



In Alignment

Aligned Medical Group takes a team approach to helping patients overcome pain, injuries, and other health issues that may be holding them back.

by **BILL DONAHUE** | photography by **JODY ROBINSON**

Joel A. Stutzman, D.C., believes in a simple, universal truth: All people deserve to be free of pain or any other condition that might prevent them from leading healthy and active lives. Even so, he says many people have resigned themselves to the idea that pain is unavoidable, untreatable, or something they “just have to live with.”

Dr. Stutzman says that’s simply not the case. At Aligned Medical Group in Paoli, Dr. Stutzman has created a world-class facility staffed by a team of skilled medical professionals, all working together to help patients overcome their struggles with pain. The practice has grown to provide a host of innovative treatments and therapies, including chiropractic care and physical therapy, as well as complementary services best described as “revolutionary.”

“What we’re doing here is unique,” Dr. Stutzman says. “We take a team approach that utilizes the expertise of different specialists who can help patients feel better. We spend eight hours a week training and preparing patients to get better, but the first hour of every day is spent in conversation. The core members of our team get together every morning and talk about our patients so we can determine how to facilitate a good outcome.”

When Dr. Stutzman started his practice 15 years ago, he focused predominantly on

serving patients’ chiropractic needs. Over time, patient feedback compelled him to offer additional services, such as physical therapy, medically supervised weight loss, and treatments to address chronic headaches and facial pain. As the practice has continued to expand its reach, it has also added vital personnel needed to deliver these services effectively.

A noninvasive procedure known as SculpSure is one example of the practice’s commitment to evolution. A natural complement to medical weight loss, this procedure uses laser technology to target and eliminate fat cells in specific areas, artfully sculpting the body in the process. Some patients achieve the desired result in as few as one to three treatments per target area, though Dr. Stutzman suggests outcomes may vary by patient.

More recently, Aligned Medical Group has added regenerative medicine to its list of core competencies. The practice now offers human cell and tissue products, which promote healing through the use of stem cells that have been harvested from the human umbilical cords. When injected into a damaged joint, for example, the cells can spur the regeneration of new tissue, which, in turn, can enhance function, improve range of motion, and reduce or eliminate pain.

Dr. Stutzman suggests the therapy can be used to repair muscle tears, arthritic joints, and conditions such as bursitis and tendonitis—all without the patient having to undergo invasive surgery and contend with the long and painful recovery that come with it.

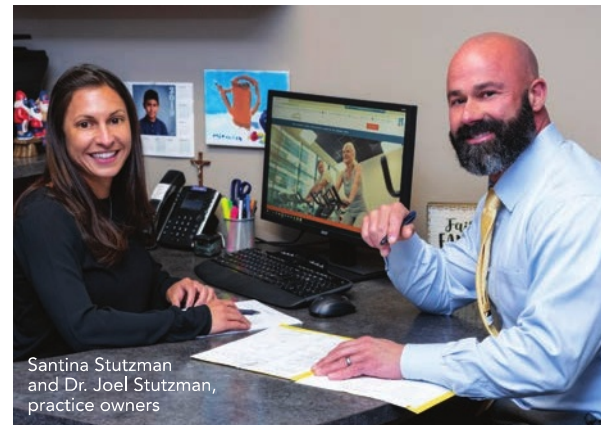
“We see a lot of severe arthritis in the knee, and this therapy is 90 percent effective in generating enough regeneration to alleviate a patient’s pain,” he says. “We want people to realize that surgery isn’t the only option. Regenerative medicine is changing the way people view health care, and we’re only just at the beginning.”

Besides Dr. Stutzman, key staff members include Medical Director Patricia Woods, M.D., and Nurse Practitioner Teresa Browne, CRNP, along with multiple physical therapists, chiropractors and massage therapists. Having a team of so many skilled practitioners under one roof enables the practice to help patients simplify their care and take a more active role in their health.

“Everyone here believes in what we’re doing,” Dr. Stutzman adds. “We wanted to shake up the traditional healthcare system, which has typically had too many delays and inefficiencies, and the patient would be stuck in the middle. Because of the way we’re structured, we’re not relying as much on reports from different providers who are beyond our walls. We think being able to centralize care helps to get a better outcome for the people we’re treating every day.”

At its heart, Aligned Medical Group aims to achieve a common goal with every individual who steps through its doors: to treat the whole person, not just a specific symptom or condition.

“Surgery and drugs have an important place in medicine, but we believe there are other pieces of the conversation, too,” Dr. Stutzman says. “Our goal is to fix people, not patch them up or cover up the real issue and just send them on their way. We want to address whatever issues they may be having because, in the end, what we’re trying to do here is help people live better lives.” ■



Santina Stutzman and Dr. Joel Stutzman, practice owners