

Health, Fitness & Beauty Guide

New relief for knee pain

(BPT) - Innovations in modern medicine have brought many artificial joints and bionic body parts to patients. Although these devices have been used for years, a prosthetic replacement for the meniscus - the tissue pad located between the thigh and shin bones - is not yet available. Now two clinical trials underway across the U.S. may help make the "artificial meniscus" a reality, providing a new treatment option for millions of Americans with persistent knee pain caused by injured or deteriorated meniscus.

The meniscus is highly vulnerable to tearing, both from physical activity and excess weight. Once damaged, it has a very limited ability to heal. More than 1 million partial meniscectomies to remove or repair a torn meniscus are performed in the U.S. every year - about the same as the total number of hip and knee replacement surgeries combined. However, many patients still experience persistent knee pain following meniscus surgery.

New York area volunteer firefighter Tracy Cullum was diagnosed with a meniscus tear eight years ago, when the 42-year-old mother of two was experiencing a constant ache

and the inability to put any weight on her left leg. Although she underwent a partial meniscectomy to treat the tear, her knee pain became progressively worse and resulted in

a constant limp while walking. "I went from working out seven days a week to having to stop any exercise activities," Cullum says. "And my work as a part-time volunteer firefighter was challenging, since it was difficult to move any equipment and my mobility was compromised when responding to an emergency scene."

With her activity severely limited, Cullum sought out options to treat her persistent knee pain and discovered that a hospital near her home town is participating in the clinical trial of the NU surface Meniscus Implant - the first "artificial meniscus" designed to replace the damaged one



Tracy Cullum received the NU surface Meniscus Implant in July 2016 through a small incision in her knee. After completing a six-week rehabilitation program, she has now returned to her work as a volunteer firefighter.

for patients like Cullum with persistent knee pain due to injured or deteriorated meniscus cartilage.

"There are limited options for patients who experience persistent knee pain following meniscus surgery," says Dr. Richard Alfred, orthopedic surgeon at Capital Region Orthopaedic Associates and VENUS study investigator. "It is our hope that the NU surface implant alleviates pain in these patients, allowing them to return to their previous levels of activity."

Cullum received the implant in July 2016 through a small incision in her knee. She completed a six-week

See *KNEE PAIN* on page 9

For a sharper mind, eat coffee

(NAPS)—Busy consumers today expect a lot from their food—it needs to be convenient, tasty and enhance physical and mental performance. To this end, two Silicon Valley entrepreneurs have created an innovation to chew on: A gummy cube that combines the caffeine kick (and taste) of coffee with the soothing benefits of green tea and the metabolic benefits of B complex.

This new product is called GO CUBES and it is at the forefront of the nootropics movement. Nootropics, from the Greek word for "toward the mind," are compounds of enzymes, vitamins, minerals and the like that are believed to enhance brain activity.

One of the most popular

nootropics is caffeine, commonly found in coffee, which roughly 83 percent of adult Americans drink, according to National Coffee Association's 2013 online survey. This makes the cubes excellent for anyone who needs to boost energy or sharpen focus—from entrepreneurs to busy moms to athletes to college students.

GO CUBES come in convenient 4-packs and offer exactly 50 mg caffeine per

cube (whereas the amount of caffeine in a cup of coffee varies greatly). Perhaps best yet, they are portable and won't spill when you are on the go. Some say this is what the next generation of coffee looks—and tastes—like.

For more facts, visit <https://nootrobox.com/go-cubes>.



Photo Credit: Maximilian Renner

Keep a tasty energy and cognitive boost in your pocket all day long.



CENTENNIAL
FAMILY DENTISTRY
A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY SMILES

EVE M. RUTHERFORD DDS, PLLC
RACHEL GREENE, DDS

*Schedule your
Kids' Appointments!*



OFFICE: (360) 568-6017 • 229 AVENUE D, SNOHOMISH, WA 98290

Virtual Colonoscopy gets top marks as cancer screening exam

(NewsUSA) - If you're turning 50, you're probably aware that it's time to take your doctor seriously and schedule your annual colon cancer test. You also probably know that it can be an unpleasant and uncomfortable experience.

What you may not know is that it doesn't have to be.

With a nod to technology, CT colonography, commonly known as a "virtual colonoscopy," is a less invasive screening procedure than its traditional counterpart, one that can detect polyps the size of small blueberries, as well as cancer and other diseases.

While the federal govern-

ment has now mandated that all private insurance companies cover virtual colonoscopies (with no co-pay to the patient), Medicare is still dragging its feet by denying coverage to its senior citizens.

Patient advocacy and medical groups are working to gain Medicare coverage for virtual colonoscopy.

"A third of those who should be screened for colorectal cancer (CRC) can't have or won't get a colonoscopy," says Eric Hargis, Chief Executive Officer, Colon Cancer Alliance. "CT colonography increases screening rates where it is offered. Medicare coverage

would provide seniors with insured access to an exam that may appeal to them. This would jump-start screening, catch more cancers early, and save more lives," adds Hargis.

This refusal by Medicare to recognize CT colonography as a viable means of detecting colon cancer comes on the heels of a recent "A" grade by the United States Preventative Services Task Force and endorsement by the American Cancer Society.

"Colorectal cancer is almost always treatable if found early by screening, and the cost to screen and prevent the disease is exponentially less than to

treat cancers not found until an advanced stage," says Judy Yee, MD, Chair of the American College of Radiology Colon Cancer Committee.

Underscoring the need to offer this type of screening – especially to the elderly population – is a recent study in Abdominal Imaging that shows that screening Medicare patients with CT colonography would cost 29 percent less than with traditional colonoscopy and save up to \$1.7 billion per screening cycle, which may be especially useful in detecting CRC in minorities, where screening rates are historically lower.



"We need to innovate to increase colorectal cancer screening rates," says Dr. Yee. "Medicare virtual colonoscopy coverage provides an option that more seniors may choose. Early

detection through increased screening saves lives, enables less extensive treatment and preserves quality of life."

For more information, please visit RadiologyInfo.org.

What to know before taking vitamins or supplements



(StatePoint) As Americans look to improve their health, many will turn to vitamins and supplements as part of their healthier routines. However, experts stress the importance of understanding the potential interactions supplements can have with medications and some brands of medical test results.

One notable

example is Vitamin B7, also commonly known as biotin, which is frequently the top selling supplement online, and found in a number of multivitamins. Among its many benefits, biotin can help keep your eyes, liver and nervous system healthy, as well as contribute to healthy skin, hair and nails. Some doctors are recommending using biotin to help with multiple sclerosis and diabetes, too.

It's important to research side effects or ask your doctor about them before taking any supplement. For example, while biotin supplements are not associated with any side effects, taking biotin can affect certain brands of blood test results, which can lead to a misdiagnosis or unnecessary treatments for heart disease, thyroid conditions, breast cancer, pregnancy and fertility.

"If you take a multivitamin, biotin supplements or prenatal vitamins, be sure to talk to your doctor before your next blood test, so that he or she can ensure the lab uses a test

that is not affected by biotin," says Ramani Wonderling, PhD, associate director for scientific relations in diagnostics at Abbott, a global healthcare company.

Dr. Wonderling advises patients to ask their doctors the following questions.

- Will the tests you order be impacted by my taking biotin?
- I prefer not to stop taking my supplements. Can you use a blood test that is not impacted by my taking biotin supplements?

Wonderling also advises that

those who take supplements read labels carefully and do their own research about supplement brands, for optimum safety and health benefits. To learn more about supplements, biotin and blood tests, visit abbott.com/biotin.

"Taking supplements can be an effective way to fill nutritional gaps," says Wonderling. "But before embarking on a regimen, be sure you understand all the possible effects of each supplement you take."

Three ways heart disease can sneak up on you

(BPT) - As Americans, our health is far from perfect, but over the decades, we've seen great improvements to medical care and lived longer lives. But new health data in a recent report might shake up our complacency: The federal government finds that life expectancy for Americans has dropped for the first time in 25 years.

Though the factors are varied and complex, it has health experts and doctors taking a hard look at the current realities, including our rising obesity rate and the fact doctors may be reaching their limit on what they can do to treat heart disease.

"The report, though troubling to any family doctor, can be used as the basis of a wake-up call to anyone to improve their health," says Andrew Manganaro, MD, FACC, FACS, Chief Medical officer for Life Line Screening. "That is

especially true for those who have been diagnosed with a risk factor for heart disease."

Manganaro urges patients ages 55 and older to be proactive with their heart health by scheduling regular doctor visits and following their doctor's instructions. In addition, he recommends making regular cardiovascular screenings a part of your wellness routine.

Not convinced you need a screening? These three realities of cardiovascular health might change your mind.

1. Heart disease is often silent.

Problems with the cardiovascular system can creep in gradually. Fully 80 percent - 4 out of 5 - of people who have a stroke have no symptoms beforehand. High blood pressure, high cholesterol and coronary artery disease are often silent,

partly because the warning signs are not what most people expect. Symptoms are less obvious, such as a headache, shortness of breath or pain in the jaw. Even if you are already taking steps to manage your risk factors, a screening will give you and your doctor a picture of the health of your cardiovascular system.

2. Minor conditions are easy to ignore.

Even if your screening doesn't reveal you're at a very high risk of suffering a stroke or heart attack, don't be complacent. Because your cardiovascular system is interconnected, plaque in one artery makes it very possible that plaque will eventually show up elsewhere. For example, a diagnosis of peripheral artery disease is a condition that is associated with leg cramping, but that's a diagnosis that should be taken as a warning. Because these leg arteries are literally

narrowing, it could mean that the arteries to the brain could also narrow, creating the ideal conditions for a stroke. Likewise, if arteries to the heart were to narrow, that could lead to heart attack or heart failure.

3. Oral health is a window to artery health.

For decades, researchers have seen a connection between oral health and heart health. Back in the 1920s for example, doctors thought they could cure heart disease by extracting teeth. While the connection is not yet fully understood, we do know oral plaque has a relationship to carotid artery plaque. Manganaro encourages patients to also see their dentist regularly and take good care of their gums and teeth.

The good news is you don't



need a prescription or take a trip to the doctor's office to have preventive health screenings for cardiovascular disease. Life Line Screening performs affordable testing in community settings throughout the country. This testing will reveal where

carotid artery plaque buildup is located and how much. This could translate into lifesaving treatment for you, or simply offer peace of mind. To find out when a screening clinic may be scheduled in your area, visit www.lifelinescreening.com/HeartCheck.

Knee pain *continued from page 1*

rehabilitation program, and she has now returned to daily leisure activities like hot yoga and her work as a volunteer firefighter.

"In the six months before receiving the NU surface Meniscus Implant, my knee pain had peaked to where I had a constant dull ache and a limp while walking," Cullum says. "Now my range of motion is improving, and I am ecstatic to be able to resume one of my favorite activities - volunteering together with my

husband and children at our local fire department."

The NU surface Meniscus Implant, made of medical-grade plastic, is an investigational device that is inserted into the knee in a minimally invasive procedure through a small incision. It has been used in Europe since 2008 and Israel since 2011.

It is important to note that NU surface is an investigational device that is limited by United States law to investigational use,"

Dr. Alfred says. "Responses to the NU surface can and do vary with each patient, so those interested in the trial should discuss their individual situations with a clinical trial physician."

To be eligible for the clinical studies, you must be between the ages of 30 and 75, have pain after medial meniscus surgery and have had meniscus surgery at least six months ago. To find a study site near you, visit www.activeimplants.com/kneepaintrial.

You don't have to live with Jaw pain!

Therapeutic Botox injections can provide the relief you need for clenching, grinding, and tension headaches provided by healthcare professionals.

CENTENNIAL FAMILY DENTISTRY
A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY SMILES

360.568.6017

Learn more about Glaucoma

Do you realize that feeling your best includes seeing your best, too? This year, add learning about glaucoma to your list! Your eyes will thank you for it.

1. Glaucoma can cause vision loss and blindness, which can't be reversed. Glaucoma causes fluid to build up in your eye, causing pressure that can damage the optic nerve, which transfers visual images to your brain. But, you can save your vision with early detection and treatment.

2. Glaucoma often has no early warning signs. No pain. No

discomfort. No blurry vision. Only advanced glaucoma will affect your vision. Don't wait for symptoms to visit your eye doctor!

3. In the United States, half the people who have glaucoma don't know they do. Nearly 3 million Americans have glaucoma.

4. African Americans over 40, adults over 60 – especially Hispanics/Latinos, and people with a family history of glaucoma are at higher risk, making early detection especially important.

5. There is only one way to

know if you have glaucoma. Getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way. During the exam, an eye care professional places drops in your eyes to widen the pupils and looks for signs of the disease in the optic nerve.

Now that you've got the facts about glaucoma, schedule a comprehensive dilated eye exam today! And encourage your friends and loved ones to do the same.

To learn more about glaucoma, visit www.nei.nih.gov/glaucoma.

Poor posture takes a toll

(NewsUSA) - If you're feeling sort of tense and achy, it may be because of poor posture.

While the media has jumped on warnings about "tech neck" – the neck pain and damage sustained from hunching over smartphones and other devices for too long – you're actually risking harm to your overall health if just about any part of your body becomes misaligned.

That's because, as the American Journal of Pain Management notes, a person's posture affects and moderates every physiological function, from breathing to hormonal production.

Yes, you read that right. Every physiological function.

How so? "Our muscles and

ligaments routinely work to balance us as we sit, stand, bend and sleep," explains Sherry McAllister, DC, executive vice president of the not-for-profit Foundation for Chiropractic Progress. "Over time, however, uneven stress causes the body to adapt and change – subsequently causing aches and pains."

Multiple factors can contribute to poor posture – including injury, stress, obesity, pregnancy and weak postural muscles. Chiropractors have been specifically trained, as part of their minimum seven years of higher education, to provide drug-free, hands-on care that helps to naturally align and strengthen the spine, as well as advise on healthy



lifestyle habits.

And speaking of habits, the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress offers tips designed to help you develop smart ones regarding posture. Among them:

- Maintain a neutral spine, meaning chin up and shoulders pulled back.
- Avoid extended time spent with your head flexed forward.
- Don't cross your legs while seated.

Learn more at www.F4CP.com.

Choose fitness when choosing a health plan



(NAPSI)—For many baby boomers, fitness is a top priority in retirement, to help reach health goals and live their best life. That is why SilverSneakers® Fitness, the nation's leading exercise program for older Americans, partners with more than 70 health plans nationwide to offer fitness benefits at no additional charge. More than 13 million people are eligible for the SilverSneakers benefit through many Medicare Supplement, Medicare Advantage and group retiree plans.

Through a variety of offerings and classes that accommodate all fitness levels and preferences, SilverSneakers helps older adults maximize their health. Members can take advantage of SilverSneakers FLEX™, which offers more than 70 types of classes in neighborhood locations, as well as BOOM, a new, fast-paced and higher-intensity fitness series designed for baby boomers.

Additionally, SilverSneakers members have access to more than 13,000 fitness and wellness facilities nationwide,

offering all the standard amenities included in a basic fitness membership, often including access to exercise equipment, pool, sauna and more.

Not only does SilverSneakers support members' health, it could also save them money if they are currently paying for a gym membership.

SilverSneakers is simple to access and easy to use. Visit www.SilverSneakers.com to find out if you are eligible, find a class, print a membership card or select a nearby participating location.