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# PATIENT PULSE

MARCH 2020



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## SPRING INTO THE SEASON WITH THESE EXCITING LOCAL EVENTS

March is jam-packed with a variety of exciting events throughout San Diego. Here are just a few that you won't want to miss!

### SPRING HOME/GARDEN SHOW MARCH 6—8

Celebrating its 35th year, the Spring Home/Garden Show returns to the Del Mar Fairgrounds for three days of pure excitement over the arrival of spring. Landscapes created exclusively for the show by "garden masters" feature beautifully inspiring home setups, and the exhibition includes hands-on demonstrations, home-improvement products, educational seminars, plant and garden sales, and consultations with top experts. If you're an avid gardener, this is the place to be during the first weekend of March.

### SAN DIEGO UNDY RUNWALK MARCH 7

When your slogan is "Hit the streets in your boxers and briefs," your event is pretty self-explanatory. Sign up for a run (or walk) in the Mission Bay neighborhood and support the Colon Cancer Alliance. Adults and kids alike will find endless entertainment in the costumes and get-ups, or lack thereof, of the runners who participate in this race for a good cause. You'll even receive your own pair of boxer shorts when you register!

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE & FESTIVAL MARCH 14

Since 1982, this parade and festival has brought the Irish culture to San Diego. The parade is the largest west of the Mississippi and features marching bands, floats, police and fire department units, clowns, horses, military troops, bagpipe players, dancers, roller skaters, and even representatives from Ireland. After the parade, the festival keeps things going with fun music, tasty Irish food, lively dancing, and much more.

### KIDS' DAY AT THE FLOWER FIELDS MARCH 22

Beginning in early March, the Carlsbad Flower Fields begin to bloom, showing off a spectacular display of ranunculus. This annual burst of color is a favorite sight for locals, and the flowers are arranged in breathtaking, expert displays. You can view them from the road or enter for a modest fee. On Kids' Day, there will be a ton of fun family activities offered, so you can make an entire day of the event. Check out their website, TheFlowerFields.com, for more special events during spring.



# THE FOOD YOU'RE EATING

## COULD BE AFFECTING YOUR HEALING



March is National Nutrition Month, so it's a great time to find ways to reinvest in our health. We love seeing our patients every day and helping them work through their physical recovery. But one thing we don't get to talk about very often, amidst the focus on the physical side of their health and well-being, is the role that nutrition also plays in happy healing.

I'll be the first to say that I'm not a fan of fad or extreme diets. They don't necessarily work effectively because they don't support useful lifestyle changes. That means they tend to fizzle out pretty rapidly, and their effects aren't long lasting. Let's be realistic here — if the "grapefruit diet" actually worked long term and had realistically achievable results, then everyone would be on it all the time! There's a reason these fad diets come and go so rapidly. They're just not sustainable, and in many ways, not very healthy.

In this newsletter, I talk a lot about being a big foodie. My readers have heard me share details about the meals I cook, the restaurants I eat at, and all the food I get to sample during my travels. It probably seems like all I do is eat out all the time, indulging in food that might taste great but isn't necessarily great for me. But I'd like to correct that assumption. The truth is that those are culinary "treats" that I like to bring into my life on occasion. For the most part, I eat healthy meals I've prepared at home, using the skills and knowledge about nutrition I've gained over the years in my field of work.

I've always found that the key is moderation. Unhealthy or indulgent foods are just fine to partake in every once in awhile, so long as you're mostly eating healthy foods that provide all the nutrients and supplements your body

regularly needs. You can get most of these from a healthy balance of fruits and veggies, whole grains, and lean protein. And I know you've heard it before, but I'll say it again: Be especially mindful of how much sugar you consume.

When it comes to using nutrition to aid in your physical therapy regimen, you'd be surprised by the difference good nutrition can make in the recovery process. Certain foods promote or reduce inflammation, which plays a large role in injury and healing. Certain vitamins and nutrients affect the strength of your bones and the way your joints and muscles move. And one thing I always make sure to tell my patients is to drink plenty of water! Staying hydrated is key not only to feeling good but also to keeping your body and all its systems running smoothly. No matter how good your diet is, if you aren't drinking enough water to go with it, you're never going to be as healthy as you could be.

Our health, in every sense of the word, is so important to us. But I'm only an expert in one area: physical therapy. The points I've detailed above are what I've garnered from both my own experiences and my patients over the years. You should consult a registered dietitian or your physician with further questions you might have. Also, be sure to check out the insert inside this newsletter for some more facts about food you may not be aware of.

Celebrate National Nutrition Month by taking a look at some of your habits and doing what you can to make them healthier!

*-Beth Scalone*



# ARTFUL PARENTING

## HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR TEEN'S ARTISTIC PASSIONS

### No. 1 Fan

You may not have to drive your high schooler to writing practice, but you can still give them the tools and support they need to hone their passion. The most obvious way is by asking to see their writing or art, but keep in mind many teens may not be willing to share something that personal. Still, reminding them you're genuinely interested in their work can help them stick with their passion. Indirect gestures like buying them quality art supplies can also show them you value their craft.

### The Big Leagues

Sure, there's no varsity watercolor portrait team, but student artists can strive for important milestones. School clubs like student newspapers can provide a semiprofessional outlet for young artists, and there are myriad creative outlets outside the classroom as well. Community galleries, youth anthologies, coffee shop open mics — these are all amazing opportunities for your teen to take their work to the next level.

Just as most teen athletes won't be professional players, you don't have to expect your artist to be the next Ursula K. Le Guin or Banksy. Whatever their interests are, helping your child explore their passions and enjoy a discipline will leave them with skills and memories they'll draw upon the rest of their life.

When a teenager is involved in sports, it's easy to show support for their passion. You take them to practice, go to their games, celebrate their victories, and help them learn from their losses. But what if your teen is more into arts than athletics? Without a literal sideline to cheer from, helping your child grow and develop in fields like writing, painting, and photography can feel — well, abstract. But make no mistake, parents can show concrete support in a few ways to help their budding artist grow and excel in the arts.

### Stars to Strive For

Just as many young athletes have star players they look up to and try to emulate on the field, aspiring artists can look to those making waves in their artistic fields today. Often, school courses focus on "the classics," which can just feel like homework to an aspiring artist. This is where you can help. Introduce the work of contemporary artists to your teen, or better yet, give your teen opportunities to discover them on their own. Trips to museums and libraries can be just as impactful on growing artists as going to a ball game.

# PRACTICE PAIN RELIEF

## THE BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

Meditation has different meanings for different people. Traditionally, the act of focusing one's mind has been used in religious and spiritual practices around the globe. More recently, it's become a popular method of relaxation. Now, new research shows that this ancient practice may have yet another benefit: pain management.

In 2008, the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey found that over 100 million adults in the U.S. suffer from chronic pain due to conditions like arthritis and debilitating injuries. Because of this, care providers have become focused on finding ways to help patients manage these persistent aches. The sensation of pain is caused by a complex interaction of biological *and* cognitive factors, leading scientists to study how mental exercises like meditation can aid in pain relief.

Anecdotal evidence regarding meditation's ability to reduce pain has existed for as long as the practice itself. However, modern technology has given researchers the means to accurately measure the effectiveness of this age-old tradition. The Department of Health and Human Services has cited MRI brain scans as proof that meditation can lead to moderate pain reduction. These scans revealed that the same



areas of the brain stimulated by painkillers are activated when the mind is in a meditative state. This supports the accounts of those who have reported better functionality after meditative sessions.

With the ongoing tragedy of the opioid crisis, there is a dire need for pain management strategies that are noninvasive and not habit-forming, such as physical therapy. Meditation is easily accessible and can be used in conjunction with other pain relief strategies. Whether you sign up for guided meditation sessions, download one of the many mindfulness apps on the market today, or simply make time to sit and clear your mind for 30 minutes, it's easy to add meditation to your normal routine.

# PATIENT SUCCESS STORY

## HEAR FROM CINDY HADDOW

There's no greater compliment we can receive than kind words from our patients. We're always humbled when a patient is willing to share their treatment experience with us and others. Here, in her own words, is how Cindy describes her experience with North County Water and Sports Therapy Center.

*"I sought the help of physical therapy because I had tendonitis in my right shoulder, and it had been bothering me for a few months. It was keeping me from doing a lot of activities that I really enjoy, like paddleboarding, yoga, and weight training. But it had even started to affect the most basic of actions, like getting things off a shelf, pouring coffee, or putting something in the microwave."*

*"When I came to North County, I started working with Ryann and Jan. Things started off really great, so I naturally thought the problem would be a quick fix. Of course it wasn't, but to be fair, they were very clear that recovery through physical therapy takes a long time and hard work."*



*I had plenty of up days, as well as plenty of down days, but all the way through, both Jan and Ryann remained positive and encouraging. I did all the exercises they assigned and eventually saw improvement, like they promised I would.*

*"Today, I'm back to doing everything I love thanks to physical therapy. What I especially like about North County is that they do everything they can to get the patient back to what they want to do. I will always recommend them to others seeking physical recovery."*

*-Cindy Haddow*

# TAKE A BREAK

SO DOES THIS SYNC TO OUR PHONES OR...?



Brighten up after a cold, dark winter with this fresh and flavorful springtime dish.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 4 boneless and skinless chicken breasts, pounded to a 1-inch thickness
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup whole-wheat panko
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 6 tbsp spinach pesto
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes
- 1 garlic clove, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp red wine vinegar

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat, add 1 tbsp olive oil.
2. Season chicken with salt and pepper, and add it to pan. Cook chicken for 5 minutes on each side, then remove pan from heat.
3. In a bowl, combine panko, Parmesan cheese, and butter.
4. Spread pesto over chicken and top with panko mixture.
5. Broil chicken for 2 minutes on high heat until browned.
6. In a skillet, heat remaining oil over medium-high heat.
7. Add tomatoes and cook for 6 minutes.
8. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds, stirring constantly.
9. Season tomato mixture with salt and pepper, and add red wine vinegar.
10. Serve tomatoes with broiled chicken.