

**BLUE TIP:** When you eat a meal in a hurry or with pent-up worry, stress hormones like cortisol interfere with the digestive process.

— Dan Buettner, *The Blue Zones Solution: Eating and Living Like the World's Healthiest People*

# LIFESTYLE MEDICINE CONFERENCE COMING TO NAPLES

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Much of what Naples has to offer for a healthy lifestyle will be on display Sunday through Wednesday to wellness leaders from around the country.

The American College of Lifestyle Medicine is holding its annual conference at the Naples Grande Resort to focus on shifting medical care from the traditional treatment-based system of procedures and pharmaceuticals to one that emphasizes lifestyle and prevention.

Members of the medicine group are physicians and other medical professionals who promote healthy lifestyles and how lifestyle is the primary determinant of health or disease.

About 80 percent of the nation's healthcare spending is for treatment of conditions rooted in poor lifestyle choices, according to conference material.

About 600 physicians and medical professionals who are active in the emerging field of lifestyle medicine are scheduled to attend.

On Sunday, a healthcare transformation summit will be held to showcase how two Southwest Florida hospital systems are leading the way in bringing lifestyle medicine into practice.

NCH Healthcare System's chief executive officer, Dr. Allen Weiss, will be speaking at the summit, and so will Scott Kashman, chief administrative officer of Cape Coral Hospital. Deb Logan, executive director of the Blue Zones Project in Southwest Florida, will also speak.

A speaker from Midland Memorial Health in Midland, Texas, will take part in the one-day summit that is a companion event to the main conference. Tickets for the summit are \$60 each, which includes continental breakfast and lunch. The summit runs from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Naples was selected to host the conference because it is working on becoming a Blue Zones Project community. Dr. David Katz, president of the lifestyles medicine organization, said in a news release.

"It's the Blue Zones around the world that serve as glowing examples of what's possible," Katz said. "Blue Zones' populations live long and health-filled lives, where there is a high quality of life until the end of life, communities where people are loving the food that loves them back and are simply using lifestyle, available to old and young alike, as the best medicine."

A Blue Zones Project community is where businesses, government entities, schools, grocery stores, restaurants and others are making healthier options available so they become easier for people to embrace, with the end goal of its residents having improved well-being and longevity.

The Blue Zones Project was launched locally in 2015 based on the world travels of Dan Buettner, who identified communities worldwide where people share lifestyle traits and live to 100 or older. He wrote a New York Times bestseller about the nine principles of longevity.

Today, 27 communities, including Collier County and south Lee County, have joined the Blue Zones Project. Healthways, a national leader on health measurements, assists communities with logistics and staffing. Healthways



LANCER SHEARER/SPECIAL TO THE DAILY NEWS

Blue Zones director Deb Millsap and NCH CEO Dr. Allen Weiss speak on Marco Island in February. Weiss will be speaking at the American College of Lifestyle Medicine's annual conference in Naples this weekend.

**"It's the Blue Zones around the world that serve as glowing examples of what's possible,"**

**DR. DAVID KATZ**

PRESIDENT, BLUE ZONES PROJECT

is a sponsor for the lifestyle management conference.

The NCH Healthcare System is underwriting the Blue Zones initiative locally over the next decade.

Weiss said he and Logan, the local project director, will speak at the summit Sunday about why prevention is key to controlling healthcare costs, and they will discuss the Blue Zones Project and how the region is embracing it, measurements for success and the need for greater adoption of the Blue Zones on a national level.

The Naples region hosts dozens or more medical conferences each year and has national recognition as "the

place to be, work, play, retire and yes, learn," Weiss said in an email.

The lifestyle conference will feature 30 top industry leaders including Katz, president of the group and founder of the True Health Initiative; Christopher Gardner, nutrition science and professor at Stanford's School of Medicine; and Danielle Nierenberg, president of Food Tank who is with Tufts University on agriculture, food and environment.

The speaker for the Tuesday evening awards banquet is Dr. Dean Ornish, who developed the Ornish Diet, a vegetarian diet based on legumes, fruit and vegetables and low fat. He also is the founder of the Preventive Medicine Research Institute in Sausalito, California, and the author of several books.

A limited number of tickets is available for the banquet featuring Ornish for \$80 a ticket. Those interested can contact the events director at [jholtgrave@lifestylemedicine.org](mailto:jholtgrave@lifestylemedicine.org).

For anyone interested in attending the summit on Sunday, the tickets are \$60. For more information, go to [www.LifestyleMedicine2016.org](http://www.LifestyleMedicine2016.org)



PHOTO COURTESY OF LINKAGES  
Members of linkAges attend a tech day where volunteers, usually high school college students, offer their skills.

## Pilot program seeks to improve seniors' health

TARA BAHRAMPOUR  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Pauline Thomas, 76, was stressed to the point of tears. The retired interior designer had just gotten a new pacemaker; her husband was fighting cancer; she needed a knee operation and she was struggling to live on Social Security in Palo Alto, Calif. where the cost of living has skyrocketed.

"People would look at me and say, 'How's your husband doing?' and become a big crybaby."

But instead of prescribing medication to alleviate her anxiety, her doctor directed her to a program that seeks to improve people's health by connecting them with community. LinkAges, a pilot program launched three years ago by the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, is an intergenerational network of people helping each other. It works as a time-bar system: if you spend an hour helping someone, you get an hour of help.

Seniors are often on the receiving end of care. But the new program reciprocity, which discourages a sense of obligation or helplessness; further encourages seniors to take advantage.

That's because social isolation and loneliness have increasingly been recognized as detrimental to health, leading to higher incidences of depression, dementia, and loss of driving skills.

The idea of linkAges arose after medical ethnographer spent a year talking to seniors and family caregivers. The program took shape "at a key time when studies were coming out linking loneliness as a very key indicator of potential outcomes," said Vandana Pant, its executive director of strategic initiatives. "Can a health system take a different approach and look at the preventable end of care rather than the traditional investments" associated with treatment?

The types of services range widely, from helping with household tasks and driving to playing board games or doing Tai chi to teaching someone how to make a corsage. Forty-two percent of members are people 65 and over, and 19 percent are family caregivers. Many are on fixed incomes. More than 1,000 people in nearby cities have joined, and over 3,800 hours have been exchanged