

Health, Beauty & Fitness



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VOICE

AUGUST 2024



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VASCULAR SURGERY ASSOCIATES

Even though these board-certified vascular surgeons and vascular trained providers focus on blood vessels, they also care for each patient's overall wellbeing.

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This multi-step treatment is designed to improve the health and appearance of the skin.

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Testosterone Therapy

Research suggests a link between testosterone deficiency and an increased risk for cardiovascular disease and mortality.

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Executive Function:

Developing Superpowers For Life

Michael J. Molinaro, MS, CCC-SLP
Peake Speech Therapy



It's hard to believe that summer is already winding down and fall is fast approaching! As the seasons change, our students start preparing for the next steps on their educational journey. Some are excited, but many others are anxious as they begin to think about what success looks like and how they can achieve their goals.



There may not be a hotter buzz word than the term “executive function skills.” But what exactly is executive function, and are there ways to develop this complex and integrated set of skills?




In its simplest form, executive function is a person’s ability to plan, organize and execute in an efficient manner. One helpful analogy for our brain’s executive func-

tion skills is the job of air traffic controller. Air traffic controllers are responsible for the safe, coordinated movement of all aircraft on the ground and in the air. Their duties include directing aircraft, providing information, responding to emergencies, transferring control, and analyzing data. Our brain’s frontal lobe functions in many

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When the dentist is mentioned, most people don't react positively. However, we are changing that narrative for many patients with recent advancements in dental technology and innovations that have significantly improved the experience of visiting the dentist.

Today, we can provide the highest-quality care with minimal discomfort. Are you missing teeth, have broken teeth, or interested in enhancing the aesthetics of your smile? Dental crowns, implants and esthetic veneers might be the perfect solutions for you. But what do these procedures entail? Let's break it down!

Dental Crowns

A dental crown is a restorative procedure used to strengthen and extend the life of a tooth. Whether due to cavities, trauma or breakage, many teeth can still be saved with a crown.

Dental crowns are typically made of ceramic, porcelain or gold, and the process of creating them has seen remarkable advancements. Modern technology allows dentists to fabricate crowns onsite the same day using milling machines. Think of a milling machine as a reverse 3D printer: instead of building material, it carves our crown from a block into the perfect shape custom-made for your tooth.

The preparation for a dental crown involves local anesthesia and a "haircut" around the tooth, reducing it on all sides by approximately 1-2 millimeters to make room for a functional crown. During this process, decay, fractures or cracks are removed, and the crown is placed on top to strengthen and preserve the remaining tooth structure.

Dental Implants



Missing teeth? Dental implants are an excellent replacement option. A dental implant comprises three parts: the implant itself, which is placed in the jawbone and allowed to heal for three to six months for osseointegration (fusion with the jawbone); a crown made to screw into the implant; and an abutment, which connects the implant to the crown.

The placement of dental implants has become quicker and easier than ever before with guided surgery. A 3D CT scan (CBCT) creates a detailed image of your jaw, and a digital intraoral scan of your teeth is used to plan the perfect spot for the implant, customized to you. This technology ensures precise placement, often completed in under an hour with minimal post-operative complications. Unlike natural teeth, implants don't decay or get

cavities, making them an ideal option for people prone to cavities. However, they can still develop gum disease, so proper care and regular dental visits for maintenance are essential and highly encouraged.

Dental Veneers

Looking to upgrade or improve your smile? Dental veneers may be a great option. Veneers change the aesthetics of your teeth without removing much tooth structure. Similar to false nails, veneers bond to the front aspect of the tooth, leaving the natural tooth intact. The preparation for veneers typically involves less than 1 millimeter of tooth reduction — about the thickness of a few strands of hair. Veneers allow you to alter the shape, size and color of your teeth to your liking.

You can choose your new smile to be as Hollywood or natural as you like, while undergoing a virtually painless procedure.

Conclusion

Innovations in dental technology have revolutionized the field, making procedures like crowns, implants and veneers more efficient and comfortable than ever before. Whether you're looking to restore or enhance your smile, modern dentistry offers solutions that can meet your needs with minimal discomfort and outstanding results. ■



The Benefits Of Dry Eye Therapy On Your Eyes And Beyond

Sydney Tramontano
Woolf Eye Lab



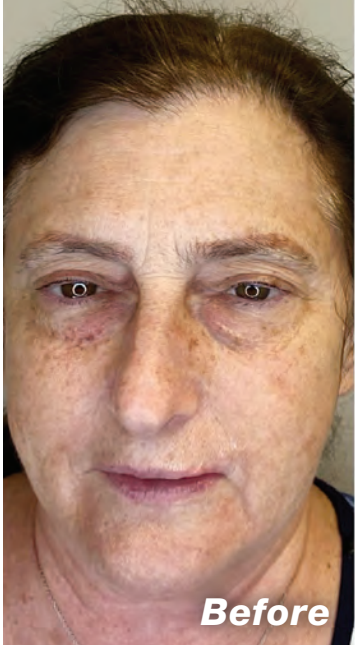
Is the summer sun drying out your eyes and skin? Are you finding sunspots surfacing as summer goes on? These long, hot days call for lots of pool and beach time and you may notice that you're using dry eye drops now more than ever from all the sun, heat and chlorine! Intense pulse light and radio frequency therapies can help you beat your summer dry eye and skin concerns.

Have you ever been to a medical dry eye spa? These facilities may utilize dry eye devices patented by Lumenis. The OptiLIGHT Intense Pulse Light (IPL) machine is the holy grail of dry eye treatment. IPL uses light to kill the bacteria in the glands

around your eyes and warm all the oils up to get them flowing again. OptiLIGHT has a specialized, Food and Drug Administration-approved hand piece that is applied under the eye to heat the glands using a powerful light. This "light" is not ultraviolet-based and is controlled through filters in the machine. The quick, painless procedure is performed once a month for four months.

In addition to dry eye care, the machine's settings can be switched over to provide a full photo facial. These "facials" will use the same light technology and go a little deeper into your skin, pulling forward any brown spots, redness and rosacea. Little brown sunspots will pepper forward and start to look like coffee grounds, eventually sloughing off after a few days. OptiLIGHT also kills the bacteria rosacea grows and thrives off of, calming redness and any

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What Are Healthy Foods For Your Heart?

David J. Caparrelli, MD
Chief of Heart Surgery
Luminis Health



lower blood pressure, and protect your heart and blood vessels.

The choices you make in your diet can have a powerful impact on your heart. Certain foods and beverages have nutrients and natural compounds that can lower cholesterol, maintain healthy blood vessels and protect your heart.

Here are the top picks for heart-smart foods to eat often.

Leafy green vegetables

All vegetables are nutritious, but dark, leafy greens like spinach, kale, Swiss chard and collard greens are especially rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that promote healthy blood clotting,

Avocados

This creamy, satisfying fruit is full of heart-healthy, unsaturated fats. Replacing foods like butter, margarine, cheese or processed meat with avocado can reduce your risk of heart disease.

Fresh or frozen berries

Colorful blueberries, strawberries, raspberries and blackberries contain polyphenols, antioxidants that reduce inflammation, protect blood vessels and lower your risk of cardiovascular disease.



Continued on page 20



Heart surgery, close to home



At Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center, we are proud to provide expert heart surgery right here in your neighborhood. Our Chief of Heart Surgery, **Dr. David Caparrelli**, and Cardiothoracic Surgeon **Dr. Murtaza Dawood** work together to treat a wide range of heart conditions, including coronary artery disease, heart valve disease and atrial fibrillation.



To learn more, please visit **Luminis.Health/HeartSurgery** or call **443-481-1358**.

What To Know About Glaucoma

Sara Francomacaro, MD
Rutzen Eye Specialists
& Laser Center



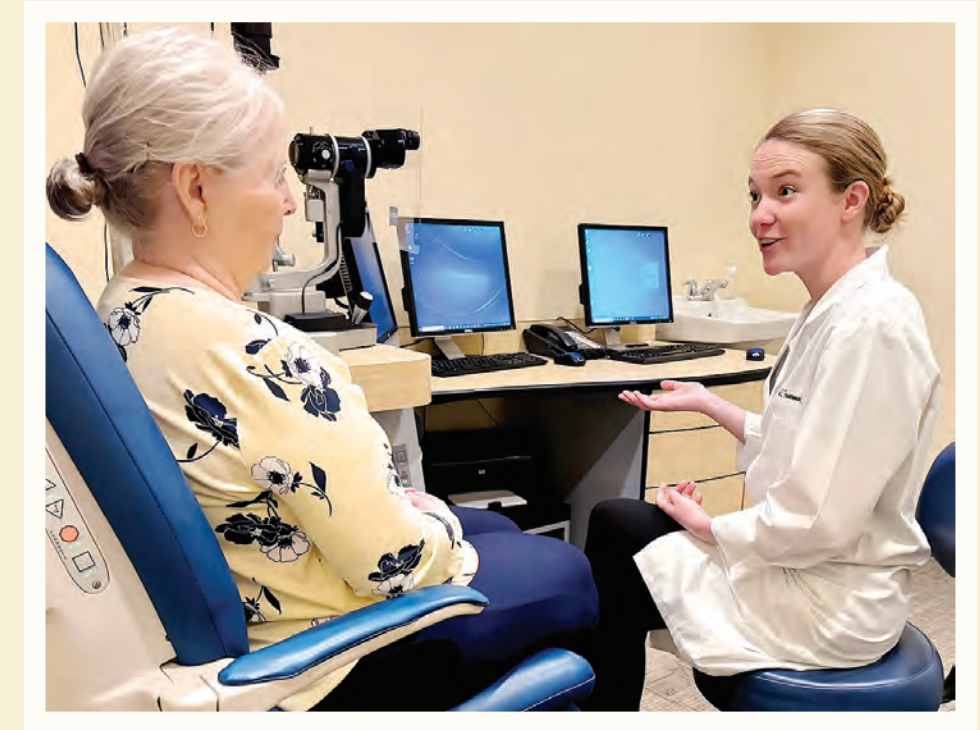
Let's talk about glaucoma. I know talking about eye diseases that cause blindness is scary, but you can prevent vision loss by knowing about glaucoma and getting screened if you're at risk.

First, what is glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a condition that causes damage to the optic nerve (the cable that connects the eye to the brain). Each cell that makes up the optic nerve carries one small part of your vision from your eye to your brain, which allows you to see. In glaucoma, these cells die over time. As a result, the connection between the eye and the brain gets thinner and thinner over time and vision is lost. Typically, peripheral vision is lost first and may not be noticeable, but eventually if glaucoma is not treated, it will also affect the cells that carry central vision.

Why does this happen? The truth is, we don't really know. We know there are risk factors that make glaucoma more likely in certain people. First, we know it has a genetic component, which means you are more likely to have glaucoma if one of your family members has been diagnosed with it. We also know it is more likely in eyes that have had injuries, complex surgeries, inflammation (uveitis) or certain viral infections (like shingles involving the eye). Typically, the people who come to see me have a family member with glaucoma, have been told on prior eye exams that they have thin optic nerves (optic nerve cupping), or they have been told they have high eye pressure.

What's the deal with eye pressure? We know that the pressure inside the eye is associated with glaucoma damage and progression. This pressure is separate from blood pressure and other bodily conditions and is simply the pressure of the fluid that fills



the eyeball. Eye pressure is important, but it's not the whole picture. Some people have low eye pressures with glaucoma, and some people have high eye pressures without glaucoma. What really matters is the health of the optic nerve, and what pressure prevents optic nerve damage in your particular eye.

How can I find out if I have glaucoma? The only way to know if you have glaucoma is to undergo a glaucoma screening. This is especially important if you have any of the risk factors listed above. A complete glaucoma screening is not just a pressure check of the eye; it also includes measuring the thickness of your optic nerve (to check for thinning) and measuring your peripheral vision for any cloudy spots that don't see as well as they should.

Every year, I ask my current glaucoma patients to recommend screenings to their family members. Glaucoma is much easier to address if we are able to catch it early. Also every year, unfortunately, I have patients come in with severe glaucoma damage and vision loss. Once optic nerve tissue has been lost, it cannot come back. We can only work to prevent future losses.

Is there hope for my vision if I find out I have glaucoma?

Yes, absolutely! Most people still have vision to save when they are diagnosed with glaucoma. Glaucoma treatments have come a long way. With treatment, we lower the pressure in the eye until optic nerve damage stops. These treatments include eye drops, laser procedures and surgeries.

There is a wide range of options depending on your specific case. In an appointment with Rutzen Eye Specialists & Laser Center, the staff will talk in detail about each of these options and which will best meet your needs. If you have any concern about glaucoma, come in for a screening.

Dr. Sara "Franco" Francomacaro is an ophthalmologist who has particular expertise in glaucoma and cataract surgery. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call Rutzen Eye Specialists & Laser Center at 410-975-0090. The office is located at 489 Ritchie Highway in Severna Park. Visit online at www.rutzeneye.com for more information. ■

Medication Mistakes Can Be Fatal Here's How To Prevent Them

Winsome Brown
Lean on Dee Senior Home Care Services



Drug errors and interactions can be fatal. Here's the story of Alice Brennan, a vibrant 88-year-old woman who loved to dance and joke with friends. After she sought treatment for severe neck pain at the emergency room, the doctor prescribed Flexeril. However, this act would later prove more dangerous than Alice's family could imagine.

Later, her neurologist advised that Flexeril was not an appropriate drug for her age and condition. He told Alice to discontinue using it immediately. After a bout with gout, Alice went to a reha-

bilitation facility, where she was mistakenly given Flexeril again. Six weeks later, Alice was found dead. The cause? Medication error.

Alice's tragic story underlines the gravity of safe medication management for caregivers, patients and hospital staff. So, how can caregivers learn how to protect their loved ones from deadly medication errors? First, caregivers must ensure that their loved one takes the correct prescription (or Rx) at the right time, with the proper dosage, and with the correct medication administration method. If you have questions about drug errors or interactions, contact your loved one's physician or pharmacist right away.

Read on to learn more vital tips on managing medications in the home, hospital and physician's office.

Continued on page 18



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Runner-Up

How To Quit Smoking And Reduce Your Risk Of Lung Cancer

Tiffany Matonak, PA-C
Peter Olivieri III, MD
Katrina Roux-Bernstein, CRNP
UM Baltimore
Washington
Medical Center



By now, most people know that smoking cigarettes and using tobacco products is bad for your health. But it can be challenging to quit. Learn how you can stop this unhealthy habit and prevent lung cancer in the future.

Why Quit Smoking?

It is the single best choice you can make for your health. It improves your chances of living a long, higher-quality life free from chronic, debilitating and sometimes fatal conditions.

A typical cigarette contains more than 70 carcinogens. Car-

cinogens are chemicals that greatly increase your chances of developing many types of cancer, particularly lung cancer.

Smoking can also lead to a variety of other health problems, including heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma and loss of bone density. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 16 million Americans currently live with a smoking-related disease.

Smoking Cessation Classes

Smokers usually have a much better chance of quitting with a support program. Studies have shown that the best smoking cessation programs include individual or group counseling. When thinking about entering a program, consider the following:

- **Session length:** A session should be at least 20 to 30 minutes long to be effective.
- **Number of sessions:** Attending at least four to seven sessions is best.
- **Number of weeks:** Attending for at least a month is ideal.
- **Certified leaders:** The leader of your group should be certified to teach a smoking cessation class or group.

Get Screened for Lung Cancer

Tobacco smoke is the leading cause of lung cancer, and lung cancer is the second-most common cancer in both men and women. More people die each year from lung cancer than from colon, breast and prostate cancer

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BALTIMORE METRO
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What Is A HydraFacial?

Cassandra Hollingsworth
Image Creators



A HydraFacial is a medical-grade facial that cleanses, exfoliates, extracts and hydrates the skin. This multi-step treatment is designed to improve the overall health and appearance of the skin, while addressing specific concerns, such as fine lines, wrinkles, acne and hyperpigmentation.

How is the HydraFacial different from a typical facial?

Unlike a traditional facial, which typically involves manual extractions and exfoliation, a HydraFacial uses vortex technology to deliver serums to the skin. This means that a HydraFacial is generally gentler on the skin, and it can be more beneficial for addressing specific skin issues. Additionally, a HydraFacial can be adjusted to address your individual concerns and goals, making it a highly customizable treatment.

What are the types of HydraFacials?

There are three main types of HydraFacials: signature, deluxe and platinum.

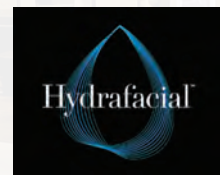
Signature: The signature HydraFacial is a 30-minute treatment that provides a thorough cleanse, exfoliation, extraction and hydration. This option is ideal for those who are new to HydraFacials or simply want a quick and effective treatment.

Deluxe: The deluxe HydraFacial

Continued on page 22



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Vascular Surgery Associates Guides Patients To Improved Health



Physician Assistant
Robert Dougherty

Registered
Vascular
Technologist
Melissa Zlatos

Dr. Andre
Biuckians

By Zach Sparks

At Vascular Surgery Associates, board-certified vascular surgeons and vascular trained providers treat conditions ranging from leg discoloration and swelling to spider veins.

“Individuals hear the word ‘surgery’ and become scared. We are much more than that,” physician assistant Robert Dougherty mentioned. “If, in fact, the patient needs a procedure, the majority of our procedures are performed through a small puncture.”

But even though they have a vascular specialty — focusing on blood vessels — they also care for each patient’s overall wellbeing.

“We do a complete assessment,” said Dr. Andre Biuckians. “(Patients) might also have nerve issues or connective

tissue disorder, for example. We incorporate a treatment plan to take these issues into account.”

To prevent and treat the full scope of venous and arterial conditions, Vascular Surgery Associates operates in-house vascular labs, performing vascular ultrasound, to help identify where issues are as well as provide surveillance.

As the name suggests, ultrasound uses high-frequency sound waves to image soft tissue and vessels beneath the skin surface. It is a highly effective way to view anatomy, direction and speed of flow, as well as any plaque or build-up that may cause blockages within the vessels. Registered vascular technologist Melissa Zlatos has been working in this capacity for over 10 years.

“I love what I do,” she said. “Ultrasound

is a great diagnostic tool. It’s quick, easy and painless. And the best part is, no radiation, so it’s completely safe!”

Zlatos said, “I like to have a quick discussion with patients before imaging. It’s important for me to know what brings them in and if there is a specific area of concern. Every patient is unique and not everyone will be textbook; therefore, they should be treated as such.”

Those test results help the providers make a treatment plan. They offer many outpatient procedures like sclerotherapy, varicose vein treatments, angioplasty and stenting, which are done in the office or in their own ambulatory surgery centers. However, surgery is rarely the preferred option if it can be avoided. Of the patients seen at Vascular Surgery Associates, “roughly 30% need some type of proce-

dures and 70% get a nonsurgical, alternative treatment,” Biuckians said.

The team is careful not to overtreat patients or use a “cookie cutter” approach.

“Each portion of the plan is individualized,” Dougherty said. “Our job here is to educate you and give you all the options in order for us to make an educated decision together.”

Biuckians and Dougherty both agreed that they want a patient to come in for one treatment if possible and minimize the necessary procedures to reach the end result.

“People don’t all have the same comorbidities or family histories,” said Tom Arwady, director of provider relations for Vascular Surgery Associates. “These guys do their best to offer a multitude of options in the safest way.”

Biuckians and Dougherty are a resource, advocating on the behalf of patients. Some have called them from as far as Florida when they need urgent medical guidance.

“The best part (of our job) is getting to know the patients,” Biuckians said. “We don’t just see them and leave them. When they step into our office, they’re not just veins and arteries. I tailor what I tell them based on their social world. It’s rewarding to be able to do that for people and not just

say, ‘You need this (treatment).’

“A collaborative approach with each patient tends to create the best results,” he added.

For the team, it’s gratifying to provide patients with the relief of knowing their health is in good hands.

“Hopefully we’re easing patients’ minds, having someone acutely answer the question, ‘What is this?’ and saying, ‘You’re going to be OK,’” Arwady said.

Biuckians said, “Someone might be worried about their leg and tell us, ‘My grandma had these sores and died.’ But we’re catching the problem early. It’s exciting to help a patient and be able to plan.”

While the providers do not pressure patients, a few exceptions arise for serious conditions: aneurysms, strokes or particular wounds that need more aggressive care.

“We want our patients to feel welcome when they enter our office and comfortable with the decisions that are being made,” Dougherty said. “They should not feel pushed one way or another. If there is a question, we are happy to take the time to answer it.”

Referrals are made with careful consideration.

“We don’t refer them to just anyone; we’re picky about who we send our patients to,” Dougherty said. “We want to be able to establish a relationship with the patient as well as their care team and ensure they are getting optimal treatment when they leave our office as well.”

The team feels at home in Anne Arundel County and is excited for the opportunity to support the community. Dougherty lives in Severna Park with his wife and two children along with their two canine rescues. A Severna Park native, Zlatos still lives in the area with her husband and enjoys fostering animals within a nonprofit animal rescue.

Dougherty, Biuckians and Zlatos all strive to be attentive and available every step of the way for patients.

“That’s establishing the relationship,” Biuckians said. “We are there from the office to the hospital.”

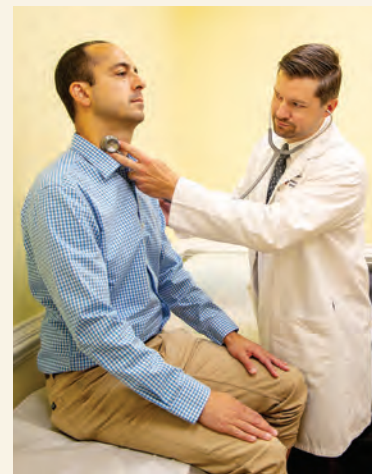
Vascular Surgery Associates has a Severna Park office, located in the Severna Park Professional Center at 22 Truck House Road, Suite 2. Business hours are 8:00am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. For more information, questions or to book an appointment, call 410-946-6402 or visit www.vascularsurgeryassociates.net. ■

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- Lymphedema
- Pelvic congestion syndrome
- Peripheral artery angioplasty treatment
- Peripheral vascular disease
- Sclerotherapy
- Spider veins
- Strokes
- Ulcers
- Varicose veins
- Vascular surgery
- Wound care

Founded more than 30 years ago, Vascular Surgery Associates has grown to 15 locations with Maryland offices in Severna Park, Bel Air, Baltimore, Towson, Westminster, Elkton, Frederick, Ellicott City, Abingdon, Columbia and Lutherville, and Delaware offices in Wilmington and Newark.

Vascular Surgery Associates LLC has a long-standing reputation for providing comprehensive, integrative and compassionate care, including vascular and endovascular surgery, to patients with vascular conditions.



Executive Function:

Developing Superpowers For Life

Continued from page 4

of the same ways as we work, plan and adjust to the daily tasks of life. This sounds complex, but don't worry – executive function is a skill that develops throughout our lifetime. In other words, get comfortable, because we'll be working on these skills well into adulthood.

So, how do we come alongside our students to help them build greater capacity to plan and execute efficiently? According to famous clinical neuropsychologist Russell Barkley, to develop strong executive function skills, individuals

“need to repeatedly practice self-monitoring, self-stopping, seeing the future, saying the future, feeling the future, and playing with the future so as to effectively ‘plan and go’ toward that future.” When truly contemplating Russell's quote, we begin to see why our basic “checklists” don't quite meet the mark. However, here are some strategies that can be more effective for your developing students:

Create Mental Imagery

Instead of using concrete directions, try using words that help build your student's mental imagery. For example, instead of saying, “Turn in your math homework tomorrow,” try something like, “Put your math homework in your blue folder. When you get to Mrs. Phillips' classroom, take it out

of your backpack and place it on your desk. It will probably only be five minutes until she asks you to take it out.” Children with strong executive function skills can plan a “dry run” of a task in their mind. Our language can help them visualize these tasks.

Use Visual Supports

So often, as parents, we hear ourselves saying, “Why aren't you ready? What's taking so long?” We can fail to realize that our kids don't understand what “ready” looks like. Take pictures of your student being ready for school, ready for homework, or ready for bed. Then, in a calmer moment, proactively show them what being “ready” looks like.

Estimate and Show the Sweep of Time

Remember those days when we had analog clocks?

Grab an analog clock and some expo markers to show them the sweep of time. Before starting an activity, talk about the steps required and estimate the amount of time each step takes. Then, shade in the time needed on the clock. Now, you're ready to start! The clock helps anchor them during their work. You can use the clock to help them decide if they need to work faster or if they can slow down and take more time.

There's no real one-stop shop for building strong executive function skills. However, it's never a waste of time to work on developing forethought, self-reflection and adaptability. These are superpowers that last a lifetime.

Michael Molinaro owns and operates Peake Speech Therapy & Consulting. For more information, contact him at molinaro@peakespeechtherapy.com or 240-702-3251. ■



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GERD — It's Not Spicy Food!

Mark Flasar
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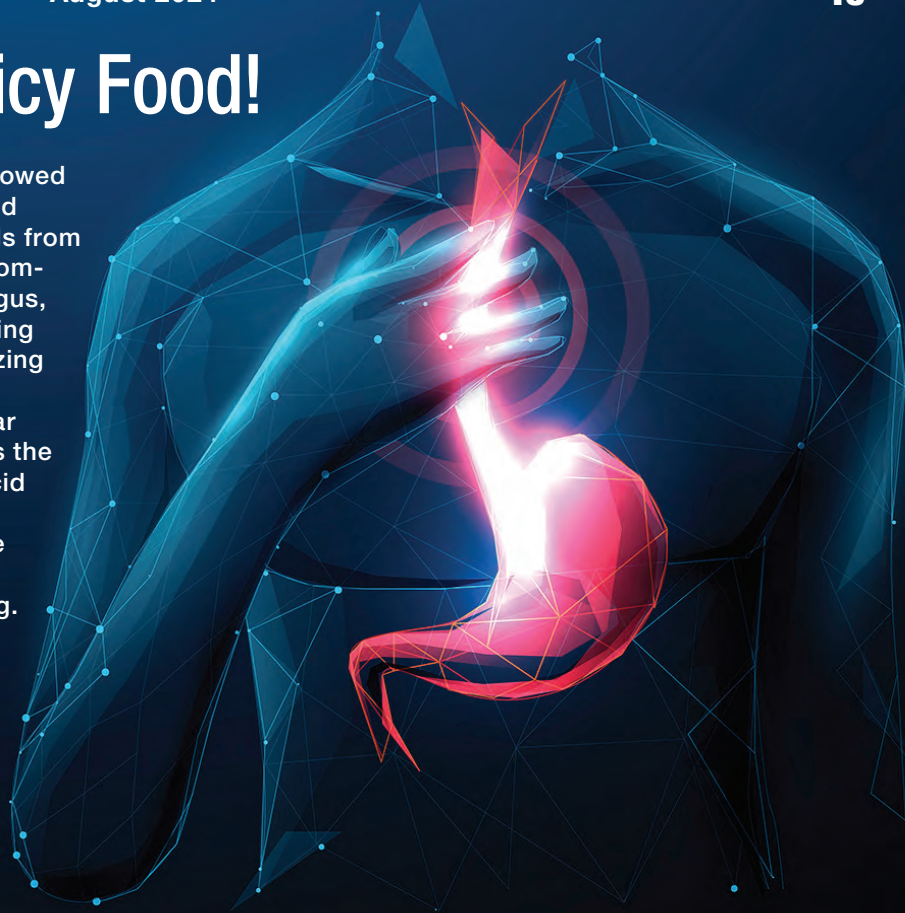
Normally, swallowed food and liquid (bolus) propels from the mouth to the stomach via the esophagus, a muscular tube using coordinated squeezing and relaxing waves

called peristalsis. The bolus arrival at the muscular “gate” or lower esophagus sphincter (LES) relaxes the LES, passing the bolus into the stomach where acid begins digestion. The LES then squeezes shut to keep stomach contents out of the esophagus. The LES is assisted by the surrounding muscle of the diaphragm, which is the main muscle for breathing.

In some people, the LES and diaphragm “gate” doesn’t prevent stomach contents from entering the esophagus. While this can happen to anybody, it is usually shortly after meals, brief and asymptomatic. In gastroesophageal reflux (GERD) patients, episodes are more frequent, they last longer and cause symptoms. GERD is not the result of acidic foods burning the esophagus!

GERD affects 10% to 20% of people. Classic symptoms of heartburn (sense of burning behind

Continued on page 21



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APRN, FNP-BC, ACHPN**

Director of Advocacy
and Legislative Affairs
Hospice of the
Chesapeake



I talked with my grandmother all the time. We were very close, so even when I was going to school eight hours away from home, I still talked with her often on the phone. While I was away, she got cancer. Soon, I noticed our conversations were different. So, I got on a bus to drive home. When I got there, I found her in a hospital bed in her living room with a hospice nurse and a social worker. My family had kept

things from me to protect me. But it had done the opposite. Seeing my grandmother so sick and so weak was so upsetting.

The nurse and social worker had with me what I now call a courageous conversation. They talked about what was happening with my grandmother. I was 16. That was my first exposure to hospice and palliative care. I already knew I wanted to be a nurse and a caregiver, but it was at that moment that hospice professionals supported me. I decided that I wanted to give that kind of support to others.

A human experience

When I'm having courageous conversations as a medical professional, I figuratively take off the white coat and scrubs, because death and dying is not a medical event for most people. It is a human experience. You must have courage to share bad or devastating information without hiding behind medical jargon.

When I'm having courageous conversations in the community, I literally take off my white coat and scrubs. Especially in churches, where it's a sacred space to talk about transitioning to end of life. You need to do some research and learn about the culture you're walking into.

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*there.
when the options aren't so easy.*

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Testosterone Therapy: *Benefits Beyond Sexual Health*



Christopher Graziano
AAUrology

cardiovascular disease and mortality.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death globally. Approximately one in 20 adults have coronary artery disease, and hundreds of thousands of Americans die every year from heart disease. The exact cause for cardiovascular disease is not so clear-cut, but it is likely a complex interplay between genetic and environmental risk factors.

Unfortunately, we can't change our genetics, but we can change our lifestyle. The most well-known modifiable risk factors include blood pressure, smoking, obesity, diabetes, cholesterol and lack of exercise. However, newer research suggests that testosterone deficiency in men may play a role in one's cardiovascular health. By correcting testosterone defi-



Hormone imbalances in men occur most often because of age-related decline in our hormone production, similar to the female menopause.

However, there are a variety of other causes ranging from chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, obesity and sleep apnea, to lifestyle causes like stress and anxiety, poor sleep, and alcohol

and drug consumption. Distinguishing between the various causes of hormone imbalance is crucial to diagnosing and effectively treating low testosterone.

The symptoms of low testosterone are often nonspecific but can include both physical symptoms — including low sex drive, erectile dysfunction, loss of muscle mass, and fatigue — as well as emotional symptoms

ciency, we may mitigate our risk of heart disease. Hypogonadism occurs when the body produces insufficient testosterone levels. Low testosterone can occur when the testicles cannot produce testosterone (primary hypogonadism) or when there is a disconnect between our brain and our testicles, such that the testicles never receive the signals to produce testosterone.

Continued on page 18



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410-266-8049 – AAUrology.com

Medication Mistakes Can Be Fatal

Here's How To Prevent Them

Continued from page 9

General Medication Tips

- Double- or triple-check that you have the correct dose prepared.
- Read the pharmacy label and check the expiration date on the bottle.
- Record the medications given and note any reactions or problems encountered.
- If you observe any adverse reactions, inform your health care provider immediately.
- Ask a pharmacist or doctor about possible interactions with other medicines.

At the Doctor's Office

- Bring a copy of your loved one's medication list on every visit.
- If the doctor prescribes a new drug, ask if it will interfere with any medications your loved one is using.
- Ask the drug name, how to fill it, and how often to take it.
- Ask the doctor to write the purpose of the med on the Rx. Noting the purpose will help the pharmacist double-check the prescription.
- Encourage the doctor to institute electronic prescribing to enhance patient safety.

Helpful Resources

Medications can get complicated, and even a small mistake can lead to serious consequences. At Lean on Dee Senior Home Care, the staff knows that your loved one's welfare is of utmost importance to you. Lean On Dee offers medication setup services to ensure stress-free and safe medication management. The trained staff helps you keep medications organized and up to date and ensure compliance with your doctor's orders. Call 410-449-4538 to book an appointment today.

For questions about drug information or interactions, contact the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's drug information pharmacists by phone at 1-855-543-3784.

Call America's poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. ■

In the Home

- Make a list of all your loved one's medications, including dosage and the prescribing physician's name.
- Any time your loved one's medication changes, change your list.
- Keep all medications in their original containers.
- Don't chew, crush, or break capsules or tablets unless advised. You may make the medication unsafe or ineffective.

At the Hospital

- Take your loved one's medication list with you.
- Ask the physician for the names of new medications and why they are prescribed.
- Before your loved one takes meds, look at the drug. If the meds appear different from their usual Rx, question why.
- Ask the hospital staff to check your loved one's hospital identification bracelet before administering meds to prevent errors.
- Before leaving the hospital, have a staff member review each medication with you. Find out what condition it treats and whether to take it in addition to current meds or in place of them. Ask about possible side effects or interactions.

Testosterone Therapy

Continued from page 17

like irritability, depression and reduced concentration.

Screening for low testosterone requires a simple blood test that is performed in the morning between 7:00am and 10:00am. Typically, testosterone levels are highest in the morning and decline throughout the day, usually reaching their lowest levels in the evening around 7:00pm-8:00pm. Given the variety of factors that can influence testosterone levels, we recommend a confirmatory blood test to ensure an appropriate diagnosis prior to starting any treatment.

There are several methods to help achieve optimum hormone levels with the goal of helping patients to feel back to their best self. A diagnosis of low testosterone can be overwhelming, but a consultation with a urolo-

gist can help you decide on the best option for replacement. The most frequently used methods include intramuscular testosterone injections or a daily cream/gel. Injections typically deliver a dose of testosterone directly into the muscle tissue on a weekly or biweekly basis, while gels are applied daily to help maintain steady levels throughout the day. Alternative options include intranasal testosterone or oral pills. There are even long-acting testosterone injections or implantable testosterone pellets that can provide steady testosterone levels for several months.

Historically, the benefits of testosterone replacement therapy have focused on sexual health, but we are now beginning to understand the impact of our hormones on our cardiovascular health. If you have signs or symptoms of low testosterone, a simple conversation with your physician can help establish a diagnosis and develop a treatment plan. ■

The Benefits Of Dry Eye Therapy

Continued from page 6

pimples that may be present. OptiLIGHT IPL is a wonderful option for those who may have dry eye and skin concerns.

In conjunction with OptiLIGHT, Lumenis' OptiPLUS Radio Frequency (RF) machine is another great tool. Radio frequency uses controlled heat to warm deeper into the skin's layer, encouraging collagen production. Each dry eye RF treatment is about 30 minutes, and a technician can massage around your eyes with OptiPLUS' 10-millimeter, FDA-approved hand piece. Your doctor can then express your lid margins, opening up all the glands manually, clearing out any old makeup, dead skin or allergens that are built up in your eyes. As alarming as gland expression sounds, many patients have reported the treatment as

very calming and comfortable; some have even taken a nap! In addition to OptiPLUS' dry eye therapy, it also provides a wonderful skin-tightening aesthetic benefit, especially for crow's feet and deep under-eye bags.

Wolf Eye Lab is proud to partner with Lumenis and bring light into health care. All products used in the office are the only FDA-approved devices for dry eye and are safe to use on most skin types, conditions and concerns. Wolf Eye Lab's dry eye protocol pairs with its medical-grade skin care line, AlumierMD, and provides the utmost dry eye and skin comfort.

For more information, contact Wolf Eye Lab at 410-255-8056 or hello@woolfeyelab.com, or visit www.woolfeyelab.com. ■

Strength Training Has Benefits Beyond The Obvious Ones



Joe Bocek
Park Fitness

“Do you want your life to be easier?”

This is the question I posed to someone not too long ago as we were talking about their fitness goals.

You see, we had gotten on the topic of strength training and all the many benefits that come along with it.

For many, this link from workout to everyday life is often overlooked.

Many people link lifting weights with trying to either look

better, play sports or be some sort of powerlifter. And those all can be reasons to incorporate strength training into our lives.

But what is easily overlooked are much simpler and more common reasons: we want to live better, live longer, and we want things to be easier.

Those, in a nutshell, are the overall benefits of getting stronger. And largely, these benefits are things we want even if we don't do any sort of working out.

Something that has stuck with me recently (I wish I recalled who said this) is the best and perhaps most succinct explanation of strength in that, “Strength is our body's currency as we age.”

That is as powerful a statement and explanation of the benefits of strength training as I ever recall hearing.

What's even better is that you, too, can have these benefits.

Dosage

Strength training is a relatively ambiguous term. What's the difference between lifting five or 25 or even 50 pounds? I will say, this is where a qualified fitness coach can come in and help direct you.

But you can also use Google and potentially learn a lot there too. Your overall goals will dictate what you need.

What's most important here is that, depending on your goals, you don't have to lift like a bodybuilder or professional athlete to achieve the benefits of strength training.

Something is better than nothing, and if you make your goal chasing strength and get-



ting stronger over time, you will probably end up far better off than where you started.

How will this make my life easier?

No matter what your

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What Are Healthy Foods For Your Heart?

Continued from page 7

Oats and barley

These whole grains are full of soluble fiber, which helps reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol. Soluble fiber also slows digestion and keeps you feeling full for longer, which can promote weight loss.

Beans (legumes)

Chickpeas; lentils; black, pinto, kidney and white beans; and all other dried beans or legumes are heart-smart superfoods. They're full of plant protein, cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber, and many other nutrients that support your heart, blood

vessels and blood pressure.

Fatty fish

Oily fish, such as salmon, sardines, mackerel and rainbow trout are excellent sources of omega-3 fats (fish oil). These essential fatty acids can help reduce blood pressure and triglyceride levels.

Nuts and seeds

All nuts and seeds are excellent sources of unsaturated, heart-healthy fats that can improve your cholesterol. They also contain significant antioxidants to reduce inflammation and protect your heart and blood vessels from oxidative damage.

Olive oil

Olive oil is an essential ingredient in the Mediterranean diet, and extensive research supports its benefits for heart health.

Tea

According to a 2021 study published in the "Annals of Medicine," drinking two cups of unsweetened brewed green or black tea each day can reduce the risk and progression of cardiovascular disease.

The bottom line

When it comes to heart health, food is medicine, so try to incorporate as many of these foods as possible into your regular diet. If you are taking blood

thinners or other medications, talk to your physician before making substantial changes to your diet; some foods can change the effectiveness of those medications. Make sure you stay on top of your heart and overall health by getting regular wellness checks and notifying your doctor about any heart-related symptoms.

Dr. David Caparrelli has more than 20 years of experience in both cardiac and vascular surgery.

To make an appointment with Luminis Health Heart Surgery, call 443-481-1358. Learn more at www.luminis.health/heartsurgery. ■

Courageous Conversations

Continued from page 16

A gift to families

There are some cultures where people feel like suffering brings them closer to God. Or it's a punishment for something they've done. Or talking about death and dying means it is going to make it happen. And so, we may not even talk about death and dying. Instead, we talk about life rituals or how your family and community cares for one another. Knowing my audience, understanding their priorities and respecting their beliefs equips me to ask how I can best help them in their life journey.

Courageous conversations are not all doom and gloom. They're a gift to your family to help them prepare for the time that you will no longer be here. Research shows families whose loved ones had advanced directives and conversations before they transitioned experience less anxiety, less depression and less of a burden at the end of life.

Uncomfortable, unexpected, but necessary

A courageous conversation can be uncomfortable, unexpected and unwanted. But it's necessary. Talking about life-limiting illness and death before it happens means accepting that this will happen to you or someone dear to you. Once you have these conversations, the door is open to preparing for every milestone in your life. Not just education, marriage, children and career, but the final milestone of your death.

Hospice of the Chesapeake is Maryland's largest not-for-profit independent hospice organization that is caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles and Prince George's counties. Its affiliated programs include Chesapeake Supportive Care and its bereavement services, Chesapeake Life Center. For details, visit www.hospice-chesapeake.org or call 410-987-2003. ■

Strength Training

Continued from page 19

physical goals are in life, from going up and down the stairs easier to dominating the pickleball court or marathon course, having greater strength increases our ability to do work.

Whether that work is actual yard work or just moving your body more easily, being stronger helps.

And regardless of if you are 15 years old or 75 years old, strength only makes it all easier no matter if we are talking about sport performance, bone density, energy, injury prevention or speed of recovery.

Being stronger makes doing things in life easier.

Mentally strong

One often overlooked element of strength training (and maybe working out in general) is showing and proving to yourself that you can do the hard thing.

Obviously when we strength train or exercise in any way, there will be, even a little bit, more challenge than doing nothing.

And as we repeat this activity again and again, we show ourselves that we can do this and will succeed. That same feeling of competency can then be applied to other areas of life. You can endure difficult stuff and be better off for it in the long run.

Now what's still more amazing is that the benefits of strength training go even further beyond all that I've mentioned so far.

And you, my friend, are very much worth pursuing these benefits.

By the way, here is an update about that same person I had talked to, asking if they wanted their life to be easier: fast-forward to now and they were talking about helping their college-aged student move and how surprised they were at how easy it was to pick up and carry all these boxes of clothing and books.

You see, they credited their workouts and the amount of strength training they do as to why they felt this move was so much easier than it ever had been before.

Strength: making life easier, one person at a time. Get yours today. Supplies are unlimited! ■

GERD — It's Not Spicy Food!

Continued from page 15

the chest) and regurgitation (stomach contents re-entering the mouth from the esophagus in small amounts) are not always present. Throat burning, chest pain, nausea and vomiting, upper abdominal pain, belching, hiccups, difficult or painful swallowing, "lump in the throat," cough or wheezing, or hoarseness — among others — may be the only symptoms.

"Alarm symptoms" may indicate a serious problem. Difficult or painful swallowing, appetite or weight loss, black tarry stools or blood in vomit, frequent vomiting, new symptoms over the age of 60 or chest pain should promptly be reported (for example, chest pain can indicate heart disease). Ongoing, frequent (twice weekly or more) symptoms or inability to stop medication also warrant evaluation.

Repeated episodes in GERD patients can cause complications from an acid-damaged esophagus. Erosive esophagitis is when the esophagus develops ulcers at risk for bleeding. An esophageal stricture is a scarred narrowing of the lower esophagus (like an hourglass) causing difficult swallowing or blockages. Barrett's esophagus is when normal esophagus cells "transform" into a different cell type to protect the esophagus from repeated acid damage. This increases the risks for future esophagus precancer and esophagus cancer, the most dreaded pos-

sible GERD complication.

Many factors promote GERD by causing LES relaxation, increased abdominal pressure/delayed stomach emptying and/or reducing diaphragm muscle assistance. These factors include obesity, pregnancy, certain medications, diet and lifestyle factors (smoking, alcohol, chocolate, peppermint, citrus, tomato products, caffeine) and a hiatus hernia. A hiatus hernia is when part of the upper stomach slides up through the diaphragm, changing the position of the LES in the chest. The diaphragm has a natural opening for the esophagus to pass through to reach the stomach (diaphragmatic hiatus). With a hiatal hernia, that opening enlarges, which allows the stomach to pass upward.

An effective medication trial to reduce acid production generally confirms the diagnosis of GERD. However, an endoscopy (tiny camera used to examine the esophagus) or pH testing (measurement of esophagus pH) is often necessary. Unfortunately, lifestyle modification has limited effectiveness, so many people need ongoing medication. Surgical options aimed at restoring an effective LES barrier can be effective. Regardless, treatment is aimed at controlling symptoms, restoring quality of life and preventing dangerous GERD complications.

Mark Flasar, MD, is a gastroenterologist at Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates. He completed his internal medicine residency at Duke University and his gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Maryland. ■



Meredith Baker
CPNP - AC, FNP-C
Owner/Founder of Skinlogic

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Skinlogic is about connection, opening up about your insecurities, connecting to our team who have many insecurities of their own, and creating a path so you can be the most confident and comfortable version of yourself. When you look in the mirror, what do you focus on that makes you feel and look like you? Or maybe it's something that doesn't make you feel like the person you are. Our job is to curate and execute a plan that meets your unique and personal goals for right now and in the future.

You are not a photoshopped billboard or airbrushed advertisement. You are the stressed out but thankful parent, the loyal friend, the over-giving caretaker, the emotional wreck, the hard-working boss, the exhausted partner. You deserve to like and be proud of the person you see in the mirror. We are here for you. We specialize in a variety of med spa aesthetic services including Chemical Peels, Botox®, Fillers, Microneedling, Radiofrequency Microneedling, Laser Hair Removal, Vein and Capillary Treatments, Laser Skin Resurfacing and Medical Grade Skincare.



Danielle Tucker
Cosmetic Nurse



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How To Quit Smoking And Reduce Your Risk Of Lung Cancer

Continued from page 10

combined. Three-quarters of new lung cancer cases are late-stage cancers, which are far more difficult to treat than early-stage lung cancers.

Unfortunately, only 16% of lung cancer cases are diagnosed at an early stage according to the American Lung Association. In fact, more than half the people with lung cancer die within one year of being diagnosed. It's important to catch the disease in its early stages and increase the likelihood of successful treatment.

Who Should Get Screened?

If you are a smoker or have quit in the last 15 years, or you live, work or are regularly around someone who smokes, you may be at risk of developing lung cancer. The risk of lung cancer is greatest for current and former smokers as they get older.

You should get screened for lung cancer if you:

- Are between 50 and 80 years old

What Is A HydraFacial?

Continued from page 11

includes everything in the signature HydraFacial, but this 45-minute treatment also includes a booster serum picked for your individual skin concern, plus healing, restorative LED light therapy. The deluxe HydraFacial is ideal for those who are looking for a targeted treatment.

Platinum: The platinum HydraFacial is the most comprehensive option. This 60-minute facial includes everything in the signature and deluxe HydraFacials, but it also provides a lymphatic drainage massage. This treatment is ideal for those who are looking for a highly targeted, comprehensive treatment that will address all their skin concerns.

Benefits of Lymphatic Drainage

- Prevents aging skin
- Reduce swelling and puffiness in the face
- Detoxifies skin

- Removes buildup of lymph
- Decreases inflammation
- Enhance natural contours of the face

Benefits of LED Light Therapy

Blue Light

- Kills acne bacteria
- Treats eczema and psoriasis
- Anti-inflammatory to calm and soothe skin
- Decrease risk of scarring and hyperpigmentation

Red Light

- Stimulates collagen and elastin
- Reduces inflammation and redness
- Boosts blood oxygen levels and promotes circulation
- Great for uneven skin tone, texture, irritated and inflamed skin

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

If you are a smoker or have quit in the last 15 years, or you live, work or are regularly around someone who smokes, you may be at risk of developing lung cancer.



- Have no signs or symptoms of lung cancer
- Have a smoking history of at least one pack a day for 20 years
- Are a current smoker or have quit in the last 15 years

Need help with quitting smoking? Register for UM BWMC's free Quit Smoking class at www.umbwmc.org/calendar. To see if you may be at risk for lung cancer, take a free and quick online risk assessment at www.umbwmc.org/lunghra5. ■

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A Golfer's Guide To Injury Prevention And Management

Devon Magretti
Stretch
Zone



Imagine playing and struggling through 18 holes with discomfort in your back, legs, shoulder or elbow. It will not only affect your performance but also rob you of the joy of the game.

Whether you're an experienced golfer or just starting out, gaining an understanding of the common injuries in golf and learning about the effectiveness of preventative measures, such as stretches for back pain, are crucial for improving your performance and reducing discomfort.

Understanding Why Golfers Get Injured

Golf, with its unique set of challenges, can make golfers susceptible to various injuries due to the sport's specific demands, such as precision, coordination and athleticism.

Some of the most common reasons why golfers get injured are:

- Poor swing mechanics
- Overuse and repetitive motions
- Lack of warm-up
- Equipment-related issues
- Lack of muscle, tendon and ligament conditioning

Exploring Common Golf Injuries

Knowing the areas and muscles in your body that are more prone to injuries in golf can make you more cautious and help you take preventive measures on the course.

Upper Body Injuries

- Golfer's elbow (medial epicondylitis)
- Shoulder impingement
- Rotator cuff injuries
- Wrist sprains and strains
- Neck injuries

Lower Body Injuries

- Lower back discomfort
- Hip strains
- Knee injuries
- Achilles tendonitis

What You Can Do To Prevent Golf Injuries

When it comes to golf injuries, prevention is key. Taking a proactive approach to safeguarding your game will not only enhance your performance but also ensure long-term success and enjoyment of the sport.

Equipment

- Ensure properly fitted clubs and appropriate grips
- Invest in golf shoes with good traction and support

Physical Conditioning

- Engage in strength exercises
- Prioritize overall strength and conditioning
- Incorporate practitioner-assisted stretching



Technique

- Be mindful of overswinging
- Maintain proper posture
- Seek professional instruction

Warm-up and Stretching

- Perform a dynamic warm-up routine
- Incorporate golf-specific stretches

Navigating Injury: Overcoming Setbacks

It's important to remember that injuries and setbacks are a natural part of any athletic endeavor. Here's what you can do:

Practice RICE

RICE stands for rest, ice, compression and elevation.

Rest

Rest is crucial for allowing your injured body part to heal.

Maintain Mobility and Range of Motion

While it is important to rest the injured area, it is equally important to maintain mobility and range of motion in the surrounding joints. It is crucial to perform these exercises properly through practitioner-assisted stretching to avoid aggravating the injury.

Coming Back From Injury

Returning to golf after an injury can be an exciting yet challenging process. It is important to approach your comeback with caution and prioritize your health and recovery.

Modify Your Approach

As you return to golf, it may be necessary to make modifications to your swing mechanics or technique to accommodate your injury and prevent further damage.

Incorporate Regular Stretching

Engaging in cross-training activities, such as swimming, cycling, yoga or practitioner-assisted stretching, can help improve overall fitness and strengthen supporting muscles.

Alleviate Your Discomfort With Stretches For Back Pain

Stretch Zone specializes in assisting golfers like you with targeted stretching techniques to enhance your performance and minimize the risk of injuries.

The trained professionals will work with you to improve your flexibility, increase your range of motion, and optimize your golf swing. Don't let injuries hold you back from enjoying the game you love.

Contact Stretch Zone for a free session and take a proactive approach to keep your body healthy and your golf game thriving. The two closest locations are 550 Ritchie Highway in Severna Park (240-749-8269) and 2315 Forest Drive, Unit A, in Annapolis (443-458-5171). ■

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