

Be Perfectly Healthy

A Reference Guide For The 21st Century

Compilation of Articles by:

Leigh Erin Connealy, MD

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This book is dedicated to my cherished family, including my husband, Patrick McCall, and seven children, Brittany, Brooke, Robert, Breanne, Beth, Alannah and Grant. Thanks to their love, support and infinite patience, I have been able to not only maintain a thriving medical practice but to write this book. Our shared hope is that our families many enjoy life's most precious gift, HEALTH.

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Cover Design by Damion Hickman Design, Inc.

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Visit my websites at www.connealymd.com, www.perfectly-healthy.com, www.centerfornewmedicine.com, www.cancercenterforhealing.com or www.drdetectivetv.com

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Printed in the United States of America

First Printing: December 2009

Second Printing: February 2019

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Introduction

Introduction

"Be Perfectly Healthy" is more than a labor of love for me- it is a way of life. We have reached a critical point in healthcare where the "solutions" to our health problems are no longer meeting the needs of the patient. Medications are merely toxic Band-Aids® that temporarily cover up illnesses while creating new problems within the body's delicate ecosystem. The cost of healthcare has risen to astronomical heights because problems are not addressed until they've reached a crisis state, when only the most drastic and expensive measures will be effective. Few of us are prepared to incur these kinds of costs to our wallets, let alone our lives.

We need to begin taking a deeper look at the health problems that are facing our nation. Diabetes, heart disease, cancer... these terrible, life-threatening diseases are all on the rise, yet we are far more educated today than we were just 100 years ago. This perplexing correlation between our increased knowledge and a population growing sicker by the day should be a red flag, a sign that we need to examine these links far more closely.

Over the past century we've witnessed amazing leaps in science and technology, advancing at rates that seem nearly out of control. Where we are going, many have yet to even imagine; however, we'll be there before you finish reading this book. We can hardly keep up with this accelerating change as current technology is replaced by new technology on a near-daily basis. Yet, it is in this rapid progression of growth that many of our problems originate.

Some of the most devastating scientific inventions were originally hailed as revolutionary discoveries. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were initially marketed as an ingenious chemical that kept food cold without the use of large blocks of ice, paving the way towards modern refrigeration.

Nearly 80 years later, those same CFCs have been banned due to their ability to eat holes in our planet's ozone layer. Leaded additives that were infused into gasoline to prevent engine "knocking" have polluted our entire planet and have horrible and debilitating health implications for those exposed to these dangerous toxins, including lowered IQ, behavioral disorders and even death.

In the early 1960s, doctors prescribed a medication called diethylstilbestrol (DES) to pregnant women to help prevent miscarriage. Their intentions were good, yet their carnage was widespread. This same medication that was supposed to enable healthy, full-term births caused devastating reproductive problems for the offspring of these mothers. Female children developed serious medical issues, from vaginal and cervical cancer to deformities of the reproductive tract, pregnancy complications and infertility.

I was one of these children.

"Doctors give drugs for which they know little, into bodies of which they know less, for diseases of which they know nothing at all."

- Voltaire

My interest in medicine began at the same time that I learned about my connection to DES. When I was just 16, my mother received a letter from her obstetrician detailing the link between the medication that she had taken and the possible health problems that I might experience, setting off a series of invasive tests and exams that would continue on for the rest of my life. I spent much of my teenage years at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas, enduring test after test and fearing that the results would be life altering. Fortunately, each test came back "normal", but year after year I have to submit to more testing, and the fear of a cancer diagnosis lives constantly in the back of my head.

DES was prescribed as a blanket solution for women deemed to be at a "high risk" for miscarriage. Very little, if any, care was given to the cause of each woman's "high risk" status; the pharmaceutical was seen as a miracle breakthrough in medicine and any woman given the opportunity to have a successful pregnancy as a result of DES was told to be grateful. Of course, this proved not only to be a terrible disaster in the history of modern medicine, but there has never been any proof that DES prevented one single miscarriage.

When I began practicing medicine in 1986 I made a decision that my approach to healing would be dramatically different than the traditional western methods. Instead of using medications to treat symptoms, I am continually searching for the root cause of health problems and tackling the issues from this "medical ground zero". By discovering where the issue originates, we can begin to take steps to truly heal, instead of simply masking the problem with medications that often cause more harm than good.

Nature has given us an infinite palette from which to heal, yet too often our medical solutions are synthetically derived. Within our bodies, these synthetic medications are foreign substances, attaching themselves to various tissues and disrupting normal function. Synthetic medications and natural treatments work in opposite manners within the body: drugs toxify while natural treatments detoxify. My approach doesn't ignore or disregard the amazing progress that modern science has made, instead, I choose to integrate the best of this new technology with the brilliant simplicity of nature's healing properties when devising my treatment protocols.

"Becoming Perfectly Healthy" is broken down into three logical sections that demonstrate my philosophy towards sickness and healing.

Why Are We So Sick?

In the first section you will learn about the current state of our environment and how it affects the health of our society. The rapid speed at which our technology has advanced has had a detrimental effect on our health and we are only now beginning to recognize just how deeply these problems run.

When I first began writing and lecturing about the connections between the environment and health, the messages were considered controversial and “alarmist” by the mainstream medical establishment. Today, many of these issues are recognized by leading research institutions as valid and serious problems that can no longer be denied or ignored. It is only a matter of time before the remaining “controversial” issues are acknowledged and taken seriously by western medicine.

What’s Happening To Our Bodies?

The second section addresses the physiological devastation that occurs when toxins enter the body. There is not a single organ system in the human body that is protected from synthetic chemicals, and every single serious health problem that our nation is facing today can be connected in one way or another to these toxins. In this section I examine the problems that patients are most commonly faced with, look at what the underlying causes may be and discuss possible integrative treatment options. You will notice that my treatment protocols always look towards natural solutions first before considering pharmaceutical and/or surgical options.

“Let your food be your medicine and your medicine be your food.”

-Hippocrates

How To Be Perfectly Healthy

Section three takes a two-fold approach to healing, focusing on detoxification and building up the immune system. In this section you will learn natural ways to rid your body of harmful toxins while boosting your body’s own innate healing abilities through healthy eating habits and regular exercise. Mother Nature, in her infinite wisdom, has provided us with everything that we need to heal ourselves- it is up to us to tap into this well of knowledge and use these natural tools to our maximum benefit.

It is my hope that this book will transform the way that you look at health and living. Instead of accepting that we will become sick (that it is inevitable) and then dealing with illnesses as they develop, we should be striving to head off problems before they begin. This proactive approach to living is within our power and provides an excellent foundation for a long life of fulfillment, happiness and hope. I commend you for taking this all-important first step to Becoming Perfectly Healthy. Your life will never be the same again, and that's a wonderful blessing!

In peace, love, joy and in health,
Leigh Erin Connealy, MD



How Sweet Is It?

Aspartame, more commonly known as NutraSweet or Equal, is one of the most toxic substances being consumed today. This artificial sweetener, currently used in over 4,000 products worldwide, entertains a sordid past and has been one of the most tested and debated food additives in the history of the FDA. While the manufacturer maintains that aspartame is not a danger to your health, the scientific studies don't necessarily agree. The FDA has approved the product for mass consumption, in spite of overwhelming evidence that aspartame can have neurotoxic, metabolic, allergenic, fetal and carcinogenic effects.

When you question how such a substance has not been banned, one simply needs to look at the billions of dollars generated by the sale of aspartame each year. In light of the staggering number of dollar signs involved, it's easy to see that the artificial sweetener industry has reached Big Tobacco status. With so much money at stake, the truth suffers almost as much as the health of the consumers, while the shareholders' wealth continues to grow exponentially.

The Ingredients

In 1965, James Schlatter, a chemist for G.D. Searle, was developing an anti-ulcer drug when he accidentally stumbled upon aspartame. Made up of aspartic acid (40%), phenylalanine (50%) and methanol (10%), aspartame is 200 times sweeter than natural sugar.

Aspartic Acid

Aspartate, also known as Aspartic Acid, is a neurotransmitter in the brain, facilitating the transfer of information from one neuron to another. Too much aspartate allows an influx of calcium into the brain cells, triggering an excessive amount of free radicals

which kill the cells. Aspartate is referred to as an "excitotoxin" because of the nerve cell damage that it causes. Many chronic illnesses have been attributed to long term excitotoxin exposure, including multiple sclerosis, ALS, memory loss, hormonal problems, hearing loss, epilepsy, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, hypoglycemia, dementia, brain lesions and neuroendocrine disorders.

In 1971, Dr. John Olney, neuroscientist and one of the world's foremost experts on excitotoxins, informed G.D. Searle that his research had revealed that aspartic acid caused holes in the brains of mice. Searle did not inform the FDA of these findings until after aspartame's approval in 1981. This would prove to be just one event in a startling pattern of lies and deception.

Phenylalanine

Phenylalanine is an amino acid normally found in the brain. Human testing has shown phenylalanine levels in the blood are increased significantly in those who chronically use aspartame. Excessive levels of phenylalanine in the brain can cause levels of serotonin to decrease, which can lead to depression, schizophrenia and make one more susceptible to seizures.

Studies conducted on rats by G.D. Searle found phenylalanine to be safe for humans. However, Louis J. Elsas, II, M.D., Director of Medical Genetics and Professor of Pediatrics at Emory University School of Medicine told the US Senate in 1987, "Normal humans do not metabolize phenylalanine as efficiently as do lower species such as rodents and thus most of the previous studies on aspartame effects on rodents are irrelevant." Unfortunately, this fell on deaf ears and failed to garner additional testing.

Methanol

By far, the most controversial ingredient in aspartame is methanol (aka wood alcohol). An EPA assessment of methanol states that it is "considered a cumulative poison due to the low rate of excretion once it is absorbed. In the body, methanol is oxidated to formaldehyde and formic acid; both of these metabolites are toxic." This oxidation occurs when methanol reaches 86°F (30°C).

Formaldehyde, a product broken down from aspartate, is a known

carcinogen and causes retinal damage and birth defects as well as interfering with DNA replications.

The EPA recommends a consumption limit of 7.8 mg/day. A one-liter aspartame-sweetened beverage contains about 56 mg of methanol—*seven times* the EPA limit.

The most common health issues related to methanol poisoning are vision problems including misty vision, progressive contraction of visual fields, blurring of vision, obscuration of vision, retinal damage and blindness.

The History of Aspartame

In 1973, G.D. Searle submitted aspartame to the FDA for approval as a sweetening agent. Approval was granted in July of 1974 but pulled in December after objections to its safety were filed by neuroscience researcher, John Olney, and consumer attorney, James Turner. Questions regarding G.D. Searle's research practices were subsequently raised and an FDA investigation was launched.

It is important to note that of the 164 studies that were conducted, 74 of them had industry related sponsorship and 90 were funded without any industry money. Of the 90 non-industry sponsored studies, 83 (92%) identified one or more problems with aspartame.

In 1976, an FDA task force investigation revealed numerous faults in G.D. Seale's studies. FDA Toxicologist and Task Force member, Dr. Adrian Gross stated, "They [G.D. Searle] lied and they didn't submit the real nature of their observations because, had they done that, it is more likely that a great number of these studies would have been rejected for adequacy. What Searle did, they took great pains to camouflage these shortcomings of the study... For instance, animals would develop tumors while they were under study. Well, they would remove these tumors from the animals." In July 1976 the FDA created another task force, headed by Jerome Bressler, to investigate the discrepancies in three particular studies.

In 1977, a Grand Jury investigation into Searle's violation of the law was launched, headed by US Attorney William Conlon. Conlon failed to follow through and the statute of limitations ran out. Fifteen months later, Conlon accepted a job with the law firm representing G.D. Searle in the investigation.

In August of 1977, the Bressler Report was released, citing a myriad of lies and inconsistencies within Searle's studies. Senior Scientist on the FDA's task force, Jacqueline Verrett, testified in front of the US Senate, "It would appear that the safety of aspartame and its breakdown products has still not been satisfactorily determined, since the flaws cited in these three studies were also present in all of the other studies submitted by Searle." Due to these findings, a Public Board of Inquiry (PBOI) was launched.

In 1980, the PBOI voted unanimously to reject the use of aspartame until additional studies on its potential to cause brain tumors could be done.

In January of 1981, G.D. Searle reapplied for approval, submitting new studies with its application. In March, a 5 member FDA panel of scientists reviewed the PBOI's findings. The panel referred to the brain tumor data as "worrisome" and could not recommend approval. In July of 1981, FDA Commissioner Arthur Hull Hayes, Jr. overruled the PBOI and approved aspartame for dry foods use, ignoring the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 348) which states that a food additive should not be approved if tests are inconclusive.

In October 1982, Searle petitioned the FDA for approval to use aspartame in soft drinks and children's vitamins. The FDA approved the use in soft drinks in 1983. Shortly after approval, Commissioner Hayes left the FDA under charges of improprieties and was hired as a consultant for G.D. Searle's PR Firm, Burson Marstellar.

In July of 1983, both Woodrow Monte, Director of the Science and Nutrition Laboratory at Arizona State University and James Turner, Esq. filed petitions objecting to the approval of aspartame based on possible serious adverse side effects from chronic intake of aspartame. In November, the FDA denied the petitions, "because public interest did not require it."

Know What's In Your Food!

Foods containing aspartame commonly
have the following labels:

Low Calorie
Zero Calories
Low Sugar
Sugar-free
Diet

Made with Nutrasweet™

Because aspartame is found in so many popular foods,
beverages, supplements and over-the-counter medications,
carefully read all ingredient labels before making a purchase.

In 1984, 6,900,000 lbs of aspartame were consumed in the US.
In 1985, G.D. Searle was bought out by Monsanto, creating
the NutraSweet Company as a separate subsidiary from G.D.
Searle. 14,400,000 lbs. of aspartame were consumed in the
US that same year.

15,700,000 lbs of aspartame were consumed in the US in 1986.
17,100,000 lbs were consumed in 1987. NutraSweet stopped
providing consumption data to the USDA after 1987.

In 1996, the FDA removed all restrictions on aspartame and
authorized its use in all products, including heated and baked
goods. This was done in spite of the fact that aspartame breaks
down into formaldehyde when heated to 86°F.

Today, aspartame accounts for over 75% of the adverse
reactions to food additives reported to the FDA. HOW SWEET
IS IT? A few of the 90 different documented symptoms include:
headaches/migraines, dizziness, seizures, nausea, numbness,
muscle spasms, weight gain, rashes, depression, fatigue,
irritability, tachycardia, insomnia, vision problems, hearing
loss, heart palpitations, breathing difficulties, anxiety attacks,
slurred speech, loss of taste, tinnitus, vertigo, memory loss and
joint pain. Which one are you ready for?

Suggested Products:

Natural Stevia

Xylitol

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Beauty To Die For

Your medicine cabinet is one of the most dangerous areas of your house, and not for the reasons that you may think. Lurking just behind your bathroom mirror, where all of your favorite beauty products are housed, lies a virtual toxic nightmare. The growing list of synthetic ingredients manufacturers add to their products are turning the most innocent looking shampoos and moisturizers into cocktails of toxins that could cause cancer or reproductive damage over years of sustained use. Modern cosmetics contain a host of dangerous ingredients, which would be more at home in a test tube than in our bodies.

Like most people, you probably assume that the ingredients found in beauty products have been thoroughly tested for safety well before they ever land on your grocery store's shelves. After all, the government has regulations in place for the water that we drink, the food that we eat and the air that we breathe. One would assume that the FDA would also be overseeing the cosmetic industry to ensure the health and safety of consumers. Unfortunately, the FDA has little power when it comes to regulating the ingredients found in your beauty products. In fact, the only people ensuring the safety of personal care products are the very people who govern the industry: The Cosmetic Trade Association (CTFA). Scientists paid by the CTFA make up the Cosmetic Ingredient Review panel (CIR) and are tasked with regulating the safety of its industry's own products.

In 2004 the Environmental Working Group (EWG) released the findings of a study that they conducted into the safety of beauty care products. Comparing approximately 10,000 ingredients found in 7,500 different products against lists of known and suspected chemical health hazards, their research revealed that the CIR was falling tragically short in ensuring consumer safety.

Of the 7,500 products tested by the EWG, only a mere 28 had been evaluated for safety by the CIR. The EWG found that 1

in every 120 products analyzed contained ingredients certified by the government as known or probable carcinogens and that nearly 1/3 of all the products contained ingredients classified as possible carcinogens. Astoundingly, 54 products even violated recommendations for safe use that the CIR had set into place, yet these products are still available for sale today.

Of the products tested, the worst offenders were products containing the cancer causing ingredients coal tar, alpha hydroxy acids and beta hydroxy acids and those containing the hormone-disrupting ingredient, phthalate.

Coal Tar

Seventy-one hair dye products evaluated were found to contain ingredients derived from coal tar (listed as FD&C or D&C on ingredients labels). Several studies have linked long time hair dye use with bladder cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and multiple myeloma.

A research study conducted in 2001 by the USC School of Medicine found that women using permanent hair dye at least once a month more than doubled their risk of bladder cancer. The study estimates that "19% of bladder cancer in women in Los Angeles, California, may be attributed to permanent hair dye use."

A link between hair dye and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma was established in a 1992 study conducted by the National Cancer Institute, finding that 20% of all cases of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma may be linked to hair dye use.

While the FDA has not stepped in to prevent the use of coal tar in beauty products, they do advise consumers that reducing hair dye use will possibly "reduce the risk of cancer".

Alpha Hydroxy Acids (AHA) Beta Hydroxy Acids (BHA)

AHA and BHA are commonly used in products advertised to

3 Steps of Action!

1. Go to www.ewg.org and check out the health risk of your favorite beauty products. EWG has compiled a list of 7,500 beauty products and has ranked them according to their potential to cause cancer, trigger allergic reactions, interfere with the endocrine system, impair reproduction and damage a developing fetus.
2. Visit the FDA's website at www.fda.gov and familiarize yourself with the process of filing complaints or concerns about consumer products.
3. Visit www.safecosmetics.org to learn how you can lobby for safe cosmetics laws in your state and at the federal level.

remove wrinkles, blemishes, blotches and acne scars. With consumer complaints of burning, swelling and pain associated with AHA and BHA flooding into the FDA, they began conducting their own research about 15 years ago. Their findings linked the use of AHA and BHA with a doubling of UV-induced skin damage and a potential increased risk of skin cancer.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, skin cancer has reached "epidemic proportions", with 1 million new cases occurring each year and 1 person dying every hour from the disease. They estimate that at the current rate, 1 in 5 people will develop skin cancer over his/her lifetime.

The FDA's study findings were presented to the CIR, but the panel approved the continued use of AHA and BHA, "in spite of serious safety questions submitted by a consumer group and a major manufacturer," according to an FDA spokesperson.

Even though 1 out of every 17 products analyzed by the EWG study had either AHA or BHA in their ingredients (with nearly 10% being moisturizers and 6% sunscreens), the most that the FDA could do was suggest that products containing the ingredients carry a warning to use sunscreen and to limit their

sun exposure while using the product. A puzzling solution, since some of the products containing the dangerous ingredient are designed specifically for use in the sun.

Phthalates

Phthalates are industrial plasticizers widely used in personal care products to moisturize and soften skin, impart flexibility to nail polish after it dries and enhance the fragrances used in most products. Studies indicate that phthalates cause a wide range of birth defects and lifelong reproductive impairments, targeting every organ in the male reproductive system and causing problems ranging from low sperm count to serious genital deformities that can lead to an increased risk of cancer.

While the EWG only found 4 products with phthalate listed as an ingredient (all nail care products), there is no telling how many products actually contain it. The industry is not required to list the ingredients in their fragrances or “trade secret” ingredients on their products, and phthalates often fall into one of those two categories.

In 2005, California passed the California Safe Cosmetics Act, requiring manufacturers to disclose any product ingredients that are recognized by the government as chemicals that cause cancer or birth defects.

EMFs: The Dangers Of Modern Convenience

We are immersed in a world of technology, unable to escape from the moment our electronic alarm clocks awake us in the morning until the moment we snuggle under our electric blankets at the end of the day. We have been raised with the luxuries of modern appliances to simplify our lives. Few and far between are the days of manual labor, as there is a machine to do just about everything for us. We live in amazing times, so different from just one hundred years ago. Life is better, right?

Yes, in many ways there's no disputing that life is, at the very least, easier. Yet unfortunately, today we are faced with illnesses that were rare if not completely unheard of just a short century ago. While our technology continues to advance us to new heights, very little attention has been paid to the toll that such feats are exacting on our health. And not until very recently has a focus been placed on the dangers associated with the very "conveniences" that were intended to improve the quality of our lives.

What Are EMFs?

In the 1970's researchers established a link between childhood leukemia and electrical power lines, creating an uproar in communities across America. It was found that power lines, like all electrical devices, emit electromagnetic fields (EMFs) that have the ability to cause cancer in children. Since this discovery, more researchers have devoted their attention to determining the full extent to which EMFs impact our health. While the research is relatively new, the findings thus far are frightening.

All power operated appliances and machinery, both alternating current (AC) and direct current (DC), emit electromagnetic waves. As the electromagnetic waves radiate away from their origin, they decrease in strength rapidly, dropping off almost

completely at about 4 feet. Such electromagnetic fields are measured in terms of Gauss (G) or milligauss (mG), 1/1,000 of a Gauss. The electrical wiring in your home, when operating properly, emits between 0.5 and 0.9mG. The EPA's recommended safety standard is 1mG.

EMFs have been linked to a host of health concerns, including miscarriage, birth defects, breast cancer (in both men and women), adult and childhood leukemia, depression, suicide, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS).

EMFs And Melatonin

Researchers believe that, rather than causing direct harm, EMFs create subtle changes within the body that lead to serious diseases. Extensive research has been conducted examining the effects of EMFs on a hormone in the body called melatonin. Melatonin is secreted by the pineal gland in the center of the brain and controls the sleeping and waking cycles, enhances the immune system, lowers cholesterol and blood pressure and is a potent antioxidant that plays a part in preventing cancer, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, diabetes and heart disease.

Studies indicate that EMF exposure can shut down melatonin secretion in the body. Researchers at the University of North Carolina found that the decreased levels of melatonin stemming from EMF exposure may cause depression and suicide. When they compared levels of EMF exposure and rate of suicide among more than 5,000 electrical workers along with an equal number of non-electrical workers, they found that the suicide rate of the electrical workers was twice that of the control group.

Robert P. Liburdy of Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory found that exposure to 12mG EMFs can suppress the ability of both melatonin and the hormone-emulating drug Tamoxifen to shut down the growth of cancer cells. Tamoxifen is a synthetic estrogen that prevents cancer cell growth by blocking the cell's estrogen receptors. In the breast, this can starve most cancer cells of the estrogen that normally spurs their growth. Exposure to EMFs interferes with the drug's ability to bind to the estrogen

receptor, thus opening the door for the cancer cells to proliferate.

EMFs Cause Hormonal Imbalance

Further research indicates that EMFs actually have the ability to alter the hormones estrogen and testosterone. Charles Graham, an experimental physiologist at the Midwest Research Institute in Kansas City, MO, found that women exposed to 200mG EMFs overnight had significantly elevated levels of estrogen. Elevated levels of estrogen over many years have been shown to increase a woman's risk to breast cancer. In the same study, Graham exposed men to 200mG intermittently over a 3-night period (on for 15 seconds, off for 15 seconds) and found that it reduced their levels of testosterone, a hormone drop that has been linked to testicular and prostate cancer.

EMFs Alter DNA

A study released in January 2004 in the "Environmental Health Science Perspectives" journal indicates that exposure to EMFs from everyday household appliances has the ability to alter brain cell DNA. Additionally, EMF exposure increases the number of free radicals in the body, which wreaks havoc on the damaged DNA cells. Researchers, Henry Lai and Narendra P. Singh, found that rats exposed to 60Hz fields, standard for AC (alternating current) power in the US, for 24 hours had significant DNA damage. Those exposed for 48 hours had even greater damage. Both groups experienced "cell suicide" in which a cell self-destructs because it cannot repair itself. Most interestingly, their research suggests that even brief exposure can pose a problem, as it appears damage builds up over time.

EMFs Linked To Miscarriage

In 2001, Dr. DeKun Li, who led the study team at Kaiser Permanente's research division, studied EMFs and their link to miscarriage by analyzing a group of pregnant women in their normal everyday environments. Arming each woman with a tool to measure their EMF exposure at different points throughout the day, he tracked their pregnancies, focusing on the number

that resulted in miscarriage. His findings revealed that women who were exposed to 16mG or more had 80% more miscarriages than those exposed to less than 16mG. Of the 159 women who had miscarriages, 132 had exposures of 16mG or higher, and of these, 95 said that they had taken measurements on a typical day. Additionally, his research found that for the pregnancies lost during the first 10 weeks of gestation, the risk of miscarriage was nearly 6 times that of less exposed women. For women who were judged to be more susceptible to environmental assaults – those who already had 2 or more miscarriages or who had fertility problems – the miscarriage risk was 3 times higher when exposed to 16mG or more.

EMF Safety

So what can you do to protect yourself from EMF exposure? The first step is to understand that your house and office are filled with EMF-emitting machinery. Ordinary household appliances tend to generate larger cumulative EMF exposures than power lines. The reason is proximity. As magnetic waves radiate from their source, they become weakened. However, within a home or office the appliances and electrical equipment create a combined field that often exceeds the 1mG standard, creating the potential for serious health consequences.

You might be surprised to know that some of the most common appliances that you use emit EMFs hundred of times higher than the EPA standard. While EMFs from appliances drop off at about 4ft, most people stand or sit closer than this distance. At 12" away, microwave ovens emit 40-80mG, washing machines emit 2-30mG, electric ranges emit 4-40mG, fluorescent lamps emit 5-20mG and televisions emit .4-20mG. Ironically, the hairdryer, which is generally held closely to the head, emits between 60 and 20,000mG at 1.2" away. Electric clocks, usually located on a bedside table, can emit as much as 10mG up to 3 feet away. So for the 8 hours that you sleep each night, you are being continually assaulted by 10 times the EPA's recommended standard.

My Healthy Recommendations

It is impossible to live your life without exposure to some EMFs.

The EPA recommends "prudent avoidance", which essentially means, put distance between yourself and the EMF sources. The electric alarm clock next to your bed is most likely sitting right next to your head. Move it to the other side of the room. Electrical blankets lie directly on top of your body and their EMF fields can penetrate the body up to 7 inches. Just get rid of them altogether. Don't sit too closely to the television set or stand in front of the microwave while your food is cooking. Hold your blow dryer as far away from your head as possible, or scrap it altogether. And most importantly, stay on top of the research on EMFs, since knowledge is power. If you are not able to get answers from your local government about EMF fields around your home, demand answers. The more that you know about the dangers, the better you can protect yourself and your family.

Suggested Products:

Smart Dots for EMF Protection

Available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Leaded or Unleaded?

Correlations between modern America and the fallen ancient Roman Empire are forever being postulated by historians of both the academic and armchair variety alike. One theory attributes the fall of the Roman Empire to the Romans' rampant use of lead. The heavy metal was used to construct their sophisticated plumbing system, as a preservative in wine and as a tasty additive to enhance bland food. In 200 B.C. a Greek physician observed that "lead makes the mind give way", and nothing could support that more than the image of Nero, Rome's great leader, fiddling and dancing through the streets while his empire burned all around him.

Lead In The 20th Century

Heeding philosopher George Santayana's warning that "those who cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it," we are a nation continually searching for answers to past failures in an effort to prevent the same ill-fated outcomes today. Unfortunately, Thomas Midgley, Jr., an engineer for General Motors Research Corporation in the 1920s, was not familiar with Santayana's logic, or chose not to give it much weight. Midgley, under the direction of GM, set out to find an additive for automobile gasoline that prevented the "knocking" sound their current fuel concoction produced. In the course of his research he discovered two such agents that would put a stop to the problem: Tetraethyl lead and ethyl alcohol. Research proved that ethyl alcohol was clearly the most efficient and less dangerous choice, but fearing that ethyl alcohol might become a replacement for gasoline altogether, GM opted to use the tetraethyl lead additive instead. Ignoring history, and the health of their customers, GM began using the lead additive in the mid-1920s, a decision that would send deadly poisonous fumes into the air for the next 60 years, and poison our soils and waterways for decades to come.

Symptoms of Lead Poisoning

irritability
aggressive behavior
low appetite and energy
difficulty sleeping
headaches
reduced sensations
loss of previous developmental skills (in children)
anemia
constipation

While lead is no longer pumping dangerously out of our vehicles, the 6 decades of vehicle-produced lead toxins still inhabit our soils and waterways. Lead does not degrade or lose its toxicity over time. Once in the environment, lead burrows in and makes a home where it remains until it is physically removed.

Lead is still a danger to us today. Approximately 95% of my patients tested for heavy metals come back positive for lead. Unbelievable, one might think, but not when you take a closer look at how lead inhabits the body.

Lead In The Body

Lead is absorbed by the body primarily through ingestion or breathing via a number of pathways including air, food, soil, dust and water. Once in the body, the toxin gets into the bloodstream, where some of it becomes excreted but the majority of it is stored in the bones and other organs where it can accumulate for decades. The amount of lead absorbed by an individual relies greatly on their nutritional status. A deficiency in iron or calcium, a high fat diet or a low caloric intake can all enhance lead absorption. Children absorb lead more readily than adults.

If you were born before 1986, when lead was officially banned from all automobile gasoline, then you have been exposed to the

toxic contaminant that flowed freely from the exhaust pipes of every vehicle on the road. Even if you were born after 1986, you are still vulnerable to the toxin, which found a home in our soils during the leaded gasoline heyday. A 1993 study conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development found that only about 10% of lead from auto emissions settled in the immediate vicinity of the roadway (within 300 feet), 45% settled up to 12.5 miles away, 10% traveled as far as 125 miles and the remaining 35% traveled on long-range atmospheric transport systems. Evidence of this long-range transport was revealed in a study conducted by Dr. Charles Boutron in 1991, which found that levels of lead from gasoline and other lead bearing sources were detected in the snows of Greenland.

Lead Toxicity

Lead absorption affects every system in the body. Acute exposure to high levels of lead can result in death or significant damage to the brain or other organs. Low levels of exposure can be more subtle but just as serious. For years now researchers have agreed that there is a definitive link between lead exposure and damage to the nervous system. In children, such exposure has shown to reduce IQ levels and attention spans; cause reading and learning disabilities; impair growth; and cause hyperactivity and other behavioral problems. Adults with lead poisoning have displayed increased incidence of depression, as well as aggressive and antisocial behavior.

Other studies have recently linked low levels of lead exposure with both higher blood pressure and a higher rate of kidney failure. The presence of lead in the body has also been linked with a deterioration in kidney function.

During pregnancy, women with lead in their bodies can pass the toxin on to their unborn child, even if they are not currently being exposed to the heavy metal. High lead exposures can cause low birth weight, premature birth, miscarriage or even stillbirth. After birth, the child may continue to be exposed to lead through the mother's breast milk.

Common symptoms of lead poisoning in adults include fatigue,

depression, heart failure, abdominal pain, gout, kidney failure, high blood pressure, reproduction problems and anemia. In children, symptoms include decreased appetite, stomach ache, sleeplessness, constipation, vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, anemia, lowered IQ and learning problems.

My Healthy Recommendations

Lead is a frightening toxin that will remain in our surroundings until it is physically removed. You do not have to sit by idly; however, Contact the National Lead Information Center (www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/nlic.htm) for information on how to check your home (and surroundings) for lead, and for referrals on lead removal. Additionally, contact your physician and request that they perform a heavy metals test. There are safe methods to remove lead from the body.

The Madhatter's Syndrome

The term "Mad as a Hatter" will forever be associated with the madcap milliner in Lewis Carroll's classic children's book, *Alice in Wonderland*. But few know that the true origin of the saying relates to a disease peculiar to the hat making industry in the 1800s. A mercury solution was commonly used during the process of turning fur into felt, causing the hatters to breathe in the fumes of this highly toxic metal, a situation exacerbated by the poor ventilation in most of the workshops. This, in turn, led to an accumulation of mercury in the workers' bodies, resulting in symptoms such as trembling (known as "hatters' shakes"), loss of coordination, slurred speech, loosening of teeth, memory loss, depression, irritability and anxiety – "The Mad Hatter Syndrome". The phrase is still used today to describe the effects of mercury poisoning, albeit from other sources.

These days we are infinitely more aware of the deadly toxicity of mercury exposure, yet mercury still remains more common than one might think. Mercury can be found in our cars, homes, food, medicine cabinets – even our mouths.

The biggest challenge with diagnosing heavy metal toxicity is its indolent, slow, smoldering effect that never lets the affected know that mercury is the root of the problem. Exposure to mercury begins in the womb where the mother transfers mercury to the fetus through the placenta. Once the fetus is out of the uterus there are many more ways for mercury levels continue accumulating.

Mercury and Fish

In 2004, the FDA and the EPA released a joint advisory, warning the public about eating mercury contaminated fish. According to the report, pregnant women represent the number one risk group for mercury toxicity because mercury that is consumed by the mother is then passed on to the fetus. Recent EPA estimates indicate that one in

Common Items That Contain Mercury	
Pesticides	Paint pigments and solvents
Fertilizers	Cinnabar (used in jewelry)
Amalgams (silver fillings)	Laxatives
Drinking water (tap, well)	Cosmetics- mascara
Auto exhaust	Floor waxes and polishes
Felt	Wood preservatives
Plumbing- piping	Adhesives
Bleached flour	Batteries
Processed foods	Air conditioner filters
Fabric softeners	Fish

six women of child bearing age have blood mercury levels that exceed what is considered safe for a fetus. According to the same advisory, children represent the number two risk group, as their nervous systems are still developing and are more sensitive to toxic exposure.

So how do the fish become contaminated? It begins at the factories and power plants where mercury is emitted into the air. Once airborne, the mercury settles in our oceans and waterways where it is converted into methyl mercury, which, when ingested, presents an even larger danger to humans. Fish absorb methyl mercury from water as it passes over their gills or when they eat other aquatic organisms. As larger fish eat smaller ones, concentrations of mercury bile accumulate in the larger fish. Because of this, larger fish contain higher levels of mercury.

The 2004 EPA/FDA advisory stated that the threat of mercury contamination is rising in America's water ways. According to their findings, more than 100,000 of America's lakes and 800,000 miles of its rivers are now under advisory due to fish contamination and pollution risks. The number of waters with fish advisories represents:

- 75% of America's contiguous coastal waters, including 92% of the Atlantic Coast, 100% of the Gulf Coast, and 37% of the Pacific Coast
- 100% of the Great Lakes and their connecting waters
- 35% of the nation's total lake acreage
- 24% of America's total river miles

Should I stop eating fish?

When the FDA and the EPA released their findings, they put forth the following guidelines for fish consumption:

By following these 3 recommendations for selecting and eating fish or shellfish, women and young children will receive the benefits of eating fish and shellfish and be confident that they have reduced their exposure to the harmful effects of mercury.

1. Do not eat Shark, Swordfish, King Mackerel or Tilefish because they contain high levels of mercury.
2. Eat up to 12 ounces (2 average meals) a week of a variety of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury. Five of the most commonly eaten fish that are low in mercury are shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock, and catfish. Another commonly eaten fish, albacore ("white") tuna has more mercury than canned light tuna. So, when choosing your two meals of fish and shellfish, you may eat up to 6 ounces (one average meal) of albacore tuna per week.
3. Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught by family and friends in your local lakes, rivers, and coastal areas. If no advice is available, eat up to 6 ounces (one average meal) per week of fish you catch from local waters, but don't consume any other fish during that week.

Follow these same recommendations when feeding fish and shellfish to young children, but serve smaller portions.

Mercury and Dental Health

If you are like most Americans, or most people in the world for that matter, you probably have mercury and/or other metal fillings in your mouth. Mercury fillings, also known as "silver fillings" or "amalgam", are the most common fillings in the world. Called silver because of their color, they actually contain from 45% to 52% mercury. Copper, tin, silver and

zinc make up the remaining volume.

Some interesting facts related to the common mercury dental filling:

- Scientific research has demonstrated that mercury, even in small amounts, can damage the brain, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, thyroid gland, pituitary gland, adrenal gland, cells, enzymes and hormones, and suppress the body's immune system.
- Mercury is continually released from mercury dental fillings in the form of mercury vapor and abraded particles. These mercury vapors can increase as much as fifteen-fold by chewing, brushing, drinking hot liquids, etc. The World Health Organization recently concluded that the average person's daily intake of mercury from amalgam dental fillings exceeds the combined daily intake of mercury derived from air, water and food (including fish).
- In human autopsy studies, it has been found that there is a direct correlation between the amount of mercury found in the brain and the number and surfaces of mercury fillings in teeth.
- Mercury causes normal intestinal microflora to become mercury resistant and antibiotic resistant. In the intestinal tract, mercury resistant bacteria cause mercury to be converted back into vapor and then recycled back into the body. Antibiotic resistance is becoming a major medical concern.
- Recent scientific research has shown high levels of mercury in the brains of individuals who died from Alzheimer's disease. Other research is demonstrating mercury can cause similar pathological effects in the brain as that seen in Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS). Laboratory studies of spinal fluid from Alzheimer's and Lou Gehrig's patients have confirmed that mercury inhibits key brain detoxification of enzyme systems.

A Brief History of Mercury Fillings

In the early 1800's, French dentists were the first to discover that mixing silver with mercury would allow the amalgams to bond at room temperature. This practice was introduced to American dentists in the 1830's and was widely denounced due to the associated dangers of mercury exposure. In 1840, the American Society of Dental Surgeons (ASDS) formed, requiring its members to sign pledges promising not to use amalgams. This led to much strife amongst the members, culminating in the suspension of 11 dentists in New York when the ASDS found them guilty of amalgam use. By the mid 1850's the ASDS disbanded as a result of the internal debate. In 1859 the American Dental Association was formed and did not take a stand on the amalgam issue. Today the ADA states that amalgams are safe and do not present a health threat, despite the fact that in 1989 the Environmental Protection Agency declared that amalgams are a hazardous substance. The debate rages on today.

Removing Mercury Fillings

If mercury is so dangerous, shouldn't everyone run out and have their dental fillings removed? The answer is a great big NO! The process of removing amalgams can generate mercury vapor and particulates many times greater than leaving them alone. Before making a decision to have your fillings removed, have your physician screen your body with a simple urine test to measure the level of toxic heavy metals in your body. If it is determined that your levels are high, it is recommended that you consult with a biological dentist who is knowledgeable in safe amalgam removal.

Chelation Therapy as a Treatment Option

You should be aware of the fact that there are alternative techniques to treat metal toxicity problems, such as Chelation Therapy. In most instances, the general population knows nothing about these treatments because the traditional medical establishment isn't aware of its existence and/or this knowledge has been suppressed over the years by various powerful

organizations.

Chelation was first used in the 1940s by the US Navy to treat lead poisoning and was subsequently approved by the FDA as a safe method of treating heavy metal toxicity. Chelation Therapy is a medical treatment that improves metabolic and circulatory function by removing toxic metals and abnormally located nutritional metallic ions (such as iron) from the body. This is accomplished by administering an amino acid, ethylene-diamine-tetra-acetic acid (EDTA), by either an oral or intravenous infusion.

When a molecule of EDTA travels through the bloodstream, it grabs onto the heavy metal particles, binding tightly and pulling them out of the membrane or body tissue in which they are imbedded. Since EDTA is an artificial amino acid, the body regards it as a foreign substance and delivers it to the kidneys to be excreted in the urine.

Physicians familiar in the administration of chelation therapy treatment alternatives can thoughtfully review the benefits of undergoing such therapeutic treatments with their patients.

For more information on the joint advisory issued by the EPA and the FDA, please visit either the EPA's website at <http://epa.gov> or the FDA's website at <http://fda.gov>.

My Healthy Recommendations:

- **HMD**
- **Chelatique**
- **Heel Detox Drops**
- **IV Chelation By An Integrative Physician**
- **Infared Sauna by Healthmate**
(available through [perfectlyhealthy](http://perfectlyhealthy.com))

Products available at Perfectlyhealthy.com

Are You Plastic-Positive?

Plastic has become a staple in our society. It's cheap to produce, lightweight, durable and even recyclable. Like many modern conveniences, it has become so much a part of our lives that removing plastic from our homes would be a difficult undertaking. Plastic is used to make our water bottles and our baby's bottles, it lines metal food cans, fast food containers and microwavable food packaging. Our shower curtains are made out of plastic, our blow-up mattresses are made out of plastic, and now, due to the ubiquitous and pervasive nature of this chemical, our bodies contain plastic.

Bisphenol A Is Everywhere

In 2005 the CDC conducted a body burden analysis to determine how many people had bisphenol A (BPA), a common type of plastic, in their bloodstream and found that a whopping 95% of their participants were plastic-positive. Over the past 20 years, numerous studies have detected BPA in breast milk, serum, saliva, urine, amniotic fluid and cord blood. And the pervasiveness of this plastic doesn't end with our bodies. BPA is so common in products and industrial waste that it pollutes rivers, sediment, house dust and air. You would be hard pressed to find a corner of the earth that BPA hasn't touched.

BPA enters our bodies mainly through the foods that we eat. Its chemical bond is very weak, allowing it to break down easily and leach into foods and beverages contained within BPA-laden packaging. Heat enhances BPA's ability to break down, an especially troublesome factor when you consider that metal food cans (lined with BPA) are exposed to intense heat during the sterilization process.

Last year the Environmental Working Group investigated the prevalence of BPA leaching into food from metal containers. 97

Symptoms of Plastic Toxicity

- Fatigue
- Poor Concentration
- Headaches
- Inflammation
- Tremors
- Rapid Heart Rate
- Stomach Irritation

cans of name brand foods were tested and they found that 1 out of every 10 cans of food and 1 out of every 3 cans of infant formula contained enough BPA in a single serving to expose an adult (or infant) to "levels more than 200 times the government's traditional safe level of exposure for industrial chemicals."

Plastic In The Body

When BPA enters the body it acts like the hormone estrogen. It is a synthetic form of estrogen, but the body can't tell the difference between the real thing and the synthetic imposters. BPA levels within the body increase the levels of estrogen, which can lead to very serious health problems including breast cancer, testicular cancer, and reproductive disorders.

A recent report by leading expert Dr. Angel Nadal linked the widespread use of plastic in beverage and food containers to the obesity and diabetes epidemics occurring within the United States. In a study conducted by Dr. Alonso-Magdalena et al., chronic exposure to BPA at very low levels induced insulin resistance in mice. Insulin is produced by the pancreas and needed to escort glucose into the cells. If the cells become resistant to insulin, glucose isn't able to enter and begins to flood the bloodstream, eventually resulting in diabetes.

Dr. Alonso-Magdalena said of the study findings, "What is striking is the low level at which BPA caused changes in glucose and insulin metabolism in these experiments." The doses in the study

were 5 times lower than the EPA safety standard and below the level reported in infant cord blood at birth.

Other studies show that BPA exposure in early life can lead to obesity in adulthood. It is believed that the synthetic estrogen does so by triggering fat cell activity. Both obesity and diabetes are on the rise in the US and researchers say that you don't have to look farther than your plastic water bottle for a reason.

My Healthy Recommendations

Ridding your life of plastic can be a challenge – it's true. When I suggest to my patients that they remove all plastic from their homes I'm often met with resistance. My simple answer to them is this: When you make choices about items that you buy for your home, choose plastic alternatives. For example, use glass containers instead of plastic to store your leftovers. For your baby, select glass bottles instead of the standard plastic bottles. Choose a shower curtain that is BPA-free (an affordable alternative is available in most bed and bath stores). Try to limit your use of canned foods whenever possible. And if you must use plastic, stay away from those with recycle codes 3 and 7, which both contain BPA.

Plastic is one of the most common toxins that I see in my patients. Symptoms of plastic toxicity vary widely and include fatigue, poor concentration, headaches, inflammation, tremors, rapid heart rate, convulsions, and stomach irritation. When I suspect that toxins may be at the root of a patient's health problems, I order a simple urine test that can detect environmental pollutants, including plastic, within the body. After reviewing the patient's results I am then able to tailor a detoxification protocol that suits their specific issues. Detoxification is always necessary in order to begin the healing process.

Plastic has become everywhere in our lives, but only because we've allowed it. Just as degenerative diseases are on the rise, so is our plastic consumption. Don't allow your need for convenience outweigh your desire to live a long and healthy life.

Can You Afford To Stick With Teflon?

Are you still using your Teflon type pots and pans? In 2006 the EPA announced that several manufacturers of non-stick cookware had agreed to phase out the use of the main harmful chemical used in the manufacturing of these kitchen necessities, but they haven't yet told you to run out and replace your old cookware. And with the cost of restocking your cabinets with all new pots and pans, the whole subject may prove to be a sticky one that you'd rather ignore. Can you afford to ignore the health hazards though? With the current list of diseases caused by the chemicals used in non-stick cookware ranging from immune disorders to hypothyroidism and even cancer, the cost of replacing your Teflon products may be well worth the initial hit to your household budget.

The Chemicals Behind The Name

To be clear, Teflon is not the offender in the non-stick health debate. In fact, Teflon is simply a product name and not a chemical at all. The chemical, or rather chemicals, currently under scrutiny are Perfluorochemicals (PFCs), a family of substances that keep food from sticking to your pots and pans. These same chemicals are used in the manufacture of carpet and fabric treatments that repel stains, as well as camping gear that keeps you dry during rain storms. Within the PFC family there are several chemicals, including the one into which all PFCs eventually break down into, Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA). PFOA has been detected in 90% of the population's blood, including adults, children and even newborn babies.

PFOAs have proven especially worrisome to scientists due to the fact that, unlike any other chemical known today, they never break down in the environment. Every PFOA released into the world since its discovery in 1938 remains in the environment today. PFOA's are released into the air and water when PFCs

are used in manufacturing. And, while the makers of non-stick cookware products deny this claim, PFOAs are released into the air when the surface of a Teflon pot or pan is heated for cooking purposes. In the Dupont factory, workers are required to wear respirators when working with Teflon heated at or above 400 degrees F. Independent experiments show that the surface of a typical non-stick pan will reach 400 degrees F within 2 minutes on a conventional stovetop burner set at high.

For years companies such as Dupont and 3M have insisted that Teflon is completely safe to use, despite the fact that their employees routinely displayed flu-like symptoms after inhaling fumes containing PFOAs. This illness, dubbed Polymer Fume Fever, became the subject of internal studies at Dupont, which eventually led to the use of respirators by their employees. Interestingly, despite the fact that respiratory protection was deemed necessary, the studies concluded that PFOA fumes were safe to inhale. This finding was determined after subjecting laboratory dogs to smoke from cigarettes laced with Teflon. The dogs displayed no adverse reactions leading the researchers to their conclusion. Similar tests were also conducted on human volunteers from Dupont, with a very different result. The human test subjects all reported symptoms of Polymer Fume Fever after smoking the Teflon laced cigarettes. Despite these findings, Dupont cited the animal studies and ignored the human studies when declaring Teflon's health safety. The human studies were not made public until recently, even though the actual study took place back in the 1960s.

PFOAs And Your Health

Today, PFOAs are classified by the EPA as an animal carcinogen. Under pressure from independent scientists, the EPA is currently evaluating research data that suggests that PFOAs are also a likely human carcinogen. Three of the four cancers that PFOAs have been linked to (testicular, breast, liver and prostate) are on the rise in the US today, with liver cancer rates increasing an average of 4.7% each year between 1992 and 1999.

PFOAs have also been found to cause hypothyroidism in laboratory studies. PFOA levels in the body appear to be

Look Out For These *Other* PFOA Sources

Microwave popcorn packaging
Fast food packaging (sandwiches, chicken, french fries)
Packaging for pizza, bakery items, drinks and candy
Paper plates

Please note: There is currently no way for consumers to tell if packaging contains PFOAs.

related to lowered levels of T3, a thyroid hormone that directly effects the rate of cellular activity. When T3 levels are lowered the metabolism slows down, causing a range of problems in both adults and children. An underactive thyroid in adults can lead to fatigue, depression, anxiety, weight gain, hair loss and low libido. In children it can be extremely detrimental to development, possibly resulting in mental retardation, loss of hearing and speech, deficits in motor skills and abnormal testicular development in boys. Hypothyroidism is of particular concern in pregnant women, as thyroid hormones are critical for proper brain development in the fetus. Even small reductions in maternal thyroid hormone levels during pregnancy have been associated with reduced IQ in children.

The immune system also takes a hit from PFOAs. As a matter of fact, scientists have failed to find a level of PFOA that doesn't adversely affect the immune system. In animal studies, PFOAs have been linked to atrophy of the thymus gland, which plays a critical role in immunity. The thymus gland manufactures T-cells which recognize and destroy bacteria, viruses and cancer cells. Another study found that any dose of PFOA could damage the spleen, possibly hampering the organ's ability to produce antibodies critical to combating disease. This particular study was sponsored by the very industry that manufactures products containing PFCs and PFOAs. Subsequent research has determined that PFOAs decrease the number of every immune cell population that has been studied within the thymus and spleen, and that remaining immune cells appear damaged and unable to properly

fend off foreign cells.

Faced with such overwhelming evidence that PFOAs are harmful to human health, the companies that use these chemicals in their products had no choice but to comply with the EPA's suggested phase out. But don't think that you've seen the end of non-stick cookware, as these companies will most likely replace PFOAs with another member of the PFC family. While you may be tempted to replace your current Teflon pots and pans with these new PFOA-free products, avoiding non-stick cookware altogether is most likely your safest plan. All PFCs eventually breakdown into PFOAs, leaving the safety of these newer lines of non-stick cookware in question.

The Rippling Effects Of Chlorinated Water

The water that comes out of your kitchen faucet carries with it a steady stream of chemical by-products that are known to cause cancer, heart disease and reproductive harm. Since the turn of the century chlorine has been used to treat the nation's drinking water, virtually eliminating disease-causing bacteria and viruses. When first used in 1908, it was viewed as the perfect treatment, one that kept us free of waterborne illnesses while creating no ill effects on our health. So much more is known about chlorine these days, and the error of our ways is beginning to become apparent; they have been tied to an increase in heart disease and cancer-related deaths.

Chlorine By-Products

The problem with chlorine is actually in the by-products, called organochlorines, created when it mixes with organic materials, such as leaves, algae or even human skin. There are thousands of different chlorine by-products, and very few of them have been studied for safety or are being tracked in our water reserves. While these by-products don't cause immediate illness, such as typhoid or dysentery, they have long term effects that are not as easy to study or link to any one health ailment.

There are several classes of by-products, the most studied being trihalomethanes (THMs), which occur when chlorine combines with methane. A common THM found in water is chloroform, a known carcinogen. As a matter of fact, a large number of THMs are known or suspected carcinogens, but they are allowed to remain in our water at minimal levels, even though research has shown those "minimal" levels are capable of causing cancer.

Toxins In The Body

Chlorine and its by-products enter the body through ingestion, inhalation and skin absorption. As the shower water heats up, the by-products turn to vapor, making them easy to inhale. At the same time, the heat also enlarges the pores in the skin, allowing for easy absorption.

Chlorine by-products do not break down quickly and are generally stored within the fatty tissues of the body, where they can alter DNA, suppress immune function and interfere with natural cell growth. The by-products also generate free radicals that can cause cancer, while destroying the intestinal flora ("good" bacteria) that protects the body from pathogens.

Chlorine and Cancer

Evidence of this was displayed in a study conducted in Hartford, Connecticut, which found that women with breast cancer have 50% to 60% higher levels of organochlorines in their breast tissue than women without breast cancer.

Chlorine by-products have been linked to several types of cancer, including cancers of the bladder, liver, rectum, and colon. A study at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland concluded, "people living in areas served by chlorinated water have twice the risk of contracting cancer," than those who have non-chlorinated water sources.

Chlorine and Heart Disease

Free radical damage caused by chlorinated by-products have been linked to heart disease and atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). In his book Mega Nutrition, Richard A. Kunin, M.D. explains, "...even in minute quantities sufficient to kill germs, chlorine can undermine the body's defenses against atherosclerosis. Chlorine in drinking water creates electrically charged molecules called free radicals... that can damage the blood vessels and create the environment for plaque formation."

Chlorine and Reproductive Disorders

A growing number of studies have also linked chlorine and chlorine by-products to reproductive harm. In 1998, the California Department of Health conducted a study that established a link between chlorinated drinking water and miscarriage. They found that pregnant women with high exposures to chlorinated drinking water nearly doubled their risk of miscarriage from a rate of 9.5% to 16%. Other studies have linked chlorinated drinking water to serious birth defects and low birth weight.

In spite of the overwhelming amount of evidence that chlorine is not as safe as once thought, the EPA continues to deny that there is a causative link between chlorinated water and adverse health effects. Opponents of chlorine's use in treating drinking water suspect that the EPA's denial stems from the sheer cost that it would have to undertake to implement a safer treatment system.

Ozonation

In 2002, England began using Ozonation to treat the country's drinking water. The process works by adding the same kind of ozone that is found in the atmosphere to the country's drinking water supply. Once the ozone has been added, an electric charge is sent through the water, effectively killing all disease causing microbes. Ozonation is twice as effective as chlorine at eliminating bacteria and is chemical free, creating no harmful by-products.

While a few cities across the US have begun using Ozonation, most are still relying on chlorine to treat their drinking water. Individual ozone water treatment units can be purchased for your home and are relatively inexpensive. Reverse osmosis, micro filtration and distillation filters are not effective because they do not eliminate the harmful by-products of chlorine.

10 Other Toxins That May Be Lurking In Your Water

1. Lead

Lead is a heavy metal that generally enters the drinking supplies due to the corrosion of pipes, plumbing or faucets. Often, the lead levels of the water at your home are much higher than the levels from the water's source. This is usually the result of contamination that may be occurring at your home, due to old or corroded pipes. The national standard (NS) for lead, as determined by the EPA, is 15 ppb.

Health Effects: Infants, young children and pregnant women are particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of lead. In serious cases, poisoning can cause permanent brain damage and, in less severe cases, can cause children to suffer from decreased intelligence and problems with growth, development and behavior. In adults, lead can increase blood pressure, harm kidney function, adversely affect the nervous system and damage red blood cells.

2. Perchlorate

Perchlorate in the water usually comes from rocket fuel spills or leaks at military facilities. Additionally, perchlorate is used in a variety of products and applications, including electronic tubes, vehicle airbags, leather tanning and fireworks. The NS is 4 ppb; however, no level has been determined to be safe.

Health Effects: Perchlorate disrupts the thyroid function and is a suspected carcinogen. Changes in thyroid hormone levels can result in thyroid gland tumors. In children, thyroid disruption can adversely affect proper development and in adults it can interfere with metabolism regulation. Disruption of the thyroid in pregnant women may impact the fetus and result in delayed development and decreased learning ability.

3. Radon

Radon is a radioactive gas that results from the natural breakdown of uranium in the ground. The NS is an average of 300 pCi/L.

Health Effects: Radon is known to cause lung cancer. No level is considered to be safe and a single particle of radon can cause cancer. The EPA estimates that radon in drinking water causes approximately 168 deaths from lung and stomach cancer each year (89% from lung cancer caused by breathing radon released to the indoor air from water, 11% from stomach cancer caused by consuming water that contains radon). Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the US, after smoking.

4. Haloacetic Acids (HAAs)/Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)

HAAs and TTHMs are volatile organic contaminants often referred to as disinfection by-products or organochlorines and result when chlorine used to disinfect drinking water interacts with organic matter in the water. The EPA has classified some TTHMs as probable human carcinogens. The NS for HAAs is an average of 60 ppb and for TTHMs, an average of 80 ppb.

Health Effects: Disinfection by-products have been linked to cancers of the bladder, pancreas, colon, rectum, brain, and childhood leukemia.

5. Cryptosporidium

Cryptosporidium is a waterborne parasite that lives and reproduces by the millions in both animal and human intestines until it is shed in the feces. The NS is 0.

Health Effects: Cryptosporidium can cause severe diarrhea, nausea, abdominal cramping and fever for up to 2 weeks. Currently there is no antibiotic that can kill the parasite. It poses a significant health risk to children and those with weakened immune systems.

6. Total Coliform Bacteria (TCM)

TCM is a broad class of bacteria, many of which live in the intestines of humans and animals. Most coliform bacteria are harmless; however, their presence indicates that the water may

contain harmful bacteria such as E. coli. The NS for TCM is 0.

7. Arsenic

Arsenic found in drinking supplies comes from mining, industrial processes, past use of arsenic-containing pesticides, and natural leaching from rock erosion. Currently the NS for arsenic is 10 ppb.

Health Effects: Arsenic is toxic to humans and a known carcinogen. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) has determined that arsenic in drinking water is known to cause cancer of the bladder, skin and lungs. An NAS report published in 2001 stated that a person who drinks 2 liters of water a day (containing 10 ppb arsenic) has a lifetime total fatal cancer risk greater than 1 in 333.

8. Chromium

Chromium is a naturally occurring metal used in industrial processes, including metal plating for chrome bumpers and making stainless steel, paint, rubber and wood preservatives. The NS for chromium is 100 ppb.

3 Steps of Action!

1. Visit the EPA's website to locate the water quality report for your city. (www.epa.gov/safewater/)
2. While you're at the EPA's site, locate their list of state certified labs that can test the water in your home.
3. Purchase a water filtration system for your home. When choosing a filtration system, I recommend a unit that also regulates the pH level of your water. Proper pH levels can further protect you from any contaminants that you might come in contact with while also warding off disease and infection. Check out my healthy recommendations below.

Health Effects: Chromium ingestion can cause a host of health problems, ranging from skin irritation to damage to kidney, liver and nerve tissue.

9. Gross Alpha Radiation (GAR)/Gross Beta Radiation (GBR)

GAR and GBR generally result from the decay of radioactive minerals in underground rocks and are sometimes by-products of the mining and nuclear industries. The NS for GAR is an average of 15 pCi/L and for GBR, an average of 50 pCi/L.

Health Effects: No level of exposure to GAR or GBR is considered safe as they are both radioactive and can cause cancer.

10. Uranium

Uranium is released from minerals in the ground, often as the result of mining or as a by-product of the nuclear industry. The NS for uranium is 30 micrograms/L.

Health Effects: Uranium is radioactive and known to cause cancer when ingested. The EPA has determined that it causes serious kidney damage at levels above 300 mcg/L.

Note: *The EPA-established national standards are determined to be the highest level of contaminants allowed in the water; however, the National Resources Defense Council, an environmental action organization, maintains that no level of any of these contaminants is safe.*





The pH Balancing Act

With the aging population of the United States, the incidence of so-called age-related diseases is expected to rise. In fact the incidence of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and a host of other diseases have been steadily rising for all age groups until they have reached epidemic proportions. That is because the factors of stress, lack of physical activity, environmental pollutants and a diet high in acid-producing foods collectively create the underlying cause of most degenerative diseases: acidosis.

Proper Acid/Alkaline Balance is Fundamental

What is acidosis? It is the reduced alkalinity of our blood and tissues. Why is this so important? Our body stays alive and healthy only because all of its 100 trillion cells communicate with each other. They do this through electrical, chemical and hormonal processes. In order for these signaling mechanisms to work, the body's internal environment must be in a slightly alkaline state. If our body becomes too acidic, it adversely affects the functioning of all its parts: heart cells, blood cells, brain cells, nerve cells, muscle cells, bone cells, even skin and hair cells. Obviously, this leaves us vulnerable to all sorts of health problems.

The acidity or alkalinity of a substance is usually expressed as a number on the "pH" scale. The pH scale goes from 1 to 14, with 1 being most acidic, 7 being neutral and 14 most alkaline. (The symbol "pH" is the abbreviation for "power of hydrogen," a measurement of the concentration of hydrogen ions.) For blood, a pH level of 7.43 — just slightly alkaline — is optimal. Levels lower than 7.0 indicate an overly acidic state (acidosis) while levels above 7.8-8.0 and higher indicate

an overly alkaline state (called alkalosis).

The Problem with Chronic Acidosis

Acidosis begins when the body cannot properly dispose of excessive acids building up in the bloodstream. The body attempts to maintain proper pH balance by eliminating the excess acids through the kidneys, lungs and skin or by neutralizing the acids during the processes of digestion and cellular metabolism. However, when too much acid is produced, the body cannot keep pace. The excess waste overwhelms the system, polluting the blood and impairing the ability of the body's cells to communicate.

In an effort to protect vital organs, the body diverts the harmful acids to store in tissues, joints and bones. This might make the organs temporarily safe, but the diversion can cause joint and skeletal problems such as osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis; skin conditions such as dermatitis and eczema; and tissue problems such as chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia.

Over time, the acids build up in the organs where they begin to disrupt normal functioning. This produces more waste, which further lowers the body's pH level. The decreased pH level means that the body is inundated with more dangerous acids and the problem becomes even more severe. Without restoring balance, cell walls harden and solidify. Our organs deteriorate as the cells die off, which further exacerbates our acidic condition. Now the body's state of acidosis is a prime breeding ground for pathogens such as bacteria, fungi, molds and parasites, which feed off of the diseased tissues and organs. Acidosis literally destroys the body from the inside out, paving the way for disease to take over.

In an attempt to neutralize excess acids, the body draws on its store of alkalizing minerals. Calcium, magnesium and sodium are drawn into the bloodstream at the expense of the bones and organs from which these minerals were taken. The bones are often the hardest hit, as they are drained of their necessary calcium reserves, leading to bone thinning and an increased risk of osteoporosis, rheumatism and fractures. The teeth also suffer as a result of the demineralization, making them more brittle and cavity-prone.

Keeping the body in an acidic state for a prolonged period of time

can dramatically accelerate aging. Cellular structures become altered. Cell membranes become narrower and weaker. The cells eventually begin making "mistakes" as they try to repair and regenerate themselves. Acidosis inhibits the production of collagen and elastin. Collagen is the principal protein of our bones, cartilage, tendons and skin and provides rigidity. Elastin is a protein that gives our skin, blood vessels and organs elasticity. Without collagen and elastin, the body loses its youthful appearance, as it is no longer able to sustain moisturized and wrinkle-free skin. Internally, the body is also aging more rapidly. The premature cell death impairs brain function as the neurons can no longer properly conduct impulses. We begin to experience memory loss, and the abilities to learn and reason decline.

With untreated acidosis, excess acids within the body attack the tissues and organs, resulting in inflammation, lesions and hardening of organ tissues. The skin and kidneys are especially sensitive to the harmful acids. Hives, eczema, blotching and itching can occur from acidic sweat passing through the skin's pores. The kidneys can become inflamed, which can lead to frequent urinary tract infections. Hardening of tissues and inflammation are also contributors to cardiovascular disease, and increased risk of heart attack or stroke.

In a state of acidosis, there is less oxygen available to the body. Many pathogens live in oxygen-deprived environments. Acidosis, then, makes the body a prime breeding ground for harmful microorganisms to live. Acid buildup also takes a nasty toll on the body's immune function by seriously diminishing the production of white blood cells. The white blood cells that are generated are of reduced strength, making it even easier for disease and infection to take hold within the body. Dangerous microorganisms can now spread throughout the body, seeking out weakened areas. They break down tissues and interfere with biological processes, leaving behind a deadly wake of waste, which further perpetuates the acidic state.

Chronic acidosis also contributes to a state of insulin resistance within the body by interfering with glucose delivery to the cells. Normally, ordinary levels of insulin will escort glucose into the cells. With acidosis, the cell receptors fail to recognize the insulin hormone and deny it access to deposit the glucose, causing sugar

pH And Your Food	
<u>Alkalizing Foods</u>	<u>Acidifying Foods</u>
most vegetables	cooking oils
most fruits	grains (oats, rice, wheat)
yogurt	cheese
almonds	milk
tofu	butter
flax seeds	peanuts, pecans, walnuts
veggie juices	all animal protein
fruit juices	beans and legumes
teas	pasta
cottage cheese	potatoes
eggs	cranberries
all herbs	alcohol
stevia	tomatoes
	strawberries

to build up within the bloodstream. The pancreas, unaware of the insulin resistance, steps up insulin production in an effort to pump out enough of the hormone to remedy the situation. The body interprets the lack of glucose within the cells as starvation and begins to convert every calorie into fat. As a result, obesity and diabetes ensue.

My Healthy Recommendations

The most effective way to reduce acids within the body is by enacting dietary changes. A proper diet should be comprised of 60-80% alkalizing foods and 40-20% acid-forming foods. The Standard American Diet is mostly made up of acid-forming foods including coffee, tea, wine and most proteins (with the exception of milk, butter, soft cheese and almonds) as well as most fats, cereals and sugars. On the other hand, almost all fruits and vegetables (except for tomatoes, cranberries and blueberries) are alkalizing.

Dietary supplements can also be very effective at restoring an alkaline state to the body. Calcium, magnesium, potassium and

pH balancing supplements all help to maintain normal pH levels. In doing so they also help regulate sugar metabolism, reduce blood pressure, enhance energy and stabilize hormones. Restoring proper pH balance can significantly improve and sometimes even completely reverse chronic conditions. With recognition, dietary changes and supplementation, acidosis can safely be reversed, increasing longevity and improving the quality of life.

Suggested Supplements

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy
Phenominal Water
PH Adjust
Active H²

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

It's Not All In Your Head

Candida Quiz

Y N

- ☐ ☐ Do you regularly experience any of the following symptoms: bloating, headaches, depression, fatigue, memory problems, impotence or loss of libido, unexplained muscle aches, brain "fogginess"?
- ☐ ☐ Do you crave sweets, products containing white flour, or alcoholic beverages?
- ☐ ☐ Do you have repeated vaginal infections?
- ☐ ☐ Do you repeatedly experience any of these health difficulties; inappropriate drowsiness, mood swings, rashes, bad breath, dry mouth, post-nasal drip or nasal congestion, heartburn, urinary frequency or urgency?
- ☐ ☐ Do you have repeated fungal infections ("jock itch", athlete's foot, ringworm)?
- ☐ ☐ Have you recently taken repeated courses of antibiotics or steroids (e.g. cortisone)?
- ☐ ☐ Have you used birth-control pills?

If you answered yes to two or more of these questions then you may be suffering from a common yet drastically under-diagnosed condition: candidiasis. It is estimated that one in every two people will be affected by candidiasis in their lifetime but many will not be aware of it or may even think that the symptoms are all in their head. The unfortunate reality is that many people who

seek medical advice from their health care providers are told that there is absolutely nothing wrong with them. The mainstream medical establishment has been slow to recognize candidiasis as a real issue; the integrative medical community, however, has been treating the condition successfully for decades. If you feel that you're one of the many who have suffered without validation or relief from this life-altering illness, please read on.

What Is Candidiasis?

Candidiasis is the medical term for yeast overgrowth. We all have flora in our intestinal tract – some of which we consider to be good, such as the bacteria *acidophilus* and *Bifidobacteria*, and some of which we consider to be bad, such as the fungus *Candida albicans*. *Candida albicans* is a form of yeast that can be dangerous to the body if it spreads. In order to prevent this from happening, the good bacteria produce antifungal substances that keep the yeast in check. These good bacteria also ferment carbohydrates into lactic acid, which maintains an ideally balanced pH within the intestines to keep *Candida albicans* at bay. As long as the good bacteria co-exist with the yeast in healthy ratios and the intestinal pH is correctly balanced, the GI tract can live in peace. Havoc ensues; however, when the pH balance shifts and the good bacteria become attacked.

The Importance Of pH Balance

Proper pH balance is vital for so many reasons. If the body becomes too acidic (a condition known as acidosis), it adversely affects the functioning of all its parts: heart cells, blood cells, brain cells, nerve cells, muscle cells, bone cells, skin cells, hair cells and hormonal levels. It also creates a hostile environment with less available oxygen – a condition key to the growth of microorganisms such as *Candida albicans*. As the bacteria fueled by these new, toxic conditions die off, the toxic waste produced by their decomposition further contributes to the already acidic environment. This cycle continues with potentially grave consequences. Researchers suspect that most degenerative diseases including cancer, heart disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, acid reflux and heartburn can be contributed to chronic acidosis.

While pH imbalance creates the perfect battleground for the yeast to spread, a number of other enemies are waiting in the wings to take aim at the good bacteria.

The Many Enemies Of Good Bacteria

The single largest enemy of good bacteria is sugar, which can single-handedly weaken the immune system, thereby weakening the good bacteria. But the sugar doesn't stop there. This sweet invader packs a dangerous one-two punch by also feeding the yeast, encouraging it to proliferate throughout the gastrointestinal tract. Since a weakened immune system generally goes hand-in-hand with illness, antibiotics or steroids may be administered, which further takes its toll on the good bacteria, killing the illness-causing fungi along with the vital good bacteria. Once the good bacteria are out of the picture, the yeast is able to take over and sink its teeth into the intestinal walls, eventually breaking down the barrier that exists between the bowel and rest of the body. This intestinal breach then opens up the flood gates for toxic debris, yeast waste products, and partially digested proteins to enter the bloodstream, resulting in allergic and toxic reactions all over the body – the symptoms of which could manifest themselves differently for every person.

Dietary factors play a key role in the survival of *Candida albicans*. Yeast thrives on sugar and as a result, intense sugar cravings may ensue. Likewise, dairy foods can be excellent supporters for *Candida albicans* for two reasons: (1) Non-organic dairy products contain traces of antibiotics, which can kill the good bacteria that have managed to survive and (2) dairy products contain the sugar lactose, which is one of *Candida albicans'* preferred meals, feeding the yeast and further encouraging it to grow and spread. Other products that cause *Candida albicans* to grow are yeast and glutens that also convert into sugar.

Environmental factors can also be big supporters of *Candida alibans'* proliferation. Exposure to pollutants such as pesticide residues, car exhaust, industrial chemicals and heavy metals (particularly those found in mercury amalgam dental fillings) may encourage the growth of yeast.

Candidiasis Symptoms

Because candidiasis suppresses the immune system, symptoms of the illness span a broad range and include chronic fatigue; weight gain; mental issues such as depression, anxiety, irritability, confusion, loss of memory, and severe mood swings; digestive problems including gas, bloating, cramps, chronic diarrhea, constipation, and heartburn; respiratory issues including food and airborne allergies, asthma, nasal or lung congestion, sinus pressure, hay fever, and coughing; recurrent fungal infections ("jock itch", athlete's foot, ringworm, fingernail or toenail fungus) or vaginal/urinary infections; skin problems including rashes, hives, acne and scaly skin; migraines; headaches; and sleep disturbances.

Candida And Your Food

Foods to Avoid

yeast foods (breads, mushrooms)
alcohol
prepared drinks (soda, coffee, herbal tea)
condiments (soy sauce, mustard, vinegar, etc.)
sugar
all sweeteners (except stevia)
dairy products (cheese, milk, yogurt)
all fruits (until symptoms clear up)

Foods to Enjoy

meat, poultry
fish/seafood
most vegetables
dried beans and peas
whole, sprouted grains, without yeast added (except for: bulgar, couscous, kamut, spelt)
nuts and seeds (fresh, unroasted, unsalted)
fats and oils (flax, sesame, extra virgin olive, etc.)
sea salt

Risk Factors

Everyone is at risk of developing candidiasis; however, people with weakened immune systems (whether from severe illness or chronic stress), those with diets high in sugars and carbohydrates, anyone who has taken repeated courses of antibiotics or steroids, women currently taking oral birth-control medications or who have taken them in the past, and women of child-bearing age are most at risk.

Diagnosing Candidiasis

Diagnosing candidiasis can be tricky, since the symptoms of this condition mimic the symptoms of many other illnesses. I generally consider several factors before pronouncing a diagnosis of candidiasis: medical history, a physical examination, lab test results and failure to respond to previous treatments. Once I am able to come to an adequate conclusion, I immediately begin my patients on a treatment protocol. Catching the condition in its early stages and commencing treatments immediately can be vital to heading off the more serious diseases to which yeast overgrowth can lead (diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, acid reflux, heartburn and even cancer).

My Healthy Recommendations

Treating candidiasis requires a degree of commitment but with dedication it is completely possible to reverse the condition.

The first step in any treatment plan begins with some key dietary changes. Sugar is the main fuel for *Candida albicans*; therefore, it must be removed out of the diet completely. A "Candida Diet" requires that sugar, alcohol, milk and dairy products, and foods containing mold and yeast must all be avoided. These foods actively encourage the growth of *Candida albicans* and the condition cannot be properly resolved as long as the "fuel" remains in place.

Because the problem with yeast overgrowth is directly linked to imbalanced pH levels, it is necessary to attack the problem from

both angles. ; therefore, , I also recommend that people take a combination of supplements that target both of these issues.

Suggested Supplements:

Mega Greens MSM™ by PerfectlyHealthy
Ultimate Flora Max by Advanced Naturals
Cumanda by Nutramedix
Freeze-dried Garlic

Products available at www.Perfectlyhealthy.com

A Healthy Mouth, A Healthy Body

"A smile will gain you ten more years of life." -Chinese proverb

These words were written countless centuries ago, yet today they ring more true than ever. The links between oral health and overall health are being established on a near daily basis and the implications are astounding! Imagine if by simply brushing and flossing regularly, you were able to prevent a heart attack? We may not be there quite yet; however, a definitive connection has been established between gum disease and heart disease, diabetes and pregnancy complications. And while the research moves forward, what we are learning today is that a healthy smile truly may add ten years to your life!

It All Begins With Plaque

At the root of this research frenzy is something that scientists refer to as biofilm. If the word "biofilm" renders images of horror films or sci-fi scream fests, then you aren't far off. In real life, biofilm is the sticky, colorless film that develops on teeth and is more commonly known as plaque. It is this complex reef-like substance that builds up over time, setting the stage for gum disease and potentially leading to life-threatening health problems.

Gum disease is also referred to as periodontal disease and encompasses the various stages of the disease, including gingivitis and periodontitis. "Periodontal" literally translates to "around the tooth".

The beginning stage of gum disease is gingivitis, which occurs when plaque buildup begins to inflame the gums, causing them to redden, swell and easily bleed. Typically there is little to no discomfort during this stage. Because of this, gingivitis is generally detected during a regular dentist visit. If diagnosed

and treated, gingivitis is completely reversible.

If gingivitis is not treated, it can lead to periodontitis, which occurs when plaque spreads below the gumline. The bacteria associated with plaque produces toxins, which trigger further inflammation. Over time, this heightened inflammatory response will ultimately deteriorate the bones and tissue that support the affected teeth, eventually leading to tooth loss. Once periodontitis sets in, treatment is crucial to manage the inflammation and minimize damage.

It is estimated that 80% of all American adults have some form of gum disease. Smoking, genetics, stress, medications (including oral contraceptives, anti-depressants and certain heart medications), pregnancy, clenching or grinding your teeth, poor nutrition, diabetes and other systemic diseases have all been implicated as risk factors for the disease.

When The Problem Becomes Systemic

The link between gum disease and systemic disease is at the center of a number of ongoing studies. What we currently know is that definitive links do exist between gum disease and heart disease, diabetes and pregnancy complications. Currently researchers are examining the possibilities that either inflammation, bacteria or a combination of the two are at the heart of the link between gum disease and other health problems.

Heart Disease

In the case of heart disease, doctors have long been aware that heart patients run the risk of developing a mitral valve infection after a routine teeth cleaning. Bacteria released during the cleaning process can enter the bloodstream and travel to the heart where an infection may occur. (For this reason, heart patients are generally prescribed antibiotics prior to dental work as a safeguard.) Now researchers are finding new links between oral health and heart health. In a study recently published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, scientists found that treating severe gum disease can improve the function of blood vessel walls, thereby improving heart health. Researchers are now

shifting their focus to determine if treating severe gum disease will result in fewer heart attacks, strokes and other cardiovascular problems.

Diabetes

Diabetics run a particularly high risk of gum disease, developing the disease at a rate 3 to 4 times higher than non-diabetics. The suspected culprit is the body's inflammatory response, which can have devastating effects on blood sugar control. Diabetics with untreated gum disease find it nearly impossible to manage their blood sugar levels and diabetes therapies often fail to work. However, with regular treatment for gum disease, blood sugar levels can generally be controlled effectively. Interestingly, the link between gum disease and diabetes doesn't always originate with an insulin problem. A study in *The Journal of Periodontology* recently reported that gum disease predisposed certain people to developing early signs of diabetes. Clearly a link between oral health and blood sugar control exists.

Pregnancy Complications

A study published earlier this year in the *Journal of Periodontology* revealed that bacteria normally found in inflamed gums have been found in the placentas of pregnant women with high blood pressure. Scientists had already suspected that a link between gum disease and pregnancy complications existed. This suspicion was further confirmed in a study conducted at the University of Chapel Hill. Steven Offenbacher, DDS, PhD, who headed the study, announced earlier this year, "Our findings indicate that periodontal disease progression during pregnancy contributes to preterm deliveries and especially very preterm deliveries (less than 32 weeks) which places the baby at high risk for neonatal problems and disability." While these findings may seem bleak, the good news is that pregnant women can safely receive treatment for gum disease during their pregnancy. Successful treatment could minimize infection and inflammation and reduce the risks to the unborn child.

The research continues on as scientists move forward in an effort to further understand the implications of oral health. While a greater understanding is essential to solving this puzzle, there are steps that you can take at home to take charge of your own health today. I recommend the following steps to all of my

patients in order to maintain a healthy and beautiful smile:

5 Steps to a Healthy and Beautiful Smile

1. Make sure to brush after every meal and floss daily.
2. See your dentist every 6 months for an examination and annually for radiographs.
3. See your hygienist every four to six months for a thorough cleaning.
4. If you notice swelling, redness or bleeding in your gums, consult your dentist right away.
5. If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, follow and complete your treatment plans as described by your dentist, hygienist and periodontist.

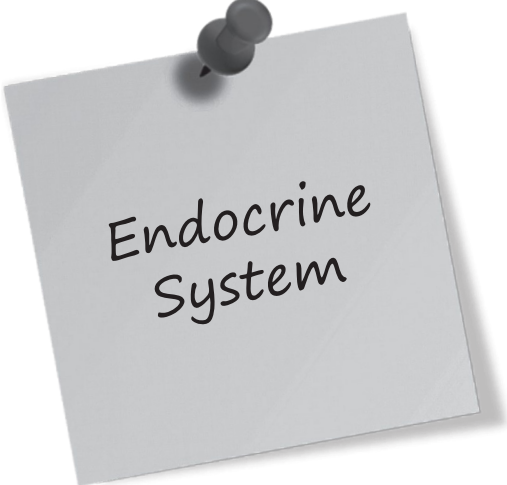
Andy Rooney once said, "A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks." I believe that it may just be an easy way to improve your health, too.

The Oral - Systemic Connection & Periodontal Tissue Therapy Program

Look for the right Dentist who can provide the right comprehensive long-term anti-bacterial approach to dealing with bacteria and endotoxins. There are solutions that retain a number of good traditional ideas in periodontal treatment. Find a program that focuses on the body's ability to build and protect new gingival connective tissue around the formally deceased teeth with the right device.

- **Periodontal Tissue Therapy Program**

- Scaling & Root Planning – removes calcified tarter and calculus around the gum line.
- Anti-microbial Rinses – kills bacteria, creates unfriendly environment for bacteria.
- Laser Therapy – a non-surgical procedure that removes diseased gum tissue, endotoxins and bacteria and repairs gum pockets.
- Accelerated Home Care – daily support health with anti-microbial rinses, pastes and state of the art hygiene techniques.
- Nutritional Therapy – provides the right supplements that have important ingredients to repair connective tissue, lower inflammation and support health.



Endocrine
System

Natural Hormone Balance

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is a hot topic under frequent debate these days – so much so that estrogen and progesterone have become household words. Deciding whether or not to supplement with hormones can be challenging when it means wading through study findings that are oftentimes frightening. In order to decide which option is right for you, it's important to understand the basics of women's hormones. Synthetic hormones are no longer the only option available and it is possible to treat hormonal imbalance safely and naturally, using bio-identical hormones.

The Role of Women's Hormones

Estrogen and progesterone perform a delicate balancing act during a woman's reproductive years. In a normal menstrual cycle there are two phases, the follicular phase and the luteal phase. The follicular phase begins on the first day of menstrual bleeding and is marked by an increase in the hormone estrogen. During this time the ovaries steadily increase production of estrogen, causing the lining of the uterus to thicken in preparation for pregnancy. Estrogen levels are at their highest right before ovulation when the hormones peak and then drop dramatically. The significant decrease in estrogen in the blood signals the ovaries to release the mature egg from the follicle (now called the corpus luteum). This begins the second half of the cycle, the luteal phase.

Once the egg has been released from the ovary, the corpus luteum begins producing progesterone. The increased progesterone levels cause the final thickening of the uterine lining. If the egg becomes fertilized it will implant itself in the uterine lining and the corpus luteum will continue to produce progesterone until the placenta matures and is able to produce

progesterone on its own. In the event that the egg fails to become fertilized, the corpus luteum dramatically decreases its progesterone production, estrogen once again takes over and the uterine lining is shed through menstrual bleeding.

As women enter their 40's, hormone levels of estrogen, progesterone and testosterone begin to decline, signaling the beginning of perimenopause. Eventually the ovaries will stop producing eggs and menstruation will cease. When menstruation is no longer taking place, menopause has begun. The declining hormone levels can cause many unwelcome symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, dry eyes, sagging breasts, mental foggiess, depression, changes in mood, and a decreased sense of sensuality and sexuality. Additionally, the hormones that made you fertile during your teens, 20's and 30's also protected you against age-related diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, osteoporosis and auto-immune diseases. With lower levels of these important hormones, your body is less equipped to fend off life threatening diseases.

Hormone Replacement Therapy

In the past decade women have discovered a new option: hormone replacement therapy. Much discussion in the news has been focused on the synthetic hormones, such as Premarin and Prempro. Studies have raised questions about the safety of using such synthetic hormones and many women are unsure of what to do. It is important to understand that synthetic hormones are not structurally identical to the hormones produced naturally within our bodies. If they were, drug manufacturers would not be able to patent them. Instead, they manufacture compounds derived from the urine of pregnant mares- a product that is structurally different from our natural human hormones. Such synthetic hormones are not processed by our bodies in the same way as natural hormones, which is why they often prove to be a dangerous option.

Natural, or bio-identical hormones are biologically and structurally identical to our own hormones, making them completely safe when used at the appropriate levels. An additional benefit

Menopause Symptoms
<p>hot flashes night sweats vaginal dryness dry eyes sagging breasts mental fogginess depression change in mood decreased sex drive</p>

to supplementing with natural hormones is that they can be customized to fit your specific needs. When prescribing bio-identical hormones to my patients, I first test their current hormone levels to determine the appropriate combination of estrogen, progesterone and, or testosterone that they will need. Bio-identical hormones are tailor made for each individual, unlike synthetic hormones, which are sold in "one size fits all" doses.

The benefits of balancing your hormones are numerous. When progesterone levels are corrected you should experience the benefits of an enhanced mood, regulated fluid balance, normalized sleep, increased sex drive, decreased risk of endometrial cancer, increased protection against breast cancer, fibrocystic breasts and osteoporosis, as well as stabilized blood sugar, thyroid function and mineral balance. Estrogen, in the correct amounts, protects against colon cancer, elevated cholesterol levels, Alzheimer's disease, urinary incontinence, osteoporosis and tooth decay/loss. Estrogen also enhances your mental acuity and memory, mood, skin tone, sex drive, sleep and digestion.

When balancing hormone levels, there is a third hormone that should not be overlooked: testosterone. While testosterone is predominantly a male sex hormone, its presence plays an important role in females as well. Testosterone is primarily produced in the ovaries and to a lesser degree by the adrenal glands and fatty tissues. Testosterone production is at its highest during a woman's reproductive years and begins to decline during

perimenopause. Because testosterone levels in women are relatively low compared to those of progesterone and estrogen, even a small decrease in testosterone can have a significant effect. Supplementing with bio-identical testosterone can make a major difference in a woman's quality of life, increasing libido, sexual satisfaction, sense of well being, body composition, and bone density.

My Healthy Recommendations

If you have not yet begun experiencing perimenopausal symptoms, this is the best time to go see your doctor. Having your hormone levels checked now, before they begin their natural decline, will better help your doctor to determine your optimal levels when the time comes for supplementation. Being proactive will make it easier to find relief when menopause becomes a reality.

A woman entering the end of her reproductive years no longer has to suffer silently through the changes caused by her declining hormones. Treating hormonal imbalance naturally, using bio-identical hormones, is a safe option that can make your menopausal and post-menopausal years some of the best years of your life. The benefits of natural hormone replacement mean that you could live a long, healthy and fulfilling life well into your golden years.

Low Testosterone: Not Just Your Father's Problem

Testosterone may be the hormone associated most with strength, but it is no match for the powerful punch of modern life. The effects of our fast-paced lives have already begun to take a toll on our health as a nation. Heart disease, stroke and cancer are the leading killers in the United States, and many point directly at lifestyle as public enemy number one. Now we can add one more downside to living the "good life": low testosterone levels.

A recent study from Finland confirmed what Danish researchers already suspected: testosterone levels in young men have dropped significantly over the past 50 years. Testosterone levels of the average 30-year old man are 20% lower than 30-year olds from their father's generation. And with these lower testosterone levels comes an increased risk of osteoporosis. Approximately 2 million men in America are currently diagnosed with osteoporosis, which researchers agree is most likely a low estimate. Canadian data suggests that the number may be much higher, estimating that 1 out of every 8 men over the age of 50 is living with the skeletal disease.

Male Menopause?

Fatigue, depression, irritability, weight gain, low self-esteem, muscle loss, low sex drive, back pain. These are all symptoms of low testosterone levels in men- a syndrome being termed "male menopause" or andropause. Just as women's sex hormones, progesterone and estrogen, decline with age, so do men's testosterone levels. Experts argue over the semantics of referring to a man's declining testosterone levels as a version of menopause; however, the reality remains the same no matter what you call it: sexual hormone levels in both men and women decrease as we mature.

Testosterone is produced in the male testes as well as the

adrenal glands and is important for libido, energy, muscle mass, mood, memory, bone formation and the typical adult male characteristics. Testosterone also decreases inflammation in the body, possibly reducing the risk of prostate cancer, since chronic inflammation is a likely precursor to the disease.

As early as puberty, levels of testosterone begin to naturally decline. By the time a man reaches his 30s, testosterone levels decline more rapidly, dropping by about 10% each decade. At the same time that this rapid decline begins, another factor in the body, called Sex Binding Hormone Globulin (SBHG), is increasing. SBHG traps much of the testosterone that is circulating, making it unavailable to the body. The remaining testosterone is considered "bioavailable".

While we know that testosterone levels decline naturally with age, these new research findings out of Finland and Denmark suggest that something else is responsible for this drastic drop in testosterone levels that has occurred over the past few decades. So why are today's men living with less testosterone than their father's generation and is there anything that they can do about it? The answer is complicated, but the solutions are numerous.

The Chemical Revolution

The worst offender when it comes to testosterone is the almighty chemical. Since World War II, tens of thousands of new chemical compounds have been created to improve our lives; yet, since the beginning of this chemical revolution, we've managed to pollute the entire planet with dangerous toxins, most of which have never been tested for human safety or how they interact with one another. Of the thousands of chemicals released into our environment every year, several groups have been identified as hormone disruptors. These chemicals enter your body through the air that you breathe, the foods that you eat and the water that you drink and invade the endocrine system, mimicking and blocking vital hormonal processes.

The endocrine system is comprised of a number of glands, which produce hormones that are sent all over the body, regulating

Symptoms of Low Testosterone

fatigue
depression
irritability
weight gain
low self esteem
muscle loss
back pain
low sex drive

basic functions such as metabolism and reproduction. These hormones act as chemical messengers, traveling throughout the bloodstream and attaching to cells where they deliver their directives. Every cell within the body has a series of receptor sites designed specifically for different kinds of hormones. Only the hormone meant for each receptor is allowed to dock and deliver its message. In the case of testosterone, when the body needs to signal a necessary repair or trigger the release of immune-boosting red blood cells the pituitary gland signals the testes to release testosterone. The hormone then travels to its intended target, docks on to the cell and passes on the message.

Over the past 30 years, researchers have begun to identify a series of chemicals that are able to dock onto cell receptor sites throughout the body and present themselves as hormones. In some cases, these chemicals mimic hormones, giving instructions to the cell to carry out a certain task, such as cell replication, while in other cases, the chemical is able to block key hormonal processes. When these chemicals are present in the bloodstream, the body is unable to tell the difference between the synthetic chemical and the real deal. For this reason, hormone levels can increase or decrease based on the activities of these hormone disruptors.

Several chemicals that have been identified as hormone disruptors are found in common products that you probably have in your home right now, such as plastic water bottles,

microwavable food packaging, bug spray, cosmetics and detergents. The complete list of known hormone disruptors is so large that the Environmental Working Group (www.EWG.org) created a comprehensive database for consumers to look up the toxic chemical load of their favorite products. While some of these known hormone-disrupting chemicals have been banned, many have not, and the banned chemicals still remain in our environment to this day. Additionally, since only a small percentage of synthetic chemicals have been studied for their harmful affects, there is no telling how many unidentified hormone-disrupting chemicals are in the products that we use every day.

My Healthy Recommendations

When it comes to harmful chemicals, the solution requires you to take action on several fronts. First, learn more about the known offenders (alkylphenols, PCBs, PAHs, Bisphenol-A, DDT, DDE, Dioxin, and heavy metals) and eliminate them from your homes and offices. A good first step is to get rid of plastic products. Plastics may spell convenience but they have been implicated as some of the worst offenders when it comes to your hormones. Plastics are able to leach into foods or liquids, making it easy for toxic chemicals to enter your body.

Foods are not immune to this chemical invasion either. Produce in your grocery store has been sprayed with pesticides, herbicides and fungicides from the farm to the market, contaminating your food at every turn. A good washing won't necessarily make it safe to eat since the chemicals seep into the food. For this reason, spend the extra money and go organic. The food is generally tastier (and certainly more nutritious) when it comes from an organic farm, too.

Don't assume that your meat and poultry are safe from contamination. Chemicals that persist in the environment find their way into animals through the food chain as well as through "conventional" farming methods. Hormones are given to animals to "beef them up" and to accelerate their growth, essentially contaminating the food that you serve to your family. Ensure that your meals are chemical free by purchasing grass-

fed, hormone-free meat and poultry.

Is Your Lifestyle Lowering Your Testosterone?

Diet, physical activity and body mass all play important roles in testosterone levels. The typical American diet, high in saturated fats, hydrogenated oils, preservatives and refined sugars, and low in crucial fiber, is highly detrimental to hormone production. This diet tends to be lacking in key vitamins and minerals, such as zinc, copper and selenium, which are necessary to produce testosterone.

When you combine this high-fat, nutrient-depleted diet with an insufficient amount of physical activity you are looking at a recipe for obesity, and one of testosterone's biggest enemies is the fat cell. Fat cells capture testosterone and convert it to estrogen, effectively lowering the total testosterone levels and creating a vicious cycle, as high levels of estrogen can also lower testosterone levels. Consider this: Overweight men typically have 25% less total testosterone than men at their proper weight.

My Healthy Recommendations

Men should eat plenty of good carbohydrates, protein and good fats. Approximately 30% of men's calories should come from foods high in unsaturated fats such as nuts, fish and olive oil. These foods are rich in omega fatty acids and help increase your good cholesterol, a key building block for testosterone.

But don't stop there! Pick up the pace and begin an exercise regime. Lifting weights can build muscle mass, thereby increasing testosterone levels. But that's not all. For every 10% that your BMI drops, you increase testosterone levels by 10%. Never have you had more incentive to hit the gym.

For additional hormonal support, I suggest the herbs tribulus terrestris and royal maca. Tribulus terrestris can increase testosterone levels while boosting sex drive and improving erectile function. Royal maca is rich in nutrients and essential

Andropause Prevention Checklist

- ☐ Have hormone levels tested
- ☐ Discuss hormone replacement therapy with physician
- ☐ Work out regularly; make sure to get a good mix of cardio and strength training
- ☐ Eat plenty of good carbs, protein and good fats
- ☐ Take a daily multivitamin
- ☐ Limit alcohol consumption

fatty acids and promotes hormonal balance.

There are many more factors that can affect testosterone levels, including chemotherapy; adrenal burnout caused by stress; depression; inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis; HIV/AIDS; Lyme disease; metabolic syndrome; diabetes; breathing disorders such as asthma, COPD and sleep apnea; Alzheimer's disease; multiple sclerosis, cardiovascular disease and malnutrition. A multitude of medications can also cause testosterone levels to drop, including statins, narcotics, antifungals, anticonvulsants, diuretics and calcium blockers. Marijuana, heroin and methadone can also result in low levels of the hormone.

Keep in mind that normal testosterone levels vary from man to man. What could be low for you may be just right for someone else. Likewise, a drop in testosterone can affect men differently. Some men may experience severe symptoms while others may experience no symptoms at all. It is impossible to predict who will suffer from symptoms and who will not.

If you are concerned about your testosterone levels, ask your physician to check your hormone levels. Proper testosterone levels can mean an improved sex drive, more energy, strength and endurance, and a healthier body and mind. Natural hormone replacement therapy is available to boost testosterone

levels safely, if lifestyle changes don't make a significant enough impact. There really is no reason why you must live with lowered testosterone levels.

Regaining Control of Your Metabolism

Over 20 million Americans are currently diagnosed with some form of thyroid disease, a health problem that impacts every cell in the body and can cause severe weight gain or weight loss, mood disturbances and even infertility in both men and women. While thyroid problems are most common in women, affecting approximately 1 in 8 women between the ages of 35 and 65, men are not immune to thyroid disorders. Common symptoms in men, such as reduced libido, difficulty achieving erection and breast tenderness or enlargement, may be too embarrassing for men to seek medical help and could contribute to the lower instances of thyroid disease recorded in men.

The Hormone Cascade

The thyroid gland is located at the base of the neck directly below the Adam's apple. This tiny little gland shaped like a butterfly is responsible for regulating the body's metabolism (the rate at which the body uses energy) by releasing the thyroid hormone T4 (tetraiodide) into the bloodstream. T4 makes its way to every cell in the body where it is converted to T3 (triiodothyronine), a hormone that controls the rate of cellular metabolism activity. The pituitary gland works in concert with the thyroid by regulating the levels of T3 in the body. When more T3 is needed the pituitary gland sends Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) to the thyroid gland to stimulate the release of T4 into the bloodstream. When too much thyroid hormone is present the pituitary gland stops sending out TSH and the thyroid stops the production of T4. The process is a delicate balance and if either the pituitary or the thyroid gland is failing to function properly the result will be a body that is not functioning properly.

Hyperthyroidism

When the thyroid gland becomes overactive, releasing more hormones than are necessary, the result is hyperthyroidism or Graves Disease, autoimmune diseases that cause over-activity of the thyroid gland. Hyperthyroidism is most common between the ages of 20 and 40 and affects roughly 1 million Americans today. With hyperthyroid, everything in the body speeds up. When the rate of cellular activity increases, more calories must be consumed to maintain normal energy levels. If the incoming calories fail to be enough then weight loss will occur. Generally, the more severe the hyperthyroid, the more weight loss will result. It is not uncommon; however, for a person with hyperthyroid to gain weight if more calories than necessary are being consumed.

Patients with hyperthyroidism may also experience fatigue, trouble sleeping, increased appetite, trembling hands, irregular heartbeat, irritability and reduced libido. In severe cases, muscle weakness, shortness of breath and chest pain may result. Often however, the symptoms of hyperthyroidism are mild and may occur gradually over a long period of time. Foods that naturally suppress thyroid hormone production are cruciferous vegetables, soybeans, peaches and pears. Have two servings of these foods daily. Carrots, celery, onion and almonds are also beneficial.

Hypothyroidism

Hypothyroidism is a far more common problem, affecting approximately 11 million Americans. The disease can affect both men and women but it is mostly diagnosed in middle-aged women. Hypothyroid is the complete opposite of hyperthyroid. In a patient with hypothyroid the entire metabolism moves at a slower speed and requires less calories than usual to maintain normal energy levels. As a result, the excess calories consumed become stored as fat and weight gain ensues.

Weight gain, while the most common problem associated with hypothyroid, is not the only symptom of an underactive thyroid gland. Other symptoms include low energy levels, depression, irritability, intolerance to heat or cold, decreased heart rate, dry skin and frequent infections, along with decreased sex

Hypothyroid Symptoms	
weight gain	dry skin
low energy	frequent infections
depression	decreased sex drive
irritability	infertility
intolerance to heat or cold	hair loss
decreased heart rate	shortness of breath

drive, infertility, hair loss, dry hair and shortness of breath. As with hyperthyroid, it is not uncommon to experience few to no symptoms of this disease.

To combat hypothyroidism, consume foods that contain iodine such as kelp, radish, parsley, potatoes, fish, oatmeal and bananas or look for a supplement that has 150 mg of Iodine. Iodine is needed by the body to form thyroid hormone. Also, copper, iron, selenium and zinc are essential in the production of T3 and T4. Exercise 15-20 minutes per day—enough to raise the heartbeat.

Diagnosing Thyroid Problems

Diseases of the thyroid can be diagnosed with a simple blood test which evaluates levels of TSH, free T3 and T4 in the bloodstream. Another way to measure is by taking and recording the basal body temperature under the arm as soon as you wake up for ten minutes, five mornings in a row. The normal axillary temperature is 97.8 – 98.2 degrees F. If the temperature averages 97.4 or less see your physician.

Once a diagnosis of either hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism has been ascertained, treatment is aimed at restoring proper levels of the thyroid hormones. With hyperthyroidism this might require surgery or the use of medication. Hypothyroid is usually treated with hormone replacement therapy. In my practice I have found that natural thyroid hormone can be a safe and very successful means of restoring the appropriate levels. For both diseases, restoring proper levels of the thyroid hormone

can result in a reversal of symptoms, including a return to pre-thyroid disease weight.

If you suspect that you might be suffering from a thyroid disorder, see your doctor immediately for an evaluation. Thyroid disease is a serious health problem and one that can be easily treated if properly diagnosed.

Stress And Your Hormones

Stress is a common challenge that we all face on a regular basis. The causes of stress can range from minor irritations, such as traffic jams or lack of sleep, to more significant events such as divorce or the loss of a loved one. And while the spectrum of stress is vast, the way that our bodies react to such stressors remains constant.

The Fight Or Flight Response

To understand the biology of stress, we must go back to the beginnings of mankind. Imagine that you are walking through a dense forest in search of your next meal. Your senses are already heightened as you move from tree to tree, hoping to catch a glimpse of your desired prey when, seemingly from out of nowhere, you find yourself facing an 8-foot bear. It is then that you realize that you have gone from the hunter to the hunted. In that split second of recognition your body shifts into what is known as the fight or flight response. Your brain becomes inundated with sensory overload, thus triggering the adrenal glands to begin releasing the four major stress hormones, cortisol, DHEA, norepinephrine, and adrenaline, throughout your body in preparation for the challenge at hand. This cascading sequence causes your body to undergo a series of dramatic changes. Your respiratory rate increases. Blood is shunted away from your digestive tract and directed into your muscles and limbs, which now require extra energy and fuel for running and fighting. Your pupils dilate. Your awareness intensifies. Your sight sharpens. Your pulse quickens. Your perception of pain diminishes. Your immune system mobilizes with increased activation. You become prepared, both physically and mentally, for fight or flight.

However, when the adrenal glands begin pumping out these stress hormones it causes an abnormality in the adrenal output rhythm. Throughout the day our adrenal glands release

hormones cyclically, sending out the highest levels of cortisol in the morning and the lowest levels in the evening. As our cortisol levels increase, our DHEA levels decrease. But, when the normal rhythm of output is disturbed it creates imbalance in the body functions which can, over time, lead to serious health problems.

The Effects of Adrenal Imbalance on Our Health

- Increased levels of cortisol production paired with a decrease in DHEA causes a decrease in muscle protein synthesis and reduces muscle mass, which can lead to joint injury and chronic pain.
- Cortisol inhibits the hormones required for calcium deposition. Chronically elevated levels of cortisol cause bone growth and repair to be suppressed and may result in osteoporosis.
- Symptoms such as fatigue and low body temperature are often due to adrenal dysfunction but are frequently and incorrectly attributed to hypothyroidism. Treating the problem with thyroid replacement only serves to further exacerbate the adrenal dysfunction.
- Several key aspects of immune function follow the cortisol cycle, which, when disrupted, can severely impair our immunity.
- Elevated night cortisol levels can interrupt REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep, the body's regenerative sleep mode, thereby reducing mental vitality and vigor and leading to depression.
- Human skin is regenerated mostly at night. With higher night cortisol levels, less skin regeneration takes place.
- Human Growth hormone (HGH) production declines rapidly after age 30, and this decline correlates directly with the effects and symptoms of aging. Unfortunately, cortisol antagonizes HGH, and moderate elevations of cortisol after 10:00 pm (as little as 5%), can inhibit HGH release.

In the early days of mankind, such primal biological responses were necessary for the survival of the human species. Unfortunately, in today's day and age, while the sheer volume of stressors has increased, usually the degree of danger is minimal. And, even though we do encounter occasions where our instincts vacillate between fighting and running, most of these situations do not require such a severe response.

Combating the Stress Response

There are several ways that we can begin to combat the negative effects that the stress hormones have on our bodies. Exercise and relaxation techniques are both effective methods to lower cortisol levels immediately, a vital step in reversing the fight or flight response.

Physical Activity

When the body responds to stress, it is preparing for a physical outcome, whether that means engaging in combat or fleeing from the scene of danger. However, our everyday stressors rarely result in physical interactions, even though our bodies are prepared for the challenge. By engaging in a positive form of physical activity we are giving the body exactly what it expects. Exercise brings down the high levels of cortisol that our body is producing, while increasing our levels of serotonin and endorphins. These two chemicals control the signals from the brain that pump out the stress hormones, so that the adrenal glands, which secrete cortisol and adrenaline, can calm down. Aerobic activity, such as walking, running, riding a bike and swimming, all directly inhibit the fight or flight response.

Relaxation

Relaxation techniques, such as yoga, meditation and massage, draw our attention away from the stressful situation and refocus attention on restoring inner order. When the body is responding in fight or flight, our sympathetic nervous system dominates. Through relaxation, our parasympathetic nervous system takes over. The parasympathetic nervous system controls digestion, breathing and heart rate during times of rest, relaxation and sleep which is necessary to repair, maintain and restore balance to our bodies.

Adrenal Stress Index

A laboratory test called the Adrenal Stress Index (ASI) assesses your adrenal hormone cycles by simultaneously measuring your cortisol and DHEA levels throughout the day. The ASI is a simple, non-invasive test that uses saliva samples to measure adrenal rhythm and to obtain DHEA-to-Cortisol correlation. Measurements gathered from four specimens collected throughout the day (8:00 am, 12:00 noon, 4:00 pm and 11:00 pm) are analyzed to determine a hormone treatment plan.

My Healthy Recommendations

Several common supplements can be used to treat adrenal imbalance; however, it is important to consult with a health care provider knowledgeable in nutritional supplementation and the correction of adrenal problems before choosing which supplements will be the most effective.

DHEA is a male sex hormone produced by the adrenal glands, the same glands that produce cortisol. In the body, DHEA is converted into other hormones such as testosterone, estrogen, progesterone, or cortisol- so too much cortisol often means not enough DHEA. DHEA levels are known to decrease with age, particularly after the age of forty, but perhaps as early as twenty to thirty; therefore, , dietary supplementation with DHEA is typically recommended to slow aging, improve memory, increase sex drive, alleviate depression, boost energy, promote weight loss, and build muscle mass.

The ingredients in **Adrenal Support** may offer help in supporting adrenal functions and maintaining health. The B vitamins, for example, support most of the biochemical processes in the body, notably energy production. Vitamins B1 and B2 are necessary for helping the body endure emotional stress and maintaining the cardiovascular system.

GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid) is essential for brain metabolism, aiding in proper brain function. GABA is formed in the body from another amino acid, glutamic acid. Its function is to decrease neuron activity and inhibit the nerve cells from over firing. Together with niacinamide and inositol, it prevents anxiety

Symptoms of Adrenal Fatigue
salt cravings increased blood pressure increased blood sugar depression anxiety muscle weakness brain fog/memory loss decreased sex drive digestive issues menopausal symptoms insomnia


and stress related messages from reaching the motor centers of the brain by occupying the receptor sites. GABA can be taken to calm the body in much the same way as Valium, Librium, and other tranquilizers, but without fear of addiction.

High concentrations of **Glycine** are found in the skin and connective tissues and help repair damaged tissues and promotes healing. Glycine supplementation can be used to help prevent epileptic seizures and has also been used to treat bipolar or manic depression and hyperactivity. Having the right amount of Glycine in your body will boost your energy level naturally.

L-Glutamine is an important amino acid that helps brain function, as it converts quickly into glucose, the only source of energy to the brain. L-Glutamine promotes better thinking ability, and increases the amount of GABA, which aids in proper brain function. In addition to enhancing mental ability, L-Glutamine plays an important role in many functions of the body such as energy levels, intestinal health, protein synthesis, and can even help build and maintain muscle.

Chromium is an essential part of the GTF (Glucose Tolerance Factor) molecule. GTF is an important cofactor for insulin in the regulation of blood sugar, which is necessary for proper metabolism.

It is very important that all aspects of adrenal gland balancing be monitored by a physician, as the list of recommended supplements will vary depending on each individual's chemical makeup. It is not recommended that you begin taking any supplements without first consulting with your physician.



Circulatory
System

Getting To The Heart Of Cardiovascular Disease

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. 1 in 4 people have some form of heart disease, which amounts to roughly 61 million Americans. Over 40% of all deaths are CVD-related, resulting in nearly 1 million deaths each year. Heart disease prevention and early disease detection are the best ways to protect yourself from this deadly health epidemic.

Getting The Terminology Straight

Cardiovascular disease encompasses all diseases related to the cardiovascular system, including dysfunctional conditions of the heart, arteries and veins that supply oxygen to vital life-sustaining areas of the body such as the brain, the heart itself and other vital organs.

Atherosclerosis is the most common of the cardiovascular conditions and lies at the root of most of the major diseases affiliated with the heart. Atherosclerosis is the hardening and narrowing of the arteries caused by the slow buildup of plaque on the inside walls of the arteries.

Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) occurs when atherosclerosis results in a partial or total blockage to the coronary arteries, which supply blood to the muscles of the heart. CAD is the most common underlying cause of heart attack.

Angina is the medical term used to describe chest pain or discomfort that occurs when the heart muscle does not get enough blood. Usually the pain starts in the chest behind the breastbone but may also occur in the arms, shoulders, neck, jaw, throat, stomach or back. Angina can be a sign of an impending heart attack.

Heart attacks occur when a clot in the coronary artery blocks the supply of blood and oxygen to an area of heart muscle. Often, the blockage leads to cardiac arrhythmia, an abnormally high or abnormally low heart rate that causes a severe decrease in the pumping function of the heart and may bring about sudden death.

A **stroke** is caused by an inadequate oxygen flow to the brain. Strokes that don't result in death can be mild, known as **Transient Ischemic Attacks (TIA)**, or they can be severely damaging to the brain, causing paralysis and cognitive malfunction.

Heart failure usually develops slowly, often over years. Some people may not become aware of their condition until symptoms appear years after their heart began its decline. Symptoms of heart failure include shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, swelling of the ankles and feet, and weight gain due to water retention.

Women and Heart Disease

CVD has long been thought of as a man's disease, while in reality it is the leading cause of death among women today. This year 435,000 women in America will have heart attacks with over half of them resulting in death. But women, why aren't you hearing more about this?

The simple fact is that men have long been the test subjects in CVD-related studies. Most of the data that we currently rely on to diagnose and treat CVD is based primarily on male physiology. (Good news for men, not such great news for women.) It has recently come to the attention of researchers that women display different symptoms than men when it comes to CVD and that the risk factors vary between genders.

The male and female bodies have two different, yet equally important sets of sex hormones. While the presence of the female and male sex hormones can be found in both genders, testosterone is present at higher levels in men while women have higher levels of estrogen—and it is the estrogen that makes all of the difference in the CVD equation.

While researchers don't yet know the cause, it appears that estrogen has a cardio-protective effect during the fertile years of a woman's life. It is during those years that estrogen is plentiful in the body and plays an important role in the monthly menstrual cycle. However, as a woman enters the menopausal phase of her life, estrogen levels drop severely. When comparing the age-related data for men and women side by side, it is not surprising that women tend to develop CVD an average of 10 years later than men. The theory behind this is the loss of estrogen that occurs at menopause.

Driven by this theory, a wide scale clinical study called "The Women's Health Initiative" began in 2002. Researchers believed that women taking synthetic hormones would find relief from the side effects of menopause while also lowering their CVD risk. There was high hope that synthetic hormonal supplementation was the answer. However, the study was abruptly halted when the data suggested that, instead of protecting women from heart attacks and stroke, the synthetic hormones were actually increasing the subject's risk of CVD and breast cancer. Since the findings were publicly released, synthetic hormone replacement therapy has been under intense scrutiny. A safe alternative to these synthetic hormones are biologically identical hormones. In the proper doses they can provide relief from menopausal symptoms as well lower your CVD risk.

CVD Risk Factors

While lowered estrogen levels and synthetic hormone replacement therapy are both major risk factors for CVD in women, the following applies to both genders:

High Cholesterol

Proper ranges of cholesterol are important to the prevention of cardiovascular disease. Total blood cholesterol above 200, LDL cholesterol above 130, HDL cholesterol below 35 and lipoprotein levels greater than 30 are all indicators of problematic cholesterol.

High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure levels at or below 120/80 are considered to be

within the normal range. 140/90 or higher is considered to be within the high range, and immediate action is required. Levels ranging between 120-139/80-89 fall within the range of pre-hypertension, which means that you are more likely to develop high blood pressure unless you take immediate action to prevent it.

Diet

A healthy diet is essential. Everyone should eat five to seven fruits and vegetables a day, whole grains, a handful of nuts, as well as low-fat meats, chicken and fish cooked in olive oil or other excellent tasty oils. Avoid sugars and processed foods.

Diabetes

People with diabetes have the same level of risk for having a heart attack as those who have had a prior heart attack.

Stress

When the body is consistently under a lot of stress, it releases too much of the hormone cortisol. Over time, cortisol can strain the heart and increase your risk of having a heart attack.

Lack of Exercise

The heart is like all other muscles in the body: In order to stay in good shape and function properly, it needs to be exercised. Lack of exercise contributes to obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and elevated stress levels- all risk factors for CVD.

The Cholesterol Connection

High cholesterol, a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, affects nearly 26% of all adults and an additional 100 million Americans are considered borderline high. Considering these statistics, it's entirely possible that you or a loved one is living with this potentially dangerous health problem.

Cholesterol is a wax-like substance found in both your bloodstream and every cell in your body. Maintaining good cholesterol levels is vital to your health, as cholesterol is necessary for producing cell membranes and several important hormones including the male and female sex hormones and the adrenal hormones. Too much cholesterol; however, can cause cardiovascular disease and result in heart attack or stroke.

Cholesterol Guidelines	
LDL Cholesterol Levels:	
Those with a low risk for heart disease	less than 100 mg/dL
Those with an intermediate risk for heart disease	100 - 159 mg/dL
Those with a high risk for heart disease	160 + mg/dL
HDL Cholesterol Levels: (Ideal)	
Men	40 mg/dL or higher
Women	50 mg/dL or higher
Total Cholesterol Levels:	less than 200 mg/dL

Cholesterol is produced by the liver but also comes from animal products such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, butter, cheese and whole milk. As a matter of fact, the liver creates all of the cholesterol that the body requires and any cholesterol derived from food is considered excess.

Cholesterol doesn't dissolve in your bloodstream and needs to be transported to and from cells by special carriers called lipoproteins. There are two types of lipoproteins: low density lipoproteins (LDL) and high density lipoproteins (HDL). LDL is known as the "bad" cholesterol because it builds up in the bloodstream, clogging arteries and increasing risk for heart attack and stroke. HDL, on the other hand, is considered the "good" cholesterol because it mops up the LDL cholesterol and transports it to the liver to be excreted from the body. For this reason, it is important to have low levels of LDL and high levels of HDL. An LDL score of 100 mg/dL or less is considered optimal, while anything higher is cause for concern. An HDL score of 40 or higher is desirable since lower levels are linked to higher incidence of cardiovascular disease. Total blood cholesterol is the most common measurement of cholesterol and the number that you normally receive as your test

result. A total blood cholesterol level of 200 mg/dL or lower is ideal. A higher total blood cholesterol level indicates an elevated risk for cardiovascular disease.

My Healthy Recommendations

A recent study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that adding foods like tofu, almonds, fibers, soy products and plant sterols into your daily eating plan can lower total cholesterol more effectively than statin medications.

- The most effective cholesterol lowering fibers can be found in oat bran, barley, flax seed, apples, citrus fruits, lentils and beans.
- Plant sterols can be found in small amounts in foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruits and vegetable oils and to a larger degree in spreads such as Smart Balance and Benecol.
- Combining a dietary intake of these foods along with lowering your intake of saturated fats is the most effective way to lower your total cholesterol.
- Additionally, stay away from partially hydrogenated and hydrogenated fats (such as margarine and shortening), which are sources of trans fatty acids known to increase LDL cholesterol and lower HDL cholesterol.
- Research has also shown that taking a daily essential fatty acid supplement (such as flax seed oil or fish oil) can help to lower cholesterol and protect the heart. The fatty acid not only decreases the rate at which the liver produces LDL cholesterol but it also has an anti-inflammatory effect in the body, decreases the growth of plaque in the arteries and aids in thinning the blood.
- If your HDL cholesterol level is low you can help increase it by losing weight or maintaining a healthy weight, quitting smoking and engaging in physically activity for at least 30 to 60 minutes a day on most or all days of the week.

Cholesterol-Lowering Foods	
tofu	apples
almonds	citrus fruits
soy products	lentils
oat bran	beans
barley	whole grains
flaxseed	fish

- Researchers have also found that supplementing with niacin (vitamin B3) is highly effective at increasing HDL levels while also lowering LDL levels and preventing atherosclerosis.

The Hypertension Connection

50 million Americans are living with hypertension and only about 14 million actually have their disease under control. High blood pressure, or hypertension, is the disease that doctors treat more than any other. Characterized by elevations of the systolic pressure, diastolic pressure or both, hypertension can lead to heart disease, heart attack and stroke if left untreated.

My Healthy Recommendations

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has devised an eating plan aimed at lowering blood pressure called the DASH Diet. The diet emphasizes eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy foods and plenty of potassium, while minimizing your daily intake of unhealthy fats and sodium. When followed properly, this diet has been shown to reduce blood pressure in those living with hypertension.

In my practice I have found that the DASH diet works best when combined with a handful of other essential nutrients. Every successful hypertension treatment plan should include plenty of calcium, vitamin D, antioxidants, magnesium and essential fatty acids. All have been shown to lower blood pressure and when

Blood Pressure Guidelines		
	Systolic (mmHg)	Diastolic (mmHg)
hypotension (low)	< 90	< 60
NORMAL	90 - 119	60 - 79
prehypertension	120 - 139	80 - 89
hypertension (high)	140 +	90 +

combined, their effects become even more powerful. Here's a brief breakdown of each of these heart healthy nutrients.

Potassium

The Facts:

Potassium and sodium must be balanced within the body to ensure a healthy heart. In the days of the cavemen, the standard diet held a 1:2 ratio of sodium to potassium; in today's diet that ratio is 5:1. Reestablishing an optimal balance is essential to lowering blood pressure. People with high sodium intakes will have the largest benefit to lowering their blood pressure by adding magnesium into their daily eating plan.

How Much:

4,000 mg per day from mostly food sources

Sources:

green leafy vegetables, nuts, papaya, dates, banana, cantaloupe, guavas, and oranges

Magnesium

The Facts:

Magnesium plays a key role in regulating systolic and diastolic blood pressure, as well as the amount of sodium, calcium and potassium found within the cells. Studies show that the more

magnesium you consume in your food, the lower your blood pressure will be.

How Much:

500 to 1000 mg daily from food sources only

Sources:

peas, beans, whole grain breads, avocados, dry-roasted almonds, lima beans, dark green vegetables, nuts and seafood

Calcium

The Facts:

Diets high in calcium have been linked to lower blood pressure as well as a reduced risk of developing hypertension. An analysis of several published studies found that supplementing the diet with calcium lowered systolic pressure an average of 4.3 mm Hg and diastolic pressure an average of 1.5 mm Hg.

How Much:

1,000 mg to 1,500 mg per day

Sources:

milk, cheese, canned salmon, almonds, cantaloupes and broccoli

Vitamin D

The Facts:

Studies have shown that when blood levels of vitamin D drop, your blood pressure rises. Add to that the fact that vitamin D makes the effects of calcium more potent and you have no excuse for not getting enough vitamin D.

How Much:

200 to 400 IU per day

Sources:

fortified milk, cod liver oil, fish oil

Vitamin C

The Facts:

Researchers have confirmed that the more vitamin C you consume the lower your blood pressure and heart rate will be. AND, the higher your blood pressure is to begin with, the more it falls. But don't worry about overdoing it. Your body will only use the vitamin C that you need and the remainder will be excreted through your urine.

How Much:

250 to 500 mg twice daily

Sources:

papayas, guavas, red peppers, cantaloupes, black currants, green peppers, oranges, broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus

CoQ10

The Facts:

CoQ10 is a powerful antioxidant that is manufactured within the body and helps to keep cholesterol levels down. CoQ10 levels decline naturally with age, but they also are lowered by high blood pressure and statin medications. Research has shown that supplementing the diet with CoQ10 causes a significant reduction in blood pressure, decreasing systolic pressure by an average of 15 mm Hg and diastolic pressure by an average of 10 mm Hg. CoQ10 takes about 4 weeks to start seeing results, but the effect can be so powerful that hypertensive patients may be able to reduce their medication dosages or eliminate them altogether. Don't stop taking your medication or change your dosage without discussing it first with your physician, though.

How Much:

60 to 120 mg, in supplement form, once a day

Omega 3 Fatty Acids

The Facts:

Omega 3 fatty acids help to lower your blood pressure and

improve your overall heart health. An analysis of several studies into the effects of fish oil, rich in Omega 3s, found that the larger the dose of fish oil taken daily, the larger the drop in blood pressure. When you combine weight loss with a daily dose of omega 3s, the positive effects are greater.

How Much:

3 to 4 grams daily

Sources:

fatty cold water fish such as salmon and mackerel, fish oil, soybeans, butternuts, flaxseed oil, canola oil, walnuts and Brazil nuts

Omega 6 Fatty Acids

The Facts:

Omega 6 fatty acids help protect against high blood pressure caused by poor eating habits and stress. It is important to get a balance of both Omega 3s and Omega 6s in your eating plan in order to glean the full benefits of each fatty acid, so make sure that you aren't overlooking either one.

How Much:

2 to 4 grams of flaxseed oily daily

Sources:

sesame seeds, sesame seed oil, unrefined corn oil, canola oil, nuts, evening primrose oil, black currant oil

If you have hypertension it is important to monitor your blood pressure regularly. Don't stop taking any medications without discussing it with your physician first. The solutions mentioned above are safe and all natural, but make sure that your physician is aware of the additional steps that you are taking.

6 Tests That Can Save Your Life

Cardiovascular disease is referred to as "the silent killer" because often, the first indication of a problem is a heart attack or stroke. Fortunately, the body provides us with a host of markers that can be used to gauge a person's current cardiovascular health status before such a serious problem occurs. By performing a few simple tests, your doctor can determine your risk level and work with you to develop a personalized treatment plan to tackle your individual situation.

The Markers...

Fibrinogen Test

Fibrinogen is a protein that circulates in the blood and responds to infection and inflammation by causing blood platelets to stick together and seal off injuries. If trauma is detected, platelets rush to the site and form a plug to repair the wound. Fibrinogens provide the material for vascular repair and are necessary for normal blood coagulation. However, if fibrinogen levels increase above normal, a blood clot can become a real threat, leading to diminished blood flow and reduced delivery of oxygen to the body. About 400,000 heart attack and stroke deaths occur in the US each year as a result of a blood clot obstructing the delivery of blood to the heart or brain.

Fibrinogen levels can be used to predict future cardiovascular disease in both men and women. Studies have shown that fibrinogen levels after a stroke can remain elevated even a year later, further increasing the risk of a recurrent vascular event.

Homocysteine Test

Homocysteine is an amino acid found in the blood that is typically altered for use in the body's normal functions. The resulting homocysteine byproducts are important nutrients for cardiovascular health, liver detoxification and cholesterol excretion. Researchers also suspect that homocysteine metabolites support adrenal gland function and contribute to neurotransmitter synthesis and the regeneration of bones and cartilage.

At elevated levels, a dangerous accumulation of homocysteine in the cells can occur with serious implications. Homocysteine has been shown to alter cell DNA, which is believed to fuel the progression of heart disease. (DNA alteration has also been linked with accelerated aging and a greater cancer risk.) Elevated homocysteine levels are also associated with plaque buildup in the arteries, increased blood coagulation leading to blood clots and atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries. As homocysteine levels increase, so does the risk of hypertension, stroke and heart attack.

C-reactive Protein Test

C-reactive Protein (CRP) is produced by the liver and helps the body heal wounds and fight off infection; its presence in the body is an indication of an underlying infection or inflammation. Chronic inflammation is associated with a variety of diseases, including cardiovascular disease and stroke.

CRP levels may be elevated several years prior to a coronary event and can be a significant predictor of new coronary events in apparently healthy men and women. Studies indicate that the higher the CRP level, the higher the risk of developing a heart attack. Elevated CRP levels present in the blood after a stroke or heart attack can be indicative of a repeated coronary event with a lower survival rate.

Triglycerides Test

Triglycerides are fats found circulating in the blood, especially after a meal high in saturated fat. Enzymes normally break down these fat particles, but when the process is not working efficiently, triglycerides that are only partially broken down can cause fatty deposits in blood vessels leading to a hardening of the arteries. When functioning properly, triglycerides are necessary for life. They are chains of high-energy fatty acids providing much of the fuel needed for body cells to function.

Triglycerides and cholesterol are closely related, as the liver uses triglycerides as fuel to make cholesterol. Generally, if your triglyceride levels are elevated, you also have high cholesterol. Both cholesterol and triglycerides coexist in animal fat, so when you eat meat, dairy, eggs and other animal products, you are consuming the two fatty acids together.

High triglyceride levels can cause the blood to thicken and reduce the arteries' ability to expand. In addition, elevated levels make the blood more sluggish and less capable of transporting oxygen to the tissues, particularly through the smallest blood vessels. People with high triglyceride levels are much more prone to developing atherosclerosis, leading to a heart attack or stroke.

Metabolic Syndrome Evaluation

Unlike the previously mentioned markers of cardiovascular health, metabolic syndrome does not rely on any one test to indicate a problem. Rather, metabolic syndrome is characterized by a group of conditions, including elevated levels of triglycerides, cholesterol, blood pressure and fasting sugar. Obesity (especially weight accumulated around the mid-section) is generally factored into the diagnosis as well, as it tends to go hand in hand with the related characteristics.

Causes of metabolic syndrome include physical inactivity, diets high in carbohydrates, and a family history of heart disease. The syndrome affects about 25% of all adults in the United States and shares the same risk level for developing early heart disease with those who smoke. A metabolic syndrome diagnosis can be a powerful indicator of an eventual heart attack or stroke.

Coronary Calcium Screening

The coronary calcium screening is conducted using a 64-Slice CT-Scanner, that takes images of the heart. In less than 10 minutes a detailed 3-dimensional picture emerges, showing if the coronary arteries have calcified and to what degree. The computer then assigns a score associated with your risk of developing a heart attack within the next year. A score of zero indicates no calcification and an extremely low risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke. A score of 10 to 400 indicates a 12% risk of having a heart attack or stroke within the next year and a score over 400 indicates a 50% risk of heart attack or stroke within the next year. A higher score correlates with a higher plaque burden (atherosclerosis). A coronary calcium screening is recommended for those over the age of 40 who have a moderate to high risk of heart disease.

Suggested Products:

Carditone by Ayush Herbs

Vitality C by American Nutraceuticals

Bio Lipitrol by Bio Genesis

COQ10

Omega Pure 900 EC

Algae Cal

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

The Diabetes Wake-Up Call

Diabetes has become so common in our society that during my last trip to the grocery store I saw two separate magazines dedicated to healthy diabetic living and at least a handful of nutrition bars aimed at regulating glucose levels in the insulin resistant. This was all while I was in line waiting to check out. The fact that there are entire aisles of food and supplements dedicated solely to those living with diabetes is a testament to the overall poor health of our country. For this reason alone it should come as no surprise that approximately one in four Americans has pre-diabetes, a condition that can develop into type 2 diabetes within 10 years if left untreated.

If you aren't currently at risk, odds are that someone you love is and that's bad news. But there is a silver lining to the pre-diabetes cloud: A recent major national study has proven that with a few lifestyle changes, pre-diabetes can be reversed and the risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be reduced by up to 58%. Pre-diabetes should serve as a wake-up call and not an inevitable sentence of "Life With Diabetes."

What Is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic health problem stemming from elevated blood sugar (glucose) levels. Glucose is a simple sugar that is derived from the foods that we eat. Our bodies metabolize carbohydrates, proteins and fats from our meals and use the metabolites to create glucose. This glucose then enters the bloodstream and provides energy to every cell in the body. However, when too much glucose is present, insulin resistance occurs.

Blood sugar levels become elevated when glucose is unable to enter the cells in the bloodstream. Imagine that your bloodstream is a highway and each cell in the bloodstream is a car. Cars

need gasoline (glucose) in order to run, and these cars within your bloodstream require a key to unlock the gas cap before the tank can be filled. In your body, this key is insulin. Without insulin the glucose cannot get into the cells and it is left to float freely through the bloodstream. Just as a car without gasoline will eventually fail to run, your body will begin to suffer without glucose.

In the case of type 2 diabetes, it's as if someone has changed the locks on the gas cap. The cells fail to recognize the insulin and deny entrance to the glucose. That's what we call insulin resistance.

Children & Type 2 Diabetes

Generally diabetes is thought of as an adult disease, but the emerging reality is that children are increasingly diagnosed with the disease. Juvenile diabetes, also known as type 1 diabetes, has long been associated with children and teens, but today up to 45% of the children diagnosed with diabetes have "adult onset" or type 2 diabetes, a statistic that is directly tied to the childhood obesity epidemic; nearly 85% of all children diagnosed with type 2 diabetes are classified as obese.

(For an in-depth discussion on children, obesity and diabetes please see *Generations At Risk: Childhood Obesity and the Diabetes Epidemic* on page 125.)

Diabetic Complications

While 500,000 people die annually from complications associated with diabetes (with two out of three dying from heart disease or stroke), others suffer serious health problems. Diabetics often succumb to diabetic retinopathy, a condition that impairs the tiny blood vessels of the retina and causes approximately 12,000 new cases of blindness each year. Diabetics are also at increased risk of cataracts and glaucoma, heart disease, stroke and peripheral neuropathy, a form of nerve damage.

Research has shown that the type of long-term damage that

typically occurs in those with diabetes can actually begin during pre-diabetes. The elevated blood glucose levels associated with pre-diabetes can increase your risk of cardiovascular disease by 50% over those who have normal blood glucose levels.

Type 2 Diabetes Risk Factors

The risk factors for type 2 diabetes include obesity, sedentary lifestyle, genetics (a family history of diabetes), ethnicity (African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans are at greater risk), a history of gestational diabetes, low HDL (cholesterol) levels or high triglyceride levels.

Testing For Insulin Resistance

There are two different tests that can be used to determine if a person has diabetes or pre-diabetes: the Fasting Plasma Glucose Test (FPG) or the Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT). The American Diabetes Association recommends the FPG because it is easier, faster, and less expensive to perform.

With the FPG test, a fasting blood glucose level between 100 and 125 mg/dl signals pre-diabetes. A person with a fasting blood glucose level of 126 mg/dl or higher has diabetes.

In the OGTT test, a person's blood glucose level is measured after a fast and two hours after drinking a glucose-rich beverage. If the two-hour blood glucose level is between 140 and 199 mg/

Fasting Glucose Levels (Hemoglobin A1C)	
	(mmol/L)
NORMAL	5.3 or lower
Pre-diabetic	5.4 - 5.9
Diabetic	6.0 and above

dl, the person tested has pre-diabetes. If the two-hour blood glucose level is at 200 mg/dl or higher, the person tested has diabetes.

In both tests, a normal test result indicates that the body is processing glucose properly, where as a diabetic test result indicates that the body is resisting insulin and too much glucose is present in the bloodstream. A pre-diabetes test score falls short of the lower threshold for diabetes yet still indicates an elevated presence of glucose in the bloodstream. Being diagnosed with pre-diabetes is a powerful wakeup call that should not be ignored.

Reversing Insulin Resistance

Fortunately, a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine in February of 2002 has provided hope for those living with pre-diabetes. The Diabetes Prevention Program Study showed that just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, coupled with a 5-10% reduction in body weight, produced a 58% reduction in diabetes for those already diagnosed with pre-diabetes. The researchers believe that weight loss reduces the risk of diabetes by improving the ability of the body to use insulin and process glucose.

My Healthy Recommendations

When it comes to physical activity, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends that people with pre-diabetes or diabetes should aim for a minimum of 30 minutes most days. Physical activity can consist of walking, gardening, doing yard work, swimming or cleaning the house. According to the ADA, beneficial physical activity can be, "anything that increases your heart rate and causes you to break a sweat." Don't worry; however, if 30 minutes seem overwhelming at first. Breaking up activities into 3 10-minute intervals a day is a great way to achieve the desired 30 minutes.

Healthy eating is an important component to any weight loss plan. Keep in mind these tips when creating your regular meals:

Foods to Enjoy

- Follow a diet high in fiber, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains and water soluble fibers (such as those found in oat bran, beans and apples) to help balance blood sugar.
- Consume vegetable proteins, which include legumes, nuts, seeds and peas, or lean animal protein (turkey, chicken and fish) with each meal. Protein drinks that have low sugar levels are good as they also help modulate blood sugar levels.
- Focus on quality fats. Salmon (and other fish), olive oil, flax oil, nuts and seeds are excellent "good fat foods" that help combat disease.
- Eat several small meals throughout the day to keep your insulin and blood sugar levels regulated.
- Because hormone deficiency has been linked to diabetes, you want to eat lots of brewers yeast, wheat germ, whole grains, soy products, onions, and garlic. Onions and garlic will help lower blood sugar levels and also protect against heart disease.
- Enjoy plenty of berries, plums and grapes, which contain vital chemicals that protect your vision.

Foods To Avoid

- Stay away from simple sugars. The obvious offenders include desserts, candy, sodas, and other sweets. Avoid fruit juices. Fruits that are low in fiber, such as oranges, are best consumed along with meals.
- White, refined bread spikes blood sugar levels. Better choices include whole grains and complex carbohydrates.
- Eliminate alcohol and limit your caffeine intake to one cup of coffee a day.
- Reduce your consumption of saturated fats, which have been

shown to increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease.

- Avoid artificial sweeteners such as Equal, Sweet N'Low Brand®, or Sucrolose. Use a diabetic-safe, healthier, natural sweetener such as stevia or xylitol.

A healthy diet combined with regular exercise and the proper supplements can help tremendously to control your diabetes. I highly recommend that you consult your doctor as well as a nutritionist before making any major lifestyle changes. Your overall health should be factored into any exercise and healthy eating plan to prevent the possibility of causing more harm than good. Additionally, allowing a certified nutritionist to guide you through the often confusing world of healthy eating will not only provide you with valued support but can also boost your chances of success.

Suggested Supplements:

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

Chromium

Cinnamon

Alpha Lipoic Acid

Biotin

Berberine

Omega Pure 900 EC

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Generations At Risk: Childhood Obesity And The Diabetes Epidemic

What would you do if your 20-year old son was diagnosed with heart disease? If your teenage daughter was losing her eyesight? What would you do if you were told that your child had to have his foot amputated because of diabetic complications?

Today's children are becoming sick with illnesses that used to be reserved for the middle-aged and obesity is at the center of this terrifying epidemic. Poor eating habits, lack of physical activity and an invisible world of toxins are all working against the health of our children. The childhood obesity problem in America has lead to a diabetes epidemic, and exposes our children to health problems that were unheard of in children just a few short decades ago. Unless we intervene now, the problems will only continue to escalate.

The Facts

On third of US children are overweight or in danger of becoming overweight, a number which has tripled over the last four decades. 70% of these children will become overweight or obese adults.

Children's eating habits play a key role in the obesity epidemic. Over the last 30 years, spending on fast food in the US has increased from \$6 billion to \$10 billion annually, with the average teen eating fast food twice a week. The FDA has designed a food pyramid for healthy eating, yet most Americans are far exceeding their fat and sugar intake while neglecting to eat enough fruits, vegetables, good fats and fibers. In a poll of high school seniors, only 3 out of 10 reported eating vegetables on a daily basis.

When people consume more calories than they burn off, the calories become stored as fat. Physical activity, necessary for maintaining a healthy weight, is sorely lacking in most children today. Physical education programs have been cut from schools all

over the country and recess time has been reduced or eliminated altogether in some schools. Nearly 1 out of 4 children fails to get any physical activity at all, a fact that isn't too surprising when you consider that half of children between 8 and 16 years of age are watching up to 5 hours a day of television. One study found that children who watch the most TV have the highest incidence of obesity.

A Toxic Relationship

Unfortunately, even the best efforts at weight loss or weight management are often met with resistance due to environmental factors that you would never suspect. Toxins that are present in every single living thing on the planet are harming our bodies and contributing greatly to the obesity epidemic. These toxins come from man-made chemicals and are called endocrine-disruptors because of their ability to enter the body and mimic or block vital hormonal processes. In the case of obesity, these toxins interrupt the normal thyroid function, effectively altering the metabolism. When metabolism is slowed down the end result can be weight gain and difficulty losing weight.

A study concluded earlier this year at the University of Missouri-Columbia found that when mice fetuses were exposed to certain chemicals it altered the way their genes functioned, making the mice more prone to obesity after birth. Frederick vom Saal, who authored the study, concluded that the endocrine-disrupting chemicals altered the metabolic system, predisposing the mice to obesity. A mouse exposed to the chemicals in utero could eat the same foods and exercise the same amount as a mouse with a normal metabolism, but would still become obese, while the mouse with the normal metabolism would not. vom Saal believes that the same holds true for humans.

Various studies support the fact that exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals after birth can have a similar affect on thyroid function, blocking vital hormones that are needed to regulate the metabolic system and aid the body in burning fat. These chemicals are present in many common products in our households today. A quick scan of your kitchen could reveal a great deal of these toxins, from the plastic bottles that hold soda

and water, to the plastic containers that house left-over foods. The cleaning products under your sink most likely contain several of these endocrine-disruptors. Even your foods are "toxin-carriers". Non-organic produce is sprayed with pesticides while conventional meat and poultry are given hormones to stimulate quick growth. These substances are dangerous to humans yet exist in our food chain at just about every level.

The Obesity-Diabetes Connection

The Center for Disease Control predicts that at least one out of every three children born after the year 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.

While obesity is the primary risk factor in children, other factors are contributing to this epidemic. Studies have found that the same toxins that are contributing to the obesity epidemic are also contributing to the diabetes epidemic. It has been shown that repeated exposure to toxic chemicals, such as those found in plastics (including pthalates, PCBs and parabens) can cause insulin resistance and eventually lead to type 2 diabetes.

Children are particularly vulnerable to insulin resistance when toxic overload and obesity are present. When children reach their early teens, the pancreas increases its insulin production to support the rapid growth of the body. At the same time, hormone changes are making it more difficult for the body to use the insulin. The pancreas responds to this problem by producing even more insulin. In a healthy child, the problem eventually corrects itself; however, in an obese child, the insulin resistance increases resulting in a pre-diabetic state. Studies indicate that many people diagnosed with pre-diabetes will develop diabetes within 10 years. But due to the rapid growth that children experience in their teen years, diabetes can result much quicker.

Diabetic complications result in half a million deaths and 71,000 lower limb amputations each year. Diabetics are also at increased risk of heart disease, stroke and peripheral neuropathy in which the body's nerves are damaged. The length of time that one has diabetes is the biggest risk factor for developing diabetes-related complications. For this reason,

such complication could occur in early adulthood for children with type 2 diabetes.

Most children do not display symptoms of diabetes or pre-diabetes and often a diagnosis is made when the child sees a physician for an unrelated problem. If your child is overweight or has poor eating habits, it is a good idea to have his/her blood sugar levels tested. If a pre-diabetic state is diagnosed, steps can be taken to avoid reaching a diabetic state. If diabetes is diagnosed, a treatment plan can be put in place to manage the child's blood sugar levels and attempt to stave off dangerous complications.

My Healthy Recommendations

Exercise

Whether your child has been diagnosed with diabetes, insulin resistance or is simply overweight it is important to implement a game plan for health. Exercise needs to be a major part of every child's life. A minimum of 30 minutes each and every day needs to be spent exercising- this can mean playing a game of soccer or running around at the park. Anything that gets your child moving while elevating his/her heart rate is good for their health.

Healthy Eating Habits

At the same time, it is vital to teach them healthy eating habits. Introduce a rainbow of colors into your child's regular meals. Eating organic fruits and vegetables in a variety of shades will ensure that your child is getting the nutrients he needs without giving him the toxins he doesn't need. Organic foods are not only chemical-free but they generally have a higher nutritional value and taste better than conventionally grown produce. Likewise, replace your conventional meats and poultry with all-natural, grass-fed animal products. These foods contain no harmful chemicals or hormones and also taste wonderful!

Detoxify

It is also important to detoxify the harmful chemicals that are residing in your child's body. Since everyone in the world is carrying these chemicals around inside of them, get the whole family on a detoxification plan. Infrared sauna and liver cleanses

are excellent and safe ways to rid the body of these dangerous toxins while boosting your overall health.

It is our job as loving parents to protect our children from the diabetes and obesity epidemics. If you suspect that your child is at risk for diabetes, have him/her tested immediately. Even if your child is not insulin resistant, make changes at home and encourage good habits to ensure that diabetes doesn't become a reality.

Suggested Supplements:

Detox Kit Drops by Heel

pH Adjust

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

Cinnamon

Chromium

Lipoic Acid

L-carnitine

Niacin

Fish Oil - Carlson's Kids Chewable DHA

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Is It Your Stomach, Or Something Else?

While your pancreas may not be something that you think about very often, it might just be time to take notice of this vitally important organ. Listening to your body can help you maintain good health and alert you to potential problems. The more knowledge that you have about your body, the easier it becomes to recognize those symptoms that something may not be right. By listening to the warning signs of your pancreas, you could potentially avoid developing diabetes, heart disease and even prevent pancreatic cancer.

Why You Need Your Pancreas

The pancreas is located behind your stomach and attached via ducts to both the gall bladder and the small intestines. Comprised of exocrine tissues and endocrine tissues, the pancreas is an important organ for two reasons: It both regulates blood sugar levels within the body and aids in the digestion of food. If either of these functions failed to work properly, disease would rapidly ensue.

Food digestion involves several organs and various steps before the process is fully completed. The pancreas falls somewhere in the middle of the digestive process, yet provides the important role of secreting enzymes that are sent to the small intestines to neutralize acids and break down fats, carbohydrates and proteins. When the pancreas produces these enzymes they are inactive and do not become activated until they arrive in the small intestines.

The pancreas also regulates blood sugar levels by releasing the hormone insulin when glucose levels become elevated. Glucose is a simple sugar that our bodies derive from the foods that we eat. It enters the bloodstream after a meal and is the necessary nutrient to provide energy to the cells of the body. When the

Symptoms of Pancreatitis
abdominal swelling nausea loss of appetite constipation itchy skin jaundice unexplained weight loss

pancreas detects elevated levels of glucose in the bloodstream it sends out insulin to facilitate the sugar’s entrance into the cells. Glucose cannot enter the cells without insulin. When blood sugar levels have returned to normal the pancreas slows down the release of insulin.

Listening To Your Pancreas

Symptoms such as abdominal pain and swelling, nausea, loss of appetite and constipation can all be signs that something serious is wrong with the pancreas. Since these symptoms also could be attributed to a myriad of other health problems, they often are dismissed as insignificant. If the above symptoms are accompanied by itchy skin, jaundice or unexplained weight loss then you might be faced with something more than just your average stomachache.

Pancreatitis

Pancreatitis is a rare but serious infection that can be either acute or chronic. In the acute form, pancreatitis comes on rapidly and is characterized by abdominal pain and swelling, fever, muscle aches and a drop in blood pressure. The most common cause of acute pancreatitis is a gallstone blocking one of the pancreatic ducts, causing the digestive enzymes produced in the pancreas to become trapped within the organ. These enzymes, which are normally inactive while in the pancreas, become activated and cause damage and infection to the lining of the pancreas. Acute pancreatitis can also be caused by excessive alcohol consumption, poor eating habits or trauma to the pancreas. Regardless of the cause, acute

pancreatitis requires immediate attention by a health care provider. With the proper treatment, acute pancreatitis generally clears up within 5 days.

Chronic pancreatitis occurs when acute pancreatitis persists or becomes recurrent, and usually follows years of alcohol abuse. In addition to the symptoms caused by acute pancreatitis, chronic pancreatitis may also cause weight loss. This weight loss occurs because the pancreas' ability to produce digestive enzymes has become diminished, impairing the absorption of nutrients such as fat, protein and sugar.

Pancreatic Cancer

People with chronic pancreatitis are at high risk for developing pancreatic cancer. Other risk factors for pancreatic cancer include excessive alcohol consumption, high fat diets and smoking. Research has shown that smokers are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop pancreatic cancer than those who do not smoke. Pancreatic cancer affects men twice as frequently as women and is more likely to develop after the age of 40.

Diabetes

Chronic pancreatitis often leads to diabetes as well. The insulin-producing cells within the pancreas become damaged and begin producing sub-standard insulin or fail to produce insulin completely. Without insulin, glucose is unable to gain access to the cells and is left to linger in the bloodstream. Eventually the glucose is excreted through urine, creating a sweet odor. The body cells, without their vital glucose, essentially starve.

A diabetic state can lead to heart disease, kidney failure, nerve damage and blindness. Once diabetes has taken hold, the body can never go back to its pre-diabetic state. Blood sugar levels will have to be monitored on a regular basis and the use of therapeutic insulin may become necessary. Symptoms of diabetes include frequent urination, increased thirst and hunger and fatigue.

Listening to the messages that your body sends out could mean catching disease early, while it's still possible to treat. Pancreatitis, pancreatic cancer and diabetes can all be deadly if ignored. However, if detected early on, a treatment plan can be put into place that may effectively manage the illness or disease.

Kidney Disease: A Silent Intruder

High blood pressure and diabetes are the top two causes of kidney disease, a disease that can be deadly if not caught in its early stages. According to the National Kidney Foundation approximately 20 million Americans (1 in 9 adults) have the disease and another 20 million are at risk for it. Kidney disease is often a silent intruder and most don't know that they have it until the disease has progressed to a life-threatening stage. In 2005 researchers reported that nearly half of the people in their study with an advanced form of kidney disease did not know they had weak or failing kidneys. If kidney disease is caught too late the only options for survival are a lifetime of dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Why We Need Our Kidneys

The kidneys serve many important functions to the overall health of the body. Resting just below your ribcage on your backside, they each contain over a million tiny vessels called nephrons that act as filters for your blood. Every 30 minutes your entire blood supply is sent through the kidneys and, on a daily basis, more than 2 quarts of waste are filtered out and sent to the bladder to be excreted as urine. Without this vital function the waste would build-up within the bloodstream and rapidly cause damage to the other organs, a condition called Uremia.

During this filtration process the kidneys also regulate the body's mineral composition. As blood passes through the kidneys, key chemicals that the body needs are extracted from the waste, such as sodium, phosphorus and potassium, and sent back into the bloodstream for use.

The kidneys are also in charge of regulating the body's acid-alkaline balance by maintaining a proper pH level of 7.4. If the pH level exceeds 7.4 the body will become alkaline, whereas

if the level drops below 7.4 the body will become acidic. In order to function at optimal levels, the body must maintain a proper acid-alkaline balance. Acidosis is a major health problem in America today and the most likely cause of many of the age-related diseases that we are experiencing, such as heart disease and diabetes.

Lastly, the kidneys serve the important functions of regulating the body's fluid levels as well as releasing 3 important hormones into the body: erythropoietin, which stimulates the bone marrow to make red blood cells; renin, which regulates the blood pressure; and calcitriol, the active form of vitamin D which helps maintain calcium for bones and for normal chemical balance in the body.

When both kidneys are functioning properly your renal function is considered to be 100%. While we have two kidneys, the body only requires the presence of one fully functioning kidney to do its job successfully. When renal function drops to 25% or below (less than half of one kidney functioning properly) serious health problems will begin to occur. If renal function is below 15% you will die unless dialysis or a transplant is performed.

Kidney Disease

There are 3 degrees of kidney disease: Acute Renal Failure, Chronic Kidney Disease and End Stage Renal Disease.

Acute Renal Failure

Acute Renal Failure (ARF) is characterized by a sudden drop in kidney function, generally brought on by an accident that injures the kidneys, a sudden loss of blood or a poisonous toxin such as drugs. ARF can lead to the permanent loss of kidney function if not treated immediately; however, if the kidneys are not severely damaged, the renal failure may be reversed.

Chronic Kidney Disease

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is the gradual loss of kidney function, and the most common form of kidney disease today. If left untreated, CKD will lead to permanent kidney failure and those with the disease are at a high risk of dying from a heart attack or stroke. In the early stages of CKD there often are no symptoms

that the kidneys aren't functioning properly; however, as the disease progresses patients may begin to experience fatigue, dry and/or itchy skin, frequent urination, loss of appetite, nausea, swelling of the hands or feet, numbness in the hands or feet, trouble concentrating, darkening of the skin or muscle cramps. Other complications associated with CKD include anemia, weak bones, nerve damage and heart disease.

End Stage Renal Disease

End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) is the total or nearly total loss of kidney function. Once the kidneys have reached ESRD the damage has become permanent and ; therefore, irreversible. Those diagnosed with ESRD will need to undergo dialysis on a daily basis or have a kidney transplant in order to survive.

My Healthy Recommendations

If detected early enough the progression of the disease may be slowed down. Since two-thirds of all kidney disease cases are caused by either high blood pressure or diabetes, controlling your blood pressure and blood glucose levels can be key to prolonging the disease. It is also recommended that those with kidney disease follow a low protein eating plan and maintain their levels of cholesterol since high cholesterol can cause high blood pressure. Additionally, maintaining a healthy weight and quitting smoking are both key steps to slowing the progression of the disease.

There are valuable tests that your doctor can perform to determine if your kidneys are functioning properly. If you have high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney problems, see your doctor today to have your kidney function evaluated. Don't be one of the 50% who aren't aware of their kidney disease. The sooner that you are evaluated, the sooner a treatment plan can begin. An early diagnosis can mean a long and healthy life if the proper steps are taken.

Suggested Supplements:

Kidney Rescue

Kidney Chi - Chi's Enterprises

Echo Water Ionizer & Hydrogen Machine
Whole House System - Synergy Home Filter

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com



Take The Burn Out Of Heartburn

Are you one of the 25 million Americans suffering from heartburn? Over the past decade we've been lead to believe that the cause of the heartburn epidemic is an overproduction of stomach acid and as a result, doctors are writing millions of "acid blocker" prescriptions each year. Yet ironically, *low stomach acid levels* may be causing your heartburn and the very act of "blocking" stomach acid production can have disastrous consequences for your health down the road.

The Real Cause Of Your Heartburn

Heartburn, or Acid Reflux, is often incorrectly thought of as a stomach acid disease, but are actually the result of a malfunctioning muscle called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). The LES is a flap that separates the base of the esophagus from the top of the stomach and opens only to allow food and liquids to pass down or vomit or gas to pass up. When the LES is functioning properly it will remain closed at all other times, sealing off the esophagus from the harmful acids in the stomach. However, when the LES is malfunctioning, corrosive stomach acids are able to make their way into the esophagus where they burn the esophageal lining. Over time this can lead to ulcers, swelling and even cancer. Many things can lead to LES malfunction: the consumption of nicotine, caffeine, chocolate, certain drugs, eating large meals, obesity, hernia (hiatus), alcohol, food allergies and low stomach acid.

The idea that low acid levels are causing your heartburn may be difficult to swallow, but consider this: As we age our stomach acid levels decline. In our teens, acid levels are at their highest but decline as much 45% as we enter our 30s. By the time that we're in our 60s we have less than 30% of the stomach acid we did in those early years. Yet, do you recall having heartburn in your teens or early 20s?

But My Acid Blockers Work

If all of this is true, then why do acid blockers seem to work? The answer is, when you block the production of stomach acid there isn't any acid to reflux into the esophagus. So, while the cause of heartburn isn't an overproduction of acid, by shutting off (or slowing down) acid production you are minimizing the chance that acid can harm the esophagus. However, this does nothing for the initial problem of the malfunctioning LES. Should you cease taking the acid blocking medication, your heartburn will return almost immediately.

And, while your medication may be working temporarily, the damage that it's causing to your body can be extremely dangerous over the long term. Stomach acid plays an important role in both digestion and overall health and by blocking its production you are essentially starving the body of life sustaining nutrients.

Why You Need Stomach Acid

Stomach acid is absolutely vital to digestion, breaking down valuable nutrients in our food so that they can be more easily absorbed into the bloodstream. These nutrients, such as amino acids, minerals and vitamins, are necessary to power the cells in our body. Without adequate nutrients the cells can't function properly and the body will essentially starve.

Stomach acid also serves the purpose of protecting your GI tract from harmful bacteria, parasites and other invading microorganisms. When acid levels become too low, bacteria can spread and excrete toxic substances throughout the entire body. Research has shown that over time low stomach acid can lead to a wide range of serious diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, type 1 diabetes, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, allergies, skin disorders and depression.

My Healthy Recommendations

Fortunately, acid reflux can be treated naturally and safely by getting to the root causes. When a patient comes to me

Protocol For Discontinuing Antacid Medications

Liquid Aloe Vera Stomach Formula by Nature's Aid:
2 oz. twice a day

HEARTBURN EASE by perfectlyhealthy: Take 2 – 3 pills
between meals & before bedtime (can take as you need
throughout the day as necessary)

Week One and Two:
Decrease medication to every other day; take Heartburn Ease
by perfectlyhealthy as directed above

Week Three:
Use your medication twice a week (i.e. Sun & Wed) or repeat
Week Two as necessary; take Heartburn Ease by perfectly-
healthy as directed

Week Four:
Use your medication once a week; take Heartburn Ease by
perfectlyhealthy as directed

Week Five or Six:
Stop your medication; take Heartburn Ease by perfectly-
healthy as directed

Once you've completed this protocol you may require a
digestive enzyme, like ZymeMax, directly after each meal and
Heartburn Ease between meals and before bedtime.

***Please Note:** this is not a substitute for medical advice. Upon
onset of symptoms of heartburn, acid reflux, GERD, Stomach
pain, and, or stopping/starting any medications or supple-
ments, you should talk to your physician.

complaining of heartburn the first thing that I do is test their stomach acid levels. More often than not I find that their levels are below the normal level. I also perform a physical evaluation and review the medical history to find out what might be causing their LES to malfunction. So many times I find that food allergies play a role in the problem and by simply eliminating those foods from their normal eating plan we can correct the problem. As there might be multiple causes for the problem, the solution will often involve a combination of nutritional supplements to get the

patient back on track.

Once we have developed a treatment plan, weaning the patient off of their prescription acid-blocker becomes key to a full recovery. I generally recommend that the patient begin by decreasing their medication to every other day during the first week, then down to only twice a week in the second week, once a week in the third week and finally stopping the medication completely in week four. During this time I place the patient on an all-natural supplement designed specifically to treat the effects of heartburn and indigestion called perfectlyhealthy Heartburn Ease™. Patients should take 2 to 3 perfectlyhealthy Heartburn Ease™ capsules between each meal and 2 to 3 more directly before bedtime. Additionally, I recommend 2 ounces of Aloe Vera 80 Stomach Formula daily to stimulate the growth of healthy bacteria in the intestinal tract and to help maintain normal acid levels. Once the malfunctioning LES has been corrected, acid reflux will subside and the supplements can be taken only when they are needed.

As a nation we find it so simple to pop a pill to “cure” what ails us, but in this case the pill might be causing more harm than good and it doesn’t address the root cause of the problem. You owe it to yourself to make intelligent and informed decisions about what you put into your body and how you attend to your health problems. If you suffer from acid reflux, seek out a doctor who is willing to treat the root cause of the problem, rather than one who will prescribe a potentially harmful “band-aid” treatment.

Suggested Supplements:

Heartburn Ease™ by Perfectly Healthy
Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy
Digestive Enzymes with HCL
Stomach Aloe by Lily of the Desert
Restore - Gut Formula
Herbal Aloe Force

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Restoring Intestinal Harmony

When was the last time that you mentioned to a friend that your bowels have been feeling a little sluggish lately? Don't remember? That's probably because digestion is not the most socially acceptable topic. You may have no problem discussing your exercise routine with your boss, or the foods that you eat with your friends, yet your regular (or not so regular) bathroom habits are strictly off limits. But why? The state of your intestines is just as important to your overall health as the foods that you eat or the physical activities that you participate in. As a matter of fact, imbalances in the colon can lead to a host of problems ranging from ulcerative colitis and multiple sclerosis to allergies and constipation. Regaining control of your intestinal health can be a wonderful step towards both overall well-being and good health.

The Ins and Outs of Digestion

The process of digestion converts the foods that you eat into energy for your body. It begins when food passes from the mouth, down the esophagus into the stomach and then on to the small and large intestines before it finally arrives in the rectum where it will remain until it is eliminated. As it passes through the small intestines, nutrients from the food are absorbed into the intestinal wall and the bloodstream. Whatever is left over from this point then passes into the large intestines (also called the colon) where the remaining nutrients are again absorbed into the intestinal wall. The remaining substance is no longer of use to the body and is actually toxic if it stays in the colon. For this reason, it is sent onto the rectum as waste.

The colon is responsible for the digestion of food, the elimination of digestive residue and the discharge of toxins and waste from the body. In addition to removing toxins from foods that are ingested, the colon also absorbs toxins out of the bloodstream

Conditions Caused By Poor Digestion
diarrhea indigestion irritable bowel syndrome lowered immune function infertility increased risk of cancer

through the intestinal wall. These toxins are then removed from the body.

The intestines are also home to good bacteria called probiotics which prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying; enable the body to absorb and utilize crucial minerals such as calcium, zinc, and iron; and help to manufacture key vitamins such as B6, B12 and K. Additionally, these good bacteria enable helpful microbes to cling to and colonize the intestinal walls and reinforce barriers that keep harmful invaders out.

When Good Colons Go Bad

An imbalance in your good bacteria levels can lead to digestive problems such as diarrhea, indigestion and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) as well as other health problems ranging from lowered immune function to infertility to an increased risk of cancer. Bacteria levels are easily affected by a poor diet, increased stress and even medications. It may come as a surprise to you that antibiotics kill not only the disease-causing bacteria but also these good bacteria as well.

Additionally, the same factors that contribute to bacterial imbalance can also cause the colon to become congested with stagnant waste. This waste contains poisons that leach back into your bloodstream, causing auto-intoxication. Auto-intoxication results when the intestinal walls become caked with hardened feces, essentially cutting off contact between the intestinal wall and the vital nutrients supplied by food

passing through the colon. These layers of hardened feces are generally made up of oils and grease from fried and overcooked foods, as well as by-products of mucous producing foods such as meats, dairy products and processed flour. Over time these layers build up and the colon finds it increasingly difficult to expel them. These fecal layers are often carried for the duration of an individual's life as a toxic burden.

My Healthy Recommendations

Probiotics

As mentioned earlier, antibiotics are the enemy of probiotics. While these valuable medications serve a very important role in combating infections within the body, the aftermath is an intestinal tract lacking in enough good bacteria to maintain a healthy environment. Fortunately, there are many options available to replenish these disease-fighting bacteria. Foods such as yogurt with live *L. acidophilus* cultures, miso, tempeh, fermented dairy products and acidophilus milk are all decent sources of probiotics. The digestive process can diminish the beneficial bacteria in these sources before it makes it to the intestines though, so I generally recommend to my patients either a probiotic supplement, the culture packed Kefir or a combination of the two. Kefir has been proven to not only survive the descent through the digestive tract, but the blend of good bacteria in kefir grows rapidly within the intestines also, providing results much quicker than other products. For those who don't care for the taste of kefir or yogurt, there is also the option of probiotics supplements, which are just as beneficial.

Colon Hydrotherapy

It may not be your idea of a good time, but colon hydrotherapy is a wonderful way to clean out your colon. Dispense with your preconceived notions about this process. Colon hydrotherapy is done in a clean and safe environment under the guidance of a certified hydrotherapist. With the latest techniques, your dignity is a priority and there is no pain involved. In only a few sessions you will begin to feel results from this calm and relaxing process. Not only can colon hydrotherapy restore proper pH levels within your intestines but the treatment also allows normal intestinal flora to thrive once again. Colon hydrotherapy can also help

relieve fatigue, gas, irritability, constipation, skin problems, cold hands and feet, lethargy and chronic diarrhea.

Targeting Liver Disease

Your liver is one of the most important organs within your body, but you probably don't think about it very often. And why should you? As long as it's functioning properly, there is very little reason to give it much attention. But did you know that each year more than 25 million Americans are afflicted with some type of liver-related disease? Some of these diseases are genetic; however, most of them are entirely avoidable. Taking proper care of your liver is so simple and one of the best things that you can do for your overall health.

The Liver's Role

The liver is the second largest organ in your body (your skin being the largest) and possesses the miraculous ability to regenerate itself by replacing damaged tissue with new cells. Your liver performs various functions for the body and at any given moment, thousands of processes are taking place within this vital organ.

Your liver plays an important role in digestion. When ingested food reaches the liver, all of the vitamins, fats, sugars and nutrients are converted into forms that the body can use. Some of these substances are immediately released into the bloodstream while others are stored for future use. When the body is in need of any one of these items, the liver will release the appropriate amount.

In the same way that the liver converts our food, it also converts the medications that we ingest. Our bodies cannot properly handle medication in its original state, ; therefore, , the liver must convert the chemicals before they can be absorbed within your bloodstream. Without your liver, medications would not work properly.

The liver is also a very powerful filter. In the case of prescription and over-the-counter medications, it is the liver's job to remove the medication from the bloodstream after a period of time. If your liver isn't functioning properly, the medication could remain indefinitely and cause a great deal of harm. With alcohol and illegal drugs, your liver goes into overdrive attempting to remove these toxic substances. The liver is the only organ involved in processing alcohol and can only handle small amounts at a time.

Toxic substances resulting from internal processes also need to be filtered out through the liver. Your body creates quite a bit of waste that becomes poisonous if not removed. It is the liver's job to filter out these toxins and then send them to either the intestines or the kidneys to be excreted.

In addition to all of those important tasks, your liver also acts as a chemical factory, not only converting your food into useable nutrients but also creating key proteins for use throughout the body. Every day your body is making and breaking down thousands of different proteins. Some of these proteins are necessary for blood to clot while others prevent swelling due to infection. One of the most important proteins is cholesterol, a key component of the membranes of your cells. Without the necessary amount of cholesterol, your cells cannot function properly. Cholesterol is also a building block for sex hormones.

Liver Disease

Liver disease is the result of damage to the liver which can be caused by many things such as the hepatitis virus, excessive alcohol consumption and certain medications. Damage to the liver results in scarred tissue which can no longer perform any of the functions of healthy liver cells. If too much scar tissue builds up it can lead to cirrhosis of the liver. Cirrhosis does not occur overnight though, and many people who have the illness don't begin displaying signs for at least 10 years or more. If left untreated, cirrhosis can lead to advanced liver disease. Symptoms of cirrhosis include fatigue, fluid in the abdomen, difficulty thinking clearly, bleeding in the intestines and poor blood clotting.

Symptoms of Hepatitis A, B and C

a short, mild, flu-like illness
nausea and vomiting
diarrhea
loss of appetite
weight loss
jaundice

Hepatitis

The word hepatitis means inflammation or swelling of the liver. Hepatitis A and B are both minor forms of the virus while hepatitis C is chronic and can cause severe damage to the liver. Hepatitis C is spread mainly through blood and is generally associated with sharing needles; however, if you had a blood transfusion prior to 1992 you may also be at risk. There are often no signs that you have been infected with the virus, yet damage to your liver can be occurring without your knowledge. Hepatitis C is a serious lifelong illness that can cause permanent liver problems. Currently, there are over 4 million people infected with the virus in the US and 8,000 to 10,000 people are expected to die of the virus this year.

Alcoholic Liver Disease

As mentioned earlier, your liver is the only organ involved in processing alcohol in the body and it can only handle small amounts at a time. When too much alcohol is consumed, normal liver function is disrupted and a chemical imbalance can result. Over time, liver cells can be destroyed or altered, resulting in permanent scarring and inflammation. If alcohol consumption is stopped early enough, the liver does have the ability to repair itself; however, if excessive consumption continues severe damage will lead to illness and even death. Excessive consumption is classified as more than two alcoholic drinks a day for men and one alcoholic drink a day for women. Liver damage can occur from drinking wine, beer or hard liquor.

Drug Induced Liver Disease

The most prevalent form of acute liver failure today is the result of taking too much medication. Over 800 drugs (both prescription and over-the-counter) can potentially cause liver damage. Damage can occur when an excessive amount of one medication or a mixture of several medications is ingested. For this reason it is very important to tell your doctor all of the medications that you are currently taking.

The most common and dangerous liver-damaging medication is acetaminophen (also known as Tylenol®). An estimated 500 deaths and over 50,000 emergency room visits a year are the result of an acetaminophen overdose. In the proper dosage, acetaminophen is generally considered safe, but it becomes toxic to the body at higher levels. Acetaminophen becomes especially dangerous when taken with alcohol, which hampers the liver's abilities to detoxify the dangerous toxins.

Fatty Liver

Fatty liver is the buildup of fat in the liver cells and is one of the most common types of liver disease in the US. While the cause of liver buildup is not clear, it tends to occur more frequently in those with diabetes, high cholesterol, high triglycerides or those who are overweight. There is some evidence that fatty liver can lead to cirrhosis and even cancer of the liver if left untreated. The good news is that weight loss, controlled blood sugar levels and lowered cholesterol and triglycerides can all decrease the amount of fat in the liver.

My Healthy Recommendations

The medications used to treat liver-related illnesses often carry with them significant side effects. For this reason, many hepatitis patients look for alternatives to the standard treatment protocols. Dietary supplements, herbal remedies, acupuncture, massage and physical therapy have all shown varying degrees of success.

The dietary supplements alpha-lipoic acid, selenium and SAME all have liver-protective properties while supplements such as cysteine and zinc have been shown to improve the response of

**The American Association for Liver Disease
recommends the following liver healthy tips:**

Avoid taking unnecessary medications & don't mix medications without the advice of your doctor.

Don't drown your liver in beer, liquor or wine.

Never mix alcohol with medications.

Use caution and common sense regarding intimate contact.

Never, ever touch a discarded syringe or needle.

traditional medications used to treat hepatitis. The supplement spirulina, a blue-green algae, is a powerful immunity booster with antiviral properties. The protein is a rich source of several nutrients including B complex vitamins, beta-carotene, vitamin E, carotenoids, manganese, zinc, copper, iron, selenium and gamma linolenic acid.

Several scientific studies suggest that the active substances in the herb milk thistle protect the liver from damage caused by viruses and a variety of toxins. In a Japanese study, licorice root, an herb that has been used in Eastern medicine for centuries to treat liver disease, was shown to significantly improve liver function. The astragalus root is often used for its immune enhancing properties and is believed to be especially effective in treating chronic hepatitis.

It is important to note that dietary supplements and herbal remedies can be dangerous if taken with certain medications and should only be used under the supervision of a trained professional. People with hepatitis should especially avoid using vitamin A and the herb kava kava as they can both be toxic to the liver when taken excessively or in large quantities.

Additionally, if you believe that you may be at risk for liver disease, I recommend that you see your doctor immediately for testing. The sooner that liver disease is detected, the

better your chances of survival.

A healthy liver is one of the greatest resources that you have and protecting it can be very simple. Unlike so many other aspects of good health, taking care of your liver requires only a few easy alterations in your life.

Suggested Supplements

Liver Gall Bladder Flush by perfectlyhealthy
alpha-lipoic acid
selenium
SAMe
cysteine
zinc
spirulina
herb milk thistle
licorice root
astragalus root

Suggested Products:

Health Mate Infared Saunas (www.perfectlyhealthy.com)
Echo Water Ionizer & Hydrogen Machine

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com



Cracking The Pain Code

Fibromyalgia has been a complicated and often misunderstood illness in both the mainstream and alternative medical communities. For centuries, patients presenting the typical symptoms of fibromyalgia have been dismissed as attention seekers or referred to psychiatrists for mental evaluation. People suffering from fibromyalgia have only recently begun to be taken seriously and an actual name has been given to the collection of symptoms that fibromyalgia patients live with on a daily basis. Recognizing the illness was a crucial first step in understanding and treating this painful syndrome. Today researchers are attempting to discover what causes the pain associated with fibromyalgia with the hope that understanding will lead to a cure. Because of the great strides that have been made in fibromyalgia research, we are now closer than ever to deciphering this puzzling syndrome, and effective treatment plans are being employed to restore pain-free living to those once knocked down by this debilitating syndrome.

Pinpointing Fibromyalgia

In America there are currently upwards of 6 million people living with fibromyalgia. Roughly 1 in 50 people have the syndrome, most of them women in their early- to mid-adult years, although men and children are not immune to this illness. Characterized chiefly by widespread pain and fatigue, a diagnosis of fibromyalgia is often difficult to ascertain as the symptoms can indicate a number of other illnesses. A person presenting the symptoms of fibromyalgia will often see a series of medical specialists before receiving a correct diagnosis. Unfortunately, fibromyalgia can only be diagnosed by first ruling out all other possible causes of the pain and fatigue. There is no diagnostic test to determine if a person has fibromyalgia, making it an especially difficult syndrome to identify.

Symptoms of Fibromyalgia
<p>widespread pain morning stiffness nausea dizziness depression anxiety fatigue sleep disorders chronic headaches muscle twitches and weakness cognitive and memory impairment</p>

Patients displaying the symptoms of fibromyalgia are often referred to a rheumatologist due to the nature of the pain from which they are suffering. Although fibromyalgia is not a form of arthritis, it is considered a rheumatic condition because it impairs the joints and soft tissues and causes chronic pain. Fibromyalgia differs from arthritis; however, because arthritis causes inflammation and damage to joints, muscles and other tissues while fibromyalgia does not. People living with fibromyalgia may experience debilitating pain on a daily basis; however, the syndrome is not fatal nor does it cause damage to the joints, muscles or tissues.

While there is no test to determine if a patient has fibromyalgia, the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) has established two criteria that must be met in order to establish a fibromyalgia diagnosis. First, the patient must have a history of widespread pain lasting a minimum of 3 months. Widespread pain is defined as pain that affects all four quadrants of the body (right, left, upper and lower). Second, the patient must have the presence of tender points. Tender points are locations on the body where a person with fibromyalgia feels pain. The ACR has identified 18 such locations that are typical in patients with fibromyalgia. Tender spots are located all over the body including the neck, shoulders, back, hips and upper and lower extremities and are extremely sensitive to pressure.

Once a patient has been diagnosed with fibromyalgia, a treatment plan must be established. While pain and fatigue are the two most serious complaints associated with fibromyalgia, patients with the syndrome often suffer from other symptoms such as sleep disturbances, morning stiffness, headaches, irritable bowel syndrome, painful menstrual periods, numbness or tingling of the extremities, restless leg syndrome, cognitive and memory problems and temperature sensitivities. A successful treatment plan addresses all of these symptoms simultaneously.

Searching For The Cause

While researchers do not definitively know what causes fibromyalgia, several theories are currently being investigated. One issue that most researchers agree upon is that fibromyalgia most likely has several causes that must occur together in order for the syndrome to be present. A study published in the *Journal of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome* by Dr. Jacob Teitelbaum, et al. presented the theory that fibromyalgia is the result of 4 key factors: inadequate sleep, hormonal imbalance, chronic infections and nutritional inadequacies. 72 men and women with fibromyalgia participated in his study with 38 patients receiving treatments and 34 receiving placebo. Dr. Teitelbaum's treatments varied from participant to participant based on their symptoms, but on a whole included supplemental sleep aids; hormones such as DHEA, testosterone and estrogen; antifungals and antibiotics; and a series of nutritional supplements including a daily multivitamin. At the end of the study period (approximately 3 months) 91% of the participants in the treatment group had significant improvement. Most of the treatment participants found that their energy had increased, their sleeping habits had improved and their pain was gone.

Dr. Teitelbaum's findings are exciting and his research continues on today. Physicians across the country are employing his treatment methods with excellent results. Today, fibromyalgia patients can have hope and the possibility of a pain-free life. While more information is still needed to understand the complexities of this mysterious syndrome, we are well on our way to finding answers and I believe a cure is just around the corner.

Suggested Supplements:

Omega Pure 900 EC

Suggested Products:

Health Mate Infrared Saunas (www.perfectlyhealthy.com)

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Quick, There's A Tick!

Since Lyme disease was first recognized in Connecticut in 1975, ticks infected with the bacteria that causes Lyme disease have been found in 95% of the states in the US, including California. Often difficult to diagnose, Lyme disease can have long lasting and debilitating effects if not treated immediately. Recognizing the risk factors and early symptoms can mean the difference between a full recovery and a lifetime of health problems. While new treatment options are available for those suffering from the effects of Lyme disease, prudent awareness should be your first plan of attack.

Contracting Lyme Disease

Lyme disease generally occurs when a person is bitten by a tick infected with the spiral shaped bacterium, *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Ticks carrying the bacteria tend to be found in grassy areas inhabited by deer. Scientists believe that an infected tick must be attached to its host for 48 hours in order for the host to become infected with the bacteria. The sooner that a tick is discovered and removed, the lower the odds that an infection will occur. However, if you suspect that you've been bitten by a tick you should contact your health care provider immediately.

Symptoms of Lyme disease do not always present themselves in the same manner and can vary greatly from person to person. Additionally, there is no concrete test that can accurately determine if someone is infected with Lyme disease. The most typical symptom of Lyme disease is a bulls-eye shaped rash that may occur at the site of the tick bite. The rash, called Erythema Migrans (EM) tends to begin as a small red dot and then can expand outward over a matter of days or weeks. The rash can eventually spread to different parts of the body and is usually accompanied by other symptoms such as headache, fever, stiff neck, muscle aches and fatigue. Such symptoms are

Symptoms of Lyme Disease

Within 48 hours of infected tick bite:

- a bulls-eye shaped rash
- headache
- fever
- stiff neck
- muscle aches
- fatigue

Months or years after untreated tick bite:

- arthritis
- heart problems
- meningitis
- Bell's palsy
- poor muscle movement
- memory loss
- difficulty concentrating
- changes in mood
- changes in sleeping habits

often believed to be the flu, yet unlike the flu, these symptoms can come and go or persist. Unfortunately, not all people who are bitten by an infected tick will have the EM rash or, if they do, they may fail to notice it.

As mentioned, the rash along with flu-like symptoms may never present themselves even if you have been bitten by an infected tick. Over several months or even years, if the tick bite has not been treated, more serious health problems can occur, such as arthritis, heart and neurological problems including: meningitis, temporary paralysis of facial muscles, poor muscle movement, memory loss, difficulty concentrating and changes in mood and/or sleeping habits. Chronic stress or an underlying thyroid problem can further exacerbate the symptoms of Lyme disease. Since these long-term symptoms tend to mimic other autoimmune system disorders, properly diagnosing the illness can be difficult.

**Lyme Disease Treatment Protocol
(List of Options Recommended By Your Health
Professional)**

- Remove gluten, sugar, caffeine, alcohol, fast foods, frozen foods, coffee and soda from diet
- Eat fresh organic fruits and vegetables
- Detoxify, especially for heavy metals
- NutraMedix antimicrobials (burbur and parsley)
- Deseret Biologicals homeopathic adjunct
- IVs: Vitamin C, Hydrogen peroxide/DMSO (for coinfections like fungus), Meyer's Cocktail, garlic oil, Glutathione, Quinton Hypertonic/Isotonic, Ozone, IVIG (5 grams every week or 2), Magnesium
- Coffee enema
- Remove amalgams and root canals
- Colonics
- Quinton marine plasma (Hypertonic/Isotonic)orally
- Zithromax 500mg/antibiotics
- ACS200 silver
- PhotonGenie
- Samento/TOA-free cat's claw (*Uncaria tomentosa*)
- L-5-MTHF form of folic acid (800ucg every 6 hours)
- Hyperbaric OxygenTherapy (HBOT)
- Frozen thymic peptides
- Fish/flax oil
- Echinacea Purpurea root
- Broad-spectrum digestive enzyme
- High-potency bromelain
- Probiotics
- Decaffeinated green tea
- Diflucan therapy
- Bee venom
- Salt and Vitamin C protocol (don't use alone)
- Comitras
- Acupuncture
- Meditation

Testing For Lyme Disease

If you've been bitten by a tick, there are two tests that your health care provider may order to determine if you have Lyme disease. One test looks for the presence of the bacteria in your body while the other looks for the presence of antibodies produced to fight off the bacteria. Neither of these tests are 100% accurate and a negative result does not mean that you are free of Lyme disease. For this reason, your health care provider will need to consider many factors, including your medical history, in order to determine the best course of action.

My Healthy Recommendations

Antibiotics are usually prescribed if a person is suspected of having Lyme disease. Most people treated with antibiotics in the early stages of Lyme disease are able to recover fully. Unfortunately, if the Lyme disease wasn't detected early on, treatment protocols can be more complex and will vary from case to case. For example, a patient with arthritis symptoms might benefit from a combination of Essential Fatty Acid supplements to reduce inflammation in the joints along with acupuncture and physical therapy to relieve the pain. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) has also been shown to be beneficial in relieving or reducing many of the symptoms of Lyme disease. Reducing or eliminating sugar along with properly balancing the body's pH levels can slow the spread of the bacteria and may also reduce the severity of Lyme disease symptoms.

If you suspect that you've been bitten by a tick, contact your health care provider immediately, even if you aren't displaying any symptoms or if your symptoms appear to go away. Treating Lyme disease from the onset can dramatically improve your chances of a full recovery and can lower the possibility of debilitating health problems down the road.

Living With Herpes

Are you one of the many people living with herpes? Even if you don't think so, you could be wrong. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 90% of Americans have been exposed to the virus that causes oral herpes and roughly 25% have been exposed to the genital herpes virus. It is believed that nearly 45 million people over the age of 12 are living with genital herpes in the US today. And the results of a national household survey found that only 10% of people living with the virus know that they have been infected.

The Herpes Virus

While there are several types of herpes viruses, the two most common are herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1) and herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2). HSV-1 is the virus responsible for causing cold sores and is most commonly known as oral herpes; HSV-2 is the virus that causes genital herpes. HSV-1 can be spread through oral secretions while HSV-2 can be spread through both oral and genital secretions. Because the herpes virus can be passed during an oral sexual encounter, it is not uncommon to find the oral virus on the genitals or the genital virus around the mouth. Blood tests can determine the specific virus, HSV-1 or HSV-2, that is causing the infections.

A herpes infection begins with increased skin sensitivity, which can present as either a tingling, burning, itching or painful sensation, followed by an eruption of blisters. These blisters eventually break, resulting in painful shallow ulcers. These ulcers generally clear up within a week or two. Not every infection is accompanied by symptoms; however,. Many people have no symptoms at all or mistake their symptoms for something else entirely.

Whether you have symptoms or not, the virus will stay within your

body forever. There is currently no vaccine or cure for herpes.

Every person with herpes is different, but someone who has experienced symptoms of an initial infection can expect to have several subsequent breakouts (called recurrences) each year. Over time these breakouts may become milder or decrease in number.

Recurring herpes infections can be triggered by many things including, a weakened immune system due to illness, fatigue, physical or emotional stress, or medications such as chemotherapy treatments or steroids. Additionally, sexual activity and menstruation can bring on breakouts.

Prescription medications may be effective in managing the symptoms of an infection and may limit the number of recurring infections as well. Maintaining a strong immune system can also be a powerful way to fend off future breakouts.

Complications Associated With Herpes

For men with healthy immune systems, the herpes virus will most likely not cause any complications beyond those associated with a breakout. For women, the same cannot be said. The virus that causes herpes has also been found to increase the risk for cervical cancer. This risk is increased further when the herpes virus is present in conjunction with the human papilloma virus (HPV), the virus that causes genital warts.

Pregnant women with the herpes virus must also take extra precaution in order to avoid passing the virus onto their baby during delivery. As the baby's due date nears, an infected mother should have weekly viral cultures performed. If a culture comes back positive, a cesarean section is recommended to protect the baby.

People with a compromised immune system, whether as a result of the AIDS virus, chemotherapy treatments, certain medications or caused by stress, fatigue, lack of exercise or a poor diet, run the risk of serious complications from the herpes virus including infections of the eyes, mucous membranes, esophagus, liver,

brain and lungs. Such complications could result in blindness or death.

My Healthy Recommendations

Preventing the spread of herpes can be difficult since the virus can be transmitted from an infected person even when they are in between breakouts. Medications such as Valtrex, when taken daily, can minimize this risk of transmission but they do not prevent it altogether. For this reason, using a latex condom during sexual encounters is essential. While it also does not completely eliminate the possibility of transmitting the virus, it does minimize the risk greatly.

If you suspect that you've been exposed to the herpes virus, see your doctor to be tested. If you find out that you've been infected you can take steps to support your health as well as minimize the risk of spreading the virus further. For those infected, it is vital to maintain a healthy immune system. To keep your immune system in optimal shape I recommend taking a pH balancing supplement as well as a greens based multivitamin. Additionally, I recommend that we strengthen our immune system, giving you an extra edge at staving off breakouts. I also instruct my patients on the virtues of regular exercise, a diet filled with fresh vegetables and fruits and a good night's sleep. A strong immune system relies on you to feed and nurture it.

The spread of herpes can affect anyone, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, gender or age. No one is immune to the herpes virus. Tell your loved ones how to protect themselves and others.

Suggested Supplements:

Vitality C by American Nutraceuticals
Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy
Guna Herpes by Guna Products
Guna Lympho by Guna Products
Citomix by Guna Products

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Nailing Fungus Once And For All

Millions of Americans are plagued with fungal infections in their nails, very few are talking about it and even fewer still have been able to treat their problem effectively. Covering up those toenails may be easy during the winter months, but when the weather heats up, you want have your feet in beautiful and healthy condition.

Fungal Infections

The most common type of nail infection, onychomycosis, is caused by fungi and occurs in the toenails more often than the fingernails. Onychomycosis affects about 12% of all Americans and nearly 40% of people over the age of 40. The fungal infection usually begins as a yellow or white spot under the tip of the fingernail or toenail. As the fungus spreads deeper into the nail, it may cause the nail to discolor, thicken and crumble at the edges. Eventually the nail may also separate from the nail bed, a condition called onycholysis. Some people may even feel pain in their toes or fingertips and detect a slightly foul odor originating from the infected area. While nail infections aren't generally life threatening, people with diabetes or a weakened immune system can develop serious health risks if the infection is left untreated.

Fungal nail infections usually develop on nails continually exposed to warm, moist environments, such as sweaty shoes or shower floors. Fungi are microscopic organisms that don't need sunlight to survive and can invade your skin through tiny invisible cuts or through a small separation between nail and nail bed. The fungi will only cause problems if your nails are continually exposed to warmth and moisture, conditions under which they thrive.

Onychomycosis is more common among older adults because

nail growth slows and nails thicken with age, making them more susceptible to infection. Men are affected by nail infections more often than women and heredity seems to play a factor in the disorder. Those who smoke are also at a higher risk of developing a fungal nail infection.

Before treatment can begin it is important to first identify the type of infection that exists. To do this, your doctor may examine your nail and then take samples from under the nail to culture or examine under a microscope.

My Healthy Recommendations

Treating a nail infection is often difficult as the infection lives deep underneath the nail. It has proven nearly impossible in the past since most medications failed to penetrate the thick nail and reach the nail bed underneath. Additionally, nails grow slowly, thereby slowing the treatment's progress. Oral medications are available on the market, but they can take up to a year to work and come with a list of side effects ranging from skin rashes to liver damage. Such medications aren't recommended for people with liver disease or congestive heart failure or people taking certain medications.

Over the years I've developed a formula for topical treatment that has overcome the previous obstacles of other nail infection treatments. Nature's Oil for Nails contains Australian Tea Tree Oil to stimulate the immune system while providing antiseptic and antimicrobial qualities, along with jojoba oil to soften and condition the skin surrounding the nails. I've added the minerals copper, chromium oxide green and magnesium dioxide, which allow the solution to penetrate into the nail bed while maintaining the health of the nail. Patients who have used the solution have seen significant improvement in the health and appearance of their nails over the course of 90 days.

Any treatment plan that you choose to employ will work best when used in conjunction with proper nail hygiene. Toenails are particularly susceptible to infection due to the warm, moist climate of most shoes. Adequate ventilation for the feet can be provided either by wearing sandals or shoes with air-breather

How To Use Nature's Oil For Nails

Twice daily, soak nails in warm water for 5 minutes. Pat dry with a clean towel and then lightly file the surface of the nail with an emery board. For tougher nails, file the face or the top of the nail and then soak in Epsom Salt prior to application. Apply Nature's Oil to the nail and 1/8th inch around the nail with the applicator. Repeat daily until nail is clear.

holes built into the sides. Shoes should always be made of natural materials and should fit comfortably, avoiding a tight fit. When wearing socks, again stay with natural materials such as 100% cotton, wool or silk as they tend to absorb moisture caused by sweat as well as provide good ventilation. If socks become wet, remove them immediately and thoroughly dry off feet before putting on a clean pair of socks. To vigorously fight toenail infection, I recommend going without socks completely whenever possible. Since fungi and bacteria thrive in areas such as gym locker rooms, showers and swimming pools, always wear sandals, water shoes or swimming booties to keep feet from touching the floor directly.

Treating a fungal nail infection can take time and overnight results should not be expected.

Suggested Supplements:

Nature's Oil for Nails™ by Perfectly Healthy

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com



A Joint Effort

Are you one of the nearly 46 million adults living with arthritis? Are you worried that you may have the disease but are afraid to find out? Arthritis is a serious chronic health problem and the nation's leading cause of disability among Americans over the age of 15, yet with a proper diagnosis and an aggressive treatment plan, arthritis can be managed and pain and damage can be minimized. As a matter of fact, there are many simple and effective steps that you can take on your own right now to improve the quality of your life, even with a diagnosis of arthritis.

Last year nearly one in five adults were living with arthritis and 300,000 children were afflicted with the juvenile form of the disease. Arthritis is an umbrella term that encompasses over 100 different conditions that affect the muscles and bones. Translated literally, arthritis means joint inflammation and includes the two most common conditions, osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis as well as some of the less common conditions such as fibromyalgia, lupus, gout, bursitis and tendonitis. While the common thread between arthritic conditions is that they all affect the musculoskeletal system and primarily the joints, many forms of arthritis can be systemic, causing damage to the heart, lungs, kidneys, blood vessels and skin.

Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common form of arthritis and affects approximately 21 million adults. OA usually comes on slowly, beginning with achiness in the joints caused by inflammation after physical work or exercise. Over time, the achiness can develop into pain, and stiffness may result after a period of rest or inactivity. Swelling or tenderness may appear and a crunching sound could occur when the affected joint is used.

The culprit in OA is a loss of joint cartilage, the tissue that cushions the ends of bones within the joint. While the cause is unknown, in people with OA the cartilage begins to fray and may eventually wear away completely causing the debilitating joint pain and stiffness. When these less common joints become affected, it can typically be traced back to an injury or unusual stress (such as a work-related, repetitive action).

OA can occur in children but usually affects adults. In men, OA occurs mostly before the age of 45; however, in women the disease generally occurs after the age of 45. Risk factors for OA include obesity, improper joint alignment and certain diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis. Root causes may also include food allergies, a diet high in fats or eating foods that promote an acidic environment, poor digestion, and hormone imbalances.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is the second most common form of arthritis, affecting roughly 2.1 million adults in the US. RA is considered an autoimmune disease because the immune system attacks healthy joint tissue causing joint damage and inflammation. The exact cause of RA is unknown, but researchers have found that the disease can be triggered by an infection in people who have an inherited tendency for the disease.

The major differences between OA and RA lie in the way that the disease presents itself. As with OA, RA causes joint tenderness and inflammation as well as pain and stiffness. Unlike OA; however, RA presents itself in a symmetrical pattern, meaning that the symptoms occur in both sides of the body at the same time. For example, both knees will be concurrently inflamed. RA can also be accompanied by a fever and a general sense of not feeling well. Perhaps the greatest difference between the two conditions is the fact that RA has periods of remission while OA will not go away.

RA is caused by an inflammation in the joint lining and in some people, the infection can lead to inflammation of the tear glands, salivary glands, the lining of the heart and lungs as well as inflammation of the lungs themselves. The inflammation

Arthritis And Your Food

Foods to Avoid

Foods high in saturated fats

fatty cuts of red meat, fried foods,
snacks containing partially hydrogenated oils,
margarine, butter

High sugar foods

Foods containing refined flour

Foods to Enjoy

Fruits/veggies high in antioxidants

green peppers, citrus fruits, strawberries, sweet and
white potatoes, tomatoes, broccoli, leafy greens

Healthy fats

cold water fish (salmon, mackerel), flaxseed, olive oil,
avocados, nuts

High fiber foods

raw vegetables, whole grains

Sulfur-rich foods

asparagus, cabbage, garlic, onions

10-12 glasses of water each day

associated with RA most often affects the joints of the hands and feet; however, no joints are immune. RA is 2-3 times more common in women than in men.

My Healthy Recommendations

The Arthritis Foundation's "Principles of Arthritis Management", proclaims the following:

1. There is no best treatment for everyone who has a particular type of arthritis, as each individual may respond differently to different treatments.
2. Something can always be done to improve the situation for a person with arthritis.

The main goals of arthritis treatment are to minimize the damage resulting from the disease and to manage pain effectively. Getting an early diagnosis is vital to your treatment plan as the earlier you are able to begin treatments the better your results may be. Treatment plans may include medication, weight management, exercise, use of heat or cold and methods to protect joints from further damage.

Making some alterations to your eating plan can have a significant effect on the symptoms of arthritis. Foods high in saturated fats and refined sugars promote an inflammatory response within the body. On the other hand, fruits and vegetables high in antioxidants and healthy fats (essential fatty acids) can help reduce the inflammatory process. Fiber-packed foods help to sweep away mineral and acid build-up while sulfur-rich foods can help to repair cartilage and bone. Since dehydration has been linked to arthritis pain, it is also a good idea to drink a glass of water every two hours that you are awake to keep cartilage lubricated and healthy.

Suggested Supplements:

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectlyhealthy

Omega Pure 900 EC

Algae Cal

Osteo Vegan

Multi - Collagen Protein by Ancient Nutrition

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Osteoporosis: Not Just For Women

Did you know that osteoporosis affects men as well as women? While nearly 8 million women in the United States are currently diagnosed with osteoporosis, an additional 2 million men suffer from the disease as well. The good news is that there are many things that you can do to both lower your risk for developing the disease and minimize the bone damage if you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis.

What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis literally translates to "porous bones" and occurs when bone density deteriorates to the point that the bones are no longer strong enough to support the body. The early stages of osteoporosis are generally unaccompanied by pain or symptoms and a fractured bone is typically the first sign of a problem. The most common fractures associated with osteoporosis occur in the spine, hips and wrists. As the bones increasingly weaken, back pain, loss of height and a stooped posture can occur.

Beginning in early childhood, our bones go through a continual cycle of remodeling, generating new bone and breaking down old bone. Up until our mid-thirties, the body generates new bone faster than it can break down old bone, subsequently increasing bone mass. However, as we move into our forties, the remodeling process slows down and we begin to lose more bone than the body is able to generate. Regular exercise and adequate amounts of calcium, magnesium and vitamin D are all key to maintaining strong bones throughout our lifetime. Without these important nutrients, bones may never reach their full density and will only become more porous with age.

The Estrogen Connection

Women are generally associated with osteoporosis due to its direct link with menopause. Estrogen is important to maintaining bone density, but as women enter menopause, estrogen levels drop significantly, triggering an increase in bone loss of about 1% to 3% each year. Around the age of 60, a woman's bone loss slows down, but does not stop completely. As women reach their later years, they may lose between 35% and 50% of their total bone mass.

While the estrogen link to osteoporosis is significant for women, it plays an important role in the skeletal health of men as well. The male hormone testosterone is, in part, converted to estrogen and is used to maintain bone density. As men age, their testosterone levels, and subsequently their estrogen levels, decline. Some researchers speculate that this loss in testosterone could be as severe as a woman's loss of estrogen during menopause. To date, there is very little research on men with osteoporosis.

A decline in estrogen levels is the biggest reason why women tend to develop osteoporosis at a higher rate than men; however, there are a few other factors. Most women tend to have smaller skeletal frames than men. With a lower bone density to begin with, it doesn't take nearly as much bone loss to reach the point of osteoporosis. Additionally, women tend to begin losing bone mass earlier in their lives and at a higher rate than men.

Acidosis and Osteoporosis

Stress, lack of physical activity, environmental pollutants and a diet high in acid-producing foods collectively create the problem of acidosis. The body needs to be in a slightly alkaline state in order to function optimally. With acidosis, the body seeks to correct the overly acidic state by drawing alkalizing minerals such as calcium from the bones. Over time, this severe loss of calcium can have a major impact on your bone density and osteoporosis can ensue.

Foods Rich in Calcium	
milk	orange
cheese	tofu
yogurt	red kidney beans
broccoli	chickpeas
watercress	green beans
kale	almonds
okra	sesame seeds
apricots	walnuts
figs	tahini paste
currants	salmon

My Healthy Recommendations

pH Balance

The most effective way to reduce acids within the body is by enacting dietary changes. A proper diet should be comprised of 60-80% alkalizing foods and 20-40% acid-forming foods. The Standard American Diet is mostly made up of acid-forming foods including coffee, tea, wine and most proteins (with the exception of milk, butter, soft cheese and almonds) as well as most fats, cereals and sugars. On the other hand, almost all fruits and vegetables (except for tomatoes, cranberries and blueberries) are alkalizing.

Dietary supplements can also be very effective at restoring an alkaline state to the body. Calcium, magnesium, potassium and pH balancing supplements all help to maintain a slightly alkaline state.

Calcium & Vitamin D3

Bones weaken when you have low levels of vital minerals such as calcium and vitamin D. With age, dietary calcium intake and the body's ability to absorb calcium tend to fall.

It is recommended that premenopausal women and men below the age of 65 maintain a daily calcium intake of 1,000 mg. Menopausal and post menopausal women and men over the

age of 65 should increase their daily intake to 1,200 mg a day. Adequate amounts of vitamin D3 are necessary for the body to absorb calcium; therefore, I recommend taking 400 mg of vitamin D3 along with your daily calcium supplement.

Natural Hormone Replacement Therapy

For both men and women suffering from osteoporosis caused by hormonal imbalance, natural hormone replacement therapy (HRT) can be the answer. Because HRT is not without risk, work closely with your doctor to determine the best hormone levels for you. Periodically your doctor will want to check your hormone levels to ensure that you are taking the smallest dose necessary to correct the problem. Research has shown that HRT can make a great impact on bone density and is the best known way to prevent osteoporosis.

Healthy Lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle is key to optimal bone health. Poor habits such as smoking and excess alcohol consumption can both reduce bone formation by interfering with the bone's ability to properly absorb calcium.

Regular Exercise

Regular exercise is necessary to building strong bones. Those with the most physically active lifestyles tend to have the greatest bone density. Exercising for 30 minutes a day, three times a week can increase bone density at any age. Weight bearing exercises, such as riding a bike or walking, combined with strength building exercises, such as weight lifting, are the most beneficial. For an added boost, take your exercise routine outside! The sun's rays are packed with vitamin D, a necessary nutrient for your body to absorb calcium.

Get Tested

Testing for osteoporosis is simple, painless and non-invasive. Doctors can detect early signs of osteoporosis using a variety of devices to measure bone density. The best screening test is called dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA), which allows your physician to measure the density of bones in your spine, hip and wrist (the areas most likely to be affected by osteoporosis) and to accurately follow changes in these bones over time. Ultrasound and quantitative CT scanning are also effective tests

that can accurately measure bone density.

Speak with your doctor and find out if you are a candidate for osteoporosis screening. Man or woman, bone health should be at the top of your priority list.

Suggested Supplements:

Bone Up by Jarrow

Strontium by Ortho Molecular

Pro Bona by Ortho Molecular

Vitamin K2 with D3 by Perfectly Healthy

Mag - Malate

Arthroplex

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

Algae Cal

Multi - Collagen Protein by Ancient Nutrition

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Discover The Root Of Your Hair Loss

Are you one of the 50 million Americans suffering from hair loss? Have you resigned yourself to a life of thinning hair or baldness? Just because you have a family history of hair loss doesn't mean that you are destined to a life without hair. While you may indeed be suffering from a form of pattern baldness, there are several other reasons that might be causing your hair to fall out, some of which could even indicate that a far more serious health problem is present. Determining the underlying cause of your hair loss may not only put an end to the hair loss, but it could save your life.

Why Your Hair Is Falling Out

There are multiple reasons why people lose their hair, but the most common by far is due to alopecia areata, also known as pattern baldness. Formerly this disease was termed as "male pattern baldness" but the fact is, women are just as susceptible to this hereditary disease as are men. There is no known cure for pattern baldness and no way to avoid developing it; however, some experts suggest that a diet low in animal fats, animal proteins and salt may actually delay hair loss until later in life.

While you may blame your hair loss on a family history of baldness, don't jump to conclusions too fast. The cause of your hair loss could be as simple as a medication that you've been prescribed. Certain drugs used to treat gout, arthritis, acne, depression, heart problems, high blood pressure and indigestion have all been found to cause varying degrees of hair loss. If your doctor determines that medication is at the root of your problem, simply switching to another medication may reverse the hair loss. Speak with your physician before discontinuing use of any prescription medication, as there could be serious health consequences.

Causes of Hair Loss
alopecia areata (pattern baldness) certain prescription medications poor eating habits hormonal imbalance stress to the body (illness, surgery)

Have you recently begun a new fad diet or does your eating plan leave something to be desired in the nutrition department? If so, your hair loss could be indicating a lack of proper nourishment. Diets lacking in enough protein, iron, zinc or biotin can all result in thinning hair. By eating a wide variety of foods from all of the food groups, as well as supplementing your healthy eating habits with a daily multivitamin, you can prevent malnutrition and restore your hair to its former state in the process.

It is not uncommon to find that hormonal imbalance is at the root of your hair loss. Often times, hair loss is the first indication of an overactive or underactive thyroid. Hair loss could also be the result of a dramatic shift in hormones, such as occurs after a pregnancy or during menopause, and has also been associated with the use of birth control medication. If your hair loss is the result of hormonal imbalance, restoring the proper balance should reverse the problem.

If you've suffered a recent illness, high fever or surgery, these could all be the cause of your hair loss. Each of these events causes stress to the body, which could result in your hair falling out. The scalp goes through a growth cycle where, at any given time, 90% of the hair is in a growth phase while the other 10% is in a resting phase. The hair in the resting phase is shed once the phase has ended (usually after two to three months). Once the hair has been shed, the growth stage begins again as a new hair from the same follicle replaces the shed hair. The trauma of a stressful event, such as an illness, can force more of the hair than usual into a resting phase, causing it to fall out at the end of the resting cycle. Look at a calendar and see if a few

months have passed since your stressful event took place. If so, this could very well be the cause of your hair loss.

In some cases, hair loss is the result of a more serious underlying illness, such as lupus or diabetes. As a matter of fact, hair loss is often the first indication that something is wrong. It is for this very reason that hair loss should not be taken lightly.

My Healthy Recommendations

If you are experiencing thinning hair or baldness, see your doctor immediately so that the root cause can be determined. In my practice I routinely conduct a unique series of screenings and tests to get to the root cause of an individual's hair loss. Evaluating a patient's heavy metal body burden, adrenal and sex hormone levels, as well as their nutritional status are important. By conducting a blood nutritional screening, I am able to determine the cause or causes of their hair loss. Once a cause is established a treatment plan can be put into place. Treatment protocols might include nutritional supplements, IV therapy, and detoxification methods such as sauna, body cleanse and colonic hydrotherapy.

The cause of your hair loss may be easily correctible or even a wake-up call that lifestyle changes need to be made. Whatever the cause, for many people hair loss can be corrected and even reversed. Don't ignore your hair loss for another day. Take action and call your doctor today.

Suggested Supplements:

Hair Revive by Ridgecrest Herbals

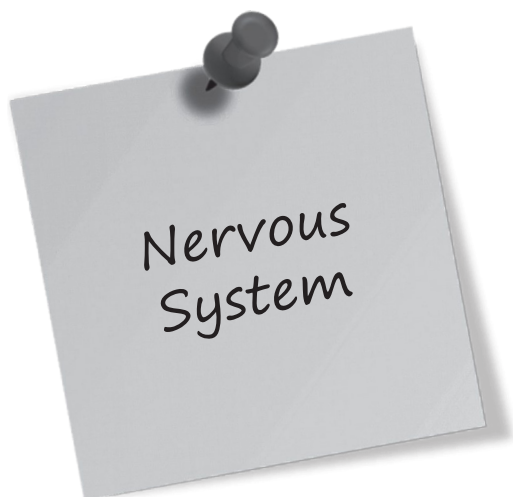
Digest Max

Silica

Biotin

Priaplex

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com



Battling The Blues And Winning

Depression seems to be the catch phrase of the new millennium and the health care community is often all too quick to prescribe antidepressants as a cure for what ails you. But not all forms of depression and anxiety warrant such drastic measures. Often, with a few changes to your diet and lifestyle, you could be looking at the world with a whole new attitude.

Understanding Depression and Anxiety

We've all said it at one time or another, those words that seem to sum up our angst so perfectly: "I'm so depressed!" But what does that mean exactly? The symptoms of depression can be characterized by many factors, ranging from irritability and insomnia to panic and the inability to enjoy life's little pleasures. Often we strive towards perfection in an effort to manage our feelings of despair or inadequacy, generally falling short and leaving us feeling worse than we when we began.

Many of us were raised on the old adage, *Mind Over Matter*, and feel that we should be able to manage our emotions on our own, that anything less would be a sign of weakness or failure. Not true. This method of thinking is outdated and most often ineffective, as the culprit in depression is generally not a weak will, but rather a reduced level of an important brain chemical called serotonin.

The Role Of Serotonin

Serotonin is the body's primary defense against anxiety and depression. When our serotonin levels are low, we tend to lose our natural good nature and find that life's challenges become increasingly more daunting.

Symptoms of Depression

persistent sad, anxious or "empty" feelings
feelings of hopelessness and/or pessimism
feelings of guilt, worthlessness and/or helplessness
irritability, restlessness
loss of interest in activities once pleasurable
low sex drive
fatigue and decreased energy
difficulty concentrating and remembering details
difficulty making decisions
insomnia or excessive sleeping
overeating or appetite loss
thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts
aches/pains, headaches and/or digestive problems

There are many reasons why your serotonin may be low, with genetics often being a key factor. Does depression seem to run in your family? Did your parents have a difficult time facing the day to day stresses that seemed so easy for others? Is there a history of alcoholism or drug abuse in your family? These are all signs that low serotonin might be present. Don't be discouraged if this is the case, though. As you will see, genetics do not mean a life sentence of depression. There is hope.

Stress can also be a contributing factor to depression. Have you experienced elevated levels of stress over an extended period of time? Whether the stress is the result of a major tragedy in your life, like the loss of loved one or the difficulty of a bitter divorce, or the result of a lengthy or debilitating illness, the effects on your body are the same. Under attack by such stressors, your serotonin store is tapped into repeatedly which can eventually lead to total serotonin depletion, leaving you running on a perpetual state of "empty".

Believe it or not, the time of the year may also have a very real effect on your mood. Do you find that your mood seems to drop when the weather is cloudy, or the sun doesn't come out for days on end? There is a biological explanation for this. Serotonin

is one of the few body chemicals that is actually stimulated by light. An underexposure to light can lower your serotonin production, leaving you feeling down and depressed. And if you are already running on low levels of serotonin, something as minor as a cloudy day can bring you further down.

A major contributor to depression, and the one most often overlooked, is your diet. In order for your body to produce serotonin it relies on the foods that you eat to provide the much needed amino acid, Tryptophan. Tryptophan can be found in high-protein animal-derived foods such as turkey, chicken, beef and cheese. Once ingested, your body converts the amino acid, tryptophan, into a chemical called 5-HTP (5 hydroxytryptophan) and then into the neuro-transmitter, serotonin. Without tryptophan, your body is unable to produce 5-HTP and subsequently serotonin, leading to a myriad of problems, most notably, depression.

Symptoms of Low Serotonin

There are four key symptoms that could indicate the presence of low levels of serotonin:

Gut and Heart Problems

90% of the serotonin in your body is in your gut and when you raise your serotonin levels, your digestive tension (including constipation) can often dissolve with your depression. Your heart is also partly serotonin-dependent. It's well known that low serotonin-type negative moods, including fear and anger, are closely associated with heart disease.

Sleep Disturbance

Many people with low serotonin levels obsess and worry instead of getting to sleep, while others tend to wake up too early in the morning.

Fibromyalgia, TMJ, Migraines

Raising serotonin levels not only has a powerful muscle relaxing effect, it can also stimulate our natural pain killers, the endorphins.

Cravings for Carbs and Alcohol

Ingesting carbohydrates (whether through food or alcohol) can set off body-wide stress, causing your pancreas to release insulin in order to remove the excess carbs from your bloodstream and store them as fat. The insulin sweeps most of the amino acids out of your bloodstream, along with the carbs. Only one amino gets left behind– tryptophan– and it goes right into your brain, unimpeded by the other aminos that usually crowd it. Once in the brain, the tryptophan can easily convert to 5-HTP and then to serotonin, elevating your mood temporarily. The downside? This source of instant euphoria most often leads to a dependency on sugary foods which can in turn lead to excess weight gain along with a series of other health problems.

My Healthy Recommendations

The treatment of depression may take some time but it can be accomplished. And while your mood may not improve right away, don't let this discourage you.

Counseling

Counseling can often be an effective tool in coping with depression and anxiety. By adopting valuable problem solving skills you can begin to regain control and achieve happiness in your life. Learning to recognize and accept your feelings, even feelings of sadness, anger or fear is an important first step.

Exercise

One of the most important treatments for depression is exercise. When you exercise, your body seeks out the amino acids in your bloodstream for routine muscle repair. This causes tryptophan, the only amino acid not used for muscle repair, to go straight to the brain. Once it gets there, it is quickly converted to 5-HTP and then to serotonin. Exercise also increases your oxygen intake which is critical to the formation of serotonin from amino acids. The amount of exercise needed to fight depression is not much and even a small amount of exercise has been shown to enhance the powerful mood elevating substances in the brain known as endorphins. When the endorphins are elevated, our mood improves. Physical exercise is a very safe and natural antidepressant– perhaps

the most effective natural antidepressant available.

Identifying Food Allergies

Food allergies can be a major contributing factor in depression. A simple food allergy test could reveal whether or not you are experiencing the effects of this common problem.

Controlling Blood Sugar

Hypoglycemia, the result of a dysfunctional sugar metabolism, is a common but often unrecognized cause of depression. The brain doesn't function properly when the sugar levels in our body are low, creating symptoms such as depression, irritability, anxiety, fatigue and headaches. A dietary intervention consisting of properly balanced proteins, carbohydrates and fats could completely alleviate this problem.

Eliminating Alcohol And Caffeine

Alcohol and caffeine cause significant stress on the body and can inhibit the natural production of serotonin. Alcohol is a brain depressant that disrupts the normal sleep cycles and interferes with the many brain cell processes. Individuals who are prone to feeling depressed seem to also be especially sensitive to caffeine. Drinking too much caffeine can lead to all of the common symptoms of depression. Just by cutting down on, or eliminating altogether, these two addictive chemicals, you could see a dramatic difference in your mood.

Supplementing Your Diet

Proper levels of calcium, magnesium, vitamin D and B vitamins are needed to ensure the conversion of tryptophan to 5-HTP to serotonin. Although it is difficult to diagnose, there is evidence that vitamin deficiency tremendously affects our health and can cause fatigue or a general lack of well being. Individuals with depression have often been found to be deficient in folic acid, B12 and B6. Also, very importantly, a deficiency in essential fatty acids (the omega 3 oils) has recently been linked to depression.

When I evaluate a patient for depression and/or anxiety, it is important that I gain a complete understanding of all of their symptoms along with their physical state of well being. There can be several physiological causes of depression, including

chronic disease, low adrenal function, heavy metal toxicity, PMS, menopause, hypothyroidism and more. By determining the underlying cause of the depression and/or anxiety, the proper illness can be treated, which should subsequently ease the patient's emotional unrest.

The drug Prozac®, and other similar medications, have become big sellers, generating over \$2 billion in sales annually. However, it is doubtful that 20th century Americans have suddenly developed a Prozac® deficiency. Before I place my patients on medication that could have both short and long term side effects, I begin with one of the many natural treatments that are available, such as tryptophan, tyrosine, phenylalanine or melatonin. I do sometimes find that the use of amino acids along with a low dose of an antidepressant medication may also be beneficial to the patient.

When people are depressed, they are often unaware that their behavior has changed. If other people have noticed a change in your outlook, consider whether or not you might be suffering from depression. If it is possible, try adjusting your diet and adding approximately 20 minutes of exercise 3 days a week to your regular routine. If your depression is too severe to be affected by these adjustments, please seek the professional help that you need to start the healing process.

Suggested Supplements:

Omega Pure 900 EC

Brain Link® Complex by Pain & Stress Center Products

5-HTP by Thorne

Mood Sync by Pain & Stress Center Products

IQ Maximizer by Novus Optimum

Amino Acids - Perfect Amino

4 Mood by Perfectly Healthy

4 Anxiety by Perfectly Healthy

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Can Your Child Become Ritalin-Free?

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is the most commonly diagnosed childhood behavioral disorder today, with an estimated 12% of school aged children currently being treated for the symptoms. In the 1990s, childhood prescriptions for ADHD medication rose nearly 380%, but the truth is, medication isn't always the best treatment for ADHD. Many times, significant behavioral improvements can be made by simply altering your child's eating habits. Nutritional deficiencies or food allergies could be at the very root of your child's problems, and correcting them may be as simple as eliminating certain foods or adding nutritional supplements to their daily eating plan.

Scientific evidence suggests that ADHD may result from a chemical imbalance or deficiency in certain neurotransmitters that are responsible for regulating behavior. The symptoms of ADHD include inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity and are so persistent in people with the disorder that they interfere with daily life. Since there is no blood test that can determine if a person has ADHD, diagnosis is largely based on observation. For this reason, misdiagnosis happens frequently as symptoms of ADHD can be similar to other disorders such as depression and anxiety or may even be an indication of an undiagnosed learning disorder.

The ADHD/Nutrition Connection

The symptoms of ADHD can also be an indication of dietary problems. The Standard American Diet combined with the declining nutritional value of our vegetables, fruits and meats can lead to nutritional deficiencies in our bodies. Additionally, a person's inability to properly absorb nutrients can result in further deficiencies.

ADD/ADHD Dietary Recommendations

Avoid candy and desserts; Xylitol and Just Like Sugar[®] are excellent sweeteners that to prevent cavities and ear infections.

Avoid Nutrasweet[®] and other artificial sweeteners.

Avoid white flour and all refined carbohydrates, including cereals and pasta--especially those that are made with yeast such as bread, bagels and English muffins; replace these with brown rice, sweet or white potatoes and onion.

Increase consumption of Omega-3 (especially fish, and flax oil).

Eat proteins at every meal including eggs, fish, chicken and meat.

Avoid hydrogenated vegetable oils.

Healthy snacks would include vegetables, nuts, olives,

Essential Fatty Acids

Research has shown that Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs) play a key role in brain function. Omega-3 fatty acids in particular are highly concentrated in the brain and are vital to cognitive and behavioral function. In a 1987 study, researchers found that levels of the Omega-3 fatty acids arachidonic acid (AA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) were significantly lower in hyperactive children than they were in non-hyperactive children. Another study found that boys with lower levels of Omega-3 fatty acids had more learning and behavioral problems than boys with normal Omega-3 fatty acid levels.

EFA's are the good fats that must be present in the foods that we eat because the body is unable to produce these fats on its own. When we eat foods containing Omega-3 fatty acids, such as flax seed oil, salmon, walnuts, soybeans and green leafy vegetables, our body converts those fats into AA and DHA. Sometimes, people who eat plenty of foods high in Omega-3s may still be deficient in AA and DHA because their bodies have a difficult time converting the fatty acids. When this is the case, supplements containing AA and DHA can make up for these deficiencies.

Food Allergies

Undiagnosed food allergies may also be at the root of ADHD symptoms. Allergic reactions to foods are not always displayed in what we think a typical reaction would be: hives, sneezing, swelling, etc. More commonly, food allergies can present themselves in a behavioral manner, such as hyperactivity or inattention. In a study of 26 children diagnosed with ADHD, behavior improved on days when certain foods (corn, wheat, milk, soy, oranges and food colorings) were eliminated from the diet. On days when these same foods were re-introduced to the diet, behavior worsened. Most of the children who displayed an improvement on the elimination diet had a history of allergies, such as asthma and allergic rhinitis.

In addition to behavioral problems, food allergies may also impair vitamin and mineral absorption in the digestive tract. Recent research has suggested that an iron deficiency may contribute to the imbalance in chemicals in the brain associated with ADHD. Likewise, a magnesium deficiency could lead to irritability, decreased attention span and mental confusion. A study of 116 children diagnosed with ADHD found that 95% of the children were magnesium deficient.

Glucose Levels

Blood sugar levels can also affect behavior and a landmark study conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health showed that the rate at which the brain uses glucose is lower in subjects with ADHD than in subjects who do not have ADHD. Fluctuating blood

sugar can cause mood swings, as the brain requires a constant supply to function properly. Since children with pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes often do not display any symptoms of the disease, it is a good idea to have your child's glucose levels tested if they are displaying the symptoms of ADHD.

While food may very well be at the root of your child's behavioral issues, it is always a good idea to work with a physician or nutritionist when making any major dietary changes. Making a few key changes to your child's eating plan can make all the difference in the world when it comes to your child's behavior, medication is not your only option.

Suggested Supplements:

IQ Maximizer distributed by Perfectly Healthy
Brain Link® Complex by Pain & Stress Center
Chewable DHA by Carlson's

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Why Are We So Tired?

Are you one of the millions of Americans who are constantly tired? You might feel that you can never catch up on your sleep or that your energy reserves have been permanently depleted. You may even wonder if you will ever return to your normal self again.

If you're like most people then you probably assume that your fatigue is the result of a hectic lifestyle, but what if it isn't? What if your fatigue is a symptom of something more serious than the everyday chaos of life? And, by the same token, what if there was a way to reverse the fatigue by addressing the root cause?

Is My Fatigue Normal?

Fatigue is one of the top complaints that I hear from my patients. By definition, fatigue is more than simply feeling sleepy. Fatigue is the constant sensation of being tired or lethargic and is often accompanied by a feeling of weariness and a lack of energy. Normal fatigue happens to all of us, such as when we are sick with a cold or flu or after going for a run. You may also experience normal fatigue when you fail to exercise, are bored or when you simply are not getting enough sleep. These types of fatigue can all be reversed with the proper amount of rest and generally do not last longer than a few days.

Fatigue lasting longer than 2 weeks is defined as abnormal and should be evaluated by a health care professional. Fatigue is a sign that something is not functioning properly within your body and should be addressed immediately. Since there are various causes of fatigue, your physician will ask you a panel of questions designed to determine your specific health problem or problems. Fatigue can be a complex condition and often there is more than one issue at the root of the problem.

Some of the more common causes of abnormal fatigue range from mental health issues such as anxiety, stress and depression to respiratory and cardiovascular impairment.

Why Can't I Just Wake Up?

Here is a brief overview of just some of the health problems that could be causing your fatigue.

Mental Health Issues

One common link between anxiety, depression and stress is that they all tend to result in a fatigue. With anxiety, you often are not getting the proper amount of sleep at night. Depression may cause you to have disruptive sleep or to sleep more than your body requires, both of which will cause fatigue, and people with chronic stress are in a persistent state of fight or flight, overtaxing their adrenal glands which takes a dangerous toll on all of the systems in the body. As a result, the cardiovascular, digestive and respiratory systems are all being affected. This breakdown of vital organs can deplete serotonin and endorphins, leading to a state of constant fatigue.

Respiratory & Cardiovascular Impairment

Any time your heart or lungs are failing to work properly, or at their optimal performance levels, you will experience a feeling of fatigue. The reason behind this is that your heart and lungs are chiefly responsible for the circulation of oxygen-rich blood to all of the organs in your body. This oxygen-rich blood is necessary to maintain healthy energy levels. While the cause of fatigue might be something serious such as Coronary Artery Disease or heart failure, it could also be something as simple as allergies, such as hay fever or asthma, which can limit the amount of air that is coming into your body.

Sleep Disorders

Sleep disorders are a common problem today, with approximately 40 million Americans suffering from some form of sleep disturbance. If you're suffering from insomnia (difficulty falling asleep), hypersomnia (excessive sleeping), or Restless Leg Syndrome, then you are more than aware of the problem. However, you could be suffering from sleep apnea and not

A Closer Look At Serotonin

It is currently estimated that more than 80% of Americans suffer from a serotonin deficiency. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter in the brain and the only substance in the body from which melatonin can be made. Melatonin is not only a powerful antioxidant for the immune system but also a vital chemical that triggers the body's sleep/wake cycle. As the afternoon sun starts to give way to evening darkness, the body is signaled to begin making melatonin. When adequate amounts of serotonin are present, the body can readily produce enough melatonin to prepare you for sleep. However, when there is a serotonin deficiency, the body is unable to produce enough melatonin, resulting in a restless night without slumber.

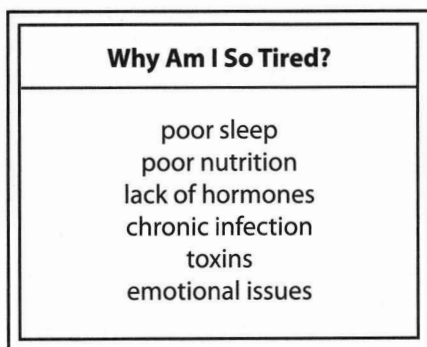
The nutrients tryptophan and 5-HTP (5-hydroxytryptophan) are necessary in order for the brain to produce serotonin. Tryptophan can be found in protein-rich foods and, when ingested, converts into 5-HTP, then serotonin and finally into melatonin. Most people generally do not get enough tryptophan through the foods that they are eating, making it important to supplement their diets with a daily dose of 5-HTP. 5-HTP is available over the counter and is a safe and all-natural way to provide the body with the necessary amino acids it lacks in order to create serotonin. If serotonin deficiency is the cause of your sleep problems, you should find a marked improvement in the quality of your sleep within a couple of weeks. For those patients who find that they need more than 5-HTP alone, I suggest that they add tryptophan along with their regular dose of 5-HTP. Tryptophan is also available over the counter and is a safe and all natural alternative to pharmaceutical sleep aids.

While melatonin is also available as a supplement, I do not recommend it for my patients who are suffering a serotonin-deficient sleep disturbance. Taking melatonin supplements ignores the root of the problem and does nothing to increase the serotonin levels in the body. It will only be a temporary solution.

even be aware of it. Sleep apnea causes you to stop breathing for at least 10 seconds at a time while you are sleeping, an interruption in breathing which usually occurs more than 20 times during each hour that you are asleep. The condition, which is associated with aging, obesity and depression, is a major risk factor for stroke and heart attack and should be taken very seriously.

Lack of Exercise

Lack of exercise can lead to a health problem called deconditioning wherein the organs begin to deteriorate resulting in fatigue. Researchers studied athletes at the top of their health and found that their organs began deteriorating within 24 hours after the end of physical activity. The same research team found that even mild exercise could counteract the deconditioning response. This discovery has been especially useful to patients confined to bed rest but can also apply to those who live a sedentary lifestyle.



Pain

Pain is a complex problem that can cause fatigue in many different ways. Fatigue may be caused by sleep disruptions associated with chronic pain or the deconditioning that results from being confined to a bed. Pain can also lead to isolation which can cause depression and, thereby, fatigue.

Malnutrition

Malnutrition can take many forms, from simply not getting enough nutrients from the foods that you eat to more serious

Beat The Fatigue Checklist

- ☐ Seek treatment for your depression or anxiety
- ☐ Improve respiratory function by reducing allergies
- ☐ If you have heart disease, or are at risk of developing it, discuss your treatment options with a physician
- ☐ Speak with a physician about your sleep disorder
- ☐ Discuss pain management options with your physician
- ☐ Have your thyroid levels checked
- ☐ Get at least 30 minutes of exercise every day
- ☐ Eat a nutritionally balanced diet and take a daily multivitamin

concerns such as eating disorders or problems with your digestive system. The immune system is the first body function hit by a lack of proper nutrients which can lead to disease and fatigue unless the problem is reversed.

Thyroid Disorder

The thyroid gland regulates the rate of your metabolism and, consequently, energy levels. If your thyroid is failing to produce enough hormones then your metabolism slows down resulting in feelings of sluggishness as well as weight gain, a condition called hypothyroidism. Hypothyroidism is a common problem in our country and affects nearly 11 million Americans.

While this list is far from comprehensive, it is a good example of how complex the problem of fatigue can be. Discovering the underlying cause of your fatigue will not only put you back on the path to your usual, energetic self again, but it could also be the beginning to restoring your health. If you are experiencing fatigue that has lasted longer than 2 weeks, schedule an appointment with your health care provider as soon as possible.

Suggested Supplements:

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

CoQ10

Brain Link® Complex by Pain & Stress Center

Amino Acids - Perfect Amino

Omega Pure 900 EC

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com



How To Be
Perfectly
Healthy

Lighten Up: 5 Ways To Lower Your Toxic Burden

Do you ever feel sluggish with no explanation in sight? Tired, but clearly not for lack of sleep? Just not right but unable to explain how or in what way? Do you worry that your doctor will think that you're making it all up or that maybe these symptoms are all in your head? Perhaps what is weighing you down is a case of toxic overload!

It certainly is more likely than not! Consider these facts: There are over 75,000 synthetic (aka "man-made") chemicals currently registered with the Environmental Protection Agency. Every year more than 24 billion pounds of toxic substances are released into the environment, only a fraction of which have been tested for safety or how they interact with each other. At the same time, chronic degenerative diseases are on the rise. The CDC estimates that 1 out of 2 men and 1 out of 3 women will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. 70 million Americans have been diagnosed with some form of cardiovascular disease and 16 million adults suffer from asthma. Adults are not the only ones affected by the toxic epidemic, though. Asthma diagnoses in children have jumped 75% since 1980 and the number of children diagnosed with autism increases 17% *each year*.

Toxic substances find a way into our bodies through the air that we breathe, the foods that we eat, the water that we drink, and the products that we use to clean and beautify our bodies and our homes. Think that you're immune? A study conducted by the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in 2003 says differently. Study researchers tested 211 volunteers for a range of possible contaminants, and found an average of 91 pollutants in the volunteers' blood samples. Of those 91 pollutants, an average of 53 were known carcinogens including PCBs, dioxins, phthalates, insecticides, pesticides and heavy metals. The group of volunteers included individuals who lived in a rural coastal community and had eaten organic foods for over 30

years.

There are no facts or statistics to enumerate how many people are suffering with general yet unexplained symptoms such as fatigue, aches, general malaise or "allergies". Yet when faced with the statistics that we do have, a link between toxins and these unexplained symptoms isn't so far fetched.

So the question then becomes, "Must we sit by idly while these toxins settle in our bodies?" The answer is a resounding, "NO!" There are a number of effective detoxification methods available, ranging from general purpose to those intended for more specific purposes. Here are some of my favorite methods of detoxification. Keep in mind, a variety of detoxification methods can be employed for your purposes, some of which can even be done on a daily basis.

1. Far Infrared (FIR) Sauna

Who can benefit:

FIR sauna is a wonderful general-purpose detox method and can successfully rid the body of a variety of toxins, including alcohol, nicotine, PCBs, cholesterol and certain heavy metals such as mercury, lead, arsenic, cadmium and aluminum.

How it works:

All saunas work on the premise of sweating the toxins out of the body. FIR differs from standard saunas because it utilizes radiant energy instead of convectional heat to induce sweating. Radiant energy is able to penetrate the body as much as 4.5 cm below the surface of the skin, reaching all layers of the dermis and subcutaneous. This energy is then converted to heat, causing the body to sweat, which removes the toxic waste. The fact that FIR saunas operate at lower temperatures than standard saunas (generally between 105 and 130 degrees) makes this a relaxing and comfortable way to lighten your toxic burden!

2. Chelation Therapy

Who can benefit:

Anyone with heavy metals in their body.

How it works:

Chelation refers to the process of administering a substance into the body that binds with heavy metals, forming a salt that can then be safely excreted from the body through the urine. The chelator can be administered orally, intravenously, rectally or topically on the skin. There are several different chelator substances, each of them tailored to bind to specific metals.

3. Body Cleanse

Who can benefit:

This is another great all-purpose detox method, that can benefit everyone.

How it works:

Body Cleanse, also known as Foot Detox, is a relaxing way to rid your body of toxins. It works by placing your feet in a basin that contains salted water and an ion generator. A power supply attached to the ion generator delivers a small current (1.6 to 1.8 amps), creating positively and negatively charged ions in the water. The charged atoms act as a magnetic field, attracting oppositely charged particles in the body, drawing them out through osmosis. The charged particles target toxic substances within the body, attaching to them and then releasing them safely and painlessly into the water.

4. Lymphatic Therapy

Who can benefit:

Those with a weakened immune system or people who suffer from swollen lymph nodes.

How it works:

The lymphatic system is larger than the circulatory system, and the body's primary immune defense and waste eliminator. It is critical to managing the elimination of toxins from the body. The lymphatic system is comprised of over 600 "collection" sites called lymph nodes and has a massive network of collecting vessels. The primary responsibilities of the lymphatic system

are to carry disease-fighting material to cells attacked by germs, transport the dead germs away and supply the heart with protein-rich plasma. When this system is blocked, the body becomes defenseless against attacks by viruses, fungi, bacteria and other toxins.

Because the lymphatic system is not driven by the heart, there is no engine pumping fluid through the vessels. The lymphatic system relies on pressure generated by activity to move the toxin-laden lymph fluid out of the cells. Without sufficient movement, the waste can build up in the lymph system and health problems can ensue.

There are two therapies that I employ for the lymphatic system: rebounder (mini-trampoline) therapy and Light Beam Generator.

Rebounder therapy works by getting the body in motion to encourage the lymphatic system. Jumping up and down on a mini-trampoline is one of the best ways to compress the lymph vessels and move lymph fluid throughout the system without causing high-impact stress on the musculo-skeletal system.

A Light Beam Generator (LBG) is a device that can assist the body in detoxifying the lymphatic system. LBG is a non-invasive technology that uses extremely low current and negatively charged light photons to provide compatible frequencies to the blocked areas in the lymphatic system, resulting in the cells correcting their out-of-balance condition. Rapid movement of waste material within the cells occurs, greatly increasing the delivery of waste material to the organs responsible for body waste disposal.

5. Heel Detox-Kit™

Who can benefit:

Those experiencing symptoms of illness caused by an unhealthy lifestyle such as an unbalanced diet, substance abuse and/or exposure to environmental toxins like allergens, pollution and

pesticides.

How it works:

The Detox-Kit™ works by stimulating the body's natural processes of elimination to cleanse itself of these poisons, which can build up over time and negatively affect the immune system. It is easy to use – no pills or messy powders to deal with. You simply add the recommended dosage to your daily amount of consumed water.

There are so many other wonderful, healthy and safe detox methods that I recommend, including liver flushes, coffee enemas, colon hydrotherapy, IV therapy and a host of supplements that can boost your immune system.

Before beginning any type of detoxification program, discuss the pros and cons with your physician. Not every method will be effective or recommended for every person. Inform your physician of any health problems that you may have so that they can work with you to create the appropriate detox method for you. Toxins may be a given in our environment, but they don't have to be a given in your body. Detoxify regularly to safely avoid toxic overload.

Additional Detoxification Treatments

Coffee Enema

Liver Flush (available through perfectlyhealthy)

Colon Cleanse

Health Mate Far Infrared Sauna (available through perfectlyhealthy)

Light Beam Generator

Laser Energetic Detox

IV Chelation

Glutathione IV

Phosphatidylcholine IV

Vitamin C IV

IV Nutrient Therapy (Push or Meyer's Cocktail)

Amalgam removal

Dental Foci Treatment

Colon Hydrotherapy

Suggested Supplements:

Chelatique

H.M.D.

Detox Kit by HEEL
Vitality C by American Nutraceuticals
Burbur by Nutrimedix
Opti Cleanse GHI By Xymogen
Core Restore by Orthomolecular
Trace Minerals by Standard Process
Parsley by Nutrimedix
Alpalipoic Acid
Superionic Silver by Perfectly Healthy

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Make Your Home A Healthy Home

We often think of our homes as our sanctuaries, a place to rest and regroup so that we can face the world each day. Our homes protect us from the outside world, insulate us from the cold and give us a place to treasure our families and express our personalities.

But what if this very place to which you retreat is the source of illness and disease? It's entirely possible, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, which lists indoor air pollution as one of the top 5 public health threats facing Americans today. Judging by the list of chemicals and biological contaminants that contribute to indoor air pollution (mold, carbon monoxide, radon, tobacco smoke, nitrogen dioxide, organic gases, formaldehyde, pesticides, cleaning products, asbestos, lead and plastics) it's no wonder that we are in more danger from our indoor air than we are from our outdoor air. Many of these toxins are known or suspected carcinogens while others can cause respiratory problems, as well as damage to the kidneys, liver and the central nervous system. That's the bad news.

The good news is that there are many things that you can do to reduce your exposure to these harmful toxins. Below is a list of just a few steps that you can take to restore your home to a place of healing.

Test Your Home For Radon

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that seeps up from the ground and can come in through cracks in your home's foundation or walls. No one is safe from this natural toxin. Whether you live in a classic turn-of-the-century home or a brand new modern domicile, radon can find a way into your house. The EPA estimates that up to 30,000 people die each year from lung cancer as a direct result of radon poisoning— a number

that could easily be reduced if more people tested for radon in their homes. Visit your local hardware store and purchase an inexpensive radon test. If the test results are positive for radon, contact a specialist who can safely and effectively eliminate the harmful gas from your home.

Use All-Natural Household Products

Your average household cleaning product contains a toxic mixture of active and inactive ingredients, few of which have been tested for their health safety when used alone—none of which have been tested for their safety when used together. Such products contain chemicals that are known or probable carcinogens and can cause a myriad of other health issues ranging from respiratory problems to headaches to damage to the central nervous system, kidneys and the liver. The only way to ensure safety when using these products is to avoid using them at all. For those with the time and inclination, simple recipes to create your own cleaning products can be found at the bookstore or online. If you prefer to purchase ready-made products at the store, your choices have significantly improved over the past few years. Products exist for every budget and can clean your home from top to bottom just as effectively as the more toxic options.

Clean Your Air With Potted Plants

Common household plants can be very effective at cleaning the air in your home. Bill C. Wolverton of NASA has been studying the use of plants as air cleaners for over 25 years and has found that plants actually absorb toxins through their leaves and use them as a form of plant food. His research has revealed that plants such as Boston Ferns, English Ivies, Areca Palms, Spider Plants and Striped Dracena can remove toxins such as xylene, benzene, formaldehyde and carbon monoxide from your indoor air. You may not know what these chemicals are, but they are lurking all over your house. Xylene can be found in synthetic fragrances (such as air fresheners) and paint while benzene is a common ingredient in plastics, detergents, synthetic fibers, and tobacco smoke—all which have the ability to off-gas into

the air that you breathe. Formaldehyde, a hot topic in the news these days, is found in plywood, particle board, carpet, household cleaners, water repellants and paper goods, to name a few and carbon monoxide can leak from fireplaces, stoves and space heaters. By bringing the beauty of the outdoors in, you can have an effective and all-natural air purification system for a fraction of the cost of a high priced air filtration system.

Reduce Moisture

Moisture in your home can create the perfect breeding ground for biological contaminants such as molds and mildew, which can create a host of health problems ranging from cold-like symptoms to difficulties breathing. Poorly maintained humidifiers, dehumidifiers, and central air units can prove especially hazardous as they not only create an excellent environment for these contaminants to grow but they also disseminate the contaminants into the air with each use. Regularly cleaning these appliances according to the manufacturer's instructions can drastically reduce the level of contaminants in the home. Likewise, wipe down moist walls immediately and make certain that carpets are thoroughly dried after becoming water-soaked.

Ventilate, Ventilate, Ventilate

Ventilation is key to maintaining good air quality in your home. Many of today's homes have been weatherproofed so that they are more energy efficient. Admittedly, energy efficiency is important to the planet as well as our wallets, but a home that has been weatherproofed too well can actually be making you sick. When a home has little to no ventilation, chemical particulates and gases can build up to toxic levels. You may not notice the effects at first, but a cold that just won't seem to go away or a headache that comes on at the end of each day (just about the time that you return home after work) could be the result of poor indoor air quality. The solution? Believe it or not, it can be as simple as opening a couple of windows and turning on the fan. Moving the air out of your home and introducing outside air can make a huge difference!

When it comes to your home, place good air quality at the top of

your to-do list. While a beautiful home is a wonderful place to come home to, clean healthy air will ensure that you can enjoy that home for a lifetime!

Suggested Products:

Air Purifier by Austin Air

Health Mate Infrared Saunas

Aromatherapy Products by Ancient Nutrition

Essential Oil Diffuser

Echo Water Ionizer with Hydrogen

Synergy Whole House Water Filter

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

A Meal To Live For

You've seen the labels before. You've heard the buzz in your grocery store aisles. Organic! Grassfed! But what is that anyway? And does it really matter if I buy organic or grassfed products?

Understanding Organic

Let's start with what makes something "organic". Organic refers to the agricultural process used to produce food and fiber. All kinds of agriculture products are produced organically, including produce, grains, meat, dairy, eggs, fibers, flowers and processed food products. Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides, petroleum- or sewage-sludge- based fertilizers, bioengineering or ionizing radiation. Organic meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. Before a product can be labeled "organic," an inspector visits the farm where the food is produced to make sure that the farm meets the USDA's strict standards.

But why choose organic over the standard fare found in your average grocery stores? Let's look at how organic farming differs from conventional farming in the methods used to grow crops.

- Where traditional farmers apply chemical fertilizers to the soil to grow their crops, organic farmers feed and build soil with natural fertilizer.
- Traditional farmers use insecticides to get rid of insects and disease, while organic farmers use natural methods such as insect predators and barriers for this purpose.
- Traditional farmers control weed growth by applying synthetic herbicides, but organic farmers use crop rotation, tillage, hand

weeding, cover crops and mulches to control weeds.

The result is that conventionally grown food is often tainted with chemical residues, which can be harmful to humans. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers 60% of herbicides, 90% of fungicides and 30% of insecticides to be carcinogenic. Human exposure to pesticides can lead to a host of other problems as well, including neurotoxicity, disruption of the endocrine system (hormones), immune suppression and reproductive issues, including miscarriage and birth defects.

Additionally, conventional produce tends to have fewer nutrients than organic produce. On average, conventional produce has ONLY 83% of the nutrients of organic produce. Studies have revealed significantly higher levels of nutrients such as vitamin C, iron, magnesium and phosphorus, and significantly less nitrates (a toxin) in organic crops.

Why Go Grassfed?

When it comes to meat and poultry, you may have heard the term "grassfed", but what does that mean? No antibiotics, growth hormones, fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides are used when raising grassfed animals. Parasites are controlled primarily through preventative measures such as rotational grazing, balanced diet, sanitary housing, and stress reduction. The result? A nutritionally superior food source containing less fat, fewer calories, more beta carotene, a lower risk of E-coli and more Conjugated Linoleic Acids (CLAs), which block tumor growth, reduce obesity, reduce the risk of diabetes and stimulate the immune system.

The meat from grassfed animals is also 2 to 5 times higher in omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids belong to a group of polyunsaturated fats called essential fatty acids because they are necessary to life and health, yet we cannot make them in the body—they must be obtained from diet. Like all fats, omega-3s provide energy. Their caloric value is similar to other fats and oils, but unlike saturated fats, they have important health roles. These fatty acids are fundamental molecules in the structure and activity of the membranes of all cells throughout the body and hold highly specialized functions in neurological tissues, especially

Conventional Farming Methods	vs.	Organic Farming Methods
Farmers apply chemical fertilizers to the soil to grow their crops		Farmers feed and build soil with natural fertilizer
Farmers use insecticides to get rid of insects and disease		Farmers use natural methods, such as insect predators and barriers, to get rid of insects and disease
Farmers control weed growth by applying synthetic herbicides		Farmers use crop rotation, tillage, hand weeding, crop covers and mulches to control weeds

the brain and retina. Because of their role in cell membranes, omega-3s are essential for the formation of new tissue and are ; therefore, important for development and growth. They also play a major role in the prevention and management of certain diseases and chronic conditions.

Everyday we are bombarded by toxins in our water, our air, the products that we use... and especially our food. By buying organic and grassfed products, you are taking charge of your health and making a conscious choice to care about your future and well being. With all of the dangers that we are forced to confront, make your dinner table a safe haven for your family and loved ones. Why not give the special people in your life a meal to live for, rather than a meal to die for?

The Fruits Of Good Health

Each year the changing seasons gift us with a new cornucopia of delightful fruits and vegetables that not only taste great but are excellent health boosters, as well! Fruits and vegetables are packed with powerful antioxidants that can lower your risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes-related damage and even slow down the body's natural aging process. So grab an apple and read on...

Antioxidants vs. Free Radicals

What exactly are antioxidants and why do we need them? Antioxidants are nature's way of fighting off potentially dangerous molecules in the body. These molecules are called free radicals, and come in many forms, including: synthetic chemicals such as pesticides, plastics, and chlorine byproducts. Free radicals are unstable molecules that essentially feed off of otherwise healthy molecules in order to survive. Every day tens of thousands of free radicals are generated within the body, causing cell damage that can lead to chronic and degenerative diseases if left unchecked.

The body sometimes creates its own free radicals in order to destroy viruses or bacteria. To balance out these unruly molecules, the body also creates antioxidants, which have the sole purpose of neutralizing free radicals. The body is only designed to create a certain amount of antioxidants on its own; however, and as we are faced with an ever-growing number of environmental toxins, the body is less capable of fighting off the unwanted harmful invaders.

Fruits and vegetables provide the body with an added source of antioxidants that is needed to properly wage war against free radicals. Without the necessary intake of healthy fruits and vegetables, free radicals can spread and eventually lead

to stroke, heart attack, arthritis, vision problems, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease and various types of cancer.

Lower Your Cholesterol

The benefits of getting your daily dose of fruits and vegetables are numerous! The antioxidant vitamin E is wonderful for your heart. vitamin E has the ability to essentially "mop up" the LDL ("bad") cholesterol in your arteries, allowing for the necessary elasticity and blood pressure levels to keep your heart pumping safely. LDL cholesterol, if left untreated, builds up as plaque on the inside walls of the arteries, impeding blood flow and forcing the heart to work overtime to continue functioning. Eventually, plaque buildup can become so severe that it can create a blockage in the artery, leading to heart attack or stroke. By getting enough Vitamin E in your diet you can give your body the necessary antioxidants to prevent your LDL cholesterol levels from getting out of control.

Protect Against Diabetes-Related Damage

Antioxidants can protect you against diabetes-related damage. Free radicals thrive in the altered metabolic states of diabetics. But with the necessary antioxidants that fruits and vegetables can provide, free radicals can be neutralized, protecting your kidneys, blood vessels, eyes and heart from harmful damage.

Prevent Cancer

Free radicals cause cancer cells to grow. Many studies have linked cancer, including those of the stomach, prostate, colon, breast, bladder, esophagus and pancreas, to free radicals. Eating your fruits and vegetables may not prevent cancer altogether, but can give your body the fighting chance that it needs. Antioxidants can neutralize cancer cells before they develop into a mass. A recent study at Harvard University found that men who ate the most tomato-based foods (rich in antioxidants) had a 35% lower risk of developing prostate cancer than those who ate the least amount of tomato-based foods.

Top 10 Antioxidant-Packed Foods

small red bean	artichoke hearts
blueberry	blackberry
red kidney bean	prune
pinto bean	raspberry
cranberry	strawberry

Look Younger

Antioxidants slow the effects of aging! Free radicals damage the cells within our body that are vital to a youthful appearance and good health. Eating fruits and vegetables can slow down the loss of muscle elasticity that leads to wrinkles, boost your immunity, making you less susceptible to illness, and put the brakes on memory failure, since free radicals injure the brain cells necessary for retaining information.

My Healthy Recommendations

Antioxidants are available in supplement form but are the most powerful when found in whole foods. The best practice is to combine a "greens" supplement (containing vitamins, minerals and antioxidants found in produce) with the recommended 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Leafy vegetables, like spinach, collard greens, broccoli and bok choy, and orange colored fruits and vegetables such as mangos, oranges, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes and carrots are all excellent sources of the antioxidant beta-carotene. Fruits and vegetables containing lycopene, such as tomatoes, watermelon, guava, papaya, apricots and pink grapefruit, are also packed with antioxidants.

It is important that when you are purchasing fruits and vegetables for yourself and your family that you shop in the organic section. The produce available in most stores no longer contains the level of nutrients that it did 100 years ago.

Because of pesticides and the diminished mineral levels in soils used today, eating non-organic produce will not provide you with the antioxidants (or vitamins and minerals) that your body needs. On average, organic produce contains nearly 30% more nutrients than non-organic and is grown without using harsh chemicals that can lead to further free radical exposure.

This summer is a great time to start a new healthy habit that your family will love, and eating 5 to 9 servings a day of scrumptious organic fruits and vegetables really can keep the doctor away!

Suggested Supplements:

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

ACE-S + ZN

Raw Chocolate by Sun Food Nutrition

True Fiber

Fibermax

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Not All Fats Are Created Equal

It has been drilled into our heads over the years that foods high in fat are bad for us. But did you know that there are actually fats that are good for you? And not only are they good for you, but they are essential to your very existence.

Essential Fatty Acids

Essential fatty acids (EFAs) are called essential because your body cannot produce them on its own. EFAs must be present in the foods that you eat and without them, vital life-saving hormones cannot be made. Every single cell in your body is made up of these important fats and they are critical to the functioning of the muscles, nerves and organs. A deficiency in EFAs could mean minor to serious health problems that are avoidable by getting the necessary amount in your regular diet.

Essential fatty acids are comprised of two types of fats: Omega-6 fatty acids and Omega-3 fatty acids. The standard American diet is typically high in Omega-6 and low in Omega-3. Omega-6 and Omega-3 are both polyunsaturated fats, whereas the "bad" fats are saturated and mono-unsaturated fats.

Omega-6

The primary Omega-6 fatty acid is called linoleic acid (LA) and is found abundantly in processed foods, vegetable oils and margarine. Once LA enters the body it is converted to gamma linolenic acid (GLA) and arachidonic acid (AA) where it is then used to make vital hormone-like substances called eicosanoids. GLA is partially used to make an eicosanoid called Prostaglandin E1 (PGE1), whose 3 basic functions are to reduce inflammation within the body, dilate blood vessels and inhibit blood clotting. This important eicosanoid helps the body to recover from injury

by reducing pain and swelling. It is also vital to keeping blood flowing freely throughout the body.

AA is partially converted to a second class of eicosanoid called prostaglandin E2 (PGE2). PGE2's primary functions are the opposite of PGE1's. This key hormone strongly increases inflammation, constricts the blood vessels and encourages blood clotting. Without PGE2 you could bleed to death, but in excessive quantities, this hormone could be bad. Diseases associated with inflammation and blood clotting, such as rheumatoid arthritis, heart attack and stroke can result from an overabundance of PGE2.

Omega-3

Omega-3 is the healing fat. Its primary fatty acid is alpha linolenic acid (ALA) and large quantities of it can be found in flax seed oil, fish and fish oils. To a lesser extent, ALA can also be found in dark green leafy vegetables, soybeans and canola oil. Once in the body, ALA converts to two other Omega-3 fatty acids, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) where they are used to produce the eicosanoid, prostaglandin E3 (PGE3). PGE3 is a proinflammatory and inhibitor of blood clotting, both key to reversing trauma and infection.

Balance Is Key

Both Omega-6 and Omega-3 must be present in equal proportions in any healthy eating plan in order to glean their full benefits. An imbalance can be detrimental to your health, and is likely one of the main reasons why we are seeing an influx in age-related illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes today.

When humans first roamed the earth during the Paleolithic era, their diets included a one-to-one ratio of Omega-6 and Omega-3. The average ratio of Omega-6 to Omega-3 in North America is currently around eleven to one. That means that Americans are consuming eleven times as many Omega-6s as Omega-3s. A deficiency in Omega-3 can lead to many health

Foods Rich in Omega-3 Fatty Acids

nuts	herring
soybeans	tuna
canola oil	cod
walnut oil	flounder
flaxseed oil	mackerel
salmon	shrimp
bluefish	

problems, ranging from dry skin and hair, frequent colds and flu, fatigue, depression and memory loss to high cholesterol and blood pressure, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Supplementing your diet with foods high in Omega-3 could help to reverse some of these symptoms and improve your health greatly.

Fats That Heal

In the early 1950s, researchers were highly intrigued by the dietary habits of the Greenland Eskimos. While they consumed great amounts of fatty fish, their instances of cardiovascular disease were quite low. Through their study, the research team discovered that the subjects' diet of seal and whale contained very high amounts of essential fatty acids.

Since the Greenland Eskimo study was first conducted, over 30,000 subsequent research teams have investigated the healing properties of EFAs with exciting results. Over the past half century it has been determined that supplementing your daily food intake with EFAs can have a positive effect on cardiovascular disease by reducing the chance of suffering from a heart attack or stroke. Studies have also determined that EFA deficiency plays a role in mental decline and cognitive impairment. Supplementing volunteers with fish oil (high in Omega-3) effectively lowered the rate of mental decline and, in some cases, halted the decline altogether. Patients suffering from depression have shown promising results when taking

fish oil on a daily basis as have subjects diagnosed with both schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Researchers have also determined that children diagnosed with ADHD tend to have lower levels of Omega-3 in their blood cells, leading to several studies currently underway.

My Health Recommendations

In 2002, prompted by the sheer volume and promising results of EFA research, the American Heart Association issued new dietary guidelines stating that eating fish twice a week may lower your risk of heart disease. Due to the amount of mercury pollution in our nation's waterways, I recommend that my patients take a high quality fish oil supplement instead. The same healing Omega-3 fatty acids are present in fish oil but without the dangers of mercury contamination.

Supplementing your diet with Essential Fatty Acids is vital to good health. When making food choices, remember that all fats are not created equally and choose your fats wisely. Cutting out fats completely is not only a bad choice but can lead to serious health consequences down the road.

Suggested Supplements:

Omega Pure 900 EC

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

The Many Benefits Of Goat Milk

Your favorite foods could be the source of allergies that you didn't even know you had. Food allergies are commonly overlooked or misdiagnosed, often being dismissed by your health care provider with a quickly written prescription. The source of the problem is all too often misunderstood or simply not determined, leaving the patient with a temporary band-aid solution for a long-term health problem.

The Problem With Cow's Milk

Cow milk is a common allergen, typically causing problems in either the small intestine or the colon; however, digestive, breathing or skin problems can also occur. Symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, colitis, poor nutrient absorption, eczema, rhinitis, asthma, bronchitis, hyperactivity and migraines can all be caused by an allergy to cow's milk. Typical symptoms related directly to intestinal distress include irritability; failure to gain weight; and large, foul-smelling stools. In infants, these symptoms generally manifest themselves between the 2nd and 4th weeks after birth. No wonder it's so commonly misdiagnosed!

Solving The Milk Riddle

So what is the answer to this milk riddle? It's the most widely consumed milk in the world: Goat milk.

It has been found that approximately 40% of people allergic to cow milk are able to tolerate goat milk. In infants, the numbers are even more impressive, with only 1 out of every 100 infants allergic to cow milk also having goat milk intolerance. As a matter of fact, the use of goat milk as a hypoallergenic infant food has been reported widely in anecdotal literature. Infants

who suffer from the symptoms associated with a cow milk allergy have found relief with goat milk. There have been numerous cases of chronic intestinal disease in infants (primarily caused by feeding them cow milk formula) reportedly cured by shifting them over to goat milk. If infants are arguably one of the most vulnerable age groups, then it's likely that goat milk holds the same benefits for people of all ages.

Why Soy Milk Is *Not* The Answer

Soy formula is the most common cow milk formula substitute for infants suspected of having a cow milk allergy, but approximately 20-50% of these infants will have a similar intolerance to soy formula. While soy formula has been touted for years as the healthy alternative to cow milk formula, the truth is that very little research has been done to determine the safety of soy in infants.

Daniel Sheehan, director of the FDA's National Center for Toxicological Research, stated in 1998 that soy-fed babies are taking part in "a large, uncontrolled and basically unmonitored human infant experiment". The reason for this concern lies in the fact that soy contains several toxic chemicals, including phytates, enzyme inhibitors, haemagglutinin and phytoestrogens, which are not fully destroyed during the cooking process. The phytates in soy actually block the body's ability to absorb the minerals calcium, magnesium, iron and zinc, all of which are vital to an infant's growth and development. The enzyme inhibitors in soy hinder protein digestion; the haemagglutinin causes red blood cells to clot and inhibits oxygen uptake.

Perhaps the most troubling issue with soy formula; however, is the vegetable's ability to mimic the hormone estrogen. Some researchers believe that soy-fed babies receive estrogen equivalent to five birth control pills EVERY DAY. This phytoestrogen overload has been linked to thyroid abnormalities, retarded physical maturation in boys and early puberty in girls. Early puberty is a significant risk factor for breast cancer later in life, as it increases lifetime exposure to estrogen. Research also suggests that diabetes, central nervous system changes, extreme emotional behavior, asthma,

immune system problems, pituitary insufficiency and irritable bowel syndrome may be caused by high phytoestrogen intake in early life.

My Health Recommendations

Since scientists are only now beginning to research and understand the long-term effects of soy consumption on the body, it is clear to me that the far superior choice for infant formula is evaporated goat milk or goat milk powder.

Goat milk fat contains significantly greater amounts of short-and-medium-chain fatty acids than its cow counterpart, contributing to more rapid digestion. Such short-and-medium-chain fatty acids have been used to treat a number of health problems, including childhood epilepsy, cystic fibrosis and gallstones. Additionally, these fatty acids have the unique ability to provide energy to growing children as well as the ability to lower cholesterol deposits in the blood and dissolve cholesterol in gallstones.

Goat milk also has a greater amount of iron than cow milk. It has been observed that children on goat milk surpassed those on cow milk in weight gain, stature, skeletal mineralization, bone density and have higher blood concentrations of vitamin A, calcium, thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin.

The average size of goat milk fat globules is smaller than that of cow and other species' milks because it is naturally homogenized. The smaller fat globule size makes it easier to digest and allows the amino acids to be absorbed more efficiently than those of cow milk.

There is good reason why the majority of the world's population consumes goat milk and has thrived for thousands of years: because it's the closest to human breast milk that you can find in a widely domesticated animal, period. It's accepted the world over, and is quickly gaining popularity here in the United States as the general population becomes more educated regarding the health benefits of this ancient animal.

C Your Way To Good Health

Hear the term "vitamin C" and you might conjure up images of orange trees, grapefruits and someone shaking an ice-cold container of OJ, fresh from the source, and covered in cool drops of water. Refreshing citrus and maybe even avoiding a cold or the flu—these are things that people generally associate with vitamin C. But did you know that this powerful antioxidant can also lower your risk of heart disease, stroke and even cancer? It's never been so easy to C your way to good health!

The importance of vitamin C has been known for centuries, going back to the late 1700s when sailors in the British Navy began dying of scurvy caused by a severe deficiency of vitamin C. Vitamin C wouldn't actually be isolated and identified until the 1930s, but what the sailors knew at the time was that eating oranges could cure scurvy. Today, incidences of scurvy are scarce in the US but can still be found in the elderly population. Symptoms of a vitamin C deficiency include dry skin and hair, gingivitis, easy bruising, wounds that heal slowly, nosebleeds, swollen and painful joints, and a decreased ability to fight infections.

In the nearly 80 years since vitamin C's discovery we've learned enough about the nutrient to fill volumes. Here are some of the most notable facts about this amazing vitamin...

Vitamin C Is A Powerful Antioxidant

Antioxidants are nature's way of fighting off potentially dangerous molecules in the body. These molecules, called Free Radicals, come into the body in a variety of ways, including in the form of synthetic chemicals such as pesticides, plastics, and chlorine byproducts. Free radicals are unstable molecules that feed off of healthy molecules in order to survive. Every day tens of thousands of free radicals are generated within the body,

causing cell damage that can lead to chronic and degenerative diseases if left unchecked.

The body sometimes creates its own free radicals in order to destroy viruses or bacteria. To balance out these unruly molecules, the body also creates antioxidants, which have the sole purpose of neutralizing free radicals. The body is only designed to create a certain amount of antioxidants on its own; however, and as we are faced with an ever-growing number of environmental toxins, the body is less capable of fighting off the unwanted harmful invaders.

Vitamin C provides the body with the added antioxidants that are needed to properly wage war against free radicals. Without enough vitamin C, free radicals can spread and eventually lead to stroke, heart attack, arthritis, vision problems, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease and various types of cancer.

Vitamin C Is Excellent For Your Heart

The First National Health and Nutrition Examination Study found that the risk of death from cardiovascular disease was 42% lower in men and 25% lower in women who consumed 300 mg/day of vitamin C. Another study found that patients who took 500 mg/day of vitamin C were able to lower their systolic blood pressure by 9% after 4 weeks. Vitamin C has also been found to significantly reduce LDL ("bad") cholesterol and increase HDL ("good") cholesterol as well as decrease the number and size of blood clots in veins.

Vitamin C Lowers Your Risk Of Cancer

Studies show that high intakes of vitamin C are associated with decreased incidence of cancers of the mouth, throat, vocal chords, esophagus, stomach, colon-rectum and lung. In these studies, the most significant risk reductions occurred in people consuming at least 80 to 110 mg of vitamin C daily. Some studies suggest that even higher amounts may prove to be beneficial. In the Nurses Health Study, premenopausal women with a family history of breast cancer who consumed an average

Vitamin C Food Sources*			
Barbados Cherry	1,678	Kiwifruit, green	98
Rosehip	1500	Lychee	72
Jujube	500	Persimmon	66
Guava	183	Papaya	62
Black Currant	155 - 215	Orange	53
Kiwifruit, yellow	120 - 180		

**mg vitamin C/100 grams*

of 205 mg/day of vitamin C had a 63% lower risk of breast cancer than those who consumed an average of 70 mg/day. In the 1970's and 80's, Nobel laureate Linus Pauling Ph.D. conducted a series of research studies into the effects of vitamin C on cancer. His studies found that extremely high doses of vitamin C (10 grams/day intravenously for 10 days followed by 10 grams/day orally indefinitely) were helpful in increasing the survival time and improving the quality of life of terminal patients. Pauling's findings were exciting news in the medical community and the implications were encouraging for further research. In the 1980's however, the Mayo Clinic tried to replicate his findings and were unable to do so. For several decades the prospect of vitamin C having cancer-fighting implications was essentially shelved.

All of that changed a few years ago; however, when it came to light that the two studies were conducted in a slightly different manner: the Pauling study administered the vitamin both intravenously and orally while the Mayo Clinic study only administered the vitamin orally. This lead to a 2004 study conducted by the US government's National Institute of Health (NIH), which found that how vitamin C is administered is directly related to how much the body is able to use. It was found that blood concentrations of vitamin C administered intravenously were 6.6 times higher than when the same amount was taken orally. This lead the NIH scientists to conclude in their paper (published in the "Annals of Internal Medicine," April 2005) that,

"the efficacy of vitamin C treatment cannot be judged from clinical trials that use only oral dosing," and that, "the role of vitamin C in cancer treatment should be reevaluated". Based on the NIH's conclusions, several studies are currently underway exploring the use of vitamin C in cancer treatments.

My Health Recommendations

Vitamin C can be found in foods, or in supplement form, either taken orally or administered intravenously. Foods such as green peppers, citrus fruits, strawberries, tomatoes, broccoli, leafy greens, sweet and white potatoes and cantaloupe are especially high in vitamin C. It is important to note that the body cannot manufacture or store vitamin C; therefore, it is necessary to make sure that you are getting enough from your daily eating plan and through supplementation. The recommended daily allowance for women is currently 75 mg/day and for 90 mg/day for men. Those who are likely to require more vitamin C daily include people with poor eating habits, those who consume alcohol, diabetics, people exposed to heavy metals and those who smoke. Discuss with your doctor the benefits of increasing your daily intake of vitamin C.

Getting enough vitamin C each day is an easy way to take care of your body and fight off future illness. So grab an orange and C your way to good health!

Suggested Supplements:

Vitality C by American Nutraceuticals

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

The Sunshine Vitamin

The UVB rays from the sun are bursting with protective vitamin D, an important nutrient for your bones, heart, immune system and your happiness. Vitamin D is known as the sunshine vitamin because the majority of our D intake comes from these sunrays (in the form of vitamin D3). A handful of foods, such as fatty fish and egg yolks, contain vitamin D naturally, yet our main food source of the vitamin, milk, is fortified with D2 to protect us against deficiency. Fortification began in the 1920s to prevent children from developing rickets and adults from developing osteomalacia, both skeletal diseases that damage the bones. Today, rickets is relatively unheard of, but the need to get your daily D is still vitally important.

The Benefits Of Vitamin D

Over the past few decades, vitamin D research has begun to explode and the findings are both intriguing and exciting. It appears that vitamin D has many protective health benefits. For example, studies suggest that vitamin D may prevent the development of colon cancer and breast cancer while preliminary evidence suggests that high doses of the vitamin may be beneficial in the treatment of prostate cancer.

Heart Disease

Vitamin D is proving to be an important contender in the fight against heart disease. A German study found that high doses of D lowered inflammation in study participants, an underlying cause of congestive heart failure. In a Harvard Medical School study, participants who were vitamin D deficient were twice as likely to have heart attacks and strokes than participants who had adequate vitamin D blood levels. And yet another study linked low vitamin D levels with hypertension, noting that blood pressure is often elevated in the winter when exposure to the sun is most limited.

Metabolic Syndrome

Metabolic syndrome (also known as Syndrome X) has been strongly linked to vitamin D deficiency. One study out of Spain found that 61% of participants who had metabolic syndrome were also D-deficient. Metabolic syndrome is characterized by cardiovascular disease, abdominal obesity and insulin resistance, a precursor to diabetes.

Diabetes

The relationship with Vitamin D and diabetes doesn't stop there; however,. A study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that lower blood levels of D were associated with a greater degree of insulin resistance. Not surprisingly, recent studies indicate that patients with type 2 diabetes had improved insulin sensitivity after supplementing with vitamin D.

Bones

When it comes to skeletal health, vitamin D has always been an important factor and multiple research studies continue to prove just how significant the connection is. Vitamin D is vital to strong, healthy bones and maintaining normal levels of the vitamin may actually prevent osteoporosis. A D deficiency is associated with hip fractures and bone loss and it has been estimated that roughly half of those being treated for osteoporosis have lower-than-adequate levels of vitamin D in their blood.

Are You Vitamin D Deficient?

90% of my patients are deficient in vitamin D so, chances are, you are too. A D deficiency can occur if your dietary intake of the vitamin is inadequate, if you have limited exposure to sunlight or if your body cannot process vitamin D appropriately. People with Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis, liver disease or who have had part or all of their stomach removed may also be deficient in the vitamin. As we age, the body is less able to convert vitamin D to its active form; therefore, , older individuals may also be at risk for vitamin D deficiency.

My Healthy Recommendations

Getting your daily dose of vitamin D is as easy as stepping out into the sunlight and drinking in the rays. Here are a few things to keep in mind when enjoying the warmth of the sun:

1. Begin with just a few minutes of exposure, until you have a pink foundation. Never let your skin burn.
2. Sunbathe with clean skin, free of lotions, soaps, perfumes or cosmetics.
3. Do not use sunblock—the production of both vitamin D and melanin pigmentation are UVB dependent.
4. Use sunscreen only after you've had proper sun exposure and you are going to be in the sun for extended periods of time.
5. Reduce sun exposure when you are in the snow, white sand, or high altitude locations.
6. Do not exceed the safe daily limits. Put on a hat and the proper clothing, and a sunscreen that contains a physical sun block, such as titanium dioxide.

I encourage everyone to have their vitamin D blood levels tested for sufficient levels of the sunshine vitamin. Your doctor can monitor your blood levels to determine the dose appropriate for your individual needs. In addition to daily exposure to the sun you may need to supplement with cod liver oil or vitamin D3 (the form most readily available to the body). Check with your doctor to find out how much you should be taking before you begin to supplement with vitamin D.

Suggested Supplements:

Vitamin D3 by Thorne

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Enhancing Health With A Multivitamin

An apple a day keeps the doctor away. But then, you also need a banana, an orange, a pear, a handful of carrots, some avocado, a head of lettuce, some tomatoes... well, the list goes on. Did you make sure to get your 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables today? How about yesterday, and the day before that? Chances are, even if you are the most diligent of nutritional fiends, you still don't get your daily requirement of vitamins and minerals.

Thesedays, it's nearly impossible to find the necessary level of nutrients in our food alone. The mineral content in our soils has diminished over the years due to the increase in pollution and pesticides and the hormones in our meat and poultry supply lower the food's overall nutritional value. Just a century ago our food contained all of the nutrients that our bodies required to perform at an optimal level. But today, this is no longer a fact. Today it has become necessary to supplement your diet with a multivitamin.

The Recommended Daily Intake (RDI) for vitamins was first established during the first World War when food supplies were limited and concerns about vitamin deficiency-related diseases ran high. RDIs were created to ensure that Americans received the minimum vitamins necessary to ward off diseases such as scurvy. Today, these diseases are relatively unheard of and medical researchers have begun to focus their attention on the role that vitamins play in preventing degenerative diseases.

Cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes are serious diseases that thrive on our nation's poor eating habits and sedentary lifestyle. A lack of the necessary vitamins and minerals triggers a cascade of events within the body that ultimately leads to these degenerative diseases. But with a multivitamin, your body is armed with the necessary weapons needed to fend off life threatening illness.

Lower Your Risk of Cardiovascular Disease

Testing your blood for homocysteine and C-reactive Protein levels can indicate your current health status. Elevated levels of either one is a red flag that something is not right within your body. Too much homocysteine in the bloodstream can alter DNA, which can fuel the progression of heart disease, accelerate aging and increase your risk of developing cancer. But two studies recently reported in the New England Journal of Medicine found that taking a daily multivitamin with folic acid and B vitamins can lower homocysteine levels.

C-reactive Protein (CRP) is produced in the liver and helps the body to heal wounds and fight off infection. The presence of CRP in the blood is an indication of an underlying infection or inflammation. Chronic inflammation is associated with a variety of diseases, including cardiovascular disease and stroke.

CRP levels may be elevated many years prior to a coronary event and can be a significant predictor of new coronary events in apparently healthy men and women. Studies indicate that the higher the CRP level, the higher the risk of developing a heart attack. Elevated CRP levels present in the blood after a stroke or heart attack can be indicative of a repeated coronary event with a lower survival rate.

A study printed in the "Journal of the American Medical Association" (JAMA) in 2003 found that multivitamins can significantly lower CRP levels, with an observed average drop of 14%.

As a matter of fact, authors of a similar study reported in JAMA stated that the simple act of taking a daily multivitamin, "could prevent tens of thousands of cases of cardiovascular disease each year at very low cost and with few (if any) adverse effects."

Lower Your Risk of Cancer

A study published in 2003 in the "Journal of Epidemiology" found that people who took a multivitamin regularly for 10 years had a 30% lower risk of developing colon and rectal cancer.

Multivitamins contain vitamin D, which has been found to keep cancer cells from multiplying and dividing in laboratory studies. Likewise, vitamins D, E and folic acid have been linked to a lower risk of both colon and breast cancer.

Multivitamins also contain several antioxidants, including vitamin C, E, as well as beta-carotene, which fight off potentially dangerous molecules in the body called free radicals. Free radicals are unstable molecules that search the body for healthy molecules to complete them. When a free radical encounters a healthy molecule, it takes what it needs from the healthy molecule to stabilize itself, rendering the formerly healthy molecule damaged. Free radicals leave behind them a wake of destruction, altering DNA and oxidizing the body from the inside out. Left unchecked, free radicals can cause cancer as well as heart disease and other degenerative diseases. Antioxidants seek out free radicals in order to neutralize them, stopping them before their damage leads to a deadly outcome.

Lower Your Risk of Diabetes

Insulin resistance is a precursor to type 2 diabetes. Normally, ordinary levels of insulin will escort glucose into your cells. With insulin resistance, your cell receptors do not recognize the insulin hormone and deny it access to deposit the glucose. With nowhere for the glucose to go, sugar begins to build up in your bloodstream. Your pancreas, unaware of the insulin resistance, steps up insulin production in an effort to pump out enough of the hormone to remedy the situation. The overproduction of insulin inundates your bloodstream. Chromium has been found to assist the body in maintaining normal blood sugar levels and can be an important measure towards preventing Type 2 Diabetes from taking hold.

Multivitamins level the playing field of good health. A food-based multivitamin will contain all of the vitamins and minerals that should be a part of your regular diet and fill in the gaps where your diet falls short. Multivitamins do not replace healthy eating, but rather they supplement an already healthy diet. As a matter of fact, the healthier your diet, the better your multivitamin will work for you!

Suggested Supplements:

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy
Innate Multi Vitamin without Iron

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

You Can Live A Cancer-Free Life

The word "cancer" has shown up in so many news reports over the past decade that people have almost become desensitized to its brevity. With so many things—things that were once staples of the American way of life—being labeled as carcinogenic, it's hard to not feel overwhelmed, and then simply feel nothing at all. "After all," the prevailing attitude seems to be, "I'm going to die of something, right?" The fact is; however, that cancer does not have to be your destiny. Yes, there are factors such as genetics that are simply out of our hands but there is a great deal more that we DO have power over when it comes to living a cancer-free life!

What Causes Cancer?

Cancer is the result of previously healthy cells within the body simply going awry, whether as a result of a genetic switch that has been turned on or a toxic substance altering the cellular DNA. Without intervention, these cells may begin to multiply out of control and then eventually spread to other parts of the body. There are over 75,000 synthetic chemicals currently registered with the Environmental Protection Agency, and nearly half of them are known or suspected of having the ability to alter cellular DNA. Every single living being on this planet has been touched by these chemicals, through the air that we breathe, the water that we drink and bathe in, the foods that we eat and the personal care products that we apply to our bodies on a daily basis. A study conducted by the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in 2003 found that every single one of their 211 volunteers had an average of 91 environmental pollutants in their bloodstreams. Of those 91 pollutants, approximately half of them were known carcinogens, including PCBs, dioxins, phthalates, insecticides, pesticides and heavy metals.

Cancer does not generally occur after the first encounter with

carcinogenic toxins, but instead a cumulative exposure can cause cells with altered DNA to replicate and form tumors. And while a weakened immune system will not cause cancer to form, a strong immune system can and often does prevent tumors from developing and plays a strong role in protecting the body against cancer.

How The Body Fights Back

Our bodies have been designed with the innate ability to correct the damage caused by toxic invaders, such as microorganisms, viruses and bacteria. Armed with a battalion of cells, all with different abilities, the immune system can identify toxins within the body and the damaged cells that result from their intrusion. Once identified, the immune system goes to work, neutralizing or killing the harmful toxins and the damaged cells.

Feed Your Immune System

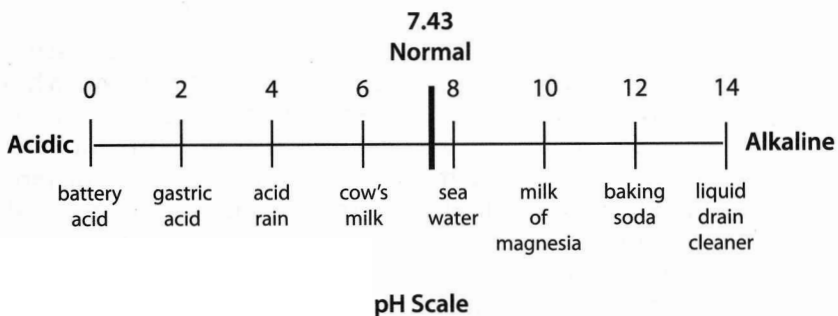
It is important to feed your immune system to keep it in cancer-fighting shape. Hippocrates is famous for saying, "Let your food be your medicine and your medicine be your food." Keep this in mind when choosing the foods that you put into your body. The Standard American Diet (SAD) is filled with foods that are known to inhibit proper function of the immune system. Such immune-debilitating foods include those containing white flour, sugar, preservatives, cholesterol, pesticides, antibiotics and hormones as well as those that are low in fiber and high in fat. Instead of these harmful foods, eat plenty of organic fruits and vegetables, packed with the vitamins and minerals necessary to fuel your immune system. Antioxidant-packed foods will give your immune system an extra boost, so be sure to get the recommended 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables every day! Leafy green vegetables, like spinach and collard greens, and orange colored fruits and vegetables such as mangos, oranges, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes and carrots are all excellent sources of the antioxidant beta-carotene. Fruits and vegetables containing lycopene, such as tomatoes, watermelon, guava, papaya, apricots and pink grapefruit, are also packed with antioxidants.

Run For Your Life

Exercise can serve a dual function when it comes to your immune system. By exercising 30 to 60 minutes a day, every day, you can give your immune system an extra boost while also helping to reduce stress and its harmful effects on your health. Stress can generate harmful free radicals that alter healthy cells within the body, and is considered to be a factor in nearly 90% of all illnesses. Exercising is the perfect antidote to stress, though! When the body encounters a perceived stressor it sends out stress hormones, which initiate the fight or flight response. By stretching out your muscles and giving your body a workout, you're providing the release that it requires to restore hormonal balance without causing harm to your health.

Find A Good Balance

Proper pH balance is also vital to healthy immune system. A slightly alkaline state is optimal for cell communication, while an acidic state can lead to a weakened immune system. Acid buildup both diminishes white blood cell production and lowers the quantity of white blood cells that are produced.



The most effective way to reduce acids in the body is through the foods that you eat. Reducing your intake of acidic foods (such as coffee, alcohol, sugar and most proteins) and replacing them with alkalizing foods (such as fruits and vegetables) is an excellent way to restore pH balance. Dietary supplements such

as calcium, magnesium and pH balancing products can also aid in restoring and maintaining normal pH levels.

Detoxify Regularly

It is immensely important that you partner your immune-boosting efforts with a method of detoxification! Ridding your body of the toxins that can lead to cancer is absolutely necessary when it comes to living a long and healthy life. Methods such as Far Infrared Sauna and chelation therapy can safely rid the body of harmful toxins. There are also a variety of detoxification methods that you can do at home, such as a liver flush and a colon cleanse. Speak with your physician before beginning any detoxification protocol. Your physician should be able to recommend a protocol that is right for your specific detox needs.

Don't tune out when it comes to discussing cancer! Learn all you can about boosting your immune system so that you are best prepared to avoid this disease. Give yourself a fighting chance. Don't you deserve to live a cancer-free life?

Suggested Supplements and Protocols:

Vitality C by American Nutraceuticals
Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy
Detox drops Kit by HEEL
Burbur Detox by NutriMedix
Natural Extracts
Liver Gall Bladder Flush
Coffee Enema
Superionic Silver by Perfectly Healthy

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Lowering Your Prostate Cancer Risk

One in six men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime, with more than 234,000 men being diagnosed this year alone. An estimated 2 million Americans are currently living with the disease—a number so high that you most likely know someone living with prostate cancer.

While every 19 minutes another man dies from this deadly disease, prostate cancer has a nearly 100% recovery rate if detected in its early stages. Since the 1970s the survival rates for all stages of prostate cancer combined have increased from 67% to an amazing 97%. Researchers credit these impressive statistics to an increase in awareness and early detection.

The Risk Factors

The age that a man should begin prostate cancer screening depends upon his personal risk factors. Factors that determine risk level include age, family history, race, diet and lifestyle. If none of the risk factors are present, men should begin annual screenings at the age of 50. However, if one of more of the risk factors exists, testing should begin as early as 45.

Age

As a man grows older his risk factor increases exponentially. At the age of 30 the average man has a 1 in 10,000 chance of developing the disease. However, as he reaches his 40s the risk increases to 1 in 38 and by the time he's in his 60s the risk becomes *1 in 14*.

Race

African American men are 61% more likely to develop prostate cancer than Caucasians and are 2.5 times more likely to die from the disease.

Family History

If another member of your immediate family (father, brother, son) has been diagnosed with prostate cancer then you are twice as likely to develop the disease.

Diet and Lifestyle

While the first three prostate cancer risk factors are out of your control, diet and lifestyle changes can be made to decrease your odds of developing the disease. Researchers have discovered that certain foods can have prostate-protective effects and that maintaining a healthy weight can not only lower your risk of developing the disease but also increase your chance of survival should you be diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Foods That Lower Your Risk!

A loss of vitamins and minerals in your diet can lead to uncontrollable cancer cell growth, yet by increasing your vitamin and mineral intake you can slow down the development or progression of cancer. Armed with this knowledge, researchers have begun to focus their attention on individual vitamins and minerals and their healing effects.

Tomatoes

Recently, several studies have extolled the virtues of the tomato, thought to be one of the most "prostate healthy" foods out there. Tomatoes contain the powerful antioxidant lycopene, which neutralize cancer causing free radicals before they can cause damage within the body. One study conducted over a 12-year period found that men who ate at least 2 servings of tomato sauce each week lowered their risk of developing prostate cancer by 28%. In those who had already been diagnosed with the disease, eating two servings of tomato sauce a week lowered their risk of the cancer spreading to other organs by 36%. While researchers aren't clear on the exact science, it appears that cooked tomatoes are more beneficial than raw tomatoes.

Cruciferous Vegetables

Researchers have also discovered the healing effects of cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy and kale. In the early stages of prostate cancer,

a key cancer stopping protein called sulforaphane is wiped out so that the cancerous cells can grow and spread. Cruciferous vegetables contain high amounts of this cancer fighting protein and studies have shown that men who eat 5 or more servings of these leafy green vegetables a week can lower their risk of developing prostate cancer by up to 20%.

Vitamin E, Selenium and Beta-Carotene

Vitamin E, selenium and beta-Carotene have all been the focus of research studies lately and are currently the subject of a 12-year study by the National Institute of Health (NIH) that began in 2000. Previous studies have revealed that supplementing your eating plan with vitamin E can lower the risk of developing prostate cancer by 32% and the risk of dying from the disease by 41% while two other studies have discovered that taking 200 mcg daily of selenium and supplementing daily with beta-Carotene can also lower your risk of developing the disease.

Omega-3 and Vitamin D

While you may now be tempted to limit your vegetable eating to only tomatoes and broccoli, remember that the best healthy eating plan is one that contains a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Additionally, foods high in omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin D are beneficial to lowering prostate cancer risk and should be a part of each meal, while cancer-promoting foods such as red meat should be avoided whenever possible. It is also vitally important to maintain a healthy weight, and exercise for 30 minutes a day 3 times a week. Preventing prostate cancer is easier than treating the disease.

This information is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to prostate cancer. Volumes of research have been published on this disease and new findings are being revealed every day. With awareness, education and early detection come hope and the potential to live a long and fruitful life. If you or someone you love is at risk (and especially those over the age of 65, since 90 percent of prostate cancers fall in that group), encourage them to schedule a prostate cancer screening examination, a PSA blood test, and, if elevated, an ultrasound, which could locate a suspicious area.

Prostate Health Checklist

- ☐ Begin having annual prostate screenings between the age of 45 and 50
- ☐ Eat foods rich in vitamin D & Omega 3 fatty acids
- ☐ Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables (with an emphasis on tomatoes and cruciferous vegetables)
- ☐ Take daily doses of vitamin E, selenium and beta carotene
- ☐ Exercise regularly & maintain a healthy weight

Suggested Supplements and Protocols:

A good prostate formula recommended by your doctor

Omega Pure 900 EC

Vitamin D3 with K2 by Perfectly Healthy

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

Liver Gall Bladder Flush - 1 per month X3 months then twice per year.

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

5 Steps To A Sharper Memory

Have you ever searched frantically for your sunglasses only to find them propped comfortably on top of your head? Or pulled out of your driveway with your coffee cup perched precariously on the roof of your car? Sure, we all have days like these, where we seem to have left our brains at home for the day. But enough of these days in a row and you might start to question if you're losing your mind altogether. While you might be tempted to begrudgingly chalk it all up to yet another downside of aging, don't be too hasty! There are a number of things that you can do to stop mental decline in its tracks. Here are five easy ways to sharpen your brain while also boosting your overall health.

1. B Smart!

The brain is a sophisticated network of communication, processing and storing information and sending important signals throughout the body. All sensations, movements, thoughts, memories, and feelings are the result of signals passed through cells called neurons and are facilitated by chemicals called neurotransmitters. Neurotransmitters escort the signal from one neuron to another until it has reached its intended destination. In order for this process to be successful, the neurons must be healthy and flexible, and nutrients to feed the process must be bountiful.

B vitamins play an integral role in brain health and have long been associated with memory, information processing, verbal reasoning and verbal ability. The family of B vitamins includes thiamin (B1), riboflavin (B2), niacin (B6), folic acid, pantothenic acid, biotin, cobalamin (B12) and choline and can be found in many foods including vegetables, dairy products, whole grains and liver. The B vitamins play a critical role in brain function, from manufacturing neurotransmitters to regulating energy release in the brain to maintaining mental agility.

B vitamins also appear to protect against dementia and Alzheimer's. A study conducted by the Rush Institute for Healthy Aging in Chicago found that low niacin intake was directly associated with Alzheimer's disease. Of the 815 participants in their study, those with the lowest intake of niacin were 80% more likely to be diagnosed with the disease.

So how much is enough when it comes to taking your B vitamins? I recommend that everyone take a B complex vitamin with a daily dose between 80 and 200 mg.

2. PS: Slow Down Cognitive Decline

Phosphatidylserine (PS) is an important nutrient vital for cell communication. PS makes up about 70% of the neurons protective outer membrane, preserving its flexibility and aiding in the storage, release and activity of neurotransmitters. The list of functions that PS performs is long, and includes stimulating the release of dopamine for mood regulation, increasing the production of acetylcholine which is necessary for learning and memory, enhancing blood glucose metabolism to fuel the brain, and reducing the stress hormone cortisol.

As we age, levels of PS in the brain decline, resulting in the gradual loss of the ability to learn, reason, concentrate and remember. In the 1970's researchers began examining the effects of PS supplementation on brain activity with amazing results. The decades of research have concluded that PS supplementation can slow down and even reverse the decline of cognitive functioning that comes with aging.

PS is available in supplement form at health food stores and has been determined to be completely safe. Due to the integrity of the volumes of peer-reviewed research conducted on PS, in 2003 the FDA allowed two health claims to be made about the supplement: PS may reduce the risk of cognitive dysfunction in the elderly and PS may reduce the risk of dementia in the elderly. Most vitamins and minerals on the market do not carry FDA health claims.

Among the various research studies conducted, no participants reported adverse effects caused by PS and only one drug

interaction has been detected. PS has been found to interact with blood thinners, such as Coumadin, and may possibly enhance their effects. If you are taking blood thinners, consult with your doctor before supplementing with PS. You may find that the dose of your blood thinner can be lowered.

3. Take A Radical Approach

Every single day your brain is facing off against destructive free radicals, which are the result of environmental pollution, stress, medications, and even food additives. Fortunately, coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is guarding the frontlines and protecting your brain against the harmful effects of these scavengers. CoQ10 is produced by the body and protects from the ravages of everyday life and normal aging (such as oxidative stress and cell damage), which can lead to dementia, Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. As we age; however, CoQ10 levels begin to decline. And if you are taking certain prescription medications, such as statins, antidepressants, beta blockers or antidiabetic drugs, your CoQ10 levels are even lower.

Studies have shown that taking CoQ10 supplements can restore energy production levels in the brain to nearly normal levels, protecting the neurons from free radicals that cause cell death. Researchers suggest that low energy levels in the brain play a large role in the progression of Parkinson's disease. When it comes to choosing a CoQ10 supplement, I suggest selecting a 200 mg dose to take daily.

4. Choose Your Fats Wisely

When your younger sibling used to call you a "fat head", he wasn't far off! The brain is made up primarily of fat and the kinds of fat that you get in your diet can have a big impact on your mental health. Bad fats, such as trans fats and saturated fats, produce inflammation throughout the body and prevent good fats from getting to the brain while also disrupting neurotransmitters— the brain's great communicators. These fats can be found in french fries, margarine, potato chips and anything else with partially hydrogenated oils. When good fats, in the form of Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids (also known as essential fatty acids), aren't able to make it to the brain, a

Broken Brain Treatment Protocol

- Optimize nutrition
- Balance your hormones
- Reduce inflammation
- Fix your digestion
- Enhance detoxification
- Boost energy metabolism
- Calm your mind

decline in structural and functional integrity in the brain occurs. This means that your memory declines, learning becomes more difficult, and you may become depressed. It also sets the stage for dementia, Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

As we age our need for essential fatty acids increases; therefore, it is highly important that you get them through your foods and with supplementation. Make sure that you get between 300 and 1,000 mg a day. Flax seed oils, fish and fish oils are all excellent sources of essential fatty acids.

5. Get The Lead Out

...and the mercury and all other heavy metals while you're at it! All of us have these metals in our bodies, to one degree or another. We get them from the foods that we eat (mercury and pesticide-residues containing heavy metals), the water that we drink and bathe in (98% of households have lead somewhere in their plumbing), the air that we breathe (air pollution from manufacturing plants and vehicle emissions) and even from the fillings in our mouths (mercury amalgams).

Sadly, it's a fact of life that we all have to live with, but when it comes to our mental acuity, there couldn't be a bigger enemy! It's been well known for centuries that lead and mercury affect memory and cognitive behavior. Now researchers suspect that these metals are involved with senile dementia and may be responsible for Alzheimer's disease. Studies show that Alzheimer's patients have 3 times higher blood levels of mercury than people without Alzheimer's disease.

Memory Checklist

- ☐ Take 80 -200 mg of vitamin B complex daily
- ☐ Take 200 mg of CoQ10 daily
- ☐ Eat/take 300 -1,000 mg of Essential Fatty Acids daily
(through food and/or supplements)
- ☐ Discuss a detox plan with your doctor
- ☐ Talk with a biological dentist about your metal amalgams

Detoxifying heavy metals from your body should be a part of your regular routine. Since your exposure to heavy metals is most likely ongoing, your detoxification regime should include chelation. I suggest detoxifying every day to continually cleanse the body of these harmful metals and other toxic pollutants. Spending 20 minutes in a far infrared sauna 3 times a week can be an effective way to detoxify, as can using products such as Zeolite or Detox Kit drops by Heel. These supplements are designed to accelerate the removal of toxins from the body in order to provide you with rapid relief of symptoms caused by heavy metal exposure.

If you have mercury amalgams, make an appointment with a biological dentist to discuss your removal options. Biological dentists are specially trained in safe amalgam removal and will create a detoxification program to accompany the removal.

If you're feeling like your brain isn't what it used to be, don't waste another day before taking action. Deterioration of the brain can be, to a great extent, repaired or even prevented, so you have nothing to lose when it comes to boosting your brain power.

Suggested Supplements:

IQ Maximizer distributed by Perfectly Healthy

CoQ10 by Perfectly Healthy

B-Compleet by Carlson's

Lithium Orotate

Omega Pure 900 EC

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

Avoiding The Flu Naturally

Every year, right around the beginning of fall, the media begins their annual “flu pandemic” reporting. At about the same time, reports of vaccine shortages start hitting the air and the feeling of widespread panic begins. It’s practically a tradition. You don’t need to worry about the flu this year; however, and it won’t be thanks to a flu shot! No, this year you and your family can avoid the flu naturally by strengthening your immune system.

Taste the Rainbow

Eating a wide variety of fresh, wholesome foods packed with powerful vitamins and minerals is the first step to ensuring a strong immune system. Vitamins A, B6, C, and E and the minerals zinc, iron, copper, and selenium are critical for maintaining strength and immunity. Make sure that your diet consists of a rainbow of fruits and vegetables to ensure that you are getting all of the necessary nutrients. Supplementing your diet with a daily multivitamin will fill the gaps where your diet falls short and should be an essential part of your health regime. During cold and flu season, increase your dosage of vitamin C for added virus-fighting benefits. Should you still become sick, studies have shown that the powerful antioxidants in vitamin C can reduce both the symptoms and duration of the flu.

I’ll Have Extra Garlic, Please

Certain foods can give you an extra boost and should be factored into your regular eating habits. Garlic is known for its antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal properties and can prevent infections from taking hold and spreading. A daily serving of 2 raw garlic cloves will provide you with the bulbous herb’s healthy benefits. Tip: To avoid offensive garlic breath, cut the cloves into smaller pieces and then swallow them with water or herbal tea. Follow with a sprig of parsley.

A Mushroom A Day

Mushrooms have been found to increase production and activity of white blood cells, improving your chances of fighting off infection. Both Shiitake and Maitake mushrooms provide the biggest immunity boost.

Have a Tea Party

Jump-start your immune system each morning with a fresh pot of black tea. While the healthy properties in black tea have been known for centuries, a recent Harvard University study confirmed its healing effects. The study found that people who drank 5 cups of black tea a day for two weeks had 10 times higher levels of the cold-and-virus fighting chemical interferon than those who did not drink tea. Researchers suspect that green tea has the same effect.

Run Away

Exercising for 30 to 60 minutes daily can give your immune system the extra kick that it needs. A study conducted by David Nieman at Appalachian State University found that people who walked regularly for 12 weeks had half the number of colds and sore throats as people who were less active.

Exercise is also a great way to reduce stress and its harmful effects on the immune system. It has been estimated that 90% of illness and disease is stress-related. But don't overdo it! Too much exercise can have the opposite effect on your immune system. Exercising for more than 90 minutes a day could make you more susceptible to the flu virus.

Sleep On It

Getting a good night's sleep is essential for the immune system to recharge itself. An overly fatigued body doesn't have the necessary strength to fight off infections. With 8 hours a night of solid sleep, your body will be ready to face a new day and ward off pesky invaders.

Flu Prevention Checklist

- ☐ Take a daily multivitamin
- ☐ Increase vitamin C intake during cold/flu season with Vitality C
- ☐ Eat 9 servings of fruits & vegetables daily
(with liberal servings of garlic, shiitake and maitake mushrooms)
- ☐ Begin each day with a cup of black tea
- ☐ Exercise for 30-60 minutes each day
- ☐ Get 8 hours of sleep each night
- ☐ Wash your hands frequently

Lather Up

A strong immune system should be able to combat the flu virus, but washing your hands frequently can increase your health odds even more. Use warm water and soap and avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes to prevent the virus from entering your system.

Avoid the Flu Shot

According to Dr. J. Anthony Morris, the former Chief Vaccine Control Officer at the FDA, "There is no evidence that any influenza vaccine, thus far developed, is effective in preventing or mitigating any attack of influenza." When you also consider the toxic mixture of chemicals found in the flu vaccine, the decision becomes a no-brainer. Among the vaccine's ingredients are such toxins as ethylene glycol (a.k.a. antifreeze), formaldehyde (a known carcinogen), aluminum (linked to Alzheimer's Disease and known to produce cancer in mice) and thimerosal (a form of mercury, the most toxic of all heavy metals). Thimerosal has had so much scrutiny in the past decade that it has been banned in all childhood vaccinations in the United States, yet it still remains in the influenza vaccine today.

This year the flu season doesn't have to get you down. Take good care of your body and you will be rewarded with a lifetime of good health. And just think of what you can do with all of those unused sick days!

Suggested Supplements:

Guna Flu by Guna

Citomix by Guna

Vitality C by American Nutraceuticals

Mega Greens MSM™ by Perfectly Healthy

Superionic Silver by Perfectly Healthy

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

A Scentsational Approach To Healing

Aromatherapy is a popular buzzword these days and you would be hard-pressed to walk through your favorite store without seeing the word splayed across label after label. Ten years ago the term was typically reserved for use in the holistic community and just a few years before that it was relatively unheard of. But the truth about aromatherapy is that it has been around far longer than most people realize, dating all the way back to the ancient Egyptians.

Aromatherapy has been found to provide therapies, both therapeutic and medicinal, using oils extracted from plants. These oils improve your health and well being on all levels—physically, mentally, and emotionally.”

The History Of Aromatherapy

Essential oils have been used throughout history for their healing properties. The oldest known herbal text was written around 2700 B.C., documenting over 200 botanicals and their specific uses. During the 1500s B.C., the Egyptians used aromatic botanical oils, waters, incense and resins in their religious ceremonies. Both the ancient Greeks and Romans believed that scented water and incense could boost health and prosperity and the Greek physician Hippocrates famously stated, “To achieve perfect health everyone should have a daily aromatic bath and a scented massage.”

The term “aromatherapy” was coined in the early 1900s by French chemist R.M. Gattefossé. He discovered the healing properties of aromatic oils quite by accident when his hand became severely burned while working in his laboratory. Reacting quickly, he stuck his hand in the closest liquid he could find: lavender oil. The oil soothed the burn and after a few days he found that the wound had completely healed, leaving no traces of a scar. This

piqued his interest a great deal and in 1937 he penned the first modern text on the subject titled "Aromatherapy".

Most people associate aromatherapy with aromatically pleasing scents, but the actual term refers to the essential oils derived from plants using a distillation process. Often it can take several hundred pounds of any such plant to produce even a small amount of the essential oil. Essential oils are pure and the only type of aromatic scents that contain healing properties.

Fragrances That Heal

True essential oils can offer both physical and psychological benefits. Physically, they can enhance the immune system, heal wounds, fight colds and relieve pain associated with muscle aches, headaches and arthritis. Psychologically, essential oils have been shown to have a soothing effect and relieve stress. But the healing properties found in essential oils do not end there. Astrid Duerr says that she has used aromatherapy to effectively treat patients for over 20 years. She has found great success treating women with PMS and menopausal issues as well as men and women who suffer from insomnia, depression, anxiety and fatigue. When working with a patient, she provides support in stress and pain management, detoxification and boosting the immune system.

No one knows for certain how essential oils work to heal the body. The most widely accepted theory suggests that the fragrances do their work through the brain. The aromas enter the body through the nasal cavity and stimulate the odor-sensing nerves, which send messages throughout the body via the limbic system. The limbic system is believed to be the part of the brain responsible for memory and emotion. Based on the particular properties of a scent, a calming or energizing response will occur.

Recently, researchers have begun taking a closer look at the healing properties of essential oils. In a study conducted by the Natural Health Center in the United Kingdom, 7 out of 10 patients experienced a reduction in their blood pressure levels after receiving massages using a blend of ylang-ylang, clary

Essential Oils

Bergamot: *skin conditions, depression, stress*

Benzoin: *stress, arthritis*

Eucalyptus: *arthritis, sinusitis*

Geranium: *menopause, skin conditions*

Lavender: *anxiety, depression, headaches*

Lemon: *flu, skin conditions*

Orange (sweet): *stress, cold/flu*

Patchouli: *fatigue, stress, skin conditions*

Peppermint: *asthma, headache, nausea, vertigo*

Rosemary: *muscle aches, exhaustion, joint pain*

Tea Tree: *candida, flu, sinusitis, migraine, skin conditions*

Ylang Ylang: *anxiety, depression, hypertension*

sage and marjoram mixed with grapeseed oil. Researchers at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital in New York found that patients undergoing MRI reported 63% less claustrophobia after exposure to the aroma of vanilla and researchers at Wheeling Jesuit University discovered that the smell of cinnamon or peppermint can relax driver's tensions, curb driver fatigue and increase alertness.

Aromatherapy can be practiced in your own home, but there are added benefits to working with a professional. A certified Aromatherapist will evaluate your current health status, considering factors such as lifestyle, allergies and stress level. Using this information, they can create a unique blend of essential oils tailored to address your specific needs. Essential oil blends can then be mixed with a carrier oil, such as jojoba or almond oil and used for massage or added to boiling water for steam inhalation.

Recipe For Relaxation

Try it yourself and experience the benefits firsthand. There are simple recipes that anyone can use at home. "For a wonderfully relaxing and stress-relieving bath, immerse yourself into a bathtub filled with warm water. Add 3 drops of bergamot, 3 drops of lavender and 2 drops of cedarwood essential oils dispersed in 1 tablespoon of milk or almond oil. Enjoy for 20 minutes."

Essential oils can be purchased at most health food stores or online. When using essential oils, keep them out of the reach of children and never take them internally unless it is clearly noted that it is appropriate (or safe) to do so.. Also, keep in mind that a little goes a long way so it is important to always stick with the recommended dosage.

Suggested Supplements:

Essential Oil Diffuser

Aroma Therapy by Ancient Nutrition

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·

Products available at www.perfectlyhealthy.com

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Laughing Your Way To Good Health

You care about your health. You eat only organic foods, exercise daily and take your vitamins religiously. But did you manage to squeeze in a good belly laugh today? If you didn't, you're missing out on one of the easiest, least expensive and most enjoyable activities that you can be doing for your health. Laughter is wonderfully healing and is not only good for your heart and immune system but can also be an effective tool for managing stressful situations.

Good For Your Heart

Earlier this year, researchers established a link between laughter and healthy blood vessels. In a study led by Michael Miller, M.D., 20 non-smoking, healthy participants were shown two movie clips, a humorous scene from the movie "Kingpin" and the mentally stressful opening scene of "Saving Private Ryan". Before and after viewing each movie clip, the volunteers were given a blood vessel reactivity test. For the test, blood flow in the brachial artery in the arm was restricted by a blood pressure cuff and released. An ultrasound device then measured how well the blood vessel responded to the sudden increase in flow. Each participant watched the two clips with a minimum of 48 hours in between viewings.

The results? Beneficial blood vessel relaxation was increased in 19 of the 20 volunteers after they watched the movie segment that generated laughter. In contrast, brachial artery flow was reduced in 14 of the 20 volunteers following the movie clip that caused mental stress. Overall, the average blood flow increased 22% during laughter and decreased 35% during mental stress.

The finding confirms the link between mental stress and the narrowing of blood vessels. Laughter appears to cause the tissue

**American Film Institute's
Top 10 Comedies**

1. Some Like It Hot (1959)
2. Tootsie (1982)
3. Dr. Strangelove (1964)
4. Annie Hall (1977)
5. Duck Soup (1933)
6. Blazing Saddles (1974)
7. MASH (1970)
8. It Happened One Night (1934)
9. The Graduate (1967)
10. Airplane (1980)

that forms the inner lining of blood vessels, the endothelium, to expand in order to increase blood flow. The endothelium plays an important role in the development of cardiovascular disease. Says Miller, "The endothelium is the first line in the development of atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries, so, given the results of our study, it is conceivable that laughing may be important to maintain a healthy endothelium, and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease."

Miller goes on to say, "The magnitude of change we saw in the endothelium is similar to the benefit we might see with aerobic activity, but without the aches, pains and muscle tension associated with exercise. We don't recommend that you laugh and not exercise, but we do recommend that you try to laugh on a regular basis. Thirty minutes of exercise three times a week, and 15 minutes of laughter on a daily basis is probably good for the vascular system."

Reduces Stress

Humor imparts both physical and emotional benefits by helping us to cope throughout the day and providing us with much

needed emotional releases. Often, laughter can be just the thing we need to get us through a difficult situation.

Stress can take a nasty toll on our immune systems, leaving us vulnerable to infection. During stressful situations the body is in a state of fight or flight and large amounts of the hormone cortisol are sent into the bloodstream to prepare us for the task at hand. Most often, the types of stress that we encounter throughout the day do not warrant such an extreme reaction by our bodies, but the fight or flight response is the same whether we are faced with a life-threatening situation or merely a paper jam in the photocopy machine. Over time, this constant stream of cortisol can break down our immune systems and a whole host of health problems can ensue.

The good news is that researchers at the Loma Linda University School of Medicine have found that laughter lowers cortisol levels in the body. So next time you are facing a situation that has you ready to pull your hair out, find something that you can laugh about. It will not only help you to relax, but it will also help to reverse the fight or flight response so that you can think clearly and face the situation with the proper attention.

Boosts Your Immune System

Lowering stress isn't the only way that laughter helps our immune systems. According to the American Association for Therapeutic Humor, laughter increases the body's production of natural killer cells, which target tumor cells and protect against a wide variety of infectious microbes.

Studies also show that laughter increases Immunoglobulin A, often referred to as the body's first line of defense when it comes to fighting off colds and the flu. Several studies have shown that watching as little as 30 to 60 minutes of a comedy video is enough to increase both salivary and blood levels of Immunoglobulin A in both children and adults.

It's free. It's easy. It's fun. It'll leave a smile on your face and it doesn't hurt. Where's the downside? Laughter brings people together and adds joy to your life. And while you're rolling

on the floor, clutching your stomach with one hand and wiping the tears from your eyes with the other, your body is getting healthier. Ice cream can't even compete!

Meditating To Health

Meditation is a treatment in mind/body medicine, which refers to the way our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors affect our health. While the history of meditation can trace its roots all the way back to the 1st century B.C., new physiological benefits are still being realized today.

Most meditative techniques have come to the West from Asian religious practices, particularly those from India, China, and Japan, but similar techniques can be found in many cultures around the world. Until recently, the primary purpose of meditation has been religious, although its health benefits have long been recognized in the cultures where these methods originated. It was not until the early 20th century when the Western healthcare community began to look towards the ancient practice of mediation for its physiological healing benefits.

The first articles on the health benefits of meditation appeared in *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* in 1970. Since then, over 500 papers have been published in over one hundred scientific journals, authored by scientists at 211 research institutions and universities in 23 countries. Meditation is the first mind/body intervention to be widely adopted in mainstream health care and is now taught in modern medical settings as a technique for relaxing the body and calming the mind. It is through this relaxation that the body is able to reverse the negative effects of stress and begin to heal itself from many common health ailments that plague our society today.

Meditation is a self-directed practice for relaxing the body and calming the mind. Studies have found that regular meditation can increase longevity and quality of life while reducing chronic pain, anxiety, high blood pressure, cholesterol levels, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress syndrome in Vietnam veterans, and lowering blood cortisol levels initially brought on by stress.

The extensive health benefits are continuing to be discovered on a daily basis.

How Meditation Works

The body has two powerful systems to protect our health: a stress response and a relaxation response. The stress response, also known as the "fight-or-flight" response, is triggered by a real or imagined threat and a feeling of not being able to cope with it. Our bodies respond automatically, mobilizing for a physical struggle or quick retreat, automatically driving our sympathetic nervous system into action. As heart rate and breathing increase, our blood pressure surges, sending blood rushing to our muscles and preparing us for action. Our metabolism shifts into high gear, our blood clotting mechanisms are readied and our digestion is temporarily placed on hold. In the proper setting, this reaction is necessary for surviving a physical threat, such as a would be attacker. Unfortunately, our bodies react in the same fashion to everyday stressors, such as mortgage payments, traffic jams, criticism, insecurities or thought of our own mortality. Over time, these stressors can become disastrous to our health, producing physiological changes that can contribute to digestive and sleeping problems, cardiovascular disease, reproductive disorders, diminished immunity and a host of other illnesses and symptoms.

The beauty of the body is that it balances out the stress response with the relaxation response, inducing rest and recovery. The relaxation response combines a natural set of physiological changes including: a slowing down of our heartbeat and breathing, a decrease in our blood pressure, relaxation of our muscles and a lowered metabolism that offsets the stress response. Through the practice of meditation, you can learn to trigger your relaxation response and reduce senseless fight-or-flight responses in the face of worry or imaginary attackers.

The Studies Show It Works

In the last 30 years, scientists have found surprising connections between the mind and body at many levels of biological

Deep Breathing Tips:

Take a series of long, slow, deep breaths through your nose (focusing on raising your abdomen instead of your chest) and exhale through your relaxed mouth.

Begin your deep breathing exercises for one- to two-minute periods and slowly increase the duration until you can sustain twenty-minutes of practice in a sitting.

*Best when performed while laying flat on your back with your knees bent; however, deep breathing can be done effectively just about anywhere.

functioning. Researchers still have many questions about the complexities of mind/body interactions, yet data supports that a range of meditative techniques possess the ability to prevent, alleviate or treat specific illnesses.

Dr. Herbert Benson, a pioneer in establishing the efficacy of meditation for health through his research at Harvard in the early 70's, provides a model of mindful meditation for cardiac rehabilitation, high blood pressure, cancer, anxiety disorders and chronic pain. Dr. Benson studied the health impact of a type of meditation involving the repetition of a word or phrase (called mantra meditation). He created a non-religious version of the popular Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique with the sole goal of achieving the relaxation response that TM is known to trigger. Instead of using Sanskrit or other religious words as is done in religious practices, he had patients use neutral words such as "one" and even "Coca Cola". This approach allowed those who were not religious, or whose beliefs may have appeared to conflict with the teachings connected to a particular meditation system, to nonetheless participate fully in this health-promoting activity.

Dr. Benson's studies found that people who regularly

experienced restful awareness through meditation developed less hypertension, heart disease, anxiety and depression. The noted cardiologist emphasizes the individual's role in mind/body medicine. "Health and well being should be viewed as a three-legged stool. One leg is pharmaceuticals, another is surgery, and the third is what you can do for yourself. Mind/body medicine is strengthening the third leg, integrated with the other two legs."

In 1998, a randomized clinical trial conducted by Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D, founder of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, showed that patients with moderate to severe psoriasis undergoing phototherapy treatment, who practiced meditation while receiving the ultraviolet light treatments, healed at approximately four times the rate of subjects receiving just the light treatments. Since the delivery of the mind/body element of the intervention was simultaneous with the conventional treatments, the results were a classic example of both integrative and participatory medicine. The observation of an increased rate of skin clearing among the meditation group was seen in two separate studies. This work suggests that the integration of the mind/body element into the more conventional medical treatment resulted in a reduction of treatment costs and risk of cancer from UV exposure. It also suggested that indirectly, the mind can effect a healing process all the way down to the level of gene expression and control of the cell replication cycle, which may prove to have implications for oncogenic treatments down the road.

Practical Meditation for Everyday Life

There are many types of meditation, from transcendental to walking, to one of the most basic forms– mindfulness. While the approaches are different, all share similar outcomes: reduced stress and increased mental clarity. You achieve these results by taking time out of your life to refocus your attention from daily worries to the present moment.

There are two essential components to meditation:

1. Focusing your mind by concentrating on your breathing or a

repetitive word, phrase, image or prayer, and;

2. Taking a detached, nonjudgmental observer's view of the thoughts that go through your mind.

Before beginning your meditation, select a mantra to use during your practice. A mantra is a sound, word or phrase that is repeated to yourself. It could be spoken aloud, as a chant, or silently. Many people think that the best mantras are sounds which have no clear meaning, and are used as a way of displacing your usual thoughts and moving your awareness inward. If you do not already know of a good mantra to use, try using the word "hamsa." This is a natural mantra, being the sound that one makes when breathing, with "ham" (h-ah-m) on inhalation and "sa" (s-ah) on exhalation.

Directions for Mindful Meditation

- Sit comfortably. A quiet place is preferred, but not required.
- Close your eyes. Breathe naturally. Sit for about one minute before you begin thinking the mantra to allow your heart and breathing to slow.
- Gently bring your attention to your breath and begin to think the mantra, gently and easily. Just let it come, don't force it. Think "ham" on the inhale and "sa" on the exhale. Allow yourself to be absorbed in it.
- Allow your thoughts and feelings to come and go with detachment. Don't try to control them in any way. Just note them, and when you realize that you are not repeating the mantra, gently return to the mantra. Do not try to force yourself to think the mantra to the exclusion of all other thoughts. You may experience a deep state of relaxation but it is OK if you don't.
- Meditate in this way for 20 minutes (children for less time).
- When done, take about a minute to slowly return to normal

awareness. Be gentle with yourself when opening your eyes or coming to stand after a meditation. It isn't good for your heart to get up quickly after the state of deep rest that is often a result of meditation. Note: It is OK to glance at a clock to time the meditation. ****Don't use an alarm timer.****

- During meditation your business is simple awareness, nothing else. It is a time to connect to your inner Source and let go of the things and roles we get caught up in: work, parenting, concerns and responsibilities. It may be that your meditation is peaceful, or it may be fretful and full of obsessive thought. Regardless, daily meditation will have a positive effect on your life.

While the extent of meditation's healing effects are still being explored by the medical community, the reduction of stress and increase in mental clarity have been known for centuries. Through the practice of regular meditation, we can begin to harness the body's natural ability to heal itself and regain power over our mental and physical well being.

Suggested Products

Holosync CDs (www.centerpointe.com)

emWave® Stress Relief Systems (www.heartmath.com)

Meditation and Yoga products (www.gaiam.com)



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