

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

U.S. President
Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Democrat

Switchboard: 202-456-2121
Comment Line: 202-456-1111

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

U.S. Senate
Rick Scott
Republican

P: 202-224-5274

716 Hart Senate
Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

U.S. Senate
Marco Rubio
Republican

P: 202-224-3041

284 Russell Senate
Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

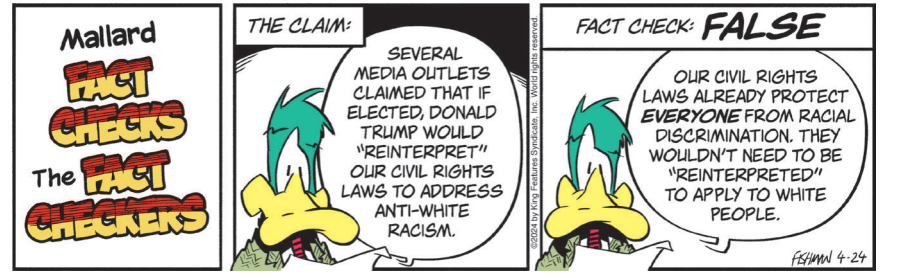
U.S. House
Daniel Webster
Republican

P: 202-225-1002

2184 Rayburn House
Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

CONSERVATIVE CORNER | MALLARD FILLMORE

By Loren Fishman



SUNDAY, LOCAL COMMENTARY | MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY, POLITICAL OPINION | WEDNESDAY, HEALTH & WELLNESS ADVICE | SATURDAY, POSITIVE LIVING

A VIEW FROM THE VILLAGES HEALTH

Diabetes is a highly prevalent condition in the U.S., affecting an estimated 29.7 million Americans. This is a staggering 8.9% of the population. Without a doubt, living with diabetes is difficult.



Dr. Matthew Shlapack

COMMENTARY

Diabetes creates unique challenges, both for the patient and their family.

The good news is that while a definitive cure for diabetes is still not available, there have been huge advances, not only in treatment capacity, but in our understanding of how to best manage diabetes overall.

The last 10 years have seen whole new classes of medications to treat diabetes emerge. From both better insulin preparations to the emergence of once weekly GLP-1 agents, we now have the tools not only to control blood glucose but to also limit, and sometimes reverse, the health complications that

arise from having diabetes. At the same time, new advances have made the monitoring of blood glucose not only more accurate, but far more convenient. Continuous glucose monitors now allow patients to have the ability to know what their glucose is, at any time, without having to perform a fingerstick.

Our understanding of how best to manage diabetes has also continued to grow and now, more than ever, we have the knowledge that we need to give the most to our patients. Gone are the days of simply trying to get the lowest A1C. Research has shown us that avoidance of low blood glucose (hypoglycemia) and glucose stability are as, if not more, important. We have also learned that some medications are better in certain situations, especially when a patient is being forced to juggle multiple medical conditions. In a busy, on the go world, we have learned how to make the most of the diet choices available to us, to keep glucose as controlled as possible.

While having better tools and better targets are important, I would argue that our growing

understanding of the importance of individualizing treatment for each patient has also been critical. Achieving perfect glucose control is of little value if the medications used to do so create unfavorable adverse reactions. Further, treatment must always take into account quality of life. If our care only prolongs life, at the expense of enjoying life, we have not really helped those living with diabetes. There must always be a balance of both in any treatment plan.

Diabetes continues to be a difficult condition for those who are affected by it and for their families. At the same time, every day we have more to offer to make the situation better and to lessen the impact on health and happiness. If you or someone you love is struggling with diabetes, be sure to take advantage of all the advances that are now out there.

The Villages Health's endocrinology team is within the specialty care division. This dedicated team addresses a wide array of conditions, including but not limited to, diabetes, obesity, thyroid disorders, heart disease, high blood pressure and circulatory issues, employing a collaborative approach to

Achieving perfect glucose control is of little value if the medications used to do so create unfavorable adverse reactions. Further, treatment must always take into account quality of life. If our care only prolongs life, at the expense of enjoying life, we have not really helped those living with diabetes."

ensure comprehensive patient care.

With a multifaceted team comprised of providers, dietitians, and diabetes

educators, we deliver personalized treatment strategies tailored to effectively manage diabetes and pre-diabetes.

Our commitment to excellence is further underscored by the accreditation of our Diabetes Education Program by the American Diabetes Association. This meticulously crafted program caters to individuals grappling with type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes, offering a diverse range of classes designed to empower patients with the necessary tools to navigate their condition successfully. From nutrition guidance to lifestyle modifications, our classes, such as "Prevent T2" and "Prediabetes and Diabetes Prevention," serve as invaluable resources in fostering holistic wellness and disease management.

Our specialty care team works in tandem with our primary care division to provide comprehensive patient care. For more information on our specialty care division and other services offered, please visit thevillageshealth.com or give us a call at 352-604-5868.

Dr. Matthew Shlapack is an endocrinologist at The Villages Health.



MEDICARE

Unhappy with your current Medicare coverage? You may be able to switch to Florida Blue Medicare. Turning 65 and haven't chosen a Medicare Advantage plan yet? You can still enroll in a Florida Blue Medicare Advantage plan. See how Florida Blue Medicare 2024 plans stack up to other Medicare Advantage insurance plans in your area.

BENEFIT	Florida Blue Medicare Premier (HMO) H1035-043	UnitedHealthcare The Villages Medicare Focus (HMO-POS) H1045-056
Monthly Premium	\$0	\$0
In-Network Maximum Out of Pocket	\$2,400	\$2,400
PCP/Specialist Copay	\$0/\$20	\$0/\$20
MRI, CAT Scan, PET Scan at an Imaging Center	\$0	\$85
In-Patient Hospital	\$110 per day 1-6, Then \$0	\$150 per day 1-4, Then \$0
Dental, Vision and Hearing Flex Allowance	\$500 Annual Benefit	No
Durable Medical Equipment costs	\$0 (Except 20% on motorized scooters & wheelchairs)	20% Coinsurance
Urgent Care	\$35	\$40
Transportation	48 one-way trips annually to clinical and pharmacy and grocery locations	No
\$50 Food Card Per Month for Members with Chronic Needs*	Yes	No
At Home Care Per Year for Members with Chronic Needs*	30 hours/year	No
Prescription Drug Benefits	Standard Retail	Standard Retail
Preferred Generic Drug Copay (One month supply)	\$0	\$0
Generic Drug Copay (One month supply)	\$0	\$0
Preferred Brand Drug Copay (One month supply)	\$35	\$40
Moffit Cancer Center	Yes	No
The Villages Health	Yes	Yes
Shands Hospital / UF Health	Yes	Yes

Now that you see the savings you can get from a Florida Blue Medicare plan, call your local licensed agent today.

Brownwood® 352-775-1979

Mulberry (Hwy. 42) 352-775-1131

Creekside - Lake Sumter Landing™ 352-775-1161

Leesburg 352-728-0050

All benefits are not available on all plans. The Dental, Vision, and Hearing Flex allowance is a yearly benefit and any unused amounts do not roll over to the next year. +\$50 per month to purchase healthy food items from plan approved stores. Unused amounts do not roll over to the next month. These benefits are part of special supplemental benefits and not all members will qualify. See Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) in your Plan's Evidence of Coverage for full eligibility requirements. Florida Blue Medicare is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Florida Blue Medicare depends on contract renewal. HMO coverage is offered by Florida Blue Medicare, Inc., DBA Florida Blue Medicare, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Agency is an authorized, independent agency for Florida Blue Medicare. Applicable to 2024 HMO plans on contract H1035. We comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Visit floridablue.com/ndnotice for information on our free language assistance services. © 2023 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., DBA Florida Blue. All rights reserved.