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Dr. Tank, third from right, surrounded by her support staff. In front, from left, Cristy Mitchiner, Shannon Mooring, ANP-C, Dr. Tank, and Meg Barnes. Left to right, back row, Lori Myers, Tabitha Pate, and Dwaina Aycock.

# Balance Supports *Healing*

## NOW OFFERING P-STIM

**D**r. Tank reports that her practice is now offering Pulse Stimulation Treatment (P-STIM™) for pain relief—the first and only FDA-approved continuous microchip-controlled ambulatory device available to treat acute and chronic pain.

P-STIM is described as a revolutionary chronic and acute pain control device, designed to deliver autonomic nervous system and vascular stimulation over a period of a few days. It delivers intermittent, low frequency electrical pulses to specific peripheral nerves with end locations in the ear. It is placed behind the ear and weighs only seven grams.

Once installed, P-STIM provides a steady current of low frequency electrical impulses over several days. Continuing clinical studies show that specific stimulation of peripheral nerve endings located in the auricular region not only relieve pain, but also seem to regulate secondary effects common in pain patients, such as anxiety, depression, and insomnia.

Randomized, controlled studies indicate that after initial treatments, 75 percent of patients experience a reduction in pain after short-term use of the device.

**D**r. Bhavna Vaidya-Tank, the founder a decade ago of the Family Wellness Clinic in Clayton, is recognized as an exceptional family practice physician. She is also a wife and the mother of two beautiful, active children.

Seeking balance is an important part of her life.

“I read an article recently about a mother who had come to realize that doing laundry was a never-ending task,” she says. “Even as she was doing the laundry she could see another pile of clothes taking shape. It’s kind of an analogy for life; often we feel like we never really catch

up. Many of us never feel done—we’re almost driven to take on the next task.

“And that, I think, is a trap. It is also an invitation to look around us and appreciate the wonderful things in our lives. It’s OK for me to relax in my living room, eating pizza and watching my two beautiful children at play. And it’s OK for me to carve out quiet, meditative time each day, to deeply appreciate the wonders and the gifts in my life. I encourage each of my patients to find quiet time for themselves, as part of the healing process, and to achieve and maintain some measure of balance in their lives.”

### BALANCED HEALING

“In this practice,” says Dr. Tank, “providing quality care is a team activity and we all need to do our part in a balanced way. That of course includes the patient.

“A patient in her forties came to us some time ago. She was experiencing joint pain in her hands, and had tested positive for rheumatoid arthritis.

Actually, she had been having this pain, off and on, for many years, along with another autoimmune problem.

“We talked about both alternative and traditional treatments for her condition, so that she could be fully aware of her options. We agreed she needed to also see a rheumatologist even as we continued to work together. We need to approach this issue as a team. I also suggested a number of supplements for her, and encouraged her to adopt a meditative practice.

“Autoimmune problems are often difficult,” notes Dr. Tank. “This patient didn’t get better immediately; in fact, she got a little better and then her condition worsened.

“But her attitude as she worked with us was her greatest strength. We continued to explore options, and finally we found an approach that made a significant difference. She was in time about 60 percent improved over her earlier condition, and she was so grateful. We walked together, every step of this journey, and every member of this team—and we still are.

“I tell my patients the obvious truth: Doctors don’t know everything. But all of us here are doing the very best that we can, all of the time. For this patient and for so many others, their outcome is based to a very great extent on the power of their own beliefs. For this patient, medications were helpful, specialized care was beneficial, supplements I believe helped a good deal. And most important of all was the contribution this patient made to her own healing, through her relentlessly positive attitude. To support healing, all of these factors come together in a balanced way.” *h&h*

## A PATIENT-CENTERED MEDICAL HOME

**D**r. Tank is understandably pleased and proud that her practice continues to receive annual designation, after rigorous review, as a Patient-Centered Medical Home, a federal program designed to strengthen the delivery of primary care services.

The federal guidelines note that “The medical home is best described as a model or philosophy of primary care that is patient-centered, comprehensive, team-based, coordinated, accessible, and focused on quality and safety.

“It has become a widely accepted model for how primary care should be organized and delivered throughout the health care system, and is a philosophy of health care delivery that encourages providers and care teams to meet patients where they are, from the simplest to the most complex conditions.

“It is a place where patients are treated with respect, dignity, and compassion, and enable strong and trusting relationships with providers and staff. Above all, the medical home is not a final destination; instead, it is a model for achieving primary care excellence so that care is received in the right place, at the right time, and in the manner that best suits a patient’s needs.”

In 2007, the major primary care physician associations developed and endorsed the Joint Principles of the Patient-Centered Medical Home. The model has since evolved, and today the PCPCC actively promotes the medical home as defined by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Some insurance companies pay premiums to PCPCC facilities in recognition of the quality of care they provide.

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