# Barton Health&Life

Fall 2025

## Strengthen Mental Performance

p. 7

Back-to-School Boost

New Ankle, Same Passions

When Coping Turns Risky

Barton Health

## A Note from the CEO

As we step into the fall season, I encourage everyone in our community to take proactive steps to stay healthy—whether it's getting a flu shot, staying active outdoors, or scheduling annual checkups.

I am pleased to share Barton Health is a new member of Cleveland Clinic Connected. This collaboration brings Cleveland Clinic's world-class clinical expertise to our region and is already supporting future plans to grow comprehensive service lines in cardiology, oncology, and neurology. Cleveland Clinic's guidance will also play an important advisory role as we continue planning our hospital expansion project. Read more about how Barton will elevate patient care with Cleveland Clinic Connected in this issue.

In addition, we're excited to welcome Drs. Cummings and Southard to Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine. They are already familiar faces in the region, and they will now be seeing patients at Barton's orthopedic offices in Stateline and the Carson Valley. Their experience and commitment to excellent patient care will further strengthen our ability to meet the orthopedic and sports medicine needs of our community.

Sincerely,

Clint Purvance, MD
President and CEO
Barton Health

# Stronger Together: Elevating Quality Healthcare in Lake Tahoe

Barton Health

Cleveland Clinic Connected

Barton Health is now a member of Cleveland Clinic Connected.

In today's fast-moving world of medicine, collaboration is not just helpful, it's essential. And when healthcare organizations work together, patients benefit. Through shared learning, access to cutting-edge knowledge, and alignment with established best practices, collaboration allows us to raise the bar for care across the board.

That's why we're proud to announce Barton's new membership with Cleveland Clinic Connected—an exciting step that gives our rural region access to world-class healthcare expertise.

This relationship connects our teams with Cleveland Clinic specialists, allowing us to tap into evidence-based protocols, access leading physician education, and, importantly, work with an advisory team to help the future expansion of cardiovascular, cancer, and neurological services locally, to ensure our patients receive the highest-quality care, close to home.

Additionally, access to memberships like this helps independent hospitals stay independent. In rural areas such as ours, keeping local care is vital—but it shouldn't mean sacrificing access to innovation or specialty knowledge. By joining forces with a respected healthcare network like Cleveland Clinic, we gain a deeper expertise while keeping care rooted in the place our patients call home.

Healthcare is always evolving—and so are we. Through our Cleveland Clinic Connected membership, we remain a locally managed, independent, not-for-profit health system, while reinforcing our commitment to providing high-quality, compassionate care close to home and expanding our ability to tackle tomorrow's healthcare challenges with confidence.

### The Benefits of Membership

Dr. David Young is a practicing cardiologist and the Chief Medical Officer at Barton Health. Learn more about Barton and Cleveland Clinic Connected at **BartonHealth.org.**

# Back-to-School Boost:
## *Setting Your Child Up for a Happy, Healthy Year*

Change can be tough, especially for kids and teens. Whether it's adjusting to a new grade, school, teacher, or social circle, the return to school can stir up a mix of excitement and anxiety.

But a new school year also brings fresh opportunity, renewed energy, and a clean slate. With the right tools, you can help your child thrive. Here's how to make the most of the school year ahead.

### 1 Team Up with Teachers and School Counselors

Think of your child's educators as part of your team. Open communication helps them understand both academic and emotional needs. Let them know about any major life event—such as a recent move, loss, or divorce—so they can offer the right support, whether that's extra check-ins, flexible deadlines, or access to counseling services.

When school and home work together, kids feel safer, more understood, and better equipped to succeed.

### 2 Build Comfort with Routine

Consistency helps kids feel grounded. Stick to predictable routines for waking up, meals, homework, and bedtime. Including time for outdoor play and family connection, like a nightly walk or shared dinner, can calm nerves and strengthen emotional health.

Simple rituals, like packing lunch together or chatting on the way to school, also help kids ease into the day with confidence.

### 3 Prioritize Sleep

Sleep is a superpower, especially during the school year. When kids are well-rested, they're more focused, emotionally balanced, and ready to learn. Aim for age-appropriate bedtimes, and create a calm nighttime routine free from screens and overstimulation.

Cutting back on evening commitments, like too many practices or lessons, can help teens and tweens unwind and get the rest they need.

### 4 Stay Alert, Stay Supportive

Mental health struggles aren't always obvious—watch for red flags, like ongoing sadness, sudden mood swings, social withdrawal, or risky behaviors. If something feels "off," trust your gut and reach out to a pediatrician or licensed mental health provider.

Your presence, love, and attention are powerful tools. Remind your child they're not alone and asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.



**Care for Kids of All Ages**

Molly Dowd, CPNP-C, MSN, RN, is a pediatric nurse practitioner with Barton Pediatrics, offering care to infants, children, and adolescents. Learn more about Barton's pediatric services by calling **530.543.5623** or visiting **BartonHealth.org.**

# New Ankle, Same Passions

## *How Liz Got a Second Chance*

For Liz, the road to recovery began decades before her recent total ankle replacement with Barton Health's orthopedic surgeon Dr. Paul Ryan. In 1979, a motorcycle accident left her with a compound tibia fracture. Doctors weren't optimistic, and she was told she might never walk again. But she walked. She hiked. She skied. She even works in the ski industry to this day, a career path she started in the early '90s.

Still, the injury left her bow-legged, and over 44 years of active living, the misalignment took its toll. "It was osteoarthritis," Liz says. "It crept up slowly but eventually stopped me from doing the things I loved—especially hiking."

As an avid motorcyclist and recreational hiker and skier, Liz faced several orthopedic issues over the years, including ACL and MCL injuries, which she managed nonsurgically with the help of the team at Barton Health. But by 2021, her ankle pain had reached a point where her passions were no longer possible.

Liz received the recommendation to see Barton's foot and ankle specialist, Dr. Paul Ryan.

"I pulled up my pant leg, and he took one look and said, 'I know what to do,'" Liz recalls with a laugh. Dr. Ryan explained her options: an ankle fusion or a total ankle replacement. After consideration, Liz was ready to tackle the entire problem with replacement.

### Understanding Post-Traumatic Osteoarthritis

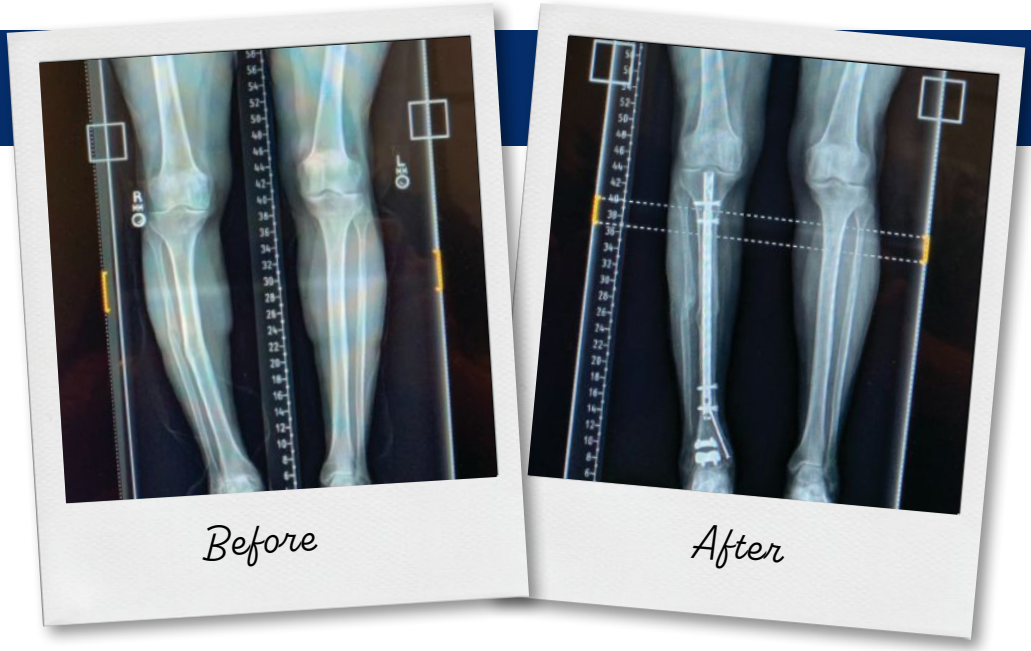
According to Dr. Ryan, Liz's case is a classic example of post-traumatic osteoarthritis—the most common form of osteoarthritis. "When there's a prior fracture that alters the alignment of a joint, it can significantly increase the chance of developing arthritis later on," he explains.

Before moving to surgery, conservative options like braces, injections, and activity modifications are typically explored. But when those no longer provide relief, patients like Liz may be candidates for either a fusion or a joint replacement—depending on their alignment, health status, and activity goals.

"In Liz's case, we were able to correct her alignment and replace her ankle in a single surgery," Dr. Ryan says.

### Keeping You on Your Feet

Paul Ryan, MD, is a board-certified orthopedic physician with Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine, specializing in comprehensive foot and ankle surgical care. For more information, visit **BartonHealth.org** or call **530.543.5554**.




## Prepared to Recover

Despite the long surgery, Liz was discharged the next day. She spent the next eight weeks partial weight-bearing in a boot and on crutches, giving her new ankle time to heal.

A naturally active person, Liz tackled her rehabilitation with determination. She trained beforehand on a stationary bike, stayed physically fit, and brought that momentum into her post-op care. She worked closely with the Barton Rehabilitation (physical therapy) team, and even added pool exercises thanks to a friend with a swimming pool.

"When I was told to do three sets of eight, I did four," Liz said with a smile. "The Alter G treadmill, hydrotherapy, everything helped. Barton's team was just incredible."

## Return to an Active Lifestyle

Two years out, Liz is back to hiking once a week and cycling regularly. She has returned to skiing, too. "You don't have to live with osteoarthritis," she says. "You just have to be ready. A lot of the recovery is mental—believing your body wants to be well, eating right, following instructions."

Ankle replacements aren't just for those looking for pain relief—they can also be a path back to an active lifestyle. While some patients may need a secondary procedure within the first decade to maintain joint motion, actual revisions of the implant are less common.

With strong confidence in her care team and a positive mindset, Liz has resumed many of the activities she once feared she might lose forever. She says staying mentally strong, physically prepared, and committed to rehabilitation made all the difference.

"I was confident in Dr. Ryan and the Barton team," she says. "And I'm so glad I did it. I'm doing what I love again."

# Welcome

## Help to Get You Back to What You Love

Whether you're recovering from an injury, chasing after grandkids, or just hoping to move without pain again, two new faces at Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine are here to help.

**Dr. Jeffrey Cummings** is a familiar face to many in the Carson Valley. As a longtime orthopedic physician in the area, he has built lasting relationships with patients who trust him for everything from sprains and fractures to joint care and injury recovery. He specializes in treating shoulder and knee injuries, joint pain, and sports-related conditions. Known for his friendly, straightforward approach, Dr. Cummings focuses on what matters most: getting you back to doing the things you love, safely and confidently.

**Dr. Scott Southard** brings decades of experience helping people return to their favorite activities—whether it's skiing, hiking, or just enjoying a walk without discomfort. He is passionate about addressing sports-related injuries and restoring joint function, and his goal is always to help patients regain strength, mobility, and quality of life.

Now seeing patients in Stateline, Carson City, and the Carson Valley, Drs. Cummings and Southard are excited to be part of your care team—keeping our community strong, active, and moving forward.

# When Coping Turns Risky:
## Addiction in Older Adults and the Road to Recovery

When you think of age-related diseases, heart disease and dementia probably come to mind. But now, startling statistics suggest another danger for older adults: drug and alcohol addiction.

In the past 20 years, drug overdose deaths more than tripled among Americans ages 65 and older. And alcohol-induced fatalities have been climbing since 2011.

Currently, about 1 million adults in this age group struggle with addiction. If you're one of them—or worried you're heading in that direction—know it's never too late to make a change. Getting help now can add life to your years and years to your life.

### Understanding the Biology

Addiction is often considered a young person's problem. But older adults face risks because:

- With age, brains can become more sensitive to drugs' effects.
- More than nine in 10 have a chronic health problem, and prescription drugs for these conditions can interact or be addictive.
- Grief, isolation, and other negative emotions—especially after major, emotional life changes—can lead to using substances to cope.
- Symptoms might be mistaken for other age-related conditions. For example, confusion, mood changes, fatigue, or falls could all be linked to substance misuse.

### Forging a New Path

Recognizing that alcohol or other drugs interfere with your daily life is one thing. Making changes to shift long-ingrained habits is another.

Lean on your healthcare provider for support and guidance during this time. To help you open up and prioritize recovery:

- **Be honest.** Providers are used to dealing with sensitive topics, and they can only help if they know what is happening. Say something like, "Lately, I've been wanting a drink earlier in the day, and then I can't stop. What treatments could help?" or, "I don't want to become dependent on opioids. What other ways can I manage my pain?"
- **Bring up all your symptoms.** Mention behavior changes, such as being irritable or not sleeping well, even if you don't think they're related. They might help your provider see the full picture.
- **Request a drug review.** Ask your provider or pharmacist to check all your prescriptions. Are any addictive? Also, tell them all the other substances you use, including alcohol, drugs, and supplements.

Remember, addiction affects millions of people—it's not something you should feel ashamed of. Reaching out is the first step to getting treatment that can restore your health and prolong your life.

### You're Not Alone

Jacob Marquette, DO, is Medical Director at Barton Community Health Center and a board-certified addiction medicine specialist. The Barton Community Health Center provides Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services supporting opioid dependency, which have expanded to also include alcohol use disorder. If you're concerned about addiction, talk to your primary care team or visit **BartonHealth.org** to learn more about available treatment options.

# The Upside of Setbacks:

## How Challenges Strengthen Mental Performance

Sports injuries don't just impact your body, they affect your mind, too. When injury sidelines an athlete, losing the ability to train or compete can feel like losing a piece of yourself. Many experience depression, anxiety, fear of re-injury, trouble sleeping, and loss of motivation during recovery.

That's why mental recovery is just as important as physical rehab. Athletes can lean on **The Three M's of Mental Performance—Mastery, Mood, and Mentors**—to stay mentally strong while healing.

### Mastery: Learning from Experience

Reflecting on past challenges—like tough seasons, comeback moments, or personal milestones—can remind athletes of their resilience and ability to persevere. Setbacks offer a rare opportunity to slow down, evaluate habits, and build new routines that strengthen both body and mind. Injuries may also push athletes to develop new areas of their game—like improving mental focus, nutrition, or flexibility—that benefit them in the long run.

### Mood: Positive Self-Talk and Visualization

Mental rehab tools like deep breathing, positive self-talk, and visualization ease anxiety and boost recovery. Breathing exercises calm the nervous system, while visualization helps athletes imagine their bodies healing and successfully returning to play. Journaling daily wins or moments of gratitude can also reframe negative thoughts and foster emotional resilience. Building a simple mindfulness routine—even five minutes a day—can have lasting benefits for mental clarity and stress reduction.

### Mentors: Strength in Community

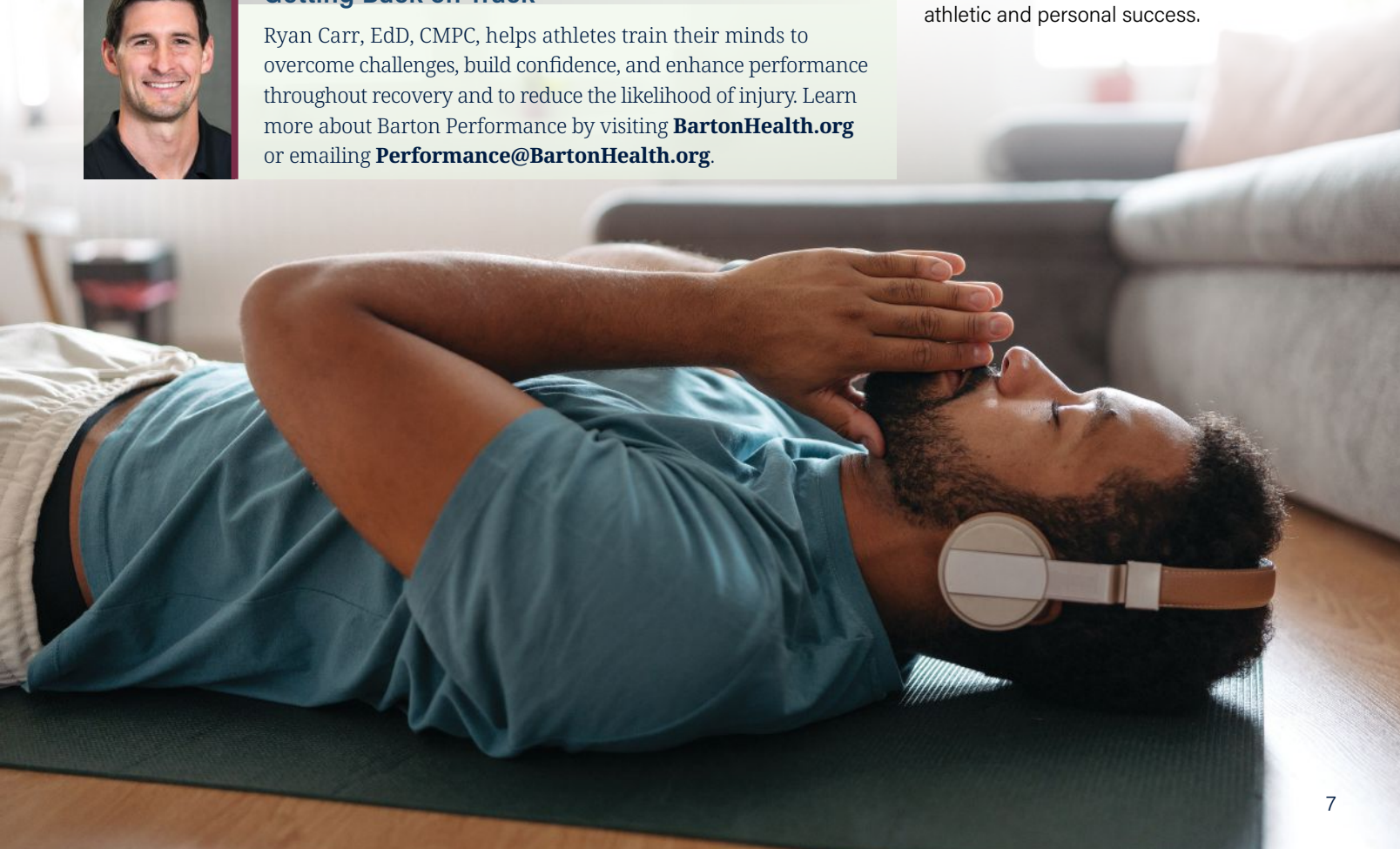
Staying connected with coaches, teammates, athletic trainers, and mental health professionals provides both encouragement and accountability. Trusted mentors can help injured athletes set realistic goals, track progress, and stay focused on what they can do rather than what they can't do. Hearing from others who have faced and overcome similar obstacles also reminds athletes that they're not alone in their journey.

### The Upside of Setbacks

Caring for both mind and body helps athletes recover faster and return stronger. The same mental skills that promote healing can enhance performance long after recovery. With the right mindset, injury becomes an opportunity to grow, learn, and come back better than before. Resilience built during tough times often becomes the foundation for long-term athletic and personal success.

### Getting Back on Track

Ryan Carr, EdD, CMPC, helps athletes train their minds to overcome challenges, build confidence, and enhance performance throughout recovery and to reduce the likelihood of injury. Learn more about Barton Performance by visiting **BartonHealth.org** or emailing **Performance@BartonHealth.org**.



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## Virtually Attend a WELLNESS WEBINAR

**The Science of the Shift: Insights into Midlife Hormonal Health**
*October 23, 5 p.m.*
Speaker: Megan Jewell, MD, Barton OB/GYN

**Foot Care: From Injury to Infection**
*November 13, 5 p.m.*
Speaker: Paul Ryan, MD, Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

**Shouldering the Pain: Understanding Common Shoulder Injuries**
*December 11, 5 p.m.*
Speaker: Jeffrey Cummings, MD, Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

*Subject to change.* Register in advance, or view previously recorded webinars at **BartonHealth.org/Lecture**.

## Fall Means It's Time to Get Your Flu Shot

A flu shot helps protect you from the flu, so you don't miss school, work, or time with friends and family. And if you do get sick, a flu shot can lessen your symptoms—so you'll feel better, faster. Getting a flu shot is also a good way to protect your loved ones. If you don't get the flu, you can't spread it to others.

### Who Needs a Flu Shot?

Experts recommend all people ages 6 months and older get a flu shot every year. It's especially important if you:

- Have a long-term health problem, like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease
- Are pregnant
- Are age 65 or older
- Are under age 5

## 988: The Mental Health Hotline

When someone needs emergency medical help, it's second nature to call 911. Now, there's a similar, simple sequence—988—for mental health support.

Calling or texting 988 connects you to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Use it for:

- Suicidal thoughts
- Substance abuse crises
- Any other type of mental or emotional distress

You can call or text 988 for yourself or on behalf of another person you're worried about. The lifeline is free, confidential, and available 24/7.