

Health, Beauty & Fitness

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VOICE



ANNE ARUNDEL GASTROENTEROLOGY ASSOCIATES

Providers say colonoscopies have a detection rate of 85% to 95% for all precancerous lesions, significantly reducing the risk of cancer development.

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**AUGUST
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CATARACT SURGERY

How Do I Choose The Best Focus For My Eyes?

Allan Rutzen, MD

Rutzen Eye
Specialists &
Laser Center



Cataract surgery is one of the most common surgeries performed in the United States. Nearly everyone develops a cataract if they live long enough. A cataract is a natural clouding of the lens in the eye. Cataract surgery removes that cloudy lens and replaces it with a clear artificial lens (an implant lens). Because the implant lens can be chosen to focus at different distances, you can choose how you would like your eyes to focus after surgery.

Start by thinking about how you spend your day. Consider your work, hobbies, driving, reading and other activities of daily living.

Distance vision covers everything beyond arm's length — driving, watching television, walking through the house and recognizing faces across the room. In my experience, most people would like to see clearly at a distance without glasses.

Intermediate vision is roughly at arm's length. The importance of intermediate vision has increased with the use of cellphones and computers, but it is also the distance we use when doing household chores like cooking, cleaning, folding laundry and personal hygiene.

Near vision is anything closer than arm's length. This is important for reading fine print and medication labels, and for detailed crafts like needlepoint and other fine handwork.

The main options

Both eyes set for distance. When both eyes are optimized for distance, intermediate and near vision will be blurry, but over-the-counter reading glasses solve that inexpensively. Some patients prefer prescription progressive lenses that allow them to see clearly at all distances but require adjusting head position to get the glasses adjusted properly for the applicable distance.

Both eyes set for closer vision. This is an option for people who spend most of their time reading or working up close and who don't mind glasses for driving and distance vision.

Monovision. One eye is set for distance and the other for intermediate or near. Some people can adapt to this option and can see well at distance and near without much need for glasses. Other people find it difficult to get used to and feel off-balance. With monovision, depth perception is slightly reduced as well. If you have worn monovision contact lenses successfully in the past, that is a good indication that you might do well with monovision after cataract surgery.

Multifocal implant lenses. These are designed to provide distance, intermediate, and near vision from a single implant. Many patients are delighted and rarely reach for glasses. But there are tradeoffs: image quality is not quite as crisp as a single-focus lens, halos or glare around headlights at night are common, and some patients still need glasses for small print.

The light adjustable lens. This newer option takes a different approach. The lens is made of a special material that can be adjusted with ultraviolet light treatments in the office a few weeks after surgery. You get to test drive your vision and adjust it — improving distance, adding some near, or trying monovision — before the result is permanently locked in. It's a particularly good choice for people who have had prior LASIK surgery, where hitting the focusing target on the first try is harder to predict. The tradeoffs are that these implant lenses require several extra office visits for the light treatments, you must wear special ultraviolet-protective glasses until the lens is locked in, and it typically carries an additional out-of-pocket cost.

A few honest realities

No lens perfectly reproduces the lens of a young person with good vision. Every option involves a tradeoff. Your other eye conditions such as dry eye, macular degeneration and prior surgery also affect which choices are best, and your surgeon will take these into consideration.

The bottom line

There is no single best lens or focusing setup after surgery. The choice depends on your priorities, eye history, and your desire to be free from glasses for certain activities. Have a conversation with your eye doctor to determine what is right for you.

Dr. Allan Rutzen can be reached at Rutzen Eye Specialists & Laser Center, located at 489 Ritchie Highway, Suite 200, in Severna Park. Learn more about cataract surgery at www.rutzeneye.com or by calling 410-975-0090. ■

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Say Goodbye To Dry Eye AND HELLO TO RELIEF WITH FORMA-I AND LUMECCA

**Samuel
Boles**
Anne Arundel
Eye Center



Dry eye disease, also known as dry eyes, is becoming increasingly common, affecting millions of people worldwide. This chronic condition can significantly impact your quality of life, making everyday activities

such as reading, driving, working on a computer, or wearing contact lenses uncomfortable. If you experience eye discomfort, blurry vision, or eyes that feel unusually dry or watery, you may have dry eyes.

A comprehensive eye exam can identify the underlying cause of your symptoms and help your eye doctor develop a personalized treatment plan to provide lasting relief.

If you're preparing for cataract surgery, treating dry eyes beforehand is especially important. A healthy ocular surface allows for more accurate preoperative measurements, improving lens selection and helping achieve the best possible visual outcome.

10 COMMON SYMPTOMS OF DRY EYES

- A burning or scratchy sensation
- Stringy mucus in or around the eyes
- Irritated eyes
- Excessively watery eyes/tearing
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Red eyes
- Blurry fluctuating vision
- Eye fatigue (tired eyes)
- The sensation of having something in the eye
- Difficulty wearing contact lenses

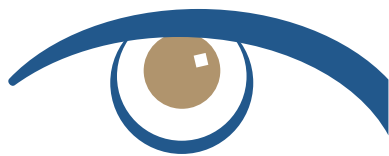
WHAT IS EVAPORATIVE DRY EYE (EDE)?

One of the leading causes of dry eyes is meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD), leading to evaporative dry eye (EDE). This is a condition in which the oil-producing glands along the eyelids become blocked or do not function properly. It occurs when your tears lack enough of the protective oil layer that slows evaporation, causing the surface of the eye to become dry and irritated. Without enough oil, tears evaporate more quickly, leading to dry eye symptoms.

TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR DRY EYES

Treatment depends on the severity and underlying cause of your condition. Initial treatment may include artificial tears, warm compresses, eyelid hygiene, or nutritional

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ANNE ARUNDEL
Eye Center

Cataract & Glaucoma Specialist

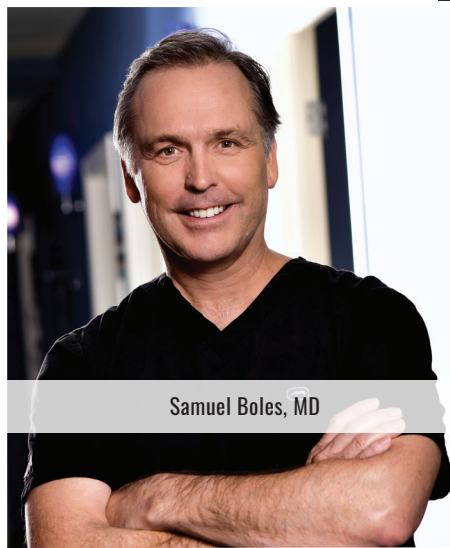
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Our team of doctors and staff takes great pride in helping patients manage their ocular health with the care and education necessary to keep them on track to a long life of good eyesight.

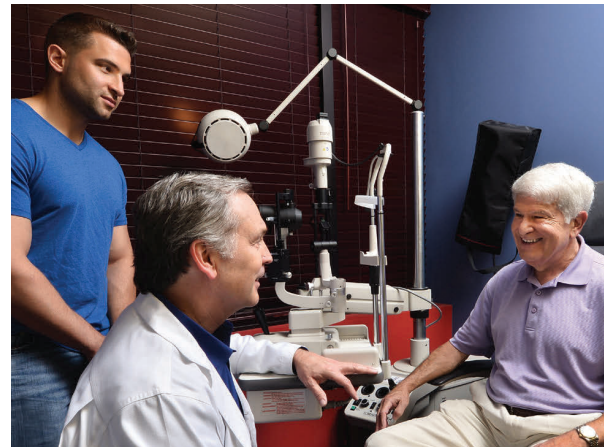
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Samuel Boles, MD



Building Better Outcomes Through Community-Based Physical Therapy

Christine Danelson,
PT, DPT,
OCS
FX Physical
Therapy



As healthcare continues to shift toward more personalized, coordinated care, physical therapy is evolving alongside it. Today's patients expect more than treatment for an injury — they want providers who understand their goals, communicate with the rest of their healthcare team, and support them well beyond the point where pain subsides.

When we opened in March 2020, the pandemic changed nearly every aspect of healthcare delivery. Traditional opportunities to introduce a new practice disappeared almost overnight. Instead, we focused on building relationships — connecting with local physicians, coaches, business owners and neighbors one conversation at a time. Those early relationships reinforced something we've always believed: the best healthcare doesn't happen in isolation.

That philosophy reflects what healthcare professionals refer to as the continuum of care — a coordinated approach in which providers col-

laborate to support patients throughout every stage of recovery and long-term wellness. Recovery does not begin and end within the walls of a clinic. Effective rehabilitation depends on communication among physicians, physical therapists, athletic trainers, strength coaches, fitness professionals and other healthcare providers.

Rather than viewing rehabilitation, fitness and performance as separate services, healthcare teams can create a connected pathway where patients can progress from injury recovery to strength development, injury prevention, and lifelong wellness while remaining support-

ed by a trusted network of professionals.

Whether someone is recovering from surgery, returning to sport after an ACL reconstruction, managing chronic pain, or simply looking to stay active, coordinated care creates smoother transitions and more consistent outcomes.

Equally important is what happens during each physical therapy visit. One of the most significant advancements in our profession has been the emphasis on one-on-one care with a doctor of physical therapy. Dedicated treatment time allows clinicians to perform comprehensive movement assessments, identify contributing factors that may

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FX PHYSICAL THERAPY



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"With A Little Help From My Friends"

Joe Bocek
Park Fitness



"get by with a little help from my friends."

That's what a member at our gym told me recently.

To give you a little context, we were having an early-morning conversation after a workout. The sun was coming up outside the gym windows, the workout was done, and there was already that nice feeling of having accomplished something before much of the day had even started.

They were telling me how they had never really been able to stick with a fitness routine before.

Yet here they were, a year and a half into consistently working out each week.

"Honestly," I told them, "A lot of it is just finding something that works for you, and that you can actually stick with."

And that's something a lot of people struggle to find.

Recent data from the Health & Fitness Association shows that about 25% of Americans belong to a gym, studio or other fitness facility. In other words, roughly three out of four people don't.

The encouraging part is that this percentage has been growing. More people are finding ways to make fitness a regular part of their lives. But getting started and sticking with it are two very different things.

Every new program, workout or gym can feel motivating in the beginning. It's new. You're excited. You have a goal. But eventually, that initial excitement starts to fade. And when it does, the question becomes: What's going to help you keep showing up when you don't feel particularly motivated?

For many people, one answer may be surprisingly simple: working out in groups and enjoying the support that comes with it. It can be quite powerful being part of something bigger than yourself. A support system, a group and

a sense of community can change the entire experience of exercise.

And there's actually good research behind this. Studies looking at group exercise have found that the social connections people develop within their group can play a meaningful role in whether they continue participating. Research involving older adults has also found that greater group cohesion can improve people's likelihood of returning to an exercise program.

More recent research has added an interesting distinction: Simply exercising in a room full of people may not be enough. What seems to matter is actually feeling connected to those people and feeling like you're part of the group.

In other words, the people you work out with may be part of what keeps you working out. Several things can help people start and maintain a fitness routine, but one of the most impactful may simply be working out with others.

They make friends. They feed off one another's energy. They laugh. They encourage each other. And perhaps most importantly, they realize they're not doing this alone.

There's accountability built into that, too. It's

Continued on page 17

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PARKFITNESS

Beyond Wrinkles: What You Should Know Before Choosing An Aesthetic Provider

**Arlette Cross,
MSN, APRN,
FNP-C**

The FaceBar
Aesthetic
Medicine

Medical aesthetics has grown tremendously over the last decade. Treatments that were once reserved for celebrities have become accessible to everyday people looking to refresh their appearance, improve their skin, or simply feel more confident. While there are more options than ever before, there is also more confusion about which

treatments are appropriate and, more importantly, who should be performing them.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that aesthetic medicine is simply about making people look younger. In reality, the goal of modern aesthetics is to help patients look like the healthiest, most refreshed version of themselves. The best results are subtle. Friends may notice you look well-rested or ask if you've changed your skincare routine rather than immediately recognizing that you've had a cosmetic treatment.

Before considering any injectable or cosmetic

Continued on page 16

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8 Veneers

A Quick Guide From Local Dentists



**Mikaela and
Joanna Frazier**
*Sisters, Dentists
and Owners*
**Vantage Point
Dental Studio**

Dental veneers have become more popular than ever over the last few years. You see them all over social media feeds and more notably showing up on our favorite celebrities. To many of us, it can feel like everyone has them, so let's try to figure out if they're right for you.

A lot of common aesthetic concerns — whether it be tooth color, shape, crowding or chipping — can be fixed with veneers, but each case needs

to be considered. For instance, many concerns like mild discoloration or small spacing issues often should be treated with whitening, bonding or orthodontics before considering veneers. Veneers are a life-changing way to fix your smile, but it's important to understand that some patients can achieve similar results with other options.

Now that we've decided you're a good candidate for veneers, you need to understand the upkeep required.



All health and beauty standards require consistent care to maintain. From the daily routine of brushing our teeth or applying moisturizer to the monthly maintenance of dyeing our hair or getting Botox injections — consistency is key to seeing and maintaining the results you want, and veneers are no exception.

To place veneers, the tooth or teeth in question have to be prepared, which requires removing a small amount of the outer enamel layer to make room for the veneer to be attached. This means veneers are a lifetime commitment. Thankfully, veneers have an excellent life expectancy with studies showing that 95% re-

main functional after 10 years, with an 85% survival rate at 15 years and some patients even experiencing longer results with proper care. If you get veneers at 30, with proper care and upkeep, you would get two or three replacements over a lifetime.

You're a good candidate for veneers and you understand it's a commitment, so now you want to know who will do the maintenance and touch-ups you'll need over the years.

All good things take time and that is true of dentistry too. Good dental care happens slowly with small adjustments — catching a

Continued on page 16



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Have You Been Curious If Chiropractic Is Right For You?



Patricia Beall
Peak Potential
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& Physical
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Whether you're a student carrying a heavy backpack, a parent juggling a busy schedule, an athlete training for competition, or a retiree enjoying an active lifestyle, your body is designed to move. When pain, stiffness or injury gets in the way, everyday

activities can become much more difficult. Chiropractic care offers a conservative, non-invasive approach to helping people improve movement, reduce pain, and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.

Many people think chiropractic care is only for back pain, but the profession has evolved significantly over the years. Today's chiropractors evaluate the entire musculoskeletal system, helping patients with conditions such as neck pain, headaches, joint discomfort, sports injuries and mobility limitations. Treatment often includes spinal manipulation, soft tissue therapy, rehabilitative exercises, posture education and lifestyle recommendations tailored to everyone's needs.

One of the greatest benefits of chiropractic care is its focus on addressing the underlying causes of pain rather than simply masking symptoms. By improving joint mobility, reducing muscle tension, and restoring proper

Continued on page 18



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At Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates,

By Zach Sparks

A bdominal pain, unexplained weight loss or a change in bowel movements could be a sign of a bigger problem. In the United States, colorectal cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer-related deaths in men and the fourth-leading cause in women.

Colorectal cancer is also the leading cause of cancer deaths among U.S. residents younger than 50, according to the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The term colorectal combines colon and rectal cancer since the two share some risk factors and symptoms.

Dr. Kent Aje, a gastroenterologist at Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates, explained that some people are predisposed to colorectal cancer. This includes anyone with a first-degree relative — a parent, child or sibling — with colorectal cancer. It also includes anyone with Lynch syndrome or familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP). But anyone can be diagnosed with the disease.

"Some of the lifestyle factors are still being studied, but we know that alcohol use, tobacco use and obesity have been linked to colon cancer, as have diets that have more processed meats and high-fat dairy," Aje said.

There is good news, though. Studies show that colorectal cancer screening and early-stage detection result in five-year survival rates in more than 90% of cases in the United States.

American Cancer Society guidelines suggest screening from age 45 to 75 for patients with a life expectancy greater than 10 years. While at-home stool and blood-based tests have emerged as convenient screening options, providers prefer one method as the best for saving lives.

"I am a big believer that any type of screening is better than no screening, but the gold standard remains getting a colonoscopy," Aje said. "The implementation of stool-based screenings are inappropriate sometimes. If you've ever had a colon polyp or have a family history of colon cancer, you're not the best candidate."

One study of nearly 4,000 Cologuard at-home test users found that 38.5% had a false positive rate, according to the National Library of Medicine. By contrast, colonoscopies have a detection rate of 85% to 95% for all precancerous lesions, significantly reducing the risk of cancer development.

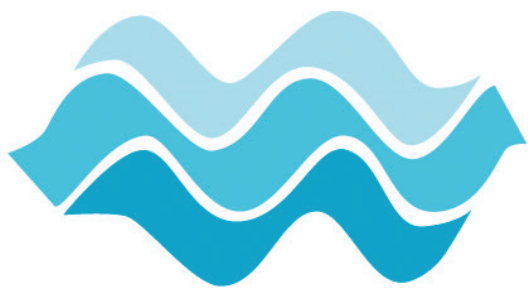
At-home tests are typically recommended every three years whereas colonoscopies are not needed as often.

"Colonoscopies are efficient," Aje added. "If I don't find any colon polyps during the evaluation, the patient does not need another colonoscopy for 10 years."

Colonoscopies Save Lives

Studies show that colorectal cancer screening and early-stage detection result in five-year survival rates in more than 90% of cases in the United States.





Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates, P.A.

410-224-2116
aagastro.com

How It Works

During a colonoscopy, a tube with a small camera is passed through a patient's rectum and into the colon. With those tools, a provider can look for inflamed tissue, ulcers, bleeding or other problems.

"The overall procedure is easy, especially in our center," Aje said. "You come an hour before your scheduled time and meet the anesthesia staff, and they place an IV in your vein to keep you comfortable. When patients are fully asleep, we insert a camera and it takes about eight minutes to investigate from beginning to end if there are any polyps."

Risks are rare but those include bleeding and tears.

"The tough part for patients, understandably, is the bowel prep," Aje said. "We have great guidelines on how to make sure we get a clean gut."

Efficiency and each patient's experience are of utmost importance at Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates.

"We have six rooms operating at any time of the day, and we see over 100 cases a day," Aje said. "At the same time, we never compromise our standards. We have well-trained recovery nurses, anesthesiologists and gastrointestinal (GI) techs who are all part of this well-oiled machine."

Colonoscopies are relatively quick, but patients can expect to spend about three hours at the center when accounting for changing clothes, IV setup, anesthesia, the procedure and recovery.

Aje and his fellow providers want patients to know that the three hours are worth it.

"Colon cancer is preventable, treatable and beatable," Aje said.

Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates has offices in Annapolis, Pasadena, Odenton, Stevensville, Bowie and Greenbelt. For more information, call 410-224-2116 for the Annapolis location or visit www.aagastro.com. ■



MORE TIME WITH THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE

Why Earlier Hospice Referrals Matter

Kylie Taylor
*Director
of Access
and Patient
Experience*
Hospice
of the
Chesapeake



Many of us have someone we love and quietly wonder if hospice might help. But then we push it to the back of our minds, telling ourselves, "Not yet."

If hospice has crossed your mind, it's worth having the conversation and finding out more. Because the earlier hospice begins, the more it can offer to patients and the people who love them.

Hospice is not only for the very last days of life. In reality, hospice care is meant to help people live longer comfortably. And it works best when it starts sooner rather than later.

When hospice begins early,

Continued on page 14



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More Than Meets The Eye

The Role Of Esthetics In Optometry

Megan Lovelace
Licensed
Esthetician
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Eye Lab



Most patients go to the optometrist to have a vision screening, get help with medical emergencies, or go shopping to pick out a gorgeous pair of glasses; however, have you heard of going to the optometrist to treat your skin?

Ocular Rosacea

Rosacea is a vascular condition characterized by dilated blood vessels at the surface of the skin. This leads to excessive redness that can be triggered with stress, food and drinks, and environmental factors, all of which are unique

between individuals with this condition. Common treatments, such as medication and lifestyle changes, can temporarily manage symptoms but do not address the underlying conditions.

Ocular rosacea can significantly impact both the health and function of the eyes. Common signs include chronic redness of the whites of the eyes, irritated eyelids, and recurring styes, all of which can cause ongoing discomfort and inflammation. If left untreated, this chronic inflammation can lead to dry eye disease. Persistent dry eye may damage the ocular surface, resulting in blurred or fluctuating vision, reduced visual quality and increased sensitivity to light.

Optilight and Optiplus

You want to focus on treating the underlying condition to alleviate symptoms and improve overall ocular health.

Optilight is an intense pulsed light (IPL) device that can effectively reduce

the appearance and symptoms of rosacea. This is a noninvasive procedure done in-office with little to no downtime; most people come on their lunch break and return to work with minimal redness. Pulses of light seal off abnormal blood vessels reducing inflammation and irritation around the eye, while the heat of light helps melt hardened oil, skin cells, or debris left in the oil glands of the eyes.

Optiplus uses radio frequency to stimulate oil glands and improve oil production. Most patients with dry eye have clogged oil glands that don't allow for natural expression, leaving a gritty feeling in the eyes. While Optilight uses pulses of light to address inflammation, Optiplus uses bulk heating to liquefy any material that is preventing the eye from naturally lubricating itself. Combined with manual expression of the eyelids, Optiplus helps the glands to secrete oil naturally again.

Continued on page 17



OPTILIGHT & OPTIPLUS

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Why Earlier Hospice Referrals Matter

Continued from page 12

it's not rushed. There's time to get to know the care team and feel comfortable. There's time to make a plan. And there's time to focus on what really matters – being with the ones you love in a familiar place that you call home.

Getting to know you

Hospice is more than medical care. It's a team of nurses, doctors, aides, social workers, chaplains and volunteers, all working together to support not just the patient but the whole family. They manage pain and symptoms like shortness of breath or nausea before they become overwhelming. They make sure equipment like hospital beds, wheelchairs and oxygen is in place. And they teach the family what to expect, so nothing feels quite so uncertain.

Hospice gives people a voice in their care. Starting earlier of-

ten means patients are still able to share what they want for this time in their life, whether that's being comfortable at home, spending time with family, or continuing simple daily routines they enjoy. Hospice doesn't take away hope. It helps redefine it.

Help for caregivers

For families, the support can be life-changing. Caring for a loved one at the end of life can feel overwhelming, especially without guidance. Hospice brings education, reassurance and a steady presence. Instead of feeling alone or in crisis, families feel prepared. They can spend less time worrying about "what do I do?" and more time simply being together.

That support doesn't end at the moment of loss. Hospice teams also help families begin to process their grief, offering counseling and emotional support along the way.

What matters most

Hospice is often seen as a last resort, when it's actually about improving quality of life – right now.

I have never heard a family say, "I wish we had waited to call hospice." But I have frequently heard, "I wish

we had called sooner."

That's why starting the conversation early matters so much. Just asking questions or learning more can make a real difference.

Because when hospice begins earlier, there's more time – for comfort, for connection and for the moments that matter most.

Hospice of the Chesapeake provides expert, compassionate care for individuals and families navigating serious advanced illness and loss. Care is built around a genuine partnership between skilled clinicians, healthcare partners, and patients and families – centered on supporting quality of life at every stage.

For more than 45 years, Hospice of the Chesapeake has had the privilege of caring for more than 65,000 patients and more than 100,000 family members across the communities it serves.

Hospice of the Chesapeake is proud to be a part of Chesapeake Health Partners, an organization focused on strengthening community-based care and support services across the region.

For details, visit www.hospicechesapeake.org or call 1-877-462-1101. ■



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Regenerative Medicine Is Here To Stay



Lucy Guevara, MD, MPH
Owner and Medical Director
Optimal Longevity MD

What if the future of medicine was not about managing disease but about helping the body heal, restore and thrive? That future is already here, and it is called regenerative medicine.

Regenerative medicine is transforming the way we

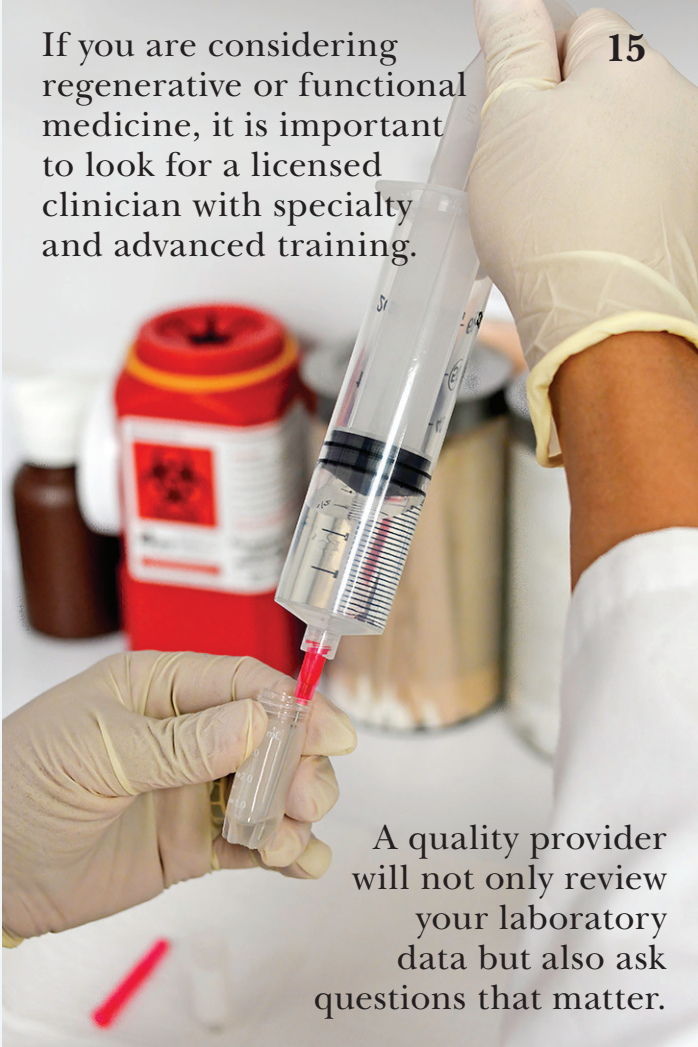
think about health and aging by focusing on the body's natural ability to repair itself. While it may sound like a new trend, the science behind regeneration has been studied for decades. Today, regenerative medicine, together with functional and integrative medicine, is challenging the conventional healthcare model by shifting the focus from symptom management to prevention, optimization and longevity.

So, what is regenerative medicine?

Regenerative medicine encompasses therapies and approaches that support the body's healing processes, promote healthy tissue function, and encourage restoration at a cellular level. Combined with functional medicine, which seeks to identify and address the root causes of illness, regenerative medicine offers patients a more comprehensive view of their health rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

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If you are considering regenerative or functional medicine, it is important to look for a licensed clinician with specialty and advanced training.



A quality provider will not only review your laboratory data but also ask questions that matter.



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Beyond Wrinkles

Continued from page 7

procedure, start with a consultation, not the treatment itself. A thorough medical history, medication review, facial assessment, and discussion of your goals should always come first. Every face is unique, and what works beautifully for one person may not be the right choice for another.

Choosing The Right Injector

A Patient's Checklist

The person holding the syringe matters just as much as the product inside it. Cosmetic injections are medical procedures, so it's important to choose a provider and practice that prioritize patient safety, education and ethical care.

When researching a practice, consider asking the following questions:

- ◆ What are the injector's credentials? Ask about their professional license, education, certifications and specialized training in aesthetic medicine.
- ◆ How much experience does the injector have? Experience isn't measured only in years. Ask how long they have been
- injecting, how often they perform treatments, and whether they regularly attend advanced training and continuing education.
- ◆ Do they perform a thorough consultation? A quality consultation includes a review of your medical history, medications, allergies, aesthetic goals and a discussion of realistic expectations before recommending treatment.
- ◆ Do they listen to your concerns? Your appointment should feel like a conversation, not a sales presentation. A good provider spends time understanding your goals and answers your questions without pressure.
- ◆ Are treatment recommendations individualized? Every face is different. Recommendations should be based on your anatomy, facial balance and personal goals, and not on trends or a one-size-fits-all approach.
- ◆ Are they comfortable recommending less or even no treatment? One of the hallmarks of an ethical injector is knowing when treatment isn't necessary. Sometimes the best recommendation is skincare, lifestyle changes, or simply waiting. You should never feel pressured into purchasing additional treatments that don't align with your goals or medical needs.
- ◆ Do the results look natural? When reviewing

before-and-after photos, look for patients who still resemble themselves, just refreshed, rested and naturally enhanced.

Choosing an aesthetic provider is about more than finding someone who can perform an injection. It's about finding a qualified medical professional and practice that value safety, honesty, education and individualized care. Taking the time to ask thoughtful questions can help patients make informed decisions and feel confident throughout their aesthetic journey.

Healthy skin is also the foundation of great aesthetic results. Daily sunscreen, quality skincare, hydration, adequate sleep, a balanced diet and avoiding tobacco products often make as much difference as any cosmetic treatment. These habits protect collagen, reduce premature aging, and help maintain results over time.

Perhaps the most important trend in aesthetics

today is personalization. Rather than following social media trends or asking for someone else's features, today's approach focuses on enhancing your own natural anatomy while respecting the aging process. The goal isn't to look like someone else or erase every line; it's to look healthy, refreshed and authentically you.

Aesthetic medicine is most rewarding when it is approached with education, trust and realistic expectations. Whether you're considering your first treatment or have been receiving aesthetic services for years, remember that education should always come before injection. The right provider won't simply offer a treatment; they'll partner with you to create a plan that is safe, thoughtful and tailored to your individual needs.

For more information, contact Arlette Cross at 443-781-3195 or connect@facebaram.com. ■

Veneers: A Quick Guide From Local Dentists

Continued from page 8

crack before it's a fracture, catching a filling before it's a crown, learning that someone clenches when work gets busy. That takes building trust and knowing a person over years, and that means finding a dentist who plans to still be around. That's why we recommend choosing a locally owned and operated office with a dentist you can rely on.

Veneers can be transformative. If you're considering them, talk it through with someone willing to have an honest conversation and someone who intends to be around for the long haul either way.

To learn about the comprehensive dental services offered at Vantage Point Dental Studio in Severna Park, go to www.vantagepointdentalstudio.com. ■

Community-Based Physical Therapy

Continued from page 5

otherwise be overlooked, and develop individualized treatment plans based on a patient's medical history, lifestyle and personal goals.

This individualized approach strengthens what healthcare professionals call the therapeutic alliance, the collaborative relationship between patient and provider. Research consistently shows that a strong therapeutic

alliance is associated with greater patient engagement, better adherence to treatment recommendations, higher satisfaction, and improved functional outcomes. When patients feel heard, understood, and actively involved in their care, they become partners in the rehabilitation process rather than passive recipients of treatment.

Over the past six years, these principles have guided the growth of FX Physical Therapy from a single clinic inside Rockwell Fitness to two Severna Park locations, including REPS Performance, that serve a broader range of patient needs. While its network has expanded, its mission has remained the same: to provide evidence-based, one-on-one care while strengthening the partnerships that help people move confidently across the full continuum of care. Learn more at www.fxphysicaltherapy.com. ■

Esthetics In Optometry

Continued from page 13

Welcome to the Esthetics Industry

To maximize and maintain the benefits of OptiLight, a consistent skincare routine is essential. Supporting the skin barrier after treatment helps minimize irritation and reduce flare-ups, while regular maintenance facials allow an esthetician to monitor skin health, address any emerging concerns, and recommend personalized treatments that help prolong your OptiLight results.

As the fields of optometry

and medical esthetics continue to progress, patients can benefit from a comprehensive approach to both eye and skin health. By combining professional in-office treatments with a personalized at-home skincare routine, patients can enjoy long-term dry eye relief alongside healthier, glowing skin — all at their local optometrist.

Woolf Eye Lab is located at 2446 Mountain Road in Pasadena. Call 410-255-8056 or email Megan at megan@woolfeyelab.com for more information. ■

Help From My Friends

Continued from page 6

a lot easier to bail on a workout when no one is expecting you. It's a little harder when you know someone is going to notice that you're not there.

Research supports this idea as well. Studies examining social support and exercise participation have found that social support and group cohesion can help distinguish people who attend more consistently from those who attend less or eventually drop out.

But accountability doesn't have to be complicated. It's someone asking where you were Tuesday. It's knowing your usual workout crew will be there. It's the person next to you encouraging you through the last few reps. Or it's simply knowing someone is expecting to see you. Over time, those little things can create momentum.

It's a bit like swimming with the current instead of against it. When you're trying to do everything on your own, motivating yourself, getting through your workouts, pushing yourself and holding yourself accountable, it can sometimes feel like you're constantly swimming upstream. The right environment can turn that around.

That's why it's important to "just get in the door." That doesn't mean the workout itself doesn't

require effort. It does. It means that sometimes the hardest part is simply getting yourself there.

Once you're through the door, you're surrounded by people doing the same thing you are. The workout is ready. People know your name. Someone is happy to see you.

And instead of having to manufacture all that motivation yourself, you can borrow a little energy from the people around you. The current starts carrying you.

And maybe that's an important lesson for anyone who has struggled to make exercise stick. If you've tried gyms before and they haven't worked, maybe you haven't found the right environment yet.

Some people thrive working out alone. Others need a class, a coach, a training partner or a group of familiar faces. The important thing is figuring out what helps you keep showing up.

Because the best fitness program isn't simply the one that looks best on paper. It's the one you can make part of your life.

As many people have discovered, finding the right current can make all the difference.

Sometimes, we really do get by with a little help from our friends.

Park Fitness offers group personal training, accountability and tracking, practical nutrition strategy and more. Learn more by calling 410-432-2113 or by visiting www.parkfitssp.com. ■

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Regenerative Medicine Is Here To Stay

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Traditional healthcare and insurance excel in many areas — especially acute care, emergencies and life-threatening conditions. There is no question that modern medicine saves lives. However, the current system is often not designed to focus on prevention, optimization or long-term wellness. Many advanced laboratory assessments that can provide insight into inflammation, nutrient status, hormones, metabolic health and overall function are not always covered by insurance, which can leave patients with an incomplete picture of their health.

The difference between conventional versus regenerative medicine often comes down to one question: are we managing symptoms or addressing the root cause?

It is like putting tape over a check engine light. The warn-

ing signal may disappear, but the underlying issue remains. Regenerative and functional medicine aim to look under the hood — examining lifestyle, nutrition, sleep, stress, movement, hormones and cellular health to understand why symptoms are occurring in the first place.

As we age, our bodies experience changes in collagen production, tissue repair, hormone balance and overall cellular function. The body naturally shifts toward more catabolic (breaking down) processes and away from anabolic (building up) processes. Regenerative strategies seek to support the body's ability to repair and recover and help individuals stay active and resilient throughout their lives.

If you are considering regenerative or functional medicine, it is important to look for a licensed clinician with specialty and advanced

training. A quality provider will not only review your laboratory data but also ask questions that matter: How are you sleeping? What are you eating? How do you move your body? How are you managing stress? These factors are foundational to true health.

Optimal Longevity MD is located within Perilla Wellness, a collaborative wellness center that brings together providers with different specialties to deliver a holistic approach to comprehensive health. This approach allows patients to benefit from integrated care focused on prevention, performance, recovery and longevity.

The bottom line: invest in your health, invest in yourself, and invest in your resilience. The question is not simply how long you want to live, but what you want your quality of life to look like along the way. ■

Is Chiropractic Right For You?

Continued from page 9

movement patterns, many patients are able to return to work, sports, hobbies, and family activities with greater comfort and confidence.

Research continues to support chiropractic care as an effective first-line treatment for many common musculoskeletal conditions. Clinical guidelines increasingly recommend conservative treatments, including chiropractic care and exercise, before considering more invasive options for many patients.

Prevention is another important aspect of chiropractic care. Regular movement assessments can identify areas of stiffness, muscle imbalance, or poor posture before they develop into more significant problems. Small changes in ergonomics, exercise habits, and daily movement patterns can have a lasting impact on overall health and function.

As healthcare continues to emphasize collaboration, many chiropractors work alongside primary care physicians, physical therapists, orthopedic specialists, massage therapists, and other healthcare providers to ensure patients receive comprehensive, coordinated care. This team-

based approach helps patients receive the most appropriate treatment for their individual needs.

Our community thrives when its members can stay healthy and active. Whether it's enjoying local parks, participating in youth sports, working in physically demanding jobs, or simply playing with grandchildren, movement is essential to quality of life.

If you are experiencing persistent pain, limited mobility, or recovering from an injury, seeking an evaluation from a qualified healthcare professional can help determine the most appropriate treatment plan. Chiropractic care is one option that may help many individuals move better, feel better, and continue participating in the activities they enjoy.

Healthy movement is about more than being pain-free. It's about maintaining independence, improving function and living life to its fullest. As our community continues to grow, encouraging healthy movement and proactive care can help people of all ages remain active for years to come.

To learn more about chiropractic care services offered by Peak Potential Chiropractic and Physical Therapy, call 410-881-5415. ■



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KEYS FOR LONGEVITY

Nutritious Foods



By Dan Elson

People who want to start their health journey should eat nutritious foods such as animal protein, fruits and vegetables while starting small with exercise, according to health and fitness experts.

No specific exercises are best for beginners, according to Travis Clay, the founder of REPS Performance in Severna Park. Clay said a good starting point is to discuss injury history and training programs.

"We try to build the program or place the program, whomever it is, that fits the person that's coming in versus, well, this is the best exercise," Clay said. "Not everybody should be doing a front squat. Not everybody should be doing, necessarily, single-leg movements or even squatting past 90 degrees."

Adding muscle helps people prevent injuries, increase bone density and avoid falls.

REPS Performance trainers recommend starting with two to three days of strength training per week. It is essential to give

beginners small doses and wins along the way. Clay said two to three sets of eight to 15 reps is best for beginners.

"The last thing you want to do is have someone who's first coming in do five days, and all of a sudden they're so sore that they're unable to do their daily activities, or they get into their head as this is what it's going to feel like constantly," Clay said.

A record 81 million Americans belonged to a gym in 2025, according to the Health & Fitness Association. That is over 26% percent of the population age 6 and older.

"From a younger generation, it has become more important to them to be healthy," Clay said. "I think with fitness facilities continuing to open across the landscape, whether it be a class model or boutique or one-on-one, something like what we have here at REPS or an open gym, I just feel like more people are health conscious."

Clay also noted he has seen older people get into exercise.

"You're never too old to start," Clay said. "You're seeing a lot more people of that age group come back in. There's also a lot of them that started back in their 20s, 30s that have just never stopped. I think the rise of pickleball has helped (and) the rise of golf and extracurricular activities has really helped with that."

Individuals who start their fitness journey and are trying to

lose weight must realize it takes time, according to Colleen Kiley, the lead diabetes educator for Luminis Health.

"A reasonable amount of weight loss is a pound a week," Kiley said. "Small changes and actually changing your behaviors is what's going to help you over time."

Consuming enough fiber is essential, and that comes from fruits and vegetables. Kiley said to aim for at least 22 grams of fiber.

"I think it's one of the hardest things for people to actually achieve, and something kind of simple to start with," she said. "Then from there, really just looking at your portion sizes going forward, that your proteins are about the palm of your hand, and then your carbs or starches are about one fist."

Rotisserie chicken is a good option to buy on a budget.

"It's already prepared for you," Kiley said. "You just need to cut it up, and then you can easily pair it with some rice. They sell rice in individual cups that you can heat up, or frozen rice you just put in the microwave and then add a bag of frozen veggies to that."

Kiley noted adding chia seeds to Greek yogurt bowls and protein shakes is a good option. Make sure the label says Greek yogurt because others have high sugar. She also recommends consuming at least 60 ounces of water each day.

Beginners should aim for 7,000 steps a day, according to Joe

Daily Movement



Bocek, co-owner of Park Fitness in Severna Park. Walking benefits the cardiovascular system and regulates blood sugar.

"If we can work our way up to that 10,000 or beyond number, that's good," Bocek said. "There is a lot of really good data out there that shows us the more steps we get in, the greater the health benefits overall."

From 1999-2023, U.S. obesity rates rose from 30%-41% according to the American Heart Association.

"Food has never been as hyper-palatable as it is now," Bocek said. "So there is a big ... leading thought process that we are engineering food to taste better, better and better. We are making food we want to eat all the time. I think that's one (reason). I think people are less active than they used to be. That starts to dip into technology."

Individuals new to exercise must go in with the right mindset to avoid injuries, according to Bocek. The first workout does not have to be the best one because beginners have the rest of their lives to achieve the best workout. ■

Say Goodbye To Dry Eye

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

supplements. There are also a number of prescription medications that can be effective.

For patients with MGD, advanced in-office treatments such as Forma-I and Lumecca-I (IPL) can provide long-lasting relief. These non-invasive procedures use handheld technology to improve meibomian gland function, reducing tear evaporation and

relieving symptoms. A series of four or more treatments is typically recommended for the best long-term results.

By combining these two U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved technologies, many patients experience significant improvement in their dry eye symptoms, often reducing their reliance on artificial tears and lubricating ointments. An added benefit is improved skin tone around the eyes, with many patients also noticing a reduction in fine lines and wrinkles.

If you think you may benefit from

dry eye treatment, schedule a consultation with your eye doctor. While the consultation is typically covered by insurance, the procedures themselves are paid out of pocket. However, many patients can use flexible spending account (FSA) or health savings account (HSA) funds to help cover the cost.

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