

Health, Beauty & Fitness



SEVERNA PARK
VOICE

UM BALTIMORE WASHINGTON MEDICAL CENTER *PAGE 10*

JANUARY 2024

Only 2.9% of high-risk lung cancer patients are being screened in Maryland. Experts are working to change that and save more lives.



The Power Of Play

PAGE 5 Play helps children develop problem-solving, collaboration and creativity skills.

Mohs Surgery

PAGE 7 Each year, 3.3 million Americans are diagnosed with one of these skin cancers.

Dry Eye Treatments

PAGE 15 Eye pain, blurry vision, and dry or watery eyes could be signs of dry eye disease.

Sunscreen

The Last Line Of Defense

Lane Neidig

MD, FAAD

Modern Dermatology
of Maryland



Sunscreen is one of the most scientifically proven ways to prevent aging of the skin, skin cancer and sun damage. It is commercially available in personal care products such as daily facial moisturizers, facial sunscreens, sprays, gels, sticks and cosmetics.

Sunscreen comes in two forms: physical and chemical blockers. Physical blockers consist of zinc or titanium dioxide, which reflect light. Chemical blockers are organic compounds that need to be absorbed in the skin where they then protect our skin from ultraviolet light (UV). The best sunscreens will block both UV-A (aging) and UV-B (burning) wavelengths and are considered broad spectrum. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends a broad-spectrum blocker that is water resistant with an SPF of 30 or greater.

But is sunscreen really delivering sun protection for us, and are we using it correctly? The product label will usually recommend reapplication every 40-80 minutes in most cases. The rates of reapplication, in reality, have been shown to be very low and sunscreen is frequently applied in inadequate amounts, leading to missed spots, and ultimately undesired UV exposure. While being most apparent as a sunburn, frequent low-grade UV exposure is cumulative. Ultraviolet light causes damage to the DNA of our skin cells and also thins our skin over time, leading to loss of the collagen and elasticity that gives our

skin its youthfulness.

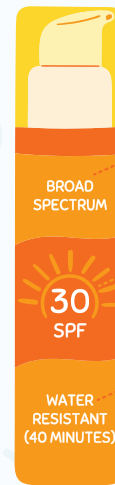
One of the most vulnerable times for our skin is trips to sunnier climates closer to the equator. It is important to be aware that the ultraviolet exposure in places such as Florida, the Caribbean and Mexico are several times higher than the ambient ultraviolet in the mid-Atlantic. Ten minutes by the pool on vacation may be equivalent to an hour outside in Maryland.

Very strong UV exposure from these trips can accumulate over time and accelerate skin aging dramatically. It is these intense exposures, though somewhat infrequent, that can significantly increase future risk for skin cancer. For fairer skin types, recent studies have shown that the individual lifetime risk is as high as 30% to 40% for skin cancer.

Sunscreen, although helpful, is only one piece of the skin protection puzzle. Use of sunscreen should not be a blank check to do any activities outside for hours on end. If your job or hobbies require you to be outside on a regular basis, it is time to really up your game with sun protective habits, clothing and hats in addition to sunscreen in exposed areas. As for Vitamin D, rely on supplements and natural dietary sources and don't expose your skin to ultraviolet



Choose the Right Sunscreen



Broad-spectrum

Sunscreens with this label protect against both UVA and UVB rays

Sun protection factor (SPF) 30 or higher

The SPF number is the level of protection the sunscreen provides against sunburns

Water resistant

How long (either 40 or 80 minutes) the sunscreen will stay on wet or sweaty skin for a while before you need to reapply

radiation to obtain it.

The best way to prevent unnecessary sun exposure is to plan outdoor excursions outside of the hours of 10:00am to 4:00pm when the vast majority of UV exposure occurs. Sunscreen is also a good idea to use year-round to prevent aging of the skin. UV exposure is cumulative and protecting our face, neck and tops of our hands even in winter months can allow the skin to flourish.

Given what we know about the benefits of sunscreen, it should always be part of any skin care regimen. If you are unsure what products or sunscreen may be best for your skin, schedule an appointment with your local board-certified dermatologist, get a baseline check skin examination and ask for sunscreen recommendations.

Lane Neidig, MD, FAAD, is a board-certified dermatologist who practices medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatology for all ages at Modern Dermatology of Maryland in Annapolis. For more information, contact Dr. Neidig's office at 410-216-0993, by email at info@moderndermatologymd.com or visit www.moderndermatologymd.com. ■



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Madison Reese
Image Creators

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The Power Of Play



By Alison Meagher
Owner, Rolly Pollies Maryland

Play is a universal language that transcends age, culture and background. From the giggles of children engaged in imaginative games to the strategic moves of adults in a boardroom, play is a powerful force that shapes our lives in profound ways.

In early childhood, play is the basis of all learning. Decades of research by a myriad of professionals prove to us that play is an essential part of a child's development. The American Academy of Pediatrics has deemed play as fundamentally important for the development of 21st-century skills such as

problem-solving, collaboration and creativity. Beyond these skills, play has the potential to foster creativity, enhance social skills, promote cognitive development and contribute to an overall healthy well-being.

We, as parents and educators, have the responsibility to seek out opportunities that provide our children with both structured and unstructured play. Incorporating this time into our lives will develop gross and fine motor skills,

In early childhood, play is the basis of all learning.

social and emotional skills, and life skills.

Whether it's building an epic fort, zooming down the bounce-house slide, or engaging in make-believe scenarios, play stimulates the brain in a way that leads to active learning and enhances problem-solving abilities, spatial awareness and critical thinking skills. Not only is play fun for kids, but the process of trial and error during play encourages a growth mindset, teaching children that failure is a natural part of learning. More than just a social activity, play offers cognitive learning too.

Through play, children learn to navigate social situations,

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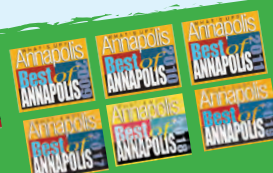
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Hospice And Supportive Care: An Additional Layer Of Support For Residents Of Assisted Living Centers

Colleen Shields
Market Development Manager
Hospice of the Chesapeake



When a member of your family lives in an assisted living center, you feel safe knowing that they have help with their day-to-day life. Someone is there to help them bathe and get dressed without fear of falling. Someone is there to cook their meals. Someone is there to encourage them to be active and social.

There is another layer of support many do not know about. More than likely,

someone from their local hospice organization is there, too. For residents living with chronic or life-limiting illness, assisted living centers turn to local hospice and supportive

care professionals to provide onsite expert care.

Supportive care

Supportive care practitioners, also known as

palliative specialists, visit residents to provide specialized care focused on reducing the symptoms, pain and stress caused by any serious

Continued on page 12

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Mohs Surgery



Dr. Stephanie Clements
Dockside Dermatology



Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and cumulative sun exposure is a major risk factor for its development. The most common types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma. Each year, 3.3 million Americans will be diagnosed with one of these types of cancer; that is approximately 9,500 people every day!

Fortunately, there are many available treatment options for basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma.

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Home Care Services Can Make A Big Difference For Seniors

**Jennifer
McAndrews**
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A new year signals a new beginning, and for some people, the realization that mom or dad may not be living out their golden years in the safest and most enriching environment. Visits home through the holidays can expose situations that can't be overlooked or brushed off in ways they can be with just a phone call.

Spending a few hours or days in a parent's home may offer a glimpse into their day-to-day life. Upkeep of the home and personal appearance are frequently the first indicators that something may be amiss. Here are some common signs indicating that a loved one is becoming

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Seven Reasons Your Back Is Aching





Devon Magretti
Stretch Zone
Severna Park

One of the most common reasons people visit their doctors is for back pain that could either be chronic or be resolved in a few days or even weeks. Unfortunately, over 3 million people suffer from back pain every year. If you're struggling with this affliction, you should know that you can do stretches for back pain that could ease the pressure you may be feeling.

In the meantime, check out the most common reasons why your back is aching, common causes of back pain, and what factors put you most at risk of developing this condition.

Continued on page 16

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Screening Saves Lives: Team At UM BWMC



At UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Dr. Gavin Henry, Dr. Peter Olivieri and certified physician assistant Tiffany Matonak work together to increase lung cancer screenings and ultimately help more people get diagnosed earlier.

By Zach Sparks

Lung cancer is a leading cause of cancer death for men and women in Maryland, yet only 2.9% of high-risk patients are being screened for the disease.

According to the American Lung Association's State of Lung Cancer report released in November 2023, that number is lower than the 4.5% national rate.

At the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC) in Glen Burnie, experts in lung cancer, thoracic surgery and interventional pulmonology are working to increase lung cancer screenings and ultimately help more people get diagnosed earlier, when treatment has the best chance of being effective.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCREENING EARLY

"Most of that mortality (with lung cancer) is coming from the advanced stages," said Dr. Peter Olivieri, director of interventional pulmonology at UM BWMC. "Because it is completely asymptomatic when it's stage I. By the time a patient has symptoms from

lung cancer, it's advanced. It's not that it's not treatable. We still have options, but their prognosis is not going to be nearly as good as it could have been if we could have detected it early and cured it."

When it comes to screening, the earlier, the better. Under American Lung Association guidelines updated this year, people who are between the ages of 50-80 and have a 20-pack-year or longer history of smoking are eligible for screening.

"Just like you go to your primary care doctor and get checked for blood pressure, you want to make sure you get treated so it doesn't become a problem," said Dr. Gavin Henry, medical director at the Tate Cancer Center at UM BWMC, and physician lead for the lung cancer screening program and chair of thoracic surgery. "Lung cancer is no different. The earlier you pick it up, the sooner you can live a normal life again."

Screening takes less than 15 minutes and involves a low-dose CT scan. No blood work or injections are involved. Most Medicare and commercial insurance plans

cover screening costs for eligible individuals. After a non-invasive, low-dose CT scan, results are reviewed by a radiologist to identify if there are any spots, or nodules, on the lungs that could indicate a problem.

EXPERT CARE IN ONE PLACE

If a nodule is cancerous after a biopsy, a multidisciplinary team of oncologists, surgeons and interventional pulmonologists at UM BWMC meet to determine the best course of care. This could include minimally invasive procedures, surgical care and radiation.

All of these services are available through UM BWMC's Lung Center and Tate Cancer Center. Since opening more than 20 years ago, the Tate Cancer Center has cared for more than 20,000 patients, with lung cancer being the second most treated type of cancer.

"We built a system where we are very proud that we can get patients in very quickly ... review their imaging and discuss it as a team," Olivieri said. "It's a very interdisciplinary, team-based approach."

Patients are seen the same week or even the same day if cancer is a possibility. Those who need surgery can take some comfort in technological advancements utilized at UM BWMC, such as state-of-the-art, minimally invasive approaches that aim to make treatment safer and help patients recover faster.

The result is a patient can get evaluated, diagnosed, staged, treated and receive follow-up all in one place.

"For them to be able to come to one place and get evaluated, diagnosed, staged, treated and ultimately follow-up afterward is what we're able to offer, all in one location, with one integrated team, with a dedicated staff," Olivieri said. "Not just the medical providers, but the front-office staff, as navigators, are tremendously essential for the patients. We call them navigators because they shepherd the patient through the process."

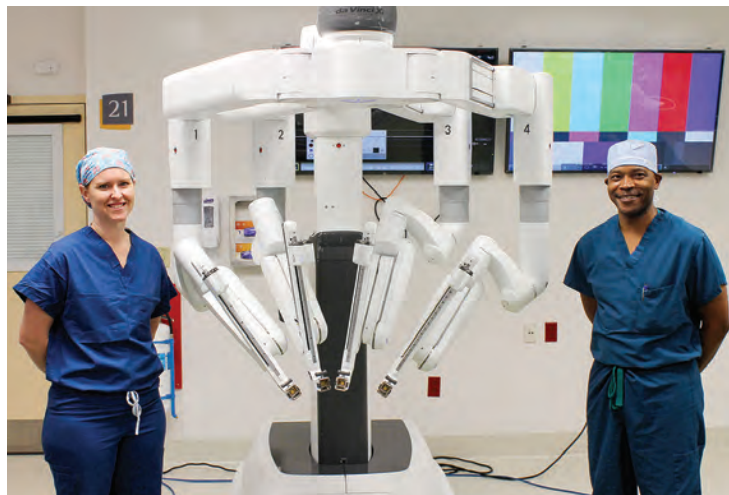
INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR BETTER OUTCOMES

Since spring 2023, UM BWMC has had a new tool at its disposal: the ION robot, a minimally invasive technology that allows providers to sample even smaller lung nodules in harder-to-reach places in the lungs. The robotic-assisted bronchoscopy system allows health care providers to identify smaller lesions or nodules easier. It also helps physicians reach areas in the lungs that were not accessible with a traditional bronchoscopy.

"We're trying to diagnose very small spots in the lung, and not only are they very small, but they are also moving while the patient is breathing," Olivieri said.

The result is a more accurate diagnosis earlier,

Works Together To Fight Lung Cancer



which can help patients start treatments sooner, when it's most successful. UM BWMC's interventional pulmonology team recently hit a milestone — surpassing 100 cases with the ION.

After the bronchoscopy, the pulmonologists do a staging — finding out if the cancer has spread and how far — so patients do not have to come back for an additional procedure.

Henry has been using another robot-assisted surgical system in cases that require thoracic surgery since 2011. Called the da Vinci, the surgical system enables surgeons to perform complex and delicate procedures through small incisions.

"I have done over 1,000 robotic thoracic cases, which is quite a bit in terms of using this keyhole surgery to take out the lobe of the lung that involves the cancer, and that allows for quicker recovery of patients," Henry said. "So, we have been able to streamline the process for improved outcomes for patients."

REACHING OUT TO UNDERSTAND YOUR RISK

In addition to educating people about screenings and offering innovative proce-



dures and treatments, UM BWMC wants to break the stigma surrounding lung cancer.

"When you look at the other three cancers — breast, colon and prostate — most people will say they didn't do anything in their lifestyles to get those cancers," Henry said. "For lung cancer, people think, 'If you didn't smoke, it wouldn't do this to you.'"

As many as 20% of lung cancers occur in patients who have never smoked. People who do not fit the screening profile may be able to get screened for a fee.

"Any provider can order a screening," said Tiffany

Matonak, a certified physician assistant with the thoracic surgery and lung cancer screening program. "We have a screening program that has expedited access to interventional pulmonology and thoracic, but any primary care doctor, nurse practitioner, and physician assistant can order a lung cancer screening."

If patients have a history of smoking, they can ask their primary care doctor if they qualify for a screening. They can also take a quick online assessment to understand if they meet the criteria for a lung cancer screening at www.umbwmc.org/lunghra2.

Through early diagnosis

and treatment, patients are seeing increased survival rates in Maryland. The team at UM BWMC hopes to see that trend continue as they help more patients.

"I say, 'The best gift that you can give to me is that you have gone back to your own life and this is just a speed bump,'" Henry said. "For some patients, it's life-changing. They are helping other people; maybe they are volunteering or being an advocate for cancer care and telling their friends. That's what I like to see."

For more information about UM BWMC's pulmonary care, visit www.umbwmc.org/lung-health. To learn more about a lung screening, talk to your primary care doctor, call 410-553-8150 for an appointment, or visit www.umbwmc.org/lung-cancer-screening. ■

UM BWMC Programs

Smoking Cessation: This seven-week program offers peer support and education from a certified American Lung Association Freedom From Smoking facilitator. All meetings are offered free of charge to adults who live or work in Anne Arundel County. Free nicotine patches, lozenges and gum are also available to those who qualify.

Learn more: www.umbwmc.org/quit-smoking

The Care & Comfort Fund for Cancer Patients: From helping with food access and other necessities, to nutritional supplements and rides to doctors' appointments, this fund helps cancer patients to feel supported.

Learn more: www.umbwmc.org/cancer-support

Hospice And Supportive Care: An Additional Layer Of Support For Residents Of Assisted Living Centers

Continued from page 6

illness. It can be provided alongside curative treatment at any stage. This is not only for cancer patients. Supportive care is a perfect partner for people coping with any advanced illness — from congestive heart failure and Parkinson's to dementia and lung disease.

Hospice care

Hospice care is for residents whose disease progresses to a point where doctors determine a cure is no longer an option, and they likely have less than six months to live. The care shifts to ensuring the patient is as comfortable as possible with a focus on quality of life. A whole team of end-of-life specialists care for the patient in

their residence. This includes a physician or nurse practitioner, nurse, social worker, chaplain and certified nursing assistant.

This is often called the continuum of care. We're here for the family and the center's care team as much as we're here for the patient. That's why we offer another layer of support to assisted living centers — education. This can be community gatherings at the center to educate their residents and staff on hospice and supportive care. It can also be in-service education for the center's care team on how to care for their residents at end of life or when to turn to hospice or supportive care. And we offer support groups for caregivers and classes on how to avoid caregiver

burnout. These conversations are better understood before people need these services rather than at a time of crisis.

Volunteers who care

Another layer of support comes from trained volunteers who often visit assisted living facilities to provide pet therapy, Compassionate Touch and reiki. Volunteers who are veterans visit residents to perform honor salutes. Sometimes volunteers are there just to visit and be a friend.

All of this comes to the resident onsite — there is no need to arrange transportation or schedule offsite appointments.

Where they are needed

The health care indus-

try can be overwhelming. Hospice organizations like the not-for-profit I work for go where they are needed to empower residents, their family and the center staff. Our wish is for everyone to understand the choices they have when experiencing advanced illness of any kind. We are there when you need us.

Colleen Shields is the market development manager for Hospice of the Chesapeake, Maryland's largest independent not-for-profit hospice organization that is caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles and Prince George's counties. For details, visit www.hospice-chesapeake.org or call 410-987-2003.



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Step One: *Take Action*



Joe Bocek
Park Fitness



Staring off to the side of my desk, I can see empty storage containers.

This is where all our Christmas decor will go and hide for the next 11 months until the items are called upon again to add some color and warmth to next year's holiday season.

January is a fresh start and a clean slate. The corner where the Christmas tree lived and the mantle that was holding stockings will soon be empty and clear.

It's the sign of the "unofficial" beginning of winter but also of a fresh and clean year

ahead.

Goals and possibilities are endless. This is also true in health and fitness.

Even though there is never a bad time to start or restart focusing on your health, there is something special about the beginning of the year and the predefined start date of January.

Whether you are into resolutions or not, this time of year typically finds us at fewer social events and grants us more time and availability to focus on ourselves.

But if there is ever one thing we, at times, may find lacking in the pursuit of better health, it is simply action.

You have probably heard

the short story of the two fishermen, but if not, here is my overly simple summary of it:

Two individuals embarked on a journey to become fishermen.

Fisherman A invested in a top-of-the-line boat, fancy equipment and every training resource available. He did all he could to prepare himself to be the ultimate fisherman.

On the other hand, fisherman B opted for a modest fishing pole and immediately started fishing.

Despite initially catching nothing for over a week, B persisted, experimenting with different techniques and constantly refining his approach.

While A finally started fishing after months of meticulous planning and training, he was disappointed as he caught nothing. This was because B had already exhausted all the fish in that lake and moved on.

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Home Care Services Can Make A Big Difference For Seniors

Continued from page 8

overwhelmed: their refrigerator has an abundance of spoiled or uneaten food; televisions, smoke detectors or other devices aren't working properly; mail is piling up or prescription medication seems to be stored in a disorganized manner.

Consider housekeeping or meal-prep services to get ahead of a situation that can become unsafe. Home care services can also help keep seniors living in their own homes longer. A little help can frequently go a long way, especially when proper nutrition and medication management are prioritized.

Although exercise routines and regular weekly outings may be on hold while family members are visiting, having conversations about these activities is important. Knowing that mom or dad has a few events each week to look forward to and the opportunity to engage with others is reassuring. Lack

of socialization can exacerbate loneliness and feelings of isolation even for those who have never been known for a busy social calendar.

For some, transportation is a factor in their ability to be active. Once a senior is no longer driving, consider setting up an Uber account or engaging in services through the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities, or organizations such as Partners In Care, to provide the necessary rides. For those who are still driving but aren't sure where to go or what to do, recommend visiting any of the Anne Arundel County senior centers. There are eight centers located throughout the county that provide an abundance of activities, entertainment and opportunities to socialize.

For those who are really not interested in leaving their home on a frequent basis, think about encouraging them to adopt a daily routine if they do not have one. Waking and going to bed at generally the same time every day, as

well as eating meals and/or napping around the same regular time frame, is ideal. Other options to suggest would be walking the neighborhood, doing brain games such as crossword puzzles or word searches, and making at least one phone call a day to friends or relatives. Another idea would be to consider what other services or resources can either come to the senior's home or do outreach in some way. The county offers a telephone reassurance program, which tasks volunteers to make daily calls at a designated time to people who are enrolled. If the call goes unanswered, there is a protocol that is followed to ultimately alert a designated friend, neighbor or relative.

For those with Medicare B, benefits allow physical or occupational therapists to make visits to the home. The more interactions a senior has, the more opportunity for them to remain engaged and less of a chance for an unsafe situation to arise. ■

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Samuel Boles
Anne Arundel Eye Center

Dry eye disease is becoming increasingly common, affecting millions of people worldwide. This chronic condition can significantly impact your life, sometimes making even the smallest of tasks seem diffi-

cult. If you have eye pain, blurry vision and dry or watery eyes, it could be a sign that you have dry eye disease. But don't worry! With an in-depth eye exam, your doctor can assess your vision and eye health to get you the treatment you need, like OptiLight or iLux advanced medical dry eye treatments.

What Is Dry Eye Disease?

Dry eye disease is a common eye condition that occurs when there is an issue with any one of the three components of your tears. Your tears are made up of three distinct layers, all of which work together to keep your eyes healthy:

- The oily layer prevents your tears from evaporating too quickly
- The watery layer delivers nutrients to your eyes
- The mucus layer keeps your tear film stuck to the surface of your eyes



What Are The Symptoms Of Dry Eye Disease?

If you are suffering from dry eye disease, you may notice any of the following symptoms:

- A burning or scratchy sensation in your eyes
- Stringy mucus in or around your eyes
- Irritated or overly watery eyes
- Sensitivity to light or photophobia
- Eye redness, blurred vision or eye fatigue
- A sensation of having something in your eyes
- Difficulty wearing contact lenses

What Is OptiLight By Lumenis?

OptiLight by Lumenis is a safe, gentle and effective treatment done to manage dry eye disease. This non-invasive procedure is the first and only Food and Drug Administration-approved intense pulsed light (IPL) treatment for dry eye management.

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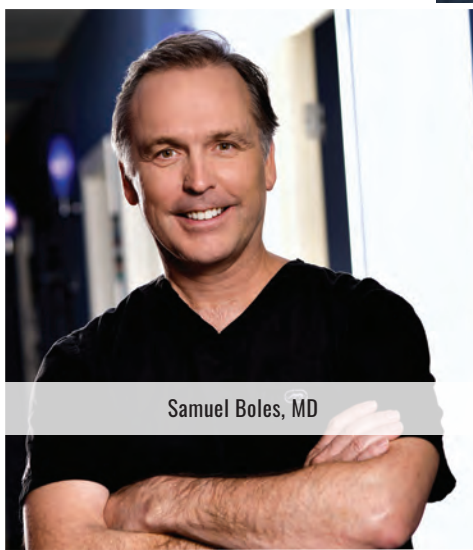
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Samuel Boles, MD



Seven Reasons Your Back Is Aching

Continued from page 9

How Common is Back Pain?

Back pain can affect eight out of 10 people at some point in their lives, making it one of the most common medical problems. Back pain is also the single leading cause of disability worldwide.

You might be wondering why exactly it's so common and if there is anything you can do about it. You can work to treat or even prevent your back pain from occurring. Something as simple as correcting your posture, stretching and being more active can make a difference.

Types of Back Pain

You may have heard all the different ways to describe back pain – sharp, dull, shooting, stabbing. The kind of pain you experience can all depend on where it's occurring and the cause of the pain.

Top Reasons for an Aching Back

Back pain can occur for many reasons, including being hereditary. Below are some of the common reasons you may be experiencing an aching back.

- Bad posture
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Stress
- Weak pelvic muscles
- Arthritis
- Pregnancy
- Scoliosis

Risk Factors for Back Pain

Although back pain can happen to anyone, certain factors put you more at risk of developing it. What are some of the factors that can increase your chances of

having back problems?

- Age
- Weight
- Lack of exercise
- Occupation
- Smoking
- Certain diseases
- Some psychological conditions

Stretching to Ease Back Pain

Many experts recommend certain stretches and exercises that target your back if you're experiencing any pain. Although you may be capable of performing these moves on your own, doing them with a professional stretching coach will ensure you get a deeper stretch and more benefits.

Fast Facts About Back Pain

- It costs just over \$2,000 per year for the average person suffering from back pain to get treatment
- Only 10% of doctors can tie back pain with a firm diagnosis
- The most common cases of low back pain are non-organic
- Back pain is the result of over 264 million lost workdays in a year
- Back pain is the cause of limitations at work for 60% of people
- Sleeping on a medium-firm mattress can minimize any curve in your spine

Thanks to the stretch practitioners at Stretch Zone, there can be hope. Each facility has professionals who are trained to help you perform the best assisted stretches for back pain. ■

Advanced Medical Dry Eye Treatments: OptiLight And iLux

Continued from page 15

OptiLight uses pulses of light precisely administered in the area below the eyes to reduce dry eye symptoms. This 10- to 15-minute procedure can relieve dry eye symptoms by:

- Increasing tear break-up time
- Reducing the amount of demodex mites and bacteria around your eyes
- Decreasing inflammation
- Improving meibomian gland functionality

Not only will it give you dry eye relief, but OptiLight treatments make you feel better and look better, reducing fine lines and wrinkles.

What to Expect

If your eye doctor has recommended

the OptiLight treatment, they will go over everything you can expect before, during and after your appointment. Your doctor will recommend a series of four treatments followed by an iLux treatment for optimal results.

The OptiLight treatment is fast and simple. During your treatment, your doctor will apply a cool gel on the treatment area and cover your eyes with shields to protect them. As light is applied to the skin, you may experience a warm or a tapping sensation, but you shouldn't feel any pain.

What Is Systane iLux?

iLux is the world's first meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) thermal pulsation system. Through the use of a handheld device, iLux uses gentle heat and pressure to remove oil blockages in

these glands, all in a minimally invasive treatment process that takes less than 15 minutes.

Pairing the use of OptiLight and iLux, we can ensure reduction in dry eye symptoms long-term. Based on your specific case, your doctor may recommend maintenance treatments on a biyearly basis.

Find Relief Today

You don't have to live with the uncomfortable symptoms of dry eye disease. With OptiLight and iLux, your symptoms can be managed effectively and efficiently, restoring your quality of life.

The Anne Arundel Eye Center team can help you find relief from dry eyes. Call 410-224-2010 to learn more. ■



HOW TO CONTROL CHOLESTEROL

✓ UNDERSTAND CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that comes from two sources: **FOOD** and your **BODY**.

It is found in foods from animal sources only. It travels in the body by lipoproteins (LDL and HDL).



HDL = GOOD

High-density lipoprotein is known as **“good” cholesterol**.



LDL = BAD

Low-density lipoprotein is known as **“bad” cholesterol**.

HDL helps keep LDL from sticking to artery walls and reduces plaque buildup. This process can lower the risk of heart disease and stroke.

heart.org/cholesterol

TRIGLYCERIDES

The most common type of fat in the body.

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL

HDL level + LDL level + 1/5th of triglyceride level = **total cholesterol level**.

✓ TRACK LEVELS



A health care professional can measure your blood cholesterol and help you understand what the levels mean in context of your overall heart health..



Track your cholesterol levels over time and take steps to reduce high cholesterol.

Check your heart disease risk with the [Check. Change. Control. Calculator](#).

Learn more at heart.org/lifes8



TIPS FOR SUCCESS



EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins like fish and seafood.

Limit sugary foods and drinks, red or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods.



MOVE MORE

Physical activity helps improve cholesterol levels.



KNOW YOUR FATS

The fats you eat can affect your cholesterol levels. Replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats.



NO NICOTINE

Smoking lowers good HDL cholesterol. It also raises your risk of heart disease.



TAKE MEDICATION AS DIRECTED

Your health care professional may prescribe statins or other medications to control your cholesterol levels.

The Power Of Play

Continued from page 5

practice empathy, and begin to understand the perspectives of others. Cooperative play promotes teamwork, communication, and the ability to work toward common goals. Imaginative play allows children to explore and express their emotions in a safe and constructive environment, contributing to their development of emotional intelligence.

Play is a natural stress reliever and mood enhancer. Engaging in enjoyable activities, whether it's jumping

on the trampoline, climbing through the foam pit, or simply spending time on the swing, triggers the release of endorphins – the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Play provides a healthy outlet for stress, promoting relaxation and mental well-being. It helps children recharge, foster a positive mindset and reduce the negative impacts of daily stressors. Kids having a rough day? Time to take a break and let them play!

The power of play doesn't diminish with age. In our adult life, engaging in playful activities continues to contribute to learning, adaptability and overall cognitive health. It's time to embrace and release your inner child. Playing with

your children offers a range of benefits for adults, beyond just being an enjoyable and heartwarming experience. Play keeps the mind sharp, encourages communication, creativity and patience, and promotes a sense of joy and fulfillment.

Has it been a while since you've played? Did you know that there is a National Institute for Play that will help you determine what your unique "play personality" is? It is incredibly powerful to understand the importance of play for both adults and children, remember (or discover) what type of play brings you the most joy, and embrace playfulness and make it a regular part of your life. So, wheth-

er you're a child building a mountain in the foam pit or an adult engaging in strategic games, remember that play is not just a pastime – it's a transformative force that shapes the way we live, learn and connect with the world. And, when you play with your child, the benefits are exponential!

As adults with busy lives, we might forget how vital play is. It's so much more than just fun and games. Be intentional about scheduling playtime with your child and engage in purposeful play daily. The benefits for both of you guarantee a healthier balance and a more positive outlook on the world. Can't we all use a little more of that? ■

Whether it's building an epic fort, zooming down the bounce-house slide, or engaging in make-believe scenarios, play stimulates the brain in a way that leads to active learning and enhances problem-solving abilities, spatial awareness and critical thinking skills.

Beauty And Wellness Go Hand In Hand

Continued from page 4

the structure and shape prebuilt in, which allows technicians to apply beautiful, natural looking extensions.

So what is soft gel and how is it different from hard gel and acrylic?

Typically, soft gel is also known as gel polish. It's more porous and can be easily removed. Hard gel is chemical resistant and has to be filed off, which can lead to damage if your technician isn't properly trained. Both hard and soft gel are cured in an LED light.

Acrylic is a mixture of monomer (liquid) and polymer (powder) that goes through a process called

polymerization when mixed together. Industry standard ethyl methacrylate (EM) liquid can be removed with acetone unlike non-industry standard methyl methacrylate (MMA) liquid, which can be extremely harmful to the health of your nails. Unfortunately, there is no way to tell which liquid you have on until the removal process.

Here's to 2024 and making healthy decisions for our mind, body and nails!

For more information, contact Image Creators at 410-544-8852. Image Creators has proudly served the community for over 35 years. ■

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The Severna Park Voice is published by

 THE VOICE MEDIA INC.

Family owned and operated since 1981

Please send your news to:

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P.O. Box 608, Severna Park, MD 21146

410-647-9400

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Mohs Surgery

Continued from page 7

Mohs surgery, named after the inventor of the technique, Dr. Frederick Mohs, is the gold standard treatment for these skin cancers in cosmetically sensitive areas such as the head and neck. Mohs surgery is a specialized type of surgery in which the dermatologist acts as both the surgeon and the pathologist. Under local anesthesia, the skin cancer is surgically removed, processed in a lab onsite and placed onto slides, maintaining the precise orientation using a map. All edges of the skin are then checked under the microscope to ensure that the cancer has been completely removed. If there are any residual roots to the cancer seen under the microscope, more skin is removed in that area.

Mohs surgery offers a 99% cure rate. Furthermore, because all of the edges are checked under the microscope, it allows for the smallest amount of normal skin to be removed, sparing as much as possible. After the cancer removal, Mohs surgeons are well-trained to reconstruct the skin, providing excellent cosmetic and functional outcomes.

Even though Mohs surgery is a great option for treating skin cancer, the best way is to prevent it in the first place. We recommend wearing sunscreen that is SPF 30 or higher, sun-protective clothing, and practicing sun avoidance. If you have any spots of concern that are bleeding, changing over time, or not healing, see your local dermatologist for further evaluation. Finally, regular skin checks for skin cancer screening with your dermatologist increase the likelihood of catching skin cancer early and treating it effectively. ■

Step One: Take Action

Continued from page 13

In essence, B's bias toward action, embracing trial and error, propelled him far ahead of A, who became entangled in excessive planning and training.

You see, far too often, we see many people with the best intentions focus first on everything but action.

In fitness, we often will see someone getting new workout clothes, the coolest shoes or investing in the best meal prep containers and smart-phone apps first.

And while that is perfectly fine and can be helpful, we might be overlooking the most important element of all: doing the thing.

Sometimes, like fisherman B, we tell ourselves we have to get in better shape first before joining the gym. Or we need to get to a place in life where we can have a completely open schedule.

What we typically find is that there is no perfect time or situation; the best thing to do is to just start. Just begin.

Imperfect action tops perfect inaction time and time again.

So if you find that you might be a bit more like fisherman B, it's OK. Ask yourself, what's the next step you can do now and just do that.

Maybe it's going for a walk with that friend who holds an open invitation for you.

Maybe it's picking up the phone to call or email the gym or trainer you've been thinking about for some time.

Whatever it may be, just take some action doing it today.

And by the time those holiday decorations come back out next time around, you can be a healthier version of you.

Step one: Take action! ■

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