

Sunday, January 1, 2023

Health Talk



SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

Eric M. Parsons, M.D.

Q: I was diagnosed with a rotator cuff tear that is too large and chronic to be repaired. I was told that I would need a reverse total shoulder replacement. Is that my only option?

A: Very large rotator cuff tears, particularly those that have been neglected for a period of years are occasionally beyond repair. In such cases many surgeons have turned to reverse total shoulder replacement as a technique to attempt to address shoulder pain and dysfunction. This is not without its potential downsides, however. Reverse shoulder replacement has among the highest rates of complication among all shoulder surgery and is not well suited for many active patients under the age of 70, as there are questions about the longer term durability of the shoulder prosthesis. What is more, for patients who are suffering from isolated rotator cuff problems, to replace the hard architecture of the shoulder joint (the bone and cartilage) that is in many cases in good condition is unnecessarily invasive. And once those structures are removed and replaced with metal and plastic there is no going back.

For these reasons surgeons have continued to explore alternatives to reverse shoulder replacement in patients with the most severe rotator cuff problems. Superior capsule reconstruction (SCR) is a procedure that has provided such an alternative. SCR involves the arthroscopic implantation of a soft tissue graft to substitute for deficient rotator cuff material in patients with irreparable rotator cuff repairs.

An article published in the December 2020 issue of the Journal of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery authored by Lacheta et al compared the outcomes of patients under age 70 who underwent SCR with a similar group that underwent reverse total shoulder replacement. At two years following surgery there was no detectable difference in pain relief and shoulder function between the two groups, with the SCR group enjoying a lower

risk of complication.

Dr. Eric Parsons performed the first SCR procedure in Northeast Ohio at Lake West Hospital in 2015 and continues to rely on this procedure for select patients as it burns no bridges and offers those patients a way to avoid shoulder replacement for their complex rotator cuff problems provided they have relatively little arthritis within the shoulder.

To learn more about SCR and other treatment options for treating rotator cuff tears visit www.ohioshouldercenter.com

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Mena Afsarifard, M.A., LPC

Q: I can usually handle my own problems, but it would be hard for me to open up and talk to someone about these problems. How do I know if therapy is right for me?

A: There are many reasons why people seek out therapy. Sometimes it is to manage some prevalent psychological issues, or issues with anxiety or depression. Other times it is in response to unexpected changes in life. Working with a therapist can help provide compassion, understanding and new skills to effectively manage different areas of life. Life can be challenging, and while you may have managed some difficulties you've faced, it can be beneficial to seek out extra support when you need it.

Mena Afsarifard, M.A., LPC
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Test your knowledge of the common cold

Sniffles, cough, sore throat ... these can be symptoms of any number of conditions, but are often a byproduct of the common cold.

Colds are the result of more than 200 different viruses, according to Johns Hopkins Medicine. Adults experience an average of two to three colds per year, and rhinoviruses cause most of them. The American Lung Association states that colds are minor infections of the nose and throat. Despite typically producing only mild illness, colds account for more visits to the doctor than any other condition in the United States.

People will experience many colds in their lifetimes, and this true or false quiz can test their knowledge about them.

1. Colds are highly contagious.

True: Colds most often spread when

droplets of fluid that contain the cold virus are transferred by touch or inhaled.

2. Cold weather or being chilled causes colds.

False: While many colds occur during seasons when the weather is cold, transmission is likely higher then due to people staying indoors, and thus closer to one another, when temperatures dip. But the cold air itself has nothing to do with the cold.

3. Antibiotics are a known remedy for a cold.

False: Antibiotics treat bacterial infections, while colds are viral. That means antibiotics will be ineffective at helping a person recover from a cold.

4. Rhinoviruses that cause colds also can trigger asthma attacks.

True: These rhinoviruses also have been linked to sinus and ear infections.



AUDIOLOGY

Dr. Jane Kukula, AuD

Q: What's is an extended wear hearing aid?

A: Lyric is the only FDA approved extended wear hearing device. It is placed in your ear canal by a certified audiologist and typically stays in place for 6-8 weeks. Lyric is unique in several ways; it's 100% invisible, provides effort-less hearing, and has natural sound quality. Lyric is the only hearing aid that can be worn without daily insertion or removal and there is no need to change the batteries. It can be safely worn through daily activities such as showering, exercising, sleeping and talking on the phone.

Lyric is placed deep in the ear canal, approximately 4 millimeters from the ear drum. This allows for both the microphone and speaker to fit in the ear canal. The deep placement allows the ear to work in its most natural way. The device cannot be seen from any angle, at any time. This programmable hearing instrument is comfortably placed during a short routine office visit.

Lyric uses the natural anatomy of the outer ear to direct sound to the microphone, where it is then amplified at the ear drum. Because Lyric takes advantage of the ear's anatomy, users experience natural sound quality and improved directionality and localization (the ability to hear where sounds come from). Eighty six percent Lyric users agree that the sound quality is very good.

To see if you are candidate for the device call 440-205-8848 for a 30 day risk free trial. Life Sounds Great!

The Hearing Center Advanced Audiology Concepts

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LASIK, CATARACTS & LENS IMPLANTS

Michael E. Rom, M.D.

Q: I need cataract surgery and I'm looking into the PanOptix Lens, is it worth it?

A: The PanOptix IOL (intraocular lens) is the latest generation of lenses used to replace cataracts during cataract surgery. This lens is classified as "Trifocal" which means that patients will be able to see better at three different focal points. The PanOptix Lens uses a unique technology which provides an extended depth of focus while still providing excellent near, intermediate, and distance vision without any halo or glare effect.

Alcon Pharmaceuticals has further improved its Panoptix technology by offering the Clareon® PanOptix® IOL. A new advanced trifocal IOL equipped with ENLIGHTEN® Optical Technology. This proprietary design optimizes intermediate vision without compromising exceptional near and distance vision, all while providing fewer glare, haloes, and glistening's due to a new glistening-free IOL material.

In a recent study, of Clareon® PanOptix® IOL patients said they would have the same lens implanted again.

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Have your problems addressed by medical professionals in "Health Talk"! Send your question to: advertising@news-herald.com



5. Colds are sometimes serious for people.

True: People with weakened immune systems, asthma or conditions that affect the lungs and breathing passages may develop serious conditions, even pneumonia, from colds that linger.

6. Colds can't be caught from shaking hands.

False: Colds can be transferred through touch, including shaking hands. It's recommended to wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

7. You feel a cold and starve a fever.

False: Harvard Medical School says there is no need to eat more or less than

usual if you have a cold or flu. However it is important to increase fluid intake to avoid dehydration. Fluids also help keep the lining of the nose and throat from drying out.

8. Vitamin C, zinc, eucalyptus, garlic, and others are not proven cold remedies.

True: Various herbs, minerals and other products have gained a reputation as cold remedies but there are no scientific studies that support such assertions.

9. One should avoid caffeine or alcohol while experiencing a cold.

True: Alcoholic and caffeinated beverages can lead to dehydration, which is the opposite of what the body needs to recover.

Sunday, January 8, 2023

Health Talk



SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

Eric M. Parsons, M.D.

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To learn more about SCR and other treatment options for treating rotator cuff tears visit www.ohioshouldercenter.com

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AUDIOLOGY

Dr. Jane Kukula, AuD

Q: I read that there is a medicine that can prevent noise induced hearing loss. Is that true?

A: Not right now, but yes, one day we will have a drug that can prevent noise induced hearing loss. Experiments with the drug is showing that it is most effective when taken prior to the noise exposure but can also be taken after the exposure. They say that it is only a few years away. The drug is currently in FDA trials and the hope is that it will be approved soon. It was developed by a hearing researcher from Southern Illinois University.

Interestingly, there are a few other drugs for the treatment of hearing loss and tinnitus (noises in the ears) under FDA review for approval that are also very promising. A drug called STS is being developed to help prevent hearing loss that can result from the use of cisplatin, a chemotherapy drug. AuriPro is intended for the treatment of otitis media, middle ear infections common among children. AM-101 is proving to be helpful to those with tinnitus. People with Meniere's disease are not to be left out, a drug called OTO-104 is proving to be helpful.

It is remarkable that one day soon we will be able to offer more than hearing instruments for the treatment of some types of hearing loss. Be aware, that damage from noise exposure that occurs now, will not be improved with this new drug. The benefit occurs only when taken before or right after the exposure. So in the meantime, protect your hearing from loud sound through the use of earplugs or muffs and have regular hearing checks. Call 440-205-8848 to schedule an appointment. Life Sounds Great!

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Hayle Fisher, M.A., LPCC, BC-TMH

Q: I find myself losing meaning during the winter and feeling really down. What can I do?

A: The chaos of the holidays, lack of sunlight, and cold winter days can absolutely result in an increase in depression symptoms. During this time, it is important to validate our struggles, challenges, and emotions, while also finding balance and a sense of gratefulness for what we do have present in our lives. Listed below are some activities and ideas to help incorporate positivity and gratitude into our lives during these challenging times:

- **Positive Journal** – Every day will include both positive and negative experiences. While we may be more attentive to our negative experiences, it's just as important to find balance through acknowledging our positive experiences. For each day of the week, write down at least 3 positive experiences to help find that balance.

- **Building a Satisfying Life** – On a piece of paper, imagine and describe where you would like to see yourself 5 years from now personally, professionally, and socially. Over the next week, spend at least 5 minutes each day visualizing this best, possible version of yourself. What sights do you experience? Sounds? Feelings? Write it down each day!

- **Gratitude Journal for Couples and Families** – It's likely we have seen our significant others and those we live with more often this year due to schools and work being closed. It's normal to feel a little more irritable with each other due to this increase in time spent with them! However, make a point to journal each day what you are grateful for about them to help find that balance. How did they show you affection? What was something they did that made you happy? How did they make you laugh? What was the best part of the day you spent with them? How did they overcome a challenge?

- **Positive Experiences** – This activity can be used to explore how we view ourselves and help construct a narrative about our identity we feel comfortable with. Write about a time that you displayed each of the following qualities: Courage; Kindness; Selflessness; Love; Sacrifice; Wisdom; Happiness; and Determination!

If you have continuous concerns regarding your wellbeing or satisfaction with

life, please feel free to reach out to a professional at Premier Behavioral Health Services to further assist in building a life worth living.

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LASIK, CATARACTS & LENS IMPLANTS

Michael E. Rom, M.D.

Q: My Grandmother was just diagnosed with Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD or ARMD). What exactly is AMD and can this disease be cured?

A: The American Academy of Ophthalmology has recognized February as Age-Related Macular Degeneration Awareness Month!

There is a small area of concentrated cells on the retina called the macula, which is responsible for central vision. The macula allows us to see finer details, such as words in a book, features of someone's face, or the leaves on a tree. As we age, the macula is at an increased risk of deterioration. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a medical term used to describe the deteriorating effects that can develop on the macula. AMD is caused from a combination of genetics, age, and environmental factors, such as cigarette smoke. AMD can be categorized as either wet or dry.

The most common form of AMD is Dry, which accounts for roughly 90 percent of all macular degeneration cases. It happens when the macular cells slowly break down or degenerate, resulting in blurred central vision. Over time, patients can experience a complete loss of central vision, resulting in the inability to make out details in faces or words while reading. Once AMD reaches the most advanced stage, nothing can help the patient regain vision. However, a doctor might be able to delay and possibly prevent the middle stages of AMD from progressing to the advanced stage.

It is important for those over 50, especially those who have a family history of AMD or those who smoke, to undergo an annual dilated eye examination to look for macular degeneration.

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Sunday, January 15, 2023

Health Talk



LASIK, CATARACTS & LENS IMPLANTS

Michael E. Rom, M.D.

Q: What is Flex Spending? Can I use it for LASIK or Refractive Lens Exchange?

A: Flex Spending also known as a Flexible Spending Account is an employer-sponsored healthcare benefit that allows employees to set aside up to \$3,050 (2023) annually to cover the cost of qualified medical expenses. The 2023 limits for pre-tax contributions to HSA and FSA accounts rose significantly to help consumers keep up with inflation. An individual can set aside up to \$3,050 in a healthcare Flexible Spending Account (also known as a Flexible Spending Arrangement), which is a \$200 increase over the 2022 limit. Some employers also contribute to employee FSA accounts. Another pre-tax health funding option is known as a Health Savings Account (HSA). For 2023, individuals can set aside up to \$3,850 and families up to \$7,750 in an HSA.

You can use your FSA or HSA for multiple healthcare related expenses. LASIK and Refractive Lens Exchange also count as a qualified expense. Make sure you mention your Flexible Spending Account during your initial visit.

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SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

Eric M. Parsons, M.D.

Q: I have been diagnosed with a rotator cuff tear and surgery has been recommended. What size incisions can I expect and what is the recovery time?

A: The technical aspects of rotator cuff repair involve placing small screws in the upper portion of the arm bone (humerus) where the rotator cuff tendon normally attaches. The screws are called suture anchors and are made from a special form of biodegradable plastic that the body will naturally absorb over time. The suture anchors are armed with high strength sutures that are then placed through

the torn tendon, and through a variety of pulley-type techniques the tendon is returned back to the bone at the location of the anchor.

The advent of arthroscopic techniques has provided improved access to the rotator cuff using small instruments with the assistance of video technology, allowing for treatment of the rotator cuff through a few tiny incisions without trauma to the overlying deltoid muscle. In addition to reduced pain from the minimally invasive nature of the surgery, arthroscopy affords the surgeon greater visualization of rotator cuff tear patterns as the arthroscope can reach places that are not easily seen with open surgery. Today, virtually all rotator cuff repair surgery is performed through arthroscopic techniques.

Even after the rotator cuff tendon has been repaired back to the humerus bone, optimal success from the operation is not achieved unless there is true biologic healing of the tendon back down to the bone. This is a process that occurs very slowly over time thus explaining the need for strict protection of the shoulder following surgery.

Patients are placed into a specialized sling which they are expected to wear for 4 to 6 weeks after surgery. The sling can be removed for bathing and changing clothes and for appropriate physical therapy, but no purposeful, active movement of the shoulder is permitted as this can compromise the healing process. The optimal approach to physical therapy following rotator cuff repair remains a topic of ongoing research without widespread consensus. Most research favors a very slow progression of therapy, with a brief period of complete rest followed by several weeks of passive movement of the shoulder where the patient does not assist in the movement of the arm. Over time active lifting of the arm is permitted followed by a program of strengthening.

To watch a video of Dr. Parsons performing arthroscopic rotator cuff repair visit www.ohioshouldercenter.com.

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Kelly Smith, C.T.

Q: My teenager and I frequently argue. What can I do to communicate more effectively?

A: Adolescence can be a tumultuous time for both parents and teenagers. Developmentally, it is normal and natural for a teenager to desire more independence and to be more focused on their peer group. This can lead a teenager to push boundaries with parents or caregivers, resulting in conflict. This can be exacerbated by patterns of unhealthy communication within the family or underlying mental health challenges. When addressing your teen, it can be helpful to start by describing the facts of the situation without judgement, express feelings about the situation using "I" statements, and to clearly assert your needs in the situation. Seeking counseling can help to process emotions and learn to effectively communicate and improve relationships.

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AUDIOLOGY

Dr. Jane Kukula, AuD

Q: What is the battery life in a hearing aid?

A: Battery life depends on many things. Typically, hearing aids that use disposable batteries and are worn 12-16 hours per day and the battery can last anywhere from 5-7 days. Length of wear time, amount of noise in your environment and amount of cellphone streaming all impact the length of battery life. Cellphone use whether with disposable or rechargeable hearing aids, is the number one drain on the battery. It takes more power to stream a phone call, music, audio books or a pod cast, then it does for regular hearing. These activities require more power from your hearing aids reducing battery life at a quicker rate. As a result, you have to change your battery more than someone who does not use his or her hearing aids for these things. To get the most from your hearing aid batteries, make sure that you open the battery door every night before bed so that they turn off.

The hearing aid industry has responded to the need for power through the development of rechargeable hearing aids. When fully charged, they typically have enough power to get through the day and allow for approximately 4 hours of streaming phone calls, audio books, pod casts etc. They just need to be put the charger every night. To learn more about rechargeable hearing aids call 440-205-8848 to schedule an appointment. Life Sounds Great!

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Did You Know?



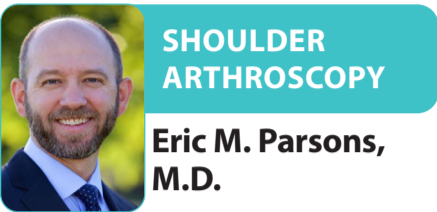
Canned foods can provide significant nutrition, especially for individuals who cannot find fresh fruits and vegetables during certain times of year, such as winter. In fact, the Produce for Better Health Foundation notes that research indicates

canned foods offer comparable nutrients to fresh and frozen foods. In addition, the PBHF reports that canned foods are minimally processed, which helps to preserve nutrients and flavor. However, dietitians note that all canned foods are not made the same, so it's imperative that shoppers read food labels prior to purchasing any canned goods. Overconsumption of sodium, which has been linked to health problems such as hypertension, heart attack and stroke, is a common consumer concern about canned foods. Shoppers can ease such concerns by reading product labels and looking for items described as "sodium-free," "low sodium" and/or "no salt added."

Have your problems addressed by medical professionals in "Health Talk"! Send your question to: advertising@news-herald.com

Sunday, January 22, 2023

Health Talk



SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

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arm. Over time active lifting of the arm is permitted followed by a program of strengthening.

To watch a video of Dr. Parsons performing arthroscopic rotator cuff repair visit www.ohioshouldercenter.com.

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Brianna Babyak, M.Ed., LPC

Q: I have been hearing a lot about DBT, would you be able to explain what that is?

A: Hello there! Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) is a type of therapy our clinicians at PBHS use with our patients. It is a derivative of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) which was created by a psychologist, Marsha Linehan. There are four core skill modules in DBT which include Core Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Interpersonal Effectiveness, and Distress Tolerance skills. "Dialectics" is defined as a synthesis or integration of opposites such as balancing acceptance and change. DBT is a helpful therapy for individuals experiencing a variety of issues. PBHS also offers intensive outpatient programs (IOP) for adolescents, adults, and those with dual diagnosis which focuses on DBT skill building and acquisition. If you believe that these services could help, please call us to schedule an appointment.

Brianna Babyak, M.Ed., LPC
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AUDIOLOGY

Dr. Jane Kukula, AuD

Q: Can you wear the extended wear hearing aid all day?

A: Lyric is the only extended-wear hearing instrument. And yes, it's worn 24 hours a day 7 days a week. It is water resistant and can be worn in the shower and for all daily activities except swimming. Because the Lyric is placed in the ear canal near the eardrum, it is the only 100% invisible hearing aid. While traditional daily wear hearing devices capture and process sound outside of the ear, Lyric uses the natural anatomy of the ear to amplify sound and gives you a full, natural listening experience with clear, natural sound. Lyric's miniature size and exceptional build quality allow it to withstand the challenging conditions within the ear canal. Originating in Silicon Valley, Lyric incorporates Swiss precision engineering to create a unique piece of hearing technology. Lyric is not appropriate for all patients. You will need to see a certified Lyric provider to help determine whether you're a candidate. If you would like to try the device for 30 days at no risk, call 440-205-8848 to make an appointment for your consultation. You can also go to our website at www.aacHear.org to learn more. Life Sounds Great! Enjoy every moment.

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LASIK, CATARACTS & LENS IMPLANTS

Michael E. Rom, M.D.

Q: How Do UV Rays Affect Your Eyes?

A: Both long- and short-term exposure to UV radiation can harm the eyes, affect vision, and compromise overall eye health. There are several eye diseases and conditions caused or aggravated by exposure to UV radiation, such as:

- **Macular Degeneration.** Macular Degeneration (AMD) is caused by damage to the retina over time and is the leading cause of age-related blindness. Extended exposure to UV light increased your risk of developing macular degeneration.

- **Cataracts.** A cataract is a clouding of the eye's natural lens – the part of the eye that focuses the light we see. UV light, especially UV-B rays, increases your risk for certain types of cataracts. It is estimated that 10% of all cataract cases are directly attributable to UV exposure.

- **Pterygium.** Often called "surfer's eye," pterygium is a pink, non-cancerous growth that forms on the layer of conjunctiva over the white of your eye. UV light from the sun and wind is believed to be a factor in the development of these growths.

- **Photokeratitis.** Also known as corneal sunburn or "snow blindness," photokeratitis is the result of high short-term exposure to UV-B rays. Long hours at the beach or skiing without proper eye protection can cause this problem. It can be very painful and may cause temporary vision loss.

To help protect your eyes from UV light, be sure to know the dangers, and wear proper eye protection and hats to block UV rays! Your doctor at Insight Eye can help with more tips!

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Is your desk getting you sick?



wiping down desks and computer equipment with recommended disinfecting wipes can help to corral germs. In addition, do not to eat at your desk and keep pets away from workspaces to tame bacteria.

Winter is a time of year when colds and the flu tend to spread more easily. People know that door handles and commonly shared items like remote controls and even mobile phones can be hot spots for various bacteria and viruses, but what about your desk? According to WebMD, more than 10 million bacteria are on a typical office desk, which is 400 times more bacteria than is found on the average toilet seat. NBC News investigative correspondent Vicky Nguyen tested her own desk, computer and mouse with a specialized swab in 2021. Her desk scored 7,506, a numerical score given to calculate how soiled the area is. That figure was 75 times higher than what high-touch hospital surfaces are expected to be for cleanliness. Other coworkers scored much higher. Routinely

Sunday, January 29, 2023

Health Talk



SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY

Eric M. Parsons, M.D.

Q: I have heard that recovery from rotator cuff surgery takes some time. Why is that

A: The critical component to a successful outcome from rotator cuff surgery is a robust healing response and sound structural integrity at the repair site. A major factor in that integrity is meticulous arthroscopic surgical technique and the skill of the surgeon. However, in even the most technically well-performed surgeries complete rotator cuff healing is not a guarantee. A host of additional factors, some related to the patients themselves and others related to the approach to postoperative recovery can ultimately determine success or failure.

Patient characteristics such as tear size, how chronic the tear is, other medical conditions such as diabetes and smoking can all impact healing and surgical outcome. Overly aggressive physical therapy or premature return to use of the surgically repaired shoulder can also be detrimental to healing. As our understanding of rotator cuff tendon to bone healing has evolved, so has our approach to rehabilitation and return to use and an appreciation that a less is more and slow and steady philosophy results in the best outcomes. An overzealous desire to “get back to normal” can compromise the healing tendon and if the rotator cuff tendon fails to heal the results will suffer.

Because of this, for the first 4 to 6 weeks of recovery most surgeons who perform a high volume of rotator cuff surgery and have the greatest knowledge of state of the art rehabilitation protocols will permit little or no shoulder movement, even with the supervision of a physical therapist, and sling immobilization. After this initial period of maximum protection there is a slow progression of range of motion exercises and ultimately strengthening that typically requires another 3-4 months to achieve optimal results. Successful rotator cuff surgery requires full commitment from the patient and an understanding that investment in near term protection gives the best chance for long term satisfaction.

To learn more about rotator cuff repair surgery visit ohioshouldercenter.com

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LASIK, CATARACTS & LENS IMPLANTS

Michael E. Rom, M.D.

Q: How Do Environmental Factors Affect My Eyesight?

A: Environmental factors such as pollutants, toxic gasses and chemicals, bacteria, smoking, and ultraviolet radiation can all harm different parts of your eye

1. UV Rays: Prolonged exposure to the sun’s UV light can cause damage to the structure of the eye, most often the cornea (the front of the eye) or the retina (the back of the eye). UV radiation raises the risk of developing sight-threatening eye conditions like corneal diseases, cataracts, and macular degeneration.

2. Dust and other particles. Airborne debris can impact the cornea and induce ocular itching and blurred vision. Eye pain can indicate a corneal abrasion or an eye injury

3. Pollution: Ongoing exposure to air pollution can lead to a number of eye problems, including dry eye syndrome, blurred vision, ocular burning and eye-watering

4. Smoke: In addition to raising the risk of developing serious eye diseases, cigarette smoke (first-hand and second-hand) can irritate your eyes. Smoke, from a forest fire and other fires, can contain many harmful pollutants, including carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide gasses, dust, and other tiny particles. When this smoke comes into contact with your eyes, these small particles and fumes can dissolve into your eyes and coat the eyes’ surface, triggering inflammation, irritation, and blurred vision

Our eyes are in direct contact with the environment, so it’s no wonder that environmental factors can either cause or contribute to certain eye conditions, including two of the most common eye conditions worldwide.

- Cataracts are the most common cause of reversible blindness in the world. While aging and genetics are the top 2 reasons people get cataracts, exposure to the sun’s UV rays also increases the risk. Sunglasses that block 100% of UV rays lower that risk

- Dry Eye symptoms can be triggered by a dry climate, strong winds, air conditioning, indoor heating, and poor air quality. Minimizing exposure to these environmental triggers coupled with treatments prescribed by your eye doctor can relieve dry eyes

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AUDIOLOGY

Dr. Jane Kukula, AuD

Q: How are heart disease and hearing loss related?

A: This is a great question and with Valentine’s Day coming, a great time to talk about matters of the heart. A group of Harvard University researchers discovered a relationship between heart disease and hearing loss. They found that hearing loss occurred 54% more often in people with heart disease than in the general population. At this time, we are not sure what causes this link, but they have a theory. Cardiovascular disease reduces blood flow through veins and arteries, and it is the blood that brings oxygen to the body’s organs. This lack of oxygen can damage the heart and other organs including the hearing nerves (hair cells) deep in the inner ear. Hair cell damage is the most common cause of permanent hearing loss. The researchers also believe the hearing nerves are so fragile that the ear is likely the first organ to be damaged by cardiovascular disease. Some feel that one-day hearing loss may be used to predict heart disease. The good news is that a healthy cardiovascular system positively affects hearing. Eating right and exercising helps your hearing too! Exercising once a week reduces the risk of heart disease by 32%. Have regular hearing checks and use hearing aids when recommended. Taking care of your hearing is part of taking care of your health. Those who use hearing aids report greater overall health, a physically more active lifestyle, and a more active social life. And it’s a physically active life that can help reduce heart disease. Life Sounds Great!

The Hearing Center Advanced Audiology Concepts

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Hayle Fisher, M.A., LPCC, BC-TMH

Q: I don’t know how to get my teen to complete their schoolwork. I’ve tried being lenient because I know they’ve been going through a lot, but things got worse. So I also tried taking away their phone, but they’re still failing their classes! What can I do?

A: One of the hardest challenges of parenting is finding the balance between two opposite extremes: Being too lenient versus being too strict. As humans, we typically avoid engaging in tasks that cause emotional distress to help regulate our emotions. For example: Every time a teen thinks about their homework due, they feel overwhelmed and anxious about the amount they need to complete. This activates their fight-or-flight system, resulting in the urge to avoid the homework through procrastination. This procrastination decreases the level of anxiety and/or overwhelm they feel in the short-term; however, the long-term consequences start to catch up when they have not turned in assignments.

As a parent, it is important to accept your teen’s emotional challenges while also advocating for change. Explore with your teen what emotion they might be experiencing. What obstacles are preventing them from engaging in the homework? What are the pros and cons of the procrastination in the short-term and long-term? How are their current actions influencing their long-term goals? Validating your teen’s emotional challenges can help them to accept the problem exactly as it is while still encouraging them to change the situation through participating with it. Instead of procrastination, some other skills that help regulate anxiety include completing the homework one thing at a time, breathing exercises, or reinforcing the use of breaks so they are not binge-completing homework for hours at a time. If further concerns need addressed, you can also always reach out to a counselor at Premier Behavioral Health Services to provide support to you and your teen.

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