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HEALTH  WELLNESS

ANXIETY:
MORE COMMON
THAN **DEPRESSION?**



HORMONES
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OF YOUR **WELL-BEING**

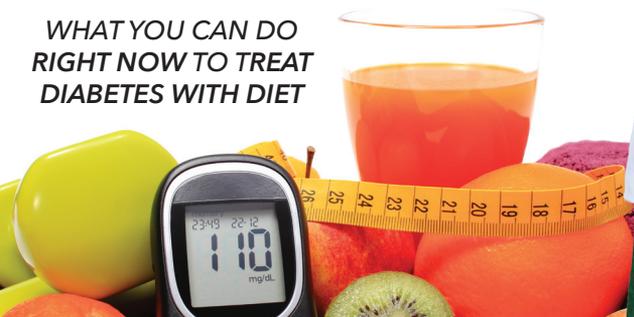
Dr. Jonnalyn Belocura, M.D.

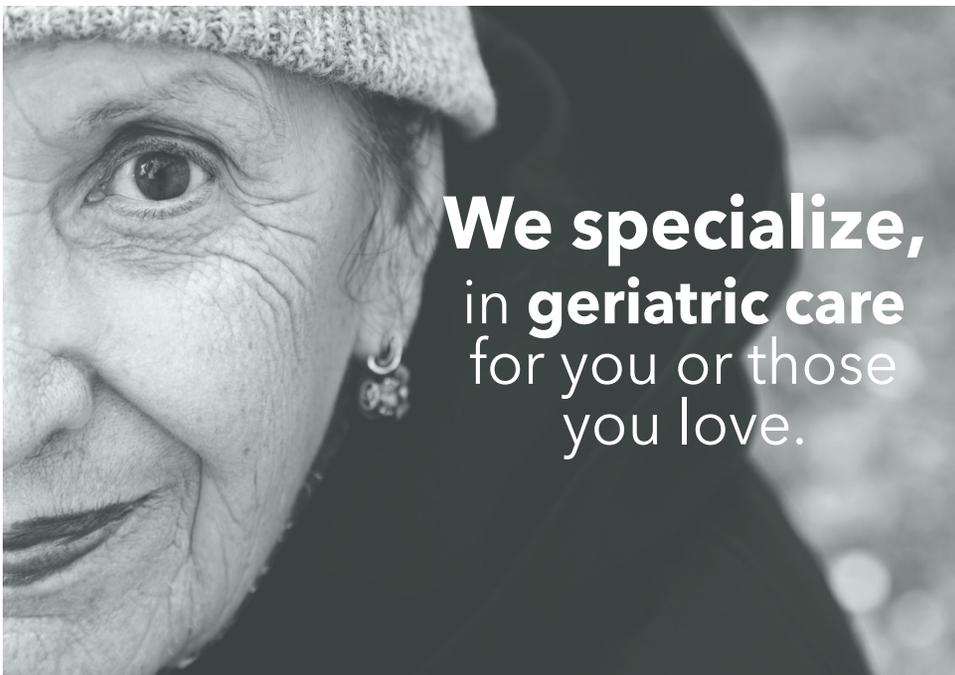
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Prescription drug addiction: A national epidemic

This month, I met several people who shared this common concern: too many people in our community, and in our country, have an addiction to prescription pain medications.

Dr. Vanderpool of Atlantis Health Services called it a national epidemic. He said we have two generations growing up hooked on pain medications, adults, as well as children who have gained access to their parent's prescriptions.

Elizabeth Munoz, the area coordinator for the One-Eighty program at The Hospitals of Providence Sierra and Memorial campuses, said almost all of the heroin patients admitted to the addiction recovery program started on prescription pain killers.

Every day more than 50 people die in the U.S. from an overdose of prescription pain medication. Heroin, claims another 29 lives each day. That's over 28,000 deaths per year; more Americans now die from drug overdoses than they do in motor vehicle crashes, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

President Obama has said the opioid overdose epidemic is a priority for his administration, and in February he proposed \$1.1 billion to expand access to medication-assisted treatment and counseling for those with opioid addictions.

Doctors like Vanderpool and programs like One-Eighty are important in the fight against addiction. With their help, we will create a stronger, more healthy community.

— Candis Brinegar




EL PASO BUZZ M.D.
HEALTH | WELLNESS

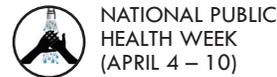
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APRIL 22, 2016

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Program offers alcohol, drug withdrawal stabilization services

Recovering alcoholic, Arturo Garcia is no stranger to alcohol detox and rehabilitation programs.

In the last five years, 55-year-old Garcia has been in and out of both private and public programs in El Paso and the surrounding area.

When Garcia heard of the new program, One-Eighty, which is a hospital-based, inpatient withdrawal stabilization service provided at The Hospitals of Providence Sierra Campus, he called and made an appointment.

Garcia checked in to the hospital on January 4. "I thought I was going to have a bad experience from the beginning," Garcia said. "But it wasn't. [One-Eighty] is absolutely different from any other program."

By the time Garcia left the hospital three days later, he said his mind was clearer than it had ever been before.

Once admitted to One-Eighty, patients are admitted to a private room on the medical floor of the hospital.

"We really push that this is your time to relax, to reflect, and to get some rest because it will be a lot of hard work for you when you leave," said Alison Gizinski, the director of business development and operations at The Hospitals of Providence Sierra Campus.

Since One-Eighty patients are admitted among others who have nothing to do with substance abuse, it makes them feel that they

are just another medical patient, said Sergio Sanchez, the program care coordinator.

"There's not that stigma of the substance abuser," Sanchez said.

Garcia, who has battled alcoholism for over 40 years, agrees. "You are not stereo-typed. You are a patient, like any other patient. You are not treated as a second-class citizen."

Being in a hospital environment also affords the patient a level of confidentiality that is difficult to achieve at other detox or rehabilitation centers.

"Some patients check in and tell their bosses or their families that they are going to go get a procedure," said Elizabeth Muñoz, the area coordinator for One-Eighty.

Alcohol withdrawal is potentially lethal because of the delirium tremens, the seizures, and the risk of going into a coma and never waking up, Sanchez said.

For this reason, most rehabilitation programs in El Paso require a patient be stable, or have gone through withdrawal, before being admitted.

"It forces people to try and withdraw on their own at home," Muñoz said. "The individual may be emotionally and mentally ready and have every intention of quitting, but as they get into the withdrawal process it becomes very uncomfortable and dangerous, and their only option is to do what makes them feel normal again."

People come to One-Eighty because they are

Recovering from knee-replacement surgery, former One-Eighty patient, Arturo Garcia, with One-Eighty area coordinator, Elizabeth Muñoz, left, and Alison Gizinski, director of business development for The Hospitals of Providence Sierra Campus.

afraid to go through withdrawals at home, Sanchez said.

"They've probably already been through it before and know how it feels, so when they hear that the program is in a hospital inpatient setting, under the care of a physician and nursing staff, they want to come."

The care provided is highly individualized, Muñoz said. "We do assessments every four hours and we address every symptom individually."

"Someone who is withdrawing from the exact same thing as another person may not have the same symptoms. One might have severe pain, the other might have severe anxiety, one might have diarrhea and vomiting and one just a headache," Muñoz said.

Most importantly, One-Eighty tailors a plan for each patient to help ensure they have continued sobriety upon leaving the hospital.

"When our patients leave, they have an appointment somewhere within 24 hours," Muñoz said. "What we do—and do well—is work with all of the other providers in the community."

Patients who require more extensive therapy may be admitted to an in-patient rehabilitation program upon leaving. Others might go to an intensive outpatient or partial hospitalization program. Others may only need to be connected to individual or group therapy, a psychiatrist, or a physician, such as one who specializes in pain management.

"Addiction is often the result of chronic pain," Gizinski said. "So that's when we look at how we can connect you to a pain management physician."

Most, if not all, of the One-Eighty patients addicted to heroin started with prescription pain medication, according to Muñoz.

In addition to connecting patients to community resources, the One-Eighty staff continues to follow-up with patients after 24 hours, seven days, 30 days, and then quarterly up to a year.

"Because it's such a personal issue, we establish a rapport with the patient where they are very comfortable discussing something with us that they probably wouldn't discuss with a relative or someone they're close to," Muñoz said.

The rapport Garcia established with Muñoz is undeniable. "I'm thankful for people like Elizabeth," said Garcia, who admits he is now "a walking billboard" for One-Eighty.

"I want it to succeed," Garcia said. "If I had the money, I would give it all to the program."



One-Eighty

One-Eighty is a medical withdrawal stabilization service provided by The Hospitals of Providence Sierra Campus for individuals who have decided to take a 180° turn away from alcohol and drugs.

Available to patients 18 and older, the program provides detox from alcohol, drugs, and prescription medication.

Typical hospital stay is three days and discharge planning is provided to help the patient achieve continued sobriety.

Commercial and private insurances, cash payment, Medicaid and Medicare are accepted.

If you have questions, a referral, or need assistance, contact the One-Eighty office Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., at 866-320-5180.



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Hormones: The Missing Link

One day several years ago, Dr. Jonnalyn Belocura had an epiphany that ultimately served as a catalyst, forcing her to seek an alternative way to practice medicine.

Belocura, who was a family medicine practitioner in East El Paso at the time, had an appointment with a long-time patient. Belocura needed to adjust one blood pressure medication and add another prescription.

As she looked through the patient's thick chart, Belocura realized the woman had steadily gained weight throughout the years, adding a host of medical conditions, like high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Now the patient was pre-diabetic.

"What have I done to this patient?" Belocura asked herself. Yes, she had maintained her blood pressure—but only with medication. "There must be something I can do to help this patient," she thought.

"It's like I was ushering this patient slowly to a nursing-home scenario because the quality of her life was diminishing each year," Belocura said.

This realization, along with other frustrations (primarily dealing with insurance companies), led Belocura on a journey that transformed her way of thinking and practicing, and ultimately transformed the lives of her patients.

Several years ago, Belocura joined the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine as a Fellow of Metabolic and Nutritional Medicine. "It was like I went back to medical school," she said.

Her education focused on how to prevent illness and build health rather than just treat a disease after it had already manifested itself. This type of approach, which Belocura refers to as functional medicine, addresses the underlying causes of disease, using non-traditional approaches.

According to Belocura, conventional medicine and functional medicine have very different parameters.

"With functional medicine, we are more aggressive," she said. "We tend to identify a problem when it isn't really showing up as a problem yet."

"Take glucose—in conventional medicine, most doctors would not be concerned about a sugar level of 90 because it's still below 100, but in functional medicine we are concerned when it goes above 84," Belocura said.

The same is true for hormones. "The normal level of testosterone in men according to the lab is 250-800, so if you have a 400, your insurance will say you have normal testosterone," Belocura said. "In functional medicine, 400 is not optimal." Lower testosterone increases the risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and Alzheimer's, Belocura said.

Belocura's migration from conventional medicine to functional medicine, prompted her to open a new practice, The Hormone Center, located in West El Paso.

At The Hormone Center, Belocura combines functional, metabolic and integrative medicine to treat patients with hormone imbalances, which she says is at the core of many diseases, including obesity, which itself is often referred to as "the mother of all disease."

FAT = ESTROGEN = INFLAMMATION

Belocura describes the correlation between hormones, obesity and disease as a web of inter-related issues. "Obesity is characterized by hyperestrogenism, or high estrogen, which is equal to low progesterone, hypothyroidism and hypoandrogenism, which is low testosterone," Belocura said. "Those three are your hallmarks for obesity."

With excessive fat, you get inflammation, which is a major factor in almost all diseases, according to Belocura. Most patients who have excessive body fat are taking blood pressure medications, thyroid medications, or insulin, Belocura said.

"If you target the underlying progesterone



Dr. Jonnalyn Belocura, M.D., is board certified in Family Medicine and Anti-Aging Medicine. She is a Fellow of Metabolic and Nutritional Medicine from the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine. After receiving her medical degree from Davao Medical School Foundation, a Jesuit university in the southern Philippines, she trained at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities.

and testosterone deficiencies and put them on the right thyroid and the right adrenal gland extract, you will make a big impact on the wellness of the patient," she said. "Bio-identical hormones are the missing link to most problems."

At The Hormone Center, both men and women, from teenagers to 90-year-olds can be treated with bio-identical hormones.

While Belocura uses bio-identical hormone replacement in any form, she prefers to administer progesterone and testosterone in pellets, which are inserted under the skin and provide a steady hormone release for up to six months.

WEIGHT LOSS & THE HCG DIET

Since excessive fat leads to an imbalance in hormones and a host of health problems, Belocura believes in aggressively attacking weight issues with the HCG diet, which uses Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (hCG), a pregnancy hormone, to facilitate rapid weight loss. Patients on the diet are restricted to 500 calories a day while receiving a small dose of hCG, typically for a period of 40 days.

"By putting patients on hCG and balancing the hormones at the same time, you're actually fast-tracking the progress of these women and men who have been suffering for all these years," she said.

The controversial diet was discovered in the 1950s by British endocrinologist Albert Simeon, after he observed malnourished pregnant women in India giving birth to healthy babies. He believed that if hCG could mobilize a pregnant woman's own fat reserves to nourish a developing infant, a small amount administered daily in obese men and women, could assist in weight loss.

"Those who have negative opinions about HCG are those who have not tried it or do not understand the science behind it," Belocura said.

"When you are using hCG, you are breaking down something in your body that you have too much of and which you don't need, FAT, in order to produce energy," Belocura said. "It's like you are eating your own body fat and generating the calories you need."

While you may be eating only 500 calories a day, your body is producing more like 2,000 to 4,000 calories. "For the most part, the patient's energy level is actually increased," Belocura said. "Think of it like this: you are eating your own chicharrónes and that provides you the energy."

In 40 days, women typically lose 20-30 pounds and men lose 30-40 pounds, according to Belocura.

If you were on a 500-calorie diet without hCG, it would be very unhealthy, Belocura said. "You would get sick and you would lose a lot of muscle mass, but with hCG your brain thinks it's pregnant and you have to break down what you don't need. It's not going to break down your muscles and your bones; it's going to break down something you have a lot of — the fat, and that is the best source of energy."

The protocol at The Hormone Center doesn't end with weight loss. "With the weight off, the estrogen brought down, the inflammation controlled, the other hormones can now be quite easily managed," Belocura said. "When a patient feels better overall, he is empowered to take control of his health."

BY CANDIS BRINEGAR



HEALING TO THE CORE

Jonnalyn R. Belocura, M.D.

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Cryotherapy offers new-age alternative to traditional ice-bath

Cryotherapy, a long-time European health trend, has finally made its appearance in El Paso, thanks to young entrepreneurs, Carlos Venegas and David Horcasitas, who opened Cryolab in West El Paso on February 1.

In whole body cryotherapy (WBC), a futuristic-looking machine, called a cryogenic sauna or chamber, is used along with liquid nitrogen, to expose the body to ultra-low temperatures (from -200 to -256 degrees F) for a short duration of two to three minutes.

Similar to an ice-bath, but without the pain, cryotherapy can decrease inflammation in joints and muscles. Research indicates it can also help encourage the growth of healthy skin cells and improve the dexterity of existing cells.

Developed by a doctor in Japan in 1978 for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, whole body cryotherapy became popular in the U.S. several years ago. It gained notoriety after star athletes, including LeBron James, Kobe Bryant and Floyd Mayweather touted its benefits.

As Floyd Mayweather was training last April for his Manny Pacquiao bout, he was shown using the Cryosauna, which was

reported as his preferred method of recovery. This got Venegas's attention, and after

extensive research, he and Horcasitas decided to bring the new-age technology to El Paso.

Cryotherapy is useful as an aid for recovery for athletes, as well as a treatment option for those suffering from arthritis or chronic pain, according to Venegas. It can also be used simply for its beauty benefits, which Venegas said includes skin improvement and weight loss. One client recently reported that cryotherapy caused a reduction in her spider veins, Venegas said.

At Cryolab, clients must fill out a medical release form and have their blood pressure checked before entering the cryogenic chamber, a single-person device which envelops the body while keeping the head and neck area exposed to room air above the device.

Cryolab also offers leg compression therapy, which utilizes nylon air bags and a compression pump to tighten muscles and increase blood flow. "It accelerates the recovery process to reduce muscle soreness," Venegas said.

Currently Cryolab is offering a free leg compression session with the purchase of cryotherapy.

In the future, Venegas and Horcasitas plan to add localized cryotherapy treatment, which targets a specific area to improve skin or reduce inflammation.

Cryolab is located at 6955 N. Mesa, Suite 113. They are open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. To schedule an appointment, call 915-303-5733.

BY CANDIS BRINEGAR



MMA Pro-Fighter,
Randy McCarty at Cryolab

CRYOTHERAPY BENEFITS

FITNESS

- Increased energy levels
- Faster recovery times
- Reduced muscle soreness
- Increase metabolism
- Reduction in fatigue
- Reduced inflammation

BEAUTY

- Skin tightening and smoothing
- Increase in collagen production
- Cellulite reduction
- Reduce fine lines
- Improves acne and psoriasis
- Weight loss

HEALTH

- Relieves arthritis and joint pain
- Alleviates back pain
- Relieves stress and depression
- Boosts immune system



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Local blood donor hits 500 mark

If wealth were measured by health and a giving heart, it would be safe to say that Dennis O'Conner won the lottery many times over!

In February, the United Blood Services honored Dennis for his 500th blood donation. There aren't too many people (if any) in the entire United Blood Services family who can boast of so many lifesaving donations.

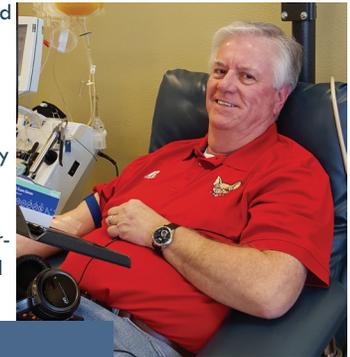
Dennis began donating in 1977 right after his son was born when he heard an urgent call on the radio from United Blood Services asking for donors. He decided right there and then he would donate and went to the Pershing blood donor center.

Dennis switched to donating platelets in 1992, a process that takes anywhere from two to two and a half hours and is crucial in saving the lives of cancer patients.

As the process for donating is a bit different, a donor can donate every two weeks, which Dennis has made the effort to do.

You may think Dennis has time on his hands and doesn't have the typical job that many of us hold. This isn't the case... Dennis has been in the transportation industry for over 48 years and is currently the operation manager with Carmen Pacheco Transportation. Dennis volunteers his time on Saturdays to donate platelets and donates every time he is eligible.

For information on becoming a platelet donor, please call 915-544-5422, ext. 168.



Dennis O'Conner has made 500 blood donations since 1977. United Blood Services recently honored O'Conner for his outstanding service.

WHY ARE PLATELETS NEEDED?

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Raw Carrot, Parsnip & Apple Salad



DANIELA CIUBUC

Eat your vegetables! We have all heard this suggestion (bordering on a fierce order) from time to time, but many of us brush it away and push the offending vegetable aside.

Some of us go a step further and drench whatever greenery there is on the plate in thick dressing to make it as close to unhealthy as possible.

We baptize vegetables as “healthy;” potatoes are acceptable if they are fried or mashed with lots of butter, and baked ones are good with sour cream.

Unless one is a dedicated vegetarian, vegetables alone are not popular these days, although their benefits to our health are tremendous. Not only do they provide nutrients that are vital for the health and maintenance of our body, but most vegetables are also naturally low in fat and calories and obscenely rich in vitamins and micronutrients.

Dietary fiber from vegetables helps reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower the risk of heart disease. Eating a diet rich in vegetables assures a source of vitamins A, C, folate and potassium. A healthy daily serving of vegetables rich in fiber can also reduce the risks of heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes and protect you against certain types of cancers.

There is one trick that makes vegetables palat-

able—veggies served in a high-end restaurant! They look great on your plate and the price tag is so high that you might as well eat them.

Here is a recipe for a nice restaurant-quality salad. Treat yourself and your family, give it a French name and it is sure to be a hit!

Raw Carrot, Parsnip, & Apple Salad

- 2 organic carrots
- 2 parsnips
- 1 apple
- Fresh parsley

Dressing :
1/2 lemon to squeeze for lemon juice

1 tsp olive oil
mustard and honey, to taste

Mix all the ingredients.

With the aid of a vegetable peeler run off ribbons of the root vegetables along their length or use a mandolin. Peel the apple and grate it on the large setting. Chop the parsley and mix with the dressing, add salt and white pepper to your taste.

Gently toss the shredded vegetables with the dressing. You can add nuts, sesame seeds, chia seeds, and dried cranberry if you plan to make it a main course.

Most of all... enjoy and be healthy!



Treating Diabetes with Diet

Diabetes is a disease that, in some cases, can be prevented and treated with diet and physical activity.

The amount and type of carbohydrates you eat is one of the most important factors in managing glucose. When preparing meals or choosing foods, you want to include carbohydrate-containing foods that are nutrient dense and rich in fiber such as vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that your plate be composed in the following manner: fill half with non-starchy vegetables, a quarter with protein, and the other quarter with small portions of starchy foods such as fruits, starchy vegetables, or whole grain products.

Consistently eating low-carbohydrate meals



will help you lower glucose levels, maintain those healthier levels, and promote weight loss.

For an interactive tool designed to help you create healthy meals, visit www.diabetes.org and search for Create Your Plate.

BY FRANCO LOPEZ III, CLINICAL NUTRITION MANAGER FOR THE HOSPITALS OF PROVIDENCE

Diet & Disease

In “Diet and Disease,” published in the March 2016 edition, we reported that dietician Franco Lopez said protein should be limited to 3-4 ounces per meal. This suggestion is based on a 2,000 calorie diet if eating three meals a day.

Lopez encourages people to limit (not avoid) bananas and vegetables high in starch, such as potatoes, peas and corn. On a strict ketogenic diet, patients do avoid bananas.

For regular diets, Lopez recommends whole grain products that contain at least 2 grams of fiber per serving.

In a modified ketogenic diet, flaxseed bread is used because it is higher in fiber. Some flaxseed breads contain 4 gm or more of fiber per serving.

The ketogenic diet, as explained in the March edition, is high in fat content, with adequate protein and some carbohydrates.

This combination places the body into a state known as ketosis and changes the way energy is used by elevating the ketone levels in the blood.

These changes not only lead to a reduction in epileptic seizures but lower glucose levels and reduced insulin resistance, according to Lopez.

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Anxiety, Addiction Common Challenges

When his younger brother committed suicide, Dr. Jean. Joseph-Vanderpool, who was a young man at the time, had an intimate lesson in the importance of mental health.

As a result, Vanderpool, who is CEO for Atlantis Health Services, has devoted his life to providing resources for a population that sometimes seems forgotten.

Vanderpool describes Atlantis as having two practices, one for higher functioning people who are suffering from anxiety, depression, or obsessive compulsive disorder, and one that is geared for those with severe persistent mental illnesses like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

"The disease has caused these people to lose the ability to do things we do every day, like coming in here, saying hello, going shopping, and buying groceries," Vanderpool said.

Atlantis provides psychosocial rehabilitation for this population, many who cannot function in society. "The treatment helps them to stay in the community instead of ending up in a state hospital, like they did 30 years ago," Vanderpool said.

As far as the general population is concerned, anxiety is a prevalent mental health issue treated at Atlantis Health Services.

"I would say it's more common than depression," Vanderpool said.

People who suffer from anxiety are generally tense; they worry a lot, they think of consequences first before doing something, and they become afraid, Vanderpool said.

"They worry about their children, they worry about whether they are going to get paid. They worry about holidays coming; they worry about how they are going to take care of their parents," he said.

While some anxiety is necessary, persistent anxiety can manifest itself in physical symptoms, such as diarrhea, abdominal pain, and chest pain.

When you are under this kind of stress, your adrenal glands secrete a hormone called cortisol.

When you are constantly in a state of tension, you are in a hyper cortisol state.

Eventually this can lead to depression, Vanderpool said. He stresses that recovery is possible.

"It's not a weakness in your personality. It's a chemical imbalance just like diabetes or high blood pressure. For most people, it exists in our genes," he said. And depression does not discriminate. It can be found in all social classes, ethnic classes, and among all age groups, Vanderpool said.



Often there is a correlation between depression and anxiety, poor physical health, and drug or alcohol addiction, according to Vanderpool. Patients who have medical conditions like arthritis or fibromyalgia are often prescribed medication to treat chronic pain. The problem occurs when the person becomes dependent on the pain medication.

"When you are taking the pills, you feel good; you are a happy person, ready to have fun," Vanderpool said. "When the effects are wearing off, you have irritability, anger, and mood swings. You are almost like two persons."

Pain pill addiction is a major problem in our community, according to Vanderpool. "We are seeing people with pain pills at home because they are addicted to them and their children are picking these pills up from the cabinets and using them as well," Vanderpool said. "So you have two generations that are coming up with addiction problems—and that's a major issue."

At Atlantis, people who are experiencing anxiety or depression are typically assessed for drug or alcohol dependence. "A lot of people try to cope with depression or anxiety by drinking," Vanderpool said.

"Alcohol is great for anxiety," Vanderpool said. "The problem is that you have to drink more and more to get that anti-anxiety effect."

Before long, the person has an addiction and most of the time, they don't see the problem, Vanderpool said. "Even after two or three DWIs, a broken marriage, a family assault charge, they still will think, 'I don't drink too much,'" he said.

Atlantis Health Services offers a variety of treatment options, ranging from medication to counseling, for patients with alcohol or drug addiction or those experiencing anxiety or depression. For more information, visit www.atlantishealth.org or call 915-544-3500.



Sometimes laughter is the best medicine

Whoever said laughter is the best medicine knew something of what Luther and Susan Ludwig are all about.

Certified laughter yoga teachers, the Ludwigs host a "Laughing Fits for Fitness" class Saturdays at the west side public library. No yoga mat or sense of humor is required.

Laughter Yoga was developed in 1995 by an Indian physician, Dr. M Kataria, who combined laughter with yogic breathing.

His research and that of others has shown that laughter produces many therapeutic benefits to different body systems.

"We are using simple laughter for health and happiness," said Susan Ludwig. "Even fake laughter has the same physiological effects and benefits of real laughter. And laughter can be especially contagious in a group."

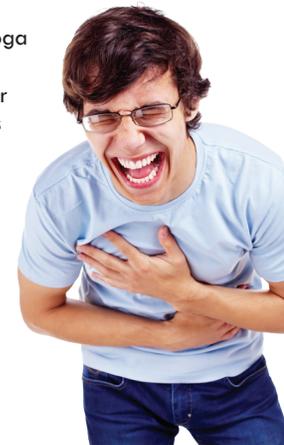
Kataria started the first "laughter club" by bringing together a group of people to tell jokes. When the jokes fell flat, he decided to get everyone to just pretend to laugh. Now there are thousands of similar groups, said Luther Ludwig.

"Laughter is good aerobic exercise," he said. "Research shows it increases circulation, oxygen and energy in the body, as well as endorphins in the brain, while reducing stress hormones."

Participants can be sitting or standing, or even in wheel chairs, to take part in the exercises.

"We encourage our students to use laughter to eliminate stress in their day-to-day lives," said Susan Ludwig. "When someone cuts you off in traffic, wouldn't it be better to laugh?"

The Ludwigs' class is held from 1 to 1:45 p.m. Saturdays at the Dorris Van Doren Library, 551 Redd Road. They are available for group presentations by calling 915-217-8028. For more information, visit www.laughterworksunlimited.com.



BY TERESA STUDER



"Dedicated to our patients' recovery and personal growth"

ATLANTIS HEALTH SERVICES















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"IT FEELS SO GOOD TO HELP OTHERS BECOME HEALTHY IN BODY AND MIND, AND INSPIRE OTHERS AS WELL."

At 370 pounds and suffering from numerous health ailments including high blood pressure, pre-diabetes and trouble sleeping, it never crossed Mike's mind that one day he would inspire others to lead a healthier lifestyle. One day, Mike experienced a devastating wake-up call; his doctor diagnosed him with high blood pressure and pre-diabetes. *"I realized then that I was on a very unhealthy path and knew that I needed to make changes to get myself on a healthier track,"* said Mike.

Mike reached out to "A New Me" Bariatric Program at The Hospitals of Providence. With the help of the doctor and the team of experts at "A New Me," Mike decided to undergo gastric sleeve surgery, and has since lost 140 pounds. *"I have tremendous amounts of energy and I put that to use at the gym daily,"* notes Mike. Besides working out, Mike is also able to enjoy golfing, which is one of his favorite activities. *"I feel blessed to be here now with a new outlook on life,"* said Mike.



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These testimonials reflect results achieved by these patients. As each case must be independently evaluated and managed, actual weight loss will vary.