

Florida Wellcare Alliance, LC

Healthy Living

complimentary healthcare information for patients

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Benefits of a Healthy Morning Meal

Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day - it gives you energy to start the day and is linked to many health benefits. Studies show that eating a healthy breakfast can help give you a nutritionally complete diet, higher in nutrients, vitamins, and minerals; better weight control; improved concentration and performance in the classroom or the boardroom; more strength and energy to engage in physical activity; and lower cholesterol levels.

If you find yourself at a fast-food chain in the morning, always opt for the healthiest breakfast options, or eat a smaller portion and save the other half. You can eat out healthfully, but nothing compares to the numerous breakfast options at home, from an egg and whole-wheat toast to a whole-grain breakfast parfait with fruit and yogurt. Short on time? Pack it the night before and take it along with you.

Patients With Heart Disease Need to be Screened for Sleep Disorder

Dacelin St. Martin, M.D.

There is strong medical evidence of a link between sleep apnea and cardiovascular diseases such as hypertension, arrhythmia, stroke and heart failure. As a physician, board certified in Sleep Medicine, I feel a great responsibility to share this information, increase awareness, and ultimately, save lives. If you or a loved one displays any sign of sleep apnea as mentioned in this article, or has recently been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, please talk to your doctor. You may need to schedule an overnight diagnostic sleep study (polysomnogram) at an accredited sleep clinic, such as Sleep Clinic of America.

Most people associate sleep apnea with loud snoring, but the important thing to look for here is breathing. People with sleep apnea tend to have periods when he or she stops breathing and nothing can be heard. Then, suddenly they snort, gasp, choke, or snore and breathing is resumed. Unless the problem is noticed by a roommate or bed partner, a person may not even know they have sleep apnea. Meanwhile, sleep apnea takes its toll, setting the stage for hypertension.

Blood pressure tends to go up when a person with sleep apnea sleeps. This is because when breathing stops, the oxygen level in his or her body goes down, and receptors are stimulated to alert the brain that there is a problem. In response, the brain sends signals through the nervous system and essentially tells the blood vessels to "tighten up" in order to increase the flow of oxygen to the most vital organs: the heart and the brain. The

problem is that this message tends to carry over in the daytime, even when the sleep apnea patient is awake and breathing normally. High blood pressure suddenly becomes a problem, and may be difficult to manage. This in turn increases the risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

There is good news, however. We have found that if you treat people with high blood pressure and sleep apnea using CPAP therapy, their blood pressure is not only lower at night—it's also lower during the day. Patients with heart failure and sleep apnea also showed significant improvement. Patients with atrial fibrillation and sleep apnea that are appropriately treated have only a 40% chance of coming back for further treatment of their atrial fibrillation. If their sleep apnea is untreated, the chance of a recurrence of atrial fibrillation goes up to 80%. The message to heart patients with sleep apnea is clear: With treatment of your sleep apnea, your chances of improvement are considerably better.

Dr. Dacelin St. Martin is board-certified in sleep, internal, and pediatric medicine. He is the medical director of the Sleep Clinic of America in Lecanto, which is accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. Contact him at 352 527-6673, or visit www.SleepClinicAmerica.com.

Age Spots

Age spots (also called liver spots) are flat gray, brown or black spots. They vary in size and usually appear on the face, hands, shoulders and arms, areas most exposed to the sun. Though age spots are very common in adults older than age 40, they can affect younger people as well.

True age spots are harmless and don't need treatment, but they can look like cancerous growths. For cosmetic reasons, age spots can be lightened with skin-bleaching products or removed. However, preventing age spots by avoiding the sun and using sunscreen may be the easiest way to avoid these dark skin spots.

Age spots typically develop in people with a fair complexion, but they can be seen in those with darker skin. Age spots are flat, oval areas of increased pigmentation. They are usually brown, black or gray and occur on skin that has had the most sun exposure over the years, such as the backs of hands, tops of feet, face, shoulders and upper back. Age spots range from freckle-size to more than 1/2 inch across and can group together, making them more prominent.

Age spots are usually harmless, however, your doctor should evaluate spots that are dark or have changed in appearance, because these changes can be signs of melanoma, a serious form of skin cancer. Have any skin changes evaluated by a doctor, especially if a spot or lesion is darkly pigmented, rapidly increasing in size, has an irregular border or an unusual combination of colors or is accompanied by itching, redness, tenderness or bleeding.

Age spots are caused primarily by years of exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun. The use of commercial tanning lamps and tanning beds can also contribute to the development of age spots. The pigment in the upper layer of skin that gives your skin its normal color is called melanin. UV light accelerates the production of melanin, creating a tan that helps protect deeper layers of skin from UV rays.

On areas of the skin that have years of frequent and prolonged sun exposure, age spots appear when melanin becomes "clumped" or is produced in particularly high concentrations. In addition to sun exposure, simply becoming older can cause the extra production of melanin. Your genetic makeup may also play a role in how susceptible you are to the development of age spots. Although anyone can develop age spots, you may be more likely to develop the condition if you have light-colored or fair skin, or have a history of frequent or intense sun exposure or sunburn.

Start by seeing your primary care doctor. However, in some cases when you call to set up an appointment, you may be referred to a dermatologist, a specialist in skin diseases.

Your doctor is likely to ask you a number of questions, such as:

- When did you first notice the spots on your skin?
- Did the spots appear gradually or quickly?
- Have you noticed any other changes in the appearance of your skin?
- Is the condition itchy, tender or otherwise bothersome?
- Have you experienced frequent or severe sunburns?
- How often are you exposed to sun or UV radiation?
- Do you regularly protect your skin from UV radiation?
- What kind of sun protection do you use?

Your doctor can usually diagnose age spots by visually inspecting your skin. If there is any doubt, the doctor may do other tests, such as a skin biopsy. During a skin biopsy, the doctor takes a small sample of your skin for microscopic analysis. A skin biopsy is usually done in a doctor's office, using a local anesthetic.

Age spot treatments include prescription bleaching creams and a mild steroid that may gradually fade the spots over several months. Sun protection with a

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broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more is strongly advised. If you use prescription medication treatments these may result in temporary itching, redness, burning or dryness.

Laser therapy destroys melanin-producing cells without damaging the skin's surface. Treatments with a laser typically require several sessions. After treatment, age spots fade gradually over several weeks or months. Laser therapy has few side effects, but it may result in slight discoloration of the skin.

Freezing involves applying liquid nitrogen or another freezing agent to the age spots to destroy the extra pigment. As the area heals, the skin appears lighter. Freezing is typically used on a single age spot or a small grouping of age spots. The treatment may temporarily irritate the skin and poses a slight risk of permanent scarring or discoloration. Dermabrasion consists of sanding down the surface layer of your skin with a rapidly rotating brush. This procedure removes the skin surface, and a new layer of skin grows in its place. Temporary redness and scab formation can result from this treatment.

A chemical peel involves applying an acid, which burns the outer layer of your skin, to the age spots. As your skin peels, new skin forms to take its place. Several treatments may be necessary before you notice any results. Sun protection is strongly advised following this treatment. Temporary irritation is likely, and there's a slight risk of discoloration.

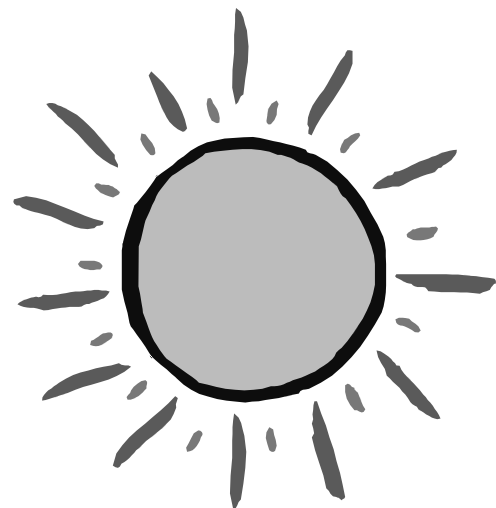
Because age spot treatments are considered cosmetic, your insurance may not pay for them. And because the procedures can have side effects, discuss your options carefully with your dermatologist. Also, make sure your dermatologist is specially trained and experienced in the technique you're considering.

Many fade creams and lotions for lightening age spots are available. These may improve the appearance of age spots depending on how dark the spots are and how often you apply the cream. Regular

use over several weeks or months may be necessary to produce noticeable results. If you opt for an over-the-counter fade cream, choose one that contains hydroquinone, deoxyarbutin, glycolic acid or kojic acid. Some products, especially those that contain hydroquinone, may cause skin irritation.

To help avoid age spots, follow these tips for limiting your sun exposure:

- 1 Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Because the sun's rays are most intense during this time, try to schedule outdoor activities for other times.
- 2 Use sunscreen. 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors, apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen that provides protection from both UVA and UVB light. Use a sunscreen with a SPF of at least 15. Apply sunscreen generously, and reapply every two hours, or more often if you're swimming or perspiring.
- 3 Cover up. For protection from the sun, wear a broad-brimmed hat, and tightly woven clothing that covers your arms and legs. You might also consider wearing clothing designed to provide sun protection. An ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) of 40 to 50 provides the best protection. UV-blocking clothes can lose their protective feature if they are stretched, become wet or are washed repeatedly.



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Allergy Symptoms

Allergy symptoms depend on your particular allergy. Allergic reactions can range from mild to severe. In some severe cases, allergies can trigger anaphylaxis, a life-threatening reaction.

- Hay fever may cause congestion, itchy runny nose, itchy, watery or swollen eyes.
- Atopic dermatitis, (eczema) an allergic skin condition, may cause itchy skin, red skin, flaking or peeling skin.
- A food allergy may cause tingling mouth, swelling of the lips, tongue, face or throat, hives, or anaphylaxis.
- An insect sting may cause a large area of swelling at the sting site, itching or hives all over your body, cough, chest tightness, wheezing or shortness of breath, or anaphylaxis.
- A drug allergy may cause hives, itchy skin, rash, facial swelling, wheezing, or anaphylaxis.

Some types of allergies, including allergies to foods, drugs and insect stings, have the potential to trigger a severe reaction known as anaphylaxis. A life-threatening medical emergency, this reaction can cause you to go into shock. Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis include loss of consciousness, lightheadedness, severe shortness of breath, rapid, weak pulse, skin rash, nausea and vomiting, and swelling airways which can block breathing.

You may want to see a doctor if you have symptoms you think may be caused by an allergy, especially if you notice something in your environment that seems to trigger your allergies. If you have symptoms after starting a new medication, call the doctor who prescribed it right away. For a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), call 911 or seek emergency medical help. If you carry an epinephrine auto-injector, give yourself a shot right away. Even if symptoms improve after an emergency epinephrine injection, a visit to the emergency room of the hospital is still necessary to make sure symptoms don't return when the effects of the injection wear off.

If you've had a severe allergy attack or any signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis in the past, make an appointment to see your doctor. Evaluation, diagnosis and long-term management of anaphylaxis are complicated, so you'll probably need to see a doctor who specializes in allergies and immunology.

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Crohn's Disease Research Trial

Crohn's Disease affects many Americans. Physicians in your area are currently seeking volunteers to participate in a clinical research study evaluating an investigational medication for people with Crohn's Disease. You may be eligible if you

- Are between the ages of 18 and 75
- Have a diagnosis of Crohn's Disease by a physician
- Have taken OR could not tolerate OR have not had an adequate response to an anti-TNF medication (such as Humira®, Remicade®, Enbrel®, Cimzia® or Simponi®)
- Have not had bowel surgery within the past 3 months

Qualified participants may receive study related medication and study related medical exams at no cost for up to 11 months. Compensation for time and travel is available for qualified participants.

For more information call:
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NEW STUDY SEEKING PEOPLE WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES AND HEART DISEASE

Nature Coast Clinical Research
is seeking people with type 2
diabetes and heart disease
to take part in the **SUSTAIN™ 6**
Long-term Outcomes trial.

SUSTAIN™



**NATURE COAST
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ABDOMINAL PAIN, BLOATING, DIARRHEA

Have you or someone you know been Diagnosed with Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

If so, there is now an opportunity to join a new research study.

Are you eligible?

- Between the ages 18-80 years old
- Have diarrhea predominant irritable bowel syndrome



**NATURE COAST
CLINICAL RESEARCH**

Qualified Participants: Will receive study medication or placebo, study-related testing, physical exams, and lab work at no charge

Additionally: Compensation may be available to qualified participants for each completed visit (for time and travel)

Furiex
Pharmaceuticals

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If you would like to know more about these studies or just learn more about research participation, please fill out the form on the back of this newsletter and mail it to us.



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ENCouraging COmmunity Research and Education

Nature Coast Clinical Research has two locations serving Citrus County:

NCCR Inverness Office
411 W. Highland Blvd.
Inverness, Florida 34452
Phone: 352 341-2100
Fax: 352 341-0363

NCCR Crystal River Office
6122 West Corporate Oaks Dr.
Crystal River, Florida 34429
Phone: 352 563-1865
Fax: 352 563-2169

www.naturecoastresearch.com

CONTACT THE OFFICE NEAREST YOU FOR MORE INFORMATION!

Clinical Trial Information Form

Please call me with more information about...

INVERNESS OFFICE

CRYSTAL RIVER OFFICE

- Chronic Constipation
- Chronic Liver Disease/Liver Cirrhosis
- Constipation Induced by Pain Medication
- Crohn's Disease
- Diabetic Gastroparesis
- Diabetes—Type 2
- High Cholesterol
- High Triglycerides
- Irritable Bowel—Constipation
- Irritable Bowel—Diarrhea
- Shingles Vaccine in Patients With Cancer History
- Ulcerative Colitis

- Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS) (post heart attack treatment)
- C-diff Vaccine Prevention
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Constipation Induced by Pain Medication
- Diabetes—Type 2
- Endometriosis
- Glaucoma
- Gout
- High Cholesterol
- High Triglycerides
- Irritable Bowel—Diarrhea

COMPLETE AND MAIL THIS FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____