



January/February 2014

## what's inside

### Medical News

5

Your Diabetes Care Includes Your Dentist

### Natural Options

13

Meditation Delivers Results in Schools

### Integrated Practices

20

New Biomarker Screenings For Cardio Health

### Financial Health

22

Clinton Health Matters Conference Returns

### Family Health

23

Young Women Leaders Learn and Give Back

### Senior Health

24

For All the World to Hear: Cochlear Implants

### Health & Beauty

26

Vein Treatments: Not Only Skin Deep

### Fitness

28

Choosing the Right Exercise Program for You

### Desert Events

30

Humana Challenge Brings Healthy Fun to La Quinta

## INTEGRATIVE HEART HEALTH

Reversing heart disease is a reality for many these days, and preventing it an attainable goal for millions more. It doesn't simply take a pill or two from your doctor. It doesn't happen solely by watching the foods you eat. Exercising alone isn't enough, and there is no magic supplement. But through the advances in today's medicine and an integrative approach, doctors and health care practitioners are helping their patients reverse and prevent heart disease in greater numbers than ever before.

The credit, however, goes to those consumers who are taking their health into their own hands and proactively implementing the necessary changes to live healthier lifestyles. These consumers are not solely depending on their doctors to 'fix' them; they are helping their doctors to help themselves.

But we still have a long way to go, because cardiovascular disease remains the number one killer in the United States today accounting for more deaths than all forms of cancer combined. "Most patients hospitalized with heart disease show a similar nutritional profile," states renowned heart surgeon and integrative doctor, Steven Gundry, MD, "they're overfed but undernourished, with remarkably

low levels of quality protein and vitamins and minerals revealed in their blood work."

In his new book, *The 30-Day Heart Tune-Up: A Breakthrough Medical Plan to Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*, Steven Masley, MD, states that most physicians have become accustomed to treating "so-called" high cholesterol levels, which is understandable as years ago, abnormal cholesterol profiles were deemed the leading cause of heart attack and strokes. Today, however, Dr. Masley states that the recent epidemic of elevated blood sugar levels, low fitness, expanding waistlines, and obesity (collectively called the metabolic syndrome) has become the new number one cause.

Thus to successfully combat heart disease, both patients and doctors need to take an integrative approach.

#### What is an integrative approach?

Integrative medicine (also called functional medicine) is a healing-oriented practice that takes into account the whole person and all aspects of an individual's lifestyle. With heart health, it includes a doctor's care to first help prevent disease, which is now more effective than ever thanks to advanced

*Continued on page 9*



**How many prescription drugs are you taking? One or two? You are not alone. Nearly 7 in 10 Americans are on at least one prescription drug, and more than half take two, according to a recent report by the Mayo Clinic and the Olmstead Medical Center.<sup>1</sup> 20 percent of us are on five or more.**

It appears that drugs are prescribed to both men and women across all age groups. High blood pressure drugs do skew towards older age groups, and those being treated average three pills a day.<sup>2</sup> These new statistics are comparable to other reports nationally, says study author Jennifer St. Sauver, Ph.D., a member of the Mayo Clinic Population Health Program.

There is no denying that prescription drugs are lifesaving therapies in many cases. However, their use in this country has increased steadily over the past decade,<sup>1</sup> and what's more, overdoses involving prescription drugs are at new epidemic levels, now killing more Americans than heroin and cocaine combined.<sup>3</sup> This startling fact, and action steps to address the problem, will be a key focus at January's Clinton Health Matters Conference in La Quinta. (See Conference page 22)

#### How did we get here?

Why is prescription drug use so out of control? Is it because busy doctors often lack the time to address whole person care, and thus write prescriptions in a sincere effort to fix us to the best of their ability? Or are we as patients just looking for that quick fix? Numerous reports point to both. It is certainly interesting to note that the increase in use mirrors the FDA's approval of pharmaceutical companies to advertise on TV (1997), a novelty in only two countries worldwide - the U.S. and New Zealand<sup>4</sup>. As such, it is not surprising that you will recognize some of the top selling drugs on the following chart (their promotional messages may even dance in your head).

*Continued on page 4*



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# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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Community

This year, let's all take an active role in our own health care.

Let's educate ourselves and work with health care professionals who embrace 'whole person care.' We are fortunate to live in a community with an abundance of medical professionals, hospitals and natural health care practitioners who understand that educating consumers to take care of themselves and their loved ones is the only way to end our country's health epidemics, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Let's create a better tomorrow for ourselves, and then reach out to the

community and see how we can help others. Desert Health® is honored to be a Clinton Health Matters Initiative Pledge Maker, and we continue our efforts to recruit medical professionals to volunteer just 4 hours a month to our community's only free medical clinic, Coachella Valley's Volunteers in Medicine. With a three-month patient waiting list, their need is great.

If you need inspiration to get on the path to good health, start in La Quinta. There are numerous free wellness activities taking place around the Humana Challenge and everyone is encouraged to attend.

As we enter our fourth year, we cannot thank you enough for reading Desert Health®. This publication would not exist without the continued support of our advertisers, so if you visit their businesses, please let them know you saw them on our pages.

Here's to a healthy New Year for all!

*Lauren*  
Lauren Del Sarto  
Publisher



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## We are Proud to Support These Desert Events



### Jan. 6-11 • Humana Challenge Healthy Fun in La Quinta

Expanded activities around this year's Humana Challenge (Jan. 15-19) include Humana Fit, Fun & Forever Week (Jan. 6-10) at the La Quinta Senior Center featuring daily fitness demos like Zumba and Tai Chi, healthy food demos, a luncheon and more! Humana Well-Being Walk (Jan. 11) 5-3/4 mile walk starts at 9a at the La Quinta Community Park followed by the Humana Healthy Fun Fair; and the Humana Day at the Certified Farmers Market (Jan. 12). All activities are FREE. Visit [PlayInLaQuinta.com](http://PlayInLaQuinta.com). (760) 777.7090.

### Jan. 11 • Mayor's Race, Swim and Wellness Festival

Join Palm Springs' Mayor Pougnet and special guests for one of the most scenic runs you will ever experience: 10 mile, 5K (and 1k for kids!). The race is part of the Mayor's commitment to health and reducing childhood obesity. Wellness Festival at Ruth Hardy Park 8a – 11a with scheduled appearances by Suzanne Somers, Scott Cole and Billy Blanks. Visit [YourSustainableCity.com](http://YourSustainableCity.com) or Register online at Active.com.

### Jan. 13 • The DASH Diet: Lower Your Blood Pressure

Free lecture given by Eisenhower Medical Center Registered Dietitians. 1p – 2p. DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) to a healthier you and call (760) 568.1234 to register!

### Feb. 1 • 11th Annual Community Heart Conference

Presented by Eisenhower Desert Cardiology Center and Eisenhower Smilow Heart Center. 8a– 1:30p, Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower. Free and open to the public. No reservations required. For more information call (760) 568.1234 or visit [emc.org](http://emc.org).

### Feb. 6-9 • 14th Annual Palm Desert Senior Games & International Sports Festival

Four-day competition which qualifies those aged 55+ for state, regional, and national Senior Games. Events include basketball, golf, pickleball, swimming and more. Venues throughout the valley. Come out and support our local athletes! Visit [MyRecreationDistrict.com](http://MyRecreationDistrict.com) or (760) 541.4184.

### Feb. 7 • Go Red for Women Luncheon

Heart disease is the #1 killer of women. Come learn what you need to know at this memorable event featuring speakers, a silent auction, gift bags, and stories from survivors. 9a-2p. Visit [CVGoRedLuncheon.org](http://CVGoRedLuncheon.org). (760) 346.8109.

### Feb. 9 • Steve Chase Humanitarian Awards

One of Desert AIDS Project's largest fundraisers! The fun begins with red carpet arrivals, cocktail reception and silent auction at 5:30, and dinner, awards & entertainment at 7:00. The after party starts at 9:00. For more information and tickets visit [www.DesertAidsProject.org](http://www.DesertAidsProject.org) (760) 323.2118.

### Feb. 14 • Affair of the Heart

This free community education and screening program offers lectures on heart conditions, treatment options and prevention, as well as free blood pressure and blood sugar screenings. Featured speakers include Mellanie True Hills, founder of [www.stopafib.org](http://www.stopafib.org) and author of *A Woman's Guide to Saving Her Own Life* and renowned heart surgeon and author Steven Gundry, MD. Call (800) 491.4990.

### Feb. 28 & March 1 • CanadaFest

Be a Canuck for a day and celebrate our friends from Canada. Enjoy Canadian food, music, health and wellness, and fashion shows at the Renaissance Esmeralda in Indian Wells. Fri 1p-8p; Sat. 9a-5p. \$10 daily admission; children under 8 free. Visit [BetteKingProductions.com](http://BetteKingProductions.com) (760) 202.4007.

### March 1 • Walk to End Alzheimer's

The 15th annual Alzheimer's Association event takes place at Palm Desert Civic Center Park. Local residents and businesses will gather to raise awareness and funds to fight Alzheimer's disease. In addition to the two-mile route, attendees will enjoy a health fair, entertainment, food, awards and family festivities. Registration opens at 9a and the walk begins at 10:30a. Visit [www.alz.org/socal](http://www.alz.org/socal) (760) 328.6767.

### March 2 • Poses on El Paseo

All are encouraged to join local yoga instructors for a day of health and wellness benefitting Coachella Valley's Volunteers in Medicine. A two-hour class performed to live music is for people of all ages and ability. The event will also include healthy food and a post-class celebration. 7a-11a at The Gardens on El Paseo. Donations \$25 in advance/\$35 onsite. Visit [PosesonPaseo.com](http://PosesonPaseo.com) or contact [johnnyuhas@me.com](mailto:johnnyuhas@me.com).

### March 22 • 19th Annual Jim Cook Day of Hope for Diabetes

Presented by the Desert Diabetes Club, this FREE event is open to the public and all those interested in diabetes care. Many medical speakers are featured and this year's celebrity keynote speaker is legendary entertainer, Tony Orlando. Visit [EMC.org/DDC](http://EMC.org/DDC) (760) 773.1578.

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## Advanced AFib Technology Showing Promise

**Desert Regional successfully treating patients**

Some patients with atrial fibrillation (or AFib) and heart rhythm disorders may be able to say good-bye to their medications thanks to new technology offered at Desert Regional Medical Center.

AFib occurs when the heart's electrical system has a problem that causes the heart to fibrillate, or beat very rapidly. When this occurs, the heart cannot pump blood properly throughout the body. The new technology, called Stereotaxis Robotic Navigation, enhances a cardiologist's ability to treat problem cells that are causing the heart's electrical system to misfire. Desert Regional has been actively using the robotics since August with promising results.

According to the American Heart Association, AFib is the most common type of heart rhythm disorder, affecting more than 2.7 million people in the U.S. AFib can cause chest pain; however, in some cases, people may not feel any symptoms. The likelihood of developing AFib increases with age, and those affected are five times more likely to have a stroke.

"Among the senior population, the percentage of people with atrial fibrillation can be as high as 8 to 10 percent, and that's a significant number," said Dr. Hetal Bhakta, MD, a cardiologist with Desert Regional Medical Center who specializes in



Dr. Bhakta and Desert Regional's Stereotaxis

electrophysiology, the treatment of heart rhythm disorders. "A lot of the episodes are silent, so these patients don't know they even have atrial fibrillation."

AFib is a serious illness. When the heart cannot move blood properly, it may pool in the chambers of the heart and blood clots may form. When a clot blocks a blood vessel in the brain, heart failure or stroke may occur.

Palm Springs real estate broker Edward Leao experienced serious and debilitating health issues that can come with atrial fibrillation. Following cardiac bypass surgery and a heart valve replacement, Leao continued to have severe fatigue and other symptoms that made it impossible for him to work. "I simply could not stand up for any time at all," Leao said. "I would have to sit down or lay down, or I would just fall down."

After coming to Desert Regional for an unrelated health issue, Leao met Dr. Bhakta, and they discussed the catheter ablation procedure for his heart rhythm disorder. During catheter ablation, a cardiologist inserts a catheter (a thin flexible tube) into the blood vessel of

the groin, arm or neck. A wire inside that catheter is connected to a special machine that can generate radiofrequency energy at its tip. Using sophisticated imaging technology, the cardiologist can navigate to the places on the heart that are causing the electrical signals to misfire. The radiofrequency energy heats the problem cells and deactivates them. Electrical signals can then move normally through the heart and a regular rhythm can be restored.

Leao underwent the ablation procedure at Desert Regional Medical Center in February 2011. "Immediately I felt the difference," Leao said. "I started getting stronger. I had been totally debilitated for so long, I was afraid to walk far because of my previous experience falling to the ground."

By August of that year, Leao felt he was back to normal. "I took a vacation to Napa and I started out slow, but eventually I was walking three miles in the morning without any problems at all," he said. "That's when I decided my life was back to normal. I don't get dizzy anymore. The first year I took two-hour naps. Now I don't even take naps."

Desert Regional Medical Center installed the Stereotaxis navigation equipment in June to make ablation procedures easier for physicians and more accurate for patients. Rather than push a catheter manually through a patient's blood vessels, with Stereotaxis navigation the cardiologist can steer the catheter remotely while watching its progress on a high-definition computer screen. Powerful magnets lock onto the tip of the catheter and allow it to be steered, improving both precision and safety.

Dr. Bhakta adds, "Manual ablation is like trying to paint a canvas on a small fishing boat in the middle of the ocean with all the waves, compared with painting that same canvas on a steady cruise ship."

This advanced technology also reduces the use of radiation exposure because the physician needs to take fewer x-ray pictures than manual ablation methods would require. According to a recent study, Stereotaxis technology is ten times less likely to injure a patient than manual treatments that do not use robotic navigation and requires approximately one-third less time exposed to radiation.

For more information on this technology, go to [www.desertregional.com/afib](http://www.desertregional.com/afib).

A Healthier  
**HOSPITALS**  
Community

## Affair of the Heart

Desert Regional Medical Center's annual Affair of the Heart will take place on February 14 from 9a-12:30p on the main campus. The event is free and open to all.



Desert Regional is proud to announce that this year's event will feature Mellanie True Hills, author of the multiple award-winning book *A Woman's Guide to Saving Her Own Life: The HEART Program for Health & Longevity*. Hills, a heart disease survivor and founder of StopAfib.org, will team up with Hetal Bhakta, MD for a keynote presentation.

Also appearing will be renowned heart surgeon, Dr. Steven Gundry, founder of The Center for Restorative Medicine and author of *Dr. Gundry's Diet Evolution*.

This free event will also feature heart health screenings, heart-healthy recipe demonstrations and refreshments. Desert Regional Medical Center is located at 1150 N. Indian Canyon Drive in Palm Springs. Please call (800) 491.4990 to RSVP.

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Considering Knee Replacement?

By Luke Gentry, PT, DPT, OCS & Jason S. Sanders, PT, DPT, OCS, GCS

An estimated 27 million Americans have some form of osteoarthritis. Joint replacement surgery is considered the most effective option for reducing disability and restoring function of those suffering, and 95% of patients report that they are satisfied with their procedure. That is probably why there are more than 4.5 million Americans currently living with at least one Total Knee Replacement (TKR).

What are some of the indications for considering a TKR?

**Pain!** Generally described as a dull ache that is difficult to localize, is aggravated by activity during the day, and often followed by pain in the evening.

**Functional Limitations.** Limiting activity due to pain can often lead to progressive muscular weakness, increased joint stiffness, and the loss of motion needed for many activities.

**Quality of Life.** Patients often ask, “How will I know when I need a knee replacement?” It is truly when the pain in your knee prevents you from living the life you want to lead. If you are making decisions about activity based on how your knee will react, it is time to look into your options on how to improve that situation.



Knee replacement is a viable option for many

**Preparation.** Pre-operative physical therapy can be an important part of your preparation for surgery. Improving your physical condition as well as the strength and range of motion at the knee can help to ensure a positive post-operative outcome.

What can you expect after Total Knee Replacement?

Of course, there is going to be the normal post-operative pain and swelling. Your physical therapist’s goal will be to help you regain your knee mobility and strength as quickly as possible. To ensure a full return to function and an optimal recovery you will need to put in a little hard work.

That work will begin with the physical therapists in the hospital the day of surgery. You will be instructed in safe mobility with an assistive device (likely a walker or cane). Following a 2-4 day stay in the hospital you will usually be seen for in-home physical therapy for 2-4 weeks. You will slowly be weaned from your assistive device to walk independently. Somewhere between weeks 3-5 you will likely begin outpatient physical therapy where continued focus will be given to controlling swelling, improving your lower extremity strength, maximizing range of motion, and most importantly getting you back to the activities you love.

As your strength and range of motion normalize, your physical therapist will begin to add more dynamic and functional activities to address the specific demands of your return to life, work, and sport. Usually within 10-12 weeks of surgery most patients have returned to the vast majority of their daily activities without pain or limitation.

TKR is a long process, but can be worth it. Prepare yourself mentally and physically, follow physician instructions, give yourself the time to heal, and work hard in physical therapy.

Dr. Luke Gentry is the clinic director of Avid Physical Therapy’s Cathedral City office and can be reached at [luke@avidphysicaltherapy.com](mailto:luke@avidphysicaltherapy.com) (760) 202.0368.

Health is a Choice

Continued from page 1

What drugs are we taking?

It may be surprising to learn that two of the top three selling drugs are for depression (Abilify and Cymbalta)<sup>5</sup>, but not so when you consider the The Mayo Clinic findings: nearly 1 in 4 women ages 50-64 are on an antidepressant.<sup>1</sup>

The most often prescribed drug (in units) is the cholesterol-lowering drug, Crestor, which is one of four in the top ten for both units sold and drug sales. Joining this list is Nexium (“the purple pill”), Cymbalta, and the bronchodilator Advair Diskus.

Continued on page 9

Top 10 Drugs by Total Annual Sales			
Rank	Drug (Brand Name)	Primary use	Annual sales 10/1/12- 9/30/13
1	Abilify	depression/ mental/mood disorders	\$6,391,050,009
2	Nexium	acid reflux/ulcers	\$6,086,840,503
3	Cymbalta	depression/ mental/mood disorders	\$5,432,152,672
4	Humira	inflammation: arthritis	\$5,352,226,238
5	Crestor	statin: cholesterol	\$5,318,542,115
6	Advair Diskus	inflammation: bronchial	\$5,114,309,392
7	Enbrel	inflammation: joints/skin	\$4,673,141,322
8	Remicade	inflammation: joints/bowels/skin	\$4,058,128,532
9	Copaxone	multiple sclerosis	\$3,788,545,102
10	Neulasta	to increase white blood cells	\$3,537,574,204

Source: IMS Health



DID YOU KNOW?

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## THE SURGEON

DR. DAVID S. JOHNSON



### Are PPIs the Right Solution for Heartburn?

As a physician, I was very skeptical when pharmaceutical manufacturers began to promote prescription medications – which can have very serious side effects – on TV. As an expert on gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), I am shocked at the frequency of the Proton Pump Inhibitor (PPIs) commercials – even Larry the Cable Guy is now an expert on how to manage your heartburn.

What I, and most GERD experts believe, is that in order to make an informed decision regarding taking PPIs, or any drug for that matter, one must understand exactly what the drug does, why it is prescribed, potential side effects, and other options for treatment. At \$14 billion in US sales annually and growing, it is fair to say that PPIs are used indiscriminately in the United States without the above criteria being satisfied.

PPIs are effective in decreasing the production of acid in the stomach, making its contents less irritating when they reflux into the esophagus. However, they do nothing to decrease the frequency or volume of your reflux. In effect, they make you feel better without addressing the disease itself. That comes at a price:

1. Once you begin, PPIs are likely to be required for life.
2. PPIs have immediate possible side effects of headache, diarrhea, and abdominal pain.
3. Long-term side effects include increased risk for hip fracture; a serious colon infection called C. difficile colitis; pneumonia; a low magnesium level which can lead to heart rhythm problems; and interaction with other drugs.
4. Almost 40% of people on PPIs continue to have symptoms.
5. Over 30% of PPI users do not have reflux disease.

Given those issues, what else can you do?

First, confirm that you have reflux disease. Diagnosing via symptoms or reduced improvement on PPIs is not a good means of diagnosing GERD. See a physician who can perform the necessary diagnostics to validate a GERD diagnosis. If you are found to have reflux disease, there are many other things you can do to reduce your GERD symptoms:

**Lifestyle Changes** can reduce or eliminate the need for such potent medications.

**Diet:** Knowing and avoiding your “trigger” foods can result in significant symptoms reduction.

**BMI:** Those extra pounds put pressure on your diaphragm causing an increase in GERD symptoms.

**Medications:** If you need medication to control your symptoms, there are several other prescription drug categories that are available with fewer side effects, such as H2 blockers (Zantac, Tagamet), as well as antacids like Tums and Mylanta. It is also important to point out that if any of these medications are needed, they should not be taken daily but only to control symptoms.

Finally, the most important thing you can do is to learn more about your heartburn. Reflux disease is a long-term chronic condition that can progress, leading to many complications including Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma (esophageal cancer). I recommend that our patients with reflux disease visit [www.refluxmd.com](http://www.refluxmd.com), an internet healthcare community dedicated to GERD. Educate yourself, know all your treatment options, build your support team (including a GERD expert), and build your plan to symptom relief and good health.

*Dr. Johnson is a board-certified general surgeon with Premier Surgical Associates in Palm Springs and can be reached at (760) 424.8224.*

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## Your Diabetes Care Team Includes Your Dentist

*By Mo Hishmeh, DDS*

If you have diabetes, the high content of blood sugar can affect your entire body. The disease can harm the kidneys, eyes, nerves, heart and other important systems.

Your teeth and gums are no exception.

Diabetes reduces the ability of the body to fight infection, and studies have shown that diabetics are more susceptible to the development of oral infections and periodontal (gum) disease than those who do not have diabetes.

Two major threats to oral health are dental caries, such as tooth decay and cavities, and periodontal disease. Periodontal disease (affecting the gums) is caused by bacterial infection associated with poor oral hygiene, infrequent dental visits, age, smoking, and certain medical conditions, especially diabetes.

According to the American Dental Association, approximately one-third of adults with diabetes in the United States are undiagnosed, and preventive care among these patients falls below national health objective standards. Therefore, dental professionals can play an important role in the managing care team for patients with diabetes - counseling about improving glucose regulation, maintaining oral and nutritional health, performing daily glucose monitoring tests, and seeing medical professionals for routine care.

The good news is that prevention is in your hands:

- Make sure that your blood sugar is under control.
- See your dentist on a regular basis and keep him or her informed of your health status.
- Keep your mouth in good health, brushing at least twice a day - once in the morning, at night and, ideally after meals.
- A soft-bristled toothbrush is recommended. Consider using an electric toothbrush.
- Flossing at least once a day helps remove plaque between your teeth and under your gum line.
- Schedule professional dental cleanings at least twice a year.

The most important task is to make sure your dentist knows that you have diabetes. Also let your dentist know if you have any other signs and symptoms, such as dry mouth, loose teeth or mouth pain.

In addition, talk with your dentist about receiving elective dental care. Short and stress-free dental procedures should be addressed. Morning appointments should be scheduled since blood glucose levels tend to be under better control at this time of day.

If you have a scheduled appointment, eat and take your medications as directed. And remember, smoking increases the complications of gum disease. There is help to quit smoking. Your dentist or medical professional can help provide available resources.

Managing diabetes is a lifelong commitment, and that includes proper dental care. Your efforts will be rewarded with a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

*Dr. Mo is the owner of El Paseo Dental Care in Palm Desert. He practices a holistic approach to dental care and can be reached at (760) 340.9645.*

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## Hyperbaric Oxygen Aids Osteomyelitis Therapy also shown to combat newly resistant germs

By Doris Steadman

Osteomyelitis is a serious bacterial infection of the bone which may unexpectedly occur from something as simple as a dental procedure or bone fracture. It is often due to a staphylococci (staph) bacteria that begins in soft tissue and spreads to outer layers of bone, and sometimes the inner bone marrow, by way of the blood.<sup>1</sup>

The difficulty of treating osteomyelitis is that it causes a lack of oxygen in the tissues where the healing should occur. Fortunately, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) has proven to be an effective tool for osteomyelitis when used in conjunction with antibiotics and surgery.<sup>1</sup>

Osteomyelitis may occur in infants, children and adults, with different types of bacteria affecting different age groups. It can be chronic or acute. In children it most often occurs at the ends of the long bones of the arms and legs; in adults it is more common in the jaw (mandible), the maxilla (upper palate of the mouth), spine, feet or pelvis.<sup>2</sup>

Conventional treatment may include several weeks of bed rest and antibiotics. In cases where the bone has died, referred to as osteonecrosis and resulting from a loss of blood supply to the area, surgery may be required to remove the dead bone and tissue. Osteonecrosis often results from radiation therapy; it is a gradual process and can take many years to appear. As an adjunct to surgery, HBOT has been shown to produce new blood vessels to help the remaining area heal.<sup>3</sup>

How does HBOT work? HBOT is an FDA-approved medical treatment in which the patient is enclosed in a chamber and breathes oxygen while the chamber pressure is increased as much as three times normal atmospheric pressure. Oxygen under the pressure becomes soluble and reaches areas of the body where the tissues have been compromised, thereby accelerating healing. With osteomyelitis, it provides forced oxygenation in the bones, thus helping to strengthen the bone cells and reabsorb the dead bone. It also adds oxygen to the white blood cells (which depend upon oxygen to function) and helps the body create new blood vessels. In addition, HBOT improves circulation, boosts the effects of antibiotics, and accelerates bone growth and healing.<sup>1</sup>

"In our practice, HBOT is generally used to treat three different classes of patients: 1) osteomyelitis which is resistant to standard surgical treatment; 2) osteoradionecrosis of the jaw related to radiation therapy for the treatment of head and neck cancer; and 3) treatment of poor healing wounds," says oral and maxillofacial surgeon Dr. Milan Jugan of Rancho Mirage. "The tissue in these disease processes all have the same issues, for which hyperbaric oxygen is the ideal medium. Using various protocols, HBOT provides an essential adjunct to our surgical therapy in the rehabilitation of these patients."

HBOT is now a widely accepted and often lifesaving modality. Other applications include diabetic wounds that won't heal, autism, stroke, Lyme disease, and neurological disorders, and many medical conditions are now covered by insurance.

Osteomyelitis, like other necrotizing infections, involves very frightening germs. Some traditional therapies used against these microscopic invaders are beginning to weaken, and HBOT is a vital new process which will help to combat these resistant germs.

For more information, contact Desert Hyperbaric Medicine at (760) 773.3899.

References: 1) [www.hyperbariclink.com/diseases-and-conditions/osteomyelitis](http://www.hyperbariclink.com/diseases-and-conditions/osteomyelitis); 2) [www.medicinenet.com/osteomyelitis/article](http://www.medicinenet.com/osteomyelitis/article); 3) [www.virginiamason.org](http://www.virginiamason.org).

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# Eye Health Linked to Stroke Risk

By Greg Evans, OD

A new study published in the American Heart Association Journal *Hypertension* suggests a correlation between retinal microvascular changes and increased stroke risk.

The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study authored by Dr. Mohammad Ikram reviewed retinal images of 1406 patient ages 50-73 between 1993 and 1995. With each participant, their level of hypertensive retinal disease was classified as A) no retinopathy (eye disease); B) mild retinopathy; or C) moderate retinopathy. After an average 13-year follow-up, researchers found a high correlation between increased hypertensive eye disease and increased risk for stroke. This increased risk occurred in spite of the fact that other risk factors were considered.

Researchers conclude: "This study suggests that the presence of these retinal microvascular changes indicates additional vascular (stroke) risk beyond that conferred by traditional cardiovascular risk factors." Despite having good control of blood pressure, patients with hypertensive eye disease had up to four times greater risk of stroke.

So what does this mean? Let's see how much you know:

**Stroke is what leading cause of disability?**

- 1. 1st
- 2. 3rd
- 3. 5th
- 4. What's a Stroke?

**Stroke is what cause of death?**

- 1. 1st
- 2. 3rd
- 3. 6th

**Stroke is preventable?**

- 1. Always
- 2. Never
- 3. Sometimes

**Being overweight is a risk factor for Stroke?**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

**Having uncontrolled hypertension (high blood pressure)...**

- 1. Increases the risk of a stroke or heart attack by 4-6 times.
- 2. Does not affect stroke risk as it's determined by genetics.
- 3. Increases the risk but only slightly and I'm better off to stop smoking.

**Eye exams can be important even if my blood pressure is under control.**

- 1. Yes, because patients with eye disease from hypertension have higher risk of stroke even if their blood pressure is well controlled.
- 2. No, good blood pressure control means no hypertensive eye disease.
- 3. I have no idea and that's why I read *Desert Health*®.

Stroke is the leading cause of disability and the third leading cause of death. It can be prevented by controlling risk factors. Those risk factors include high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation (irregular heart rhythm), uncontrolled diabetes, smoking, elevated cholesterol, alcohol consumption (greater than 2 drinks/day), existing carotid and/or coronary artery disease and being overweight (BMI>30).

**What's the take home? Get your eyes examined and control your risk factors for stroke.**

*Dr. Evans is the founding owner of Evans Eye Care in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 674.8806 or online at [www.evans eyecare.com](http://www.evans eyecare.com).*

Sources: 1) American Heart foundation; 2) Hypertension online journal August 12, 2013 "Hypertensive Retinopathy Linked to Increased Stroke Risk" Mohammad Kamran Ikram MD, Singapore Eye Research Institute, Department of Ophthalmology, University of Singapore

# Conscious Movements Can Save Your Back

By Alan Eldridge, DPT, OCS

Low back pain is the fifth most common reason for individuals to visit their physician, and it will occur in approximately 80% of individuals at some point in their life.<sup>1</sup> Nationally, those doctor visits cost an estimated \$100 billion cumulatively in a given year.<sup>2</sup> Often back pain can be easily relieved through physical therapy which does not directly contribute to the aforementioned cost; and in fact, it may actually decrease the overall cost. There are many common movement patterns that can contribute to low back pain which can easily be altered with physical therapy.

**Have pain with sitting?** The number one movement-related impairment for individuals who have pain when sitting is decreased flexibility at the hips. If your hips are stiff, you end up sitting too slouched, which adds stress to your back. Make sure your seat is high enough to allow your feet to be on the floor with approximately a seventy degree angle at your hips. Most importantly, you should have an arched back to allow the muscles in your back to be relaxed and decrease the amount of stress. Sit on a towel roll or small pillow to help tilt your pelvis forward and create the small arc in your back.

**Have pain with lifting?** There are many small muscles in the low back used to stabilize our core during activity, but they are not meant to be a primary lifter of our core. If you have pain when lifting - even small items - you may be using your back too much. Learn to use your powerful gluteal muscles which are meant to be our primary lifters. Keep your back straight, stick your bottom out, and bend from the hips and knees (but more your hips).

**Have pain with walking or running?** Low back pain while walking or running can have many causes, but the most common contributors are decreased flexibility of the muscles in the front of your hip and decreased gluteal muscle strength. When your hips cannot move backwards while walking or running, your body compensates with excessive low back movement. Stretch the muscles in the front of your hip (hip flexors) to allow you to move your hips back while walking or running.


Changing the faulty movement strategies which contribute to low back pain is often the most important lesson learned while participating in physical therapy. These hints often take practice and in-depth monitoring to determine if they will be beneficial in decreasing symptoms, but when combined with the strengthening and stretching needed to perform the movements correctly, pain can be alleviated.

*Dr. Alan Eldridge is a Board-Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist for Avid Physical Therapy and can be reached at [aeldridge@avidphysicaltherapy.com](mailto:aeldridge@avidphysicaltherapy.com) (760) 202.0368.*

References: 1) Browning, Gerald. Mechanical low back-pain, prevalence and costs. School of Health Professions, University of Missouri-Columbia. 2005. [http://shp.missouri.edu/vhct/case1699/preval\\_costs.htm](http://shp.missouri.edu/vhct/case1699/preval_costs.htm). Accessed 5/23/13; 2) Crow WT, Willis DR. Estimating costs of care for patients with acute low back pain: A retrospective review of patient records. Journal of American Osteopathic Association. April 1, 2009. Vol 109 229-233.; 3) Fritz JM, Childs JD, Wainner RS, Flynn TW. Primary care referral of patients with low back pain to physical therapy: impact on future health care utilization and costs. Spine. Dec 2012; 1:37(25):2114-21.





Learning to move can negate back pain



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# A Closer Look at the Heart

## Using CT to scan for coronary artery disease

By Stuart T. May, MD

Coronary artery disease (CAD), the leading cause of death for men and women worldwide, is the accumulation of plaque within the walls of the arteries which supply the heart with oxygen and nutrients. Hard plaque is the buildup of calcium, fats and abnormal inflammatory cells within the walls of the arteries. Over time, this plaque can harden which can lead to narrowing of the artery wall (called stenosis).

Normally, the coronary arteries do not contain calcium; therefore, a standard measurement of CAD is the Calcium Score test. However, soft plaque does not contain calcium and has been dubbed the silent killer as it is "hidden" inside the artery walls and can cause sudden death if it ruptures. Soft plaque rupture is responsible for up to 75% of acute coronary events.

The good news is that advanced imaging can identify soft plaque. Over the past 15 years, advances in imaging technology have given clinicians a non-invasive way to evaluate the coronary arteries using Computed Tomography (CT). The Coronary Calcium Score and the Coronary CT Angiogram are both CT exams, so let's take a look at their individual use.

### Coronary Calcium Score

Coronary Calcium Score is a test to measure the presence and amount of calcification in the walls of the coronary arteries. This exam will identify the location and the amount

of calcified plaque in a particular coronary artery. It will not identify the areas of arteries that may have blockages, but it can be used to determine if a patient has CAD and to estimate its severity. This exam is most beneficial for people with an intermediate risk of CAD. Physicians use the Calcium Score to determine follow-up testing and behavior modification, if necessary. This exam should not be used for people with a low or high risk of CAD, or those who are experiencing chest pain, as it does not show soft plaque or areas of blockage.

### Coronary CT Angiogram

This exam is a more detailed look at the coronary arteries as well as the chambers and valves of the heart. It can also identify areas of blockage. A contrast agent is administered which fills the coronary arteries and identifies plaque, both hard and soft. This exam is helpful in assessing a wide range of heart conditions, including coronary artery disease, diseases of the aorta and other structural heart problems. This exam is appropriate for people who have multiple risk factors, are experiencing chest pain, or have had an inconclusive stress test. It may also be used to see if stents are open or if coronary bypass grafts are functioning normally. This test is often performed for screening patients prior to non-cardiac surgeries. A normal result from this study means there is a 99% assurance that there is no coronary artery disease.

Risk factors for developing CAD include family history of heart disease; men over the age of 40 and postmenopausal women; high blood pressure; high cholesterol; smoking; obesity; diabetes; and physical inactivity. A healthy lifestyle can help alleviate your chances of developing coronary artery disease.

Dr. May is a Board Certified Interventional Radiologist at Desert Medical Imaging. DMI performs both screening exams at their Indian Wells location. For more information please call (760) 694-9559 or visit [desertmedicalimaging.com](http://desertmedicalimaging.com).

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# Integrative Heart Health

Continued from page 1

diagnostic testing (see page 20); analyzing the cause of your heart conditions, not merely treating the symptoms; embracing healthy nutrition that is right for you (which may mean drastic changes!); getting proper exercise, managing your stress, and replenishing nutrient deficiencies.

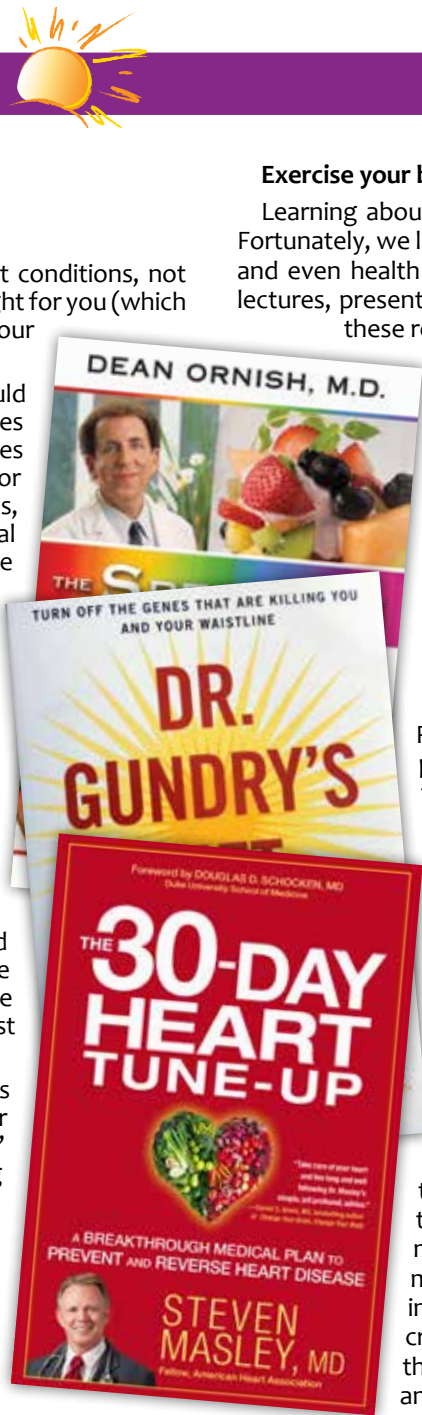
“Instead of a diagnosis of hypertension,” says Dr. Masley, “I would likely call it: ‘not enough exercise, not enough fruits and vegetables in your diet, high emotional stress, and excessive body fat.’” He goes on to say that his treatment plan would not be a prescription drug for blood pressure, but rather to view the whole matrix of health issues, to optimize a new lifestyle plan with customized tools for individual success, and to correct the underlying cause of the blood pressure once and for all.

One of the first pioneers in integrative heart health was Dean Ornish, MD. In his 30+ years of work, Dr. Ornish was the first clinician to offer documented proof that heart disease can be halted, or even reversed, simply by changing your lifestyle. His internationally acclaimed study showed that participants reduced or discontinued medications; their chest pain diminished or disappeared; they felt more energetic, happy, and calm; they lost weight while eating more; and blockages in coronary arteries were actually reduced.

The study indicates that, with significant lifestyle changes, blood flow to the heart and its ability to pump normally improve in less than a month, and the frequency of chest pains can fall by 90% in that time. “Within a year on our program, even severely blocked arteries in the heart became less blocked, and there was even more reversal after five years,” says Ornish. “That’s compared with the natural history in other patients in our study, in which the heart just got worse and worse.”

Since January 2011, after 16 years of extensive review, Medicare has been covering *Dr. Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease* under a new benefit category called "intensive cardiac rehabilitation." Medicare will reimburse certified providers of the 72-hour training program for patients who have coronary heart disease. Many private insurance companies also cover this program, reimbursing for patients who have coronary heart disease and for patients who simply have risk factors.

Dr. Ornish's program seems simple; it's based on a low-fat vegetarian diet, exercise, regular yoga, meditation, and stress reduction. Yet his proven model has paved the way for many others. "Dean Ornish was one of my mentors," states Dr. Masley. "We were the first two people publishing data to show that you can shrink atrial growth through diet and lifestyle changes." Masley's new book follows the same basic principles of diet, exercise, and stress management, but also incorporates advances in diagnostic testing, measured fitness programs, state-of-the-art heart nutrients and a broader nutritional plan. "I believe that you can add more healthy protein and fats (for greater patient compliance) and still achieve success."



**Exercise your brain for your heart.**

Learning about advances in heart health takes two things: resources and desire. Fortunately, we live in a community with hospitals, qualified health care practitioners, and even health food stores which all embrace patient education. Each holds free lectures, presentations and Q&A sessions throughout the year; taking advantage of these resources is up to you.

February is Heart Health Month and Desert Regional Medical Center will be holding their annual “Affair of the Heart” on February 14 featuring Dr. Steven Gundry, as well as, Mellanie True Hills, author of the multiple award-winning book *A Woman’s Guide to Saving Her Own Life: The HEART Program for Health & Longevity*. Hills is also a heart disease survivor and founder of StopAfib.org, and she will present with Desert Regional’s Hetal Bhakta, MD.

Eisenhower will hold a lecture on lowering your blood pressure with the DASH Diet on January 13, and their annual Community Heart Conference takes place on February 1. Both are free and open to the public (see Events page 2 for more information).

Our Valley naturopathic clinics, including Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and the Live Well Clinic in La Quinta also hold educational presentations on natural health and prevention, so visit their websites for topics and schedules.

You can also pick up a book from leaders in the field. We've mentioned *The 30-Day Heart Tune-Up* by Dr. Masley which is out February 4, 2014 and will be followed by a PBS special airing nationally in the first two weeks of March. Dr. Ornish's latest book is *The Spectrum* which is available now, as is Dr. Gundry's *Diet Evolution*. Their messages are the same: preventing and reversing heart disease are possible. Each will offer a slightly different integrative health plan. Which one is the best for you? Quite simply, the one you will follow.

Implementing a new plan must be done under the care of a medical professional. With your education in hand, ask questions and follow the path that is right for you. If your doctor is not one to embrace integrative heart health, build your heart health team to include those who do, such as a registered dietitian to help with nutrition; a naturopathic doctor for prevention and complementary modalities; a massage therapist to help manage stress; a yoga instructor who can encourage a regular practice; or a fitness trainer to create a program that will keep you motivated and moving forward in the right direction. Many of these services are inexpensively offered - and even free - at your local community or senior center, and practicing at home is always an option.

Your health is in your hands. This year, make it a priority in your life and take the necessary steps to prevent heart disease or to use the tools available today to turn your heart health around.

Reference: 1) American Heart Association

## Health is a Choice

Continued from page 4

## Why are we taking all these drugs?

Considering a second report from Drugs.com,<sup>6</sup> we summarized the symptoms consumers are battling with all these prescription drugs, and the absolute forerunner was inflammation – of joints (arthritis), bowels (ulcerative colitis, Crohn’s Disease, IBS), and skin (psoriasis). Inflammation affects every cell in the body, and today’s medical community points to inflammation as a leading cause of chronic disease in this country, so it is no wonder we are popping pills.

Other top categories include acid reflux, depression, cholesterol, high blood pressure, asthma and pain.

## What is there to do?

You know from their commercials, and hopefully your health care provider, that many of these medications can cause serious side effects. Others are not meant to be taken for long periods of time, which we often overlook as symptom relief from taking a pill makes us feel better fast.

If you currently take medications and would like to wean off them, or are considering starting a drug but want to research natural options first, there are usually lifestyle changes, foods, and natural vitamins, minerals and compounds that can aid your condition. It simply takes a bit of work and dedication, as well as, support from your health care provider or team. The number of doctors adopting this philosophy of integrative medicine is significantly increasing. In fact, Scripps Hospital in San Diego now offers board-certification in integrative holistic medicine (ABIHM).

If you seek the assistance of an integrative or naturopathic doctor, it is important that information is shared with your primary care physician or medical team. It is also important to note that you should never change or stop taking medication without first speaking with your doctor, and he or she should always be informed of any complementing treatment plan you begin.

Let's take a look at some of the aforementioned symptoms and the lifestyle changes which can help minimize their effects. There are dietary recommendations for most and a trip to one of our neighborhood health food stores, like Clark's Nutrition or Harvest Health Food, will introduce you to many natural aids. Both Clark's and Harvest have knowledgeable staff to help you navigate their shelves.

Starkie Sowers, Director of Education for Clark's, says it is important to note that their nutrition consultants do not prescribe or diagnose, but are there to share the science and research behind the products they offer. Their training is extensive and on-going.

Just as you should inform your doctor of any additions to your treatment plan, sharing your medications and health history with these nutritional consultants will help them to help you.

## Inflammation

One of the simplest ways to help reduce inflammation is to avoid foods that cause it. As stated by local board-certified integrative medicine doctor Hessam Mahdavi, MD, in an earlier *Desert Health*<sup>®</sup> report,<sup>7</sup> five of the top inflammatory foods are gluten (found in wheat and other grains), corn, dairy, soy, and refined sugars. Unfortunately, “the foods that are inflammatory are some of the most common foods we ingest through the standard American diet,” he said, adding that people suffering

Continued on page 12

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# My Head Is Spinning

Dizziness with Dr. Kato

**Dear Dr. Kato:** I've had several instances where I get a severe vertigo attack that lasts for two hours. It hits me out of the blue, and the vertigo is very debilitating! I notice that before the spinning sensation starts, my ear feels full and rings, and my hearing gets plugged. These attacks have been more frequent. I'm 56, and have had a significant amount of emotional stress lately.

**Dear Reader:** There are many different causes of vertigo. The cause of your vertigo is most likely an inner ear disorder, called Meniere's Disease.

**Cause:** In 1861, the French physician, Prosper Meniere, theorized that these bouts of vertigo, tinnitus, and hearing loss came from the inner ear, rather than the brain. Modern research has shown that many individuals with these symptoms have an excess of fluid (endolymph) inside the inner ear. The exact cause of this fluid buildup is unknown, but theories include: viral infection, autoimmune reactions, circulation problems, allergies, and genetics.

**Symptoms:** There is a wide spectrum of symptoms, varying from mild to severe. Meniere's disease may begin with fluctuating hearing loss, and progress to attacks of dizziness and vertigo. Attacks are often preceded by an "aura." Other symptoms can include: imbalance, nausea, vomiting, anxiety, diarrhea, headache, visual disturbances, and sensitivity to noise.

**Duration and Frequency of Attacks:** The unpredictable nature of this disease is frustrating and challenging. Attacks can last from 20 minutes to 2 days. They can occur weekly, or can be separated by months and even years. Most patients report "major" and "minor" (less debilitating) attacks.

**Treatment:** There are two general categories of treatment. The first is preventative. To prevent attacks, patients are recommended to stay on a strict, low-sodium diet (< 2000 mg sodium per day), and avoid caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, and highly concentrated sweets.

Medications used to reduce the severity of the vertigo and nausea and vomiting during an attack include: diazepam (Valium), promethazine (Phenergan), and meclizine (Antivert). These medications are NOT to be used on a daily basis, but only during an active attack.

For some patients, steroids can be helpful. Steroids can be given orally (e.g. prednisone), or delivered directly to the inner ear. The injection of steroid into the inner ear can be highly effective in reducing both the frequency and severity of the attacks. Finally, surgery can be performed for refractory cases.

**Coping:** Meniere's disease can be a challenging disorder. The attacks are unpredictable, and can be severely debilitating. It impacts a person's daily life: dietary restrictions limit dining out, unpredictable attacks make them leery of social events, and even simple tasks, such as grocery shopping and driving, can be uncomfortable and unsafe.

Educating family and friends can be helpful, and talking with others with Meniere's disease can provide insight and support. One should also be under the care of a neurotologist, a physician who specializes in inner ear disorders.

Dr. Maya Kato is the founder of The Ear Institute in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 565-3900.

Sources: 1) Dietary modification as adjunct treatment in Ménière's disease: patient willingness and ability to comply. Luxford E, Berliner KI, Lee J, Luxford WM. Otol Neurotol. 2013 Oct;34(8):1438-43. doi: 10.1097/2) Oral steroid treatment for hearing improvement in Ménière's disease and endolymphatic hydrops. Fisher LM, Derebery MJ, Friedman RA. Otol Neurotol. 2012 Dec;33(9):1685-91.; 3) Meniere's disease: New concepts, new treatments. Berlinger NT. Minn Med. 2011 Nov;94(11):33-6.Review.

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Affected by an Affair?  
Your marriage can still work

By Sandy Cox, MFT

One of life's most devastating traumas is finding out that one's partner has had an affair. It is probably the most painful and hurtful experience one can go through in a marriage or committed relationship. The one person you placed your trust in above all others, and whose love on which you relied, has destroyed that trust. It is the ultimate betrayal, causing trauma and excruciating pain. You will be broken-hearted, suffering emotional and physical fallout. You may even question yourself: what could I have done better? The feeling of hurt, rage, loss, grief and rejection are unbearable. Your world turns upside down.

As a marriage therapist, I know that a relationship can survive after an affair. It takes hard work, desire and commitment to make this happen, but I have witnessed many couples successfully rehabilitate their relationships. If you both want to continue the relationship, this is possible.

An affair is an ongoing tryst, not a one-night stand. It is usually sexual and develops an emotional connection sometimes interpreted by the participating parties as "love." It is intense and emotionally powerful - a big adrenaline rush. It is a secret life your partner is having, and the possibility of getting caught often adds to the excitement that is missing from their primary relationship.

If you simply suspect an affair, but are unable to comfortably confront your partner, there are symptoms to look for. You may not want to know, as denial can be a strong defense mechanism. But if you are observant, you might see a change in behavioral patterns such as staying late at the office, staying overnight with a good friend, coming home late from work, a new interest in their appearance, new clothes, weight loss, exercise and taking better care of themselves. Things in your own relationship may have changed: less sex, less communication, not paying much attention to you, frequently lost in thought, and simply acting disinterested. Sometimes their guilty feelings will be manifested in anger.

If you feel certain that your partner is having an affair, you need to confront them. They may or may not acknowledge their mistake, and if they do admit it, they may even blame you. This is where you need to be strong and remember, this bad choice was theirs, and they made that choice on their own. You do not have responsibility for what they did. Maybe your relationship wasn't perfect, but working towards improvement is the smart and proper choice.

To heal and repair a relationship affected by an affair, there are a few necessary steps:

- Your partner must own his or her mistakes and weaknesses.
- They must commit to working on themselves and the problems in your relationship.
- They must commit to stopping the affair immediately and prove to you that this step has been taken.



Two committed hearts can repair a relationship

- You also must consider how you may have contributed to faults in your relationship, and be willing to work on being a better partner.

- It is vital that you both still feel love for each other. Your anger may block those feelings, but if you're reading this, there's a good chance it's buried inside and can return.

Throughout the healing process, if your partner continues to lie and/or see the third party, you must accept that he or she is not committed to rebuilding your relationship.

Therapy is essential for success. A trained therapist will guide you, and help you to achieve your goals. Emotions will be strong and often overwhelming throughout the healing process, and not having a trained professional in the room can be detrimental

to success or failure. Sometimes individual therapy is helpful as well. Your therapist will know what to do and how to do it.

Through this difficult time, be sure to take good care of yourself. You really need to nurture yourself both physically and emotionally. Trust that there is hope, even if you don't feel that way in the beginning. With strength, courage, love, and full cooperation from both partners, you can get through it.

Sandy Cox is a licensed marriage and family psychotherapist and can be reached at (760) 345.9002.

What IS That Floating By?

By Wallace Goldban, MD

Ever see a small insect or thread passing through your field of vision but couldn't quite put your finger on it? These specks or clouds going by are often "floaters."

Floaters are actually clumps of cells inside the vitreous portion of the eye. As we age, the vitreous (a jelly like substance which is usually transparent) changes consistency causing these floaters to form. Nearsighted people and those who have recently had eye surgery, or sustained trauma to the eye, are more likely to develop floaters.

Most floaters are harmless and often disappear as quickly as they form. However, floaters can also be a sign of something more serious such as a retinal tear or blood. A recent study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* determined that 15 percent of people presenting to the ophthalmologist with a new onset of floaters had a retinal tear.<sup>1</sup> This is quite significant and emphasizes how important it is to have a complete eye exam when new floaters occur. Even if you have had your eyes examined for floaters previously, if you experience new floaters you should schedule another exam to see if tears may have developed.

If floaters are accompanied with flashing lights, the chance of a tear will be even higher. Flashes in the eye signify that there is traction on the retina, which would happen if there was indeed a tear.

Other signs of a retinal tear include a curtain covering your vision, or blind spots.

During the eye exam your ophthalmologist will dilate your eyes and check the retina to see if there are any problems. It is wise to bring a driver to take you home because after dilation you might not feel comfortable driving.

Many patients wonder if it is possible to get rid of floaters that persist and interfere with clear vision. A vitrectomy,

Most floaters are harmless... However, floaters can also be a sign of something more serious such as a retinal tear or blood — Dr. Goldban

a surgery that cleans out the vitreous, can help eliminate floaters; however, in most cases this surgery is too risky. New laser technology, laser vitreolysis, is showing great promise in eliminating floaters that have remained for many months; however, this technology is not yet readily available.

There are no medications or eye drops that help to reduce or eliminate floaters.

While seeing a floater can cause a scare, most of the time they will disappear as the brain learns to ignore them.

Dr. Wallace Goldban is a board-certified ophthalmologist specializing in Lasik surgery and cataract removal. He has over 20 years of experience and is a graduate of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He has office locations in Palm Springs and Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 320.8497.

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### Health is a Choice

autoimmune disorders, such as lupus and osteoarthritis, can benefit significantly from this simple lifestyle change.

Great food alternatives include many readily available gluten-free products, brown rice pasta, bean chips, almond or coconut milk, and fresh seasonal fruit. And as renowned heart surgeon Dr. Steven Gundry of The Center for Restorative Medicine is fond of saying, "Eat things that eat green things" because most farm-raised chicken and beef are now being fed corn and soy, so opt for the grass-fed beef, or even better, wild fish.

According to Sowers, some of the natural ingredients that substantiate biochemical knowledge and aid inflammation include omega 3 fatty acids, vitamin D, digestive enzymes, msm, and curcumin which is extracted from the turmeric plant and found in spices like curry. "Inflammation is a very broad spectrum, and similar to medications, the many natural anti-inflammatories work in different areas of the body," he says. For example, probiotics create an immune response in the gut and calm down inflammation, so they are effective with irritable bowel syndrome and ulcerated colitis. Omega 3 and quercetin are shown to be effective in decreasing joint inflammation.

Sowers adds that in this category, there are many multi-nutrient formulas that work in different areas.

#### Acid Reflux

The FDA recommends that treatment with proton pump inhibitors (PPIs like Nexium, ProliSec) not exceed 14 days, but many consumers often overlook this advice. Many are also unaware of the adverse and often severe side effects, or alternative treatment options. According to David S. Johnson, MD, of Premier Surgical Associates, 30% of PPI users don't even have acid reflux. He adds that once properly diagnosed, there are lifestyle changes that can reduce symptoms.

In a related editorial for Prevention.com,<sup>8</sup> Liz Lipski, PhD, CCN, author of *Digestive Wellness* agrees and adds that PPIs block the protective hydrochloric acid (HCL) in the stomach, which can lead to bacterial overgrowth in the small intestines and ultimately to mineral deficiencies by hindering their absorption. (See page 5 for more on PPIs.)

The simple solution once again is to avoid foods that cause the problem. We've all heard 'avoid spicy foods for heartburn,' but avoiding all trigger foods is important. Shannon Sinsheimer, ND of Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert, recommends a blood test to identify those from over 90 foods which commonly cause sensitivities and can result in acid reflux. She adds that managing stress is also an important factor.

Natural remedies include slippery elm which contains antioxidants that help relieve inflammation in your intestines and help protect your gastrointestinal tract from excess acid; marshmallow root extract, digestive enzymes and probiotics.

#### Cholesterol

The bad news is that bad cholesterol (LDL) is a leading cause of cardiovascular disease. The good news, however, is that there are a lot of good foods - such as garlic, olive oil, tree nuts, red wine and dark chocolate — which can help reduce inflammation in your body and have been proven to lower LDL and raise HDL (the good kind) naturally.

The secret to garlic's heart-protecting powers is an amino acid called allicin, which is released when garlic is crushed. Allicin protects the heart by keeping cholesterol from sticking to artery walls<sup>8</sup> and garlic supplements that contain allicin

are now available without the strong garlic taste and smell.

"Fiber is amazing as well," says Sowers. "Water soluble fiber helps prevent cholesterol absorption and helps modulate healthy HDL and LDL." He also points to berberine which is found in plant roots, stems, and bark.

Red yeast rice is often used as a natural statin; however, the active ingredient in red yeast is the same as the active ingredient in prescription statins and thus, can have similar side effects, drug interactions, and precautions as statins. Do not take red yeast if you are already taking medications used for lowering cholesterol.<sup>9</sup>

#### Depression

Depression can be a serious condition ranging from mild to moderate to severe. Those on medication should never stop taking them without the guidance of a health care professional.<sup>3</sup>

Healthy lifestyle changes like exercising and meditation have been scientifically proven to alter mood and help with mild to moderate depression. Ensuring that your hormones are properly balanced is also important, especially considering



How many prescription drugs do you take?

that 1 in 4 women ages 50-64 are on an antidepressant which correlates with the menopausal stage in life. As reviewed in our last issue of *Desert Health*<sup>®</sup>, hormone replacement therapy can positively affect both your mental and physical well-being.

Research also finds that fish oil can have an anti-depressant effect.<sup>8</sup> "Studies show that eating omega-3 rich seafood two or more times a week may be linked with a 50% lower rate of depression," says Daphne Miller, MD, author of *The Jungle Effect: A Doctor Discovers the Healthiest Diets from Around the World*. She points to Iceland, where they eat a hefty 225 pounds of cold-water fish such as char, herring and cod per person per year and have surprisingly low rates of seasonal affective disorder and depression despite long, dark winters. By contrast, she states, Americans average 48 pounds of fish per person.<sup>8</sup>

To get your dose of omega-3s, opt for grilled salmon when ordering at restaurants, or make your own light tuna salad by mixing low-mercury canned tuna. Sardines are another great choice, says Dr. Miller. "If you are not a fish lover you can still get your omega-3s by eating leafy greens, seeds such as flax or pumpkin, walnuts, and free range meats."

In natural supplements, St. John's wort, a plant used for centuries by European countries to treat mild to moderate depression, still leads the category. Research supports its effectiveness; however, it may take 2 to 3 weeks for St. John's wort to improve depressive symptoms.<sup>9</sup>

Adopting new habits to improve your health is a lifestyle change and not merely a phase. It takes a shift in mindset to release the idea of prescription drugs as the easy fix, and it is important to have a supportive health care team. Taking pro-active steps to manage your medical conditions through nutrition, exercise, and stress relief is a primary factor to longevity and quality of life.

*For additional information on natural remedies for medical conditions, consult with your health care practitioner.*

References: 1) Nearly 7 in 10 Americans Take Prescription Drugs, Mayo Clinic, Olmsted Medical Center Find June 19, 2013 www.mayoclinic.org/news; 2) American Heart Association, Tasty Topics presentation, Dr. Philip Shaver, MD; Dec. 2013, Palm Desert; 3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vital Signs: Prescription Drug Overdoses in the U.S. 2011. Web. 01 May 2013.; 4) Chronology of Direct-to-Consumer Advertising regulations in the United States by Scott A. Mogull, MS, MA Austin TX. AMWA Journal Vol. 23, No.3, 2008; 5) Top 100 Selling Drugs in the U.S. Oct. 1, 2012 - Sept., 30, 2013. IMS Health.; 6) Drugs.com: US Pharmaceutical Sales - 2013; 7) The Food and Inflammation Connection by Maura Ammenhauser. Desert Health March/April 2012; 8) Natural Alternatives To The Top 10 Most Prescribed Drugs By Holly C. Corbett for Prevention.com http://www.prevention.com/mind-body/natural-remedies/top-10-prescription-drugs-and-natural-remedies; 9) WebMD.com;

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## Home Is Where the Heart Is

### Creating balance and prosperity for 2014

By Susan Fefferman

Home truly is where the heart is. That's why it's so important that your home is nurturing, supportive, safe, and makes you feel like you're getting a big hug when you walk through the door. No matter what's going on in the outside world, once you step inside, you should be completely relaxed and able to connect to body, mind and spirit. When you implement changes in your home, you will notice that your life is also transformed - instantly, dramatically and permanently. This is Feng Shui.

Feng Shui is an ancient art and science dating back 4000 years to Chinese philosophy and culture. The many different schools of Feng Shui practiced around the world today have adapted to the geographical locations and times of our modern world. One school of practice called "Classical" has the same roots as acupuncture. Whereas needles are used to improve the energy patterns of the body, Classical Feng Shui uses both decorative and non-seen items made of the five elements: water, wood, fire, earth and metal (and their representative colors) to remedy any negative influences caused by the invisible energies in our environments. Bringing the elements into our spaces also helps us reconnect with nature by balancing the natural order of things.

'Feng' literally means wind and 'Shui' (pronounced shway) means water. Water and wind carry Chi (the energy of life) and 60% of our bodies are comprised of water and air. The three principles of chi are: (1) everything is alive; (2) everything is connected or related; and (3) everything is always changing (weather, seasons, bodies, emotions, etc.).

How a space feels will deeply affect people's responses on both conscious and subconscious levels. While some places seem to feel naturally inviting, warm and inspiring, others do not feel right and people usually do not thrive there, or worse, they want to leave quickly. Bringing Feng Shui into the internal and external design of a building can have immediate, noticeable, and positive effects upon the way that people react and function there. One could say that Feng Shui is a practical technique for manipulating energy (chi) to improve wealth and prosperity, relationships, career, family, children, creativity, education, community respect, and health among other things.

Feng Shui practices can also include a deeper understanding in using crystals, essential oils and even astrology. For example, the New Solar Year begins February 4, 2014 and with it, the transition from the Water Snake to the Green Wood Horse. The Wood Horse represents growth, fast victories, unexpected adventure, and surprising romance. It is an excellent year for travel, and the further away (and off the beaten path) the better. Energy is high and production is rewarded. Decisive action, not procrastination, brings victory. But you have to act fast in a Horse year. If you are not 100% secure about a decision, then don't do it. Events move so fast in the year of the Horse that you don't want to gallop off in the wrong direction!

In Chinese astrology, Horse year is considered a fortunate year that brings luck and good things. Understanding the chi of your work and living spaces can maximize the balance and prosperity being universally offered.

Susan Fefferman is an internationally educated and certified Classical Feng Shui Consultant. She is an instructor with the International Feng Shui School which will be offering certification courses in Palm Springs March 2-7, 2014. For more information contact Susan at (619) 361.1846 or [internationalfengshuischool@gmail.com](mailto:internationalfengshuischool@gmail.com).

Reference: <http://www.crystalwind.ca/astrology/chinese-zodiac/6769-the-year-of-the-wood-horse-2014.html>

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## Meditation Delivers Results in Schools

By Doris Steadman

We know that stress can be detrimental to adult health, but what about children? Significant research now suggests that American children are indeed experiencing stress at new levels: suicides among adolescents have quadrupled since the 1950s; only 36 percent of 7th graders agreed with the statement "I am happy with my life"; and in the past decade, using pharmaceuticals to treat emotional disorders has shot up 68 percent for girls and 30 percent for boys.<sup>1</sup> And nowhere are the effects of stress more prevalent than in our inner-city schools.

A new program called Quiet Time is being successfully implemented in urban schools using Transcendental Meditation™. The program is now in six schools working with students and another ten working with teachers.

One of the first to take part was Visitacion Valley Middle School in San Francisco. Principal James Dierke states that in his first year with the school (2002-2003) there were 41 neighborhood murders. Every student either knew or was related to the perpetrator or the victim, and many witnessed the crimes. "Stress is the number one enemy of public education," he states. "It creates tension and violence and compromises the cognitive and psychological capacity of students." Research has shown that high levels of stress contribute to attention deficits, anxiety, depression, obesity, high blood pressure, and learning difficulties.<sup>3</sup>

Dierke knew that in order for his students to learn and be creative, they had to feel happy and safe. "I heard about Quiet Time, and we took a brave step forward into a new world of teaching our students how to meditate."

TM® was chosen as it is simple, easily learned, secular (non-religious), and has a large body of evidence supporting its effectiveness.<sup>3</sup> According to Dr. Sarina Grosswald, an expert in cognitive learning,

TM® increases the ability to focus outside of meditation as it enhances brain functioning.<sup>4</sup>

Quiet Time is the first activity of the day and the last before students leave. It starts with the ring of a bell in each classroom and ends 12 minutes later. It is a full school event with a support team, an on-site leader, and Quiet Time instructors.

Quiet Time's Executive Director, Laurent Valosek, states that research on the program indicates that the schools are experiencing marked reductions in violence, suspension and truancy, and an increase in attendance. The staff is experiencing reduced burn-out, and improved well-being. The students are showing improved psychological and physical health and improved academics.<sup>3</sup>

Visitacion Valley started Quiet Time in 2007 and since then has cut their truancy rate by more than half to 7% (compared to the statewide rate of 30%) and their suspension rates, which were equal to 13% statewide, have dropped to 6%.

Teacher Rose Ludwig praises the program and feels that students are now more manageable. "We're giving kids a coping mechanism. The problems they face keep coming, but their ability to deal with them changes. Behaviorally, you see a difference."

Laurent adds, "We can't have an effective educational system if we don't address the problem of stress. This impacts our neurophysiological functioning." With Quiet Time, students and teachers are experiencing a deeper inner peace as a foundation for healthy development.

For more information on Quiet Time visit [www.cwae.org](http://www.cwae.org). For more information on Transcendental Meditation™, contact their Palm Springs office at (760) 537.1006.

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## Poses on Paseo to Raise Funds for CVVIM

**Everyone encouraged to take part**



Some of the Valley's most recognized instructors are coming together for a day of yoga, music, healthy food and community gathering – all to raise funds and awareness for Coachella Valley's Volunteers in Medicine (CVVIM).

Poses on Paseo will take place March 2 from 7am-11am at The Gardens on El Paseo second floor parking deck and everyone is encouraged to get involved. Whether you are a first-timer or a seasoned pro, Poses on Paseo's purpose is to bring people together to establish an intention of well-being throughout our community – for those of us who seek it, as well as, those whose only place to turn is CVVIM.

CVVIM is the Valley's only free medical clinic and is supported by volunteer physicians, nurses and support staff who donate their time to tend to patients who lack access to proper medical care. CVVIM is in need of both donations and volunteer medical professionals. 100% of the revenue generated from Poses on Paseo registrations will go to support their work.

Poses on Paseo's day in the sun will begin with registration from 7-8am. A two hour all levels yoga practice will start at 8am featuring five keynote instructors from various yoga pathways. The practice will be accompanied by a powerful musical performance by recording artist Larisa Stow and the Shakti Tribe. From 10-11am, a post-event concert by Stow will take place and vegetarian food trucks will be open for late morning lunch and social hour.

Event organizer, Johnny Yuhas, RN, RYT 400, hopes the event will become an annual. "Yoga is a powerful source of healing for so many people who find its path. Poses on Paseo will serve to extend this healing resource to those in our community who are in desperate need of medical care." As an emergency room nurse, Yuhas has always been inspired to support this particular cause. "I see the end result of patients who have been neglected within the healthcare system, but I have also seen those who receive the assistance they need through CVVIM and are able to get back to work and lead a healthy, productive life."

How can you get involved? Health-minded individuals of all ability and ages are encouraged to sign up at PosesonPaseo.com. Advanced online registration is \$25.00/ \$35.00 day of the event. Volunteers are needed for pre-event promotion and onsite production, and certified yoga instructors may apply to provide adjustments during the practice event.

Poses on Paseo supporters include lululemon athletica, City of Palm Desert, The Gardens on El Paseo, and Classic Party Rentals.

For more information and sponsorship opportunities, contact johnnyyuhas@me.com or visit [www.PosesonPaseo.com](http://www.PosesonPaseo.com). Visit CVVIM.org for more information on Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine. We thank you in advance for your support!



Johnny



Jane



Bronwyn



Stephan

## The Many Wonders of Dang Gui

**By Diane Sheppard, PhD., L.Ac.**

Dang Gui, sometimes spelled Dong Gui or Dong Quai, is Chinese angelica root. It is a perennial plant found along ravine streams, marshy meadows, river banks and sea coasts. Long used in traditional Asian herbal remedies, Dang Gui root is among the most important of the Chinese blood tonics.

It has a strong but pleasant musky odor. According to Chinese theory, this odor indicates that the herb will not only nourish, but will also disperse the blood through the body, penetrating the tissues and making the skin glow, the hair luxuriant, and the mind serene.

Pungent and both sweet and bitter in flavor, and warming in action, it affects the heart, liver and spleen channels. In Traditional Chinese Medicine it is considered to replenish and tonify blood; form healthy new blood and promote blood circulation; nourish the female essence and regulate menstruation; and relieve pain. It is used to treat any syndrome of blood-deficiency, various kinds of pain due to blood stasis, swellings, and traumatic hematoma. While nourishing blood it is also helpful in lubricating the bowel, for relief from constipation due to blood deficiency and dryness in the bowel.

Dang Gui is almost never administered as a single herb but appears in many well known formulas combined with other herbs, including Shou Wu Chih (the famous tonic) and Ba Zhen Wan (Woman's Precious Pill). Often used as a daily supplement to maintain good health, and/or to aid a wide variety of complaints. Indicated when there are signs of blood deficiency such as pale tongue, hormonal problems and circulatory issues, Dang Gui is used to treat dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, female infertility, anemia, tinnitus, hair loss, blurred vision, mental foggy, fatigue, weakness, lightheadedness, reduced appetite and heart palpitations.

Available as whole dried root, which needs to be boiled as a tea, in tinctures and concentrated powder or encapsulated, most often it is mixed with other herbs in a Chinese prescription or a prepared herbal remedy. The root extracts are rich in calcium, essential oils, magnesium, iron, vitamins A and B, Folic Acid, Biotin, Nicotinic Acid and Cobalt which helps increase the hemoglobin content of the blood.

Dang Gui is also rich in phytoestrogens, botanical substances that mimic the action of estrogen. It has the ability to balance female hormone levels and can be used during the menstrual cycle as well as during menopause and perimenopause. It is useful for treating hot flashes, mood swings, headaches and other menopausal symptoms. Additionally, because of its ability to improve circulation it is good to use when recovering from illness or injury.

Dang Gui should not be used during pregnancy as it may cause the uterus to contract, increasing the risk of miscarriage. Nursing mothers should not take Dang Gui. Dang Gui may act like estrogen in the body: therefore, exercise caution when taking it with hormone medications. Also, do not use with blood-thinning medications such as Coumadin as it may increase the risk of bleeding. Dang Gui, particularly at high doses, may make you more sensitive to sunlight and cause skin inflammation and rashes.

Diane Sheppard is a licensed acupuncturist with a PhD. in Oriental Medicine. She is a practitioner at Eisenhower Wellness Institute and owner of AcQPoint Wellness Center in La Quinta. (760) 775.7900 [www.AcQPoint.com](http://www.AcQPoint.com).

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---

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## Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco



### Art's Avenue Towards Wellness

An important factor of good health is allocating the time and freedom to create. It doesn't matter how good or impressive the end result may be; allowing yourself the time, and enjoying the experience, is what matters. However, a large majority of us forego creative activities because we feel we are not "artistically inclined." Experiences in our youth (possibly negative responses to our creations) may shut this window in our mind. But the truth is we all have the potential and need to hone that part of our brain which is nurtured by the arts.

I grew up with an artistic and creative mother who impressed upon me and my children the importance of nurturing our inherent creativity. Now 80, she continues to volunteer in schools extolling this value. My mother's impact is contagious, leading me to implement artistic classes into spas and wellness centers which I have managed. The effect has been powerful.

In art there are four distinct therapies that are shown to trigger positive emotions, enhance affirmative moods and develop a capacity for self-reflection: visual arts, movement-based expression, music engagement, and expressive writing. These practices have been used clinically for more than a century.

**Visual Arts Therapy.** By taking the time to draw or paint, mold clay or work with abstract concepts, the right side of the brain is stimulated. This is the side of the brain that is visual and intuitive, while our left side is analytical and sequential. Balancing the effect of right brain to left brain results in non-verbal communication through art experiences.

**Movement Based Expression.** Tai Chi, a meditative movement of expression derived from martial arts, is gaining new popularity. It is a perfect example of movement-based arts as each movement has symbolism and subtle nuances of energy aimed at reducing stress. Dance, yoga, theatre and other movement-based therapies also reap great benefit.

**Music Engagement.** Music is a very positive and well-researched medium of art and healing that can calm as well as excite us. A way to understand the power of sound and music is exposure to crystal bowls tuned to reverberating sounds related to a chakra of the body. We have seven chakras in our body that emanate energy. By focusing on a specific field of energy such as the heart, a profound balance can be achieved while the heart responds to the tune of the crystal bowl.

**Expressive Writing.** The power of writing, journaling, poetry and verbal communication as expressions of oneself is a wonderful social and emotional therapy. Joining a writing group, starting the process to write a memoir, reading or writing poetry, or other writing-based activities are shown to have a positive effect on mood.

We all have the opportunity to enhance our well-being by expressing that which comes from within. Fortunately, our Valley has many organizations, from community and senior centers to non-profit groups, offering classes and programs to help us open this window of our brain and to grow and heal through art.

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## CV Link to Save \$152M in Local Health Care Costs

### Desert Healthcare District commits \$10M to project

A Healthier  
**GOVERNMENT**  
Community

CV Link, the planned multi-use path connecting all nine Valley cities, is estimated to deliver an overall economic benefit of \$1.47 billion including \$152 million in health care costs through 2035.

The 50-mile path will run from Palm Springs to Coachella and offer a safe alternative for outdoor exercise. Health advocates see the link as an opportunity to counter inactivity and obesity by offering a scenic and auto-free place to bike, run, jog, and inline skate. Based on the benefits the project will have on the public health and well-being of District residents, the Desert Healthcare District has committed \$10 million towards development.

A cost-benefit study report conducted in 2012 estimates that the Link could play a strong role in reducing medical costs from obesity. Studies show that the Coachella Valley has a growing base of retirees and school-aged kids who are overweight, and it is well-documented that increased activity can decrease the incidence of disease and lower health care costs.

Public health research links physical activity to public health, and according to a landmark report published by the Surgeon General in 1996, physical inactivity is the number one public health problem we face. Trails provide the ideal link between

physical activity and improved national health. A trail in a neighborhood makes it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation or non-motorized transportation. Trails by another name are "linear parks"—safe havens for walking and jogging, bicycling, family and social outings that connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses and neighborhoods. Communities need trails along streets as well as off the roadways, giving people of all skills and abilities the option to be active.

The economic analysis of the Link project conducted by noted local economist Dr. John Husing estimates that a 10% success rate (9,670 people) would be achieved in three years resulting in a \$4.9 million savings in annual health care costs. After 2025, an estimated 20% success rate (19,339 people) would save \$9.8 million annually and hold at that rate through 2035. Adjusting those figures, the full public health benefit based on a reduction in medical costs would total \$152.2 million.

The commitment by the Desert Healthcare District is unique in that funding usually aids medical clinics and care. "As far as I know, no other special healthcare district in the state has made this type of commitment," stated Tom Kirk, Executive Director of the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG). "This health care district has demonstrated that they are interested in making an investment in developing a permanent piece of public health infrastructure."

In addition, those who worry about safety recognize that over 80% of the valley's auto accidents involving cyclists, as well as pedestrian fatalities, have occurred within two miles of what will be a safer alternative.

The concept for CV Link as a way to connect our Desert cities started decades ago with a 30-40 year projection. In 2011, Supervisor Benoit and elected leaders gave CVAG the green light to move forward, and in only two years, \$65 million has been assembled.

CV Link is the nation's largest project of its kind. The 50-mile project will run along the White Water River, or what we know as 'the wash,' from Palm Springs to Coachella with future connections to Desert Hot Springs and the Salton Sea. The 20-foot wide path will have a section for walkers, joggers, and bikers and a separate area for small, low-speed electric vehicles like golf carts. The project is currently in the environmental review stage and estimated to break ground in 2016.

"Bike trails are not complicated projects and have been built in many areas," said Kirk. "We are simply putting a new, and hopefully game-changing, twist on a popular idea." He points to other trails along flood controls such as the Santa Ana River Trail in Orange County and the American River Trail in Northern California. The project will be built on top of the levee, not on the wash floor, to minimize the need for repairs.

But in pure Coachella Valley fashion, it is the award-winning design of the project that sets us apart. "CV Link will be an iconic piece of public art. Even from the air it will look special." The aesthetically pleasing, very high quality design will further entice locals and visitors alike to enjoy the pathway and to take part.

According to Kirk, much of the funding for the project comes from funds that could have been spent outside of the Coachella Valley, and construction will not impact our roads. Actually, one of the project's goals is to relieve congestion during large events and high-season by offering a safe option to take an electric vehicle, bike or to walk.

The success of CV Link will be dependent upon design elements which will make this trail safe, aesthetically pleasing and easily accessible. With the help of advocates such as the Desert Healthcare District, the design will also meet the needs of anticipated users of all ages, socio-economic status, abilities and activities – and local health care professionals 'prescribing' physically active lifestyles.

For more information visit [CoachellaValleyLink.com](http://CoachellaValleyLink.com). To keep informed of progress, sign up for their newsletter and attend the community workshops taking place throughout the valley. Contact [mshoberg@cvag.org](mailto:mshoberg@cvag.org).

Source: 1) [www.CVAG.com](http://www.CVAG.com)



CV Link will offer safe alternative for joggers, bikes, and small electric vehicles



The Link will run from Palm Springs to Coachella

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# Navigating the Grocery Store

## It's easy with a healthy GPS

A Desert Health Review

The New Year is here and once again, you've made that old familiar resolution: "This year, I am going to eat healthier!" So you head to the grocery store with your list of good intentions in hand, yet it isn't long before confusion sets in.

It's not surprising as this cavernous room is filled with over 40,000 products made by companies who pay millions to ensure that you buy their item over another.

You start by opting for products that scream "we are healthy!" But how do you know if the product truly is healthy, or simply being marketed as such to entice you?

Fortunately, help is here thanks to Mira and Jayson Calton of Calton Nutrition. These nationally-acclaimed nutrition experts introduce the "Ultimate Grocery Purchasing System" (GPS) in their new book *Rich Food, Poor Food*. With humor and insight they lead you down each aisle with an easy-to-digest Eat This, Not That strategy.

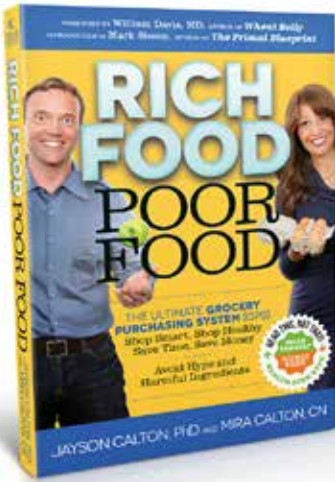
The Calton's conveniently organize your shopping road trip into nine categories: dairy, meat, fish, produce, condiments, grains, baking, snacks and beverages. They educate you to look beyond the 'Misleading Misfits' and 'Sinister Substitutes' to find the most nutritious and truly healthy options. It doesn't matter what type of nutrition plan you follow - Paleo, low-carb, vegan, or simply better-than-before; their program focuses on maximizing micronutrient values (vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, essential amino acids and fatty acids) and avoiding potentially harmful ingredients.

Let's consider potato chips. Say they are on your 'just can't give up this year' list, so you opt for the baked version as the healthier choice. But are they healthier? The Calton's say no, and all you need to do is look beyond the less-fat-less-sodium label to the ingredients. Lays Potato Chips contain three: potatoes, vegetable oil, and salt. Lay's Baked Potato Crisps actually contain seven ingredients including cornstarch, sugar, soy lecithin and corn sugar. The dangers of these 'poor food' ingredients are further explained in *Rich Food, Poor Food*. The Caltons add that Lay's may have started with good intentions, but somewhere they took a very wrong turn.

*Rich Food, Poor Food* helps you identify genetically modified culprits, the 'Fab Fourteen' vegetables you can safely buy conventionally, and the 'Terrible Twenty' you should buy organic. They demystify dairy, expose eggs, list beneficial brands, characterize packaging claims, and more.

The Caltons' goal with *Rich Food, Poor Food* is to change your experience from buying groceries to buying real food that nourishes your body, and 'there is no better investment on which to spend your hard earned money!'

Jayson Calton holds a doctorate in nutrition with continuing medical education at Harvard Medical School and Yale School of Medicine. Mira Calton is a licensed certified nutritionist and fitness chef. For more information visit [CaltonNutrition.com](http://CaltonNutrition.com). *Rich Food, Poor Food* is available on their website, Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com.



# Get Some Sleep!

## Important facts worth repeating

By Jill Coleman, RN

You've probably heard the many reasons why sleep is so important to your health, but as we enter the New Year, these friendly reminders are worth repeating.

**Sleep is when the body heals and repairs.** Throughout your hectic day, your sympathetic nervous system acts as your accelerator allowing you to handle action and stress. While engaged, the priority is on your muscles, respiration, and heart. Digestion and healing take a back seat because they are not going to get you through life's many obstacles. At night, your parasympathetic nervous system takes over. It acts as your brake allowing the body's systems to slow down, relax and heal. In addition, a variety of hormones are secreted at night to help your body replace damaged cells and rebuild.<sup>1</sup>

**Sleep plays a role in memory and learning.** Studies show that a sleep deprived person cannot optimally focus attention and/or retain information. This is because sleep plays a major role in the consolidation of memory which is imperative for learning new information.<sup>2</sup>

**Sleep helps you live longer.** As sleep is shown to minimize stress, increase energy and stamina, and stave off depression, it will improve your quality of life which puts you on track to living longer. Conversely, sleep deprivation is shown to cause accidents, which puts you on track to shorten your life!

**Sleep reduces inflammation.** People who get at least six hours of sleep have less inflammation and lower CRP levels (a protein found in the blood which rises in response to inflammation). And as you have read in both *Integrated Heart Health*

and *Health is a Choice*, inflammation is strongly linked to heart disease, arthritis, stroke, diabetes and premature aging.

**Good sleep can increase creativity.** Researchers at Harvard University and Boston College found that people seem to strengthen the emotional components of a memory during sleep, which may help spur the creative process.

**Sleep to lose weight.** Studies also show that sleep deprived dieters lose less weight because when you are sleepy, certain hormones associated with appetite are increased.

It is also important to note that prescription drugs and alcohol can keep you from going into the essential, deeper levels of sleep. So what can you do to get a better night sleep? Stay decaffeinated and alcohol free after 3pm. Keep your bedroom calm, cool, quiet, dark, and uncluttered. Eat a small snack 15-30 minutes before bed (Why warm milk? It contains the natural sleep promoting substance tryptophan, but so do these dairy-free options: nuts and seeds, a banana, honey, and eggs). Take a warm bath before you tuck in, and no cell phones, iPods, computers or homework in the bedroom!

Jill Coleman has been a registered nurse for over 21 years. She has studied natural holistic medicine since the late 1990s. She promotes healing through whole foods and organic remedies. For more information visit her blog at [www.JillColemanRN.com](http://www.JillColemanRN.com).

References: 1) Rest and Sleep Essential for Health by Lawrence Wilson, MD © January 2012, The Center for Development; 2) <http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/healthy/matters/benefits-of-sleep/learning-memory>; 3) <http://www.health.com>; 4) Mednick SC, Christakis NA, Fowler JH (2010) The Spread of Sleep Loss Influences Drug Use in Adolescent Social Networks. PLoS ONE 5(3): e9775. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0009775

# Wellness Matters

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<p>January 7</p> <p>★ <b>Dr. Wayne Andersen</b> New York Times Bestselling Author</p> <p><b>TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2014</b> As Medical Director of Take Shape For Life, Dr. Andersen has built an integrated support system that helps people make changes to reach optimal health. While most experts focus on "the how," he will show you why all permanent change must start with "the why."</p>	<p>February 11</p> <p>★ <b>Dr. Peter Attia</b> President, Nutrition Science Initiative</p> <p><b>TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014</b> Humbled by his own health crisis, this prestigious surgeon dedicated himself to reducing individual, social and economic costs associated with obesity related diseases. Dr. Attia is devoted to testing assumptions about the relationship between nutrition, obesity, and diabetes.</p>	<p>March 11</p> <p>★ <b>Gail Sheehy</b> Life Cycle Expert and Bestselling Author</p> <p><b>TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014</b> As the bestselling author of 15 books, including the revolutionary <i>Passages</i>, Gail Sheehy has changed the way millions look at their lives. She will share dynamic insights based on her groundbreaking observations of men and women within different phases of life and how they can enjoy them to the fullest.</p>	<p>April 9</p> <p>★ <b>Dr. Eben Alexander</b> Renowned Neurosurgeon and Author</p> <p><b>WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014</b> Dr. Alexander will discuss his near-death experience and his book <i>Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife</i> that chronicles his powerful, life-changing story. Dr. Alexander's story offers a crucial key to the understanding of reality and human consciousness.</p>
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## Fight the Flu! Naturally

### Enhance your immunity this season

By Thea J. Rabb, ND

Your immune system is a complex network of powerful players communicating and working in concert throughout the body to keep you healthy. Supporting the immune system on a variety of fronts will provide you with your best chance for staying flu-free this winter season.

Let's get started...

#### Eat an Immune-Enhancing Diet.

Eating a healthy diet is critical to robust immune function and keeping you safe from seasonal invaders. Avoid foods that impair your immune system, such as simple sugars, additives, preservatives, and fried foods. These culprits contribute to inflammation and become an immune suppressant by directly impairing immune cells.

#### Stay Hydrated!

Your body is made up mostly of water and consuming sufficient amounts is required for optimal immune function.

#### Use More Spices and Seasonings.

Beyond making food tastier, many spices, herbs, and other seasonings also have antioxidant and immune-enhancing properties. A few easy examples to add to your winter fare include garlic, rosemary, and turmeric.

#### Eat Organic Whenever Possible.

Pesticides and herbicides are immune-impairing additives, so eat organic foods as often as possible.

#### Avoid Eating too Much.

This is not a simple feat on cold winter nights, but trying to reduce the quantity of food you consume can keep your immune system on track. Metabolizing food creates free radicals; therefore, eating excessive calories exposes your body to more free radical damage, draining your antioxidant reserves and overwhelming your immune system.

#### Exercise More!

Moderate regular exercise (20-30 minutes a day) has a wide range of health benefits, including enhancing immune function. Too much exercise, however, can actually have the reverse effect and suppress the immune system, so don't overdo it. Consider the following immune benefits of regular exercise:

- Flushing bacteria from the lungs, which decreases risk of airborne illness.
- Flushing carcinogens from the body via urine and sweat.
- Increasing the rate of circulation of antibodies and immune cells throughout the body, which could help the body detect immune threats earlier.
- Elevating body temperature temporarily, which may inhibit bacterial growth and stimulate activity of immune cells.
- Slowing down the release of stress-related hormones, which increase the risk of illness.

#### Minimize Stress.

When we are exposed to stress, physiological alarms are triggered and chemical signals are released. One of these chemical signals called cortisol actually acts as an immune suppressor, and prolonged elevation of cortisol can lead to impaired immunity making a person more prone to infection. Finding ways to minimize and positively cope with stress can greatly protect immune function.

#### Immune-Enhancing Supplements.

Healthy immune function requires a multi-dimensional approach. Healthy diet, consistent physical activity and reducing stress can be immensely helpful, but a beleaguered immune system may need some additional support to keep it hearty.

#### Probiotics

These supplements restore beneficial intestinal bacterial flora, which enhances the activity of immune cells located in the intestines. Probiotics improve the intestine's immunologic barrier particularly by stimulating antibodies produced in the intestines. If the intestinal antibodies find pathogens, they bind to them and then are excreted out of the body. This process is critical to keeping us disease-free, and also alleviates intestinal inflammation.

#### Mushroom Supplements

Mushrooms are miniature pharmaceutical factories, as they possess a unique combination of talents that improve our overall health especially related to the fight against viruses and bacteria.

#### Antioxidants

There are dozens of antioxidants present in fruits and vegetables, each of which has its own unique effect on immune function, so load up on veggies and eat fruits high in antioxidants such as berries.

#### Myer's Cocktail IV Therapy

This intravenous therapy gives a quick boost to the immune system by providing high doses of vitamins and minerals directly into the bloodstream that are needed for a strong immune reaction. We recommend this therapy for those suffering from a weakened immune system, or when you are feeling as if a cold or flu is setting in.

Remember, although the immune system may be a complex system, keeping it performing at its best doesn't have to be.

Dr. Thea J. Rabb is a Naturopathic Doctor with Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568.2598. For an introduction to naturopathic medicine, Optimal Health offers complimentary consultations.



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## Proactive Cardiovascular Health New biomarker screenings now available

By Nicole Ortiz, ND

Many are surprised to hear that their hearts are the organ most likely to fail them. The reality is, despite all the amazing advances of medicine, the fragility of the human heart remains a key deterrent to human health. Until the last decade, there had been little in the way of preventative screening for the internal processes of the cardiovascular system. However, a recent paradigm shift in preventive cardiology, by way of novel biomarker screening and genetic testing, has altered the nature of preventative treatment through simple blood tests in the setting of your primary care doctor's office.

One such test is an ultra-sensitive immunoassay technology that measures the release of Troponin I (cTnI), a biomarker released when the heart muscle is stressed. An elevated cTnI may mean you are at higher risk for having a heart attack or developing heart failure. Troponin I enables your doctor to identify chronic injury in asymptomatic individuals with unrecognized heart disease who are at high risk for adverse cardiovascular outcomes. This test can be tracked over time to fine-tune your heart health. I find this marker especially important for female patients, as it is well-known that females often do not express symptoms before experiencing a heart attack. Testing high-sensitivity troponins better equips us to prevent such unfortunate outcomes.

Another available test analyzes inflammation, the body's natural response to injury. The inflammatory markers measured are Interleukins 6 & 17A and TNF- $\alpha$  (tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ ), CRP-hs, and LpPla2. Increased inflammatory markers over time may be a sign that your blood vessels are under attack, resulting in the passage of cholesterol into the walls of your arteries, plaque build-up, and clogged arteries, while increasing your risk of heart disease.

A simple blood test, Corus CAD, now offers a non-invasive way to assess whether you are suffering from obstructive coronary artery disease (CAD). Before the availability of this test just 5 years ago, the initial screening process for a patient suspected to have artery disease consisted of invasive and time consuming lab studies conducted outside of the doctor's office. The initial test consisted of more invasive procedures that use radiation, dyes, and even surgical procedures. Corus CAD, conversely, measures the activity of specific genes in the blood that change when there is a significant blockage in the heart arteries. Corus CAD is unique in that it is the first sex-specific test for coronary artery disease which takes into account the key biological differences between men and women.

Heart disease often does not act alone, and for that reason, many preventative doctors standardly run cardiometabolic tests to assess the future risk for diabetes. Besides the traditional blood sugar testing methods, new hormones such as adiponectin and leptin are included. These hormones regulate appetite, calorie burning power, inflammation, and cell efficiency. Abnormal results in these cardiometabolic tests also provide new insights when individuals have difficulty losing weight, which can also increase their risk for heart disease.

Despite their effectiveness, not every doctor has elected to utilize these new tests for their patients. Although not yet a standard of care, they are being readily used by integrative and preventative medical professionals.

"Just as our government has a system of checks and balances between the Senate and the House of Representatives, so should our practice of medicine," says board-certified integrative medicine doctor Hessam Mahdavi, MD of Eisenhower Medical Center. "There is a danger in relying on just one main test, such as an exercise stress test, to assess the true risk of heart disease. It's always good to get a comprehensive viewpoint, including advanced biomarker testing, to assess the true status of heart disease."

As a proactive patient, you can begin the conversation with your primary care doctor about what tests they offer to assess your true cardiac risk profile. Ask about tests such as Singulex, HDL labs, Corus CAD, Genova, or Atherotech advanced cardiometabolic testing, which are only some of the many preventative tests now available. The testing can be run through your insurance and is often completely covered or available for a reasonable co-pay.

The latest developments in preventative cardiac screening allow us as primary care providers to make more accurate assessments of our patients' true health risks, and to better develop

a treatment plan unique to each person's specific imbalances. The tests covered in this article, when applied to a preventative treatment philosophy, can be invaluable tools for early detection of problems, as well as, maintenance of cardiovascular health.

Dr. Nicole Ortiz is the co-owner of Live Well Clinic and a Naturopathic Doctor with a focus in preventative cardiology. For more information call (760) 771.5970 or visit [www.livewellclinic.org](http://www.livewellclinic.org).

Sources: 1) Increased cardiac troponin I as measured by a high-sensitivity assay is associated with high odds of cardiovascular death: the Minnesota Heart Survey. Apple FS, Steffen LM, Pearce LA, Murakami MM, Luepker RV Clin Chem. 2012 May;58(5):930-5; 2) PREDICT Study. Clinical trial summary found at: [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov), NCT00500617; 3) Clinical trial summary found at: [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov), NCT01117506. <http://www.singulex.com/understand-health-risks-and-test-results>



Ask your doctor about new heart health screenings

**"There is a danger in relying on just one main test, such as an exercise stress test, to assess the true risk of heart disease. It's always good to get a comprehensive viewpoint, including advanced biomarker testing, to assess the true status of heart disease."**

– Dr. Hessam Mahdavi



Blood tests can now identify individual cardiovascular risks





## Timing That Is Best for YOU

By Craig C. Rumbaugh, MBA

Timing is everything! Many people have crossed my path over the years, and some have done much better than others. Why is that? With all other key factors remaining equal - strategy, funding, education, or marketing - the primary difference was due to timing. For example, it made sense to buy a home in 1996 but not in 2006 when housing prices peaked; an industry that experienced phenomenal growth in the 1990s may not do so in 2014.

**Timing your investments.** Recently MasterCard, Inc. (MA) announced an 83% dividend increase and a 10 for 1 stock split. Are you thankful you owned MA prior to the announcement? If so, you will have a larger tax liability due to higher dividends. Or did you happen to buy MA the day after the share price increase? Well, the right answer for you depends on your need for cash flow, your tax situation and overall portfolio. The efficient-market hypothesis states that at any moment in time, stocks are correctly valued, and that one cannot consistently achieve returns in excess of average market returns. Don't even consider market timing as there are thousands ahead of you, not to mention that high-frequency trading now places trades in nano-seconds for those firms to profit first.

**Timing your life events.** If you want to buy a new car for Christmas, is it best to take delivery on New Year's Day instead? Your financial plan should outline the timing of both acquisition and disposition of all assets. It is better to have a plan and miss a financial goal, than to not have a plan at all. Regarding social security, just because you're eligible doesn't mean you should take it; your spouse taking income first, or a deferral, may be best. For your estate, consider gifting now while you are living to see the beneficiaries appreciate your generosity, or the traditional way gifting, from the grave. One will definitely

have an advantage to your estate, so ask your team if you should gift now or later.

**Timing for today.** What worked in the past may not work in the future. How do you know if your new business

venture, or buying a home, is right for you? From taxes, to cash flow, to industry timing, to legislation from Washington, to your family legacy planning, every financial step you take should have a stamp of approval from your CPA, CFP, estate planning attorney, and insurance experts. Not one of them, but all of them, should have input into your financial decision.

Most importantly, understand there are hundreds of solutions for your financial decisions. Advanced planning solutions - ranging from your trust, to life insurance, to natural gas and other alternative investments - could better impact your bottom line than only regular portfolio re-balancing.

Ask questions. Be a contrarian. Seek more. Have a team of professionals.

On a personal note, what is more important in life than money? Remembering that spending time with family, friends and key business partners is most important. It is likely on your deathbed that you won't ask for more money; rather, you will ask for more time with those you love.

*Rumbaugh Financial, Inc. is a Registered Investment Adviser and Craig Rumbaugh is Principal. He can be reached at (760) 341-5010 or visit [www.RumbaughFinancial.com](http://www.RumbaughFinancial.com).*



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#### [ COMMUNITY MATTERS ]

Craig is an active member of the community supporting many non-profit organizations including Indian Wells Rotary Club (President 2011); Director of the Community Foundation of Riverside County; and Director of the Steinway Society of Riverside County.

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## The Alphabet Soup of Medicare

By Randy Foulds

About 8,000 Americans turn 65 every day and almost all of them qualify for Medicare. If you are one of them, here is what you can expect: a lot of junk mail. If you joined AARP, you will be receiving approximately 2-3 items per week from them in the 6 months leading up to your 65th birthday!

Medicare plans are big business. And insurance companies are eager to sign you up for their plan. But AARP is not an insurance company; rather, they have licensed their name to United HealthCare who in turn, markets Medicare products under that name.

Your Medicare plan from the Social Security Administration (referred to as "Original Medicare") gives you Part A for hospitalization coverage, and Part B for doctors and other medical services. You have 6 months after your Medicare effective date to decide if you need any extra coverage and, if so, to select either a Medicare Supplement, or a Medicare Advantage plan. Let's look at the major differences between these two types of plans.

Medicare Supplements are secondary insurance, which means that they provide extra coverage, *after* Medicare pays its part. The benefits for each level of these plans are mandated by Medicare, so no matter which insurer you select, the plans will be basically the same. Medicare Supplements are known by letters, including Plan A, B, C, D, F, G, K, L, M, or N. This is where the alphabet soup gets confusing. Plans A and B are not the same as Parts A and B. The most complete coverage is the F Plan, which may be more coverage than you need, but there is a catch. The level of coverage you select now is probably the best you are going to get in the future.

The other type of plan is the Advantage Plan or, Part C. These are marketed very aggressively under product names such as Medicare Complete and First Choice Health plan. No matter which insurer and plan you select, if it is an Advantage plan, it is probably an HMO. Most have no additional premium and may include a prescription drug plan. The upsides to an Advantage plan are zero premiums, low co-pays, prescription drugs included, and many extra benefits thrown in. The downside includes limited choice of doctors and facilities, regional coverage, and waiting for referrals to a specialist.

When you first turn 65, the insurer guarantees the issuance of your policy, with no medical screening, no pre-existing condition exclusions. Each year, on your birthday, they will also guarantee issuance of a plan with *similar or less coverage*, but not *better coverage*. So the plan you select at age 65 should be the best coverage you can afford, since it will be your one best chance to have this plan issued with no medical underwriting. The Affordable Care Act did not change this.

Original Medicare (Parts A and B) + Medicare Supplement (Plans A-N) + Prescription Drug Plan (Part D), or Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C). The choice is yours. Ask plenty of questions and do your research. Medicare.gov is an excellent reference full of clearly written guidance from an impartial source.

*Randy Foulds is a Certified California Exchange Health Insurance Agent (license #0G69218) with Feldmann Insurance and can be reached at 760-346-6565.*



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# Clinton Conference to Spotlight Youth Focus on prescription drug abuse and physical inactivity

By Lauren Del Sarto

The 3rd annual Clinton Health Matters Conference will return to the Coachella Valley January 13 - 15. As part of the foundation's Health Matter Initiative (CHMI) and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, the conference will unite corporate, non-profit, sports and media leaders to discuss partnerships and action steps to address two key issues: prescription drug abuse on college campuses, and physical inactivity amongst our youth.

"Prescription drug misuse is one of the leading causes of accidental deaths," said Rain Henderson, Deputy Director of the CHMI, who notes that the issue is epidemic at colleges and universities. "We want to reduce the number of deaths by ten thousand in five years." To accomplish this goal, the CHMI is recruiting the experience of the Jed Foundation, a nonprofit organization committed to promoting emotional health and preventing suicide among college students. To help generate awareness, partnerships include MTV and Facebook.

"One in every two college students is given the opportunity to take prescription drugs," states Henderson. The program is designed to help colleges assess mental health, substance abuse and prevention programming against recommended practices, and aims to broaden resources, to provide alternatives for mitigating student stress, and to help students make the better choice.

MTV and Facebook will further assist by enhancing awareness to the community which plays a critical role in helping those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts and others who may be at risk. "Suicide prevention is one of our big commitments heading into 2014," says Facebook's Matt Steinfeld, "making sure we're connecting those in need with the resources and people who can help them best."

The CHMI's efforts to address childhood obesity will focus on physical inactivity. "One of the goals is to equally distribute the opportunity to be active," said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO of the CHMI, "and we know that sport is a powerful element in that equation." Partnerships for this segment will include ESPN, The Aspen Institute, and Nike; panel discussions at the conference will feature athletes and influencers including President Clinton and Kobe Bryant.

Other activities around the conference include the CHMI's fourth Codeathon event taking place at Palm Spring's Ace Hotel January 11-12. Playing off the format of 'Hackathon' the event gives developers and designers a healthy environment to build technology products that can solve challenging social problems. Codeathon aims to demonstrate to youth how valuable their technology skills can be in transforming the health of our nation.

On Monday, January 13, Chelsea Clinton will be hosting a Day of Action in partnership with the City of Coachella. (Visit [Desert Health's](http://DesertHealth.org) Facebook page for updates on this activity.)

The Clinton Health Matters Conference is presented nationally by Tenet Healthcare, whose local hospitals include Desert Regional Medical Center and JFK Memorial Hospital. The conference is held annually in conjunction with the Humana Challenge and aims to shine a light on the innovations and opportunities available to make a difference in the lives and health of our nation. The Clinton Health Matters Initiative is an on-going, local effort which first launched in the Coachella Valley and is now taking place in numerous communities across the country.

# Handling the Financial Aspects of Death

By Reesa Manning, Vice President & Senior Financial Advisor  
Integrated Wealth Management

The emotional trauma of dealing with a loved one's death can be devastating. If you are also the one who has to handle the financial aspects, dealing with all the details can seem overwhelming.

Following is a checklist of items to consider:

- Your most immediate concern will be to notify family and friends of the death and make funeral arrangements. If you aren't sure of the deceased's burial wishes, look for a letter of instruction or a will that details preferences. You'll probably need to contact a funeral home as well as your loved one's religious organization. An obituary will need to be prepared, a burial site may need to be purchased, and death certificates must be obtained. Be sure to keep track of all payments for funeral and other expenses.
- If a surviving spouse and/or minor children are involved, evaluate their means of support and determine whether care for the dependents needs to be obtained. In terms of the loved one's home, you may need to deal with security at the residence, provide for the care of pets, send mail to another location, and arrange for the care or disposal of perishable property, such as plants and food.
- Locate any safe deposit boxes and follow necessary procedures to have them opened.
- If the deceased was employed, contact his/her employer to start the process of collecting any outstanding pay, life insurance proceeds, or other benefits. If the deceased was retired, notify Social Security and any pension plans.
- Locate important documents, including wills, trusts, deeds, investment records, insurance policies, business and partnership arrangements, and other evidence of assets and liabilities.
- Meet with an attorney to discuss the deceased's estate matters. Depending on the estate's complexity, you may need to retain an attorney, accountant, and/or financial advisor. While you may be hesitant to spend the deceased's funds on professional services, these professionals have experience dealing with the financial matters of estates and can help significantly with the process.

Losing a loved one is one of life's most challenging events. Having a plan and understanding how to handle the financial aftermath can have significant value in the many years to follow.

Reesa Manning is Vice President and Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management. She has worked in partnership with Mark Hayek for 16 years specializing in retirement and income planning with expertise in creating lifetime income for their clients. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834.7200 or [Reesa@IWMgmt.com](mailto:Reesa@IWMgmt.com).

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## Coachella Valley's Health Care Industry MENTORING THE FUTURE

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### FUTURE LEADERS EMERGE FROM THEIR SHADOWS

Students from Cathedral City High School (CCHS) leave the safety and security of their classroom once every semester in their junior year, to venture throughout the Coachella Valley to discover information about a possible future career. The students are enrolled in the Health and Environment Academy of Learning (HEAL) at CCHS, a curriculum designed to prepare students for a future career in the healthcare or environmental industries.

At Coachella Valley Water District, students were able to talk to the staff and scientists about where their water comes from, where it goes after they use it and everything in between. Students explored the lab where their water is tested and asked specific questions about the process and professionals involved. Over at Vector Control, students delved into the dangers of West Nile Virus and the current techniques used to control the pests that carry the virus. There was also an opportunity for personal questions and a chance to view equipment.

Students interested in the health care pathway have a wide variety of businesses from which to choose. Those interested in a future in the health care industry may consider everything from being a nurse or a doctor to the many emerging technical positions available. Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs hosted students in a few departments, encouraging students to stay focused on their education and to continue pursuing a career that helps others. Big Horn Radiology and AVID Physical Therapy were similar success stories. At Big Horn Radiology, the emerging field of cancer detection and treatment enticed those interested in

being involved in cutting-edge technology, whereas those students who traveled to AVID Physical Therapy were hoping to meet a local golf or tennis professional and get tips to bring back to class.

Students interested in a dental future had the choice of touring the brand new Loma Linda University School of Dental Hygiene or shadowing Dr. Ellie Love, a skilled Periodontist in Rancho Mirage. These wonderful partners showed our future leaders the importance of oral hygiene and the tools of their trade.

Most importantly, students engaged professionals by asking personal, intimate questions. Students learned a lot about careers they may not have considered. Time spent with family and friends, and compensation and benefits were all topics explored with their mentoring professionals, as each considered their potential future occupation.

Our business partners were also introduced to their future workforce, and had the opportunity to hear the students' thoughts and ideas about business strategy and digital communication.

Experiences were shared, knowledge was gained, and a meaningful experience was had by all. As the school year progresses, the students will share these experiences with their colleagues and prepare for their next job shadow opportunity, only a few months away.

If you are interested in hosting students from this health academy, please contact Kyle Bashore, HEAL Teacher, Cathedral City High School at [kbashore@psusd.us](mailto:kbashore@psusd.us) or Donna Sturgeon, Director, Work-Based Learning, CVEP at [Donna@cvep.com](mailto:Donna@cvep.com).

## Young Women Leaders Learn and Give Back

By Lauren Del Sarto

This past December, Women Leadership Forum's Young Women Leaders (YWL) gathered for a volunteer day at F.I.N.D. Food Bank. The girls learned about food insecurity which affects 90,000 members of our community, as well as the value of nutritious food –for those they were serving, as well as their own circle of family and friends.

The day's activities included separating donations, bagging deliveries and working together as a team to accomplish much needed tasks. The girls also took part in the "Rethink Your Drink" challenge. Each wrote down their weekly consumption of beverages, and then guessed the amount of sugar they had consumed by placing that amount in a cup.

Next they were given a chart with actual sugar content per item and asked to fill separate cups with the actual amounts. All were shocked and surprised to find how much sugar they had actually consumed simply from their drinks. Options were discussed and lessons learned.

Volunteers from this group will be taking their lessons back to their schools as health ambassadors under the guidance of Women Leadership Forum members, Drs. Nicole Ortiz and Sonja Fung of the Live Well Clinic. Each student will submit a video of their planned lesson before heading out to demonstrate and teach their counterparts.

We thank these YWLs for their contributions and for continuing to spread the word of good health within their communities.

For more information on Women Leadership Forum and the Young Women Leaders program, visit [WLFDesert.org](http://WLFDesert.org). Please consider volunteering or donating to F.I.N.D. Food Bank. Contact Debbie Hulsey at (760)775.3663 [dhulsey@findfoodbank.org](mailto:dhulsey@findfoodbank.org).



"Rethink Your Drink" Challenge



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## For All the World to Hear

By B. Maya Kato, MD

Loss of hearing is America's most prevalent physical ailment. More people suffer from hearing loss than from heart disease, cancer, blindness, tuberculosis, multiple sclerosis, venereal disease and kidney disease combined.

Despite the magnitude of the problem, we pay less attention to hearing loss than to any other major affliction. Perhaps it is because hearing loss is invisible and is physically painless. However, the inability to hear limits communication with others, and is socially isolating. For those who are profoundly hard of hearing or deaf, living in a world of silence can be emotionally devastating.

For individuals with severe hearing loss, who are not benefiting from hearing aids, a cochlear implant is an excellent option that can allow them to hear again and communicate with the world around them.

### What is a Cochlear Implant?

A cochlear implant is a device designed to restore hearing in patients who have severe to profound sensorineural (inner ear and hearing nerve) hearing loss. It directly stimulates the cochlear nerve, by-passing the normal hearing mechanisms, and the damaged portion of the ear. It is indicated for patients with severe to profound hearing loss who can no longer hear well with hearing aids. A cochlear implant helps them to hear sounds at near normal loudness levels, experience greater clarity of speech, and some are even able to use the telephone.

### How Does a Cochlear Implant Work?

Cochlear implants have external (outside) parts and internal (surgically implanted) parts that work together to allow the user to perceive sound.

**External parts:** The external parts include a microphone, a speech processor, and a transmitter. The microphone looks like a behind-the-ear hearing aid. It picks up sounds—just like a hearing aid microphone does—and sends them to the speech processor, which is typically housed with the microphone behind the ear. The speech processor is a computer that analyzes and digitizes the sound signals and sends them to a transmitter worn on the head just behind the ear. The transmitter sends the coded signals to an implanted receiver just under the skin.

**Internal parts:** The internal (implanted) parts include a receiver and electrodes. The receiver is just under the skin behind the ear. The receiver takes the coded electrical signals from the transmitter and delivers them to the array of electrodes that have been surgically inserted in the cochlea. The electrodes stimulate the fibers of the auditory nerve, and sound sensations are perceived.

### Who Will Benefit from a Cochlear Implant?

Based on the newest guidelines for cochlear implantation approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), individuals with the following typically receive benefit from a cochlear implant:

#### Adults:

- Severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss in both ears;
- Gain little or no benefit from

appropriately-fit hearing aids following an adequate period of training;

- Have no medical or radiological contraindications;
- Have high motivation and appropriate expectations.

#### Children:

- 12 to 24 months of age and have profound sensorineural hearing loss in both ears;
- 24+ months of age with severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss in both ears;
- Receive little or no benefit from hearing aids following an adequate period of training;
- No medical or radiological contraindications;
- Have a network of family support that has a high degree of motivation and appropriate expectations for the child;
- Have an educational/rehabilitation program that emphasizes auditory skill development.

### What is the Evaluation Process to Determine Candidacy?

During the comprehensive evaluation process, an audiologist with training in cochlear implants will first determine the patient's hearing thresholds. The patient's hearing aids are then evaluated to ensure they are appropriate for the degree of hearing loss. If the audiometric tests determine that the patient is a cochlear implant candidate, the otologist then conducts a thorough medical evaluation and discusses surgery with the patient. An MRI or CT scan is obtained, and other medical tests may be ordered to ensure there is no medical contraindication for cochlear implantation.

For children, educational, psychological, speech and language evaluations are recommended.

#### Implantation Process

Once the decision is made to proceed, the surgery is done. In adults, the surgery typically does not require an overnight stay in the hospital. About 4 weeks after surgery, the person is fitted with the external parts—the microphone and speech processor—and the implant is activated and programmed.

Additional visits are needed over the next several months for adjusting and programming the implant, as the individual develops skill in using the implant.

#### Outcomes

With proper patient selection, cochlear implantation can be a dramatic, life-changing event. Implant recipients can once again be a part of conversations with families and friends. They no longer feel isolated, alone and depressed. Hearing laughter, enjoying the voices of grandchildren, and rejoicing in the sound of music are some of the benefits individuals report. For the recipient and their families, a cochlear implant can significantly improve their quality of life.

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.

References are available upon request.

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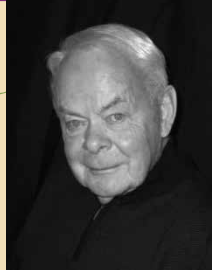
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said my friend Gary. We had not seen each other for almost two years. I am not offended and listen to him, like it or not, because he cares for me. Gary is very independent, strong and invincible; or so he thought, until he suffered a heart attack caused by a blockage.

That changed his life. Aside from other revelations, he realized he was not in as good a shape he thought he was. Gary loves life and all that it offers him. He took an inventory of his health and then stocked the shelves with an altered lifestyle including diet modifications, a consistent exercise routine, and more. He followed the instructions of his cardiologist. He has regained his strength and a renewed love of life.

When Gary made the comment on my octogenarian stride he was not being critical; he was just concerned about witnessing a repeat of what he had been through.

A few days after Gary voiced his observation, I had another warning.

My friends own a lovely home in upstate New York. For years I had cherished my long walks among the trees, meadows, ponds and lakes, with deer, pheasants, squirrels and a great variety of birds. I know the area like my proverbial pocket.

A day after my arrival, I ventured out into the woods so familiar to me. Soon I noticed that I was not very steady on my feet. They felt wobbly. I had to lie down to rest and take some calming breaths. Slowly I stood up and was able to cautiously walk back to the house. Yes, I was scared and embarrassed.

This event was a propitious lesson indeed. In many ways Gary's example and admonitions may have saved my life. Clearly it was time for a change; time for action.

Over time our physical condition tends to diminish. The more we advance in years, the faster the process. What was quick and easy now requires more work and discipline. But the rewards of accepting the challenge are well worth the reminder to stay active in body and mind, supported by healthy nutrition.

At the gym, I watched a slim and trim senior gentleman pushing stacks of weights and punishing the treadmill most days of the week at a youthful 95 years. That is an inspiration to never give up.

I continue to learn from my mistakes and the wisdom of others. Rarely do I give advice. I merely advance my opinions. The path you choose is up to you. Let it be something you like and know you need so you can commit yourself. It is what I decided to do.

If you find a morsel of value in my words, that shall be my reward.

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

## Living with Dignity and Incontinence

By Carlos Santos, MBA, HCM

As children, we learn very quickly how to avoid an embarrassing situation, such as incontinence, mostly to avoid public ridicule and or "bullying" from peers. Now, fast forward 50-60 years later to find yourself with the same problem and with the same fears. However, this time you know that the solution may not be as easy as just going to the restroom before leaving the house.

Incontinence is the involuntary loss of urine or feces. It could start with a sneeze, cough or laughter. These first few incidents can be explained away as not voiding as frequently as needed or unexpectedly exerting oneself. However, when the "accidents" become more frequent, the anxiety of when the next accident will occur becomes a quality of life issue, such as social isolation, depression and low self-esteem. When professional intervention is needed, sharing this problem with a health professional is less stressful than telling friends, family or coworkers.

Since the reaction to becoming incontinent is subjective, coping with the emotional impact and its effect on the quality of life while maintaining one's dignity can be challenging. Julie Clark, PhD, said it well in *Nursing Times*, "Dignity is a fundamental human right. It is about feeling and/or being treated and regarded as important and valuable in relation to others. Dignity is a subjective, multi-dimensional concept, but also has shared meaning among humanity."

There are many factors that play a role in this dynamic. For example, my multigenerational family was in a restaurant when my aunt needed to go to the restroom. Most of us knew that she was incontinent but assumed she had protection and enough time to reach the restroom. Unfortunately, our twenty-four year-old niece didn't understand that the situation was not as dire as she thought, so she stood up insisting that everyone move out of the way to avoid our aunt having an accident. This reaction is similar to how she approaches her young daughter's needs. Later, my niece asked me if she had done something wrong because she had noticed some looks of disapproval. This was my opportunity to share about what all caregivers deal with on a daily basis: maintaining the dignity of others while providing assistance. I had to remind her that though our aunt's needs are similar to her little daughter's, my aunt must always be treated with dignity as an adult. Sometimes all it takes is to ask, "How can I help you?"

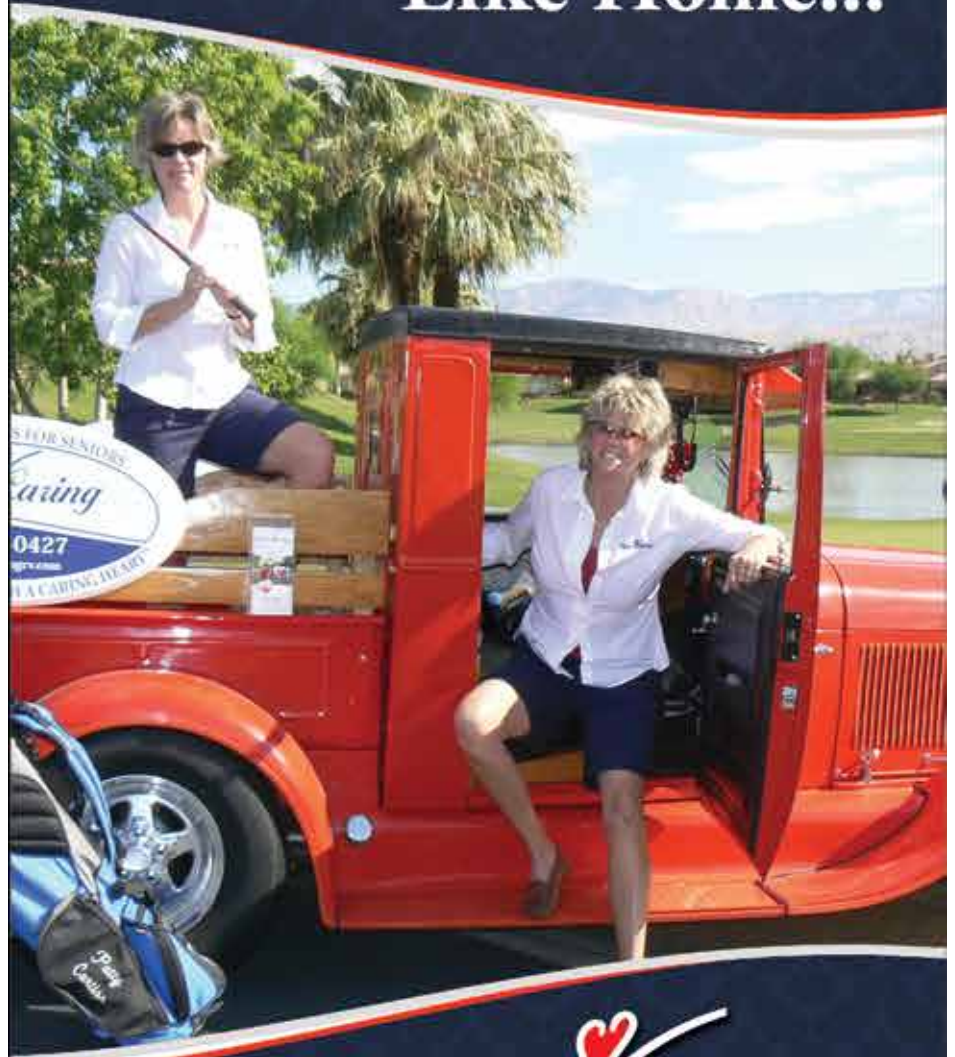
For the person living with urinary incontinence, it is recommended to have an assessment conducted by a primary care physician, urologist, continence nurse advisor or other qualified health care specialist to determine the cause of the incontinence. Furthermore, one can prepare for social outings by keeping handy an emergency kit with extra clothes, protection, wipes and odor eliminators.

It is the choice of the incontinent person to share about this part of their life with whom they please. Everyone deserves their privacy and dignity to be preserved under all circumstances throughout their life.

Carlos Santos is on the team at ElderCaring home care services. (760) 333.0427.

Reference: 1) Clark J (2010) Defining the concept of dignity and developing a model to promote its use in practice. *Nursing Times*; 106:20, early online publication.

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## Tired, Achy Legs?

### Vein treatments not only skin deep

By Lauren Del Sarto

From the pictures in most vein clinic ads, it may seem that vein removal is simply a cosmetic therapy to help attain smooth, sexy legs. While many treatments do deliver these desired results, vein removal can also be a necessary, life changing procedure.

"60% of my patients come for medical purposes," said Dr. Joan Warren of Vein Institute of the Desert. "Their symptoms are often a burning aching pain, cramping, itching, heaviness, end of day fatigue, and/or swelling of the ankles and feet." She adds that veins have valves to carry blood against gravity back towards the heart. When vein walls lose strength or valves become damaged (usually because of genetic factors), these valves no longer work properly allowing the blood to flow backwards. This causes stagnation or pooling of the blood, resulting in the above symptoms.

When the large superficial veins are not working correctly, lasering the vein shut is a safe and effective way to relieve the pressure and in turn, the symptoms. According to Dr. Warren, the pain, cramping, and burning go away almost immediately for most patients. "When they have swelling which has been there for years, it can take months for the swelling to diminish or resolve."

Visual appearances may vary. "Some people have large protruding veins and some have smaller purple-reddish veins called "spider veins." Both can be problematic. Sometimes people have symptoms such as restless legs, pain and cramping and have no noticeable veins on the surface. "When the larger superficial veins on the inside are not working correctly, they can cause these symptoms." She adds that several studies have determined that approximately 50%

of restless leg syndrome cases may be due to venous insufficiency. "Your body is trying to move the blood upward by pushing the calf muscles against the blood vessels." It is this blood pooling which causes many of the symptoms in people with varicose veins.

According to Dr. Warren, most people are self-diagnosing and don't realize the significance of their symptoms. "It is important to take care of the problem because if there is a lot of pressure in the legs, the veins can actually pop open and spontaneous hemorrhaging can occur." For some patients, it takes a long time to stop bleeding, especially if you are on blood thinning medications. Warren explains that when you have swelling at the ankles, the skin gets very hard and is destructive to those tissues. It is not getting the oxygen it needs and can cause necrosis (or death) of the skin and the fat. The skin can break open causing ulceration which can take six months, or years, to heal even with treatment. She adds that some ulcers never go away if people don't get care for them.

"If symptoms are interfering with your daily activities, it is important to seek care," says Warren. "And most insurances will cover care in these cases." Warren offers a complimentary consultation which includes an ultrasound evaluation to identify cause and options.

To help alleviate symptoms she recommends exercise, avoiding long periods of sitting and standing, wearing medical grade prescription compression stockings and limiting wearing high heels.

For more information or questions, contact Dr. Warren at Vein Institute of the Desert (760) 610.5573.

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## A Natural Facelift from the Inside Out

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

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can provide a safe, effective, natural, and drug-free approach to reducing the signs of aging.

Facial rejuvenation has a long history in TCM and was popular with Chinese emperors' wives a millennium ago. The past ten years have seen increasing interest in this country with celebrities such as Jennifer Aniston, Angelina Jolie, Sean Connery, and Madonna enjoying the benefits.

Whether it is called facial rejuvenation, an acupuncture face-lift, or cosmetic acupuncture, the aim is to tackle wrinkles, improve the muscle tone of the face and neck and reduce the tension that can cause unsightly lines. It also addresses systemic issues and underlying imbalances that may contribute to the aging process and stand between you and glowing skin.

According to TCM, wrinkles begin internally from a constitutional imbalance and fundamental weakness of Qi ('chi'). Qi flows through the body in a series of pathways called meridians providing nourishment, support, and energy to every cell, tissue, muscle, and organ. As we get older, it becomes more difficult for Qi to flow upwards to "lift" the face. This leads to inadequate muscle tone, and over time, wrinkles and sagging skin. A variety of factors can contribute to this—poor diet, digestion and circulation, or emotional and environmental stresses, and genetic factors.

A facial rejuvenation using acupuncture tightens pores, improves muscle tone and dermal contraction, and can enhance and increase the elasticity of the skin. Acupuncture can reduce signs of aging by strengthening and stimulating the circulation of Qi within the meridian pathways, especially those of the face. You will look and feel more energetic, calm, vibrant and healthy.

To maximize results, the TCM approach often combines acupuncture treatments with herbal supplements, micro current stimulators and ionizers, facial exercise, and self-acupressure.

Try these simple self-care techniques. Gently massage your face daily using either your fingertips or a special jade roller made for this purpose. As always, stay hydrated—drink plenty of fresh spring or reverse osmosis water. This can keep the muscles and skin hydrated to prevent drying. There are also some excellent herbal based pre-made and proprietary crèmes and formulas that your practitioner can provide to help tighten skin and remove wrinkles.

Before using drugs or surgery to improve your appearance, consider this safe, non-surgical method to reduce the signs of aging; one that can also help your whole body look and feel younger.

Diane Sheppard of AcQpoint Wellness Center in La Quinta is a licensed acupuncturist with a Ph.D. in Oriental Medicine. She will be conducting free demonstrations of facial acupuncture and facial self-massage techniques at AcQpoint on Feb 22 at 4 pm. For more information: (760) 775.7900 [www.AcQPoint.com](http://www.AcQPoint.com).



Acupuncture can deliver face lift benefits naturally





## Careful Considerations for Eyelid Surgery

By Jennifer Hui, MD, FACS

Eyelid surgery is one of the most common procedures people seek. While it is a rejuvenating procedure, it also serves a functional purpose for many. In cases where the excess skin overhangs the upper eyelashes (dermatochalasis), or the upper lids are drooping (called ptosis, pronounced "toe-sis"), a person's upper field of view may be obstructed.

When compared to a facelift or full laser resurfacing, an eyelid lift seems like an easy operation with relatively less down time and post operative healing. In many cases, this is true. However, it is important to remember that it is a surgical procedure and careful planning should be undertaken prior to commencement of the surgery.

Before surgery, a thorough examination should be performed. In addition to looking at the eyelid appearance and function, the degree of excess skin and fat and the position of the upper eyelid margin (near the eyelashes) should be noted as well. In many candidates where there is a subtle amount of upper eyelid drooping, the body compensates for the excess skin by using the forehead muscles to elevate the heavy upper eyelids. This may "hide" a small amount of eyelid droop. It is important to examine the upper eyelids with the forehead fully relaxed to visualize the true upper eyelid position. If there is any drooping, simply removing the excess skin will not correct the drooping and may lead to continued need to flex the forehead in order to see clearly post-surgery.

Another important factor to examine is the eyebrow. In some cases, the cause of the excess upper eyelid skin or drooping is a lowered eyebrow. When the brow position is too low, it allows the skin beneath it to droop more than expected, thus obstructing the upper visual axis. Simply removing excess upper eyelid skin will not address the root cause and may exacerbate the brow drooping. As more skin is removed from the upper eyelid, the brow will be drawn further downward. It is important to recognize brow drooping before surgery. The brow's position may be addressed during the procedure, but careful pre-operative planning is key.

During the procedure, unexpected anatomy may also be encountered. Previous surgeries are a common cause of unexpected surgical findings, and thus, it is important to let your surgeon know of any prior procedures or trauma, no matter how seemingly insignificant. Scar tissue distorts tissue planes, but with careful technique and attention to detail, these issues can be resolved. Additionally, scar tissue may affect eyelid function; this may be addressed at the time of the current surgery in order to correct any eyelid malposition or poor closure.

After the procedure, swelling and bruising should be expected. Both will peak at about the third or fourth day after surgery. While an eyelid lift does have relatively less downtime than more extensive cosmetic procedures, it is important to allow enough time to heal. While the majority of the swelling and bruising are most evident the first 10-14 days after surgery, in some cases it may take longer for full resolution.

Our eyes are the focus of our face. An eyelid lift can provide long lasting, rejuvenating results. Careful planning is the key to an optimal outcome and patient experience.

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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# The New You in the New Year! Choosing the right exercise program for you

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

It's that time again! 2014 is ushered in, and all that holiday overindulgence has found a new home around your waistline. Guilt and the typical New Year's resolutions lead many to sign up at a gym or contact a personal trainer to help them shed those unwanted pounds.

Jumping into the latest and greatest usually isn't the most effective action plan. I frequently get asked, "What type of program would best suit me?" It would be easy for me to say just join a gym and start working out with someone, but the real answer depends on the following factors:

- ✦ Your age
- ✦ Training background
- ✦ History of surgeries
- ✦ Current medications
- ✦ Current aches or pains
- ✦ Amount of time since your last workout program
- ✦ Your individual short- term and long-term goals

After compiling all the data, the next step is to ask yourself if you prefer working out indoors or outdoors. Do you want to work out on your own or in a small group setting? Many people make the mistake of getting caught up in New Year's resolutions and jump into fitness routines that are either too advanced for them, or unrealistic for their present physical condition.

The following information might make your decision easier regarding where to start your fitness plan.

If you are new to working out or haven't worked out consistently for at least a year, the best place to start might be a gym. Find a **qualified certified trainer** to assist in formulating a work-out plan for you and then have a few follow-up sessions to make sure you are progressing and have correct form. If you would rather work out at home, there are **video programs** with beginner to advanced conditioning levels.

If you like to exercise outdoors, there are many **fitness boot camps** available to push you in the right direction. They involve running, jumping, calisthenics, agility strength and cardio training. They will tailor the camp to your needs by pushing you up to, but not beyond your limits. This is a great way to lose weight, help your heart become stronger, and work out in the sun. You can also use the **hiking trails** in the valley to sprint, jog, or ride your bike.

For the more experienced workout person, **Crossfit** will challenge your physical abilities as you will experience a different workout every day. This program is really for people with a good exercise background, as well as, those who want to be pushed



Alternating fitness activities can help ensure success



to their limits. It involves doing many repetitions using a variety of strength training, cardio, plyometrics and Olympic lifting.

If you enjoy stretching and core conditioning, then **yoga and Pilates** classes are always forming. There are many types of yoga, so before you choose one, research the various types.

People who have had previous surgeries, orthopedic conditions, or have any illnesses or health conditions should seek the advice from their physician first before starting a program. Starting an exercise program with a licensed health care practitioner ensures that you aren't given any exercises that may compromise any existing or past physical problems.

We all start the New Year with good intentions and plan to stick with our exciting, new exercise routine. Putting thought into the type of program you will most enjoy, and that which will meet your specific goals, will help ensure you are maintaining that routine come December.

Michael K Butler B.A.;P.T.A.;CSCS\*D;RSCC\*D NMT 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 for 1010 KXPS's Sports Radio Talk Show and can be reached at (760) 200.1719 or michael@kinetixcenter.com.

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## The Middle Makes a Difference

### Keeping your thoracic spine supple

By Stacy Hennis, PT, C/NDT

When you have a headache, having your neck rubbed can help. When your low back hurts, stretching your hips often makes it feel better. But what about the area between your low back and neck? This area is referred to as the thoracic spine and is often overlooked. Yet it's a critical link between your neck and shoulders and lower trunk.

The neck provides flexibility for turning your head and engaging in the environment. The lower back is designed for flexibility and power: flexibility when reaching for the floor, power when lifting items. The ribs attach to the thoracic spine (T1-T10) and form the thorax, protecting the heart and lungs. It's a solid base on which the head and shoulders can move.

The thoracic spine is stable, yet highly mobile. It bends forward, backward, and rotates. Without supple mobility in this area, you can develop seemingly unrelated problems: your neck may start bothering you, or a shoulder injury may begin. It can lead to rounding of your upper back and a forward positioned head.

Often people are unaware of how to move or exercise this area properly. If they try to extend, they arch their lower back too much. Or with twisting, they only twist their neck and lower back. If people learn the proper movement in the right area, it can save them a lot of heartache in the future.

It's important to first determine your mobility. To see if you have enough thoracic extension, lay on the floor with your knees bent, feet on floor. Straighten your elbows out to the side and move your arms overhead palms facing up. If your hands don't touch the floor without arching your back, you don't have enough thoracic mobility.

If this is the case, a foam roller is a great way to gain more extension. Lay with it on your thoracic spine (not neck or low back), lift your hips in the air and gently move up and down on it, rolling along the thoracic spine. You can then start to curl over the roller, extending your spine further. To increase the stretch on the front of your chest, straighten your arms out to the side.

Rotation is critical as well. Sit in a chair, hug your chest, and rotate side to side. Don't let yourself move excessively from the lumbar spine, but instead rotate in the thoracic area. Another way to do this is lying on your side with legs bent for balance and comfort. Pull in your abdominals to help your low back remain stable. Straighten your arms out in front of you. Rotate in your thoracic spine and chest to move your upper arm towards the ceiling then back towards the floor behind you. Repeat for several repetitions on both sides.

You should never feel pain in your neck or low back. If you do, you may have flexibility or muscle imbalance issues that can be appropriately assessed by a physical therapist. Prior to starting any exercise program, it is important to consult with your health care professional.

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.



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## Go Red This February!

Join the American Heart Association (AHA) and show your support for the women in your life by encouraging them to know their numbers and pay attention to their heart.

The highlight of this year's AHA campaign is the 7th Annual Go Red For Women Luncheon at the Renaissance Esmeralda in Indian Wells. This year's event takes place on National Wear Red Day, which is the day the American Heart Association encourages people to wear red to raise awareness of the toll heart disease takes on women.

Heart disease is the number one killer of women – killing more women than all forms of cancer combined. Most women don't notice the symptoms of heart disease, and in some cases, aren't even aware of them. The AHA is working to change that.

Since the AHA's Go Red For Women campaign was launched a decade ago, more than 627,000 women across the country have been saved from heart disease – that's 330 fewer women dying of heart disease each day. But the fight is far from over.

The next step takes place locally on February 7 at the Coachella Valley Go Red For Women Luncheon. The AHA is excited to announce that this year's honored speaker is Lynn-Holly Johnson. The actress is known for her role in the movie Ice Capades, as well as for her Bond Girl character Bibi Dahl in *For Your Eyes Only*. Johnson is also a stroke survivor.

The AHA hopes to kick-off American Heart Month with a special surprise in Palm Springs and will share more information once it is secured.

### What does it mean to Go Red?

- **Get Your Numbers:** Ask your doctor to check your blood pressure and cholesterol.
- **Own Your Lifestyle:** Stop smoking, lose weight, exercise and eat healthy.
- **Realize Your Risk:** We think it won't happen to us, but heart disease kills 1 in 3 women.
- **Educate Your Family:** Make healthy food choices for you and your family. Teach your kids the importance of staying active.
- **Don't be silent:** Tell every woman you know that heart disease is our #1 killer. Raise your voice at GoRedForWomen.org.

The 2014 Coachella Valley Go Red For Women Luncheon is sponsored by Desert Oasis Healthcare, Kerrigan Family Medical Group, The Date Commission, Humana Challenge, Desert Regional Medical Center, Humana, Eisenhower Desert Cardiology Center, and Eisenhower Medical Center.

Event registration begins at 9:00 am. The educational sessions begin at 9:30 am, and will feature a physician from Desert Regional Medical Center. The Go Red For Women heart healthy lunch will be served at noon. All attendees are encouraged to wear red to show their support of the American Heart Association's Go Red For Women campaign.

For more information, call (760) 346.8109 or visit [www.cvgoaredluncheon.org](http://www.cvgoaredluncheon.org).

## Desert Events



**GO RED FOR WOMEN® LUNCHEON**

 **American Heart Association®** | 

**COACHELLA VALLEY**  
**INDIAN WELLS RENAISSANCE ESMERALDA**  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2014 9AM - 2PM**

**FOR RSVP INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT**  
**CVGORED LUNCHEON.ORG OR CALL 760-346-8109**





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*"The Valley's #1 Resource Fair"*

# CANADA FEST 2014

**This Celebration is for Everyone: Canadians, Snowbirds and Locals**

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- Travel and Leisure
- Food and Beverage
- Arts and Handicrafts
- Beauty and Glamour
- Fashion
- Health and Wellness
- Specialty Services
- Entertainment
- Food Court
- Canadian Cuisine
- Seminars
- Vendor Booths
- Prize Drawings

★ Financial Fest 2014  
"Opportunities for smart investing."

**Friday and Saturday / February 28 – March 1, 2014**

Admission \$10  
Free Parking  
Children Under 8 FREE

**Renaissance Esmeralda Resort and Spa**  
Indian Wells, California

Event Hours  
Fri: 1 PM – 8 PM  
Sat: 8 AM – 5 PM

Visit [BetteKingProductions.com](http://BetteKingProductions.com) or call (760) 202-4007

**Celebration of our Canadian Friends, Snowbirds and Locals**

## Celebrate Our Canadian Friends at Canada Fest 2014

Canada Fest returns on Friday, February 28, and Saturday, March 1 at the Renaissance Esmeralda Hotel in Indian Wells. This festive celebration and resource expo brings together local and Canadian businesses as vendors, entertainment, services, seminars and demonstrations for two fun-filled days.

Thousands attended last year's event and producer Bette King listened to their requests: move the event down valley, hold it later in the season when everyone is here, and offer more Canadian food. Thus, the mid-season event in Indian Wells is sure to be bigger and better than before! The Esmeralda's Executive Chef and his team will be offering a tasty and nostalgic array of Canadian foods and beverages, and Tim Horton Coffee will be brewing. Entertainment will be intimate and will include performers from both Canada and the US.

The Palm Springs Pipe Band, a deserving organization comprised of Canadian, Scottish, and American pipers, will be honored at this year's Canada Fest with a special presentation by the Canadian Consulate. Another addition is the inclusion of Financial Fest, a 20-year veteran event that has toured the U.S., offering over 20 exhibitor booths and informative seminars from top investment speakers. Other exhibiting categories include health, beauty and auto with test drives of Tesla electric sports cars and displays by the valley's own Exotic Motor Cars.

"We are working to become the 'Best of the Best' resource fair here in the Desert," says King who developed the event to honor the many Canadians and snowbirds who support our Desert economy.

For more information, visit [BetteKingProductions.com](http://BetteKingProductions.com) or call (760) 202.4007.

## Humana Challenge Brings Healthy Fun to La Quinta

Activities encouraging healthy lifestyles will take place over two weeks around the Humana Challenge in partnership with the Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation. Festivities continue to promote the tournament's message of good health - and all activities around the tournament are free!

Humana Fit, Fun & Forever Week kicks off Monday, January 6 at the La Quinta Senior Center. Organized walks and daily fitness demos like yoga, Zumba, and tai chi will complement healthy food demonstrations and even grocery shopping tips. The week caps off with a healthy luncheon and bingo.

On Saturday, January 11 the Humana Well-Being Walk & Fun Fair returns to the La Quinta Community Park. The walk starts an hour later this year (9am) after an active warm-up and stretch. Along the 5-3/4 mile course there will be four rest stops with snacks and water. Get a stamp at each stop and receive a prize pack when you return! The Fun Fair will take place from 10am-2pm offering healthy activities and exhibitors, live performance by the New Sensations Party Band, the Interactive Kids Fun Zone, carnival games with prizes, and open access to La Quinta Community Fitness Center.

Humana Day at the Certified Farmers Market returns to Old Town on Sunday, January 12 from 8am-Noon. Local organic fare will be available for sale, and demonstrations by popular Valley chefs will teach us how to combine these ingredients for nourishing farm-fresh cuisine.

Humana Challenge golf takes place January 13 – 19 and both The Clinton Foundation and Humana will feature healthy on-site activities for spectators. The Walk-It program returns as an interactive app for your phone, and everyone's steps will once again contribute to local charity donations made by the Humana Foundation. Last year 15.3 million steps resulted in a \$500,000 bonus donation!

Humana's Vitality Tour will be featured with BMI (body mass index) technology and those fun-to-spin blender bikes. The Clinton Foundation will conduct daily lectures and/or cooking demonstrations by noted health experts and chefs. Kids Day (Sunday, January 19) will host a myriad of activities to encourage young golf fans to get - and to stay - physically active.

Other themed days include Novo Nordisk Seniors' Day (Thursday, January 16), Astellas Women's Day (Friday, January 17), and Humana Military Appreciation Day (Saturday, January 18).

This January, La Quinta is the place to be!

For more information on La Quinta events visit [playinlaquinta.com](http://playinlaquinta.com) or call (760) 777.7090. For tournament info visit [HumanaChallenge.com](http://HumanaChallenge.com) or (760) 346.8184.

## Join the Alzheimer's Association® Walk To End Alzheimer's

On Saturday, March 1, residents and businesses from throughout the Coachella Valley will come together to raise awareness and funds to fight Alzheimer's disease at the 15th annual Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's.

In addition to the two-mile route, Walk to End Alzheimer's will include a health fair, entertainment, food, awards and family festivities. Walkers who raise \$100 receive a commemorative T-shirt, and there are prizes for the top fund-raising teams and individuals.

The event takes place at the Palm Desert Civic Center Park. Onsite registration opens at 9am; opening ceremonies begin at 10am; the walk begins at 10:30 am.

Walk to End Alzheimer's is the nation's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. Donations benefit the Alzheimer's Association – the leading voluntary health organization for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Its mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

To register, start a team, donate, sponsor, or volunteer, contact the Alzheimer's Association at [www.alz.org/socal](http://www.alz.org/socal) or (760) 328.6767. For information about the California Southland Chapter, visit [www.alz.org/socal](http://www.alz.org/socal) or call (800) 272.3900.



Janet Harris, team "Sherman's Walkers" honors her father of Sherman's Deli fame

**WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S**

alzheimer's association®

**Join us** to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. With your help we can put an end to Alzheimer's disease.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 1**  
CIVIC CENTER PARK, PALM DESERT

**JOIN US**

**Register or donate today!**  
[www.alz.org/socal](http://www.alz.org/socal)  
(760) 328-6767  
24/7 Helpline: (800) 272-3900

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Treatment covered by Medicare and most major health insurance plans.  
We now welcome **TRICARE** and **IEHP** members.

*New Advancements in medical technology have shown this treatment is safe, easy and effective.*

**NO SURGERY IS REQUIRED**

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*Board Certified Pain Medicine Specialist*  
*Board Certified Anesthesiologist*

Treatment is Safe, Easy, and **NO SURGERY** is required

**Desert Clinic** is committed to accurate diagnosis and patient care in a friendly and compassionate setting.

This is **YOUR LIFE, BEING PAIN FREE** is worth it!

*We changes lives every day, give us the opportunity to change yours.*

Some of the many pain conditions we treat:

- |                             |                     |                                    |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
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| • Degenerative Disc Disease | • Arthritis         | • Peripheral Vascular Disease Pain |
| • Radiculopathy             | • Scoliosis         | • Peripheral Neuropathy            |
| • Neuropathy                | • Knee Pain         | • Lower Extremity Pain             |
| • Low Back Pain             | • Arachnoiditis     | • Peripheral Nerve Injuries        |
| • Neck Pain                 | • Fibromyalgia      | • Myofascial Pain Syndrome         |
| • Facet Joint Dysfunction   | • Facial Pain       | • Central Pain Syndromes           |
| • Spinal Stenosis           | • Headaches         | • Chronic Abdominal Pain           |
| • Vertebral Fractures       | • Cancer Pain       | • Orthopedic, Sports Injuries      |
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Palm Springs, CA 92264  
**760-320-8005**





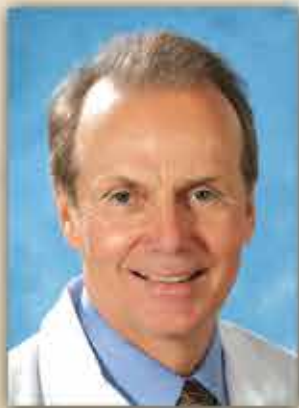
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**Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine NEEDS YOU!**  
**JUST 4 HOURS A MONTH**

Tens of thousands of Valley residents cannot access healthcare services due to financial challenges. CVVIM is the only free medical clinic available to serve this population. But only a fraction are served due to lack of volunteers.

**Patients come from every city throughout the Coachella Valley.**

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\*Medical professionals must hold an unrestricted California license to practice in the clinic.  
 Malpractice coverage provided by the clinic through FTCA.



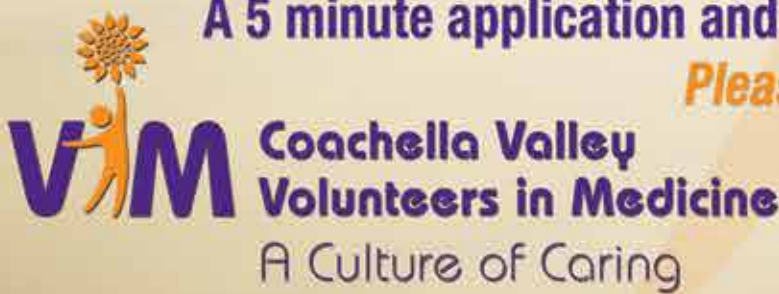
**Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH**  
 Vice President, Primary Care and DIO  
 Eisenhower Medical Center

*"Working at CVVIM is incredibly rewarding. In each clinic, I see very appreciative patients who are so grateful to receive care. Often this is an uncontrolled diabetic patient who has lost the ability to get treatment."*



**Les Zendle, MD**  
 Retired Internal Medicine Physician  
 CVVIM Volunteer Medical Director

*"Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine has given me an opportunity to provide medical care to people who have no other place to go. Every time I treat a patient with diabetes or hypertension, I know I'm making a difference in that person's life. Every one of them is so appreciative!"*



**A 5 minute application and 4 hours a month is all it takes.**  
**Please join us.**

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