

## **Find Health and Happiness in the Fountain of Youth, Florida**

In 1521 the Spaniard Ponce de Leon first embarked on a search for the fountain of youth. When he landed here with his caravel during Easter-week, he was so enchanted by the blooming splendor he discovered, that he named this place Florida, the Flowering. To this day, the beaches and the healthy climate of Florida draw travelers from all over Europe, only today by jet. They all recognize the secret, which this place has to offer.

Florida's unique combination of sun, sea and warm temperatures invites us for a total renewal of body, mind, emotions, and soul. Here, each and every one of can find what we are looking for – fitness, vitality, wellness, and beauty. The holiday-traveler can recover from the stress of his daily working life, the businessman enters a field of unlimited possibilities in the US-economy, and the retiree is offered an area with high recreational value without large seasonal climatic fluctuations.

This continuously healthy and mild weather during the entire year aids nearly all bodily functions. Here, I will describe only a few of them. Sunlight activates the melanocyte stimulating hormone, MSH, in the brain, which induces tanning. In addition, it accelerates the metabolism and increases the supply of fat reserves in the body. This leads to suppression of hunger feelings with reduced food intake, contributing to weight reduction. Increased light exposure also stimulates the thyroid, which likewise accelerates the metabolism and prevents weight gain.

An important mechanism in the body, which depends on sunlight, is the formation of Vitamin D3 in the skin, the largest organ of the body. This system is the prerequisite for a functioning calcium up-take from our intestine. After only 30 minutes in the sun, the Vitamin D level in the blood rises to the 50-fold amount necessary to prevent Osteoporosis. According to recent findings of American Cedric Garland, vitamin D also reduces the occurrence of intestinal cancer by 80%. Its positive influence on the autoimmune system also contributes to a better tissue compatibility with transplant operations. Even in mainstream medicine "irradiation", a strong concentrated beam of sun-like heat, is used for some skin diseases, for instance, with certain forms of Psoriasis or Acne. Sunlight also regulates our sleep-wake-rhythm, which plays an important role in recovery during nightly rest and stress-management.

As is the case for everything in life, the benefits depend on the dosage. A person's tolerance for sunlight is determined by the skin-type. One differentiates six so-called photo-types according to Fitzpatrick of Harvard Medical School, depending upon sensitivity for ultraviolet light. Four of them are represented in the Central European population. To prevent serious damage to the skin it is important to follow certain protective measures. One should apply sun lotions with sufficiently high light protection factors (SPF (sun protection factor)) and consider the duration as well as the time of day for the sunbath. The harmful UVA-radiation is strongest between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Therefore, one should avoid these hours or use special caution, such as staying in the shade, to enjoy them.

With all these positive effects of sunlight on the body a visit to Florida is a wonderful opportunity to initiate life style changes for a healthier you. This includes the prevention of serious illnesses like heart disease, stroke or cancer. The rewards are: Boosted energy and vitality of the body, increased mental capacity, feelings of well-being, and beauty of soul.

**CORNELIA C. DILLEY, M.D., Ph.D., Psy.D.**

Holistic Health Coach for Preventive Medicine and Stress Management

E-Mail: [Contact@DrDilley.com](mailto:Contact@DrDilley.com) Tel 954-224-2666 Fax 954-450-3392

Offices in Dade and Broward