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What is the one thing you hope to have with you for life? Your children? Your spouse? Your sanity? Your mobility?

When you think about it, the most treasured thing you could wish for yourself and your loved ones is good health. It can be the difference between happiness and heartbreak, comfort and pain, and growing older with vitality or infirmity.

Yet, often we don't do enough for our wellness. We know what we should do, but taking the first steps down that path can be difficult. Sometimes it just takes a little help from our family and friends.

So why not give the gift of health this holiday season? It's a perfect present from the heart that can last a lifetime. It's simple, can be free, or can cost as much as you usually spend on holiday gift giving.

What can you do? Give your spouse a week of healthy home cooked meals or a gift certificate to an organic restaurant. Plan a couple's spa day at home or at one of our world-class resorts. Give a week of yoga to someone who has wanted to try it; energy balancing to those feeling unease, or a gym membership to start that exercise program.

There are many ideas to meet every need and you'll find them here. A loved one with chronic pain? Try acupuncture; hoping to lose weight, a nutritional coach; loves natural medicine, essential oils; loss of vim and vigor, a hormone panel test; love of golf, a conditioning program; loves to be pampered, a facial or massage; unresolved emotions, sound therapy; osteoporosis, bone strength training; seeking deeper meaning, an awakening walk; an idiopathic condition, a naturopathic consultation; self-conscious about their teeth, a smile lift; unmanaged stress, a health coach or meditation; a love of movies, a date to see Wellness Worth Watching.

Are we promoting our marketing partners? You bet we are because our greatest gift is when readers say "thank you" for introducing them to a professional, a practice, or an experience which has enhanced their life. We are blessed to hear this often as much of the information, and many of those on our pages, hold the answers to unwrapping that which can help you move towards your best health.

We all wish for good health, so this season remember, the greatest gift you can give is the gift of health.



**Karen was a vivacious young woman** living the dream. An avid tennis and softball player, she loved doing yoga, had a private psychotherapy practice, and spent time between Redondo Beach and Palm Springs with her husband and their labradoodle Dood.

Her family lived in Texas but her beloved sister, Stephanie, a pediatric gastroenterologist, moved with her family to Redondo in 2012, close to Karen for the first time since high school.

That same year when Karen was just 42, things suddenly started to change. She came down with an upper respiratory infection and debilitating fatigue. Antibiotics only made things worse and her symptoms continued to progress. Within a year, she could hardly walk, her heart would race every



Karen Horwitz-Acosta

time she moved. She had digestive issues, trouble breathing, suffered memory loss and word confusion, and was losing muscle control with a dragging leg and drooping eyes.

Neurologists ruled out MS or a brain tumor; her sister suspected myasthenia gravis (MG), a neuro-muscular autoimmune disease, but a blood test ruled that out as well, leaving Karen, her friends and family baffled. Sadly, many doctors made her feel that it was all in her mind or refused to take her case.

Her condition progressed to the point that she could barely hold up her head and any exertion made it worse. "I felt like I was slowly dying," says Karen, who worked hard to keep her emotional state intact and leaned on her sense of humor to help get her through.

Continued on page 7

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## Can You Feel It in the Air?

Another season is upon us and I can tell it's going to be an exciting and fun-filled adventure! With the fourth quarter dubbed "The Wellest Season," it has already begun.

As I write this, the World Series is in game 2, Wanderlust's Wellspring comes to town this weekend, and our first gala is a week away. As you can see to your right, it's just the start of a full calendar presenting opportunities for all to educate, congregate and celebrate!

Our Wellest Season includes the holidays and what better way to take part than to give the gift of health to family and friends. It's a heartfelt offering to be enjoyed for a lifetime. You'll be inspired by the many ideas on our pages.

The New Year is right around the corner and I am honored to be receiving two awards this January: Women Leaders Forum's Trailblazer Award to be presented at their annual fundraiser, Women Who Rule, and the Health & Wellness Influencer Award from the Palm Springs Health Run Fitness Expo. The work these organizations do in generating funds for others is commendable and we are delighted to take part (read more in Desert Events).

To receive this recognition is beyond my dreams and expectations and I am deeply grateful. I am proud of what we have built with *Desert Health* and so very honored to be of service to our wonderful desert community.

Wishing you happy, heartfelt and healthy holidays.

From our growing family to yours ~



Lauren Del Sarto  
Founder/Publisher



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### Thank you to the Desert Health team and all our marketing partners!

**Distribution:** *Desert Health* is distributed at 350+ locations throughout the Coachella Valley including, but not limited to, grocery stores, doctors' offices, cafes and restaurants, spas, fitness centers and clubhouses. Please call for delivery to your retail location.

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## A Season of Good Health!

**Desert Health® is proud to support these community events.**  
**We look forward to seeing you out and about!**

**Nov. 1 • Nominations Now Open!** Do you know someone moving health and wellness forward in the Coachella Valley? Nominate them for a Desert Health Wellness Award taking place May 22, 2019. Categories include Individual, Business, Non-profit, Integrative Practitioner, and Youth 18 and under (see p. 29). To submit nominations, visit [www.deserthealthnews.com](http://www.deserthealthnews.com).

**Nov. 3 • Passions Ball.** This second annual benefit gala for CancerPartners features another glamorous evening including a cocktail reception, the Passion Awards, dinner, and dancing to THE GREATEST HITZ from Las Vegas. Westin Mission Hills, Rancho Mirage. 6pm. (760) 770.5678. [www.CancerPartners.org](http://www.CancerPartners.org).

**Nov. 3-11 • USA Pickleball National Championships.** The Indian Wells Tennis Garden will host this growing sport's largest annual tournament and spectators are encouraged to come cheer on athletes in over 100 divisions. Entrance to the grounds is free with tickets to the Championship Court ranging from \$10-\$50. [www.USAPA.org](http://www.USAPA.org).

**Nov. 14 • Wellness Worth Watching.** Presented by Eisenhower Health and Desert Health, this season's wellness movie series kicks off with a narrative for how to live a fully realized life in *Finding Joe* (see p. 28). Annenberg Health Sciences Building at Eisenhower, Rancho Mirage. Doors open 1:30pm; Movie 2-4pm. \$5.00. RSVP (760) 610.7360. [www.emc.org/wellness](http://www.emc.org/wellness).

**Nov. 17 • Coachella Valley Heart and Stroke Walk.** This non-competitive 5k walk encourages the community to take the pledge to live a healthier lifestyle. Start a team or bring family and friends! Palm Desert Civic Center Park. Registration and health fair begin at 7am. Walk begins at 8:30am. [www.cvheartwalk.org](http://www.cvheartwalk.org).

**Dec. 9 • IRONMAN 70.3 Indian Wells-La Quinta.** The valley's inaugural half IRONMAN competition will cover 70.3 miles (113km) in total. Event starts at Lake Cahuilla with a 1.2-mile swim, then a 56-mile bike through Indian Wells and La Quinta and a 13.1-mile run in Indian Wells. Information and registration at [www.ironman.com](http://www.ironman.com).

**Jan. 12 • Trilogy at the Polo Club Wellness Fair.** On the beautiful grounds of the Valley's fast growing gated community whose motto is "Live Happier." A variety of valley health and wellness professionals will offer demonstrations, samples and product information from 9am-12pm. Also enjoy raffle prizes and fresh bites from their acclaimed restaurant, *June Hill's Table*. Model home tours also available. Free, open to the public and presented by Desert Health®. Located on Avenue 52 between Monroe and Jackson. (760) 238.0245.

**Jan. 16 • Wellness Worth Watching.** *Food Choices* presented by Eisenhower Health and Desert Health. Groundbreaking documentary exploring the impact our food choices have on our individual health and that of our planet. Annenberg Health Sciences Building at Eisenhower, Rancho Mirage. Doors open 1:30pm; Movie 2-4pm. \$5.00. RSVP (760) 610.7360. [www.emc.org/wellness](http://www.emc.org/wellness).

**Jan. 16-20 • Career Builder Challenge.** The PGA Tournament is celebrating 60 years with a focus on fun and giving back to local children's charities. PGA WEST and La Quinta Country Club. Tickets on sale November and available at [CBChallenge.com](http://CBChallenge.com).

**Jan. 25 • Women Leaders Forum's Women Who Rule** presented by Desert Regional Medical Center. Raise a toast - and college scholarships - for Young Women Leaders while honoring dynamic community leaders at this celebratory luncheon. Champagne reception/silent auction start 11am (see p. 30). Agua Caliente Resort. (760) 837.7222. [www.wlfdesert.org](http://www.wlfdesert.org).

**Jan. 26 • Palm Springs Health Run & Fitness Expo.** Join runners, walkers and health enthusiasts for the 10K, 5K, and 1K Fun Run or simply come for the EXPO featuring over 100 vendors including the Pet Pavilion and Lifestream blood drive. Stay for the 1st Annual Health and Wellness Luncheon honoring *Desert Health's* Lauren Del Sarto and United Way of the Desert's Kristal Granados. Races begin at 8am; luncheon begins at 12pm and tickets are \$30 (see p. 28). Register at [www.PalmSpringsHealthRun.com](http://www.PalmSpringsHealthRun.com) (760) 409.1530.

**Feb. 12 • Indio Senior Center Health Fair.** Free flu shots, balance testing, blood pressure, nutrition services, giveaways, refreshments and more will be offered at this free event from 9am - 12:30pm at the Indio Senior Center. 45-700 Aladdin St. For information call Sylvia Tenorio (760) 668.0395.

**Feb. 14 • Affair of the Heart.** This free community education and screening event hosted by Desert Regional Medical Center offers guest speakers, lectures on heart conditions, treatment options and prevention, as well as free blood pressure and blood sugar screenings. (800) 491.4990.

**Feb. 16 • WineLover's Auction.** Presented by Desert Care Network, this signature event features a wine reception and dinner to benefit Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine. Silent and live auctions feature wine and wine-themed baskets, travel and entertainment, art, jewelry and much more! [www.WineLoversAuction.com](http://www.WineLoversAuction.com).

**Feb. 16 • 12th Annual Desert Woman's Show.** One day only at the Renaissance Indian Wells Resort from 10am to 5pm. Fashion shows include Pete Carlson's with spring arrivals of golf and tennis attire and Macy's. Guest speakers include Michael Klaper, MD, and life coach, Lynda Reid, author of *The Little Book of MORE*. Complimentary general admission tickets available online at [www.DesertWomansShow.com](http://www.DesertWomansShow.com) courtesy of Desert Care Network while supplies last (see p. 30). Diana@MarloProductions.com.

**Feb. 16 • 12th Annual Greater Palm Springs Food & Wine** (at the Desert Woman's Show) featuring your favorite restaurants including Mastro's, Eight4Nine, Roy's Hawaiian, Panera Bread, California Pizza Kitchen, Wildest Greens, Daniel's Table and much more! Tastings and live entertainment sponsored by Big Rock Pub. 11am to 4pm at the Renaissance Indian Wells Resort (see p. 30). Tickets are \$20 in advance available at [GreaterPalmSpringsFoodandWine.com](http://GreaterPalmSpringsFoodandWine.com).

**Feb. 20 • Wellness Worth Watching.** *The Mindfulness Movie* presented by Eisenhower Health and Desert Health. Learn about the scientific research on the benefits - and the increasing acceptance - of mindfulness for brain health. Annenberg Health Sciences Building at Eisenhower, Rancho Mirage. Doors open 1:30pm; Movie 2-4pm. \$5.00. RSVP (760) 610.7360. [www.emc.org/wellness](http://www.emc.org/wellness).

**Feb. 23 • 11th Annual Trilogy La Quinta Health Fair.** This festive and free event is open to the public and presented by Desert Health®. A variety of Coachella Valley health professionals will offer demonstrations, samples and product information. Raffle tickets for thousands in prizes available for \$1 each to benefit Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine. 9am to 12pm. 60-750 Trilogy Pkwy (off Ave. 60) La Quinta (760) 702.3037.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**May 22, 2019 Desert Health Wellness Awards**



# Open Enrollment Counselors Available

## DCN offers free guidance for Covered California

By Michele Finney

For many of us, selecting the health insurance option that best meets our – and our family’s – needs and pocketbook can be a daunting prospect.

This is especially true since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the number of insurance options now being offered through the Covered California exchange to people who previously may not have had access to affordable health coverage.

How do you pick the right plan from the choices available? It’s easy to be confused. For example, you might not realize that a minimal plan that initially looked attractive because of its low premiums does not cover the cost of medications. If you’re taking regular prescription drugs, a higher-level plan that does include medication coverage may be a better and more cost-effective option for you – even if the monthly premiums are higher.

Since the ACA was implemented six years ago, the hospitals of the Desert Care Network have been committed to helping residents of our communities better understand their Covered California insurance options and get the coverage that’s right for them.

Our three hospitals – Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs, JFK Memorial Hospital in Indio and Hi-Desert Medical Center in Joshua Tree – offer certified enrollment counselors, free of charge. We make these staff available year-round, not only to our patients, but to any member of the community who needs help understanding the options that are available to them and their families through Covered California.

These trained counselors will assist you in any way they can. They are available for an in-person appointment at the hospitals to answer your questions and help you with the enrollment process. You may also reach one of our trained counselors at the following numbers:

- Desert Regional Medical Center – (760) 323.6156 or (760) 323.6443
- JFK Memorial Hospital – (760) 775.8418 or (760) 323.6443
- Hi-Desert Medical Center – (760) 366.4370 or (760) 323.6443

Open enrollment for the Covered California health insurance marketplace runs from Oct. 15, 2018, through Jan. 15, 2019. Enrollment counselors are available for in-person appointments from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at Desert Regional, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at JFK and Hi-Desert.

We’re proud to offer this important resource to residents of the Coachella Valley and Morongo Basin as Desert Care Network’s promise is “advanced care, close to home, devoted to everyone’s health.” Providing this service is a reminder that by working together we can all enjoy the benefits of a healthier community.

Michele Finney serves as CEO of Desert Regional Medical Center and as Market CEO of Desert Care Network. Desert Care Network accepts a wide range of public and private insurance coverage.



Open enrollment counselors Lizeth Boyer and Luz Rodriguez

# Are You Living Your wel//est?

By Lauren Del Sarto

As you may have read in the previous issue of *Desert Health*, now is the time to Live Your Welllest and Greater Palm Springs has just what you need.

Our valley is the ultimate health and wellness destination and we are lucky to live here! Certainly, the area boasts other exceptional attributes for which we are known but the current focus is on the many opportunities to help you, and those visiting our beautiful desert, become the happiest, healthiest, truest – wellest - version of yourself.

### What does this mean?

A unique answer lies within each of us. An adrenaline seeker might live their wellest while biking through a stunning mountain-lined landscape. Those that prefer calmness might find their wellest experience during a sound bath in a hot spring or a Reiki crystal healing session.



Greater Palm Springs offers many opportunities to create your healthiest self.

And there is no better time to do those things you’ve talked about for years – try a new adventure or challenging exercise; meditate or simply change your perspective; replace those habits that don’t serve you well with those that do.

When you wake up in the morning feeling great inside and out with a deep solace in your soul that today – and every day – will bring you peace, happiness, laughter and love, you are living your wellest.

As I’ve said before, this idealistic sense of being may seem far out of reach for some, but it’s really not. How do you get

there? You try new things, find your passion and give it practice and patience. Then, as your body, mind and spirit begin to thrive in this new sense of being, you will soar.

### Where do you start?

The Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau has created a comprehensive resource at [LiveYourWelllest.com](#). Learn what’s happening locally, find discounts and deals on wellness offerings, even search ‘itineraries’ for new explorations. Determine your interests and browse the nine pillars of wellness: outdoor adventure, natural medicine, mindfulness and meditation, nutrition, beauty, fitness and sports, spas and mineral springs, medical tourism, and community and contribution.

And if you’re looking for qualified professionals to help start you on your journey – a coach, trainer, doctor, instructor, studio, spa, support group, chef, store, or inspirational event – all you have to do is turn the page.

These businesses thrive because many of us are already taking steps toward living our wellest, and it feels great! Just remember, it’s not a sprint, fad or phase; it’s a lifestyle of healthier choices to feed your mind, body, and spirit.

Have fun and we’ll see you along the way!

Lauren Del Sarto is founder/publisher of *Desert Health* and can be reached at [Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com](mailto:Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com).



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## Why the Puffy Eyelids?

*By Jennifer I. Hui, MD*

Our eyes are the focus of our face. It is natural to want to appear our best – rested and bright eyed! But sometimes puffiness and bagginess make us look - and feel - tired. We may even be perceived to be ill or angry.

Although a very small percentage of our skin's total surface area, the eyelids are very important for our daily visual function. The heaviness of puffy eyelids may interfere with our ability to see clearly, causing fatigue with many normal activities such as reading, driving, and computer use.

There are a number of reasons why people may have a puffy appearance to the eyelids; the most common are age and hereditary factors. As we mature, our eyelid skin loosens and the support structures weaken, causing a fuller and less pleasing appearance. Our normal fatty tissues which protect our eyes may bulge forward and protrude. The skin texture changes and becomes more redundant and crepe-like in appearance. These changes may interfere with our visual function – the excess tissue may block our peripheral vision and have a negative impact on our daily activities. If puffiness and excess fat/skin run in your family, you are more likely to be affected at an earlier age than other people. Regardless of the exact cause, surgery often improves function and appearance.

Another common cause includes obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). With OSA, patients stop breathing during sleep and their oxygenation levels drop. This cessation of breathing may be caused by airway abnormalities or a central cause (depressed respiratory drive). Patients with this condition are often required to wear a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) device in order to maintain proper breathing, airway function and oxygenation levels. However, the mask that most users wear contains a tight fitting strap which compresses the eyelid and cheek tissues. This constant prolonged pressure night after night may cause edema and puffiness of the lower lids.

Less common causes include prior dermal filler placement and systemic diseases. The hyaluronic acid-based fillers (Juvederm, Restylane, Belotero) may cause a delayed swelling in the eyelid region. This effect may be seen years after treatment. Many patients come in thinking they need eyelid surgery for their lower lid bags, but in fact their swelling is caused by a delayed response to their prior cosmetic treatment. In these patients, an injection of a solution to dissolve the hyaluronic acid-based filler usually resolves the situation. The results are seen almost immediately. The tissues may then be reassessed to see if additional surgery may be of benefit.

Systemic conditions that may worsen eyelid edema include high blood pressure, kidney disease and certain allergic conditions. Water retention and allergic reactions affect the eyelids disproportionately given the thin, delicate nature of this tissue.

It is good to know that puffy eyelids are not always a sign of aging and in some cases, the causes are multifactorial. A thorough examination and review of the medical history will help to pinpoint the causative factors and help guide an appropriate treatment plan.

*Dr. Hui is the founder of The Eyelid Institute in Palm Desert. She is an Oculoplastic surgeon with a special interest in helping patients with eyelid, lacrimal and orbital conditions and can be reached at (760) 610.2677.*



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NICHOLAS S. BAUMANN, DDS



# Helping Kids Overcome Challenges

## Scottish Rite offers hope for language impaired

By James Petersen

Did you know that many well-known film and television actors of have had to overcome speech or language challenges? That list includes Bruce Willis who struggled with stuttering; Eric Roberts who also grappled with stuttering, and his sister, Julia Roberts, who had to overcome her speech impairment. Bill Withers who wrote and sang, “When a Man Loves a Woman” also had a speech challenge.

Samuel L. Jackson, James E. Jones and Carly Simon all were stutterers - as was the author of this article. We know that Barbara Walters has had her challenge with lisping. And the singer, performer, and benefactor, Bono, also struggled with speech ‘problems.’

Anthony Hopkins was dyslexic and had both a stammer and a lisp! Even Queen Elizabeth’s father, the King of England, accepted professional help to “deal with,” if not completely overcome, his struggle.

Imagine these familiar faces as children struggling not only with the language problems, but also the heckling and abuse rained on them by their peers and unthinking adults. Imagine the children who did not receive help and have reached seniority, but cannot get a job because they cannot make themselves understood. Children who could become doctors, architects or lawyers because they have the intelligence to achieve those goals, but cannot make themselves understood. Children who, given the opportunity, could become the next Senator Dirksen, Churchill, or Sir Laurence Olivier - but they cannot make themselves understood.

A language or speech impediment is a very serious problem for a child. Without help, that child may never achieve their goals in life. But if the aforementioned actors, performers, and everyday citizens can achieve success in society, then there must be forms of therapy, clinics and professionals with the education and skills to analyze and “correct” these language problems.

We see success stories every day in our Stan and Bobbie Gold RiteCare Childhood Language and Learning Center located in Palm Desert and hosted by the Palm Springs Scottish Rite. The Center has successfully graduated hundreds of kids over the past decade with no cost to their families. We depend on the support of our membership and our Coachella Valley community - the individuals, businesses and other organizations which have been helpful in supporting this great cause.

Look again at the list above - entertainers, the singers, the interviewers, even politicians - who have become successful in the public arena. Then think how easy it is for you who has been given a voice. You can order a sandwich or cordon bleu with fine wine in French without even thinking about your words. It’s a blessing not to overlook.

If you know a child ages 3 to 18 struggling with speech, language, and literacy challenges, we are here to help and to provide professional assistance. We gladly welcome them as one of Our Kids.

James Petersen is board chairman of the Palm Springs Scottish Rite Stan and Bobbie Gold RiteCare Childhood Language and Learning Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 341.6208.



### Coachella Valley’s Health Care Industry

## MENTORING THE FUTURE

Brought to you by OneFuture Coachella Valley



Cathedral City High School students in the HEAL Academy came back from summer break to a brand new skills lab. The teachers worked during the summer to complete the lab, so it would be ready to go on the first day of school. The skills lab has a simulated doctor’s office, a hospital room, a medical laboratory, a dentist’s office, a veterinary clinic and more. At each station, students learn the skills and careers available within it. The students have named the skills lab the HEALing Center.

The HEALing Center also has mannequins that students use to learn skills such as transferring patients from one bed to another. Replicated arms allow students to practice inserting IVs, giving injections and suturing wounds. There is one mannequin that allows students to listen to the heart, lungs and bowels to make different diagnoses through computer-generated simulations.

The academy studies environmental health as one of its components. The skills lab incorporates this in the form of a pond to raise mosquito fish. Mosquito fish eat mosquitos and their larvae which inhibits the spread of diseases such as West Nile and Zika.

The research center includes both digital and light microscopes which are used to study health on the cellular level. There are also many interactive 3D models that

students can manipulate for a tactical learning experience.

The nutrition center helps students understand healthy foods, diabetes and dental health. This demonstrates how diet is associated with multiple areas of health. Students will present information learned about healthy foods in a community health fair in the spring.

In addition to the different stations, the academy purchased an Anatomage Table which shows a body in 3D. It can be dissected and manipulated to study anatomy and physiology. It’s really a simulated cadaver and is often used in medical schools. The imagery brings to life the things they have been learning about in the classroom.

The seniors became the ambassadors for the HEALing Center. Each senior learned a station and then presented that station to the underclassmen, parents, business partners, and the district and county superintendents. Many alumni came to the open house and commented that they wished they had the skills lab when they were students there, adding that this will better equip the students to enter the workforce and provide them with many post-secondary opportunities.

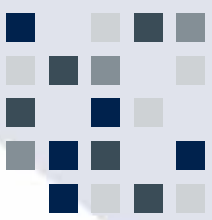
For more information on Coachella Valley HEAL academies, please visit [www.onefuturecv.org](http://www.onefuturecv.org).



Rosa Corona and Andrea Espinoza work together in the medical skills lab.



Jomar Agbayani in the lab's dentistry station



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# New COPD Vaccine Designed to Reduce Acute Flare-ups

SoCal residents invited to participate in clinical study

A worldwide clinical study is underway for an innovative investigational vaccine that may help people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) reduce episodes of exacerbations, commonly known as flare-ups. Palmtree Clinical Research (PCR), a multi-specialty clinical research firm based in Palm Springs, was selected as a study site, and volunteers are currently being accepted with enrollment expected to close by the end of the year.

The study is open to adults age 40 to 80 who have been diagnosed with moderate-to-severe COPD. About half the people with COPD experience periodic flare-ups that warrant medical intervention such as emergency or urgent care visits and/or a change in their COPD medication regimen. "Higher exacerbation rates have been linked to a faster decline in lung function and could have a negative effect on a person's quality of life," explains Ziad Tannous, MD, a pulmonologist and the principal investigator of the trial.

According to research scientists, non-typeable *Haemophilus influenzae* (NTHi) and *Moraxella catarrhalis* (Mcat) appear to be the main organisms associated with flare-ups. Thus, these are the two bacteria this investigational vaccine is designed to target. In earlier stages of development, this investigational vaccine was successfully administered to healthy adults.

Participants will receive the NTHi/Mcat vaccine or a placebo at no cost. They also receive study-related medical care by a team of qualified medical professionals throughout the course of the study and receive compensation for their time and transportation to attend each study visit. Eligible candidates will need to sign an informed consent form in order to enroll.

"People who volunteer for this clinical study may play a crucial role in paving the way for future treatments of COPD for themselves and others with this condition," adds Carlos Martinez, MD, chief medical officer at Palmtree Clinical Research.

Pulmonology is just one of the subspecialties in which PCR offers studies for potential leading-edge treatment. In addition to the COPD vaccine study, there are 11 other clinical trials in which Southern California residents may participate if qualified, including psoriasis, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, HIV, eczema, diabetes, gastrointestinal conditions and women's health.

Prior studies that were conducted at Palmtree Clinical Research which have now received FDA approval include Eucrisa, a non-steroidal topical cream for eczema; Vancomycin, a medication to treat *C. difficile* infections; Trogarzo, approved earlier this year for HIV treatment experienced patients; and Tivicay which is now widely prescribed to treat people with HIV.

To find out more about the COPD vaccine study or any other current trials, contact Palmtree Clinical Research at (760) 777.7799 or visit [www.palmtreeclinical.com](http://www.palmtreeclinical.com).

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Health is a Choice

Two years after the onset of her symptoms, a doctor recommended she try an intravenous aminosyn therapy. An online search led her to the Live Well Clinic, a naturopathic center in La Quinta owned by Sonja Fung, ND. Coming from a western medicine family, Karen was apprehensive, but had seen over seven medical doctors and nothing was making her better.

"When I met with Dr. Fung, she had already spoken to my infectious disease doctor and had reviewed my case in detail," says Karen. "She said she thought she could do more than just the aminosyn, but I was skeptical." Little did she know this meeting would help save her life.

Dr. Fung made a specific IV formula for Karen based on her symptoms and compromised immune system and it promptly worked to normalize her white blood cell and neutrophil counts. Karen's infectious disease doctor at Stanford was astounded and asked Dr. Fung to send him blood samples to study. He had never seen anyone in Karen's condition normalize immune counts like this.

"Before Karen came in for her initial consult, I knew we had a very difficult case on our hands and that we had to look outside the box if we were to make any progress," says Dr. Fung. "In reviewing her case, I knew she already had a dysfunctional digestive system and was not absorbing her essential nutrients. Giving IV amino acids would only be one set of the many nutrient cofactors needed to jumpstart her system. She needed all the other cofactors as well, such as B vitamins, minerals, and key antioxidants, such as vitamin C, CoQ10, and alpha-lipoic acid to build her mitochondria (responsible for creating energy) and her white blood cells. I knew that if I could replete her with all of the building blocks, and work on her diet and digestive function, that this would be the best and crucial first steps."

Karen continued with the IV therapies twice a week and soon added ozone therapy. "That is when I became a functioning human being once again. I could hold my head up and my legs stopped feeling like rubber and lead. After about six months, I could walk a couple of blocks and was able to return to work part time.

Dr. Fung methodically tried adding one therapy at a time to see what worked and encouraged Karen to follow an anti-inflammatory diet. "I was a naturopathic doctor's nightmare existing on soda, pizzas and other unhealthy food - especially sugar! But I was ready to do everything I could."

After working with Dr. Fung for two years and sustaining her progress, a muscle biopsy finally delivered an accurate diagnosis of mitochondrial myopathy, a debilitating and deadly disease primarily found in children which is rare in adults. With mitochondrial disease, minimal energy is produced and every muscle in your body (including your heart, digestive organs and blood vessels) is compromised. Karen's sister, the pediatric gastroenterologist, had also suspected a mitochondrial disease and, once MG was ruled out, was able to send Karen to specialists to whom she refers her young patients.

"I like to say that I'm one of Jerry's Kids," she jokes as mitochondrial disease is more commonly known as a form of muscular dystrophy. She now sees mostly pediatric doctors for her condition. "Their waiting rooms are a lot more fun; they always call me in just when the Disney movie is getting really good."

There is no cure and no specific treatment for mitochondrial myopathy, and her condition still baffles many western doctors who continue to question her treatment choices. "This is a progressive and degenerative disease. Before I found naturopathic

Continued from page 1



Athletic Karen carrying her niece in her healthier days



Using humor to help heal, Karen added bling to her mobility scooter and mask.



Karen receiving stem cells with her sister Stephanie Abrams, MD (right), and Sonja Fung, ND (center).



On especially bad days, Dood will climb on Karen's pillow and give her a hug.

Continued on page 28

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# Living Wellness

with Jennifer Di Francesco

## Lessons from the Amazon Jungle



This past summer I found myself deep in the heartland of the Amazon jungle at night, with a flashlight and a naturalist guide. This experience was as far as I have ever been out of my comfort zone; yet, it drew me closer to understanding how everything in life ultimately works together to collectively sustain us.

The jungle was buzzing with spiders, frogs, tarantulas and many other nocturnal creatures. My guide, a member of the indigenous Kitchwa community, learned the rhythm of the jungle as he grew up. At one point he asked me to stop, turn my flashlight off, and close my eyes to just listen. The symphony of sounds was alluring. The communication of crickets, frogs, cicadas, bats, and night birds were echoes of nature's communication system that left me pondering the cooperative connectivity of this amazing network of organisms. This lesson, as to how this primordial experience of the jungle connects to our own optimal survival, remains with me.

The next day I headed back into the jungle with Avel, my adventurous and knowledgeable guide, and stood under a giant kapok tree. This majestic tree had a towering, expansive character. I felt so small beneath its massive span, yet embraced at the same time. This sacred tree serves as an important niche in the ecosystem of the rainforest growing to 226 ft. and living up to 1,200 years.

A visit to another part of the forest moved us from verdant and lush plant life to a completely open space where nothing seemed to be growing except a few trees. In this open space, Avel broke a twig off a sparse tree and split the branch open, revealing a dozen tiny ants within the branch. An invitation was extended to taste this delicacy. These "lemon ants" taste just like lemons and have a relationship with the tree in which they live that is quite remarkable. The ants and the tree work together to survive and thrive in a competitive landscape. The ants receive a home and, in turn, are the only known insect to produce their own herbicide - a toxin that poisons other plants in the area. This allows their tree, called home, to get the needed sunlight. These ants bite into the leaves of any other plant that tries to take root in the area injecting formic acid which slowly kills the plant.

Our journey continued deeper into the jungle with explorations of how plants have supported native tribes for centuries. The tales of natural remedies and symbiotic relationships were affirmative lessons residing in the heart of the jungle.

When life moves away from the simplicity of the jungle and presents itself amidst the hustle and bustle of work, city life, competing priorities and crises, there are two simple questions to ask:

1. What experiences am I having with everything around me to create a positive, symbiotic relationship supporting my optimal survival?
2. What am I using day-to-day for sustenance, such as food, medication, or a natural remedy?

At any moment, I can transport my memory to the cooperative theme woven into the landscape of the jungle, remembering the lessons learned from my guides in the Amazon.

## Being "Good" At Yoga

By Jayne Robertson, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500

Over the years, I have heard Deepak Chopra speak and was recently treated to another one of his nuggets. He said that a key aim of our yoga practice is to be able to "observe ourselves, without judging ourselves." When we can drop into that inner space of self-reflection and inquiry, we begin to release the entanglement of our thoughts and get to know the truth of who we really are.

We have a given. We're human. We're judgmental. It's our nature, and deepened through conditioning, we toss judgment at not only others, but ourselves as well, often in a harsher and stinging way. I don't know of many people who upon awakening, look in the mirror, beam and exclaim, "Well, good morning, Sunshine!" We are sold on the myth that something in us is broken and needs improving. We are sold on the belief that we need to change who we are, as if what we are isn't enough. Whether we are "sold" on these notions or we are programmed to have a negative bias are ideas that can be debated. Nonetheless, as I explore this path, I'm trying to re-frame that thinking to remember that who and what I am is enough. I just need to get away from distractions in order to listen to my inner wisdom. It all sounds so simple, and yet, it is an amazing challenge.

I am also struck when people make comments about somebody being "good" at yoga. They may be talking about a person's ability to strike a pose that so many of us may never even get close to assuming. I like to say that nobody is good or bad at yoga. We all practice yoga, and

where the practice takes us is to those places where we are deeply challenged. Some things come more easily to some people and others may find the identical thing to be difficult. For example, I can do a handstand all by myself in just about any location with a somewhat level surface. I have been turning myself upside down ever since I can remember, and being inverted and viewing the world from that perspective feels comfortable to me and is "easy." Now, if I did a handstand in the middle of a class, some people might look at it and think, "Wow... she's really good at yoga," and I get that.

What many people might miss are the things that are hard for me. The physical element of yoga has always been the easiest part of the practice for me. Quieting my mind, finding stillness, self-love, and acceptance has been hard. I stepped onto my yoga mat with none of those abilities and realized that I needed something beyond the physical practice. So my being "good" at yoga is a myth; I practice what I need to remember the most, what is the least accessible, and that's the path of going inward.

So, as we release the judgment piece of the practice, we step into greater presence and curiosity. As Walt Whitman said, "Be curious, not judgmental."

Jayne Robertson is owner and instructor at Desert Yoga Therapy in Rancho Mirage. For more information, visit [www.desertyogatherapy.com](http://www.desertyogatherapy.com) or call (760) 456.5160. [jayne@desertyogatherapy.com](mailto:jayne@desertyogatherapy.com).



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## Are Your Genes Speaking to You?

*Deborah Schrameck, NC, PT*

Do any of these symptoms sound familiar to you when you eat garlic, onions, eggs or cruciferous vegetables: gas, bloating, acid reflux, headaches, dry skin, muscle cramps, joint pain, anxiety, depression, chronic bronchitis, or fatigue?

Personally, I had all of the above symptoms and suffered whenever I ate these or any other foods high in sulfur. This was extremely frustrating because the literature touts sulfur compounds as wonderful natural health remedies. The health benefits of garlic include lower blood pressure and cholesterol, an anti-inflammatory effect, a reduced risk of cancer, and a stronger immune system according to *ConsumerReports*.<sup>1</sup> In the July/August (2018) edition of *Desert Health*, Tiffany Dalton outlines the many benefits of sulfur foods, and for most people they are indeed beneficial.<sup>2</sup>

But we are all genetically individual and utilizing DNA testing can give us some valuable insights into our health blueprint to better guide us in nutrition and lifestyle choices.

Genetic testing uses a lab test to look at your genes which are the DNA instructions, or blueprint, you inherit from your mother and your father. A great resource for additional information on genetic testing is the article *Genetic Testing: Is It For You?* available at *DesertHealthNews.com*.<sup>3</sup> This simple test can be obtained through a medical office or by utilizing direct-to-consumer testing, which I found to provide additional insight and strongly recommend.

In his article *A CBS Mutation Could Be Causing Your Health Problems*, Michael Lam, MD, goes into great detail to explain CBS genetic mutations and the role they play in causing a negative reaction to sulfur foods.<sup>4</sup> This specific genetic mutation was a part of my story which I discovered through genetic testing. When synthesized with other mutation discoveries, an individualized program of beneficial foods and nutrients for optimizing my own personal health was revealed. The CBS mutation is just one of many genetic variants found when you utilize direct-to-consumer genetic testing.

When discussing the pros and cons of genetic testing, I commonly hear concerns about discrimination based on your genetic test results. In 2008, Congress enacted the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) to protect people from discrimination by their health insurance providers or employers. Unfortunately, GINA does not apply to long-term care, disability, or life insurance providers. This is a very real concern and there are some simple strategies you can use, like anonymity, when you are doing direct-to-consumer testing. For more information about genetic discrimination and GINA, visit [genome.gov](http://genome.gov).<sup>5</sup>

I strongly believe there is power in knowledge: it allows you to be proactive about your health. In the May/June 2012 issue of *Desert Health*, John Dixon, DC, IFMCP, states, "The most important factor influencing your gene expression throughout the day is your diet."<sup>6</sup> We should all feel empowered with genetic information, not destined to any specific health outcome - especially with so much control over our lifestyle choices.

Like any testing, utilizing a qualified health practitioner to guide you in the process of reading your personal blueprint is recommended.

*Deborah Schrameck is a wholistic kinesiologist, health coach, nutritional counselor and owner of Body Alive. She can be reached at (760) 238.0625 or [happyfit@mac.com](mailto:happyfit@mac.com). For more information visit [www.BodyAlive.us](http://www.BodyAlive.us).*

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Come Home to Who You Are

By Judy Nemer Sklar

The hot summer days are finally behind us, and it is now the time of year when snowbirds make their way back to their desert homes, reminding us that we live in a culture of movement. We move from our childhood home to a place of our own. In time we find something larger with room for the kids, and when we retire we look for someplace smaller or somewhere warmer. We reside “there” in the summer and “here” in the winter, and it seems we are always in movement.

The concept of home is part of how we define ourselves. It explains why many believe that our homes and all the objects that fill it represent the sum-total of who we are. None of that is true. The attachment we have to our homes and all the possessions we have collected in a lifetime only represent part of who we are and only part of who we show to the public.

If our lives were suddenly upended and everything we possessed washed away, what would happen to our perception of self?

Researchers tell us that home and our possessions are part of our extended self and if these become too intertwined with our self-image, we lose touch with our true nature. This is never more evident than in times of transition or loss when it is particularly difficult to connect to our inner voice. Unsettled and unsteady, it can feel as if the rug has been pulled out from under our feet. To regain our balance, we need to create a life more aligned to our true self.

We live hectic lives and we are often on automatic pilot. We neglect taking the time to reconnect to our feelings. Lost in the noise of daily life, we find it difficult to simply hit the pause button and just sit quietly, but studies have shown that when seeking a more meaningful life, practicing meditation is the best way to promote mindfulness. Taking three deep breaths in times of stress can be beneficial, and taking twenty minutes of daily meditation can change our lives. Reconnecting to our true nature may be as easy as revisiting a favorite pastime or rekindling a creative pursuit, which can in time put our lives back in balance.

In search of balance, we should not discount totally the importance of home in our lives. Our homes and the special treasures we have collected, the mementos and our souvenirs, make up the memories that bring depth to our lives. Nevertheless, there is more to who we are than the possessions we acquire. Taking time for quiet reflection allows us to examine and explore our truest self.

If home is where the heart is, home can be wherever you are. Look inward, put your hand on your heart, and come home to who you are.

Judy Nemer Sklar is an artist and writer residing in Palm Desert. [www.judynemersklar.com](http://www.judynemersklar.com) and [www.artistsnarratives.com](http://www.artistsnarratives.com).



There is more to who we are than the possessions we acquire.

The Invisible Power of Energy Healing

By Tracy J Smith

“In every culture and in every medical tradition before ours, healing was accomplished by moving energy.”  
– Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, MD, Nobel Laureate in Medicine

When most people think of methods for achieving physical healing, medication, surgery, and other concrete modern modalities designed to bring the body back to health come to mind. However, one of the greatest sources of healing, which has been used for thousands of years, has little to do with the visible world. It’s energy medicine.

The invisible substance governs all our body functions, and many ancient cultures knew the important role of energy in our health and well being. Hippocrates called it “physis” (from which the word “physician” was derived); the Chinese refer to it as “chi” and yogis call it “prana.” And there are many forms of energy medicine: Reiki is a Japanese method that dates back to the early 20th century and, for more than 5,000 years, traditional Chinese medicine has used acupuncture which is based on meridians or energy superhighways that run through the body.

With recent scientific discoveries, modern medicine is now utilizing many of these modalities and acupuncture and Reiki can be found in many medical establishments throughout the country.

**How Energy Medicine Works.** Our human body is a self-healing genius. There is an innate intelligence that directs every aspect of our body functions, including its ability to heal. The energy systems that run throughout our bodies regulate our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

Energetic medicine facilitates the healing process by clearing blocks in the energy fields and/or pathways, allowing the energy to flow freely so the body can repair and rebalance itself. The energy healer is trained in recognizing blockages and moving energy to assist the body.

Energy medicine is often used to help reduce or eliminate pain, speed up recovery time from injuries, prevent illness and promote balance. It can help improve clarity and overcome mental blocks, as well as increase resilience by releasing past emotions and/or traumas. Many use energy medicine to help reconnect with their personal intuition and deepen spirituality.

**Energy Self-Care.** Taking care of our energy body is just as important as taking care of our physical body, and we can do this ourselves. Our thoughts and beliefs are directly connected to both our energetic and physical bodies; past traumas and unresolved emotional pain block our energy flow. Working through trapped emotions and recognizing that you are a “new you” each day you awaken can help restore your energy balance.

It is well documented that stress can lead to physical disturbances and can cause disease. Our thoughts are made up of energy, so eliminating stress and focusing on keeping our minds at peace will help balance our energy, and the body will follow. Stress reduction techniques like meditation and breath work positively to impact our personal energy flow.

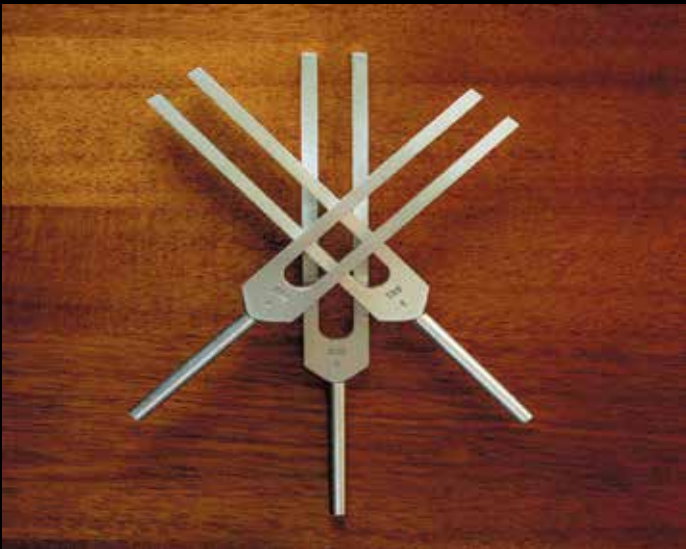
Energy healing can return us to a state of balance allowing us to reach our full potential and live a happier, healthier life with more positivity and vitality.

Tracy Smith is an energy intuitive therapist and Emotion/Body Code practitioner with AcQpoint Wellness Center and can be reached at (760) 409.9289. [www.TracyJSmith.net](http://www.TracyJSmith.net).

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Wellness Served at the  
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Employees and guests benefit from new health initiatives

By Lauren Del Sarto

There is something fresh brewing at the JW Marriott Desert Springs. Not only are they underway with a multi-million dollar renovation, but wellness is now being served to their 1,200 employees, local visitors, and international guests.

The team leading the charge includes internal nutritionist Regina Basterrechea and Executive Chef Peter Smith who have incorporated changes in the employee cafeteria, in-room dining, and most recently, the Spa Desert Springs Bistro.

**Starting with their own.** "Food is the foundation of health and education is key," says Basterrechea who works with each department from housekeeping to hotel management. "There is so much temptation and we are working hard to inspire our employees to take better care of themselves and to make better choices."

The associate program includes healthier offerings in their cafeteria, incentive programs, and free exercise classes. Granola, yogurt, and fruit were added for breakfast and a Fresh Bowl program offering a variety of lean proteins (including tofu) with vegetables over brown rice or sprouted grain. The response has been very positive.

Basterrechea is conducting a voluntary 10-day detox plan open to all employees using Mark Hyman, MD's, book *Food What the Heck Should I Eat?* to help deduce conflicting information on what are truly healthy choices. They are also launching a six-week weight maintenance contest after

Thanksgiving to help keep focus through the holidays with healthy prizes given away at the end.

Each department has a daily meeting on working together and improving guest experiences which is the perfect opportunity for Basterrechea to present her programs and encourage participation. "Each group has its own personality," she says. "The housekeepers start their shift with calisthenics to lift their energy so the nutritional education fits right in."

"Our employees work hard and they love their comfort food," adds Chef Peter, formerly the director of global culinary for Marriott International. "They like to grab a cheeseburger and fries because they know this will satisfy their cravings, but the more Regina works to educate them about satisfying options that can further help sustain their energy throughout the day, they'll start making healthier choices."



Executive Chef Peter Smith and Nutritionist Regina Basterrechea are creating wellness.

Free employee exercise classes include morning strength, sculpt and stretch and evening yoga and spin. A walking group is also in the works; meanwhile, management continues to walk the walk. During a full staff meeting Human Resources Director Mike Bills led everyone through a three-minute meditation and talked about how the practice is enhancing his life.

**National initiative for healthier room service.** In June of this year, the JW brand launched the JW Wellness initiative to feature healthier options on 70% of their

Continued on page 29

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## Are Politics Stressing You Out?

By Laya Raznick, CHHC, L.Ac.

Have you experienced a "pregnant pause moment" lately? You know, when you're talking with someone who makes a comment about the state of our country that you might not agree with, and you're at a loss for how to respond.

Or, if not the pregnant pause, maybe you've felt like a stranger in a strange land, looking around the room and wondering how welcome you'd be if they saw your voting ballot.

Regardless of where we stand on the issues, this political climate is triggering a chronic state of stress in all of us. And chronic stress sets us up for physical, emotional and cognitive problems.

It's not likely that our polarized political climate will relax any time soon, but you can. Stress is an inside job and that means you can choose how you react, regardless of the circumstances around you. When you feel threatened, your sympathetic nervous system secretes chemicals that tell the body to prepare for attack. Your blood vessels constrict, your heart races, your lungs expand and digestion slows. Your muscles tense and your senses become hyper-alert to everything around you.

The problem is that acute stress becomes chronic stress when daily pressure is high and the sympathetic response doesn't turn off. Chronic stress leads to exhaustion, anxiety, worry, and the inability to focus, and even physical symptoms like headaches, stomach aches, pain and insomnia.

The good news is that rather than spin into overwhelm, you can unravel chronic stress from the inside and come back to a place of calm.

Use these 4 simple steps to break free from stress, anytime and anywhere.

**1. Check in on what you're feeling.** Rather than getting lost in your immediate reaction, stop and look inside. Feel the knot in your gut or the tension in your shoulders. Avoiding discomfort strengthens it. *This step short-circuits your fight-or-flight response.*

**2. Take a deep breath.** Stress triggers shallow breathing. When the world is closing in on you, take a breath and create space. *A spacious feeling is crucial to stress relief.*

**3. Have compassion for yourself.** Imagine a child you love and give yourself the same comfort you'd offer if they were suffering. This step is not about being right; it's about releasing negative judgment. *This is an important missing step in reducing chronic stress.*

**4. Assess the immediate threat.** Stress can trigger a current reaction to a future or past event. Ask yourself, "Is there an immediate threat to my well-being?" Knowing you are safe and sound at this moment will calm you and allow you to think more rationally.

In this time of change, it's important that we all remain open-hearted and interested in all sides of the story. If we approach others with respect and curiosity, we will receive the same in return. Try these 4 simple steps to help you unhook when chronic stress patterns get triggered.

Laya Raznick is a certified holistic health coach guiding experienced women to release limiting stress patterns so they can relax and live with more inspiration, joy, and ease. Laya can be reached at (760) 512.3399. For more information visit [www.layaraznick.com](http://www.layaraznick.com).



Nutritional Approaches for the Aging Body and Mind

Whether we want to admit it or not, with age comes declining function of every major bodily system we have. The World Health Organization defines the aging population as 60 and older, but symptoms may start to show decades earlier. Common aging concerns should be addressed early when they are typically more manageable - or even preventable.

Common concerns that affect the aging population can be supported to a great extent with dietary modifications and smart supplementation.

There are two main theories on aging: programmed aging (our genetics), and the wear-and-tear-theory (our lifestyle choices). Most experts agree that both theories are valid and research holds valuable lessons on how to diminish the effects of the aging process – especially through nutrition and exercise.

Here are a few inevitable changes to expect as we age and ways to slow and support this natural process:

**Your stomach acid decreases.** Stomach acid plays an important role in digesting protein, as well as killing dangerous organisms that may be introduced from food. Consuming what may have been a normal amount of protein to you before may now feel “heavy” and uncomfortable from lack of acid. As we age, adequate protein intake becomes more important as it helps us preserve our muscle mass and boost metabolism. To build muscle, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends consuming about 0.64 to 0.82 grams of protein per pound of body weight daily, which means a person weighing 150 pounds could eat between 96-132 grams of protein per day.

There are over-the-counter digestive enzymes and betaine hydrochloric acid (HCl) supplements that can be taken with each protein-containing meal to support digestion. These can be game changers as they allow our body to use protein more efficiently and help unlock more vitamins and minerals, particularly vitamin B12. You should talk to your doctor about supplementing with HCl as contra indicators include NSAIDs, some anti-inflammatories and antacid prescriptions.

**There are key nutrients you have trouble absorbing.** In addition to B12 and protein, the nutrients that become especially important to adequately absorb as you age are vitamin D and calcium. There is a widespread deficiency of vitamin D in all ages, but especially in those over 70.<sup>1</sup> Vitamin D3 promotes calcium absorption in the gut and together they support mineralization and strengthening of the bones, preventing osteoporosis. Focusing on obtaining these two nutrients from food first is always the best approach, but many still need to supplement. Vitamin D3 is known as the sunshine vitamin and can be found in fatty fish. Dairy is a good source for calcium which can also be found in poppy seeds, almonds, canned fish with edible bones such as sardines or salmon, and even leafy greens.

**Your muscle mass decreases.** Humans peak in muscle mass around 30 years of age and lose muscle by a rate of 3-5 percent annually.<sup>2</sup> Causes may include hormonal changes, decreased exercise, and inadequate intake of protein and calories. Eating enough calories, particularly protein, and the ability to properly absorb protein, along with regular weight resistance exercises, can help significantly preserve or even build muscle mass in later life. You get extra benefits from supplementing with protein sources of collagen peptides usually found in powder form, as it offers a low-calorie protein source and supports anti-aging of the skin and joints.

**Calorie needs decrease.** Weight gain increases with age statistically. Have an honest evaluation of your activity level and body composition to determine how many calories you may actually need per day. If muscle loss is an issue, keep your protein intake on the higher range of recommendations and eliminate fried foods, sugar, and refined grains to manage your calorie intake.

**Your brain is not as “sharp” thanks to your diet and gut bacteria.** Memory loss is a common complaint as we age, but recognizing it early on is important. Stress, alcohol, smoking, and lack of activity all contribute to inflammation in the body and brain, but dietary choices are important, not only for specific nutrients, but also for the bacterial diversity food provides - and your brain needs.

One out of three elderly die of Alzheimer’s in the United States. Studies now show that poor balance of bacteria in the gut could be associated with the rate of Alzheimer’s progression, and “good gut bacteria” may delay Alzheimer’s and dementia-associated cognition impairment.<sup>3</sup> Prebiotic fiber plays a big role in feeding the good bugs in your body and can be sourced from the fibers found in vegetables and fruit. Blueberries are uniquely effective for memory loss and cognition; omega-3 rich foods like salmon and flaxseeds also have proven brain-boosting benefits. For more on nutrition for brain health, I recommend reading *Brain Maker, The Power of Gut Microbes to Heal and Protect Your Brain* by David Perlmutter, MD.

We may not be able to turn back the clock or change our genes, but today, we can target our health at the cellular level with strategic modifications to our diet and lifestyle in an effort to feel better, look better and live longer.

*Tiffany is a certified nutrition consultant and functional diagnostic nutrition practitioner and can be reached at (760) 285.1221. For more information visit [www.tiffanydalton.com](http://www.tiffanydalton.com).*

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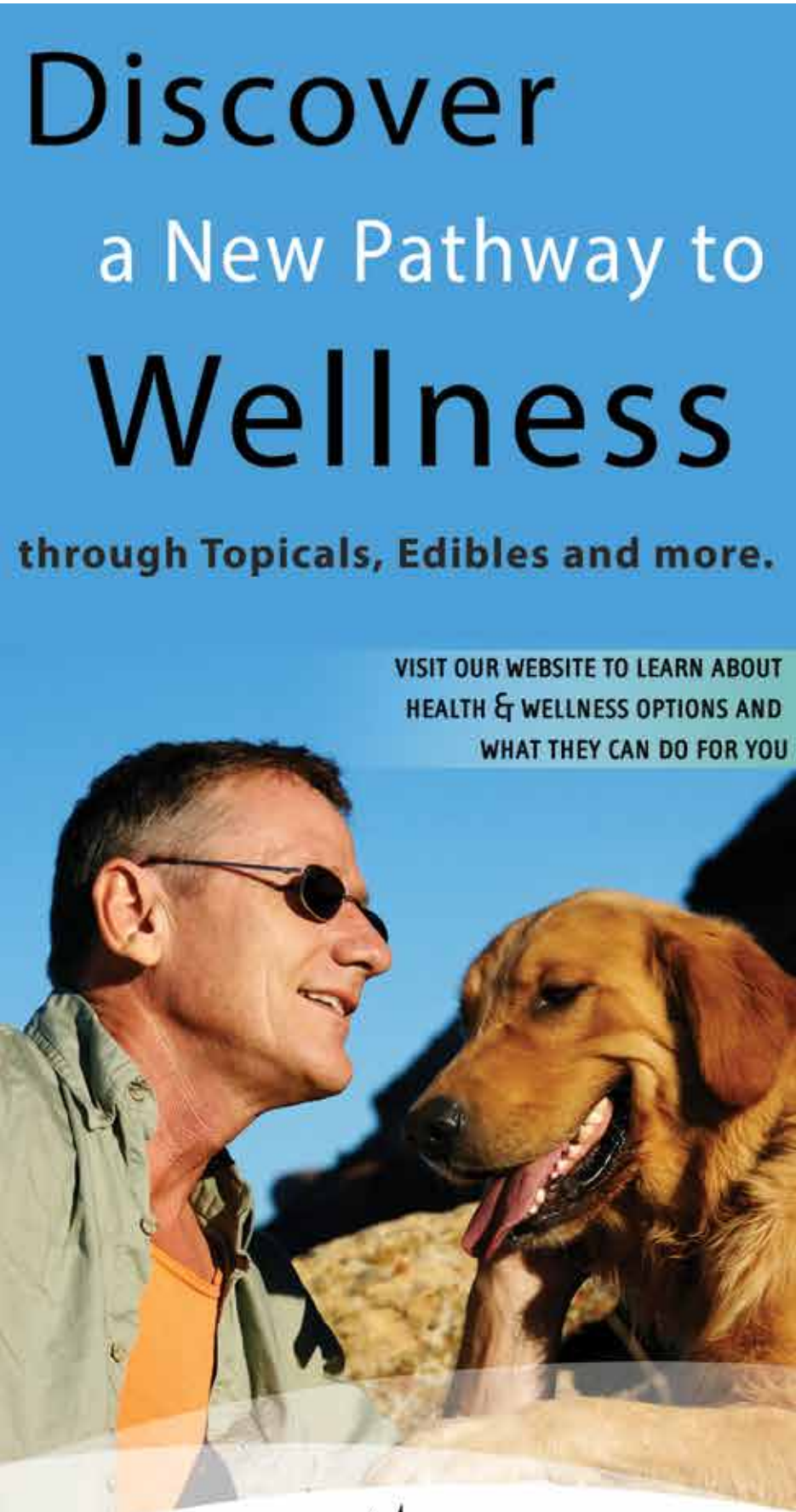
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*Shay Moraga is a triple negative breast cancer survivor and shares her journey with Desert Health® readers in an ongoing column...*

## Helping a Loved One Going through Cancer this Holiday Season

It is the most wonderful time of year. Festive tunes on the radio, everyone you meet seems excited about upcoming vacations and family coming into town to celebrate the holidays.

However, to a cancer patient, this time of year may seem overwhelming. While some people may want to put up all the usual holiday décor, those going through treatment may just want to keep things low-key and celebrations to a minimum.

So how do you know what your loved one needs? Just ask. They will be able to tell you if it's going to be too much to host the whole family this year. They may want to do it simply to keep their mind off their cancer, but they will need some help. Listen to their needs; ask questions. They will tell you what is best for them.

Have a "no pressure" holiday. This year make it a priority to ensure your loved one has no stress or pressure to feel like they must be this year's host. Like yoga, help them find the balance of celebrating family and fun events while healing from their treatments. Offer to take on simple tasks by helping them decorate, grocery shop, buy holiday presents and more. Suggest helping them around the house or offering to help hire a temporary cleaning service during such a busy time of year. Plan a baking party with family and friends in advance. That way, it is a special day building memories and helps reduce the stress of doing it alone which makes it more enjoyable.

Suggest a pot luck holiday and have family and friends bring a dish of their favorite family tradition. These can also be great conversation starters around the dinner table. Plan special outings around doctors' visits and lay low after treatments. Talk to your medical team if you are planning any long trips so that you can enjoy your time with family.

Let this year be carefree and filled with new traditions of spending time the old fashioned way - sharing stories of younger years, watching old home movies, looking through old family photo albums, or playing board games to connect with one another. Put away the electronics. Your home will be filled with love and laughter one normally feels, while relieving stress and anxiety. It will also take your loved one's mind off the word "cancer" giving them time to breathe.

Like I say in yoga, "Breathe in the love and exhale anything that does not serve you." You will be glad you did.

**Editor's note:** More for those with cancer from CancerPartners on page 19.

Shay Moraga is an E-RYT500 yoga instructor and triple negative breast cancer survivor. She teaches weekly classes entitled Yoga for Cancer Caretakers and Survivors and can be reached at shay@namstewithshay.com or (760) 895.1705.

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Mental Illness and Biomedical Correlations

By John R. Dixon, DC, CCN, IFMCP

I recently returned from the 9th annual Integrative Medicine for Mental Health Conference in Dallas, Texas. This conference offers health care providers from many different disciplines a holistic approach to successfully diagnose and treat underlying issues contributing to neurological, behavioral, and psychiatric disorders.

Research has revealed that many conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, OCD, eating disorders, and autism often have biomedical causes that contribute to symptoms including nutritional deficiencies, chronic infections, genetic weaknesses and environmental toxin accumulations. Many patients experience better outcomes when these causes are addressed and treated through a combination of functional laboratory testing, nutritional therapies, specialized diets, detoxification protocols, and neurofeedback.

Mental health is dependent on properly functioning neurotransmitters, the chemical messengers that allow neurons to communicate with one another. Of the 250-plus known neurotransmitters, the most critical for mental health are serotonin and the catecholamines including norepinephrine, epinephrine and dopamine. Proper amounts of these neurotransmitters are critical for healthy brain activity and heavily dependent on proper dietary intake of minerals including zinc, lithium, magnesium, iron, and chromium, as well as B vitamins, in particular B12, folate, B6, vitamins C, D, K and an important enzyme cofactor called BH4.

Excess dopamine, which can stem from intestinal bacteria, has been linked to a number of mental health disorders including ADHD, depression, alcoholism, Alzheimer’s disease, schizophrenia, depression and fatigue. Studies have shown that the gut bacteria Clostridia can inhibit the enzyme that converts dopamine to norepinephrine, resulting in high dopamine levels and the formation of phenolic compounds which are suspected to play a role in autism spectrum disorders. A simple urine test called an organic acid test is helpful in diagnosing this condition.

The emerging role of a condition known as metabolic endotoxemia as a cause of depression and anxiety disorders is also gaining attention in the integrative health community. It is associated with a gut-derived endotoxin called lipopolysaccharide (LPS) which is released into the blood stream of people consuming high calorie, high saturated fat diets who also have increased intestinal permeability, or leaky gut syndrome. High levels of LPS result in a signaling cascade of highly inflammatory chemicals that flood the brain, resulting in altered receptor activity. LPS has also been linked to obesity, type 2 diabetes, dementia, heart disease, cancer, and hypertension. Interventions for reducing LPS and systemic inflammation include quercetin, curcumin, sulforaphane, resveratrol, omega 3 fatty acids with high levels of EPA and DHA and free-form amino acids in a powder form.

The connection between environmental toxins and mental health conditions is well established in medical literature. Glyphosate and other toxic chemicals have attracted much attention from the autism community. Although this remains controversial, there is some epidemiological data that correlates increased usage of glyphosate with an increase in autism rate. One popular theory states that glyphosate induces significant changes in the normal bacteria that live in the gut, resulting in altered neurotransmitter production.

Heavy metals including mercury, cadmium, arsenic and lead have long been associated with altered brain and neurotransmitter function. Heavy metal toxicity is common and can be assessed with a urinary provocation test, and protocols to remove heavy metals vary. Be sure to consult your health care provider before beginning a program for toxic element removal or integrated mental health.

Dr. John Dixon is an Institute of Functional Medicine certified practitioner and can be reached at the Natural Medicine Group (760) 345-7300.

Sources: 1) IMMH conference, 2018 2) Great Plains Laboratory (July 2018) Inhibition of dopamine conversion to norepinephrine by clostridia metabolites appears to be a (the) major cause of autism, schizophrenia, and other neuropsychiatric disorders.; 3) https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3774444 4) https://jamesgreenblattmd.com/ 5) Institute for Functional Medicine website, www.ifm.org

Holistic Cancer Therapies

The use of HBOT and vitamin C IVs for tumors

By Daniel Everett, CHT, DMT-A

Cancerous tumors, due to their fast metabolism, exist best in a ‘low oxygen’ environment. While chemotherapy is, by nature, dominantly an oxidative process, there are non-toxic oxidative therapies available in out-patient environments that are proving to be effective as a complement to chemotherapy and radiation or as stand-alone holistic treatment options.

Both hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) and intravenous vitamin C cause significant oxidation of the tumor cell which slows down tumor growth and inhibits the tumor defense mechanisms. HBOT floods the body with oxygen at the cellular level and is an American Medical Association, FDA and Medicare approved modality. Through HBOT, oxygen is not only saturating the red cell hemoglobin but is also dissolved within the plasma, lymph, and cerebrospinal fluids. When tumors are exposed to a surplus of oxygen, the tumor cell retains significantly more oxygen which functions to “gum-up” the internal chemistry of the tumor cell and “stun” the tumor. Stunning the tumor helps to mitigate the circumstances of metastasis and helps control the aggressive nature of the tumor, as well as its ability to invade both nearby and distant body sites.

The tumor uptake of glucose is exponentially greater than that of other cells. This is why a tumor’s surface has up to 25 times the number of insulin receptors than that of other cells. Did you also know that when looking at the ascorbic acid/vitamin C molecule, it bears a striking resemblance to the glucose molecule? Tumors, because of their greedy nature, inadvertently consume ascorbic acid/vitamin C when consuming glucose, and therefore concentrate it greatly within the cell. When a tumor cell metabolizes the vitamin C it causes an increase in production of hydrogen peroxide (H2o2). While this is exported outside of the tumor cell, once it begins to accumulate both within the cell and at the extracellular level, it causes significant oxidation of the tumor cell. This damage makes the cell non-viable and mitigates the circumstances of metastasis.

Combining the two therapies – hyperbaric oxygen therapy and intravenous vitamin C – creates a non-toxic treatment that is particularly effective at “stunning” the tumor and can help initiate apoptosis (tumor cell death). Both therapies are recommended for patients seeking a holistic approach to combat cancer and can provide significant adjunctive benefits to patients undergoing either chemotherapy or radiation.

Prior to beginning HBOT or intravenous vitamin C, a prescription must be obtained from a licensed physician. An initial consultation which includes a blood draw usually takes less than an hour. HBOT can begin immediately and vitamin C IVs, upon evaluation of the blood panel, normally begin within a week.

As with all medical conditions, it is important to inform your entire medical team of therapies you are seeking.

Daniel Everett, CHT, DMT-A is the director of hyperbaric operations at Optimal Hyperbaric and can be reached at (760) 699.1607. www.optimalhyperbarics.com. Optimal Hyperbarics works in conjunction with Preventive Medicine Centers for IV therapy and the initiation of a consultation with a physician. For more information call (760) 320.4292.

Sources: 1) Beating Cancer 20 Natural, Spiritual, & Medical Remedies by Francisco Contreras, MD & Daniel Kennedy, MC (45, 48) Oasis of Hope & Dr Francisco Contreras; 2) Vitamin C Doubles Effectiveness of Chemotherapy and Radiation by Dr Mercola, University of Iowa, April 17, 2017; 3) Why high-dose vitamin C kills cancer cells by Dr. Mercola, University of Iowa, (2017); 4) Jennifer Brown, University of Iowa, Iowa Now (2017). Why high-dose vitamin C kills cancer cells; 4) Teicher, B.A. & Rose, C.M. (1984). Oxygen-Carrying Perfluorochemical Emulsion as an Adjuvant to Radiation Therapy in Mice. Cancer Research, 44, 4285-4288; 5) Dole, M., Wilson, F.R. & Fife, W.P. (1975). Hyperbaric Hydrogen Therapy: A Possible Treatment for Cancer. Science, 190, 152-154.

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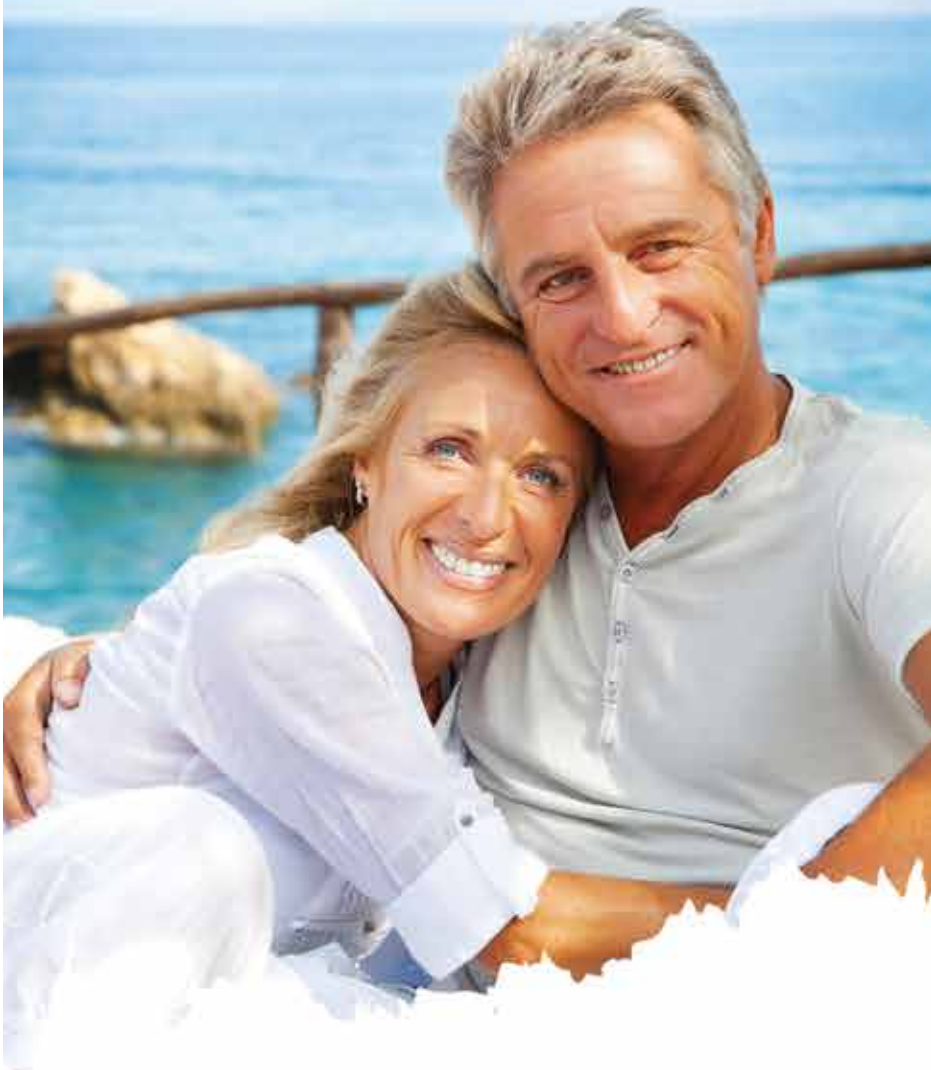
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### Why being Selfish Is GOOD

It's been interesting to note that my most requested talk this year has been about self-care. Whether I'm speaking to groups or with individual patients, we as a society seem to have a greater load of anxiety, depression and stress and I think it's time to call BS.

Now don't get me wrong, I believe what I am seeing. The impact of our mood and stress load is dis-ease in the body. As I listen to each patient's story, the pattern of a person's experience creates a picture that makes their health risks and current symptoms make sense. So why do I call BS? We are taught from childhood to share and take care of others, but we are rarely taught the importance of taking care of ourselves. And much of our dis-ease comes from twisting and shape-shifting ourselves to please everyone else.

The analogy of first applying our own oxygen mask before helping others seems so common that it is almost cliché. But in real life, do I do it? Honestly, sometimes, but not consistently. Do you, like me, realize that you've gone most of a day without feeding yourself, or that there have been no hours in your week devoted to play or relaxation?

So what should we do? I say, we need to get selfish.

What steps can we take to be kinder to ourselves? First, we may need to take inventory of how we are spending our days. Is your life centered around what matters most? Does your calendar reflect your priorities? If not, it's time to adjust: make the commitment to do one thing every day that nourishes your body, mind or spirit is a valiant stand for self-care. When I was first challenged to do this, I realized that I had forgotten what I loved to do. It took much more time than I care to admit to come up with my own list of 25 things I can do for myself, but that list has been a guide as I've adjusted my life - and I'm grateful!

Second, we can choose to decrease our load. Cheryl Richardson, author of *The Extreme Art of Self-Care*, once said, "Those of you who want to change the world, must first change your own lives. Take at least one-third of the stuff off your plate, and then come back and tell me how you'll change the world." The ability to say no to the requests and needs of others is imperative to our well-being. You are the only one managing your own life and there will always be another good-deed, opportunity or need that can move ahead of caring for yourself.

When we learn to say no, and pencil ourselves back into our own lives, magic can happen. We build resilience and a stronger immune system. And by reserving energy for our dreams and joy, we become kinder, more stable people, capable of doing more with less effort. I'm in, are you?

"And if I asked you to name all the things you loved, how long would it take for you to name yourself?" - unknown

Dr. Brossfield practices functional medicine for men and women at her practice, XO Health, in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 573.2761.

### Let's Talk About Sex

By Lauren Del Sarto

Yes, the topic makes many uncomfortable, but with rates of sexually transmitted disease at an all-time high, it can no longer remain under the covers. So let's take a look at the facts.

According to the CDC 2017 Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance Report, more than two million cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis were reported in the US in 2016, the highest number ever. It's a clear warning of a growing threat, says Jonathan Mermin, MD, MPH, director of the CDC National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention. "STDs are a persistent enemy, growing in number, and outpacing our ability to respond."

Before you blame it on kids today, you may be surprised to learn that STDs are spreading "like wildfire" through senior populations as well. Since 2007, incidence of syphilis among seniors is up 52 percent, with chlamydia up 32 percent.

In his article *Baby Boomers Gone Wild!* in *Psychology Today*, Robert Weiss, LCSW, CSAT-S, states the good news: it appears many seniors citizens are sexually active; however, a large number are choosing to "not suit up before dancing the horizontal mambo."

In his whimsical piece, Weiss, a subject expert for CNN, Oprah Winfrey, and others, considers many factors including extended vitality, hormone supplementation, the little blue pill, lack of education in youth, and even retirement communities: "...it looks as if the hard-partying denizens of Animal House have simply moved their shenanigans into the Shady Palms Retirement Villa."

So, what is being done? Getting honorable adults to face these facts and consider themselves among their peers is no easy task adding fuel to the fire. Medicare now offers free STD screenings and low cost treatment for seniors, but only 5% of those who are eligible have chosen to utilize it, says Weiss, and testing for STDs isn't always a top priority for clinicians. So, education - for patients and doctors - is the first defense.

Eisenhower Health is doing just that with their new Sexual Health Clinic located at the Eisenhower Health Center at Rimrock in Palm Springs. Their goal is to help navigate the complex issue of sexual health in a supportive, non-judgmental environment that they say is different from STD clinics. "We aren't here just to address their obvious concerns," says Jon Colbert, MSN, FNP-DC, who oversees the clinic. "We are here to partner with them and by doing so assess how they may be at risk for other conditions, such as Hep C or HPV, and addressing those risks in such a way that

they feel not only supported, but have all the information they need to make sound choices about their sexual lives."

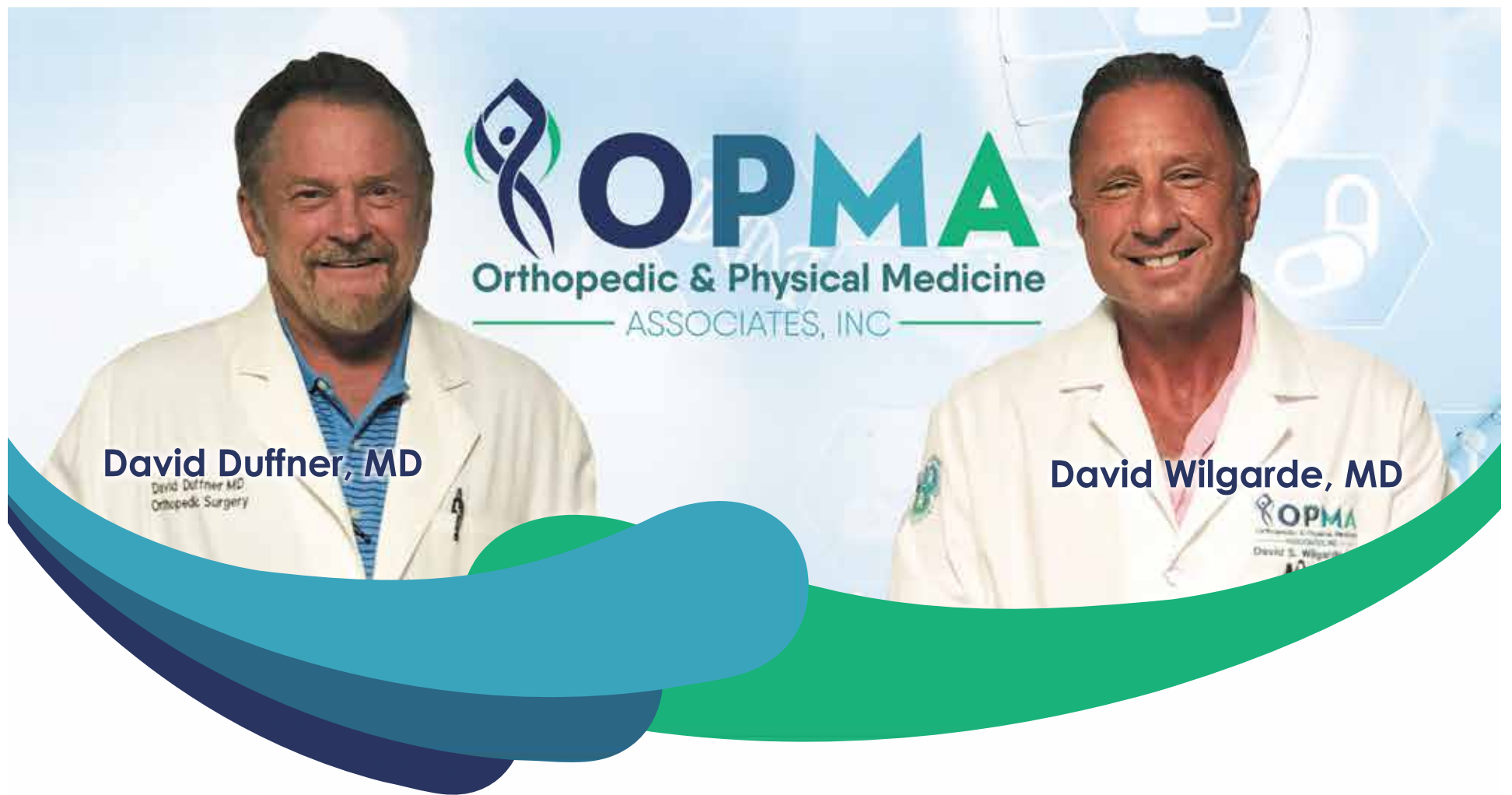
The Sexual Health Clinic is oriented for those who have sex without a condom, have multiple sex partners, have symptoms that appear to be an STD, have been informed from a partner that they may have been exposed to an STD and/or are sexually active but do not know their status.

"We will talk with our patients freely about their sexual activities - as their primary care physician often does not

*Continued on page 29*



Today, STDs are rapidly spreading through senior populations.



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Book Review: The Diabetes Code

By Joseph E. Scherger MD, MPH

Author Jason Fung, MD, of the University of Toronto has taken “Ockham’s razor” to simplify the management of type 2 diabetes. William of Ockham (1287-1347) was an English friar and philosopher famous for postulating that with complex problems, the hypothesis with the fewest assumptions is usually correct.

In his book *The Obesity Code* (2016), Dr. Fung reformulated our understanding of obesity by arguing persuasively that obesity is a hormonal illness of excess insulin. Whenever we eat, especially carbohydrates, we secrete the hormone insulin to drive blood sugar into cells. Insulin is more importantly a fat storage hormone that blocks the burning of fat and causes excess sugar to be turned into fat through lipogenesis (the making of fat in the body). Repeatedly eating carbohydrates causes chronically high insulin levels and the steady accumulation of fat.

Besides the benefits of a low carbohydrate diet, Dr. Fung stresses the importance of fasting to lower the insulin level enough to begin burning off body fat. Dr. Fung points out that we have been focused only on what we eat and not enough on how often we eat. Humans have spent most of their time on earth eating just one meal a day. Eating three meals a day is cultural and contributes to the epidemic of overweight and obesity, especially with our increased intake of refined carbohydrates.

In *The Diabetes Code*, Dr. Fung furthers this same argument to show that type 2 diabetes is caused by insulin resistance. Doctors have known this for a long time, but Fung elucidates how insulin resistance occurs. The repeated secretion of insulin that causes obesity next leads to fatty liver and our body’s protective mechanism over time is to become resistant to insulin. This results in the high blood sugar of type 2 diabetes (type 1 diabetes, a completely different illness, comes from the body losing all its ability to secrete insulin).

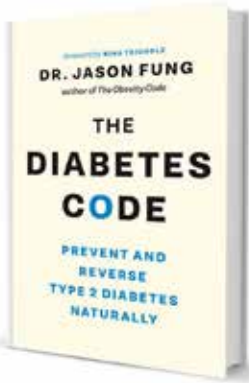
Dr. Fung discusses that while many of the drugs used to treat type 2 diabetes lower

blood sugar, they make the underlying disease worse by increasing body fat and insulin resistance. The biggest culprit here is the use of insulin injections. In the U.S. we spend over 23 billion dollars on drugs for type 2 diabetes, more than the total revenues of professional football, baseball and basketball combined. In Dr. Fung’s clinic, most patients with type 2 diabetes have complete reversal off medications by three months.

The approach to preventing and reversing diabetes described in *The Diabetes Code* is simple. The nutrition is healthy fats, low carbohydrates and intermittent fasting. Dr. Fung will often use fasting periods of three days or longer to get insulin levels low allowing the body to recover from insulin resistance. Healthy nutrition continues for life with healthy fats: nuts, seeds, fatty vegetables such as avocado, quality fish and meat. All refined carbohydrates and sugars are avoided. 12-16 hour fasting periods are built into the daily routine (stay hydrated; coffee and tea are allowed). Adults should eat only 1-2 meals a day. Any snacks should be healthy fat and low carbohydrates such as raw nuts.

With *The Diabetes Code*, Jason Fung, MD, has provided a simple lifestyle approach to preventing and avoiding what has become the most expensive of all chronic diseases. The food and drug industries will not be excited by his method, but it is time for the public to become healthier and to lower the costs of medical care.

*Dr. Scherger is an Eisenhower Health Primary Care 365 physician and core faculty member of the Family Medicine Residency Program.*





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# Insurance Carrier to Cover Naturopathic Care

By Jessica Needle, ND

As a naturopathic patient, you may have been disappointed to learn that health insurance does not cover naturopathic care in the state of California. Or maybe the lack of insurance coverage prevented you from establishing care with a naturopathic doctor in the first place.



Well, all that is about to change with the announcement that Blue Shield is now reimbursing patients for a number of services performed by naturopathic doctors.

The covered services include venipuncture (blood draws), IV infusions, vitamin B-12 injections, and trigger point therapy. Reimbursable lab work includes the complete blood count (CBC), comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP), vitamin D, thyroid hormones, and allergy testing.

Note that this list does not currently include reimbursement for office visits or supplements, and the above items may be noted as exclusions in your individual health plan. You should still expect to pay for naturopathic care out-of-pocket, and will need to submit a superbill for these charges to your insurer following the procedures.

The Affordable Care Act (also known as ObamaCare) was written with a provision stating that health insurers cannot discriminate against naturopathic doctors and other licensed health care providers. Now that Blue Shield has taken steps to comply with the law, other insurers should follow suit.

In the meantime, patients with other health plans can file a complaint in writing if their claims for payment of naturopathic services are denied. They should also contact the Health Consumer Alliance at (888) 804.3536 for assistance. The Alliance advocates for consumers and will assist in getting the denial reviewed by the California Department of Managed Health Care or the Department of Insurance. The California Naturopathic Doctors Association has a template to use when appealing a denial, available at <https://www.calnd.org/filing-a-complaint>.

This news follows the 2016 announcement that the Hawaii health insurance provider Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) now allows their insured members to choose a naturopathic doctor as their primary care physician, a big step forward for the industry.

Naturopathic doctors increase the variety of provider options available to consumers, improve access to chronic disease prevention and treatment, and refocus health care on wellness. Using naturopathic medical care can reduce costs to both the individual and insurers.

Please use the benefits to which you are entitled and help expand insurance coverage for all by filing a complaint if your claim is denied.

Dr. Jessica Needle is a naturopathic doctor practicing at Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568.2598.

# Managing Holiday Stressors for Cancer Patients

By Charlie Adams, MA, LMFT

Here we are again at another holiday season, and whether you observe religious or spiritual traditions or take part in a more cultural expression of the holiday spirit, it is time to prepare yourself emotionally for what that means as you navigate your cancer treatment at this emotionally charged time of year.

Between the planning, shopping, cooking, cleaning and decorating, it might be a good idea to take a step back now and decide how you want your holiday experience to look. Taking steps to create a manageable vision to keep yourself from becoming overwhelmed, which so many people experience at this time of year, may save you from stressors that can lead to increased depression and anxiety.

Having a clear understanding of what you are going through—whether it be changing family dynamics, historical expectations of past holiday events, or additional financial burdens brought on by your cancer treatment—and taking a realistic assessment of your abilities is a good place to start.

Communicate your concerns to loved ones early and discuss your expectations while acknowledging that the holiday planning may look a little different this year. Invite family and friends to help with planning and contribute their time and skills to the success of your events. Ask for help with cooking, cleaning and decorating. Traditions can be changed to accommodate your current abilities. What alternatives are available to you that would meet your own and your loved ones' expectations?

Dr. Karen Syrjala, co-director of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center Survivorship Program, said one of the biggest challenges for cancer patients and survivors is to think in terms of how the holidays are now, as opposed to how they used to be or “should be” in our minds.

It's good to validate your own experience and where you are right now in your cancer journey and use that self-awareness in your planning process. Be mindful of the pitfalls: not getting enough sleep, foods that may negatively impact your energy level and stamina, alcohol intake, and insufficient amounts of water. Do remember to put yourself first.

In summary, create a plan you can realistically see yourself orchestrating, leave your options open, and say YES to help! Surround yourself with good support from loved ones, decide what parts of your holiday planning are most important to you, and do your best to enjoy the moments as they unfold.

**Editor's note:** More for those supporting cancer patients and survivors from Shay Moraga on page 14.

Charlie Adams, MA, LMFT, is the program director at CancerPartners, the local non-profit offering emotional, social and educational support to all those in the Coachella Valley touched by cancer. He can be reached at (760) 770.5678 or [cadams@cancerpartners.org](mailto:cadams@cancerpartners.org). More information about no-cost support groups and healthy lifestyle classes is also available at [www.cancerpartners.org](http://www.cancerpartners.org).



For those with cancer, the holidays can be especially difficult.



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An Awakening Walk  
A Desert Health Review

By Lauren Del Sarto

Jennifer Johnson was looking for something to lift the weight of negative self-image that had plagued her most of her life. As a desert resident, she had a successful catering business, was a practicing yogi, and had many close friends, but was seeking something more.

In March 2015 she first heard about the walk of the Camino de Santiago which many had traveled for centuries seeking spiritual growth. Can I actually do something like this? I mean, the Camino route is 500 miles long and I don't even like to hike.

For months the thought remained on her mind. Asking her higher spirits for guidance, she pondered the challenge, her fears, the boredom of walking for 35 days, the pain, but also the many life-changing stories she read from others who have gone before her.

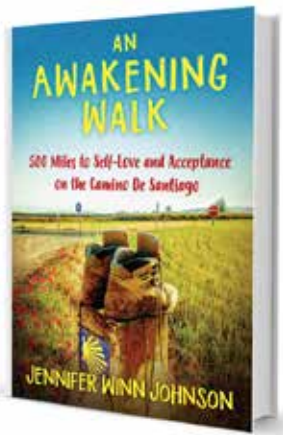
As the Camino continued to call her, she made her mind up to embark on the solo journey chronicling each step in what has become *An Awakening Walk, 500 Miles to Self-Love and Acceptance on the Camino de Santiago*.

In the book, Johnson takes us with her through her contemplations, interactions with others and the many lessons she learned about herself and life. It has been said that your Camino starts once you make a plan to walk it, and also that it does not start until after you have finished walking it.

Her inspiring story is told with raw emotion and vulnerability as she opens up about past traumas and insecurities she sought to overcome, breathing in with each step and working to breathe out anything that did not serve her well. I believe the Camino definitely works on you, your issues and your karma, she says. "It's like working through lifetimes of accumulated 'stuff' while walking for days on this ancient sacred path."

She shares her struggles with the physical demands and stories of other international "pilgrims" she meets along the way. She thoughtfully documents her observations of human nature and the reflections of herself she sees in each. As I walk the Camino, I see so many different

people, all with their own unique story. I realize deep down that we all want the same basic things: to live a good life, to be happy, have security, and most of all to have love. If there is something we judge or do not like about someone, we must bring it back to ourselves, because everyone we encounter is a perfect reflection of us.



Author Jennifer Johnson on her Camino pilgrimage

I loved Jennifer's book and remain in awe of her accomplishment. At only 160 pages, it is an easy read with vivid descriptions that allow you to feel as if you are there. Stepping out of her comfort zone, she is led by her own higher spirits and shares inspirational quotes from worldly leaders within each chapter. You find yourself asking the same questions: What do I truly seek in life and could I ever take on such a tremendous challenge? The thought of traveling and meeting so many different people is exhilarating, but would I have the courage to accomplish a feat as big on my own?



Many have traveled these sacred trails for centuries.

An Awakening Walk was my first introduction to the Camino de Santiago, but since reading it, I have met two other women who also made the journey by themselves. Reading Jennifer's book deepened my appreciation of their accomplishments and further

inspired me to expand my own realm of possibilities. Maybe these interactions are signs...An Awakening Walk has opened me up to believing this could be the case.

Has my Camino already begun? Where is your Camino?

Jennifer Johnson lives in Rancho Mirage and now takes others on inspirational walks through her travel company, Winn Journeys. An Awakening Walk, 500 Miles to Self-Love and Acceptance on the Camino De Santiago is available at Amazon.com. For more information visit [www.WinnJourneys.com](http://www.WinnJourneys.com).

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Enhancing Gratitude During the Holidays

The holiday season, a season of giving and receiving, is an excellent time to instill the essential life value of gratitude in children and adults. It can be so easy, and fun, to buy kids an item they have been waiting months to receive and share that moment of joy when they open their long-awaited present. I believe we should all have those moments of joy as kids, and as parents.

But the holiday season can be more than an opportunity for joy through gifting; it can also be a time of remembering, defining, embracing, and promoting gratitude. Children crave positive reinforcement and the holidays are prime season to demonstrate to them how to both receive and give to reap the emotional rewards of giving others joy. It is a time to teach how to experience gratitude in service to others, as well as in accepting - with appreciation - gifts of all types.

Gift making is an excellent way to include children in the experience. Involving all family members in cooking or making a holiday treat for distribution to neighbors, shopping and gift selection for friends and family, and wrapping presents involves kids in the process of what it feels like to give. In doing so, they learn the emotional rewards for giving and not only receiving. It imparts the beginning of learning service to others and in turn, gratitude.

As a family, creating mindful seasonal traditions impresses family culture and thoughtfulness. Finding traditions that bring a family together and involve an activity that bonds can ease holiday stress and bring more joy and gratitude for this time of year. Mindfulness activities may include creating personal gifts together, going on a family hike or nature outing, creating a special meal together, or having ‘no wifi or cell days’ to truly spend time connecting.

A popular way to approach holidays is to also consider giving three types of gifts: a gift that is made, a gift that is needed, and a gift that is wanted. Approaching gift giving with boundaries shows a way of caring by being in service, solving a need and also gifting for simple personal reward. Making a gift takes personal time to create which demonstrates care without taking finances into account. It creates gratitude for what is done rather than what is spent.

Giving a gift for a need displays an understanding of what would help ease a person’s struggles. It also shows that gift giving is not all bells and whistles, that sometimes a gift is to help.

The third gift is because gift giving is still supposed to be fun, surprising, and to a degree, frivolous. Creating a series of gift qualities allows each person to participate, implements ideas about how and why a gift is given, and allows gratitude for different ways to show love through giving.

Gratitude as a practiced habit has shown to increase quality and depth of happiness. It is also a virtue that often has to be taught and instilled in children. Gratitude does not always happen naturally; it is acquired by observation, demonstration, and explanation through practiced habits like giving and receiving of all types of gifts.

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

It’s Not Black And White, But the Gray That Matters

By Amy Austin RN, PsyD, LMFT

Recently, I was at a social gathering with two other women. They were busy talking about their academic achievements, employment specialties, and other professional areas of interest. I noticed that both women seemed to exclude me from the conversation. There was no eye contact, no questions, nada, zip. I asked myself whether I was being too sensitive and/or personalizing, and admittedly, after a minute of feeling the sting of a social snub, I went into observation mode. This wasn’t my first rodeo surrounding this issue.

Later, I was discussing this occurrence with a friend who suggested that maybe I am perceived as “retired”- as if retired means dead and buried. And, only when someone hears me being called doctor do they show interest.

Could this be “ageism?” Just what we all need. Another schism with an “ism.”

According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, adults 55 and over will make up 25 percent of the U. S. workforce within six years compared with just 11.9 percent of workers in 1990. A recent AARP survey found that 61 percent of workers over 45 said they have seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace. Despite their growing numbers, older workers continue to face age discrimination at stubbornly persistent rates. Trends such as shrinking benefits and increased outsourcing hit older workers especially hard.

But, I’m not going to solely focus on older workers or social etiquette. What’s lacking here is a bit of humanity. Because television, technology, and social media have entrenched viewers with wrinkle creams, Botox, and Depends commercials, the covert, and often overt, message is that eternal youth is the be-all, end-all in life. If you’re not young, you’re outdated, outsourced, and out of luck.

Here are just a few pearls that many older individuals have to offer their families and communities:

**Wisdom.** Not everyone becomes wise with age, but those who are have much to give from decades of life experience.

**Knowledge.** Grandma may be known for her homemade strudel, but she could have a wealth of knowledge that she’d love to share if asked, and her advice could be invaluable.

**Experience.** Age certainly doesn’t measure maturity, but maturity can be measured by experience. Nothing can take the place of years of successes and failures that produce a widened lens about life.

**Evolution.** Many elders have evolved over time and no longer sweat the small stuff. They may have slowed physically over time, but with “slowbriety” comes more patience, a sense of self-awareness, and acceptance.

So, I just turned sixty-six. Not all parts feel, look, or move like they used to, but I’ll take my wisdom, experience, evolution and love of life any day.

To me, ageism is an opportunity. What about you?

Amy Austin is a licensed marriage and family therapist (MFC# 41252) and doctor of clinical psychology in Rancho Mirage. Dr. Amy can be reached at (760) 774.0047.



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## Home for the Holidays Tips for dementia caregivers

By Pamela Bieri

The holidays can bring both great joy and great stress. It's often a time when family members who live elsewhere come "home" – with expectations and extra demands associated with preparations for and celebrations of the holiday season.

Being a family caregiver of someone with dementia can bring an even greater level of stress. For loved ones with dementia, too many people all at once, loud music and conversations, and unfamiliar surroundings, can cause anxiety and heightened confusion. Try to avoid situations that place your loved one in stressful surroundings such as holiday shopping, large public events, even some family gatherings.

Caregivers taking on too many responsibilities because of pressure from others or one's own expectations can easily cause "holiday burnout" for themselves and risk their loved one's wellbeing.

According to the MedicineNet.com article *Tips to Stay Sane During the Holidays*, an overloaded social schedule combined with the demands of entertaining, gift shopping, decorating and other holidays traditions can evoke panic in even the most organized people.

Four key strategies for avoiding holiday burnout are adapted from this article:

**Perspective.** Try to keep the whole experience in its proper perspective by remembering that the holiday season represents only a very short portion of the year, which will soon be at its end. Holiday time does not necessarily need to be the most important or meaningful time of the year. Decide what is most significant to you and your loved one.

**Preconceived ideas.** Banish preconceived ideas about how the season should be. For those steeped in tradition, try to separate those you truly enjoy from those others expect you to do. Consider doing something different or more modified. Equally important, banish preconceived notions about how you should be feeling at this time of year.

**Planning.** Think before committing to any responsibility or social event. Don't make any snap decisions but talk over and decide with your family members in advance about any commitments when combined with other pressures at holiday time. Ask for and accept help from family, friends and neighbors.

**Permission.** Give yourself permission to feel as you do and make the choices you need to make for yourself and your loved one's wellbeing. Do not judge or compare your feelings or actions with others. You have the right to define the things that are important and decide ways to make the holidays meaningful and enjoyable.

It is not selfish to take care of your own needs and desires when you are a caregiver – it's an important part of the job. Follow self-care practices for stress-reduction such as meditation, prayer, and yoga; seek and accept the support of others; get proper rest and nutrition; seek professional counseling when you need it; take time off without feeling guilty; identify and acknowledge your feelings; and participate in pleasant, nurturing activities like reading a good book or taking a warm bath.

Here's to a healthy, happy, stress-less holiday season!

Sources: 1) "Tips to Stay Sane for the Holidays," www.medicinenet.com; 2) Family Caregiver Alliance, "Taking Care of YOU: Self-care for Family Caregivers," www.caregiver.org

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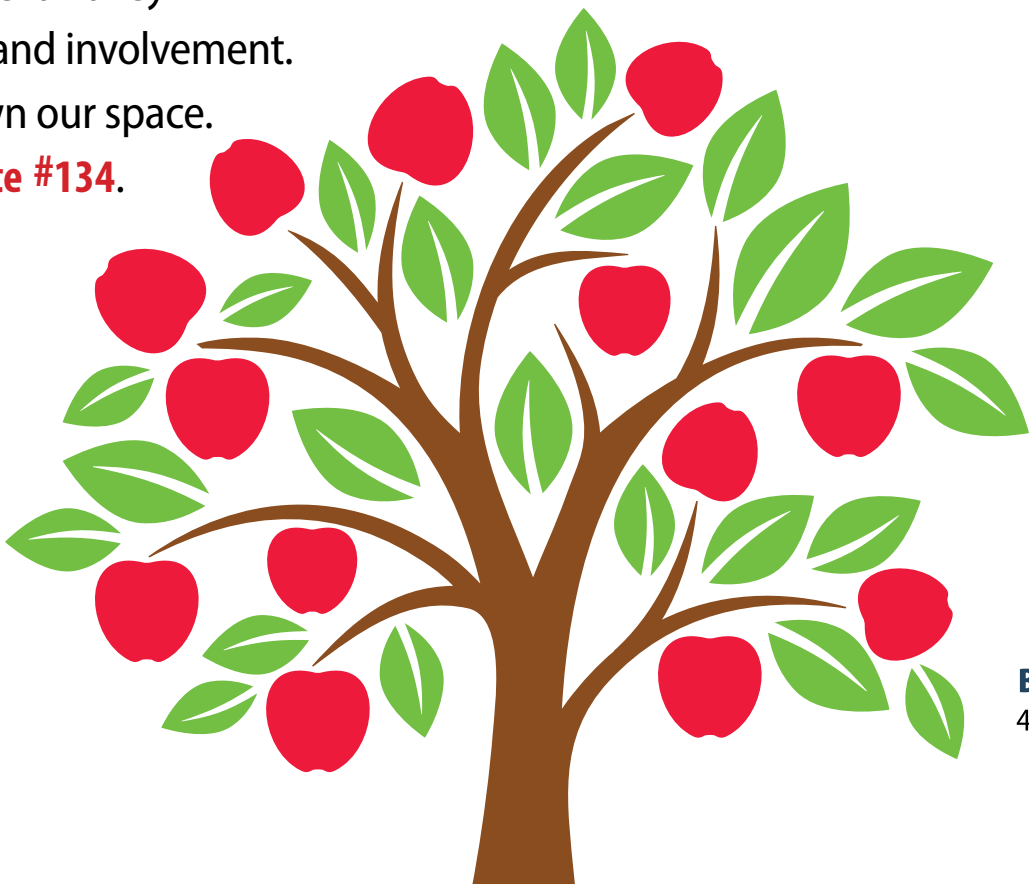
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The Tortoise and the Hare  
It's a marathon, not a sprint

By Michele T. Sarna

Remember the famous fable *The Hare and the Tortoise*? Spoiler Alert: The tortoise ends ups winning the race.

That story always comes to mind when speaking with individuals about saving for retirement. The tortoise looked at the race as a marathon - maintained a steady pace, kept his eye on the finish line, didn't deviate from the path - while the hare thought he had it all under control. So much so, that he took a nap during the race! He figured he could still win by sprinting to the finish. However, as life happens, he overslept and by the time he woke up the tortoise was approaching the finish line. The hare was not able to catch the tortoise in time to win the race.

How does this compare to saving for retirement?

The hare is someone who is too busy to save or think about saving for the future. He (or she) lives for the moment and can't (or doesn't want to) think about when he's older. He may struggle financially and think he can't save; or that his meager attempt at saving won't amount to anything worthwhile later. Or, the hare may have plenty of money to save, but doesn't put any away for a rainy day or the future. When life's unexpected events happen, and they will, it will be harder for the hare to find the resources to recover. When that finish line (which represents retirement) is quickly approaching, the hare will then "wake up" but won't have enough time to catch up and build a successful retirement plan. "Well, what about social security?" he asks. Unfortunately, social security only replaces a percentage of earnings (currently, 40%). By the time the hare retires, that amount may be lower.

Now, the tortoise is someone who started saving early and saves regularly through the company 401k, an individual retirement account, or an investment account. The monthly amount may not be large; however, the tortoise is consistently putting money into one or more of those accounts month after month. Sure, there will be times when the path turns uphill, and the tortoise may need to slow the pace for the interim, but keeps contributing. Once over the hill of that "life event," the tortoise goes right back to the normal pace of saving. As the path continues, there will be times when it takes no effort at all to contribute and perhaps, allow for increased contributions, which will lead to more savings in the future.

So, who are you? The tortoise or the hare? Looking at your savings plan as a marathon and not a sprint will prepare you for life's bumps on the road to a successful retirement path.

Michele Sarna is a financial advisor at Beacon Pointe and can be reached at (760) 932.0930.

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Increase Your Networking IQ

By Susan Murphy, PhD

Have you ever felt stressed at the thought of attending networking events, conferences and even holiday parties? Understanding networking fundamentals can help ease the discomfort and make you become a better networker.

**Show Up.** As Woody Allen says, "80% of success is showing up" and that certainly applies to networking. Even when it's raining, show up. People who show up during lousy weather are motivated and often more likely to be interested in meeting you and sharing valuable information about themselves.

**Be Strategic.** Don't go in cold. Before every event, a male client of mine decides whom he would like to get to know better and plans topics for conversation with each one. When attending dinner events, he approaches his strategic target five minutes before the dinner bell rings, begins a conversation and is often invited to sit near them during dinner. Women are usually less strategic than men when attending events, often looking for friends with whom to reconnect. If there are people you want to meet, consider getting an introduction from someone who knows them. Have professional business cards ready to share.

**Enter the Room with Your Head Up and a Smile.** Act like you're confident and ready to have a good time. Fake it until you become it! A smile is not only contagious, it can lift your mood and confidence level. Put away your iPhone, stand up straight, look friendly and extend your hand first so you look eager to connect. Wear your name tag on your right shoulder so it's easy to see when shaking hands. I always wear my own gold name badge that looks professional, classy and is inscribed "Dr. Susan Murphy."

**Start at the Food Table.** Talking and eating go together, so people are more accessible around food. Hold your drink with your left hand so your handshake isn't cold and wet. Don't go in hungry and remember your manners.

**Engage Others and Help Them Feel Comfortable.** If you are nervous, you're thinking too much about yourself. Break the ice with questions like: "How did you get involved with this organization?" or current events like "Which sport is your favorite?" Stay away from politics, religion and sex. If you don't know anyone, approach the lone wolves. When you run out of things to discuss, invite them to join you to meet other people. To meet many participants, volunteer to help register guests at the front table.

**Connect Others.** Provide helpful introductions to others. Become known as someone who is helpful and offers resources. Do what you say you will do and follow through on commitments in order to build trust. Not only does the altruistic approach make you feel great, it is effective in helping others invest in your success.

**Follow Up with Leads After the Event.** Send a follow-up note or email to people whom you enjoyed meeting and would like to have in your cadre of associates.

**Always Network.** Treat social events as an opportunity to meet new acquaintances and reinforce old ones. Always be open to expanding your network of people. Diane Darling taught me that networking is a frame of mind and a way of life. It is an investment in YOU.

Now it's time to practice your new skills, so get going!

Dr. Susan Murphy is a best-selling author, coach & speaker specializing inrelationships, conflict, leadership & goal achievement. She co-authored *In the Company of Women & LifeQ*. [www.DrSusanMurphy.com](http://www.DrSusanMurphy.com). This article also appeared on Forbes.com.

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## Magical Apples

By *Dipika Patel*



"An apple a day keeps the doctor away." Seems there could be some truth to this famous saying due to the apple's high fiber content which helps in lowering inflammation in the gut and aiding digestion and heart health. This gift from Mother Nature is also high in antioxidants which help combat free radicals and prevent oxidative stress. They are considered a natural diuretic with a mild laxative effect and have also been shown to help in the prevention of cognitive decline, diabetes, and bone health, all while carrying a good punch of vitamin C, potassium, vitamin K and manganese.

Yet, I must remind myself of this incredible gift, and this time of year always does just that.

Apples are so versatile. You can make apple chips, pies, salsas, pickles, sauces, desserts and more. Research has shown that it is best to eat the whole apple, including the peel as it has higher levels of healthy fatty acids; however, apples aren't for everyone. Due to the collections of short-chained carbohydrates (mostly sugars), they are fermentable and poorly absorbed in the gut, so those who suffer from IBS should monitor consumption.

I'm delighted to share my simple apple sauce recipe, which I keep in the fridge and use in several delicious recipes I make like my date and fig brownies and dee-licious chewy chocolate chip cookies (both gluten-free!), homemade apple and lemon tea, oven-roasted apple spiced pork chops, and apple butternut soup. It is a great alternative for fats and sugar in baking. You can substitute unsweetened applesauce for sugar in a 1:1 ratio, but you must also reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe. Typically, reducing the liquid (milk, water, etc.) by ¼ cup will do the trick.

### Homemade Apple Sauce

#### Ingredients:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 3 lbs fresh seasonal apples of your choice peeled, cored and quartered         | 2 cinnamon sticks                                    |
| (You can also use a blend of apples which will provide a complex apple flavor) | 2 star of anise                                      |
| 1 tsp of apple cider vinegar   | ½ cup monk fruit sugar (optional; I make it without) |
| ½ juice of fresh lemon   | ½ cup raisins (optional)                             |
|  | 1 cup of water                                       |

#### Instructions:

Add all ingredients in a medium pan on medium heat. Cook with lid on for about 15-20 minutes on a medium-to-low heat until the apples are cooked to your preference. I like them with a little texture so I keep them a little al dente.

This apple sauce is perfect for your morning pancakes or on pre-soaked oats with ground nuts and seasonal spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, star anise, and even on your peanut butter toast, with a nice helping on the apple sauce. You can churn it in your homemade apple pie-coconut ice cream. Think out of the box and you can surprise yourself.

*Dipika is a holistic health coach who empowers clients to activate a balanced lifestyle of the mind, body and soul. She can be reached at [dipika@dikapatel.life](mailto:dipika@dikapatel.life) or [www.loveyourlifehealthy.com](http://www.loveyourlifehealthy.com)*

## Lessons in Nutrition

By *Desert Healthcare District*

Do you know how to eat an artichoke? How about a pomegranate or kiwi?

These questions reflect a real consideration by those who teach children in public schools about healthy eating. If you've never been exposed to the aforementioned fruits and vegetables, there's a good chance you won't know how to eat them and benefit from their nutrients.

A pilot program presented by FIND Food Bank and the Desert Healthcare District gives Desert Hot Springs students access to seasonal produce. Using the Harvest of the Month curriculum through the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention branch of the California Department of Public Health, Desert Healthcare District Health Educator Vanessa Smith teaches students about the nutrients that foods contain, the daily amount of those nutrients a body needs, and the importance of basic information on food labels.

The hands-on component of the lesson is provided courtesy of a mini farmers' market that FIND sets up at schools. In early October, Desert Springs Middle School was visited by the mobile market.

"The presentation was short (20 minutes) but students received snacks, information and even played games to test their skills while out and about, which can help them make healthier choices when shopping," Smith said.

Initially, the market was planned as an opportunity to educate and serve about 500 students in nutrition classes.

"The coaches had a better idea," said Lorena Marroquin, director of community impact for FIND. "They wanted to serve all of the students. We were able to serve all 1,000 students. That was a great idea to provide all of the snacks."

The snacks consisted of apples - produce is integral to FIND's mission - and granola bars. Students were slow to approach the market displays, but soon warmed to the interactive lesson, Marroquin said.

"The thing with middle-schoolers is that they never tell you what they are thinking," Smith asserted. "But seeing them enjoy the apples and being respectful to the information is the best way to say that the students appreciated the market."

For Debbie Espinosa, FIND Food Bank CEO, the impact of the health education program is long term because it goes beyond feeding the students. Eating nutritious foods helps them perform better in school because they're more cognizant, and potentially reduces childhood obesity and diabetes, she says.

"While they're learning how to eat, we're teaching them to eat healthy, rather than reversing bad habits, which is difficult to do," adds Espinosa.

The pilot program is expected to be presented at other Desert Hot Springs schools through 2018.

For more information about the Desert Healthcare District's healthy initiatives, visit [www.dhcd.org](http://www.dhcd.org).



Desert Springs Middle School students enjoy apples during a mobile farmers' market visit. Photo courtesy of the Desert Healthcare District



## Organic Decadence at *Daniel's Table* A Desert Health Review

By Lauren Del Sarto

As you walk into *Daniel's Table* you are greeted by the chef at work and his friendly staff. A full glass front entry allows natural light to flow into the open floor design with intimate dining tables and a long counter facing the open kitchen which Chef Daniel Villanueva refers to as the Chef's Table.

Here guests can enjoy smaller plates or meze, which in Mediterranean countries means appetizer, while interacting with Chef Daniel and his personable servers. It was the inspiration for changing the restaurant's name from *Beyond Balisage*, a play on his former Palm Springs restaurant, to *Daniel's Table*.

My husband and I recently went for dinner and decided to join a group at the Chef's Table who were enjoying the specials offered as part of the Cathedral City Art Walk. The upbeat jazz in the background, view of the open flame and smell of fruit tree wood from the kitchen drew us in.



Chef Daniel at work in his open kitchen

We had heard that *Daniel's Table* was the newest organic restaurant in the valley and were eager to check it out. We prefer to eat clean, and the growing number of conscious restaurants locally is wonderfully welcomed.

*Daniel's Table* did not disappoint – especially on flavor. Each dish combined unique ingredients creating tantalizing – even decadent – tastes. Daniel uses healthy enhancements like dates, honey, garlic and lemon to complement and boost the flavors of each dish.



Meze (small plates) are served at the Chef's Table.

We started with the grilled dates stuffed with Spanish goat cheese and topped with a rosewater fruit reduction, and the fig flatbread with feta cheese pesto, field greens, Manchego cheese and herbs. Both were exceptional, however, I recommend starting with one or the other as they were, together, a bit rich.

We then enjoyed the chicken and egg, a unique tower of very moist chicken breast seasoned with cumin, coriander, cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, honey and almonds, and topped with a farm fresh egg (flavorful food as medicine!). We then had the meze special, a grilled scallop with local date sauce and a touch of labneh. The scallop was very tender, and the sweetness of the date was well balanced with the tangy yogurt cream.



Grilled scallop on date sauce with labneh cream

We continued to explore the medley of flavors with a couple more meze paired with a white Italian Civitas Pecorino wine. Our server, Bruce, offered samples to help us decide as all wines are organic and imported.



The "Almost" 1924 Caesar

If trying a variety of dishes, plan to stay a while and enjoy the ambiance as Chef puts his personal touch on each dish and is very particular about quality and integrity.

"My goal is to provide the purest and best cuisine I possibly can dish by dish," he says adding that inspiration for his bountiful flavors comes from his grandmothers of Spanish, German and Native American heritage, as well as his vast career in the industry which he calls his "restaurant-tour."

"For me, the cuisine is about the people," he says. "I worked with a

variety of cultures and picked up what I wanted to learn, choosing the restaurants at which I worked based on the cuisine." He always targeted fine dining which is demonstrated at this new establishment.

Daniel's focus on organic came years later when people started asking the origin of his ingredients. "That's when I started asking myself those questions and many hidden memories came back from childhood - watching my grandmother making trips to the garden as she cooked; living in Europe and the aromas of culturally diverse restaurants; trying escargot and pâté for the first time." It further ignited his passion and purpose.

When he moved to the desert, he was approached by our local farmer's market and it all came together perfectly. The result is a warm, friendly and flavorful restaurant offering clean cuisine for those who care about they eat.



GoneStraw Farms' chicken and egg with foraged mushrooms, Hungarian peppers, turmeric, onions, and a reduced broth

*Daniel's Table* is open Tuesday – Saturday from 5p.m.-10p.m. and located at 68327 E. Palm Canyon Drive in Cathedral City. Entrees range from \$35-\$45 with small plates (\$10-\$15) available at the Chef's Table. Reservations are strongly recommended. (760) 699.8536. [www.DanielsTable.com](http://www.DanielsTable.com).

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## Feeling Good Never Looked So Good! Tips to glamorize your look for the holidays

By Michele McDonough

Whether you wear makeup regularly or hardly ever, the holidays are a festive time to add that little extra sparkle and let your spirit glow. Here are some tips to help you shine:

**Holiday hues: red and gold.** Show your holiday spirit with incredible red and gold makeup. Determine the right shade of red that accents your features. Is it a cool blue red, or a warm orange red? Use gold eyeshadows to accent your eye area on the lid - and a little mixed in with your blush! You can go for the red lipstick and a heavier eyeliner this time of year. Use a liquid glitter eyeliner from the inner corner of your eyes and line about one-third of the way out on your lower eyelashes.

**Keep it soft and sweet.** Sometimes, the softer side of makeup is all a girl wants in life. Choose a lipstick, lip gloss, and eyeshadow all within the same pink shade family. Or, choose smokey eyes, a good option for just about everyone. Highlight the eye shadow with different colors in eye pencils.

**Ready for mistletoe.** Plumping products and injections can be pricey, and you can create that same illusion using a lip pencil, concealer and the right lipstick. Once you're done applying your lipstick, dab an angled concealer brush into some concealer and apply a thin line just around your lips to clean up any stray marks and make your lips look crisp and, as desired, more voluptuous.

New Year's Eve is the moment your glitter lipstick has been waiting for. Apply your favorite deep red lipstick, then put

on some matching lip gloss so the surface of your lips is a little sticky. Grab a wet lip brush and a pot of red or even gold glitter, and gently press the glitter into your top and bottom lips.

**Lasting brows.** No matter what kind of celebratory makeup you do, you must remember one important thing: your eyebrows. Using an angled brush and powder, fill in your brows for a more defined look. Seal the deal by adding a bit of brow gel to a brush or even a shot of hairspray to your brush/comb and apply to your eyebrows to set everything in place.

**Glowing skin.** There's glamor to be found, too, going low key with simple, yet magical, glowing skin. You'll need a loose powder highlighter, a fluffy face brush and a spray bottle of water. Put highlighter on the brush, tap to get off the excess, spritz with water, and apply along your cheekbones to bring out your inner luminescence!

And, always remember the "décolleté" when dressing up for the holidays. Over-the-counter body crèmes are sold that contain gold glitter and often a soft fragrance. Add a little to the décolleté area, as well as your upper shoulders to top off your beautiful holiday shine.

Happy Holidays!

Michele McDonough is a strategic consultant and executive recruiter in the field of health and beauty. She is also co-founder of Women's Power Circle and can be reached at mmdon4946@aol.com.



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# Building Strong Bones Naturally

By Bettyann Sator, BA, RDMS, RVT

Most often, when we talk about health and wellness, we mention eating right, sleeping habits and exercise. We give thoughtful consideration to our fitness patterns and feed our living and breathing selves with the right things to care for our body's organs and muscles. However, we don't always think of our bones as living tissues that require the same level of nurturing.

Our bones provide structure to protect organs, anchor muscles, house joints, and create balance to support a whole-body wellness solution. As the human body grows and changes, the physical condition of our musculoskeletal structure also changes. Normal wear and tear, high performance athletic impact, and aging can affect the rate of tissue degeneration (osteoporosis) and loss of bone density (osteopenia) resulting in aches and pains, decreased strength, poor posture, balance, and sometimes breaks.

There is actually a way to strengthen your bones through simple and painless compression exercises. The good news? Bone density can increase with one single 15-minute session per week.

Scientific research has now created safe and proven technology to reverse the aging of your structure by strengthening the entire musculoskeletal structure. The system enables the placement of very brief but adequate pressure on the musculoskeletal system, signaling the body to add new bone and muscle tissue. These adaptive responses are perfectly natural allowing people of all ages to participate in the healing therapy without causing pain, muscle soreness or fatigue.

Clients begin by simply standing on a vibrating power plate to warm up the muscles and

increase circulation. Three or four movements help increase leg, chest and core strength and stimulate natural reflexes. They then move to the bioDensity machine and complete four different osteogenic loading activities to deliver the precise stimulus needed to increase bone mineral density. Each isometric movement only takes a few seconds to complete; the entire session takes only 10 to 15 minutes with no sweating and no need to change into gym clothes.

Using this proven technique, studies show that a person's bone density can improve up to 14% over a 12-month period. <sup>1</sup>

"Our rejuvenation process is similar to that of a skilled architect," says Arnel Sator, physical therapy and kinesiology expert, renowned athlete and founder of BioStrength in Palm Desert. "Without creating a strong foundation, everything else placed on or within a structure will fall apart." He and his team work on building bone health from the inside out by focusing on naturally enhancing the basis of the musculoskeletal system – with no pharmaceuticals. "We have found this system can reverse osteoporosis and osteopenia, decrease joint and back pain, improve posture and balance and enhance athletic performance."

It is important to note that bone strength and bone health are lifelong concerns that begin at an early age with awareness and knowledge that our bones require different nourishment as we age. Along with proper nutrition, adequate sleep and exercise, managing positive bone health is crucial to keeping your body moving forward.

Healthy bones matter! Understanding how your skeletal structure functions is of vital importance in preventing injury and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Bettyann Sator, is co-owner of BioStrength in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 408.2720. For more information visit [www.getstrongbones.com](http://www.getstrongbones.com).

Reference: 1) Hunte B, Jaquish J, Huck C (2015) Axial Bone Osteogenic Loading-Type Resistance Therapy Showing BMD and Functional Bone Performance Musculoskeletal Adaptation Over 24 Weeks with Postmenopausal Female Subjects. J Osteopor Phys Act 3:146. doi:10.4172/2329-9509.1000146

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Method	Improvement (%)
Bisphosphonate Drugs	3.5%
Bone Anabolic Drugs	7%
OsteoStrength Session	14%

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GRAND OPENING SPECIAL  
Membership Special\* \$99/month  
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# The Importance of Endurance in a Golf Fitness Program

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

There has been a lot of focus lately on strength training for golf purporting that, to hit the ball farther, you need to lift weights. While adding strength is certainly important, it is not the only element needed to stay focused for the complete round.

Golfers also require both muscular and cardiovascular endurance as the sport demands walking, bending and possibly carrying golf bags for 18 holes.

Tempo training will add endurance and strength to your golf conditioning program.

Endurance training is not running five miles or jogging on a treadmill for countless minutes. It's about placing the body under load-bearing pressure using a method called tempo training.

When used correctly, tempo training will fatigue your golf muscles by exercising for 50-65 seconds per set. This increased load on the body promotes more blood flow and challenges your muscles to sustain great form while being placed under tension.

For example, if you were doing a seated lateral pull down (shown here) and wanted to place the stabilizer muscles and prime movers under more load, you would do a 5210 tempo, meaning it should take 1 second to pull the weight toward you with a 2-second hold at the bottom, and then 5 seconds to return the weight to the top and doing this for 10 reps.

Another example is a favorite exercise for junior players. A warm up on a treadmill for 10 minutes walking forwards, backwards and sideways left and right addresses all the leg and hip muscles, while promoting an aerobic effect on the body. They then place their golf bag on their back and walk at a 3 percent grade at 3.5 mph for 15 minutes. This is a specific form required for their sport and increases both muscular endurance and strength.

A muscular endurance/strength program can be added to anyone's exercise routine by doing circuits of 3 exercises with only 15 seconds rest between exercises and a 1-minute rest between circuits. This will work both the aerobic and anaerobic pathways to fatigue which in turn gets the golfer into better overall physical shape.

The bottom line for golfers is to have a solid strength program but to never neglect the endurance component as injury prevention is always of prime concern.

Michael Butler is co-owner of Kinetix Health and Performance Center. He is a licensed physical therapist assistant, a certified strength and conditioning coach with the highest distinction honors, a full body active release therapist, and a writer/publisher of over 100 articles, books and magazine contributions. [Michael@kinetixcenter.com](mailto:Michael@kinetixcenter.com) or (760) 200.1719.

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**PALM SPRINGS**  
**Health RunFitness Expo**  
*Presented by: Desert Regional Medical Center  
In Partnership with The Desert Sun*

# Honoree's Luncheon

*Community Advocate*  
**Kristal Granados**  
Executive Director  
United Way of the Desert

*Health & Wellness Influencer*  
**Lauren Del Sarto**  
Founder & Publisher  
Desert Health®

*Saturday, January 26, 2019*  
*12:00-1:00 p.m.*  
*Ruth Hardy Park, Palm Springs*  
*Tickets: \$30*  
*www.PalmSpringsHealthRun.com*

Palm Springs Health Run & Fitness Expo

Start out the New Year with a healthy and fitness-oriented routine! Join runners, walkers and health enthusiasts for the Palm Springs Health Run & Fitness Expo Saturday, January 26, from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Run through the most scenic areas of Palm Springs with spectacular mountain views and historic architecture on the USA Track and Field certified 10K, 5K, United Way of the Desert 5K Walk #4, and 1K Fun Run courses.

After the race, join us for the 1st Annual Health and Wellness Luncheon honoring Lauren Del Sarto, founder and publisher of Desert Health, who will receive the Health & Wellness Influencer Award, and Kristal Granados, executive director of United Way of the Desert, who will receive the Health & Wellness Community Advocate Award. Both of our award recipients are exemplary role models in promoting healthy lifestyles and work environment choices, advancing youth advocacy, and building strong, sustainable communities. The luncheon begins at 12 noon and tickets are only \$30.

The EXPO will feature over 100 health and wellness vendors, including the Pet Companion Magazine Healthy Pet Pavilion showcasing the latest in pet products and pet adoptions. Returning in 2019 is the Lifestream Blood Bank blood drive, and NBC Palm Springs anchors will compete for their 2nd Annual Media Superstar Food Challenge!

This world-class event would not be possible without the incredible support of our Presenting Sponsors: Desert Regional Medical Center and The Desert Sun, along with the City of Palm Springs, Desert Water

Agency, Desert Oasis Healthcare, Diamond Environmental, Eisenhower Medical Center, Gelson's, Forest Lawn, Hot Purple Energy, Jessup Auto Plaza, Local 721 SEIU, Nature's Health Food and Café, Palm Springs Disposal Service, Palm Springs Police Officers Association, PSA Organica, Running Wild, Southern California Gas Company, Smart & Final, Sun Country Community Federal Credit Union, Townie Bagels and Veolia Water.

Also, a big thank you to our phenomenally supportive media sponsors: Compete Magazine, Desert Charities News, Desert Health, Entravision, ESPN 103.9 FM, Gay Desert Guide, GED

Mag, Green Blender, Lamar Outdoor, LIVE Magazine, KNEWS 94.3 FM, Men's Health Magazine, Mix 100.5, NBC Palm Springs and Sunny 103.1 FM.

Register now to experience one of the largest events of its kind in southern California. There will be fun for the entire family! Every registered runner for the 5K and 10K runs and 5K walkers will receive breakfast, T-shirt, registration bag and finisher's medal. The 1K Fun Run finishers will receive a medal.

This year's event benefits the Desert Healthcare District, Palm Springs Unified School District and United Way of the Desert. Individuals and teams can register online at [www.PalmSpringsHealthRun.com](http://www.PalmSpringsHealthRun.com)

For sponsorships, festival booth information or press inquiries contact Jeff Hocker, Executive Producer, Hocker Productions at (760) 409.1530 or [jeffhocker1@gmail.com](mailto:jeffhocker1@gmail.com). The Palm Springs Health Run & Fitness Expo is a Hocker Productions event in partnership with ATS Advertising.



NBC Palm Springs team at the 2017 Run & Fitness Expo



This year's event will feature a 10k, 5k run and walk, and 1k fun run.

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**NOVEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>**

Rooted in deeply personal accounts and timeless stories, **Finding Joe** shows how mythologist Joseph Campbell's work is relevant and essential in today's world, and how it provides a narrative for how to live a fully realized life by following your bliss.

This ground-breaking documentary explores the impact that food choices have on people's health, the health of our planet and on the lives of other living species. **Food Choices** also discusses several misconceptions about food and diet, offering a unique new perspective on these issues.

**Queen of the Sun** takes us on a profound journey through the catastrophic disappearance of bees and the mysterious world of the beehive. We learn the heartfelt struggles of beekeepers, scientists and philosophers from around the world as they reveal both the problems and the solutions in renewing a culture in balance with nature.

**The Mindfulness Movie** is a powerful and educational showcase of worldwide brain research proving the benefits of mindfulness and the public's increasing acceptance of the practice. Dramatic stories shed light on the military's use, as well as how a group of special teens have benefitted.

**Walk With Me** is a cinematic journey into the world of mindfulness and the Zen Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh. Filmed over three years and with unprecedented access, this visceral film is a meditation on a community who have given up all their possessions for a monastic life in rural France.

Annenberg Health Sciences Building at Eisenhower	
Doors open:	1:30p.m.
Movies begin:	2p.m.
Tickets:	\$5; Call (760) 423-4855 or <a href="mailto:reservations@eisenhowerhealth.org">reservations@eisenhowerhealth.org</a> Cash only at door
Movie dates:	
Nov. 14, 2018	Finding Joe
Jan. 16, 2019	Food Choices
Feb. 20, 2019	The Mindfulness Movie
Mar. 20, 2019	Queen of the Sun
Apr. 24, 2019	Walk with Me

Health is a Choice

medicine, the disease was progressing very quickly. What Dr. Fung did significantly slowed the progression and significantly improve my quality of life."

In October, she received cord blood stem cells (extracted from placenta post-birth) in an effort to regenerate her deficient cells. They were donated by her step-daughter, step-son-in-law and new grandson, which she considers very, very special. "So now we are all blood relatives!"

"We have to get the word out about naturopathic medicine and an integrative approach to health," says Karen. "There are too many people who have no idea that there are resources which can help them – and in many cases even save their life."

She has learned a lot from her condition and that of others she meets in Live Well's IV room. "Most of the people getting IVs have serious health conditions like Lyme disease, fibromyalgia and cancers, some deemed terminal, but we all have a special understanding of what it's like to be suffering with chronic illness and Dr. Fung and Dr. Myers are doing a lot for us. We all support each other - especially when times get tough."

She describes one patient with a rare stage 4 lung cancer (non-smoking related) who at 49 was given six months to live. Working with Dr. Fung, two years later she is cancer free. Her doctor at UCLA said he has never had anyone with that type of cancer survive more than six months.

Dr. Fung took a very skeptical western medicine family and turned them all into believers, says Karen. Her sister had a torn disc which western medicine protocol didn't help. She tried PRP with Dr. Fung and was able to start exercising again.

Karen's father was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer and became incapacitated after his first three rounds of

chemo. Dr. Fung recommended he try 1,000 mg of the herb curcumin three times a day, but his oncologist was reluctant. Karen's sister stepped in to consult with his doctor on the science behind the recommendation, and after his next treatment, Dad was back to work. He did not experience side effects from chemo again, other than a little fatigue, and added more supplements recommended by Dr. Fung. Two years later, he is happy and still with us.



Dr. Fung points to the comical bandages Karen brought to add humor to the IV therapy room.

Karen continues on an evolving protocol of medications and supplementation as she and her team – her neuromuscular doctor, sister Stephanie, and Dr. Fung - continue to learn what others are doing for mitochondrial disease. She is also hoping to get into a third round clinical trial that she says would be "like winning the lottery."

Karen also emphasizes the importance of the mind-body connection for healing.

"If I had fallen into any sort of depression during this time, I don't believe I would have survived. If I had an emotionally down day, the next day, I would be crippled." She made a conscious decision to turn things around, finding gratitude in the midst of fear and uncertainty. "Instead of focusing on what I don't have, I focus on what I do have – a great family, a loving pup, and naturopathic medicine that is helping to save my life."

"Karen is an inspiration to us all," adds Dr. Fung. "She continues to amaze me with her tenacity and the power of positive thinking. Her energy and humor brighten up the IV room and (she) draws out even the shyest patients. She has made some life-long friends in that room and at the clinic, and we are so blessed that she continues to be a vocal advocate for her health, mitochondrial research, and naturopathic medicine."

For more information on mitochondrial disease, please visit [www.umdfof.org](http://www.umdfof.org).



## 2019 Desert Health Wellness Awards

### Nominations now open!

Is there someone you know going above and beyond to inspire health and wellness in our community? Help us celebrate their efforts with a Desert Health Wellness Award nomination.

Now in its fourth year, the Wellness Awards recognize and honor those local people and businesses inspiring others to become the healthiest – and best – versions of themselves. Past nominees include teachers, schools, fitness centers, food distribution programs, spas, chefs, health academy students, doctors, nurses, yogis, authors and more.



2015 Business Award winners, Kinetix Health & Performance Center



2017 Youth Award winner  
Jaelyn Moraga, RYT 200

2019 categories include **Individual**, **Business**, **Non-profit**, **Integrative Health Care Practitioner** (licensed health care professionals) and the 18 and under **Youth** award.

All approved nominees will be featured in *Desert Health* and honored at the evening celebration on May 22.

The festive event brings together health and wellness influencers and fans for a bountiful reception, dinner, guest speaker and the exhilarating award presentations.

This year's event will benefit two organizations: Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine, the valley's only free medical clinic staffed by volunteer doctors, dentists and nurses, and the Human Health Initiative (HHI) launched by 2017 Wellness Award winner

and teacher Jason Tate to expand youth wellness education. HHI's goal is to transform the way we educate the next generation by providing youth with extensive knowledge of the biology of nutrition, the tools and rationales for regular physical activity, and the coping mechanisms for dealing with stress, anxiety, and depression.

The Desert Health Wellness Awards would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors: NBC Palm Springs, Cambria USA, Eisenhower Health, Fresh Juice Bar, Desert Oasis Healthcare, Isning Gamez, and Prime Time Produce. To join us, please contact [Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com](mailto:Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com).

The Desert Health Wellness Awards are open to the public and all are invited to attend! The new location will be announced in our next issue.

For more information and to submit your nominations, visit [www.DesertHealthNews.com](http://www.DesertHealthNews.com).

#### Wellness Served at the JW Marriott Resort & Spa

Continued from page 12

in-room dining menus. The program was launched nationally to their 39 properties including Desert Springs.

New on tap are fresh juices to order, smoothies, and better balanced breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus offering more vegetables, smaller proteins and less processed carbohydrates.

**Wellness abounds at the Spa Desert Springs.** The beautiful amenities at the resort's world-class spa were designed for wellness and this quarter their spa menu gets a face lift with nutritional meals by today's standards created with organically grown and locally sourced ingredients.

"The new menu offers something for everyone with items that are balanced, nutritious and honestly seasoned while being satiating and satisfying at the same time," says Basterrechea. "Where many consider an acai bowl healthy, it can also be full of sugar. So we've created a parfait version that includes the nutritious fruit

along with Greek yogurt, nuts and seeds to balance it out."

Popular dishes like tabbouleh are made with quinoa (a seed) versus the traditional bulgur wheat and optional protein; vegan and gluten-free offerings are also available.

The resort's restaurants, Rockwood Grill and Mikado Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi Bar also offer a variety of healthy ingredients along with vegetarian and gluten-free options. This fall Chef Peter's new T&T Innovation Kitchen will also open with a focus on whole organic cuisine. The stunning space will offer 5-9 course meals and Chef's choice menus which will change weekly.

*Desert Health* commends the JW Marriott Desert Springs for their focus on wellness internally, as well as for their guests. If you haven't visited lately, plan a dinner or escape to their spa for a memorable – and rejuvenating – experience.

#### Let's Talk About Sex

Continued from page 16

address these issues with them, instead focusing on issues like blood pressure and diabetes. We do this through a confidential risk assessment tool that will be utilized by each patient at each visit," says Colbert.

Services are by appointment or walk-in and include screening and treatment for gonorrhea/chlamydia, general herpes, genital warts and syphilis as well as Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). The opportunity for walk-in services will remove the barrier of having to make an appointment when their need is happening today. Medicare and certain commercial insurances are accepted.

Eisenhower Health says the goal of the clinic ultimately is to effectively add value to the national goal of eliminating HIV transmission within the next few years as each client will be evaluated for their ability to contract HIV through an STD, and those HIV patients who may be at risk for other medical concerns, such as anal cancer via an HPV infection. Another goal is to ensure that everyone in the Coachella Valley understands their risks of contracting an STD - including HIV- so that they can make educated decisions about their sexual health.

"We do this in the context of a confidential, non-judgmental setting – so, regardless of who you are sexually active with – we are here for you," adds Colbert, "and we will assess your risk factors together with you."

For more information on seniors and STDs, please see references below. The Eisenhower Health Sexual Health Clinic is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The last walk-in appointment is at 4:30 p.m. For more information, call (760) 834.7950.

Sources: 1) <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2017/p0926-std-prevention.html>; 2) <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/love-and-sex-in-the-digital-age/201403/baby-boomers-gone-wild-seniors-and-stds>



Who inspires you  
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Nominations Now Open!



2019 categories:

- Individual
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- Non-profit
- Integrative Health Care Practitioner (Licensed professional)
- Youth Award (18 and under)

For more information and to submit nominations  
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Save the Date!

The Desert Health Wellness Awards  
May 22, 2019



# Woman's Show Focus: Food & Wine Fashion, shopping and wellness also on tap



Chef Herve, The Parker Palm Springs

Ladies! Are you looking for an outing to shop, sip, taste, listen and relax under the glorious desert sunshine?

This year the Desert Woman's Show will shine the spotlight on nutrition and wellness, feature the latest fashions for your golf or tennis game, and offer a cornucopia of tastings at the Greater Palm Springs Food & Wine Festival (formerly Taste of the Valley).

Whether your pleasure is a robust cabernet or a crisp chardonnay, you'll find a selection of both accompanied by tastings from your favorite valley restaurants including Mastro's, Eight4Nine, Roy's Hawaiian, Wildest Greens, Panera, Bellatrix, Daniel's Table and so many more! The ever-popular tasting area not only offers a wide variety of delights for your palate, but also live entertainment all day long provided by Big Rock Pub.



Saturday morning fashions hit the Macy's Stage with Eileen Fisher and Free People while Pete Carlson's Golf & Tennis prepare for the afternoon show. Guest speakers will cover topics from stem cells to medical marijuana. You can browse the vendor hall or step into the Mercedes-Benz RAW & FRESH Chef Series and learn from top chefs in the valley. Enjoy the presentations and shopping, then return to the tasting area for more delicious sampling and energizing tunes.



Chef Daniel Villaneuva of Daniel's Table

The 12th annual Desert Woman's Show and the Greater Palm Springs Food & Wine Festival will take place one day only at the Renaissance Indian Wells on Saturday, February 16th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. General Admission tickets for the Desert Woman's Show are available online at DesertWomansShow.com courtesy of Desert Regional Medical Center while supplies last. Tasting wristbands may be purchased online for \$20 per person or at the door for \$25. Make a day of it!



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WLF

Women Leaders Forum of the Coachella Valley

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7TH ANNUAL

WOMEN WHO RULE

Awards Luncheon and Scholarship Fundraiser

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Friday, January 25, 2019

Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa

32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage

## WLF Honors Local Women Leaders

Women Leaders Forum of the Coachella Valley (WLF) announces its 7th Annual Women Who Rule Awards Luncheon and Scholarship Fundraiser on Friday, January 25.

The highly anticipated event sponsored by Desert Care Network and honoring the Coachella Valley's most inspiring leaders will take place at Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa in Rancho Mirage.

WLF President Stephanie Weisman explains, "Our Women Who Rule luncheon is our organization's biggest event of the year. We are so proud to announce the recipients of this year's Women Who Rule awards. In addition to honoring remarkable local women, the proceeds support our Young Women Leaders program. With support from our members, sponsors and the community, we're able to provide scholarships to high school seniors who successfully complete our Young Women Leaders program."

Guest will enjoy a champagne reception and silent auction at the afternoon event taking place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets go on sale November 7. Early Bird pricing is \$70 for WLF members, \$80 for non-members and \$800 for a table of 10. After January 4, 2019, pricing increases to \$80 for WLF members, \$90 for non-members and \$900 for a table of 10.

Proceeds will benefit the Women Leaders Forum's Young Women Leaders program, sponsored by UCR Palm Desert Center. Sponsorships remain available starting at \$500. Prospective sponsors can contact Sponsorship Chair Jennifer Jank at info@wlfdesert.org.

The Women Leaders Forum has a long and successful history of supporting local students through workshops, mentoring and scholarships, including the Young Women Leaders program or YWL. This innovative outreach program provides leadership training and one-to-one professional mentoring for female high school students throughout the Coachella Valley. The goal of YWL is to guide these young women into roles of leadership and success, as they prepare for college, business and life. Seniors who successfully complete the educational, community outreach and mentoring are eligible for either a need - or merit-based scholarship.

"We're looking forward to the January event," adds Weisman, "and hope to see both new and familiar faces in attendance!"



Women Leaders Forum awards annual scholarships to deserving high school girls through funds raised at Women Who Rule.

Join Us In Honoring

Laurilie Jackson

Instructor of Media Production, College of the Desert

Helene Galen Excellence in Education Award

Lauren Del Sarto

Founder/Publisher, Desert Health®

Trailblazer Award

Sheila Thornton

President/CEO, OneFuture Coachella Valley

Mary T. Roche Community Leadership Award

Michele Finney

CEO, Desert Regional Medical Center

Desert Visionary Award

Proceeds benefit the best and brightest enrolled in Women Leaders Forum's Young Women Leaders program.

Tickets Go On Sale November 7th

Visit wlfdesert.org or call 760-837-7222

2019 Esteemed Honorees include:

Helene Galen Excellence in Education Award:

Laurilie Jackson, Instructor of Media Production, College of the Desert

WLF Trailblazer Award

Lauren Del Sarto, Founder/Publisher of Desert Health®

Mary T. Roche Community Leadership Award

Sheila Thornton, President/CEO of OneFuture Coachella Valley

WLF's Desert Visionary Award

Michele Finney, CEO of Desert Regional Medical Center

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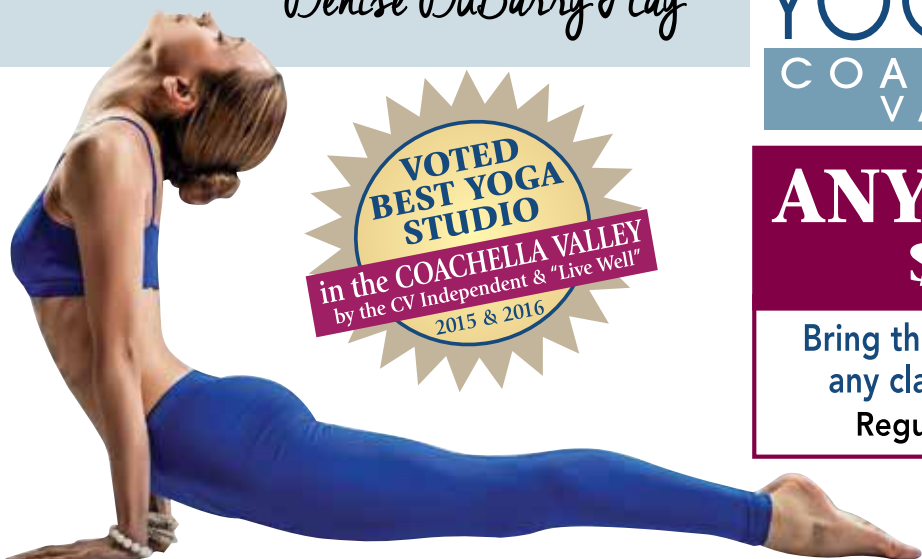
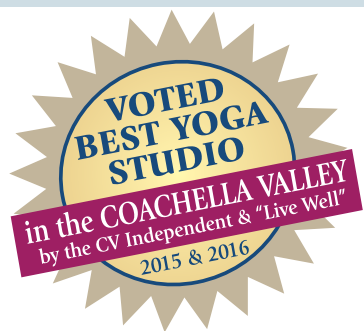
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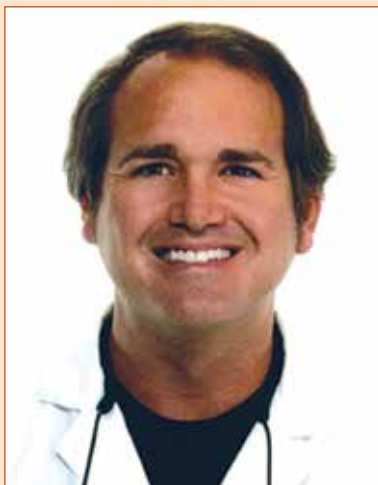
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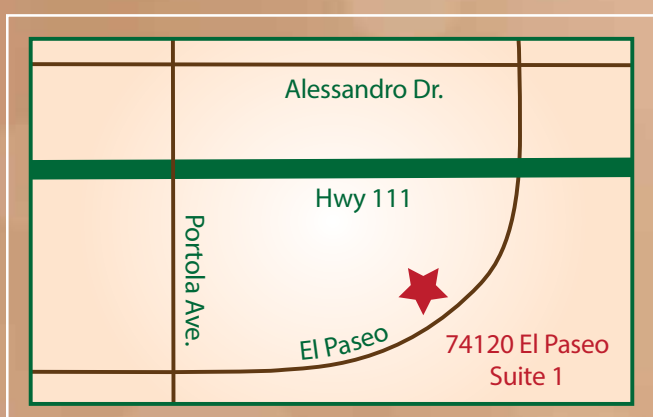
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