Signature Wellness

DR. ARNOLD'S OFFICE

SPECIAL EDITION

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THE SIGNATURE WELLNESS WEEKLY

Mental Health Through *Every Age and Every Stage*

George M. Arnold, MD, FRCSC, FSOGC, ABAARM, FAARM · Founder & Medical Director

I have a question I want to ask you before we get to the event details.

Have you ever had a period in your life when you felt anxious, low, exhausted, or simply not yourself and couldn't find an obvious reason for it? When nothing in your circumstances had changed, but something inside you clearly had?

If that sounds familiar, you are not alone. And the reason may have more to do with your biology than you've been told.

FROM DR. ARNOLD

One of the things I say most often to patients is something that sounds almost too simple to be worth saying:

The brain is part of the body.

It seems obvious. And yet so much of how we think about mental health still treats the mind as if it exists separately from the physical biology of the person experiencing it.

When someone develops depression, anxiety, sleep problems, cognitive difficulties, or changes in how they cope, the conversation often starts and ends with the psychological. What is happening in your life? What are you stressed about? What have you been through?

Those are important questions. But they are not the only questions. Because changes in how we feel, think, sleep, and function don't happen in isolation. They happen in a person, in a body, at a particular stage of life.

And that last part matters more than medicine has traditionally acknowledged.

> ***"You are not biologically identical to the person you were ten years ago. And that means your brain isn't either."***

Hormones change throughout our lives. So does the structure and chemistry of the brain itself. A fascinating body of research now shows that major hormonal transitions, including puberty, pregnancy, the postpartum period, perimenopause, menopause, and andropause, are associated with real, measurable changes in how the brain responds to stress, regulates emotion, consolidates memory, and maintains mood.

That means the same biological change can affect the same person very differently at different points in their life. And it means that two people going through what appears to be the same transition can have completely different experiences, and both can be entirely normal.

WHY ASKING "WHY NOW?" CHANGES EVERYTHING

I've spent a lot of time thinking about the question medicine doesn't always ask.

When someone develops a new symptom, we are trained to ask: What is it? What is the diagnosis? What is the treatment? What does the laboratory test show?

Those are necessary questions. But there is another question that can be just as important, and sometimes more so:

Why is this happening now?

Why did anxiety emerge in someone who has never experienced it before, now, in their late forties? Why did a psychiatric medication that worked well for years suddenly seem less

effective, now, in someone going through perimenopause? Why did the sleep problems begin now, rather than five years ago?

The answer is sometimes purely psychological. But sometimes it is biological. And sometimes it is both, and the two are interacting in ways we haven't yet learned to ask about.

That's the question I'll be exploring on October 23.

WHAT THE TALK WILL COVER

- **The biology of mental health across the lifespan**
  How hormonal transitions at every stage of life, from puberty to aging, shape brain function, mood, sleep, cognition, and emotional resilience in ways that are real, measurable, and often underappreciated.
- **Why "Why now?" is such a powerful question**
  Understanding how the timing of a mental health change can point toward biological contributors that traditional assessments may miss entirely.
- **What individualized medicine looks like in mental health**
  The same symptom doesn't always have the same cause. The same treatment doesn't work the same way for everyone. And the person sitting in front of us, at this stage of their life, matters enormously.
- **How to ask better questions**
  Practical ways to understand your own experience, advocate for yourself or someone you love, and have more informed conversations with health-care providers.

WHO THIS IS FOR

THIS TALK IS FOR YOU IF...

- You or someone you care about has experienced changes in mood, sleep, energy, cognition, or emotional resilience that haven't been fully explained.
- You have ever wondered whether hormonal changes could be connected to how you feel mentally, not just physically.
- You are going through or approaching a major life stage such as perimenopause, menopause, andropause, or significant aging and want to understand what to expect.
- You are a health-care professional who wants a deeper framework for thinking about mental health across the lifespan.
- You simply want to understand yourself, or someone you love, a little better.

The event is open to everyone: patients, families, health-care professionals, and members of the community. There is no cost to attend.

I would genuinely love to see familiar Signature Wellness faces in the room. And if this topic speaks to someone in your life, please consider forwarding this to them and bringing them with you.

EVENT DETAILS

18TH ANNUAL

Mental Health Education and Connection Day

Presented by the Markham Stouffville Hospital Mental Health Program & collaborating partners

FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. George Arnold

Physician, educator, innovator, and expert in menopause, andropause, and holistic wellness

Science. Experience. Compassion. Every age, every stage.

DATE AND TIME

Friday, October 23, 2026
8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION

Cornell Community Centre
Rehearsal Hall
3201 Bur Oak Ave, Markham, ON

Free Admission | Complimentary Parking | Light Refreshments | Community Booths

REGISTER NOW — DEADLINE OCTOBER 16, 2026

UNTIL THEN

A PERSONAL NOTE

Mental health has been at the heart of my clinical work for many years, not as a separate specialty, but as an inseparable part of understanding the whole person. Hormones, sleep, metabolism, cognition, mood, and identity are not separate systems. They influence each other constantly. And the stage of life we are in changes how all of it works.

I don't think we talk about that enough. And I am genuinely looking forward to October 23 as an opportunity to change that, even a little.

If you come, I hope you leave with something useful. A question you hadn't thought to ask. A conversation you hadn't thought to start. Or simply a new way of understanding something you have been carrying for a long time.

That would mean a great deal to me.

Dr. George Arnold

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Signature Wellness | Dr. Arnold's Office
204 - 9130 Leslie St, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 0B9
905-472-4553 · info@signaturewellness.ca

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