



**MINDFULNESS
FOR HEALTH**



**DIETING AND WEIGHT
LOSS: WHICH DIET IS
RIGHT FOR YOU?**



**THE OZEMPIC CRAZE:
WHAT'S BEHIND ALL
THE HYPE?**



**WHAT'S NEW AT NCH?
THE SCHULZE
BUILDING UPDATE**



NEWSLETTER

Practice Updates

We hope this letter finds you well. It is hard to believe but we are coming to the end of another season here in Naples. Although colder than normal temperatures started things off we found ourselves quickly back with our beautiful views quickly and even shared a solar eclipse near the end! We hope all of you had an enjoyable time in our shared piece of paradise. We wanted to update you all on some of the latest health news in our practice and community as well as share some interesting health information. As the 2023-2024 season comes to an end and many of you start planning your escape from the summer heat, our office's expansion will reach completion resulting in two additional exam rooms, a dedicated phlebotomy room, and a staff break room. We want to thank each of you for your patience during this time. Longterm this will help to accommodate our growing practice with the goal of making your time with us comfortable and efficient.

The 2024 Naples Cardiovascular Summit

In addition to caring for our patients, we continue to be active in supporting the Naples medical community as we march forward bringing the latest in cardiovascular innovations to you. The 3rd Annual two day Naples Cardiovascular Summit was held at the Arthrex Conference Center March 1st and 2nd, and included physician speakers affiliated with Christ Hospital, Johns Hopkins Medical Center, Massachusetts General Hospital, Minneapolis Heart Institute, Mount Sinai, and NCH. Both Dr. Tassin and Dr. Rao were invited to be speakers for the 430 participants. Dr. Tassin co-moderated a session on Women's Health and Cardiovascular Disease and delivered a state-of-



the-art update on the cardiovascular effects of hormone replacement therapy. Dr. Rao co-moderated a session on cardiac prevention and lectured about the specific benefits of exercise in improving our cardiovascular health. We also discussed the latest updates on lipid lowering treatments, using imaging to assess cardiovascular risk, and the interplay of cardiac diseases with kidney dysfunction and the GLP-1 weight loss drugs (refer to page 6 for more information). The feedback we received from this symposium was extremely positive and we look forward to being involved with this event in years to come. This served as an excellent opportunity for us to network and collaborate with other cardiologists at esteemed cardiovascular centers.



Improving Physician Wellness to Help Patient Well-being

Another important issue we continue to pursue is the challenge of physician burnout. This is an ongoing nationwide concern with as many as 40% of physicians reporting feeling burnt out on large national surveys. On April 4th, the Physician Wellness Committee, for which Dr. Rao serves as the chair, hosted over 100 physicians and their spouses on the Naples Princess for a sunset cruise. We invited Nicole Eull, a psychologist who is a national leader on this



issue to deliver an impactful hour-long discussion on actionable ways to promote well-being in our busy days. Our work in this area has helped make physician well-being a priority for our local health care organizations which in turn will lead to better delivery of healthcare for the patients we serve.

Mindfulness for Health

Sajan Rao MD FACC

As I have shared with many of you, I am a strong believer in the mind-body connection and can personally attest to the benefits of practicing mindfulness techniques.

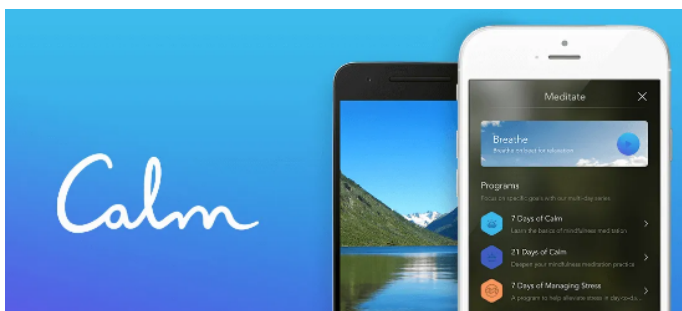
The practice is rooted in the belief that it is possible to train yourself to focus on the present moment. One definition of mindfulness is the ability to be aware of what's going on inside and around you without judgment. This is a common practice in Buddhist meditation with the aim to increase awareness of the mind and concentration.

Studies suggest that focusing on the present has a positive impact. Mindfulness-based treatments have been shown to reduce anxiety and depression. There is also evidence that it can lower blood pressure, improve sleep, and even help people cope with pain. More recently, conditions such as PTSD, eating disorders and addiction are under active research.

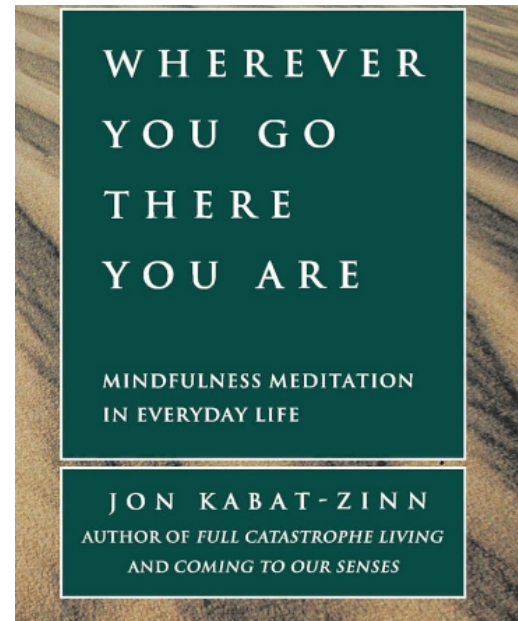
Often when dealing with health issues, your attention can get "kidnapped" into the past or future. This can lead to time spent focusing on past negative experiences or worrying about things to come. Mindfulness can help uncouple from such thinking. With training, the skill can be developed to avoid being pulled into any one thought but rather to stand back and observe the painful thought patterns without letting them become overwhelming.

Mindfulness practice can also help one make healthier choices when eating. Paying closer attention to your body can help you notice signals that you are full and help dining become more enjoyable. It can also help with setting goals such as portion control and exercise. If we place our intentionality on being more active or eating more fruits and vegetables, there is a greater likelihood that we can carry through and achieve our goals.

If you are interested in starting this practice, I use and recommend the Calm app. This can be downloaded on a smartphone and for a nominal subscription price. Once you have the app, there are several different types of guided meditations for beginners. I try to do the 'Daily Calm' most



days of the week. Anecdotally, I notice a difference in mental processing on the days that I am unable to do it. For those who are readers, I recommend a book by Jon Kabat-Zinn, "Wherever You Go, There You Are." He is one of the early leaders in applying these techniques to individuals living with health challenges.



Battle of the Bulge

Hillary Tassin, MD

For many of us this is a battle we are all too familiar with; but it is certainly a battle worth



fighting as multiple studies have shown that a reduction in weight by as little as 5% total body weight can result in significant gains in long term health outcomes. It is well established that obesity, defined as a body mass index of at least 30, is associated with a significant increase in mortality and many health risks. Whereas a BMI of 30 defines obesity, a BMI of 25-30 is consistent with being overweight and also increases one's health risks. The BMI is not a perfect tool however as it

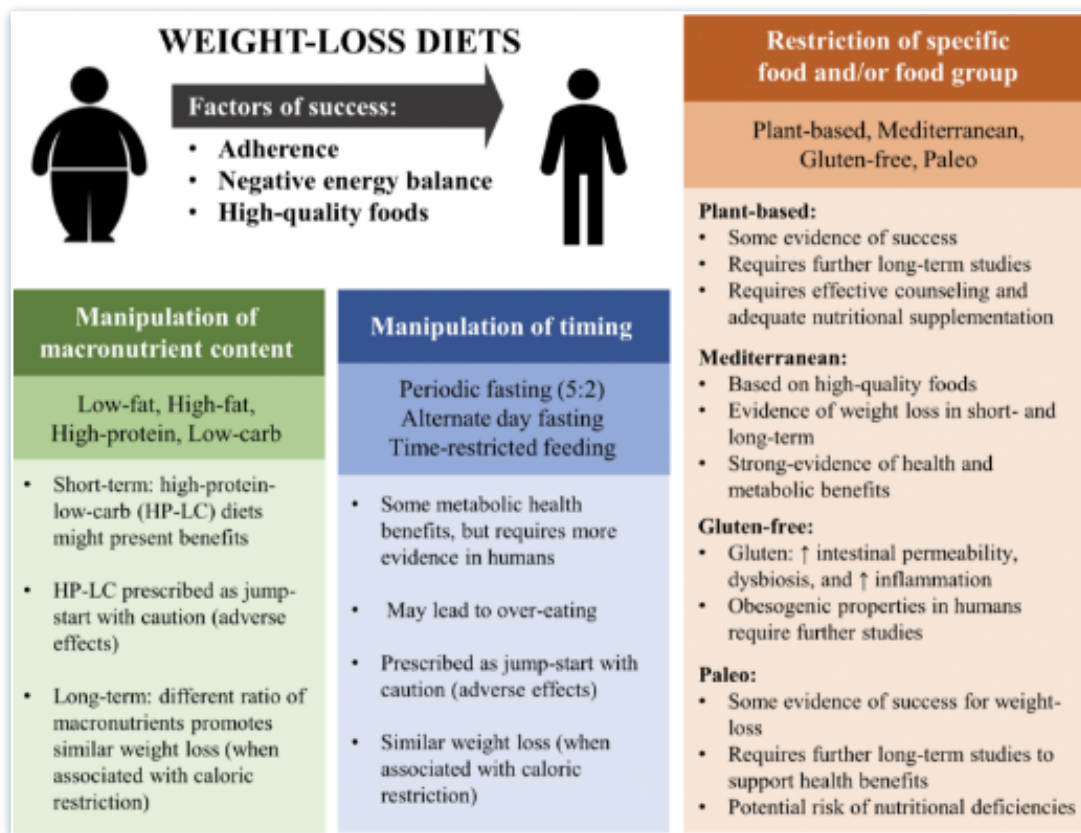
does not account well for those individuals with increased muscle mass and it does not account for the distribution of weight. Central (abdominal) obesity is associated with greater increase in cardiovascular risk. Specifically, a waist circumference of ≥ 40 inches for men and ≥ 35 inches for women is considered elevated and indicative of increased cardiometabolic risk.

Unfortunately, understanding the reason a healthy weight is important is much easier than achieving it. There are an almost unfathomable number of diets to choose from and a "one size fits all" approach is certainly the wrong one. When considering which diet is right for you the most important factor to consider is maintainability as the most effective diet is the one that

	Atkins	Ketogenic	Zone	Ornish	Paleo	Gluten-free	Mediterranean
Non-starchy vegetables	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included
Starchy vegetables	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated	Included	Restricted	Included	Included
Non-starchy fruits	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included
Starchy fruits	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated	Included	Restricted	Included	Included
Red meat	Included	Included	Included	Restricted	Included	Included	Moderated
Poultry	Included	Included	Included	Restricted	Included	Included	Included
Seafood	Included	Included	Included	Restricted	Included	Included	Included
Egg	Included	Included	Included	Restricted	Included	Included	Included
Low-fat dairy	Included	Included	Included	Included	Restricted	Included	Included
High-fat dairy	Moderated	Included	Moderated	Restricted	Restricted	Included	Moderated
Nuts & Seeds	Included	Included	Included	Moderated	Included	Included	Included
Vegetable oil	Moderated	Included	Moderated	Moderated	Moderated	Included	Included
Legumes	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated	Included	Restricted	Included	Included
Whole grains	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated	Included	Restricted	Restricted	Included
Refined grains	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated
Sugar	Restricted	Restricted	Restricted	Moderated	Restricted	Moderated	Restricted

✔ Included
 ✔ Moderated
 ✘ Restricted

you can consistently maintain long term and incorporate as a way of life rather than a “diet”. Many factors contribute to weight loss success including age, sex, body composition (particularly in regard to muscle mass), hormonal changes that effect metabolism, sleep effectiveness, stress levels, genetics, emotional relationships with food, social influences, and comorbidities such as thyroid dysfunction and diabetes mellitus. While it may seem overwhelming to select a particular diet and weight loss program, it may be helpful to focus on general concepts that are emphasized in most of the popular and successful programs. These concepts include: minimizing or eliminating sweet and refined carbohydrate intake, staying well hydrated, either tracking or being very mindful of your caloric intake, creating a net caloric deficit by increasing caloric expenditure with exercise, building muscle mass to increase metabolism, getting adequate sleep, regulating stress levels, and addressing any health conditions that may contribute to excess weight.



Rachel Freire, Scientific evidence of diets for weight loss: Different macronutrient composition, intermittent fasting, and popular diets. Nutrition, Volume 69, 2020,

Ultimately these changes should be adopted as a way of life to prevent regaining weight after the initial weight loss is achieved. However, having a specific goal in mind can be very helpful for motivation; such as setting a goal of losing 10-15 pounds prior to a social event (wedding, reunion, etc). If you enjoy a friendly competition, harnessing your competitive spirit can be a useful tool as well. There are several phone apps, such as Better Together, that enable you to compete with friends to achieve your weight loss goals. Ultimately, weight loss should be viewed as an opportunity to improve your longterm health and happiness, rather than something that detracts from your wellbeing. Finding the right nutrition and exercise program that meets your unique needs and is maintainable, is the key to optimal health.

When Are Weight Loss Medications Indicated?

If less than 5% of total body weight is lost after a period of 3-6 months of dietary and behavioral modifications, a weight loss aid may be considered for those individuals who have a BMI of >30 or >27 if weight associated health problems are present. The most effective weight loss aids are called GLP-1 agonists. These medications increase insulin secretion, reduce appetite, and reduce gastric emptying (slow digestion). Some of them have also been shown to have cardiovascular benefits including reducing blood pressure, increasing myocardial contractility, reducing cardiac inflammation, improving cardiac blood flow, and reducing cardiovascular events such as heart attacks and strokes. Unfortunately, many people do experience side effects from these medications including nausea and abdominal pain. Additionally, like most weight loss aids, most patients do experience some weight gain after the medication is discontinued.

GLP-1 Key Points:

- *Candidates: BMI of 27 or greater with at least one weight-related condition, or BMI of 30 or greater
- *10% of patients are non-responders
- * Nausea and abdominal pain are common side effects
- *Not recommended for patients with a personal or family history of medullary thyroid carcinoma
- *Weight gain is likely to occur after the medication is stopped
- * Due to the slowed digestion caused by these medications, they have to be stopped 1 week prior to procedures requiring anesthesia

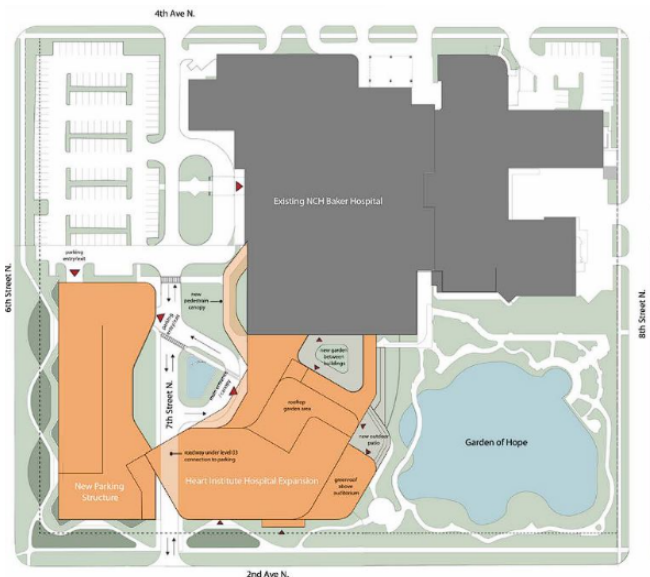
	OZEMPIC	mounjaro	wegovy™
Manufacturer:	Novo Nordisk	Eli Lilly & Co.	Novo Nordisk
FDA Approved:	December 2017	May 2022	June 2021
Delivery:	Once Weekly Injection	Once Weekly Injection	Once Weekly Injection
Dose Range:	0.25 - 2.0 mg	2.5 Mg - 15.0 mg	0.25 Mg - 2.4 mg
Targets:	GLP-1	GLP-1 and GIP	GLP-1
Most Common Side Effects:	Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Abdominal Pain	Nausea, Diarrhea, Constipation, Vomiting	Nausea, Diarrhea, Vomiting, Constipation
Avg. Weight Loss In Clinical Trials:	6.1% Of Body Weight After 52 Weeks (1.0 mg) ⁵	22.5% Of Body Weight After 72 Weeks (15 mg) ³	14.9% Of Body Weight After 68 Weeks (2.4 mg) ⁴

The R.M. Schulze Family Cardiovascular and Stroke Critical Care Center Receives Approval



In early February, after nearly three years of consideration and debate, the Naples City Council approved this 189,000 square foot, 5 story, expansion of Baker Hospital. This expansion will increase the total occupied square feet of Baker Hospital by 30% and will encompass The Rooney Heart Institute, The Wingard Stroke Institute, a 4 story parking garage, and a new conference area. NCH's CEO Paul Hiltz said the expansion was necessary to keep up with the growth of Collier County and to attract top doctors to save lives.

"Stroke and heart attack continue to be the number 1 cause of death in the United States," Hiltz said. "This area, because of an older population, is in even more need of heart and stroke care."



Over \$135 million of the \$200 million estimated construction cost has been raised thus far. Ground breaking is anticipated in 2025 with an expected completion in Spring of 2026. A rendering of the proposed building plan shows the new portion of the building (in orange on the diagram above) adjacent to the current Garden of Hope, which will remain intact. The building is expected to include 3 additional operating rooms, over 20 additional cardiac ICU beds, and will double the number of catheterization and electrophysiology laboratories that are currently available.



"Sunsets Beyond the Sea"; November 22, 2017; *Florida Weekly*, Naples Edition

For those of you who will be departing soon, we wish you a wonderful and healthy summer away. Whether you are here in Naples or away, we are here if you need us. Please feel free to reach out to us if we can be of assistance in any way. Our goal is to continue to provide you with the highest quality, most compassionate care possible.
