brain cells. This demonstrates that exercise can provide protection for the brain.

The George and Mary Lou Boone Center for Parkinson's Disease Research at USC-LA has also examined the effect of exercise. They are finding changes in the excitability in the basal ganglia, an area greatly affected by PD. Researchers at the National Institutes of Health have hypothesized that exercise enhances the signals of dopamine, and improves physical function by

suppressing other chemicals affecting the brain. This appears especially true after higher intensity exercise.

Exercise also helps with cerebral oxygenation—blood flow and oxygen to the brain. Aerobic exercise increases oxygen flow and leads to

as compared to their peers.

An exercise program as simple as walking can make a difference. The earlier someone starts to exercise after diagnosis, the better and longer lasting the results. Other beneficial exercise include Tai Chi, Qigong, Nordic walking (using two walking sticks), treadmill and bicycle riding. Until recently, traditional physical therapy for someone with PD focused on low to medium intensity programs and accommodations for a weakened body. A newer method is the LSVT® BIG program, an innovative treatment that focuses on big movements, while addressing the sensory problems that exist with PD. For example, someone with PD may feel that they are walking normally when they're actually taking small steps or shuffling.

LSVT® BIG takes PD symptoms into consideration, and can only be provided by a LSVT® certified physical or occupational therapist.

Please remember to always seek your physician's approval before beginning an exercise program.

Stacy Hennis is the owner of New Beginning Physical Therapy, Inc., an in-home therapy company. She has a Masters degree in Physical Therapy, as well as advanced certifications in treating adults with stroke, brain injuries and Parkinson's. Stacy can be reached at 760-218-9961 or online at NewBeginningPT.com.



Stacy Hennis, LSVT works with a client on BIG program moves designed specifically for Parkinson's patients

improved brain functioning, cognitive functioning, learning and memory, and enhanced energy levels.

It is well documented that people with PD lose muscle strength faster than other healthy adults. This leads to impaired balance and mobility. An increased risk of falls results from instability and walking difficulty. Researchers at the School of Public Health at Columbia reviewed Medicare claims and survey data. They showed a three times higher chance that someone with Parkinson's will fall and fracture a hip



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SongShine: Gaining Vocal Strength Through the Power of Music

Music is an integral part of our human experience. Our brains have processed and learned from the natural musical tones and rhythms around us—nature's music—for as long as man has walked on this earth.

Believing that music is life-giving and that humans are hard-wired to benefit from it, SongShine, a music-based speech and voice therapy program, was launched in 2006 as a pilot study at Eisenhower Medical Center for the Traub Parkinson's Center. SongShine's founder, Ruthanna Metzger, recognized that music, especially singing, was scoring high marks with neuroscientists and neurologists because of a process known as neuroplasticity, which helps rewire the brain.

"The organizational aspects of speech are in the brain's left hemisphere, which often ceases to send clear speech signals when damaged by disease or trauma," states Metzger, "detail, volume, and pace of speech become compromised." Music, however, is distributed throughout many areas of the brain. Musical therapies like SongShine can help the brain "switch channels," finding alternate pathways for better speech function.

According to Dr. Neil Hermanowicz, neurologist at the Traub Center, a study of music therapy as a form of treatment for Parkinson's disease was published in 2000 by Claudio Pacchetti, MD and his colleagues at the Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Centre in Italy.

Researchers found that music therapy, including "choral singing, voice exercise, rhythmic and free body movements, and active music involving collective invention" produced measurable improvements in the participants' mobility, happiness, and overall sense of quality of life.

SongShine offers an opportunity for people to improve both their speaking and singing skills in an atmosphere that lifts spirits, touches hearts, releases memories and creates a strong sense of community. Wayne Curtis, PhD, of Palm Springs, says the program brought him back to life. He developed Parkinson's in the thirty-fifth year of his career as a Clinical Psychologist. He had been a soloist since his teens, starring in high school musicals and working his way through college and graduate school singing at the professional level. "I always dreamed that when I retired, I would have nothing to interfere with my singing," said Curtis. But the closer he got to retirement age, the more he began to notice the early symptoms of the disease: the expressionless face, the tremors, the rigidity, and the lack of enunciation in speech. "I was embarrassed and ashamed, so I occupied myself with hobbies that did not require public appearances. I had decided I would never sing again."

After five years, Curtis heard about SongShine's success in helping people with strokes and Parkinson's rediscover their voices. He decided to give it a try. "The minute I walked into the room, I knew I had found something special. The atmosphere generated by the director, teachers, and other participants that made me feel I had come home." Since joining the class, Wayne has made a CD entitled I'm Still Me (in spite of PD) and makes guest solo appearances throughout the Valley.

Geoffrey Webb of Palm Springs, agrees, "I am eighty-one years young and have spent most of my life working in the theater. For the past six years I have done very little and with the onset of Parkinson's, my voice has suffered greatly. By attending SongShine, my voice has regained clarity and volume. Not only is the class beneficial for my voice, it is food for my soul."

SongShine takes place at Palm Desert Community Presbyterian Church on Hwy 74. Prior singing experience is not required and all are welcome.

Classes begin November 5, 1-2:30pm. For more information or to register online visit www.SongShineforParkinsons.org or call the SongShine Foundation office at 425-210-3612. SongShine Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity.



Wayne Curtis sings to a packed house in the 2012 SongShine Celebration featuring music from The Sound of Music.



Geoffrey Webb sings "Everything's Up To Date in Kansas City," from SongShine's Celebration Concert featuring music from Oklahoma.

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Lessons in Longevity

By Lauren Del Sarto and Friends

I love spending time with our elders. I always walk away with a smile on my face and a new appreciation. Recently, I sat down with some new friends at Mission Hills Senior Living to chat about "Lessons in Longevity." Here some of the words of wisdom—and laughter—from my delightful meeting with Mitzi (98), Rose (96) and Arnie (88), a former standup comedian :

Rose: It is wonderful you are doing this, Lauren. We often feel that very few people think about how we have made it to this age.

Arnie: I should leave now, because I don't feel like your elder.

Please stay, Arnie... What do you all feel is the primary thing that has gotten you here today?

Mitzi: In my lifetime, I have been a very lucky woman, because I have had my health. My daughter said, 'Mother, you never complain about anything.' And I told her, 'Look, I am a well woman now, wait til I get sick. Then you'll hear from me!'

Arnie: I feel differently. I have never denied myself of anything. If I want to get toasted I will. If I want to starve myself for 48 hours, I will. I let my body do the talking.

Rose: You are the exception to the rule!

He is only 88. You two do have a few years on him!

Arnie: Genetics do have a lot to do with it. My answer in life is that you are born crying, right? You might as well leave laughing.

So, health—whether you are born with it or practice it. What else?

Rose: I have always been a positive person. I have never looked back. Tomorrow is another day.

Mitzi: Do unto others. That one has always served me well.

Arnie: Oh, I'd be in prison.

Rose: It is also very important to me that I have family who still honors me.

All great thoughts. What things do you do to keep your minds so sharp?

Mitzi: I play bridge. In fact, I am playing today.

Arnie: I read a lot. It is the greatest attribute a parent can give a child. You always learn something from a book.

Mitzi: I read the obituaries every day.

Arnie: And you're not in them.

Mitzi: I pass up the ones that are older and only read the ones that are young, because it concerns me. What is killing the young people of today?

Well, we hope to provide those young people with a few words of wisdom so you won't be reading about them, Mitzi.

Rose: When you get to this age, your mind is willing, but your body sometimes just can't keep up, and it is frustrating. But life teaches you good and bad and you can never give up. Embrace what life gives you and make the most of it!



Mitzi Spivak (98)
"Moderation ('but I should have been a lawyer')"



Rose Zavodnik (96)
"A positive attitude"



Arnold "Arnie" Stuart (88)
"You gotta have laughter"

Send Us Your Lessons in Longevity!

Email to News@DesertHealthNews.com include your name, age, home town and photo!

Save
The Date



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Friday, November 9th

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2:00 - 3:30 Speaker Presentations

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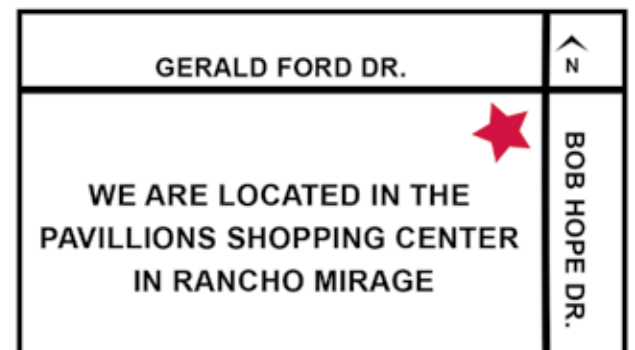
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