



# Desert Health<sup>®</sup>

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

May/June 2012

## what's inside

### 3 Medical News

Stroke Awareness Month:  
What Women Should Know

### 10 Integrated Practices

Integrated Health Care:  
How Does It Work?

### 13 Natural Options

Sometimes You Just  
Have to "Sweat It Out"

### 17 Family Health

Can Children Benefit  
From Chiropractic Care?

### 19 Fitness

Pickleball: America's  
Fastest Growing Sport

### 21 Senior Health

Tips For the Caregiver

### 23 Fresh Cuisine

Healthy Eats "On the Go"  
Throughout the Valley

### 24 Financial Health

Plan Now For a Long Life

### 25 Health & Beauty

At-Home Beauty Secrets From  
the Hyatt's Karina Chung

# FOREVER young

## A NOBEL DISCOVERY

Humans have forever sought eternal youth. The desire to turn back the clock and slow the aging process is the dream of many and an obsession for some. Thanks to research conducted since a 1984 Nobel Prize winning discovery, a growing community of scientists now believe that this dream may be within our reach.

"Living to 150 years old could be 15, maybe 20 years away," says scientist Bill Andrews, Ph.D., one of the premier telomere scientists who is dedicated to finding a cure for aging (Cure-aging-or-die-trying.com). His most recognized work followed the Nobel Prize in Medicine awarded to Elizabeth Blackburn of the University of California Berkeley and her then-grad student Carol Greider, who discovered the "the telomerase enzyme" in a pond scum organism. Ten years later, Andrews discovered the human equivalent of that enzyme which won him national accolades.

To follow the facts, a brief understanding of the science is necessary, so bear with us for a moment as this information could add many years to your life.

Your body is made up of trillions of cells that are constantly dividing. Each and every cell has 23 pairs of chromosomes (one from mom and one from dad). At the end of each chromosome are protective tips called telomeres (TEEL-o-meers). Think of the small plastic cover at the end of a pair of shoelaces.

Telomeres are critical to healthy cell function, but as

cells divide, telomeres shorten and eventually cell division stops, resulting in various conditions related to aging. Research has shown that people over 60 who have long telomeres experience greater heart and immune system health than their counterparts with shorter ones.'

Thus, it is now understood that maintaining telomere length is integral to preventing the symptoms of aging. That is where the telomerase (tell-OM-er-us) enzyme comes in. It is responsible for maintaining the health and length of telomeres. The research is leading scientists to believe that activating telomerase enzymes can slow and even reverse telomere shortening, increasing a cell's ability to replicate, and restoring and improving cellular function.

This age reversing theory has been proven in mice. In 2010, Harvard researcher Ronald A. DePinho, MD genetically aged a group of mice and then restored their vitality. He engineered the gene that makes telomerase so he could turn it on and off. Turning it off caused these genetically manipulated mice to form short telomeres. As expected, they prematurely aged with shrinkage of the brain and spleen; loss of sense of smell; and loss of fertility. A month later, he turned the gene back on to see if that would reverse these signs of aging. The mice were treated with a drug (4-OHT), that "turned on" production of telomerase and lengthened the telomeres. This practice dramatically reversed the signs

Continued on page 20



## Health is a Choice

**BASEBALL AND BEER.** For a large portion of his life, Palm Springs native Trent Hauswirth cherished these favorite American past times. He was a high school jock who excelled at baseball. He was drafted out of high school and played minor league ball with the Kansas City Royals for three years.

Trent, 39, always considered himself 'a big guy.' He was 6'2" and 220 pounds when he graduated from high school and 235 when he played ball. At spring training each year, coaches would tell him he was out of shape, but he was convinced that he was 'just big.' He also attributed his high blood pressure to his size and didn't think much about it.

Although he admits not taking very good care of himself, as an active former athlete Trent always thought he was in shape. He continued to think that way until knee surgery came calling at 37 years old, and initial tests showed that he was a good candidate for stroke. His blood pressure was 190/110 and he was 300 pounds.

"That was my wakeup call," Trent admits. "I couldn't believe I had gotten to that size at 37. I have a beautiful family with two girls who were 8 and 10 at the time, and I wanted to be there for them."

Continued on page 8



Trent Hauswirth of Palm Desert with his wife, Alexis, and daughters Camille and Shea.

DIABETES MANAGEMENT

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## Welcome Summer!

We've danced through yet another magnificent season. Why is it that the season seems to pass more quickly each year? They say that happens with age. I wonder if time will pass more slowly when our life expectancy reaches 150... I'd like to think so.



And if Dr. Bill Andrews is able to finish his life-long research on defying age and enhancing longevity, living well into our hundreds may be a reality in our lifetime. Bill himself defies what is considered 'standard' for his age. The 60 year old ultra-marathoner has run more than 100 races of 50 miles or more with his longest ever being 135 through Death Valley. He just placed third out of several hundred in his last ultra-race and seventh in a 5k - better than he's ever done in either distance.

Dr. Andrews attributes much of his stamina and endurance to the all-natural, telomerase activating supplements he has developed from his research. "My body recovers faster after competition and I have maintained a greater overall feeling of wellness." But that is not his primary goal. Developing the pharmaceutical drug to cure many diseases, and reverse aging for his family, friends and the world, is at the nucleus of his work.

Others taking these nutraceuticals agree with Dr. Andrews' results - faster recovery, increased stamina and a strengthened immune system. And of course, there are many who don't agree with Andrews and the idea that we could ever reverse aging (it's true that there have been

many such claims in the last two thousand years). Still, a Harvard researcher has done it with mice, so why not?

I'm a believer. Maybe just another hopeful fan, but I think the research is fascinating. The fact that Andrews has teamed up with a group of Indian Wells doctors to further his work and to conduct human clinical trials is yet another great example of integrated health care at work in our Valley.

We admire those working to improve their own health and that of others. Look at Trent Hauswirth of Palm Desert whose "Desert's Biggest Loser" title inspired him to become a personal trainer and to help others change their unhealthy habits for more promising futures.

And the organizations that have come together in the name of health. We congratulate Desert Classic Charities, Humana and the Clinton Foundation on the 'Sports Event of the Year' nomination for the Humana Challenge. Their contributions to our community, their donations to local charities, and their focus on health and wellness which has drawn international attention, will benefit our community for many years to come.

It's a good time for each of us to adopt healthy habits. It's never too late to start and we now have additional incentive. If Bill Andrews successfully finishes his life's work, we will all want to be a healthy and vibrant 150 years young.

Cheers to your health,

Lauren Del Sarto  
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#### We welcome local health related news stories:

Please submit proposed editorial via email as a Word document with a bio and hi resolution photo of the writer. All submissions are subject to approval and editing at the Publisher's discretion and may or may not be published. Article and advertising deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication.

#### Community photos on health & wellness:

We invite you to submit photos that portray health and wellness in the Coachella Valley. Email high resolution photos (minimum 300 dpi) to [News@DesertHealthNews.com](mailto:News@DesertHealthNews.com) with photo caption and credit. Submitted photos may be published free of charge by Desert Health and will not be returned.

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## Humana Challenge Nominated For 'Sports Event of the Year' And Local Charities Reap the Rewards!

In the company of Super Bowl XLVI (New England vs. the New York Giants) and the 2011 NBA Finals (Dallas Mavericks vs. Miami Heat), the 2012 Humana Challenge in partnership with the Clinton Foundation was nominated for Sports Event of the Year by respected industry publications SportsBusiness Journal and SportsBusiness Daily.

The PGA TOUR event was the only golf event nominated in the category, one of 15 categories the publications will honor at the fifth annual Sports Business Awards May 23 in New York.

The awards recognize outstanding achievements in sports business from March 1, 2011 to Feb. 29, 2012. "This is an unprecedented honor for our event, one that we are very, very proud to receive," said Tournament Chairman Larry Thiel.

Attendance was up 68% for this year's event which drew praise and worldwide attention for its revamped format, stronger field, and proactive community involvement with focusing focus on health and wellness. Humana promoted healthy, active lifestyles with a Healthy Walk & Fun Fair, a farmer's market, pedometers for tournament fans, and the construction of a recreational area in the East Valley. President Clinton's conference Health Matters: Activating Wellness in Every Generation brought attendees from across that nation and international recognition to the Valley. The conference encouraged local organizations to take action to improve the health of our community.

This honor is the latest for an event that had its philanthropic arm, Desert Classic Charities (DCC), recognized in November as the Outstanding Philanthropic Foundation at the National Philanthropy Day Awards luncheon. On April 20th, DCC awarded local charitable organizations with funds raised from this year's event.

A record \$2,045,000 was distributed to 40 local charities including \$262,000 to 14 children's organizations; \$141k to 11 groups providing food and shelter for the hungry, homeless and abused; and \$142k to rehab, social and support services.

Humana also created a special initiative to encourage physical activity surrounding tournament week through their Walkit pedometer program. 12,000 pedometers were distributed to fans, players and the general public, and 84 million steps were accumulated resulting in an additional \$500,000 contribution to local groups. This funding is being used to create an innovative partnership among Boys & Girls Clubs of the Coachella Valley, Family YMCA of the Desert, and KaBOOM! Their shared goal is to promote healthy behaviors in children and families throughout our community.

This year's event raises Desert Classic Charities total contributions to local charities to \$52 million since its inception in 1960 with Eisenhower as a major benefactor.

Desert Health® looks forward to being a part of the 2013 Humana Challenge and salutes Desert Classic Charities, Humana and the Clinton Foundation for helping to improve the health and well-being of our community.



84 million steps from players, fans, and the public resulted in a \$500,000 donation to local charitable organizations by Humana.





**MAY IS NATIONAL  
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AWARENESS MONTH**  
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## What Women Should Know About Stroke

By Desert Regional Medical Center

There are a few things that women should know about stroke. More women than men suffer from strokes each year – 425,000 compared to 370,000. Strokes kill twice as many women each year as breast cancer. African-American women have more strokes than Caucasian women, and strokes are the number one cause of death for Hispanic women.

“Stroke in women is more fatal than it is in men. This is important, as all too often women are more concerned with others than with themselves. Since May is National Stroke Awareness Month, it is the perfect time to educate yourself about the risk factors and signs of stroke,” said Patricia Ryan, RN, MSN, ANP neuro program coordinator for Desert Regional Medical Center.

Because stroke affects so many women, it is important to be familiar with the signs of stroke and seek medical help quickly. Women and men experience many of the same symptoms including:

- ✓ sudden numbness or weakness of face, arm or leg
- ✓ confusion
- ✓ difficulty speaking
- ✓ problems with vision
- ✓ loss of balance or coordination, trouble walking
- ✓ severe headache for no known cause

Other telltale signs of a stroke that are unique in women include:

- ✿ the rapid onset of hiccups
- ✿ nausea
- ✿ fatigue
- ✿ chest pain
- ✿ face and limb pain
- ✿ shortness of breath
- ✿ heart palpitations

Women and men share many of the same risk factors for stroke. While a person of any age can have a stroke, risk does increase with age. The chances of having a stroke double for every 10 years after the age of 55. Other risk factors include a family history of stroke, high blood pressure or cholesterol, smoking, diabetes, being overweight and not exercising.

Women also have some exclusive risk factors that could raise their risk of having a stroke, which include:

- ❖ Taking birth control pills
- ❖ Experiencing natural changes in the body during pregnancy that increase blood pressure and put stress on the heart
- ❖ Using hormone replacement therapy to relieve symptoms of menopause
- ❖ Being postmenopausal and having a waist that is larger than 35.2 inches and a triglyceride level higher than 128 milligrams per liter
- ❖ Being a migraine headache sufferer

Women can take an active role in preventing stroke by monitoring their blood pressure, not smoking, getting tested for diabetes, knowing their cholesterol and triglyceride levels, limiting alcohol and maintaining a healthy weight. Taking birth control pills is generally considered to be safe for young, healthy women. However, they can raise the risk of stroke in some women who are over 35, smoke, have diabetes, and high blood pressure or cholesterol.

If a stroke occurs, seek medical attention immediately. Strokes caused by blood clots, which are called ischemic strokes and are the most common type, can be treated with clot-busting drugs such as tPA, or tissue plasminogen activator. But in order to be effective, the medication must be administered within three hours of the initial onset of symptoms.

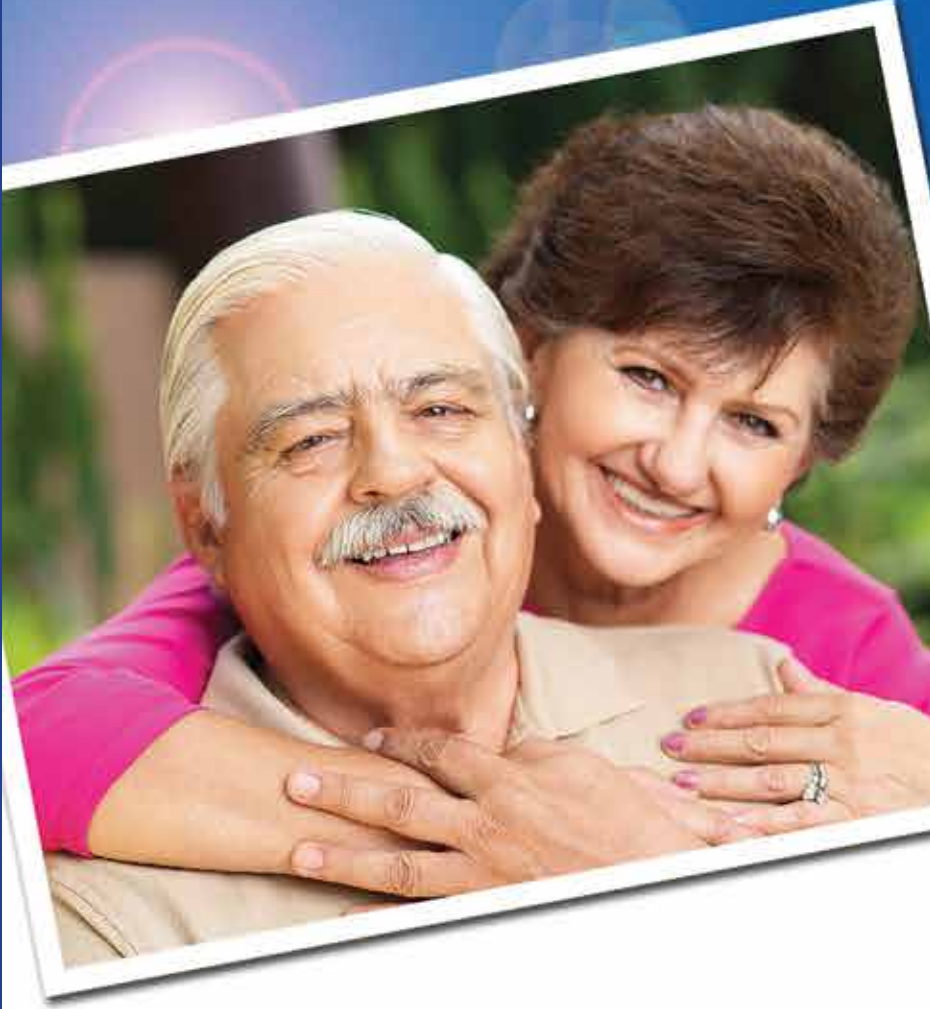
Anticoagulants, such as warfarin and antiplatelet drugs, such as aspirin, may be prescribed to help prevent a stroke in people who are high risk. In other cases, surgery may be recommended to treat or prevent stroke. Carotid endarterectomy can be performed to remove fatty deposits that clog the carotid artery in the neck. If a person does have a stroke, rehabilitation can help rebuild strength, capability and confidence to continue daily activities.


Desert Regional Medical Center has been certified by the Joint Commission as an Advanced Primary Stroke Center. For more information about stroke or stroke support groups, you can call Neuro Program Coordinator Patricia Ryan at 760-449-5291. If you need a physician to discuss stroke, you can call Desert Regional Medical Center at 1-800-491-4990 for a free referral to a neurologist near you.

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## Sudden Hearing Loss: A Medical Emergency

By Maya Kato, MD

### What is sudden sensorineural hearing loss?

Sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL) is a rapid loss of hearing that occurs overnight, or over a period of up to three days. Usually, only one ear is affected. Patients may experience a feeling of fullness in the ear and tinnitus (or ringing of the involved ear). They may also feel vertigo, or imbalance, which generally improves over a few days.

Many people notice the sudden loss when they wake up in the morning. Others are unaware of the hearing problem, until they pick up the telephone. Their first thought is that the telephone is dead, until they move the phone to their other ear, and then realize that the first ear isn't working.

Sudden hearing loss is a medical emergency, because treatment must be initi-

ated immediately if the hearing is to be saved.

### Causes

There are over 100 different causes of SSNHL. However, an exact cause is only identified in a minority (less than 10%) of patients. The list of causes includes: infection, trauma, tumors, Meniere's disease, medication, and circulatory disorders that decrease oxygen flow to the inner ear.

### Treatment – Timing is Critical!

Anyone experiencing SSNHL should see a physician, preferably an ear specialist (otologist or otolaryngologist), as soon as possible.

Why? If the hearing loss is sensorineural, it is possible to save the hearing, but only if proper treatment is begun immediately. Treatment with oral steroids is the gold standard. Steroid administration directly

to the inner ear has been shown to rescue hearing loss when oral steroids fail. It is important to realize that this treatment must be initiated within 1 to 4 weeks after the onset of the hearing loss. Beyond 4 weeks, the hearing loss will likely become a permanent disability.

Unfortunately, many patients do not see a specialist soon enough. There are several factors that may account for the delay. Sometimes, patients mistakenly think they simply have wax in their ears. On other occasions, physicians unknowingly contribute to the delay. Patients are often prescribed decongestants and allergy pills, which do not treat the hearing loss, and only serve to delay referral to the specialist.

### What to do if you experience sudden hearing loss:

Be sure to see a specialist as soon as possible. If your insurance carrier allows, make an appointment with the otologist or otolaryngologist directly. Only an otologist has the ability to treat with steroid


directly to the inner ear. A comprehensive medical evaluation and audiogram will be performed. This will ensure that the loss is nerve related, and not due to fluid, wax, infection, or a tumor. An MRI scan of the brain and ear will also be ordered to exclude the presence of a tumor.

### Conclusion

The effects of sudden hearing loss can be devastating—and can become a permanent disability if not treated promptly. Both patients and physicians need to be aware of the possibility of SSNHL and the urgency of proper diagnosis and treatment.

Dr. Kato is the founder of The Ear Institute in Palm Desert. Her top priority is improving the quality of life of her patients. Dr. Kato can be reached at: 760-565-3900.

Sources: 1) Gulya, A. Julianna: Sudden sensorineural hearing loss: an otologic emergency; 2) Comprehensive Therapy 1996; 22(4):217-221; 3) Hughes, Gordon B. et. al.: Sudden sensorineural hearing loss. Otolaryngology clinics of North America 1996; 29:393-405; 4) National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders



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## White Is Wonderful, But Unclean May Kill You

### Studies Link Periodontal Health and Heart Disease

By Lauren Del Sarto

Brushing your teeth is not only good for your smile. Recent studies indicate that it also decreases your chances of suffering a heart attack.

Researchers in England analyzed data from more than 11,000 people taking part in an 8 eight-year study called the Scottish Health Survey. They examined lifestyle habits such as smoking, overall physical activity, and oral health routines. Patients were asked how often they visited the dentist and how often they brushed their teeth.

62% of the participants said they went to a dentist every six months and 71% said they brushed their teeth twice a day. After adjusting the data for cardiovascular risk factors such as obesity, smoking, social class, and family heart disease history, the researchers found that people who admitted to brushing their teeth less frequently had a 70% higher risk of heart disease.<sup>1</sup>

"Our results confirmed and further strengthened the suggested association between oral hygiene and the risk of cardiovascular disease," said Richard Watt, DDS, of University College London. The findings of the study were not necessarily shocking, the researchers say, because scientists have increasingly wondered about a possible connection between dental disease and cardiovascular health.

Moise Desvarieux, MD, PhD of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, authored a recent study published in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association* that studied 657 people without known heart disease. He and his co-authors found that people who had higher blood levels of certain disease-causing bacteria in the mouth were more likely to have atherosclerosis in the carotid artery in the neck. Clogging of the carotid arteries can lead to stroke.

According to the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP), people with periodontal disease are almost twice as likely to have coronary artery (or heart) disease. And one study found that the presence of common problems in the mouth, including gum disease (gingivitis), cavities, and missing teeth, were as good at predicting heart disease as cholesterol levels.

Poor oral hygiene is the major cause of periodontal disease, a chronic infection of the tissues surrounding the teeth. Thus, gum infections seem to add to the inflammatory burden on the body, increasing cardiovascular risk. AAP writes that "Inflammation plays an important role in the pathogenesis of atherosclerosis, and markers of low grade inflammation have been consistently associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease."

That inflammation could be the root of the problem adds to other research suggesting that more and more diseases, including periodontal disease, heart disease, and arthritis, are partially caused by the body's own inflammatory response.<sup>2</sup>

"Annual periodontal screenings are vital to help your dentist identify issues and to educate you on potential risks for disease," advises Dr. Mo Hishmeh of Palm Desert. "Common signs include red, swollen gums that are tender to the touch; bleeding during brushing and flossing; and plaque deposits between the teeth which are often hard to reach."

Your dental professional can help you get started on a path to a healthier smile and a healthier life.

References: (1) Bill Hendrick and Elizabeth Kiodas, MD, FACC, WebMD Health News; Study is published in the journal BMJ. (2) Periodontal Disease and Heart Health Brushing and flossing may actually save your life. R. Morgan Griffin and Louise Chang, MD



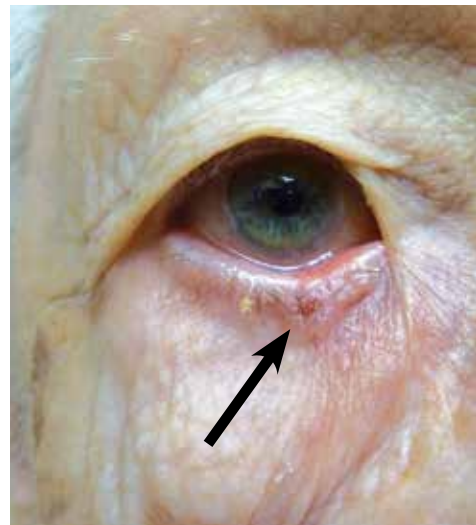


## Protection and Signs of Eyelid Cancer Often Overlooked

By Jennifer I. Hui, M.D.

The eyelids are among the thinnest, most delicate tissues of the body and are an important part of ocular health. They protect the eyes from foreign bodies and trauma, and help to keep them well lubricated.

Unfortunately, these delicate structures are often overlooked when we think about sun protection. The eyelids are best protected with the use of large sunglasses that block UVA and UVB rays as well as a wide brimmed hat. These protective measures decrease the amount of direct sunlight that reaches the eyelids, and sunglasses offer the added benefit of blocking reflected light. Both are key in reducing the number of ultraviolet rays that reaches this thin, delicate skin and thus reduce the chances of developing skin cancer, particularly in our strong desert sun.



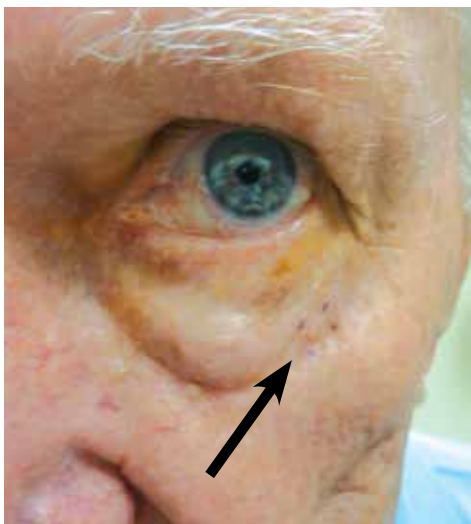
Areas of redness may appear gradually and are often overlooked. This patient's right lower eyelid has a basal cell carcinoma.

Signs of eyelid cancer are often overlooked as well. A variety of lesions may appear on the eyelids and it is important to distinguish between benign and malignant conditions. Benign lesions include skin tags, seborrheic keratoses, sunspots and nevi ("moles"). Skin tags are not cancerous but can be troublesome cosmetically. These can usually be removed in an in-office procedure if the patient desires. Seborrheic keratoses are waxy and pigmented and have a mounded, wart-like, "stuck on" appearance. They are benign and can also be removed in the office if desired. Sunspots range from benign pigmentation changes to pre-cancerous actinic keratoses. Actinic keratoses are small rough, scaly patches, that are sometimes more palpable than visible.

Moles by definition are benign. They may be pigmented or non-pigmented. Most remain stable in appearance throughout life, but some may undergo visible change. Change in appearance is a key factor and the ABCDE rule is a useful guide in evaluating this evolution. Important changes to watch for include Asymmetry (one half does not match the appearance of the other half), irregular Borders, non-uniformity of Color, Diameter larger than 1/4" (which is about the size of a pencil eraser), and Evolving appearance. A mole that seems to be changing should be evaluated to determine if further treatment is necessary.

Malignant lesions include the many different types of skin cancer that can affect the delicate eyelid tissues. As with the rest of the body, the most common cancer in this area is basal cell carcinoma. Less common types of cancer include squamous cell carcinoma, melanoma and sebaceous cell carcinoma. Important signs of skin cancer include non-healing wounds, crusting and bleeding, loss of eyelashes and/or chronic or progressive erosion or irritation of tissue. Early diagnosis and treatment are key in eyelid malignancies. Appropriate management is important in eradicating the tumor while maintaining as much normal tissue as possible. If skin cancer is diagnosed and is localized to the eyelid, removal is usually indicated. This can be performed by the Oculoplastic surgeon, or by a dermatologist trained in the Mohs technique. Once the cancer is removed, the eyelid must be reconstructed to ensure optimal function and appearance.

As we've described above, eyelid skin is thinner than in other areas of the body and thus more susceptible to sun damage. Your eyelids should be protected from the sun as much as possible. Lesions in this region can be difficult to see and are often overlooked. Any area of concern should be evaluated, preferably by a physician who is specially trained in this eye region.



Very small lesions such as this one on the left cheek may actually represent an early basal cell carcinoma.

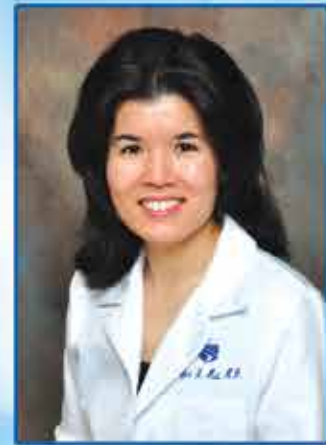


This patient has a benign nevus (mole) on the right lower lid which has gradually been increasing in size.

Dr. Hui is the founder of The Eyelid Institute in Palm Desert. She is an Oculoplastic surgeon and has a special interest in helping patients with Eyelid, Lacrimal and Orbital conditions. An Oculoplastic surgeon is a physician with combined training in Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (Oculoplastics) and Ophthalmology who has unique abilities to perform a variety of delicate procedures around the eyes. Dr. Hui can be reached at 760.610.2677.



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## "Splash into Summer Bash" to Benefit *Picture Me Happy*

In celebration of five years of service to seriously ill hospitalized children in Southern California, *Picture Me Happy* is holding a fundraising pool party at the ACE Hotel in Palm Springs. The event will take place on Sunday, May 20th and is open to the public.

Anyone who has ever spent extended time in a hospital knows that the days drag on, optimism shrinks, and boredom and depression can often set in. For approximately one million children in the United States, this is every day real life. These children are seriously ill with progressive medical conditions and reliant on the hospital for daily care and activities. Communication is limited to visits by family and friends. Excitement and hope can be a tall order.



Hospital staff and health care workers become special friends to hospitalized children.

*Picture Me Happy* brings smiles to hospital beds offering excitement, joy and a brief distraction for the normal routine of needles, nurses, doctors, tests and treatments by providing these children with a photography-based creative program. The Southern California program is quickly growing and includes UCLA's Mattel Ward, Los Angeles Children's Hospital and Miller Children's Hospital in Long Beach.



*Picture Me Happy* adds smiles to hospitalized children who desperately need them.

It is an 'Arts in Medicine' program that collaborates with the hospitals' Child Life Specialist. The program has engaged over 300 children since its inception in 2007. This year's goal is to extend the program to include a monthly visit to Loma Linda University Children's Hospital.

"Our goal is to introduce the charity to a greater public and raise much-needed funds for our 2012 programs," states co-founder Timothy Courtney of Palm Springs.

*Picture Me Happy* gives the children full control of their photographic work and the creative process. They travel about the hospital taking pictures of anything they wish and then collect the photos to create a magazine journal. "Since hospitalized children have so little control over their day, we place emphasis on inspiring and supporting each of them to take complete charge and ownership of their creativity. They are the photographer, designer, and creator of their own personal magazines," adds Courtney, "While in the creative process of *Picture Me Happy*, our participants seem to forget about their personal illness and discomforts."



The artistic freedom encouraged allows children to be anything they want to be in their personal magazine journals.

The *Splash into Summer Bash* will feature celebrity guests including Reza Farahan from *The Shahs of Sunset*, Estelle

Picture Me Happy



"Splash into Summer Bash" Fundraiser

Sunday, May 20th  
11am-4pm  
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323.854.4910

Harris from *Seinfeld* and *Project Runway* All Star, Michael Costello, with more to be announced. Past celebrity hosts include Melissa McCarthy, Marcia Cross and Ben Affleck. Guests will enjoy food and beverages and raffle prizes, and the opportunity to meet and speak with families who have benefited from the program.

There are a limited number of tickets available. General admission is \$30 in advance and \$40 at the door. Ticket sales and VIP ticket packages can be found on the *Picture Me Happy* website.

For more information or to make a donation to the program, visit [PictureMeHappy.org](http://PictureMeHappy.org). Your contribution truly helps make a brighter day for these children.

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## Vitamin Protection Against Birth Defects

By Roy M. Pitkin, MD

Supplemental vitamin-mineral preparations are consumed regularly by about half the US population, although conclusive evidence of benefit is lacking in many instances. One of those in which there is clear indication of benefit is the prevention of a particular type of birth defect (neural tube defect) when pregnant women supplement their diets with a specific vitamin (folic acid).

First, some definitions. Neural tube defect refers to an abnormality that develops early in embryonic or intrauterine life involving the tissues destined to become the central nervous system (i.e., the brain and spinal cord). The incidence of neural tube defects varies widely by geographic and socioeconomic characteristics, being highest in Ireland and Scotland where it occurs naturally in as many as 10 per thousand births (1%). In the United States, the frequency is variable (e.g., highest in the southeastern region) but overall is probably in the range of 2 or 3 per thousand births.

There are two main types of neural tube defects. Anencephaly occurs when the brain and its covering skull fail to develop; affected infants may be born alive but invariably die within a few days. Spina bifida results when the defect involves the lower end of the spinal cord; while not always fatal, it is very serious and typically causes paralysis of the legs or paraplegia, along with significant difficulties in bowel and bladder function.

The term folic acid refers to an essential nutrient, sometimes also called vitamin B-9. Essential in various metabolic functions, its requirements are especially high in rapidly-growing tissues. In foods, folic acid is present in a form called folate and the principal food sources are green, leafy vegetables, legumes, liver, and egg yolk. Because of its limited distribution, dietary surveys indicate that intake from diet is often marginal in terms of adequacy.

A possible relationship between folic

acid and neural tube defects was first suggested about 50 years ago by observations that intakes seemed low in areas with high frequencies of the defect. There have now been several studies demonstrating conclusively that supplemental folic acid to women in very early pregnancy reduces the risk of bearing a child with a neural tube defect, either anencephaly or spina bifida, by half or more. A diet high in the nutrient probably has a similar protective effect, but since dietary adequacy cannot be assumed, all pregnant women are advised to take one tablet containing 0.4 mg of folic acid daily. This dosage can be purchased over the counter and is also present in most multiple vitamin preparations.

A very important question involves when this should be initiated. The defect is believed to occur within 30 days after conception and there should be adequate blood and tissue levels of the vitamin during this time. However, this is a period when many women may not know they are pregnant. Accordingly, the recommendation is that every woman in whom there is any appreciable risk of pregnancy should consume supplemental folic acid daily, as long as there is any likelihood that she might conceive.

Roy M. Pitkin is Professor Emeritus and former Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the UCLA School of Medicine. He has served on many national bodies concerned with nutrition, including committees of the Institute of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the March of Dimes.



Roy M. Pitkin, MD

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## Health Is A Choice

Continued from page 1

Not long after, Alexis, his wife of 14 years, recommended that Trent join The Desert's Biggest Loser Contest which was hosted by Next Level Fitness of Palm Desert and the Live Well Clinic in La Quinta. The \$5,000 prize was incentive. Could he give up beer? He hadn't done that since high school and the 10-week program would be a challenge. Trent decided to bite the bullet and try.

The competition provided personal training one hour twice weekly. The remaining regiment was up to each participant, including their workout schedule and diet. Trent didn't put too much into the first week – yet he lost an incredible 16 pounds. He knew a lifetime of suds probably added water weight, but the numbers inspired him. Trent decided to take this competition seriously.

"In my 20's, I didn't appreciate the opportunities I was given. My work ethic wasn't strong. I liked staying out a little too late after games and didn't commit myself. If I had, I would probably still be playing baseball."

His thinking changed. He got up earlier and spent 2 hours in the morning working out. He rode his bike to work instead of driving. In the evenings, he didn't go to his buddy's pizza place for a slice and a beer; he returned to the gym for a spin class and another workout. He continued to eat a lot, but made healthier choices. No more fast food or junk.

Trent dedicated himself because he saw big results from simple lifestyle changes – and this time, he wasn't going to blow the opportunity. As one who never liked mundane workouts in the gym, how did Trent motivate himself day after day?

"I changed things up and kept it interesting. It wasn't long before the 'workout high' took over." The surge of endorphins your body experiences from working out can hook and further motivate you. He also tried new exercise like swimming, and loved it. During the 10 week competition, he didn't miss a day of working out. And for the first time in a long time, he felt really good.

Trent admits that he was a bit obsessive with the competition, but his wife Alexis admired his success and was very supportive, allowing Trent time to focus on his goals.

The results paid off. Trent lost an astonishing 77 pounds and won the competition. He went from 294 pounds to 217 in just two and a half months. It's important to note that these results are not normal, nor are they recommended (or considered healthy) by most health care professionals. He ate a healthy and abundant diet (an estimated 2500 – 3000 calories a day) and was monitored by Drs. Ortiz and Fung of the Live Well Clinic throughout the program maintaining – even improving - his vitals. On the final weekend of the competition, Trent participated in his first triathlon.

So the big question... where is Trent today? Rapid weight loss usually isn't maintained and a schedule like that is hard to keep. However, Trent didn't "diet" to lose almost a third of his size. He made lifestyle changes that remain with him today. Trent is now a personal trainer and likes working with clients who don't particularly like working out. His blood pressure is 130/76 and he feels better than ever.

"The exercise and healthy eating is a lifestyle for me now. I never went back to beer. From drinking a couple beers a day to absolutely nothing is huge. It's all about habits and once you make up your mind to break habits, your priorities change."

Almonds and spinach have replaced lagers and hot dogs, and he is now trying a plant-based diet. "It's an individual choice and I don't push it on family or friends. And it may not be a lifestyle choice I maintain, but healthy choices will also be a priority for me."

What is his inspiration to others? "Working out is easy. Convincing your mind to make changes is the hardest part. Start with giving up one habit and when you start seeing results, others will follow." As a trainer, his passion is inspiring others to 'convince their mind' that there are better options.

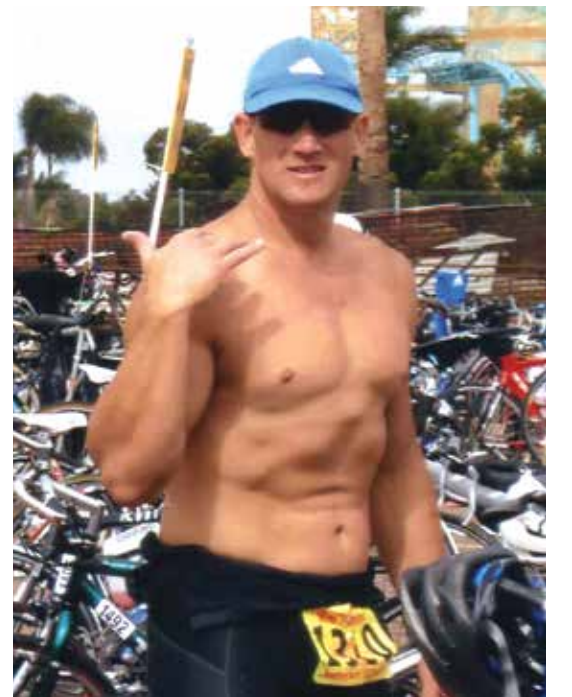
Trent is now able to do more with his two daughters, Camille (13) and Shea (10). They enjoy riding bikes (participating in Tour de Palms Springs each year as a family), hiking and playing soccer.

His greatest joy? "Knowing that I will be here for them for many years to come."

Trent Hauswirth is a certified personal trainer at the Palm Desert Athletic Club. He has an 8 pm group on Monday, Wednesday and Friday open to all (\$10 for members and \$15 for non-members per session). His clients range in age from 18 to 62. He is also certified in youth fitness and is pursuing certifications in nutrition and golf fitness. Trent can be reached at (760) 217-3212.



Trent Hauswirth at 300 pounds



Trent in his first triathlon 10 weeks later and 77 pounds lighter at 217





# One of the Lucky Ones

By Janet L. Spiegel

La Quinta resident and Contemporary American painter Tom Savage, 58, has been making and selling art most of his life. Savage's mixed media paintings are a dialogue between drawing and painting reminiscent of European Automatism, Surrealism and Abstract Expression. His work is about the poetic qualities of abstraction.

Savage was also a recipient of the prestigious Pollack-Krasner Foundation grant established at the bequest of Lee Krasner, a fellow artist and the widow of painter Jackson Pollock. This grant is coveted by those in the contemporary art world.



Contemporary American artist, Tom Savage, of La Quinta enjoying his life's passion

Yet furthering his career with the help of the grant will have to wait because four years ago, Savage was diagnosed with liver disease and was given only 3-5 years to live without a transplant. His painfully deteriorating health prevented Savage from actively pursuing his art career.

Liver disease turns your life upside down, changing everything and leaving the patient with a feeling of denial, despair and doom. The thought of an organ transplant, and figuring out how to get it, is overwhelming. But Savage wanted to live, and began rearranging his life accordingly. As did his devoted wife, who learned how to understand, cope, treat, feed and take care of someone with active, progressive liver disease.

Hard facts on how to proceed with this type of live-or-die health care are difficult to come by... four years of doctor's appointments, emergency room visits, blood tests and exhaustive poking and prodding, not to mention the paperwork, deadlines and trying to understand the complex criteria for securing a transplant.

First one learns of the scarcity of organs available for transplant in the U.S. Over

113,900 patients are waiting for an organ transplant today (a number that increases daily), and there are an additional 317,000+ patients who are on renal dialysis and not yet listed. Nationally, one person on the transplant waiting list dies every 52 minutes due to a shortage of organs.

Savage persevered, continuing to create paintings as his health permitted. In early March, his wife received "THE CALL" to check into Scripps Green Hospital in La Jolla for transplant surgery. The transplant coordinator gave the usual "don't get your hopes up" speech with the caveat that any number of things could postpone or even cancel

his transplant—the donor liver could be damaged, the match may not be right, or it could be something as mundane as a flight delay. But still, Savage was one of the lucky ones.

Many Coachella Valley residents who are desperately ill face long waits for a transplant. Patients are often denied care due to inadequate insurance coverage or their geographic location (and proximity to a transplant center). These ancillary details factor into the process of being listed before a patient is even evaluated for transplant. Sadly, not everyone who needs a liver is a candidate for transplant. Many become too sick to be transplanted and 50% of the patients who need a liver never receive one.

Savage's transplant surgery was a success and his scar is a surgical work of art. He was sitting up the day after surgery and walking two days after his transplant. Even the doctors were surprised at how well he was recuperating. Unfortunately, Savage experienced post-transplant complications which landed him back in the ICU. "Bumps in the road" are common with transplant recovery as the body works to accept the new organ. Savage was transferred from the hospital to an acute rehabilitation facility a month after his surgery and continues his recovery today.

The future looks bright for Tom Savage. Soon he will be back to focusing on his painting and taking full advantage of his coveted Pollack-Krasner grant.

*The transplant journey Tom and his wife are on has been guided by the FAIR Foundation Liver Disease & Transplant Support Group. If you have liver disease or Hepatitis C and need assistance or referral to a transplant center, please call 760-200-2766. FAIR meetings are held on the second Monday of every month at 11am at the Portola Community Center, 45480 Portola Avenue in Palm Desert. The service is free to patients and their caregivers.*

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## Integrative Health Care: How Does It Work?

By Lauren Del Sarto

Thomas Reynolds, MD is a primary care physician, internist and oncologist who specializes in geriatric and cancer care. Shannon Sinsheimer, ND, is a licensed naturopathic doctor focusing on primary and integrative patient care. Over the past several years, Drs. Reynolds and Sinsheimer have been working together on patient care. I sat down with them to generate a better understanding of how these two professionals integrate their knowledge and practices.

### What brought about your association?

**TR:** Our patients. We shared patients who felt we should meet and work together. And when I observe patients whose quality of life is greatly improved because of complementary therapies, I take notice. And as time goes on, side effects from drugs are becoming more and more obvious and of greater concern. I feel it is time medical doctors consider other available options that may be in a client's best interest. Dr. Sinsheimer is exceptionally well-trained from the most reputable and longest standing naturopathic college in the country. I cannot learn what she knows and she can't learn what I know.

**SS:** I am passionate about naturopathic care and what it does for people, but I am realistic in that we cannot live in a world without allopathic medicine. There is a time and place for pharmaceutical medication; however, it is overused and over-prescribed in our country. In a perfect health care world, I see naturopathic doctors working in conjunction with medical doctors for patient care. I find Dr. Reynolds to be one of several MDs here locally who truly takes the time to listen to their patients. Instead of ignoring how a patient has achieved above average results, he researches it and wants to understand it for his patient's benefit.

**TR:** I have always told people that natural immunity and healthy living will enhance the body's own natural mechanisms to help fight disease, and naturopathic care promotes that effort.

### What are some of the conditions you treat jointly?

**SS:** People with chronic care conditions that are only currently managed by medication including irritable bowel syndrome and other gastrointestinal disorders; chronic fatigue syndrome; chronic allergies; integrative cancer care; autoimmune diseases and arthritis to name a few.

**TR:** Many drugs for these conditions have damaging side effects and minimal long term benefits. It is in the client's best interest to get off of these medications if at all possible, and as naturopathic care focuses on diet and supplementation, achieving overall wellness, this is often achievable.

**SS:** Another category for integrative care is anxiety and depression. These conditions can often be helped by dietary changes, and supplements such as essential fatty and amino acids.

**TR:** I absolutely agree. And medications for these conditions are not recommended for long term use.

### How do you work together on cancer care for patients?

**TR:** Our first shared client had stage 3C ovarian cancer and was extremely involved with both medical and alternative approaches to her care, which included 3 surgeries over 5 years. At this point, she is cancer free. You have to respect these results.

**SS:** She has stated on several occasions that she feels certain her body would never have made it through all the medical procedures without the integrative care which included diet, nutritional supplements and IV therapy.

**TR:** And with such care, it is important that the team of practitioners communicate and work together.

**SS:** For the mere fact alone that there are some supplements you need to stop taking during chemotherapy.

**TR:** We will never prove that our working together has truly added to her life, but both Dr. Sinsheimer and I believe that we have, as does our patient.

### How about clients with say, arthritis pain?

**SS:** I prescribe an anti-inflammatory diet and there are a series of homeopathic creams we use on the affected areas. I use a combination of proteolytic enzymes, turmeric, boswellia, ginger and bromelain. Treatment sometimes includes a chiropractic referral as warranted.

**TR:** Choices from my line of work as a doctor are epidurals which we find have decreasing efficacy as you go along; pain medications; and surgery, which is usually the last resort. Why not try natural remedies before or in conjunction with these therapies, which are less than desirable for long term effects.

### What are you seeing with integrative care in the industry?

**TR:** In my medical literature, I read daily about drugs that provide "disease free survival," but it is not overall survival. As an oncologist, many of my clients are unfortunately told that nothing more can be done from the traditional medical perspective and without intervention, their remaining time in this world can be filled with toxic drugs that only take away from their overall survival. An integrated approach can add to the quality of life for overall survival.

**SS:** What I have found anecdotally is that patients who do integrative therapeutics fare far better than those who do not in terms of energy, overall feeling of wellness, quality of life, and progression of their illness. Yet time and time again, I hear patients' physicians tell them, "I don't know why you are doing so well, but stop everything else you are doing." It makes no sense, but things are beginning to change. There is nothing better you can give a chronically ill person than remedies that will help their body fight their disease and, in the case of cancer, the medical treatments that are often necessary for survival.

Integrative patient care is a growing trend here in the desert, and I commend Drs. Reynolds and Sinsheimer on their mutual respect and the success they are experiencing with and for their patients.



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## Beyond Mammography: What's New in Breast Cancer Prevention

By Nicole Ortiz, ND

Breast cancer steals the lives of over 40,000 people a year despite the enormous amount of new research and continued evolution of treatments. Bottom line, prevention remains the single best approach.

Regular screening for breast masses is unanimously recommended by every primary care doctor in this country. That said, the most common screening tool, mammography, is debated regarding its true benefits and limitations. Many leading physicians and medical journal publications have questioned whether mammography should be touted so highly. Since the incidence of breast cancer is not declining, are there other options that should be considered?

Some doctors choose to complement traditional mammography with Digital Infrared Thermography (IR) and genomic testing. These two relatively new testing tools give us another layer of prevention in the focus on breast cancer. Locally, accomplished surgical oncologist Philip Bretz, MD offers these tests. Dr. Bretz is the founder of the Desert Breast and Osteoporosis Institute and an acclaimed researcher in the field of breast cancer, including his current research on IR.

Dr. Bretz explains that IR combined with genomic testing has the ability to find micro breast cancers before they even have a chance to spread. Currently IR is FDA approved when used with other diagnostic modalities like mammography, MRI, or ultrasound.

IR works both on the theory that tumors generate increased blood supply to "feed" themselves extra nutrients required in unrestrained growth. These areas will appear as thermal hot spots on the breast image. Dr. Bretz explains,

"a patient gets two scores which are not subjective (an important difference from mammography and ultrasound). IR is based on military algorithms and the computer interprets the score. There are seven categories according to different regions of the breast. The overall personal score is from 1-10, and the higher your score the more abnormal the computer perceives your tissue. In addition there is the neural network score. This is a database of about 3,000 patients with a known score and tissue correlated with the score.

The advantages of Infrared Thermography are numerous. IR emits NO radiation exposure and no painful compression of the breast, and has the ability to pick up cancers as small as 4 mm. The smallest cancer that IR has detected was found a full 3 years before mammography or MRI detection.

Not everyone in the medical community agrees that IR technologies are an accurate screening tool for breast cancer, and the quality of thermal imaging cameras varies throughout the country. I look forward to the continued research in alternative screening methods such as IR and genetic testing to deepen the breast cancer detection protocol at the earliest stage possible.

For more information on IR, you can visit [desertbreastinstitute.com](http://desertbreastinstitute.com). The doctors at Live Well Clinic utilize this screening method as part of their integrative wellness exams for women of all ages.

Dr. Nicole Ortiz is an Integrative Primary Care Doctor and co-founder of Live Well Clinic. For more info visit [www.livewell-clinic.org](http://www.livewell-clinic.org) or call 760-771-5970.

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Drs. Nicole Ortiz and Sonja Fung



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## Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy: Can It Turn Back the Clock?

By Mark Aronauer

Nobody enjoys the little signs of aging we see when looking in the mirror each morning. We spend billions of dollars a year on products and surgeries to help us look and feel younger: hair re-growth products, dyes to hide the grey, anti-wrinkle face and eye creams, cosmetic injections, surgeries and more.

Yet none of these products or procedures actually stop the biological clock, or regrow that within us which has diminished with age. Wouldn't it be wonderful if after generations of searching, we actually did discover a true fountain of youth? As noted in *Desert Health's* lead story, Dr. Andrews' work certainly looks promising and may lead to that discovery in our lifetime.

In today's modern medicine, there is a therapy that is proven to offer anti-aging benefits through healing or regrowth of damaged cells: hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT). In HBOT, patients breathe 100% pure oxygen while the pressure of the treatment chamber is slowly increased. Pressurized oxygen is delivered into the chamber, which increases the pressure of oxygen within a person's body as much as 15 times normal tissue saturation. Each cell is literally saturated with 100% pure oxygen, accelerating the body's natural healing processes.

Oxygen therapy can help to jump start the body's antioxidant defenses, boost metabolism, and counteract low oxygen levels that lead to sluggish cell activity and oxidative stress. Research has shown that it can also help to improve the efficiency of hemoglobin in transporting oxygen around the body; improve blood flow by helping to keep cell membranes flexible; suppress inflammation; and detoxify and fight infection by destroying bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi that thrive in low-oxygen environments.

HBOT is also commonly used in treating many age-related diseases and conditions such as stroke, rheumatoid Arthritis and cancer treatment recovery.

In addition to its often lifesaving work in the medical industry, HBOT is gaining widespread recognition for its success in treating a breadth of cosmetic concerns. Regular treatment is widely thought to increase aging skin elasticity and

to stimulate collagen production which, over time, can improve skin texture and reduce the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, and scars. Plastic surgeons often prescribe the therapy to enhance recovery from reconstructive surgery.

But true aging goes beyond those fine lines and wrinkles.

Scientists have found that the chromosomes in our cells progressively shorten each time the cell divides. Eventually, the chromosomes can shorten no further and stop dividing. When this happens, the cells become senescent (sleepy) and die. In premature aging, the lifespan is shortened due to the effects of various stressors to the human body. The most obvious, and often the most common, are alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. These substances have a tremendous aging effect on the human body and can cause progressive 'wounding.'

In his book, *The Oxygen Revolution*, Dr. Paul G. Harch expresses that hyperbaric oxygen therapy will "likely become most appreciated by those Baby Boomers whose life spans have been compromised by years of drug experimentation in the 1960s and 1970s." Wounds in the brain register as areas of low blood flow and low oxygenation, which cause decreased neurological function. Most commonly, this decreased neurological function leads to the premature aging diagnosis we call dementia.

Dr. Harch calls HBOT a "generic drug for repair of brain wounds." The stereotypic chronic brain wound typically responds well to low pressures of hyperbaric oxygen treatments. What Drs. Neubauer, Harch, and others have shown in the past 30 years is that these premature aging wounds can be repaired for improvement neurologically, cognitively, behaviorally, and emotionally.

Repairing these chronic wounds is considered by many to be a reversal of premature aging by use of HBOT, aiding in prolonging longevity and an enhanced quality of life.

Considering that it delivers a natural substance which helps our body repair itself and has many significant medical benefits, including mending our DNA, it is easy to see why a growing population is

utilizing hyperbaric oxygen as an anti-aging therapy.

For more information on hyperbaric oxygen therapy for anti-aging and other conditions, visit [www.DesertHyperbaricMedicine.com](http://www.DesertHyperbaricMedicine.com) or call 760.773.3899.

Sources: 1) *The Oxygen Revolution*. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy: The Groundbreaking New Treatment. Paul G. Harch, MD. 2007. 2) [www.altmd.com/Articles/Hyperbaric-Oxygen-Therapy-HBOT-for-Anti-Aging/](http://www.altmd.com/Articles/Hyperbaric-Oxygen-Therapy-HBOT-for-Anti-Aging/); 3) <http://hyperbaricrx.com/hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy-articles/1hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy-for-anti-aging/>



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## Sometimes You Just Have to "Sweat it Out"

By Lauren Del Sarto

You don't have to go far for a little sweat this time of year, but sometimes a "good sweat" is what you really need. Many think that the best part of sweating is ridding your body of toxins, but that is not always the case.

Sweat does contain trace amounts of toxins, says Dr. Dee Anna Glaser, a professor of dermatology at St. Louis University and founding member of the International Hyperhidrosis Society, a medical group dedicated to the study and treatment of heavy sweating. Glaser adds that the real purpose of sweating is to cool down your body when your temperature rises, and that the liver and kidneys – not the sweat glands – are the organs we count on to filter heavy toxins from our blood.

Yet those who enjoy a good sweat disagree. They feel so much better afterwards. So what are the real benefits?

### Cleansing Your Body

The physical act of sweating is therapeutic for your body. Although it may not be proven to filter heavy toxins from your blood, sweating is your body's natural response to ridding itself of toxins.

Experts stress that a fever isn't an illness; it's your body's response to help fight infection. Setting the body's thermostat a few degrees higher slows the reproduction of bacteria and viruses and boosts white blood cells.<sup>1</sup>

Ever sweat after a night of drinking? This is another good example of your body's natural response to rid toxins. When you consume alcohol, it dilates your blood vessels which increase your overall body heat and temperature. As a result, the body tries to restore itself back to normal temperature by sweating.

### Beauty Benefits

Skin care begins with good diet and proper exercise. However, sweating also helps. Your skin is your largest organ and sweating helps it to stay active. Sweat contains small amounts of antibiotics that combat some of the bacteria found naturally on the skin. Sweating also unclogs pores which will help improve the skin's tone, clarity and texture. Clogged pores can cause break outs and pimples, rashes and other skin infections. By sweating out these toxins, your skin stays cleaner and, over time, will appear to look healthier.<sup>2</sup>

University of Mississippi Medical Center professor Dr. Ben H. Douglas, author of the book, "Ageless: Living Younger Longer," indicates sweating is a way of energizing the skin. He explains that sweating bathes skin cells with a liquid rich in nutrients. The nutrients and minerals in sweat are essential to maintaining the

collagen structure of the skin; sweating on a regular basis staves off the collagen breakdown that results in wrinkles and sags. Just ask those who practice Bikram (or hot) Yoga and often cite 'a natural facial' as one of its many benefits.

### Lower Stress and Reduce Pain

As the body heats up and goes through the process of sweating, circulation is increased and endorphins are released. Endorphins are proven to have a positive effect on mood and stress levels. They are also the body's naturally-produced pain relieving chemicals and can limit the pain of both muscle soreness and arthritis. The high temperatures and increased circulation may also help loosen tight muscles and eliminate lactic acid after exercise.<sup>3</sup>

### Important Additives

**Moisture.** Breathing dry air can create tiny fissures in nasal passages and membranes allowing bacteria into your bloodstream causing illness, according to Kim Tang of Bikram Yoga University Village in Palm Desert. She adds that the benefits of breathing humidified air include keeping the throat and nasal passages clear and aiding in the transfer of oxygen to the blood system. Humidity adds moisture to your lungs and skin which is essential in the dry desert. Your gym or club steam room may be the answer for a less strenuous session.

**Oxygen.** Deep breathing is encouraged when you exercise to deliver oxygen to every cell in your body. Therapies such as ozone saunas offer a low exertion option and are often recommended by wellness practitioners. They utilize a specially designed steam cabinet to accommodate an inflow of oxygen, which mixes with the steam to help heal the body.<sup>4</sup>

**Electrolytes.** The balance of the electrolytes in our bodies is essential for the normal function of our cells and our organs.<sup>5</sup> Common electrolytes include sodium, potassium, chloride, and bicarbonate. When you sweat, you lose these nutrients and it is important to replenish them. Fortunately there are many sugarless electrolyte-enhanced beverages on the market such as Smartwater or Elete electrolyte additive.

So is sweating beneficial? Yes. However it is important to note that persons suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, or circulatory disease should consult a physician before excessive exercise or using a steam room or sauna.

References: 1) WSJ. Sweating Out a Fever: Focus on Symptoms, Not Just the Number on the Thermometer, Doctors Advise. MELINDA BECK. March 1, 2011; 2) Nov. 5, 2001 online publication of Nature Immunology, research from Eberhard Karls University in Germany; 3) Livestrong.com; 4) The Oxygen Prescription by Nathaniel Altman. 2007. 5) Medicinenet.com



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"After several years of working out at the gym, I was unable to match the results with just several months of Bikram Yoga. In just 2 months I have already achieved 50% of my weight loss goal (20- 25lbs). This works! I feel calm and more relaxed than I ever have"

— Joe Caffery, Palm Springs

"If you had told me that at age 77 I would be doing Bikram Yoga at 105 degrees and 40% humidity, I would have laughed at you. Well, I've been doing it five times a week for the past two months and I haven't felt this good in 30 years!"

— Ed Monarch, former Mayor, Indian Wells

"I had cervical spine surgery a few months back which involved getting a fusion and an artificial disc. While healing I was limited in doing certain things, one of which was bending over. This caused great tension in my neck and back and loss of flexibility in my back and legs. The instructors at BYUV are aware of my situation and have been extremely caring and have shown me how to get great relief while still following the doctors' orders. The more I go, the more I realize the best part of the day is walking out of class and feeling absolutely fantastic. It is for this reason that I now know that Bikram needs to be part of my life because as I continue down the road to recovery, I am doing so pain free!"

—Kathy Valentine, Rancho Mirage

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## Genetic Make-up Plays Key Role in Health Care of the Future

By John R. Dixon, D.C., C.C.N, Dipl.Ac

There is little doubt that health care in the future will be patient centered, personalized and focused on improving function throughout the body and not just addressing symptoms. The days of "one size fits all" treatment plans are coming to an end. Health care is moving away from simply naming a disease and treating the symptoms, and now seeks to understand a disease's origins, mechanisms and causes.

Some of the new key sciences involved in personalized health care include Nutrigenomics, Pharmagenomics and Toxicogenomics. These terms may sound a bit intimidating to comprehend but a basic understanding is very important for you and your family.

Nutrigenomics is defined as the study of the interaction between your genetic makeup and the nutrients you consume. It is the understanding of how your genetic variations influence nutrient absorption, metabolism, and biologic function. This form of genotyping can help determine which foods and food supplements you should consume to optimize your health and prevent or minimize your risk for metabolic diseases.

The most important factor influencing your gene expression throughout the day is your diet. Eating less, eating fewer animal products, more vegetables, and limiting your consumption of alcohol are a few simple changes that can positively influence your genes. Additionally, your unique genetic makeup may require that you consume a greater amount of folic acid, vitamin B12, calcium, or vitamin D than the average person to minimize your risk for certain disease processes. Nutrigenomics at the patient level requires individual study and observation.

Pharmacogenomics is commonly known amongst researchers in the pharmaceutical industry, and is generally defined as the study of how genetic differences can affect individual responses to a single drug or a group of drugs, in terms of their therapeutic effect and potential adverse effects. This is of particular interest when working to improve drug safety. Identifying one's genetic variants can be used as predictors of drug toxicity and/or effectiveness, and is particularly useful in determining the effectiveness of certain anticancer drugs. Adverse drug reactions caused by the failure to predict toxicity in individuals, and toxic drug-drug interactions, now account for 100,000 patient deaths, 2 million hospitalizations, and \$100 billion in health care costs to the United States every year. It has also been postulated that as many as 20% to 40% of people receiving pharmaceutical agents may be receiving the wrong drug based on their genetic profile and their ability to metabolize pharmaceuticals.

Toxicogenomics is a field of science that is often included with Pharmacogenom-

ics. It is defined as the study of how genetic variations and weaknesses affect your ability to detoxify foreign chemicals from our environment. These toxic agents are sometimes referred to as Xenobiotics and can include, but are not limited to, pharmaceuticals. Environmental toxic agents such as PCB's, organochlorine pesticides, PBDE fire retardants, furans, and dioxins, are just a few of the toxins known to be implicated in metabolic diseases.

Each person has a unique set of detoxifying enzymes in their body that are controlled by their genes. Variations in these enzymes can predispose an individual to illness and disease at much higher rates due to their inability to detoxify foreign chemicals. A natural way to increase detoxifying enzymes is through a patient's diet. Diets high in cruciferous vegetables including broccoli, cabbage, and brussel sprouts contain a family of nutrient compounds called glucosinolates. These compounds support detoxification of foreign chemicals.

Experts estimate that the majority of medical evaluations in the future will be based (at least in part) on genetic testing. This is attributed to information gathered from the Human Genome Project. This research project was begun in 1990 and completed in 2004 by the National Institutes of Health to identify all of the approximately 20,000-30,000 genes in human DNA. There are several companies that use the information derived from this project to offer the public take-home genetic testing kits. Most of these companies have an internet presence while others are available through network marketing entities. Some experts have expressed caution regarding the use of these take home tests. They believe that nutrigenomic testing lacks scientific evidence to fully justify conclusions and recommendations based on test results. Nevertheless, that has not deterred the public demand for genetic testing or the companies that offer it.

Although genetic testing is a relatively new science, I believe it can be helpful and useful. The field of Toxicogenomics is also in its infancy, but several labs have begun to offer toxicogenomic assays to help in evaluating a patient's genetic risk for toxin-mediated illness. In other words, if you work in proximity to toxic substances and suffer from chronic illness, you could be predisposed to becoming ill due to your genetic inability to break down toxins. If you decide to undergo genetic testing, be sure to share the results with your health care provider. Remember to be proactive and informed about your health.

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

Sources: 1) Laboratory Evaluations for integrative and functional medicine, Lord et al; 2008; 2) Textbook of Functional Medicine, Jones et al; 2005 3) The integration of molecular diagnostics with therapeutics, Medscape.com

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## Longevity and Traditional Chinese Medicine

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

Longevity, as understood in the West, relates to the duration of life. It doesn't always consider the quality of that long life. Longevity, or "Chang Shou," in China is used to connote the length in years and the blessings of having quality of life unmarred by pain, disease and stress. In looking for ways to live long, healthy lives, the ancient Chinese found some very interesting and effective endeavors.

Self-care techniques and specific acupuncture procedures were tested extensively. The ancient emperors were particularly interested in learning ways to keep healthy, live long and maintain virility. The oldest book of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is called "haung di nei jing" and is derived from conversations between the emperor and his chief physician.

This common human desire of defying age drove the ancient Chinese and Taoist masters to study and develop a wide range of anti-aging herbs and formulas. Herbs are still widely used in TCM to enhance the immune system and slow down aging, and western science is catching on, proving these ancient remedies to be effective still today.

Through the use of specific herbal formulas, self-care techniques, and the stimulation of specific acupuncture points, people can live longer, more energetic lives.

In recent years, the role that stress plays in the development of disease has increased. During a stressful time the body produces an increased amount of cortisol which supplies cells with extra energy that may be needed during times of stress. For reasons that are unclear, this reaction may be accompanied by a decrease in the activities of the lymphatic organs including the thymus, lymph nodes, and spleen. Simultaneously, the number of lymphocytes in the blood tends to decrease. Since these white blood cells defend the body against infection, a person who is under stress may have a lowered resistance to disease.

Although it is not possible to prevent stress completely, we can reduce it. Taoist philosophy views a person as an energy system wherein body and mind are unified, each balancing the other. They believe that there is a universal life energy called "qi" present in every living creature. Acupuncture restores balance to the body, promotes qi flow, and stimulates our natural healing mechanisms. Acupuncture can also calm the nerves and restore and enhance function to various organs. It is especially helpful in digestive disorders.

In TCM, creating a life and work space conducive to health and wellness is crucial to achieving longevity. Feng Shui is the ancient art of creating a healthy environment.

Although there are many theories of anti-aging in traditional Chinese medicine, the most important is the association of aging and decreased immuno-function. The function of the kidney involves the immune system, endocrine system, reproductive system, and nervous system. The principle of oriental medical anti-aging treatment – both with acupuncture and herbs - is to tonify and regulate Kidney Qi and in turn, enhance the immune system to prevent aging.

There are many formulas for enhancing longevity in traditional Chinese medicine. The main ingredients of these formulas are herbs such as Huang qi; astragalus, which can significantly lower blood pressure and reduce proteinuria in the kidneys (and is the key



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ingredient in T65, a newly distributed anti-aging drug said to reverse the signs of aging); ren shen or ginseng root, which in lab research prevents human cell's aging and extends the life cycle of amniotic cells and slows their regressive change; and Wu jia pi, Acanthopanax root bark (Siberian Ginseng) which increases the non-specific immune system, regulates the imbalance of the endocrine system, controls red and white blood cells and blood pressure, and also has the indication of anti-radiation, detoxification and anti-oxidation in cells.

One of the most famous Chinese formulas is Shou Wu Chi, which has been shown to reverse graying of hair (the name literally means black hair). Its main ingredient polygoum, is now known to be a good source of resveratrol, one of science's latest anti-aging miracle elements.

The health of your internal organs reflects in your face. An entire branch of TCM practice uses someone's facial appearance as part of assessing his underlying health. Because there is such a strong relationship between inner health and outer beauty, looking and feeling younger, which have long been goals in Asian culture, go hand in hand. This is achieved by a total approach of diet, stress management, herbs, acupuncture and environmental improvements. Live right, live healthy, live long. And don't forget to be kind and to laugh often!

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



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## Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco



### Soak in the Effects of Aloe Vera

The desert summer is upon us. Our skin dries out and is more susceptible to the ravages of heat and sun. This means extra precaution needs to be taken to treat the skin in caring ways.

The most readily-available natural remedy we have at our fingertips (because it grows abundantly in our desert climate) is aloe vera. Derived from the Arabic word *aloe* for "bitter", the aloe plant produces a bitter liquid that was often ingested in ancient times. From 68 to 30 B.C. Cleopatra used the gel on her skin as protection from the sun. In modern times, we need more protection from the sun than aloe vera, yet these healing plants are still beneficial in numerous ways.

Known as "lily of the desert", the aloe plant is 95% water. The remaining ingredients are amino acids, essential oil, minerals, vitamins, enzymes and glycoproteins. These ingredients are often what we look for in just one over the counter product... and they are all housed in a plant in our backyard! The useful part of aloe for topical application is the gel. This is obtained from the cells in the center of the leaf. This topical remedy can be used to treat burns, frostbite, psoriasis, cold sores, skin damage caused by cancer radia-



tion and wounds. There is supporting evidence that aloe is able to affect circulation in the tiny blood vessels in the skin to increase productivity of blood flow and have anti-bacterial qualities.

The wonderful attributes of this resilient plant ensure that regardless of the temperature and climate of our desert, the plant is obtainable. Aloe can withstand freezing air temperatures and severe drought, so it can weather extreme environmental conditions and emerge unscathed. In previous issues the benefits of lavender oil were reviewed. The combination of aloe and lavender oil is an amazing balm for a burn. We tend to forget about the profound healing effects from the simplest, natural resources.

Harvested commercially, aloe is a multi-billion dollar business and a key ingredient in many cosmetics that we purchase. Aloe is also one of the most widely used substances to treat bruises and burns. So why not give it a try? Snip off a juicy aloe leaf and scoop out the meaty center where the healing juice resides. Your skin will appreciate the benefits of this age old natural remedy!

## Cardiovascular Benefits of a Plant-based Diet

By **Lori L. Kirshner, MD** and **Peter H. Spiegel, MD**

Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death in the US. Growing scientific evidence supports plant-based, or vegan, diets in halting and even reversing cardiovascular disease. There is also increasing interest among the public about the purported health benefits of vegan diets, in part due to many celebrities who have publicly gone vegan. With this come numerous misconceptions about plant-based diets. In this article we outline the cardiovascular benefits you may enjoy upon consuming a healthy, low fat, plant-based diet.

Meat, eggs and dairy contain cholesterol and saturated fats, which aid in the

artery involvement increases stroke risk. Even worse, saturated fat, predominant in animal food products, stimulates the production of more cholesterol.

Many people underestimate how much saturated fat they consume. For example, approximately 70% of the calories in cheese are from fat. Even in skinless chicken, 23% of the calories derive from fat. In contrast, less than 10% of calories in grains, beans, fruits and vegetables are from fat, and these foods are cholesterol-free.

Fiber is also important in this equation. Animal-based foods add no fiber to the diet. Plant-based foods are rich in fiber which decreases both the absorption and production of cholesterol. Good fiber sources include oats, barley, beans, fruits and vegetables.

Research by Dr. Dean Ornish and others demonstrates that coronary artery disease can be stopped and even reversed by adopting a low-fat plant-based diet. Many people can reduce their need for angioplasties, coronary artery stents, and bypass surgeries by changing their diets. Health care providers now understand the power of plant-based diets in reducing the atherosclerotic disease process, something procedures and surgeries cannot do. Big bonus for patients – the adoption of a plant-based diet often automatically results in weight loss, lower blood pressure and increased energy levels!

A common misconception is that plant-based diets don't provide adequate pro-

tein or calcium. In fact, you get ample amounts of protein in whole, natural plant-based foods such as soy, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, whole grains. What you will not get is the excessive amount of protein found in the typical western



diet, which can lead to osteoporosis and other health issues. Additionally, many leafy green vegetables and beans are rich in calcium, and in a form better absorbed

than in dairy.

It is easy to get started on a vegan diet. Try doing it with a family member or friend and commit to at least a three-week trial. Your taste buds will change as you come to enjoy the lighter, healthier tastes, and you will feel better and more energetic than ever before.

Recommended: *Forks Over Knives*, the film documentary by T. Collin Campbell, author of *The China Study* and Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr., MD of the Cleveland Clinic.

Dr. Kirshner is an Ophthalmologist and host of the nationally syndicated radio show, *Animals Today*. She is Founder and President of *Advancing the Interests of Animals*. Dr. Spiegel specializes in Pediatric Ophthalmology, produces *Animals Today*, and serves as Vice President of *Advancing the Interests of Animals*. Their websites are [www.animalstodayradio.com](http://www.animalstodayradio.com), [www.aanimals.org](http://www.aanimals.org), and [www.focusonyouvision.com](http://www.focusonyouvision.com).



development of atherosclerosis. Cholesterol is, of course, needed by our bodies for many essential functions, but our livers manufacture all the cholesterol we need. Excess cholesterol promotes the formation of cholesterol plaques on the inner surfaces of our arteries in the body. When the coronary arteries are affected, heart attack risk increases and carotid

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## Can Children Benefit from Chiropractic Care?

By Eric Davenport, DC

It is unlikely that you will ever see a young child bend over to pick up a toy and freeze in pain saying, "Oh no, my back just went out again." Generally, conditions that will cause such a pain do not appear in children, but it may have started there.

Chiropractic care can play an important role in the healthy development of a growing child. From infancy to adulthood, thousands of children are adjusted by chiropractors daily. The chiropractic profession practices a drug-free, hands-on approach to health and wellness that includes treating general health through nervous system function by correcting vertebral subluxation.<sup>5</sup> Vertebral subluxation complex (VSC) or subluxation, is a tiny, often painless physical misalignment of a

spinal bone that can interfere with physical and emotional health.<sup>4</sup> Subluxation is primarily caused by stress, whether physical, emotional or chemical.

Stressors in an infant's and/or child's spine can start in pregnancy, if the delicate spine is harmed by a condition known as in-utero constraint. Including breech position, in-utero constraint can create abnormal stressors to the fetus by one or



more degrees. This stress to the baby can result in spinal asymmetry and/or vertebral subluxation with long standing consequences.<sup>1</sup>

The use of drugs, vaccines, or epidurals, as well as extraction methods such as forceps and C-section deliveries, can also affect a child's spine and overall health. Injury to the spine has been associated with common newborn health issues such as colic, poor appetite, earaches or ear infections, colds and more.<sup>2</sup>

In their early years, children grow from helpless infants to fearless explorers, incurring bumps and falls as they learn the world around them. Consistent and repeated jars to the spine can accumulate as repetitive stress injuries to the nervous system and cause lasting effects that may be detrimental to normal bone growth and cause various body systems to malfunction.

The purpose of the spine is to house and protect a child's nervous system, which is

made up of the brain, spinal cord and associated nerves.<sup>2</sup> Like a computer, the brain sends signals through nerves down the spinal cord to the muscles, organs and glands. Vertebral subluxation may occur when what seem like normal, minor falls cause small vertebrae of the spine or pelvis to move out of alignment. This in turn may interfere with the nerve impulses getting to a child's muscles, organs and glands. With gentle adjustments, a family chiropractor may safely move the vertebra back into place, restoring normal joint and nervous system function, and allowing the body to work properly for a child's well-being.

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

References: 1) Anrig, C., D.C., Plaugher, G., D.C., Pediatric Chiropractic, pp. 97-98; 2) Anrig, C., Why Does Your Child Need Chiropractic Care. Generations 2010; 3) Cunningham, G., Leveno, K., et al. Williams Obstetrics, 23 Ed. Pp. 464-489.; 4) Lantz CA. The vertebral subluxation complex. Int'l. Rev. of Chiropractic. Sep/Oct 1989;37-61. 5) www.acatoday.org

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## Gilda's Club Adds New Programs for Families Affected by Cancer

By Anita Roark

"You have cancer." Those are three words nobody wants to hear. They can change a person's life in an instant, and make us feel fearful and anxious, alone in this world, and out of control. What most patients need is not only the very best and most advanced medical care, but also solid emotional and social support—support that's so critical that a 2007 report of the Institute of Medicine deemed it to be just as important as medical care. The IOM concluded, "Today, it is not possible to deliver good-quality cancer care without addressing a patient's psychosocial health needs."


Residents of the Coachella Valley are extremely fortunate to have access to the high-quality, professionally led programs of cancer support offered by Gilda's Club Desert Cities, an affiliate of the Cancer Support Community. And there are no financial barriers. The entire program is offered free of charge to everyone who needs it, thanks to the generous contributions of individuals and foundations, grant funding, and income from fundraising events.

Best of all, Gilda's Club extends their support not just to the person with the cancer, but to their family as well. Recently the programs serving families have been expanded in a number of ways, making it possible for even more people to participate. For example, to accommodate those who work, a full range of support groups has been added on Thursday evenings at the main Gilda's Club location in Cathedral City. There are separate groups for those living with cancer, their loved ones, and those who have lost someone to cancer. Two Spanish-language support groups—one for cancer patients, the other for their loved ones—are now offered as well. Currently there is a special "Kid Support" program for children aged 6 to 13 whose parent or relative has cancer. This special 10-week long kids-only course and the regular year-round children's "Noogie Nights" sessions are held in English and Spanish.


The new Thursday evening support groups augment regular daytime programming, which includes weekly support groups as well as classes in yoga, meditation and tai chi. Additional monthly groups including a post-treatment support group called "Life After Treatment" and "Couples During Cancer," for couples managing the changing dynamics of their relationship when cancer enters the picture, are now held on Monday evenings.

At Gilda's Club, there are programs for everyone affected by cancer. All it takes to get started is to attend a brief orientation and tour of the nurturing, homelike environment of the facility. If you or a loved one has recently heard the words, "You have cancer," then call Program Director Litsa Mitchell, LMFT at 760-770-5678 and get the emotional, educational and social support you need right now—support, that, as the Institute of Medicine reminds us, is as important as medical care.

Gilda's Club Desert Cities, an affiliate of the Cancer Support Community, is located at 67-625 East Palm Canyon Drive, Ste. 7A in Cathedral City, and programs are also available off-site throughout the Coachella Valley. For more information, call 760-770-5678 or go to [www.gildasclubdesertcities.org](http://www.gildasclubdesertcities.org).



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### 'Health Career Connection' Offers Summer Internships

Students thrive with mentors and a clear economic path to a career. This summer, numerous local health care industry partners are stepping up to provide both mentorship and paid internships (JOBS) for twenty local undergraduate health science majors.

Health Career Connection (HCC) was founded in 1990 by a group of health care executives who were deeply committed to empowering young people to pursue health-oriented careers while also increasing diversity in the health care industry. They themselves had the "life changing experience" of having their education and careers launched by participation in a summer internship program that was then called the Fellowship Retention Program in Health Administration. The funding for this original program ran out in the late 1980's. HCC was their way of providing others with similar opportunities.

In 1990, HCC's founders started a small Northern California summer internship program based on the Fellowship Retention Program Model and operated it on a volunteer basis until 2000. Each year the program would have a profound impact on the interns and the host organizations. Year to year the interest in the program from undergraduates and organizations alike increased, as did the number of interns who went on to graduate school and who were often employed by host organizations.

In 2000 one of the HCC founders, Jeff Oxendine, was working as a health executive at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He saw significant need to support undergraduate students interested in pursuing health careers, particularly among minority students. He launched a Boston internship program and HCC was

launched as the platform for a national program. Based on the success of the Boston program for both students and participating organizations, HCC launched its Central California Valley Program in 2008 and its Coachella Valley regional CVEP Partnership Program in 2010.

In all HCC areas, undergraduate college students from the local region and others who want to work in that area are provided opportunities to gain invaluable exposure, experience and mentoring, within health care organizations and the local community.

In 2010, California announced the need for 10,000 additional Health IT workers statewide in the private and public health care sectors. To meet that demand for qualified, educated health workers, HCC partnered with the California Health Workforce Alliance and the State of California Department of Health and Human Services to launch an HIT Fellowship Program.

HCC plans to increase the scale of its programs in current locations and to expand to other regions in coming years. In the Coachella Valley, local health care industry partners have invested significant time and resources to make HCC a long-lasting success for both students and organizations. Because of these contributions our HCC region is ahead of the curve in preparing the next generation workforce for prosperous careers in the health care industry.

For more information on the Health Career Connection Summer Internship Program, please contact Sheila Thornton [sheila\\_thornton@msn.com](mailto:sheila_thornton@msn.com) or @ 760-799-4137; Donna Sturgeon [donnasturgeon@gmail.com](mailto:donnasturgeon@gmail.com) or 760-861-8288.





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## Cryotherapy: A New Meaning to "Icing Your Injuries"

By Michael K. Butler

There is a new therapeutic trend growing nationally, which could become very popular for the Desert's summer residents. It involves whole body 'chilling' to relieve achy joints and bones. It's called Whole Body Cryotherapy and it is as popular in Europe as massage is in the US.

The science behind cryotherapy is that it significantly lowers skin temperature for a brief period of 2.5-3 minutes. The dramatic cooling effect activates the immune system, prompting each organ in the body to heal and repair itself. The results can increase circulation, metabolism, detoxification, tissue

repair and immune function. During cryotherapy, the skin's sensors send a distress signal to the brain which then draws blood to the body's core. The blood picks up oxygen nutrients and enzymes needed to survive. When the session ends, the body sends this oxygen-rich blood out to fatigued muscles.

Whole body cryotherapy was first developed by scientists and physicians in Japan in 1978. Throughout the decades, numerous institutional studies have been performed proving the therapy to be both safe and very effective. Professional sports teams like the world champion Dallas Mavericks keep a cryochamber on hand for athletes. They found that their athletes' recovery time from grueling games improved dramatically and workouts became easier. During their NBA championship run, Jason Terry and the rest of the Mavericks would use the cryochamber daily to aid in fast recovery and put a spring back in their legs. Because of

its reported success for professional basketball players, many soccer players, rugby teams, cyclists, track and field athletes, and now Olympic athletes are flocking to cryogenic centers all over the world to experience "The big chill."

What does it take? Before entering into a six-foot tall chamber, a client puts a pair of socks on their feet and hands, takes off all jewelry and is asked to totally be dry, so that articles of clothing don't stick to the skin. Next, their skin temperature is taken to be compared to when they exit the chamber. Typically there is a 30-degree difference. Once in the chamber, liquid nitrogen is blasted out at least 5 times during the 2.5-3 minute treatment. The client is instructed to keep walking around in small circles, wiggling their fingers and toes and creating small circles with their arms. The nitrogen feels extremely cold and it is typical to shiver at about 20 seconds into the treatment. Sessions are always monitored by an attendant, and can be stopped immediately if a client feels too uncomfortable. After the treatment, the skin temperature is taken again and the client is instructed not to drink anything warm for 2 hours afterwards. The average temperature for treatment ranges between -140 to -170 degrees Celsius.

The only contraindication from using whole body cryotherapy is if you have a heart condition. Because of the sudden rush of blood through the entire body with the rapid temperature change, blood pressure might be affected, and potential cryogenic patients must be cleared of any heart conditions by their primary care physician first.

To gain maximum relief from achy joint pain, 10-12 successive cryotherapy treatments are typically recommended, (ie. 3x a week for 4 weeks and then 1-4x a month thereafter).

For recovery during sports training, 1-2 treatments a week and 1-2x a month thereafter is recommended. There are many elite athletes who experience immediate results with their recovery and who use cryotherapy daily as part of their routine. With this type of training, a one-month break is recommended after a month of treatments. Therapy sessions run between \$50-85 a session at most centers.

As a therapy that helps the body heal itself, whole body cryotherapy is a popular and safe alternative to medications for aches and pains.

Michael K. Butler B.A.;P.T.A.;CSCS\*D RSCC\*D PES;NMT, is co-owner of Kinetix Health and Performance Center in Palm Desert. He holds a state license as a physical therapist assistant and National Certifications with Distinction as a strength and conditioning specialist through the NSCA. He is also a certified full body Active Release Therapist. For more information: 760-200-1719 or [www.kinetixcenter.com](http://www.kinetixcenter.com).



Cryotherapy significantly lowers skin temperature for a brief period of 2.5 - 3 minutes.



The science behind "the big chill" is that it activates the immune system prompting each organ in the body to heal and repair itself.





# AT THE GYM WITH Casey

## Try TRX For Flexibility and Core Strength

In this issue I want to highlight a tool that is growing in popularity in the fitness community and helps people become stronger and more flexible – the TRX. I have the privilege of working with one of the only Certified TRX trainers in the desert, Nik Obert, so I asked Nik a few questions to clarify what TRX is and why we should consider using it. Here's what Nik had to say –

**Q: What is the TRX and how can it help people get into better shape?**

**A:** It's the latest and greatest in the world of suspension training. TRX stands for "Total Resistance Exercise." You use your own body in everything you do. Whatever the exercise - squatting, pushups, pull ups, bicep curls – you are using your own body weight as resistance. The motto of TRX is "All Core All the Time," which means that no matter what you do, you are using your entire core for each and every exercise. Anyone can use the TRX, and we can make any multitude of exercises easier or harder by simply changing the angle of your body or adjusting foot position. The TRX increases flexibility, range of motion, joint function and overall strength.

**Q: Has TRX demonstrated proven success as part of a training program?**

**A:** TRX is being used in the NFL, NHL, MLB, NBA, for physical therapy and by our troops overseas. It is a vital tool in the golf world. Titleist has actually named the TRX as their official training tool.

**Q: How have your workouts changed since becoming TRX certified?**

**A:** Previously I did typical strength training, but I always felt like my flexibility and core strength lacked. While I was deployed to Iraq, a fellow soldier introduced me to the TRX. I started to incorporate TRX movements into my normal training routine and immediately saw the difference in my core strength and flexibility. Once I left the Army and moved to the desert, I decided to introduce TRX to others who could benefit from it.

**Q: You have many new fans. Any closing remarks about TRX?**

**A:** If you want to try something new, exciting and challenging, come try a TRX class. Classes range from beginner to advanced. If you already own a TRX and want new workout ideas, visit [nextlevelfitness.org](http://nextlevelfitness.org) where I post numerous workouts and exercises.

Casey can be reached at Next Level Fitness: 760.341.8200



Nik Obert demonstrates TRX, used as Total Resistance Exercise



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## PICKLEBALL: The Fastest Growing Sport in North America

By Barbara Wintroub

You may have heard of this crazy new game called "pickleball." The US Pickleball Association (USAPA.org) calls the game a "highly contagious, progressive and incurable disease" and estimates that between 40-50,000 people worldwide are currently infected. "While rarely fatal, the disease has enormous positive impact on the lives of infected individuals and on society as a whole." Here in the desert, we see Pickleball Fever firsthand as it is quickly becoming the game of choice for active seniors!



Pickleball can be played on a tennis court reduced to 44' x 20'

So what is pickleball fever all about? Pickleball was introduced in 1965 on Bainbridge Island near Seattle as a backyard family game on a badminton sized court (44' X 20') with a 34-inch net. The inventors used wooden paddles and a whiffle ball that happened to belong to the family cocker spaniel. Because of his habit of running after stray balls and hiding in the bushes, 'Pickles' became the game's name sake.

The sport is a mix of table tennis, paddle tennis, badminton and tennis. It is a great fit for seniors because it is very easy to learn; doesn't require the mobility of tennis; and uses an underhand serve. The smaller court also creates a social atmosphere, and playing doubles and/or mixed doubles is promoted.

Desert residents have contributed to the growth of pickleball nationwide as snow bird ambassadors take the game with them back to their summer locations. Tennis courts can be converted to pickleball courts, and therefore any park & rec department can develop a local following. Pickleball was also the largest division at our recent International Sports Festival & Senior Games in February.

As a tournament player and teacher, I love watching pickleball players improve to the point they want to participate in the many tournaments here in the desert. We currently have over 13 clubs participating in our new intra-club monthly social mixers.

For more information on the game, the USAPA recommends *The Pickleball Handbook* by Mark Friedenberg—or simply come out and quickly learn the game from a fan or friend with pickleball fever.

Barbara Wintroub is a Pickleball Teaching Professional located in Palm Desert and can be reached at (310) 913-3333 [www.retrofitpilates.com](http://www.retrofitpilates.com)

So what is pickleball fever all about?

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People of all ages enjoy this fun sport which doesn't require the mobility of tennis



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has been practicing dentistry since 1992 and exercises a passion to provide her patients optimum health and quality dental care. When Temecula, CA dentist Dr. Ruby Ann Dollins opened Bel Villaggio Dental in 2004 her office quickly gained a positive reputation among both patients and dental specialists throughout Riverside, San Diego and Orange Counties. Located near the Promenade Mall in Temecula, Bel Villaggio Dental has become one of Southern California's premier locales for exceptionally high quality general and cosmetic dentistry. Dr. Dollins specializes in Neuromuscular Fullmouth Reconstruction and Rehabilitation and Advanced Comprehensive Cosmetic Dentistry.

*"It's gratifying to change a patient's life just by improving their smile"*  
- Dr. Ruby Ann Dollins

As a Neuromuscular dentist, she helps patients with TMJ dysfunction, migraines/headaches, pain management, and other degenerative diseases that may be related to malocclusion, a problem in the way upper and lower teeth fit together in biting or chewing.

Dr. Dollins also practices Biological Dentistry, also known as holistic or natural/nutritional dentistry. She understands the intimate connection between dental health and nutrition, body structure, the cranial system, immune system, and the central nervous system. Also concerned with the materials used in her dental practice and recognizes the impact of toxic materials as they relate to dental and physiological health. Bel Villaggio Dental is a mercury free office and eschews any use of non-precious base metals, using only high-quality materials or all-ceramic restorations and follows a strict mercury removal protocol. Dr. Dollins Temecula dental office is well equipped with the latest technology including digital x-rays with up to 90% less radiation than traditional x-rays.

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## Forever Young: A Nobel Discovery

Continued from page 1

of aging and surprisingly rejuvenated the mice. Their shrunken brains, spleens and testes resumed normal size, and they regained their sense of smell. The aged, infertile males once again became fertile, and fathered large litters.<sup>2</sup>

### So could this science help age-related diseases?

Dan Olesnicky, M.D. of Executive Foresight in Indian Wells who studied molecular cell biology and genetics at NYU's Graduate School of Arts & Sciences confirms that "telomeres play an important role in cancer, HIV, Alzheimers, Parkinsons, and progeria (a rare condition that produces premature aging in children). We are not quite sure what the link is, but a common denominator is shortened telomeres." Executive Foresight is working with Andrews and his research team at Sierra Sciences.

"Disease will cause short telomeres, and short telomeres will also cause disease," adds Andrews. "Short telomeres will increase your chance of getting cancer and will decrease your ability to fight cancer if you have it." Cancer cells themselves generate telomerase and a telomerase inhibitor may turn them off; however, doing so would be detrimental to other vital cells.<sup>3</sup>

There are many organizations today studying the effect of telomeres on specific diseases.

### Where is the magic pill?

Andrews and his team are working on an FDA approved drug that he feels could be 3 years away from human testing and 10 years away from FDA approval. In the meantime, Andrews has worked with a nutraceutical company, Isagenix, to create an all-natural supplement (purified extracts of plants) that activates telomerase. It is marketed as Product B and consists of highly concentrated herbs and plants that Andrews has concluded in vitro have telomerase activating properties. There is another product on the market, TA65 by TA Sciences, which is also based on his research.

Andrews estimates that approximately 30,000+ people worldwide have taken these supplements and both companies are conducting independent studies. Clinical trials by TA Sciences have shown that 10 out of 12 people did have their shortest telomeres elongated by TA65 (as measured by Life Length, the only company in the world that can do so). The two who

saw no change were the youngest of the group, and future studies will focus on those 65+. Andrews, who co-authored the report on the study, says "there have been no negative side effects reported to date."

Here in the valley, Executive Foresight offers medically-supervised programs using both TA65 and Product B, and is monitoring 'a handful of people' through extensive testing that includes genetic measurements of telomeres.

"Once you hit 40, you have that magic realization that things start to hurt more than they used to. Your recovery time is much slower," notes Olesnicky. "What clients in the program notice are a quicker recovery time and more stamina. They tend to bounce back quicker from exercise, stress and the common cold."

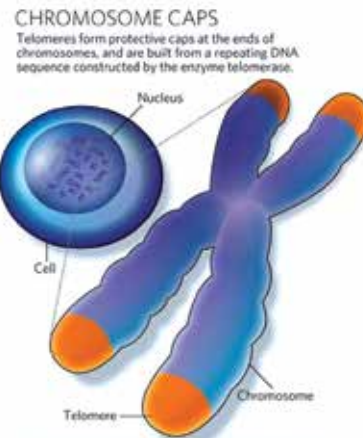
### Don't give up your health regime.

Dr. Olesnicky reminds us, "If you are serious about your longevity, you need to take control. Stop smoking, lose weight, and don't eat things that are bad for your body. Know your blood work and determine if there are any diseases brewing so you can be proactive." He adds that habits which stress your immune system and cells also cause your telomeres to burn out. This research is confirmed, and you can control many of these factors.

But Andrews work with telomeres, and that of many others racing to beat the clock, creates future hope for all of us. "We know how to cure aging," concludes Andrews. "As with all research, funding is imperative in allowing us to finish engineering a drug that can advance to human testing."

To support his efforts, Executive Foresight has set up a 501c3 research fund. "Our heart lies in the cure of debilitating diseases," says Olesnicky. "If Bill Andrews is near cracking the mystery of telomeres, we may be close to finding solutions to help with these diseases, as well as the aging process. The results to date are promising. We hope to help generate the funding necessary to allow him to continue his work for an even more promising future."

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Scientist Bill Andrews, an ultramarathoner, is racing against time to develop the first FDA approved anti-aging drug.

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## Tips For The Caregiver

By Patricia Dean Rogers

Wayne Newton's hit song Daddy Don't You Walk So Fast was about a boy trying to keep up with a father too busy to pay attention to the young child scurrying to keep up with him. The other end of the spectrum is a caregiver walking ahead of their charge, be it a parent, spouse or elder employer.

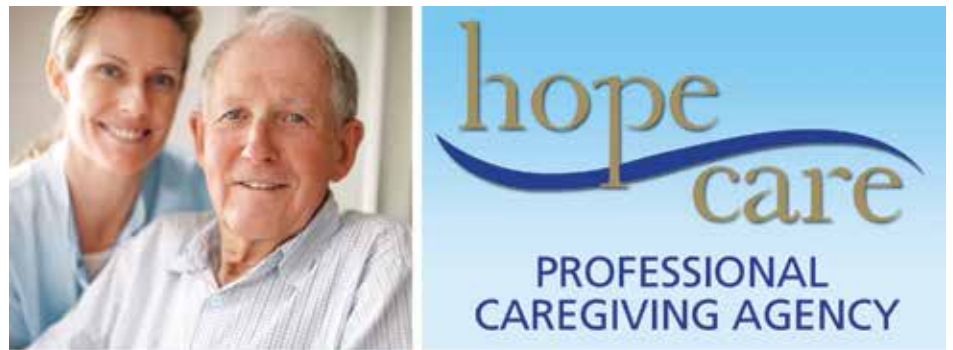
Last week at the mall, a caregiver assisting a senior out of a car seemed diligent in securing the senior with his walker. Then he walked ahead leaving the elder to slowly maneuver the contraption from the parking space, up a ramp and down a walkway to double doors where the assistant stood waiting. How much safer, certainly more respectful, had the caregiver simply walked with the senior? Elders want independence but that can be given while still being accessible.

Many simple changes make life easier for elders who've already lost a lot compared to the active lives they once led. When assisting your elder, keep these simple tips in mind:

- 1 Walk with your companion, not yards in front.
- 2 When visiting a bed bound elder, listen to them and avoid guiding the conversation only in directions you've planned.
- 3 Let the conversation flow naturally. Too many questions can be confusing.
- 4 If a third party joins, keep your elder in the conversation. Avoid discussing things of no interest to them or ignoring them like they aren't even there.
- 5 I once found a facility housekeeper arguing with a senior. She failed to understand the resident's mental state. Inform management of such disagreements.
- 6 References like "The 36-Hour Day," advise that those afflicted with Alzheimer's and dementia don't intend to be difficult. Individuals are unique at every stage of life. Some age with grace, others with great difficulty.
- 7 If your bedridden mother is fond of a certain color, consider buying her bedclothes and linens in those shades. She'll love the compliments she'll receive.
- 8 When the level of concentration diminishes, keep life simple. Select TV programming that is mentally challenging (within reason), easy game shows; style shows (if they like fashion); talk shows with upbeat hosts. Avoid violent programs which could cause nightmares.
- 9 Should dementia or medication cause hallucinations, avoid telling your elder they don't know what they're talking about, there are no monsters, etc. Try to reassure them they are safe and you are there for them.
- 10 Maintain a calm demeanor even when you're stressed. When you're a full-time caregiver, have a substitute sit with them occasionally while you take a much needed break.

Realize you're giving a precious gift to another human being; understanding and respect are needed and deserved throughout life. Whether the person you care for is a relative, friend, or individual you're employed to serve, combining care and respect is key to a better end of life experience for them and a rewarding situation for you. If you consistently feel overwhelmed, seek help from a doctor, counselor, pastor or responsible family member.

Patricia Dean Rogers is a free-lance writer in Palm Desert and L.A. County; certified by the State of California as an Ombudsman for the Elderly; retired Volunteer Coordinator for the Co. of Riverside; and former Instructor for Fit After Fifty. Mrs. Rogers can be reached at (760) 341-7235.



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## Pay It Forward: ElderCaring Awards Scholarships to Top Caregivers

ElderCaring of Coachella Valley established an annual scholarship program to reward its top caregivers with funds to advance their education in the health and medical field.

The scholarship's first recipients are Monica Carranza of Coachella and Mari Serrano of Thermal. Both caregivers have excelled in client services and have been honored with awards of recognition from ElderCaring in the past.

"Both Monica and Mari go above and beyond in the care of their clients," states owner Barrett Betschart. "We are honored to provide them with funds to advance their education and careers."

Ms. Carranza plans to use her scholarship to finish her qualifications as a Licensed Vocational Nurse. "Because of my family and schedule, attending schooling is difficult. The funding will allow me to work with a qualified individual around my schedule to help prepare me for the final tests."

Ms. Serrano, who has been taking continuing education classes at COD off and on since 2003, plans to transfer into the Physical Therapy Assistant program at Loma Linda.



Mari Serrano and Monica Carranza are the first recipients of ElderCaring's educational scholarships.

Several organizations have come together to help fund the scholarships. Local golf professional, Patty Curtiss, whose organization Golf Rehab helps people get back to the game they love, has agreed to donate all proceeds from her Saturday golf clients during May. The funds raised will be matched by ElderCaring. The clinics are open to the public at an affordable \$10 each, with only 10 spots per day available. Each clinic lasts an hour and focuses on different parts of the game including putting, working around the green, and power and distance. Golfers of all ages and skills are encouraged to register.

Golf Rehab and ElderCaring are a prime example of local organizations working together for the betterment of our community and its members. "We raised \$2000 for scholarships in our first year and hope to double that in 2012," states Betschart. "The care of our clients is our number one priority and it feels good to honor our top caregivers and pay it forward."

Fundraising clinics take place Saturdays at College of the Desert during the month of May and are \$10 each. For more information or to register visit [www.pattycurtissgolfrhab.com](http://www.pattycurtissgolfrhab.com) or call 760-578-6401.



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## Healthy Eats "On the Go"

If healthy food is a priority, you'll agree that one of the hardest things may be eating on the run. Sure you can pack fruits and nuts to munch along the way, but sometimes you want a hearty lunch you can grab-and-go that will satisfy your taste buds, re-energize, but not add to your waistline.

Here are a few of our favorite spots along the way throughout the Coachella Valley.

### Clark's Nutrition, Rancho Mirage (Monterey & Dinah Shore)

New at Clark's is a tasty alternative... Prepared vegan meals by Leaf Organics. The to-go containers include easy to eat meals like the Harvest Sandwich, yam patties with a coconut curry sauce between slices of mango herb bread with tomatoes, romaine, onions and sprouts served with a side of carrot salad; the Bedouin Burrito, sprouted chick pea hummus with tahini sauce, tomatoes, spring mix and sprouts; Pad Thai made with kelp noodles mixed with thinly sliced squash and red peppers in a lightly spiced nut sauce; or the Rawsagna, layers of squash noodles, spinach, marinara sauce, raw-cotta cheese and sprinkled rawmesan served with a side salad and house dressing. Grab a bag of kale chips and one of Clark's many healthy beverages and you've got the perfect (healthy!) deli meal. (Leaf Organic meals range from \$6 - \$10).

### Luscious, Lorraine's Organic Juice & Eatery at Harvest Health Food, Palm Desert (Hwy 111 between Portola & San Luis Rey)

Lorraine was the first in the Valley to offer an organic deli and her spot is popular and busy. They do have some prepared foods and salads, but for one of their yummy sandwiches or veggie shakes to go, we recommend calling in your order 15-20 minutes ahead. Their Asian tofu wrap, raw maca smoothie, or green drink with



Scott blends up a healthy vegetable drink at Luscious Lorraine's

kale, celery, cucumber, green apple, lemon and ginger are all made to order and will be ready upon arrival. (760) 862.1911

### Nature's Health Food and Café, Palm Springs (Sunrise Way at Ramon)

This café offers over 100 all-American and international favorites made completely with vegetarian and vegan ingredients. Enjoy blackened fish tacos, beef stir fry, and gluten-free flatbreads with organic toppings such as pepperoni (soy) and Mediterranean-style. They also have a juice and espresso bar. Nature's Cafe is another popular destination, but their menu is online ([natureshealthfoodcafe.com](http://natureshealthfoodcafe.com)) and they welcome call-ins. 15-20 minutes is recommended (760) 323.9487.

### Jensen's Fine Foods, Palm Desert and Palm Springs (E. Palm Canyon in Palm Springs & Hwy 111 at San Pablo)

Jensen's offers a variety of unique sushi meals made daily by their in-house sushi chef (made in Palm Springs and brought daily to Palm Desert). One of my favorites is the Desert Dragon Roll.



Sashimi and seaweed salad are healthy accompaniments. Sushi boxes made daily are also available at Sprouts in La Quinta. (Sushi boxes range from \$5.99 - \$8.99)

### Juice It Up!, Rancho Mirage (Monterey & Dinah Shore)

For the coldest smoothies in town, stop by Juice It Up! They offer fresh fruit, veggie and protein juice blends, boost additives and non-dairy options. Grab a shot of wheat grass while you're there.



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## Healthier Cheese Quesadillas

Everyone loves quesadilla and it can be a healthy snack! Enjoy this recipe (with even healthier replacement options) from Growers Market and Stick Figure Salsa.

**What you'll need:**

- Cooked or canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- One avocado, peeled and thinly sliced (you'll need a few slices per person)
- 1/2 cup grated low fat cheese Monterey Jack or low fat Mexican shredded cheese mix  
 \*Dairy Free option: Daiya Cheddar Style Shreds (melts well!)
- 1/4 cup Stick Figure Salsa per person, medium or spicy depending on desired heat level, plus extra for dipping
- Whole wheat tortillas, 2 per quesadilla  
 \*Gluten-free option: use Mission Corn Tortillas
- Whipped Greek yogurt (our low fat sour cream)
- Chopped cilantro for garnish

Heat a griddle or nonstick frying pan over low-medium heat. Do not oil the pan.

**On your counter, assemble the quesadillas as follows:**

Place one tortilla on the counter. Sprinkle 1/4 cup grated cheese. Arrange small pieces of chicken or vegetables (if using), sprinkle a handful of black beans here and there. Add slices of avocado. Sprinkle the salsa over the top, so there will be salsa in each bite. Top with the remaining 1/4 cup of cheese, then add a second tortilla. Press down gently so your quesadilla is the same thickness all over.

Carefully set the quesadilla on the griddle or fry pan. Cook 2-3 minutes, until the bottom layer of cheese has melted and the tortilla is slightly brown. Using a large spatula, flip the quesadilla and cook another 2-3 minutes until the other layer of cheese is melted as well and tortilla is again slightly brown.

Remove the quesadilla to a large cutting board, and let it sit for 2-3 minutes so the cheese has a chance to gel everything together. Using a large knife, cut the tortilla into wedges. Sprinkle with chopped cilantro and a dollop of sour cream or yogurt and serve with additional Stick Figure Salsa for dipping.







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## Plan Now for a Long Life

By Reesa Manning

Even in retirement, your portfolio may need to be positioned for both growth and security: growth to meet the challenges of a long life and the impact of long-term inflation and health care, and sources of secure income to ensure that your daily essential living expenses will be met.

This is a good time to think about your priorities and align your assets to support your personal goals (not just your financial aspirations). In fact, you may need to reposition your assets to accommodate a longer life with fewer assets than you previously thought.

When we talk about reevaluating and establishing financial goals, it shouldn't just be about seeking a 10% average annual return on your investments over the next five years. You should consider what you actually want to do with your money. What is the purpose of it—to live out your life comfortably and secure, or to live in luxury, entertain, and travel extensively? The latter lifestyle may no longer be your priority, so before you determine what changes to make in your finances, it's important to establish what you want from your life.

During this continuing era of slow economic recovery, remember that one of the key components to managing wealth is managing risk. In addition to the traditional sources of retirement and estate planning, consider today's popular insurance options, such as annuities, long-term care, and life insurance policies.

Just because we are living longer doesn't mean we're going to remain healthy throughout our longer lives. In the past, seniors who lived long lives tended to be healthier in their senior years, which meant they had lower medical bills. But while some credit goes to more active, health-conscious, smoke-free lifestyles, it's safe to say that today's seniors owe more to prescription drugs and medical advances for lengthening their lifespan.

And as we all know, quality health care costs money—lots of it. In fact, Fidelity Investments found in its 2011 Retiree Health Care Costs Estimate Study that a 65-year-old couple retiring this year with Medicare coverage will still need \$230,000 to pay for medical expenses throughout retirement, excluding nursing-home care.

Speaking of which, with a longer life comes the greater likelihood of needing assisted living or long-term care. According to the Genworth 2011 Cost of Care Survey, assisted living averages \$39,000 a year, and nursing homes average more than \$70,000 a year - per person. For a couple, this kind of care could cost far more than their annual household income during their highest earning years.

Some of the things you can do to plan for a long life come down to repositioning your assets—as well as your approach toward life. For example, lifestyle factors can contribute significantly to both how long you live and the quality of life you lead. Areas where most of us could easily pay more attention include lower caloric intake, higher vegetable and fruit consumption, a higher fiber diet, lower body fat, and regular exercise.

Studies have also found that people who feel the most socially connected are four times less likely to develop serious illnesses. A Brigham Young University study reports that social connections—friends, family, neighbors, or colleagues—improve our odds of survival by 50%. In fact, the study asserts that low social interaction is the equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day or being an alcoholic (Source: Social Relationships and Mortality Risk, July 2010).

Life is long, and it gets longer with each generation. They say that life gets in the way of even the best-laid plans, and it's true. Every plan—even a financial plan—requires tweaking and adjusting periodically to account for current events. However, your personal goals may well remain the same for the rest of your life. So if you establish the purpose of your money—what it is that

you want out of life—then you can reposition your assets to help you reach those goals.

The bottom line is whether you are still working or already retired, you need a sound financial plan in place to cover your retirement income needs.

Reesa Manning is a Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management, providing expertise in planning, investing, and managing your assets for income distribution throughout retirement. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834-7200, or reesa@IWMgmt.com

**Fidelity Investments found in its 2011 Retiree Health Care Costs Estimate Study that a 65-year-old couple retiring this year with Medicare coverage will still need \$230,000 to pay for medical expenses throughout retirement, excluding nursing-home care**



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## Natural Luxury at the Spa Esmeralda The Perfect Gift for Mom (or You!)

### A Desert Health Review

I am convinced that one of the greatest gifts you can give a loved one is the gift of time. Time to slow down, relax and let the body rejuvenate. As you think of that special something for your Mom for Mother's Day, consider a spa treatment at one of the desert's magnificent world-class resorts. Not only will she enjoy the treatment, she'll also enjoy the escape from her daily routine and the ability to relax into a full day of luxury and pampering.

In March, I celebrated my birthday and was treated to a day at the Spa Esmeralda at the Renaissance Esmeralda in Indian Wells. I scheduled it for the day after my birthday celebration for what I anticipated would be a much needed detoxification. It turned out to be the perfect plan.

I was delighted to see that the Spa Esmeralda now carries an organic facial line. I've been using organic fruit and plant facial products for the past three months and really like what they have done for my skin. I find them to be incredibly toning and hydrating - and you have to feel great about the fact that you are only applying things you could eat, like apples and mandarin oil, to your skin.

So I settled on a massage and a facial, arriving early to take advantage of the spa pool, steam room and beautiful relaxation lounge. My massage therapist was Jessica Blaisdell, whom I have raved about before, and my esthetician was Krystal Creech. Both have worked at the Spa Esmeralda for over 8 years and are exceptionally knowledgeable about their products and trade.

Krystal said that more and more of her guests are requesting organic products, which was interesting to hear. The Spa Esmeralda features a certified organic line called ilike (i-LEE-key) which has been made in Hungary for 50 years. Hungarians have a long history of using locally available products in their healing treatments. (Sometimes it seems we're playing catch up with our European counterparts when it comes to health care).

Due to the soil, the somewhat dry climate, and the abundance of sunshine, Hungarian herbs and fruits are proven to contain higher concentrations of active ingredients and aromatic agents than the world average. Using these ingredients, a woman lovingly known to the region as "Aunt Ilike" has been creating organic skin care products since the late 50's. Her grandmother was the village herbalist and always told her that "all we need to maintain health and beauty can be drawn from nature around us."

Ingredients in the ilike line include rose petal, grapeseed, lemon balm oil, resveratrol, flaxseed oil, peppermint, mineral salts and trace elements. Krystal noted that many of ilike products they chose to carry address aging skin, which can be more sensitive and dry. "Because of the soil, the products are mineral rich and can restore missing elements; they are also vitamin rich since they use the entire plant."

My luxurious facial included a rose petal cleansing milk applied with the soft, rotating Clarisonic cleansing tool "for a deeper, more invigorating cleanse," followed by a rose petal toner, a sulfuric exfoliator, and extractions. Krystal chose the quince apple gel mask for my skin type followed by a calendula hydrating mask. Because the products are so pure, they are very active and you can feel

them tingling. I love that aspect of natural products. It is a very different feeling than that which you get from products with active chemicals (and natural products smell delicious too!)

While each mask was setting, I was treated to relaxing hand, foot, neck and scalp massages. Ahhhhhhhhh.

My afternoon at the Spa Esmeralda was the best birthday gift I received this year. It allowed me time to leave everything else behind and simply focus on regenerating and rejuvenating. Those treasured benefits last much longer than the day, and are the perfect gift for Mom, your loved ones...or you!

The Spa Esmeralda is located at the Renaissance Esmeralda in Indian Wells. They are open 7 days a week from 8:30a-6p Sun - Thurs and til 7p Fri-Sat. The ilike line of products is available for purchase and range in price from \$40 - \$70 per item. For more information or to schedule treatments, call 760.836.1265.



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As we enter into summer, there is a noticeable change in our bodies and skin. You can maintain a healthy youthful look at home with easy beauty rituals. It's not every day we have the opportunity to visit the spa or salon for a hair treatment or body scrub. You may be surprised to find ingredients in your own backyard and cabinets for a DIY natural spa service!

### Lustrous Hairapy

Noticeably parched strands can give a tired appearance. Ever feel confident after a trip to the hair salon? The instant pick-me-up from a healthy crown of hair can do just that. Try jojoba oil, a seed oil that delivers deep hydration for the skin and hair. This multi-functional plant resembles the oil found in human sebum, does not clog pores and is anti-bacterial. Mix 3 tablespoons of jojoba oil, 2 drops of organic lavender essential oil (to promote sleep and relaxation) or 2 drops of peppermint essential oil (to stimulate hair follicles). Before shampooing, apply oil mixture to the scalp by dotting oil with your fingertip in a straight line from the forehead to the back of the head, in 2 inch sections. Gently rub into the scalp and run fingers through the rest of the hair for an awakening scalp massage. Finish with a warm towel head wrap for 30 minutes, shampoo and rinse for an instant healthy look.



### Scrub Away

Desert weather can leave us looking less than attractive with dry scaly skin. The first rule to soft supple skin is to hydrate from the inside out by drinking plenty of water and eating foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids. The second rule is scrub, scrub, scrub to eliminate dry patches on the body. Exfoliate from head to toe three times a week in your shower for best results. My motto: If you can eat it, it is good enough to put topically on the



body. Mix 1 tablespoon of organic olive oil, 1 tablespoon of jojoba oil, 2 drops of lemongrass essential oil, 1 tablespoon of Dead Sea salts and a pinch of fine ground rosemary. Add more oil to soften the scrub and less for a more invasive scrub. Apply the blend liberally to your damp body, focusing on knees, elbows, legs and heels of feet. Sugar hydrates and salt detoxifies and sloughs off dead skin cells. Olive oil, rich in polyphenols and antioxidants, delivers lustrous and supple skin while jojoba oil, rich in Vitamin E, C and B complex, softens and smoothes. Herbs, such as rosemary, deliver natural healing powers to purify and cleanse, while lemongrass is antiseptic and invigorating to the senses. Those who suffer from dry skin conditions can benefit from body scrubs to keep skin hydrated and soothe inflammation.

### Take a Bath, Yes in Summer

Take advantage of a warm bath to deliver soothing and calming properties. Forget the bubble bath and try something hydrating and natural. Add 2 ounces of Epsom salts, four drops of your favorite organic essential oil along with 1 tablespoon of healing jojoba oil to protect the skin. Feeling sluggish and need to detoxify? Try juniper berry and cypress essential oils which aid in respiratory issues and cleanse the body of impurities. If you are having skin irritations or even sunburn, try one-half cup of raw oats, four drops of lavender essential oil and 1 tablespoon of jojoba oil. When oil and water are combined notice the separation as oil floats to the surface of the water. When the body is immersed into the bath, oil is attracted to the body and immediately absorbs directly into the skin. This is the quickest way to absorb oils to attain the desired results of relaxation and detoxification. If you prefer a shower over a bath, create your own steam room while activating the respiratory system. Place 3-4 drops of eucalyptus essential oil directly onto the shower head and steam the bathroom with hot/warm water temperature. Enjoy the steam room effect with a chilled washcloth over the face or chilled sliced cucumbers over the eyes.



The summer heat is almost here - now is the time to start planning your at-home spa routine!

Karina Chung is a desert native specializing in creating new spa experiences and working internationally with Hyatt Resorts. Karina has returned to the desert as Spa Director at the Hyatt Grand Champion's Agua Serena Spa. She is enthusiastic to introduce indigenous products with healing properties and to support local health for both individuals and businesses through this beautiful wellness facility. For more information, contact Karina at 760.674.4100.





## Valley School Districts Compete in the Healthy Lifestyle Challenge

The Coachella Valley Health collaborative kicked off its 2012 Healthy Lifestyle Challenge in early January. Currently, over 1,600 Coachella Valley residents are participating in the challenge, including our valley school districts who have challenged each other for the top spot.

The spirited, good-natured challenge is lead by school board members, teachers and staff, providing healthy role models for students. There are a variety of different competitions (or "challenges") going on within each district.



Teachers are playing a big role in making health awareness fun and interesting for Coachella Valley school kids

Wanda Grant, Nutritional Services Director in the Palm Springs Unified School District, explains that the goal of each program is to keep the kids moving. "When kids move more, they learn more." During the school day and in after school programs, the district is using the SPARK'S Physical Education Program from San Diego State, which is a more inclusive, active and fun program than traditional Physical Education classes. Two of the district elementary schools are giving kids pedometers each Monday which they wear all week encouraging individual activity. On Fridays, the pedometers are read and the results tallied, creating a friendly competition with a healthy outcome.

Another great program is the "90215: Zip Code To Health." The daily campaign encourages 9 hours of sleep, 0 sugary beverages, 2 hour limit of screen time, 1 hour of exercise; and 5 servings of fruits and veggies. Parents are also encouraged to participate and may attend motivational interviews to help meet the goals of the programs.

Many schools participate in Michelle Obama's US Healthy Kids Challenge which invites local chefs to demonstrate healthy cooking skills to kids, parents and teachers. In the Farm to School initiative, 32 local farmers provide fruits and vegetables to the schools. The produce is picked one day, delivered the next and is available to the kids on the third day. The Harvest of the Month program focuses on one food for the month. The schools incorporate this food into all areas of the curriculum.

Many staff members are participating in a Lighten Up Program, competing to get in shape, similar to the Biggest Loser. This program allows the staff to become healthy living and eating role models for the kids and families in the community.

Desert Oasis Healthcare is this year's sponsor of the collaborative's website. "Our healthcare organization recognizes the importance of preventative health. The program's interactive website helps to promote physical fitness and an overall healthy lifestyle," said Dr. Marc Hoffing, medical director at Desert Oasis Healthcare.

To register for the 2012 challenge, visit [www.mywellsite.com/cvhc](http://www.mywellsite.com/cvhc). For more information about the Coachella Valley Health Collaborative, contact Gary Jeandron, Project Director, at (760) 341-2883, ext 78163 or [gjeandro@csusb.edu](mailto:gjeandro@csusb.edu) or visit <http://cvhc.csusb.edu>.

## Discovering Your Genius

By Bill Lamond



Bill Lamond

At some point in life, every person wonders what it would be like to be a genius—to have an intellectual capacity beyond compare. When we say "genius," the great cultural icon for towering intellect, Albert Einstein, comes to mind. Did you know that Einstein, whose  $E=mc^2$  changed the way we think about the workings of the physical universe, got that equation as a sudden flash of insight? How about James Watson who won the Nobel Prize for co-discovering the DNA molecule—he envisioned the shape of the molecule in a dream of snakes entwined. Clearly, these brilliant insights were NOT intellectual leaps, but rather perceptual/intuitive leaps that synthesized many aspects of intelligence.

In business, people have been said to be able to "smell the deal." Savvy people have a "gut instinct" which they learn to trust. Others have felt "magnetized" to choices that changed their lives. Still others report that bad decisions were ones their "hearts weren't into."

So, though US culture makes intellectual prowess the gold standard, real intelligence often transcends the workings of the intellectual mind and leaps out in ways that often surprise us. After many years of rigidly defining intelligence as intellectual ability, psychologists are now acknowledging many types of genius, e.g. social genius, musical or artistic genius, intuitive genius, physical/athletic genius, mechanical genius, etc.

Suppose every single person is born with a genius of some kind.

I believe that is the case.

The word genius comes from the root word for spirit. It is the essence of a person, including their physical, mental, emotional and perceptual gifts, not just intellect. To discover your own genius, you need only to train yourself to notice input from your body, emotions and mind.

The body has wisdom and intelligence that transcends the intellect. This wisdom comes from the gifts of our animal inheritance, i.e. our ability to smell, feel physical sensation, "read" energy (as in "this place has a bad vibe"), and feel emotion (as in "my heart went out to that family") and to recognize intrinsic value (as in "I know when we pulled up that this house would be our new home"). You can certainly try to explain these things logically, but at the core of the human experience is something that transcends the logic of intellect and synthesizes all the physical, mental, and emotional data we receive and makes us fully human.

To discover your genius, listen to your instincts. They may surprise you. In the thirty-five years I have paid attention to integrating my body, emotions and mind, I have found that the true "genius" of my life lies in the synthesis of these wonderful input mechanisms. I think of all three as trusted advisors to my spirit and have used them to steer an ingenious course in my health, well-being, and life as a whole.

You have these same advisors. To identify, integrate and use them is the key to genius that will make you the one of a kind, original and unique human being you have the potential to be.

A founding member of the personal coaching profession, Bill Lamond has devoted the last twenty-five years to developing a model of full use of our personal genius. Thousands of people who have worked with Bill have reinvented their lives to be a full pleasure for them. Bill can be reached at 760-992-8633.

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DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT:  
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Desert Healthcare District Supports Programs of the  
Coachella Valley branch of the Arthritis Foundation

Grant Will Allow Residents with Arthritis to Participate in Free Life  
Improvement Exercise Programs

The Directors of the Desert Healthcare District approved a grant award of \$87,000 to the Arthritis Foundation to support the Life Improvement Series Programs (LIS).

The LIS Programs consist of warm water exercise; classroom exercise; Tai Chi; self-help course; and "Walk With Ease." The Arthritis Foundation has partnered with the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) to show that the LIS programs are evidence-based to help relieve the devastating effects, debilitating pain and inflammation associated with arthritis. The programs are also physician recommended.

Currently these programs serve approximately 3,000 residents. The grant will increase the organization's capacity to serve an additional 500 District residents.

The funding will add 10 self-help programs, 10 "Walk With Ease" programs, and two each of warm water exercise, classroom exercise, and Tai Chi. Additionally, 10 instructors will be recertified as "Train the Trainers."

The Arthritis Foundation is committed to raising awareness and reducing the impact of arthritis. In support of their mission, the Foundation offers education, research grants, advocacy and other vital programs and services to improve the lives of those with arthritis and related diseases.

May is Arthritis Awareness Month and local events from the Arthritis Foundation include a Walk With Ease Program starting on May 7th at the Demuth Community Center and Park and the Foundation's National Senior Health and Fitness Day Expo on May 30th at the Joslyn Center in Palm Desert from 9a- 2p. This is a day filled with education, action, food and fun. Call the Arthritis Foundation for more information and to RSVP: 760-773-3076.

*Desert Healthcare District is a government agency, established by the state of California in 1948, to improve and support community health programs within a 457-square mile service area in the Coachella Valley. The District also owns and oversees the lease of Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs.*





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