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Editors
Lynne McTaggart and Bryan Hubbard

COMMENT

CELEBRATING 414 POINTS OF LIGHT

This is a day we never expected to reach, much less to celebrate.

In January 1990—some 36 years ago—we both had a crazy idea: to launch our own health newsletter. Bryan was working as the editor of a *Financial Times* newsletter and had become intrigued by the idea of a newsletter as an affordable way to produce your own publication.

I had become increasingly interested in alternative health after a pioneering nutritional doctor healed me of what would now be regarded as a faulty microbiome. Years before, as managing editor of the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate, I'd helped to launch a column called People's Doctor. I'd been hugely inspired by its author, Dr Robert Mendelsohn, a genial elder statesman of a doctor, who, despite having a sterling mainstream pedigree, was savaging many of modern medicine's most sacred cows.

I say it was crazy because at the time of our launch, we had very little money, I'd just given birth to our first daughter three months before and we had no childcare other than ourselves.

We persevered and, against all odds, got *What Doctors Don't Tell You* off the ground. We had chosen a deliberately provocative name and a bright red logo to reflect the take-no-prisoners approach we intended to follow as we revealed what actually worked in both conventional and alternative medicine.

As two investigative reporters, we knew how to dig deep into research. I would head to the British Medical Library every month, with my baby in a sling, and pore over the major medical journals, continuously astonished by just how many standard treatments were either dangerous or unproven.

The newsletter went through a number of iterations and sizes, from eight to 32 pages until, in 2012, we launched it as a magazine, complete with advertising. Our magazine would be sold not only by subscription but also on newsstands and be licensed to many countries around the world.

Through the years, the press's attitude toward our publication reflected the changing nature of mainstream reporting on medicine and health. In those early years, we were applauded by all the major UK broadsheets as what the *London Times* called a "voice in the silence," and we were wheeled out on TV to present "the other side."

By 2012, once our magazine appeared and investigative reportage about medicine had been replaced by what is essentially PR for the official party line, we endured rounds of cyberattacks by a small but vocal band of skeptics. We were then met with sustained attempts to get us banned from supermarkets and newsagents, smear campaigns in the press and even Covid, when newsstands and supermarkets were forced to stop selling magazines for months on end.

But here we still are. And this isn't simply a celebration of the 150 magazine issues we've produced since 2012. The candles we're blowing out actually number 414, the total number of issues of *WDDTY* since our launch all those years ago.

Every month since 1990, we've sought to warn against unsafe or unproven medical practices and to offer our readers proven holistic or integrative alternatives. And through the years, we've punched above our weight in terms of influence.



"May you take control of your own health . . . but most of all, may you always stay connected"

Last month, a naturopathic doctor flew all night to Crete just to attend a conference at which I was speaking because, as she put it, we had "saved her life." She'd suffered strokes and numerous illnesses, but something we had once said had given her the strength to take control of her own health and, as a naturopathic doctor, the health of her patients. Others have told us over the years that our pages gave them hope when standard medicine had nothing to offer, or that we helped them overcome a disease, save a limb or a loved one, or generally transform their health.

What we celebrate, most of all, are you, our beloved subscribers—the ones who keep us going. Many of you have been with us since the beginning and often tell us you have all 414 issues piled up, still heavily thumbed through, still keeping you healthy.

To make your life easier, and in honor of this issue, we've assembled 150 of our top ways to stay healthy and live to age 100. You'll find highly specific suggestions on the right diets to follow, the right supplements to take, the best ways to keep moving, the most efficacious alternative treatments and the worst drugs and household products to avoid.

But what you ingest (or not) is only the beginning. In her book *Radical Remission* (HarperOne, 2015), Kelly Turner included the nine key practices most frequently adopted by end-stage cancer patients who defied their poor prognoses and reversed their cancer. But what most struck me is that only two of the nine had to do with something physical, like diet, supplements, herbs or exercise.

The rest of the key practices were far less tangible: embracing strong social support, deepening your spiritual belief, letting go of suppressed emotions, increasing positivity, following your intuition and taking control of your health.

Taking control of your own health is always what we aim to help you do.

But, in my experience with Power of Eight® groups, community and a spiritual belief are the most important medicine of all. May you take control—but most of all, may you always stay connected.

Lynne McTaggart

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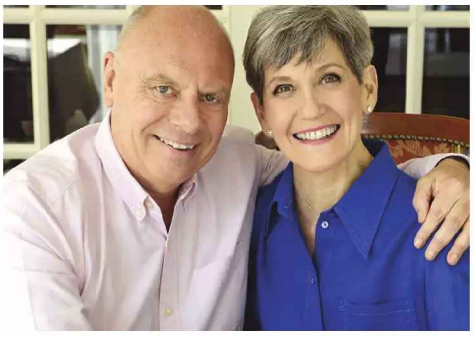
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What you now get with your subscription



Lynne McTaggart and Bryan Hubbard

Dear *WDDTY* subscriber,

We went through an evolutionary shift in November 2022. Having been a print publisher for more than 30 years, with our website puffing far behind, we became a "web first" publisher. Not that the magazine was forgotten—if you're a print subscriber, the fact you're holding a copy in your hands is testament to that—but articles destined for a particular issue are now published first on the revamped website (wddty.com).

With the relaunch, we have also reduced the subscription types to just two: print and digital or digital-only. Print-only has disappeared, and to receive the actual magazine each month, you now opt for print and digital.

Choosing this option opens up the whole website and its many benefits to you. Yes, you'll still get the magazine delivered to your door each month, but you'll also enjoy:

• Subscriber discounts: we've negotiated great discounts on a range of health products and supplements. Biocare, one of the world's leading suppliers of high-quality supplements, is the latest to offer discounts across its entire product range (see the latest offers on pages 56 – 57).

• Monthly *WDDTY* Talks: you have free access to our monthly webinars. Each month we talk with a health pioneer, and you can ask a question about a specific health concern if you join the live session. Each talk is recorded, so you can watch at any time.

• Search our database: *WDDTY* has assembled one of the largest databases of alternative health information, and you can search every word of it.

• Download e-books: you can access 20 e-books, 15 reports and two fact sheets as part of your subscription, which you can download and store on your own PC.

The way you log in has changed. With the previous site, you needed your email and password, but now you need to enter your subscriber number, which is on the address label on the envelope in which your issue was delivered. We've produced a series of videos that help you log in and navigate the site, which you can see at wddty.com/faqs.

Once you've logged in, you can also access your own account, where you can change your address and see your subscriber status.

We hope that you like the changes and that you make good use of all the extra benefits your subscription now offers.



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WHAT DOCTORS DON'T TELL YOU

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EDITORIAL PANEL

What Doctors Don't Tell You is supported by some of the world's leading pioneers in nutritional, environmental and alternative medicine. Each is an authority in his or her field; many have broken new ground and inspired new practices in medicine.



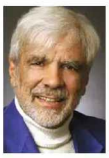
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Dr Harald Gaier is a UK-registered osteopath, homeopath, acupuncturist, naturopath and medical herbalist. Former director of medical research at The Hale Clinic and a committee member of the Prince of Wales' Foundation for Integrated Health, Dr Gaier has authored numerous scientific papers and *The Encyclopedia of Homeopathy*.



Bruce Lipton, PhD, is an internationally recognized leader in bridging science and spirit. Stem cell biologist, bestselling author of *The Biology of Belief* and recipient of the 2009 Goi Peace Award, he has been a guest speaker on hundreds of TV and radio shows as well as a keynote presenter for national and international conferences.



Dr Jonathan Wright, medical director of the Tahoma Clinic in Washington, pioneered nutritional medicine in the US. A board member of the American Preventive Medical Association and the International College of Advanced Longevity Medicine, he has published 11 books.



Dr Sarah Myhill has worked in the UK National Health Service and in private practice since 1981. Honorary Secretary of the British Society for Ecological Medicine for 17 years, she is a frequent lecturer and author of *Sustainable Medicine* and *Diagnosis and Treatment of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Myalgic Encephalitis.*



Dr Gary Smyth is a GP, homeopathic physician and academic tutor with a passion for integrative medicine. He is the immediate past president and fellow of the Faculty of Homeopathy. He is also a popular speaker at international conferences and a leading voice within the homeopathic profession.



Craig Sams is the co-founder of Whole Earth Foods and founder and president of Green & Blacks Organic Chocolate as well as director of Soil Association Certification, executive chairman of Carbon Gold Ltd., a carbon sequestration business, and a trustee of the Slow Food Trust UK. He has authored four books, including *The Little Food Book*.



Dr Nyjon Eccles, one of the leading integrative medicine physicians in the UK, has a reputation for his practice of evidence-based integrative medicine. Over the years he has developed specific and natural solutions for restoration of health, and these therapies are offered at The Natural Doctor, his clinic in central London.

HAVE YOUR SAY



Diet and D

I've been following you for several years as you speak my "language." Regarding your recent Editors' Letter, "Give Me a D" (November 30, 2025), I've always loved the sun and have sailed and skied a lot. I occasionally got somewhat sunburned but never used sunscreen.

Two summers ago I spent many hours one day at a pool in full sun wearing only a swimsuit. I expected to be painfully burned, but I just got deeply tanned with no discomfort. Two years later, you can still see the tan marks on my shoulders and back.

I read recently that diet has a great deal to do with not burning, and I had changed my diet over time to mostly vegetables, versus meat as the main object of a meal. I wonder if vegetarians don't burn. I do take vitamin D now, though, as I'm getting less sun than I used to.

Thank you for all your work. You're terrific.

I Rutter, via email

WHAT DOCTORS DON'T TELL YOU

COMMUNITY

The latest from the *WDDTY* Community

WDDTY's online community hub is now live. You can post questions or start discussions on any health topic as well as help out other *WDDTY* subscribers with your own experiences and suggestions. Simply go to community.wddty.com and sign in with your subscription ID.

Here are some of the latest posts and discussions. If you want to reply to any of the posts below, head to the Community.

Questioning conventional cancer care

I always look forward to my monthly copy of *WDDTY* and am never disappointed. I trust the contributors more than my local NHS surgery.

My mother was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer at age 81. She was persuaded by her oncologist to embark on a program that involved chemotherapy to prolong her life upwards of the predicted three months. Although I was against this, my mother was of the opinion that the doctor (oncologist) knew best.

She lived longer than three months, but her quality of life from the moment she started chemotherapy was awful. She never left the house other than to make frequent trips to the hospital for blood tests, scans and even lung drains.

I started looking into cancer and learned that such measures as minimizing sugar intake, eliminating processed foods and aiming for a predominantly alkaline diet can help. These and many more have been referred to in *WDDTY*. And yet the medical profession appears ignorant on diet to reduce the chances of cancer or help with treatment.

When I asked my mother's GP what she should or should not eat, the answer was that she could have "anything she wants."

And whenever she was suffering from the drugs' side effects, more drugs were prescribed to combat these. Anti-sickness pills were prescribed. If they didn't work, a stronger dose was prescribed and the unused pills discarded. After my mother died, a bucket full of unused drugs was sent back to the local pharmacy.

I've looked into cancer research and learned that this is predominantly funded by the pharmaceutical companies. Is it in their interests for there to be a known cure for cancer?

I've also looked into the (UK) Cancer Act of 1939. It effectively states no cure for cancer can be advertised other than what the authorities allow. Is there any wonder the only treatments allowed haven't changed since then? The go-to treatments are still these:

- Chemotherapy (which is carcinogenic)
- Radiotherapy (also carcinogenic)
- Surgery

I have no doubt the Cancer Act is a main reason many, including *WDDTY*, are reluctant to disclose any proven cases in which cancer was "cured."

From my experiences with NHS in "treating" my mother, I'm convinced the emphasis is more on procedures than care. When she was in hospital, there was more attention to monitoring her blood sugar, blood pressure, etc. than to her well-being or to whether she was having sufficient food and liquid.

The only conclusion I can arrive at is that there's more money to be made in keeping us sick than in making us well. And anyone who honestly believes the NHS is a "free" service should look at how much of their taxes go toward NHS funding, and we have no choice in the matter.

Katharine

WDDTY replies: We're sorry to hear about your mother. The Cancer Act bans the marketing of cancer therapies, but the press is free to talk about them as news or editorial items. For the many articles we've published on cancer, search wddty.com.

Not just a phage

In December's issue, *WDDTY* replied to a letter pointing out you had previously covered the topic of bacteriophages in 2013.

A book by Lina Zeldovich may be of interest: *The Living Medicine: How Phages Will Save Us When Antibiotics Fail* (Black & White Publishing, 2024). It is a very well researched, up-to-date book on the subject.

Cyril Wilson

WHAT DOCTORS DON'T TELL YOU
COMMUNITY

GET IN TOUCH: Share your views, questions and comments via the *WDDTY* Community. Visit **community.wddty.com** or scan the QR code below and sign in with your subscription ID.

Women, take omega-3 supplements to reduce Alzheimer's risk

Alzheimer's could be a different disease for men and women—and there's a simple thing all women can do to lower their risk.

For women, the disease seems to be associated with a dramatic drop in omega-3 fatty acid intake, and so taking omega-3 supplements and eating plenty of fatty fish could be important ways to prevent it. The same isn't true for men, say researchers at King's College London, which suggests the disease has different characteristics in males and females.

The researchers analyzed blood samples from 471 people with Alzheimer's disease or mild cognitive impairment and compared them to samples from 370 healthy people for signs of inflammation and brain damage. The women with Alzheimer's had dramatically higher saturated fat and lower unsaturated fat than healthy women did. This phenomenon wasn't seen in samples taken from men.

As Alzheimer's disproportionately affects women over age 80, it's imperative that they start supplementing and eating more fish, the researchers say.

Alzheimers Dement, 2025; 21(8): e70512

AstraZeneca "funding Russia's war chest"

Drugs giant AstraZeneca has been accused of funding Russia's war effort and its invasion of Ukraine.

The company has maintained a presence in Russia since the invasion began in 2022 and is paying around $43 million a year in taxes, according to a report from the Kyiv School of Economics. Overall, large Western conglomerates are paying $20 billion corporation tax every year to President Putin's government.

Companies like AstraZeneca are "choosing profit over principle," the report says, and they continue to pay corporation tax and "provide goods, services and technology" that help sustain Russia's invasion.

AstraZeneca has been increasing its operations in Russia, and sales and taxes it has paid to the Russian government have risen sharply in the past year.

Alex Ralph et al., "AstraZeneca Among Firms Accused of 'Funding Putin's War Chest,'" Aug 26, 2025, thetimes.com



Want to live longer? Then move to the seaside

For a longer life, set up your home close to an ocean. People living within 30 miles of an ocean can add a year to the average life expectancy of 79 years, whereas those in urban areas are more likely to live an average of 78 years, even if they are close to a large stretch of water.

Researchers from Ohio State University analyzed data from over 66,000 different census tracts of the US. They compared longevity rates to proximity to water, whether it was a lake, river or ocean.

Those who can afford an ocean-facing home are probably wealthier and enjoy healthier lifestyles, the researchers say, but it could also be something to do with better air quality and more stable temperatures near the ocean. It could be related to pollution and flooding risk as well since rural inland waters showed positive effects on longevity, but urban ones showed negative effects.

Environ Res, 2025; 281: 121981

Stressed? Then drink more water



If you have trouble handling stress, you could be dehydrated. People who aren't drinking enough water can suddenly experience a big increase in levels of cortisol, known as the stress hormone.

A stressful situation can often be the first sign of dehydration, say researchers from Liverpool John Moores University, causing cortisol levels to suddenly rise. When this occurs regularly over time, it increases the risk of heart disease, diabetes and depression.

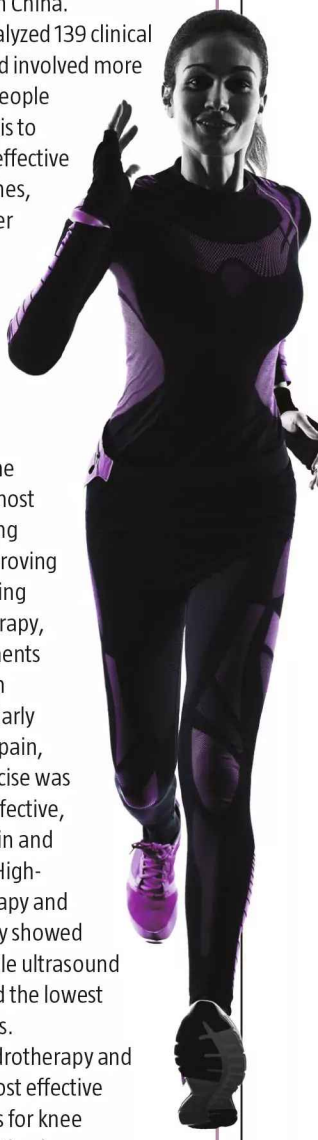
People with dehydration are typically consuming less than 1.5 L of fluids, equivalent to 7 cups of tea, every day. The recommended daily intake is 2 L for women and 2.5 L for men.

The researchers took two groups—those drinking the least and most fluids—through a series of stress tests, including a mock job interview and a mental arithmetic task. They found both groups had increases in anxiety and heart rate, but only those drinking the least had high cortisol levels—around 50 percent higher than in the hydrated group.

The color of your urine is one quick test of your hydration level: Light yellow suggests good hydration.

J Applied Physiol, 2025; 139(3): 698–708

Don't take drugs to ease knee arthritis pain—exercise instead



Medicine has plenty of ways to treat knee arthritis, but none is as good as exercise. Non-drug approaches, which also include knee braces and hydrotherapy, are the most effective, say researchers from the First People's Hospital of Neijiang in China.

They analyzed 139 clinical trials that had involved more than 10,000 people with knee arthritis to discover the most effective non-drug approaches, which included laser therapy, electrical stimulation, braces, insoles, kinesiology tape, water-based therapy, exercise and ultrasound.

Knee braces came out on top across most categories, including reducing pain, improving function and relieving stiffness. Hydrotherapy, exercises or treatments performed in warm water, was particularly effective at easing pain, while general exercise was also consistently effective, improving both pain and physical function. High-intensity laser therapy and shock wave therapy showed some benefits, while ultrasound consistently earned the lowest effectiveness scores.

Knee braces, hydrotherapy and exercise are the most effective non-drug therapies for knee osteoarthritis, and they're as effective as painkillers, such as NSAIDs, which come with gastrointestinal and cardiovascular risks, the researchers say.

PLOS One, 2025; 20(6): e0324864

Fish oil delays menopause



A woman's lifestyle plays a role in when menopause occurs. Defined as the date when a woman has gone a year since her last period, "the change" typically happens anytime between ages 48 and 52. But taking certain supplements, and especially omega-3-rich fish oil, can delay it.

Researchers from the University of Leeds analyzed data on 3,566 women in the UK Women's Cohort Study. They found that women who were regularly supplementing with fish oils had a later menopause.

B vitamins and antioxidants, such as selenium, zinc, and vitamins A, C and E, also helped to delay menopause. Conversely, women who were overweight, smoked or ate a lot of red meat tended to have an earlier menopause.

Having a later menopause matters. Women who experience menopause before age 45 are more likely to suffer from osteoporosis, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, depression and premature death. Fish oil reduces the risk of early menopause by up to 95 percent, the researchers concluded.

Nutrients, 2025; 17(18): 2921



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Losing weight is not the only key to lowering type 2 diabetes risk

Warding off type 2 diabetes isn't just a matter of losing weight—it's about normalizing your blood sugar levels. People think that by losing weight, they reduce their chances of developing diabetes—but your risk falls by more than 70 percent just by focusing on blood sugar, or glucose, even if you don't lose a single pound.

Most strategies for addressing prediabetes focus on weight loss and a healthy diet. But researchers from University Hospital of Tübingen in Germany say that these efforts can have only superficial effects if you're not understanding the biological factors that drive diabetes.

They tracked the health of 1,100 people who were prediabetic—the phase when insulin isn't efficiently removing glucose from the blood and shuttling it into cells for use—and 234 of them lost no weight. Some even gained it during the year-long study.

However, they stored that excess fat under the skin instead of in the more dangerous spaces between organs. And 22 percent of them normalized their blood sugar and reduced their risk of diabetes by as much as 71 percent.

The strategy to regulate blood sugar included eating less fat and more fiber as well as doing more physical activity during work and leisure time. But the researchers noted that the participants reduced their diabetes risk independently of any changes in physical activity. Those who concentrated on understanding the way glucose is processed by the body were still free of diabetes nine years later.

Nat Med, 2025; 31(10): 3330–3340



Have an earlier breakfast if you want to live longer

Eating breakfast earlier promotes longevity, but a late breakfast can increase the chances of fatigue, depression and poor sleep, say researchers from Mass General Brigham.

As people get older, their eating habits can change; they often eat breakfast and the final meal of the day later. But this shrinks the "eating window" and may not give the body enough time to properly digest meals before bed, which can disturb sleep, the researchers say.

They analyzed data and blood samples from 2,945 community-dwelling UK adults aged 42–94, tracking them for more than 20 years. As the participants aged, their eating habits tended to change, and they ate breakfast later in the day. The researchers found those eating later were also likely to die before those who stuck to the eating hours they had followed in their younger years. They were also more liable to suffer from depression and fatigue, although these are more likely to be reasons they ate later rather than results of eating later, the researchers say.

A later eating schedule may not directly cause the health problems, but it could be a sign of general decline that makes these issues more likely. It may also mean older people should reconsider intermittent fasting plans that involve eating later in the morning.

Commun Med (Lond), 2025; 5(1): 385

Find your purpose to reduce your dementia risk

Having a purpose in life—anything from doing charity work to being a good parent or grandparent—can reduce your risk of dementia. It lowers your chances by around 28 percent, and it delays the time when you start to lose mental abilities.

Researchers of the world's blue zones—areas where people tend to live longer—have already recognized that a sense of purpose improves longevity. But now a research team from the University of California at Davis Health has established that it also wards off dementia.

The researchers tracked more than 13,000 people aged 45 and older for up to 15 years and discovered that those who had any sense of purpose were about 28 percent less likely to suffer from dementia, even if they had the APOE4 gene considered a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease.

Examples of activities that provide meaning include caring for family, spending time with grandchildren, supporting a spouse or friend, volunteering or working, having spiritual beliefs, having personal goals or hobbies, learning new skills and helping other people.

The great news is that it's never too late to find a purpose. "What's exciting about this study is that people may be able to 'think' themselves into better health. Purpose in life is something we can nurture," said Thomas Wingo, one of the researchers. "It's never too early—or too late—to start thinking about what gives your life meaning."

Am J Geriatric Psychiatry, 2025; 33(10): 1021–1031



THOSE WITH ANY SENSE OF PURPOSE WERE ABOUT 28% LESS LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM DEMENTIA

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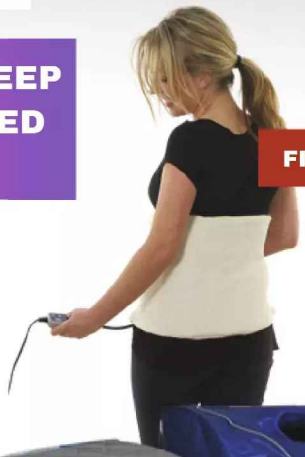
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Cannabis could help you sleep

Not sleeping? Taking a cannabis medicinal could do the trick. It could also improve your mood and reduce pain, say researchers from Imperial College London, who tracked 124 insomniacs who took cannabis for 18 months.

They reported improved sleep quality that lasted over the 18 months of treatment, and the participants also showed significant improvements in anxiety and depression and suffered less pain. About 9 percent of the patients reported problems such as fatigue, insomnia or dry mouth.

But they may have got off lightly, warns another study. People who take high-dose tetrahydrocannabinol (over 5 mg or 10 percent THC) products increase their risk of psychosis and schizophrenia. These products have become more common since the legalization and commercialization of medical (and, in some US states, recreational) cannabis.

Researchers from the University of Colorado analyzed 99 studies with more than 221,000 participants. Among those who were taking the drug recreationally, 53 percent reported suffering from anxiety and 41 percent said they had depressive episodes.

Of those who took THC products therapeutically, 47 percent said it helped with anxiety and depression. However, 24 percent said they were experiencing greater anxiety and 30 percent said their depression had increased after taking cannabis products.

PLoS Mental Health, 2025; 2 (8): e0000390
Ann Intern Med, 2025; 178 (10): 1429–1440



A Med diet keeps your gums healthy

Healthy gums aren't just the result of brushing and flossing—eating a Mediterranean diet can also play a big part. The diet reduces inflammation, which helps to maintain healthy gums, say researchers from King's College London.

People who don't follow the diet—with its emphasis on vegetables, fruits, nuts and oils—are more likely to have gum disease, especially if they eat a lot of red meat, the researchers say.

J Periodontol, 2025; doi: 10.1002/jper.70016

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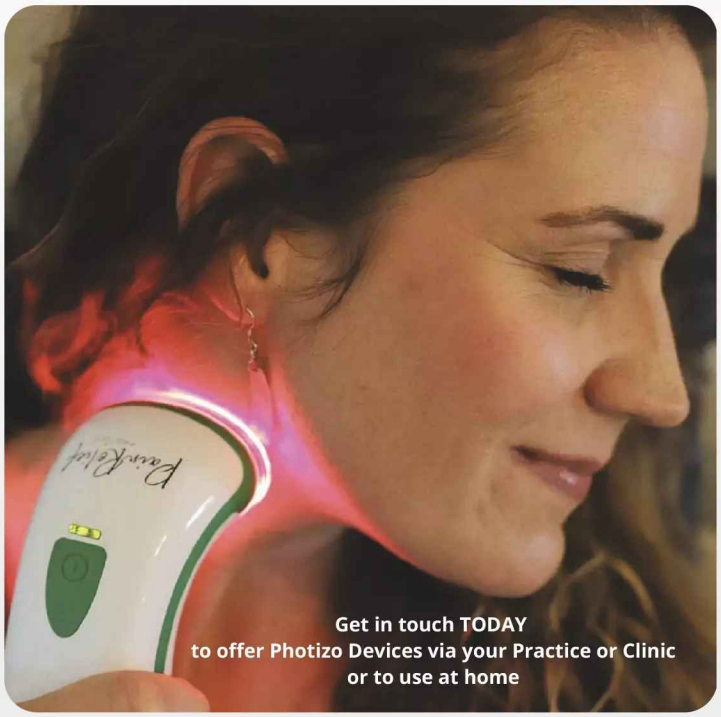
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Addiction is about avoiding stress, not getting high

What makes us addicted? Most assume it's about chasing the next high, but a new study suggests it's more often about escaping stress.

Stress and anxiety are just as likely to make us addicts as pleasure, say researchers from Scripps Research Institute who identified stronger activity in an area of the brain that regulates these feelings. A tiny region of the brain, the paraventricular nucleus of the thalamus (PVT), encouraged rats to continue drinking because it made an association between alcohol and relief of this emotional stress.

Although the rats initially drank for pleasure, over time, relief of withdrawal symptoms became a stronger motivation. The researchers think a reaction similar to this is likely to occur in people.

Biol Psychiatry Glob Open Sci, 2025; 5(6):100578

"Healthy" low-sugar substitutes age your brain

Your brain ages 18 months faster than the rest of your body if you're consuming high levels of artificial sweeteners in processed foods and sodas. People who consume sweeteners such as aspartame and saccharin, which are often considered healthy low-sugar alternatives, are suffering a rapid decline in their thinking and memory skills.

The decline in cognitive abilities is 62 percent faster in people under age 60 who are consuming large amounts of sweeteners. It's equivalent to a brain that is 1.6 years older, say researchers from the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. The mental decline was especially acute in diabetics, who are consuming more low-sugar alternatives.

They looked at the diets and cognitive abilities of 12,772 adults with an average age of 52 years and tracked the consumption of seven artificial sweeteners. These are typically found in ultra-processed foods like flavored water, soda, energy drinks, yogurt, products marketed as sugar-free and low-calorie desserts.

The artificial sweeteners were aspartame, saccharin, acesulfame-K, erythritol, xylitol, sorbitol and tagatose. They're often seen as "healthy" sugar-free alternatives to sucrose and recommended for people who have diabetes or want to lose weight.

The lowest amount consumed was an average of 20 mg per day. The highest was an average of 191 mg per day (for aspartame, this is equivalent to about one can of diet soda).

Neurology, 2025; 105(7):e214023





There's no such thing as a safe amount of alcohol

There's no safe amount to drink, a new study says—even one glass of wine can increase the risk of dementia. It overturns the belief that small amounts of alcohol protect the brain, especially as we age.

Drinking even one to three glasses of wine every week increases the risk of dementia by 15 percent, say researchers from Oxford and Stanford universities. But their findings are controversial and rely on an unproven genetic modeling system, critics have argued.

The researchers tracked 559,559 participants, aged 56–72, for five to 10 years, and 14,540 of them developed dementia during the life of the study. More than 90 percent reported that they drank alcohol.

As almost every study before had noted, there was a U-shaped association between alcohol and dementia: Around 41 percent of non-drinkers had a high risk of dementia, as did heavy drinkers. But those who drank only moderately—who made up the base of the U shape—were the least likely to develop dementia, which suggested a moderate amount of alcohol was protective.

But when the researchers applied genetic markers to the data, the protective effects of alcohol disappeared. They used a modeling technique called Mendelian randomization genetic analyses and applied three genetic measures: self-reported weekly drinks (641 independent genetic variants), problematic "risky" drinking (80 genetic variants) and alcohol dependency (66 genetic variants).

Aside from using an unproven modeling system, the researchers relied on the participants, some of whom were in the early stages of dementia, to self-report their alcohol intake, which may have skewed the results.

BMJ Evid Based Med, 2025; doi: 10.1136/bmjebm-2025-113913

DON'T DRINK WATER FROM A PLASTIC BOTTLE

Compared to people who drink tap water, people who regularly drink from plastic bottles have an extra 90,000 microplastic particles in their body after just one year, researchers from Concordia University in Canada have discovered.

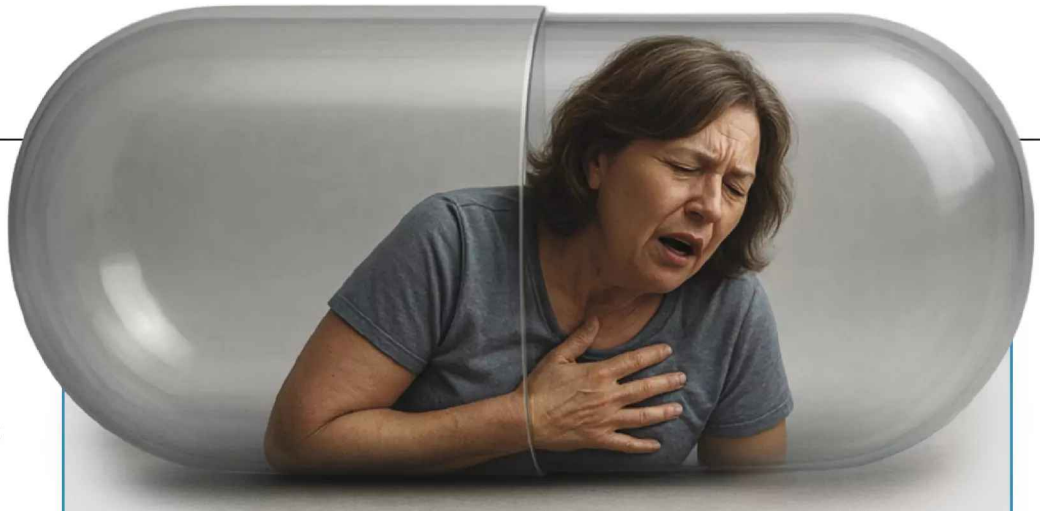
In a review of over 140 scientific articles, the researchers discovered that people on average ingest 39,000 to 52,000 microplastic particles a year. But bottled water users consume many more particles annually. The plastic used for water bottles is usually low grade and sheds tiny pieces every time they are handled and exposed to sunlight and temperature fluctuations.

Previous research has shown the phthalates that many plastics contain disrupt our hormone levels. Other studies show that microplastics can cross biological boundaries, enter the bloodstream and reach vital organs, leading to chronic inflammation, oxidative stress, microbiome changes, reproductive problems, and even neurological damage and various kinds of cancer.

J Hazard Mater, 2025; 495: 138948



See page 64 for the best alternatives to plastic water bottles



Routine heart drugs are killers

Beta blockers are routinely given to heart patients, especially after they've suffered a heart attack—but the drugs offer no benefit, a recent study shows. A subsequent study by the same research team shows they could actually be doing more harm than good.

They can cause a heart attack or heart failure that requires hospital care. They can even kill the person. The drugs should be prescribed only to those with heart damage from a heart attack, say researchers in Spain and Italy.

Although the drugs have been given to heart patients for 40 years, the researchers—part of the REBOOT study—have discovered they are far from safe, especially for women. They can cause a range of serious side effects, including fatigue, bradycardia (low heart rate) and sexual dysfunction. But in women whose hearts have returned to normal function after a heart attack, they also cause the same heart problems they're supposed to prevent.

The risk of damaging effects from beta blockers is higher now than it used to be because advances in emergency care have made a return to normal function after a heart attack more common.

The study findings could change clinical practice, and doctors may begin recommending a different drug—such as the polypill—instead. The polypill is a combination of three drugs: aspirin; ramipril, an ACE inhibitor to reduce blood pressure; and atorvastatin, a statin.

However, the polypill is not a better solution (see Last Word in *WDDTY* June 2025).

NEJM, 2025; doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa2504735
Eur Heart J, 2025; doi: 10.1093/eurheartj/ehaf673

Chronic insomnia ages brain by a year

Over time, sleeping poorly can age the brain and increase the risk of dementia. Poor sleepers have brains that are biologically a year older. They also have more inflammatory markers that make them more susceptible to poor cognition and dementia, say researchers from the Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

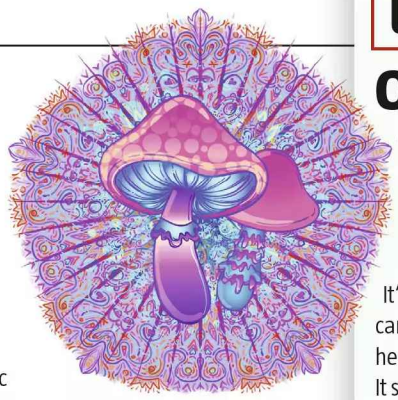
The researchers studied brain scans of 27,500 middle-aged people who had taken part in the UK Biobank study.

Although they confirmed a link between sleep and brain health, as other studies have done, the researchers weren't sure why poor sleep patterns could lead to dementia. While inflammation could be a factor, poor sleep could also be affecting the brain's capacity to clear waste or increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

eBioMedicine, 2025; 120: 105941



CANCER NEWS

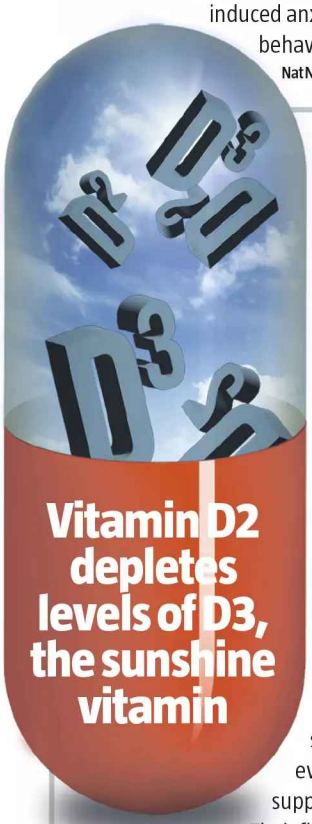


One magic mushroom dose eases pain for two weeks

Just one dose of psilocybin, the active ingredient in magic mushrooms, can relieve pain and anxiety for weeks. It calms brain circuits tied to pain and mood, easing both physical suffering and emotional distress, including depression, say researchers from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

In studies using mice with chronic nerve injury and inflammatory pain, the researchers gave mice a single dose of psilocin, which psilocybin is converted to when the body processes it. They found it reduced both pain and pain-induced anxiety- and depression-like behaviors for almost two weeks.

Nat Neurosci, 2025; 28(11): 2285–2295



Vitamin D2 depletes levels of D3, the sunshine vitamin

Taking vitamin D supplements? You may think D2 and D3 are interchangeable—after all, they're both designed to top up your levels during the dark winter months—but new research suggests one depletes the other.

If you just take D2, you'll be depleting your levels of D3, the more "natural" form that our bodies produce from sunshine, say researchers from the University of Surrey. A review of previous studies found levels of vitamin D3 were lower in those who were supplementing with D2—even lower than in those not supplementing at all.

Their findings echo earlier research by Colin Smith, a professor of microbiology at the university, who discovered that D2 and D3 do not have identical roles in supporting immune function. Vitamin D3 adjusts immune system function to fortify the body against viral and bacterial diseases.

During the winter, supplementing with D3 may help, but exercise also signals your body to access the vitamin D stored in your fat cells.

Nutr Rev, 2025; doi: 10.1093/nutrit/nuaf166
Adv Sci (Weinh), 2025; 12(22): e2416312



Orange pigment supercharges our cancer-killing cells

It's one in the eye for cancer: Zeaxanthin, a carotenoid pigment that helps improve eye health, also supercharges our tumor-killing T cells. It strengthens T cell receptors, enhances immune signaling and improves the effects of immunotherapy, researchers from University of Chicago Medical Center found.

Zeaxanthin also slowed cancer in laboratory mice and enhanced the effectiveness of immune checkpoint inhibitors, a new type of immunotherapy.

Besides being available as a nutritional supplement, zeaxanthin is also in red and orange fruits and vegetables, egg yolks, and leafy greens.

Cell Rep Med, 2025; 6(9): 102324



Covid vaccines could be increasing cancer rates

The Covid vaccines may increase the risk of cancer by 20–70 percent, a major new study has found. Although the shots seem to increase the rates of cancer in general, the risk appears to be greatest for six cancers: thyroid, gastric, colorectal, lung, breast and prostate. The cancers appear up to a year after vaccination, and the over-65s are more likely to be affected, say researchers from South Korea.

The researchers assessed the risk after collecting data from 8.4 million Koreans who were monitored from 2021 to 2023. Of the 2.9 million who had been vaccinated, 711,000 had received a booster jab.

Men were more likely to develop gastric and lung cancers, while prostate cancer was most common among the over-75s. Women faced a higher risk of thyroid and colorectal cancers. Booster jabs increased the risk of gastric cancer by around 23 percent and more than doubled the risk of pancreatic cancer.

BMC Biomarker Res, 2025; 13(1): 114

Meat doesn't raise your cancer risk—it might even reduce it

Meat eaters aren't more likely than vegetarians to get cancer. In fact, meat may have a slightly protective effect, say researchers from McMaster University who carried out a major review of protein and its role as a carcinogen.

The researchers analyzed the diets and health of around 16,000 people and the amount of animal and plant protein they consumed to determine whether their diets increased the risk of heart disease, cancer or premature death from any cause.

Although earlier research had suggested a vegetarian diet lowered the risk of chronic disease, the McMaster researchers found protein didn't increase it, and it didn't matter if the protein came from plants or meat. If anything, meat offered "modest" protection.

Appl Physiol Nutr Metab, 2025; 50: 1–8



Vaccines and autism: Is this the final word?

An exhaustive review has concluded that multiple vaccines—and not just the MMR—are the primary cause of the autism epidemic

Pharmaceuticals—either the painkillers women take during pregnancy or the vaccines we give our children—are the likeliest principal driver of the autism epidemic, which has seen rates explode by 32,000 percent in the US in the last 50 years, a major review has concluded.

Although science has done its utmost to put to bed the idea that the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine causes autism, nobody has examined the effect of multiple vaccines on the small child.

America has the world's highest rate of autism, affecting one in 31 children (3.5 percent). The average rate worldwide is one in 127, according to the World Health Organization.

And the US also has the most aggressive vaccine schedule with 54 shots and boosters on offer. A one-year-old American child whose parents follow the schedule will have been given 25 vaccines.

Last autumn, the Trump administration called out acetaminophen—the painkiller marketed as Tylenol in the US and as paracetamol everywhere else—as the major driver of autism, or ASD (autism spectrum disorder). Up to half of all women take the painkiller during pregnancy to reduce fever, which can harm the developing fetus.

Although many factors are influencing the epidemic, the blame can primarily be laid at the door of multiple childhood vaccinations, especially in the first year or two of life, an exhaustive review by the McCullough Foundation has concluded.[ii] Other factors they suspect include parental age, premature delivery, sibling recurrence, gut/brain axis alterations, in utero drug exposure—such as to acetaminophen—and environmental toxins.

According to the review, the tipping point happened in 1986, when the US passed the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act, which granted blanket liability protection to vaccine manufacturers if their products caused injury or even death. In that year, there were just 12 shots on the pediatric vaccine schedule.

Since then, there has been a steady increase in the number of vaccines given to children up to age five, and this has correlated to the rise in cases of autism.

In 1986, the US passed the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act, which granted blanket liability protection to vaccine manufacturers

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the US health monitoring agency, the incidence of autism has consistently risen every year, starting in the mid-1980s.

In 1970, just one in 10,000 American children was diagnosed with autism, but by 2000 this had risen to one in 150 children, and today one in 31 eight-year-old children is affected. Of these, 27 percent have profound autism, including loss of the ability to speak or interact with the world, and will need lifetime care.

The increase is also reflected in the need for special education services. In 2000, just 15,556 American children were receiving teaching assistance, but by 2011 this had increased to 406,957 children, a 25-fold rise.

Lots of correlation

The reviewers, headed by Peter A. McCullough, a cardiologist who was vice chief of internal medicine at Baylor University, came to their conclusions after studying various sources. The main one was a review of 136 studies, 107 of which suggested a link between vaccines and ASD and other neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs).

The researchers suspect the components in vaccines, such as thimerosal (ethyl mercury) and aluminum adjuvants, could be doing the damage by disrupting mitochondrial function, oxidative balance and neuroimmune signaling. Other studies have linked these actions to neurodevelopmental injury and regression in susceptible children.

They also looked at case reports, including one of a 19-month-old girl who developed ASD symptoms after receiving multiple vaccines, with mitochondrial dysfunction confirmed by muscle biopsy. And they reviewed 12 studies that compared the health of vaccinated and unvaccinated children and found that the unvaccinated had better health, including fewer chronic health problems and NDDs such as ASD.

Conversely, large studies have found no link between vaccination and autism, and these have frequently been cited as a response to the Andrew Wakefield study of 1998, which examined just



eight children who had developed gut abnormalities soon after being given the MMR jab. But few studies have looked at the cumulative effect of many vaccines, the McCullough researchers say.

"As a result, a small fraction of the total vaccine exposure experienced by children has ever been systematically evaluated for associations with ASD or other NDDs," their report states.

Interestingly, ASD rates fell in the years following Wakefield's study as takeup of the MMR fell to 80 percent in areas including the UK and northern Europe. It then slowly climbed again as people were reassured that the vaccine was safe to give to their children.

Wakefield's wake

Critics argue that McCullough has formed and peddled "false" information about vaccines for years. By 2025, the American Board of Internal Medicine had revoked his two board certificates, claiming he had spread "misinformation" about the Covid virus and the mRNA vaccines.

To make matters worse for his critics, McCullough has been joined in his review by Andrew Wakefield, the UK gastroenterologist whom Wikipedia describes as a fraudster and anti-vaccine activist. Wakefield lost his medical license after the UK General Medical Council stated he had committed fraud and malpractice when he conducted the small study published in *The Lancet* in 1998, a paper retracted 12 years later.

According to his accusers, Wakefield also failed to disclose a financial incentive to find a link between the vaccine, novel gastrointestinal problems and autism. Despite this supposed inducement, Wakefield concluded in the study that the number of participants was too small to establish a causal link between the vaccine and autism.[2] And *The Lancet* later determined he and his colleagues had committed no ethical violations.[3]

Controversy about the study erupted six years after its publication, and the McCullough review gives some context to it. For one, Wakefield was not the first to suspect an association between the MMR vaccine, gut problems and autism. In 1996, two years before his paper was published, American

clinical immunologist H. H. Fudenberg published a study claiming 15 children with autism developed symptoms within a week after being vaccinated.[4]

The McCullough review also suggests the reasons for the time lag between the Wakefield paper's publication and the kickback against it, which started six years later. In 2002, the US Court of Federal Claims had established a process—known as the Omnibus Autism Proceeding—for evaluating thousands of parental petitions alleging that multiple vaccines administered in early childhood had caused their children to regress into autism.

Two years later, the *Sunday Times*, a UK newspaper, ran a series of articles against Wakefield alleging fraud, malpractice and financial inducements.

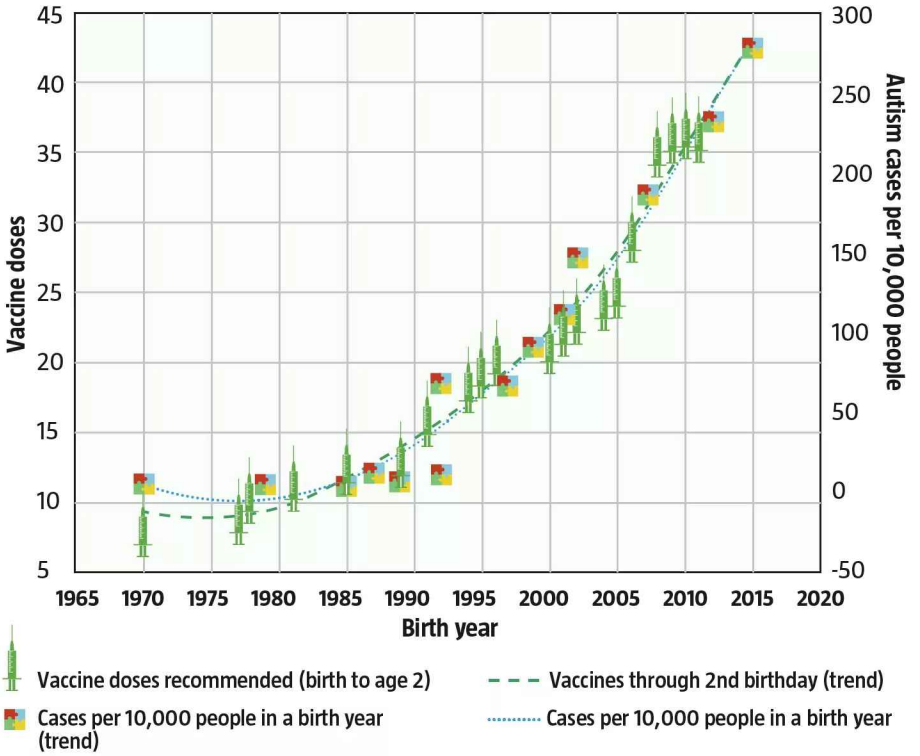
"The timing suggests that this opening salvo against Wakefield was part of the broader campaign to discredit the claims of petitioners in the Omnibus Autism Proceeding. In 2009 the US Court of Federal Claims ruled that no link between vaccines (and vaccine preservatives and adjuvants) had been proven, and therefore dismissed the claims of the over 5,000 petitioners," the McCullough review reports.

However, the court determined that the case of one petitioner, Dr John S. Poling, a neurologist at Johns Hopkins Hospital, was valid. His 19-month-old daughter had received several vaccines at once, and this had caused her regression into autism, it ruled.

The court's ruling for the rest of the petitioners ignored the observations of parents, who saw their children regress into autistic behaviors soon after receiving multiple vaccinations. Perversely, the ruling also went against the clinical findings of the vaccine manufacturers themselves.

The manufacturers have noted in package inserts that the MMR's side effects may include seizures, encephalomyelitis (brain inflammation), transverse myelitis (brain and spinal cord inflammation), fainting, polyneuropathy (nerve malfunction), ataxia (lack of voluntary muscle coordination, speech changes, abnormal eye movements), Guillain-Barré syndrome and progressive neurological disorder.

Autism prevalence and vaccine doses through 2nd birthday[5]



Data taken from early epidemiologic studies (pre-2000) and CDC ADDM Network reports (2000 onward)

It all points one way

Health agencies say the rise in autism is mainly the result of greater awareness and better monitoring, but it's hard to accept that the 32,000 percent increase in cases is entirely the result of these factors, although they no doubt account for some of them.

Denying any link to vaccinations is just bad science, the McCullough researchers argue. Studies that have failed to find an association have been limited by the difficulty in finding unvaccinated children to act as controls—a phenomenon peculiar to countries such as the US, where vaccination is practically compulsory. There's also a failure to recognize that autism is a spectrum disorder with many characteristics, they point out, and so many cases may have gone unrecorded.

The likelihood that there are many causes of autism also muddies the waters. Genetics, environmental pollutants such as PVC pipes leaching phthalates into drinking water and glyphosate in food, and antidepressants taken during pregnancy could all be in the frame.

But as with research into lung cancer, which was able to establish smoking as a principal factor, if not the only one, so the causes of autism should be narrowed down to a temporal connection: Autistic behaviors followed quickly after exposure, such as to vaccination. Ultimately, McCullough hasn't established beyond doubt that multiple vaccinations are causing autism, but there are numerous correlations that point only one way.

There are also many people, including commercial, ideological and political groups, who deliberately discredit and suppress any suggestion of a link. As vaccine manufacturers are off the hook, it's down to governments to pick up the tab and pay out the vast compensation that would be due if vaccines were proven to have caused an autism epidemic.

Bryan Hubbard

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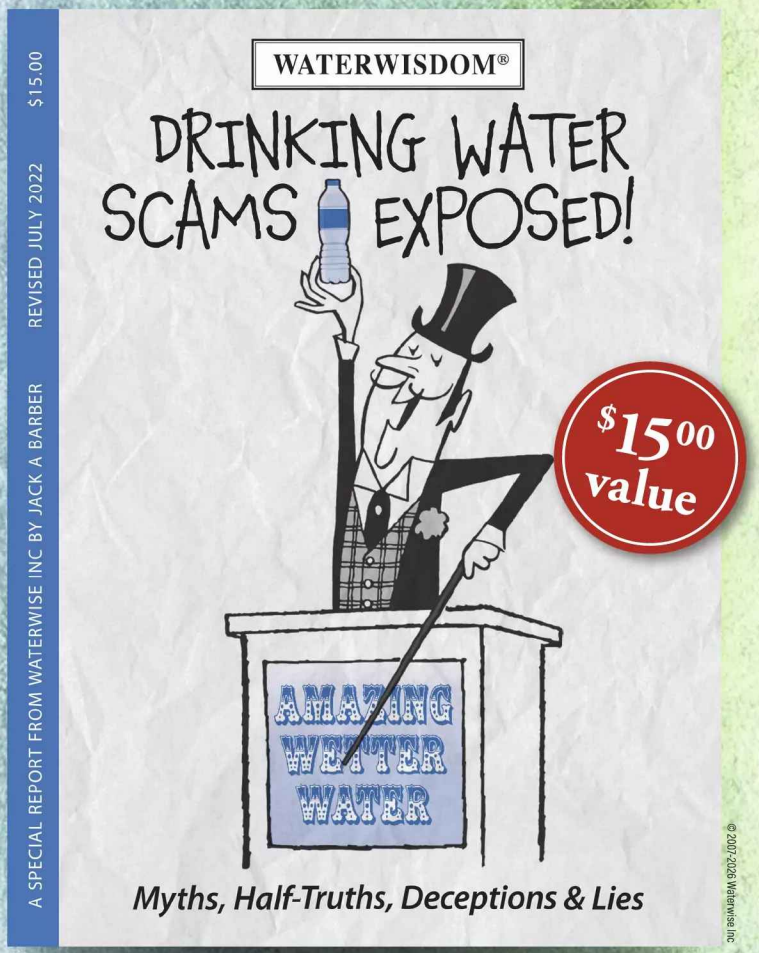
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A vitamin for every ill

Vitamins and minerals help supplement a diet low in nutrients—but forget the recommended amounts if you want to alleviate, or even reverse, some common ailments

As the adage has it, there's a pill for every ill—but there's a vitamin or mineral that can do the job, too. And we need our supplements. Studies have shown around 60 percent of people living in the affluent West are malnourished, which means they're deficient in vital nutrients.

It's no wonder. The average diet, dominated by processed food, is devoid of nutrients, and even the real food we eat is grown in soil that has been so intensively farmed that there's hardly any goodness left for plants to absorb.

Those of us who supplement with vitamins usually follow the dose specified by the US RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance) or UK RDI (Recommended Daily Intake). These doses are the minimum required to prevent disease—the RDA for vitamin C is 80 mg, for example, and that's the amount required to protect you from scurvy.

But these recommended dosages won't help you achieve flourishing, blossoming health or reverse a health problem. A better measure for that is the SONA (Suggested Optimal Nutritional Allowance), which was developed by Emanuel Cheraskin, an American physician.

Here's a tour of the body, highlighting typical ailments that can afflict us and the SONA dosages of vitamins or minerals that can help reverse, or at least alleviate, the problems. For those shown without dosages, consult your practitioner.

HEAD

NIGHT BLINDNESS / DRY EYES
Vitamin A (retinol / beta carotene), 3,750 mcg

POOR NIGHT VISION
Zinc, 25 mg

CATARACTS
Chromium, 100 mcg

RETINOPATHY (SEVERE EYE DAMAGE)
Vitamin E (tocopherol), 60 mg

SENSITIVITY TO LIGHT
Magnesium, 350 mg

BLEEDING GUMS / GUM DISEASE
Vitamin C, 750 mg
Vitamin B9 (folate), 400 mcg

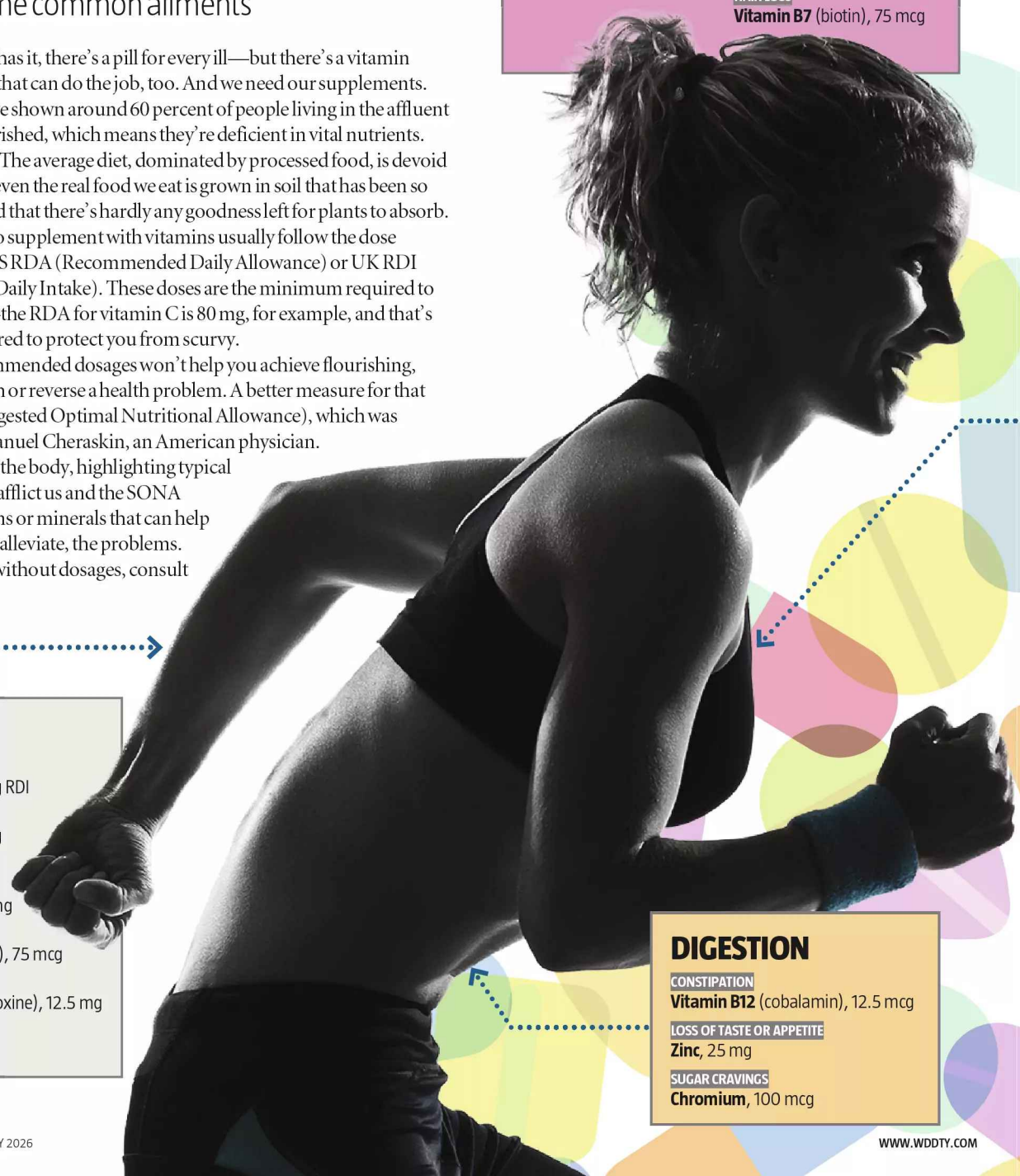
SORE TONGUE AND LIPS
Vitamin B2 (riboflavin), 12.5 mg

SORE OR PAINFUL TONGUE
Vitamin B3 (niacin), 50 mg

PALE TONGUE
Iron, 15 mg

PREMATURELY GRAYING HAIR
Vitamin B12 (cobalamin), 12.5 mcg

HAIR LOSS
Vitamin B7 (biotin), 75 mcg



SKIN

EASY BRUISING
Vitamin K, 80 mcg RDI

DRY SKIN
Vitamin C, 750 mg

GREASY SKIN
Vitamin B2 (riboflavin), 12.5 mg

POOR SKIN
Vitamin B7 (biotin), 75 mcg

DERMATITIS
Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine), 12.5 mg

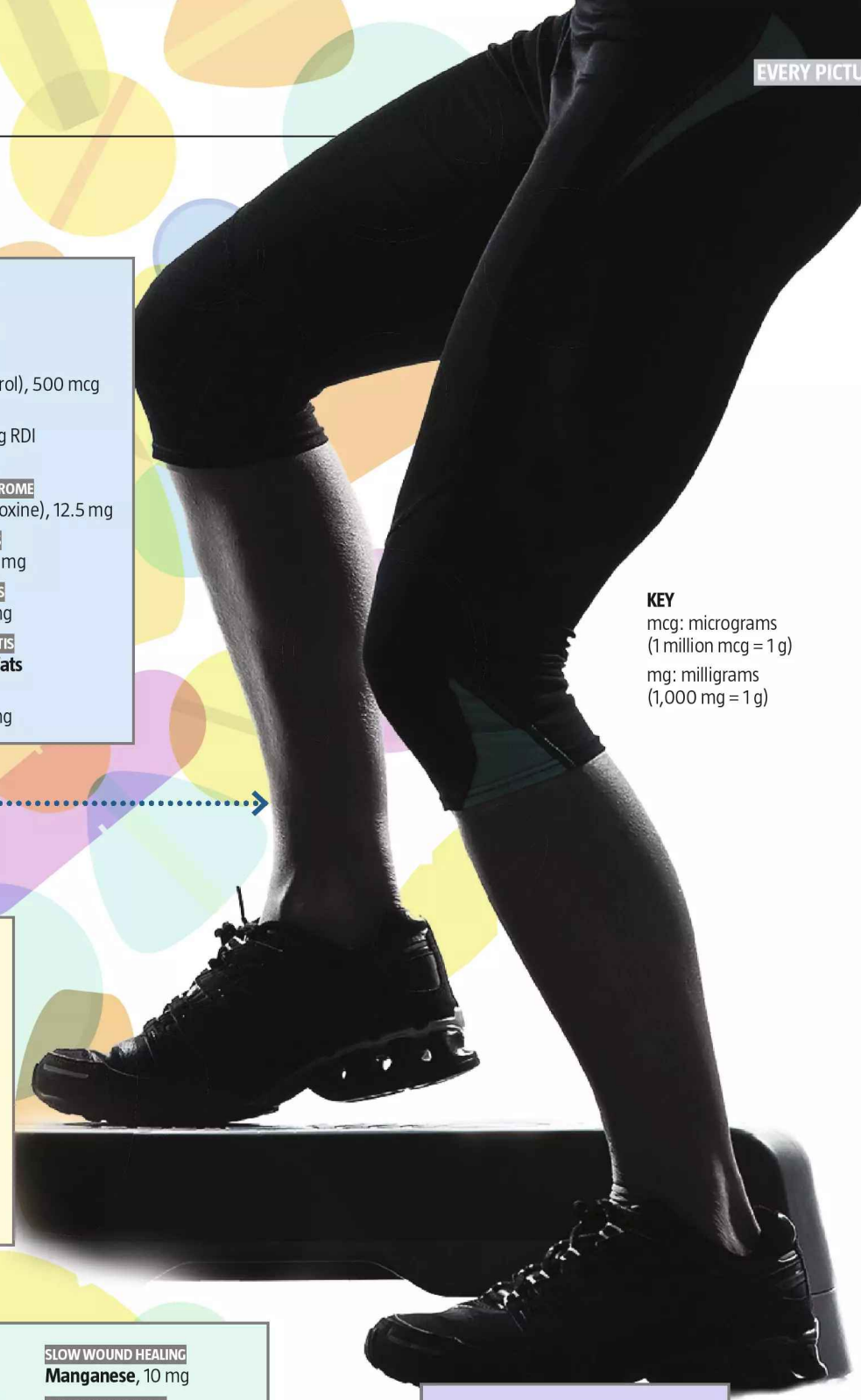
ITCHY SKIN
Iron, 15 mg

DIGESTION

CONSTIPATION
Vitamin B12 (cobalamin), 12.5 mcg

LOSS OF TASTE OR APPETITE
Zinc, 25 mg

SUGAR CRAVINGS
Chromium, 100 mcg



BONES & MUSCLES

MUSCLE WEAKNESS
Vitamin D (calciferol), 500 mcg

OSTEOPOROSIS
Vitamin K, 80 mcg RDI
Calcium, 700 mg

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME
Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine), 12.5 mg

TENDER CALF MUSCLES
Magnesium, 350 mg

MUSCLE PAIN/CRAMPS
Potassium, 180 mg

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS
Omega-3 and -6 fats

BONE LOSS
Manganese, 10 mg

KEY
mcg: micrograms
(1 million mcg = 1 g)
mg: milligrams
(1,000 mg = 1 g)

HEART

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
Vitamin D (calciferol), 500 mcg

ARRYTHMIA (IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT)
Calcium, 700 mg

CARDIOMYOPATHY (HEART MUSCLE DISEASE)
Selenium, 50 mcg

POOR HEART FUNCTION
Coenzyme Q10

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION)
Magnesium, 350 mg

IMMUNE & ENDOCRINE SYSTEMS

IMPAIRED IMMUNE SYSTEM
Vitamin E
(tocopherol), 60 mg

PERSISTENT INFECTION
Vitamin C, 750 mg

FREQUENT COLDS
Zinc, 25 mg

SLOW WOUND HEALING
Manganese, 10 mg

THYROID PROBLEMS
(swelling, hypothyroidism)
Iodine, 125 mcg

PERNICIOUS ANEMIA
Vitamin B12
(cobalamin), 12.5 mcg

FATIGUE
Vitamin B12
(cobalamin), 12.5 mcg

HANDS & FEET

SHAKY HANDS
Vitamin B1 (thiamine), 12.5 mg

TINGLING IN HANDS AND FEET
Vitamin B12 (cobalamin), 12.5 mcg

NUMBNESS IN FINGERS
Calcium, 700 mg

BRITTLE NAILS
Magnesium, 350 mg
Iron, 15 mg



A new essential nutrient discovered by a dolphin vet holds promise for healing the brain, heart, liver and more. Celeste McGovern investigates fatty acid C15:0

The **dolphin** clue to combating **metabolic diseases**



When epidemiologist and veterinarian Dr Stephanie Venn-Watson joined a US Navy program in 2001, she couldn't imagine that her assignment to help the military's trained dolphins live longer, healthier lives would lead her to challenge decades of nutritional public health dogma. Nor had she any idea her work could lead to the rediscovery of a long-overlooked nutrient—one that's revolutionizing our understanding of aging, disease and metabolic health in humans.

For decades, the US Navy has trained these remarkably intelligent mammals to find underwater mines, recover equipment and rescue lost divers. Housed in San Diego Bay, navy dolphins lead enviable lives. They're free to swim, play and socialize daily in the open ocean and voluntarily return to their naval base each evening, where they receive a steady diet of fresh fish.

It's a lifestyle with health benefits: Compared to their cousins in the wild who typically live 20–30 years, navy bottlenose dolphins often live into their 40s and 50s—about the equivalent of 80 years for a human.

As Venn-Watson's team began to study these long-lived dolphins, they noticed a curious pattern: Some aged gracefully, while others developed diseases like those in aging people.

"Older dolphins age a heck of a lot like older people," Venn-Watson says. "They develop high cholesterol, chronic inflammation, arthritis—even changes in the brain consistent with Alzheimer's disease."

The obvious question was why. Compared to the graceful agers, "they were in the same population, getting the same care and the same fish, so what made the difference?" asked Venn-Watson.

A molecular mystery

In 2015, her team applied a relatively new field of research—metabolomics, the study of thousands of small molecules that fuel life—to blood samples from the navy dolphins and identified about 100 compounds linked to healthier aging. One alone stood out.

Initially the scientists assumed the healthiest dolphins owed their resilience to omega-3 fatty acids, long celebrated as the "good fats" in fish, their dietary staple. "But it wasn't omega-3s," says Venn-Watson. "It was C15:0—a saturated fat!"

The molecule C15:0 (pronounced C-15), also known as pentadecanoic acid, has been known about for decades, but it's been mostly neglected. Its crucial role in fighting chronic disease was a shocker.

How is C15:0 different?

It wasn't enough to show that C15:0 correlated with better health. The question was whether it could *cause* it.

To find out, Venn-Watson's team conducted a series of experiments in dolphins and in laboratory models of human disease. They discovered C15:0 drives health and bodily repair in multiple ways: It strengthens cell membranes, repairs mitochondria and improves their energy production, and activates metabolic receptors that regulate inflammation, mood and metabolism.

In models of type 2 diabetes and fatty liver disease, the compound lowered glucose, cholesterol and inflammation while correcting anemia, improving liver function and reducing tissue scarring.

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"It wasn't just associated with better health," says Venn-Watson. "It was actually driving it. When we gave dolphins that were less healthy a diet higher in fish-based C15:0, they got better."

On the improved diet, the dolphins' blood markers normalized. Their red blood cells strengthened. And their metabolic function stabilized.

The team bundled their findings into a landmark 2020 paper. Their conclusion: C15:0 meets the criteria for an essential fatty acid—a nutrient the human body cannot make on its own and must obtain through diet.[1]

That made C15:0 the first essential fatty acid discovered since omega-3 and omega-6—over 90 years ago. "It's basically the discovery of a new vitamin," Venn-Watson told the audience at a scientific talk.

The paper triggered a surge of research. Within 18 months, over two dozen studies confirmed the findings: Higher C15:0 levels correlated with healthier aging, better metabolic profiles and lower disease risk. Several independent teams now agree that C15:0 is essential for maintaining baseline health.[2]

But isn't it a bad fat?

The team's findings are stunning for more than their therapeutic potential; C15:0 is a saturated fat, the kind demonized by public health for decades. These fats have been cast as the main target of the war on fats, the villains behind heart disease.

"Choose skim milk," "Avoid butter" and "Margarine is heart-healthy" all became mantras of 1970s public health experts. They consistently promoted a low-fat diet, and things haven't changed much.

"The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2020–25) mentions limiting dietary saturated fats 161 times in a 164-page document," says Venn-Watson. "Similarly, the American Heart Association recommends no more than 5 to 6 percent of daily calories come from saturated fats."

The same is true in the UK, where HEART UK claims, "Reducing saturated fat lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease" and the National Health Service says, "It's best to reduce your overall fat intake and swap saturated fats for unsaturated fats."

These organizations recommend only low-fat, fat-free and soy milk. High-fat butter, sour cream and cream cheese (which happen to be major sources of C15:0) are frowned upon.

The result? For the past four decades, our diets have been drained of whole-fat dairy and butter that are rich in C15:0. They've been replaced with watery low-fat and no-fat milk products, artificial vegetable oil spreads and dairy substitutes.



"C15:0 is a saturated fat, the kind demonized by public health for decades. These fats have been cast as the villains behind heart disease"

Truth and consequences

In the US, during the 20 years after the low-fat revamp of nutritional advice, the average person cut more than three-quarters of their daily intake of whole-fat milk, dropping it from 283 to 65 g per day.[3]

The recommendations, criticized for their flawed science at the time and since, were designed to target heart attacks in middle-aged men, but they came with dire consequences. "We as a population haven't really gotten healthier," Venn-Watson points out. "Instead, we've gotten sicker. Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and fatty liver disease have all gone up—especially among younger people."

One 18-year longitudinal study of more than 25,000 children found those who drank whole-fat milk had a lower risk of obesity than children who drank 1 percent fat or "skim" milk.[4] And multiple studies have demonstrated associations between higher dietary intake of full-fat dairy and reduced risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.[5]

While there are plenty of potential culprits in the current epidemic of metabolic diseases afflicting people at younger ages, the rise of disease with reduced-fat diets is undeniable.

By happenstance, the diet of the navy dolphins abruptly changed, too. In the 1990s, the population of fish they were routinely fed, called euchalon, suddenly crashed.

When euchalon went on the list of endangered species, it went off the navy dolphin menu and was replaced with capelin, a relatively low-fat fish with negligible C15:0. Dolphins with lower C15:0 started to develop metabolic syndrome (insulin resistance), anemia and fatty liver disease—conditions that were all corrected decades later when the problem was recognized and the diet was replaced with a high-C15:0 fish.[6]

In humans, as in dolphins, low levels of C15:0 began to show up as a common denominator in several metabolic disorders.

"We now know that there are 'good' and 'bad' dietary saturated fats," Venn-Watson explains. "Odd-chain saturated fatty acids (especially C15:0) are anti-inflammatory, have many health benefits and have been repeatedly associated with a lower risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease in studies. Conversely, even-chain saturated fatty acids (like C16:0) have the opposite effects in these same studies."

The trouble is, public health has lumped them all into one big glob of "unhealthy" saturated fats. Now "there is mounting evidence that our decreased dietary intake over the past 50 years has resulted in a nutritional C15:0 deficiency syndrome," says Venn-Watson.

A mounting body of scientific evidence—more than 100 peer-reviewed papers in recent years—points to C15:0 as critical to delaying aging-related breakdown.

C15:0 and fatty liver disease

The link between C15:0 and fatty liver disease (see box, below) emerged almost by accident. In 2008, the navy veterinarians noticed a handful of dolphins, though apparently healthy, occasionally had slightly elevated liver enzymes.

They weren't drinking alcohol. Parasites were ruled out, then viral and bacterial infections. No toxins could explain the problem either.

One term popped up in about a third of the pathology reports, however: *hemosiderosis*. In these cases, pathologists could see tiny, dark dots of iron accumulation in the dolphins' livers. A closer look showed they weren't in healthy cells but in inflammatory liver cells called Kupffer cells.

"Lo and behold, there's a distinct condition in humans that involves iron-filled Kupffer cells. It's called dysmetabolic iron overload syndrome (DIOS)," says Venn-Watson.

It starts with fragile blood cells that are filtered into the Kupffer cells, which take the iron for recycling. When too many red blood cells are dying, the iron builds up. In humans, DIOS is linked to disturbed metabolism, insulin resistance and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

The most promising pharmaceutical treatment for fatty liver disease, resmetirom, was introduced in 2024, but it's reported to resolve only about 30 percent of cases. That's why Venn-Watson says a "tsunami" of liver disease is about to crash down on humanity—and why her team was excited about the fatty liver disease in their dolphin patients, which included both DIOS and metabolic syndrome.

They discovered over the next few years that dolphins with lower C15:0 had more fragile red blood cells, which resulted in anemia as they aged. Feeding dolphins a diet higher in C15:0 raised its levels in their red blood cell membranes, strengthening the cells and completely eliminating anemia.

Supplementing pure C15:0 in this dolphin model of metabolic syndrome successfully lowered glucose, cholesterol and inflammation. And in a model of anemia + DIOS + fatty liver disease + metabolic syndrome, it lowered triglycerides and inflammation. It also alleviated anemia, liver iron overload and the progression of liver disease in multiple species.



"Supplementing pure C15:0 successfully lowered glucose, cholesterol and inflammation. It also alleviated anemia, liver iron overload and liver disease progression"

The implications were profound: Declining dietary C15:0 intake in humans may be a root cause of today's explosion of metabolic diseases.

Of dolphins and children

Around the time Venn-Watson's papers were gaining attention, she received an email from Dr Jeffrey Schwimmer, a pediatric gastroenterologist at Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego and a leading expert on fatty liver disease in children. He thought the fatty liver disease in the navy dolphins was unlikely to be the same as what he saw in his pediatric patients, but he wanted to take a look at her research.

She sent him a set of preserved dolphin liver slides, and both scientists were astonished to find the disease looked identical. What's more, the same biological chain of events seemed to be underlying it in both humans and dolphins: nutritional C15:0 deficiency, fragile red blood cells, anemia, liver iron overload, then fatty liver disease and metabolic syndrome.

Schwimmer's group went on to demonstrate that fatty liver was related to a C15:0 deficiency in 237 children with the condition; the higher the C15:0, the lower the liver fat. It also showed that the greater their full-fat dairy consumption, the lower their liver fat.[1] It was the first time fatty liver disease had been linked to C15:0 in children, though a number of studies have linked the two in adults.

In an early trial, Schwimmer's group recruited 30 overweight and obese individuals aged 18–22 and gave them 200 mg of either encapsulated pure C15:0 powder or rice flour (the placebo) every day for three months.

What is fatty liver disease?

Fatty liver disease is getting more attention as a swelling global public health epidemic. First identified in just 20 nonalcoholic patients with inflamed livers at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota in the 1980s, it has now ballooned to affect one in three people globally, including one in 10 children.

It may begin with negligible symptoms, but it can cause fatigue, pain in the upper right abdomen and general malaise. It's the fastest-growing cause of liver cancer and the leading cause of liver transplantation.

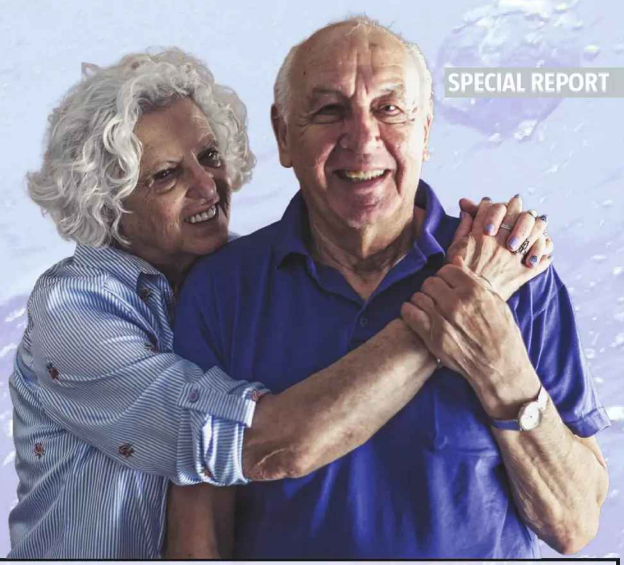
When it progresses, damage from liver cirrhosis becomes more visible as a swollen belly and legs, itchy skin, red palms, and yellow skin (jaundice). It's associated with a high risk of heart disease death and an overall higher risk of dying.





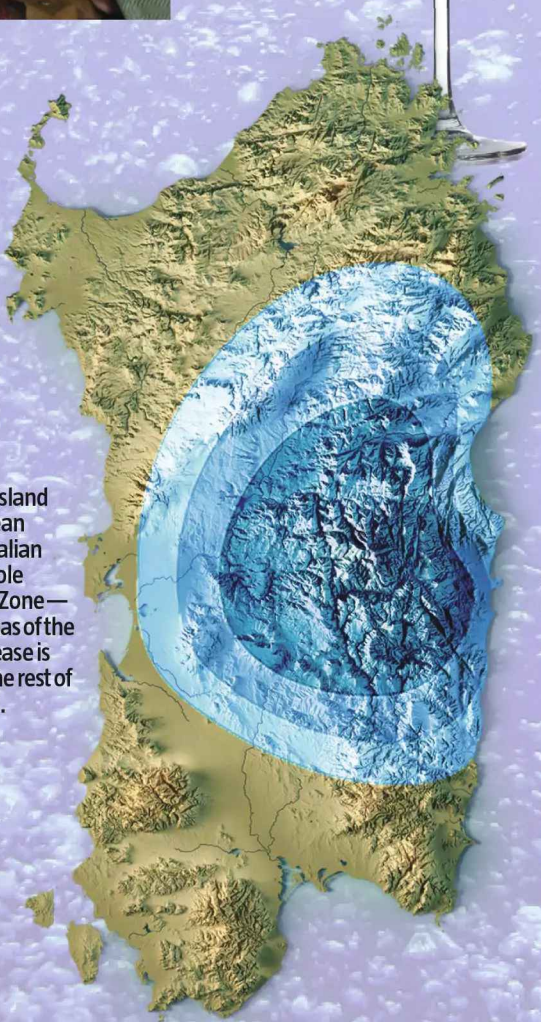






Sardinia Blue zone

Sardinia is a small island in the Mediterranean Sea, south of the Italian mainland. The whole island is not a Blue Zone—in fact, in many areas of the island, chronic disease is as common as in the rest of the Western world.



The Sardinia story

One of the strongest signals for C15:0's role in human longevity comes from the well-studied longevity hotspot on the Italian island of Sardinia—a so-called Blue Zone—where a small collection of isolated mountain villagers routinely live to age 100 and beyond. Sardinia had 606 centenarians in 2024, which is about 10 times the concentration of 100-year-olds in the rest of Europe.

The longevity of Sardinians is attributed to their laid-back lifestyle—unchanged for centuries—and their traditional diet, which happens to be high in C15:0-rich grassfed meat and whole dairy, especially in aged cheeses made from grassfed sheep and goat milk, like pecorino.

Contrary to the claims of vegan Dan Buettner, who popularized the idea of Blue Zones, their tradition focuses on raising sheep and pigs, and they often mention lamb and spit-roasted suckling pig as common foods in interviews.

Sardinians also eat homemade whole-grain bread, beans (chickpeas, fava beans, lentils), fresh vegetables and fruit, and bottarga, a salted fish roe. They forage for wild herbs, mushrooms and fruits and drink their famous flavonoid-rich Cannonau red wine every day but never in excess. Some also reportedly use mastic oil, which is super high in C15:0.

A study comparing people aged 65–70 and over 80 in the Sardinian high-longevity zone to those in a low-longevity zone on the same island found striking differences in C15:0 levels. Blue Zone Sardinians under age 70 had the highest record of C15:0 in their blood: 0.64 percent of total fatty acids, compared to C15:0 values in the populations of other Western countries, which hover around 0.20 percent or less.

Even among Blue Zone Sardinians over age 80, C15:0 made up 0.42 percent of their fatty acids, compared to just 0.29 percent of those in the low-longevity zone of Sardinia.[1] It seems that even the low-longevity Sardinians are better off than most of us.

Though it's important to note that Sardinians likely live longer due to a combination of factors, examining their diet seems to imply higher C15:0 is linked to longevity. Plus, it's probably a good idea to enjoy a good glass of red wine and some pecorino cheese.

REFERENCE

1 Geroscience, 2021; 43(4): 1783–1798

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Blood levels of C15:0 rose in the patients taking the supplement without any side effects, and among those who reached the minimum adequate circulating levels of 5 mcg/mL or more, there were also measurable improvements in liver enzyme and iron levels, signaling their liver health had improved.[8]

Venn-Watson guesses that further improvements and clinical changes would have been seen with supplementing C15:0 beyond 12 weeks.

C15:0 and ferroptosis

In 2025, researchers in India reconfirmed what Schwimmer had found: that C15:0 supplementation effectively lowered liver enzymes (improved liver function), lowered inflammation and oxidative stress in the liver, and stopped harmful liver iron overload. They used a rat model that mimicked a newly described nutritional C15:0 deficiency syndrome, called cellular fragility syndrome.[9]

This, and a good deal of other new research, is helping to solidify the hypothesis that a C15:0 deficiency is the primary driver of iron-dependent cell death (called ferroptosis), which leads to iron overload in cells.

Ferroptosis was discovered by Columbia researchers in 2012, and today there are more than 66,000 studies on PubMed about it. More are being added every day since it underlies most age-related chronic diseases that take us out in the end, including heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes and fatty liver disease.

"Ferroptosis is emerging as the calling card of nutritional C15:0 deficiency and cellular fragility syndrome, the first nutritional deficiency to be found in 75 years," says Venn-Watson.[10]

C15:0 and cancer

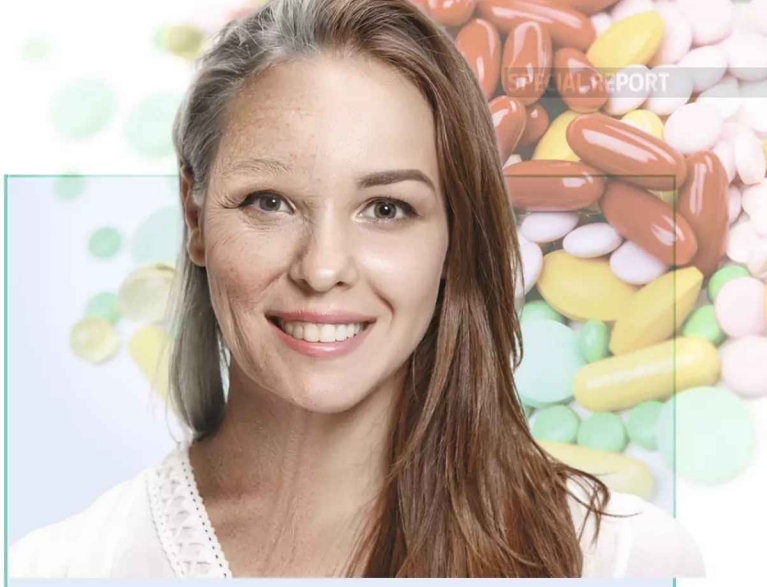
In relation to cancer, C15:0 is turning out to be a critical player. In large population studies, people with higher levels of C15:0 in their bloodstream tend to have a lower risk of colorectal cancer.[11]

Meanwhile, studies of breast tissue have found healthy tissue contains more C15:0 than cancerous tissue, suggesting the body may lose the protective fatty acid as cancer develops.[12] Researchers think this may be because C15:0 helps keep cells calm and stable.

It reduces chronic inflammation, supports the cell's outer membrane, and helps the cell's protein-making machinery run smoothly. When those systems break down, cells can become stressed and more prone to turning cancerous.

Similar associations of high C15:0 and low cancer risk have been found with liver, pharyngolaryngeal (throat and voice box) and bladder cancer.[13]

Venn-Watson published a study in 2025 after testing various concentrations of C15:0 against 94 human cancer cell lines. She found that C15:0 slowed tumor growth most effectively in a subset of B cell lymphomas (a type of blood cancer) and in breast, liver and lung cancer lines. However, it had "broad anticancer activities," which suggests that optimizing C15:0 levels may be a way to prevent or treat cancer.[14]



C15:0 for skin health

Once scientists saw C15:0 helping stressed cells recover from heart disease, metabolic dysfunction, cancer and cognitive problems, the next question came pretty naturally: If it can help our insides age more gracefully, what might it do for the skin?

In a recent randomized, placebo-controlled clinical study, researchers gave 49 women aged 35–59 with dry, sagging skin a daily capsule of a Japanese *Aurantiochytrium* (a single-celled marine organism) oil product enriched in C15:0 for 12 weeks. They tracked changes in the women's skin firmness, collagen levels, moisture and barrier function.

By the end of the study, the women taking the C15:0 supplement showed gradual but noticeable improvements: greater skin elasticity and hydration, denser collagen and less moisture loss from the skin surface. In contrast, those in the placebo group saw little improvement, and some saw their skin moisture and elasticity decline.

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Shinryo to Shinyaku (Med Cons New-Remed), 2023; 60: 459–470

C15:0 and Alzheimer's disease

Other research is just beginning to question the potential role of C15:0 in another tsunami disease: Alzheimer's. A recent study of 19 navy bottlenose dolphins found they also develop the same age-related brain changes seen in Alzheimer's disease.

Scientists found the signature amyloid-beta plaques and signs of inflammation and microglial activation concentrated in the hippocampus, the brain's memory center. The pattern mirrors what happens in aging human brains, strengthening dolphins' role as a natural model for studying cognitive decline.

The same research revealed something even more compelling: C15:0 naturally blocked two enzymes involved in neuroinflammation and dopamine breakdown, which are already major drug targets for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's therapies. This means it may be protective and essential to healthy brain aging.[15]

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Time for a public health review?

These findings align with those of a growing number of research teams worldwide who are exploring C15:0's role in human health and questioning the wisdom of the entrenched low-fat dietary guidelines. Our blanket avoidance of unprocessed natural fats may be starving our cells of critical nutrients.

The discovery of C15:0 suggests that balance—not elimination—is key. By restoring the right fats, we may be able to rebuild the cellular stability our bodies have been missing.

According to the cellular stability hypothesis, human longevity depends on how stable the fatty acids that make up cell membranes are. Since C15:0 plays a big role in this stability, it may have a direct role in extending longevity.

As a measurable quantity, circulating C15:0 levels that are 0.2 percent or less of total fatty acids may represent a deficiency state (nutritional C15:0 deficiency syndrome or cellular fragility syndrome). This condition increases the risk of ferroptosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and fatty liver disease.

In contrast, Venn-Watson argues, levels greater than 0.4 percent and perhaps as high as 0.64 percent are likely optimal for long-term health.[1,2]

The good news: restoring C15:0 levels doesn't require radical change. Adults likely need 100–200 mg per day, roughly the amount obtained from 2 cups of whole milk before the low-fat era. But reaching that amount today can be difficult without supplementation or a moderate return to whole-fat dairy (see box, right, on the pros and cons of dairy and other food sources of C15:0).

To help reach that goal, Venn-Watson and her husband, US Navy physician Dr Eric Venn-Watson, have developed a pure, vegan-friendly C15:0 supplement. "Our bodies don't make enough of it," she explains. "So we have to get enough from our diet to stay healthy, especially as we age."

Their company now collaborates with global health experts to revisit dietary guidelines and challenge the stigma surrounding fat. As she says, "Let's neutralize the term. There are good and bad fats—and some, like C15:0, are essential for life."

The implications are huge: healthier aging, stronger immunity, and improved liver and metabolic function, all through a molecule once hidden in plain sight.

What began as a mission to help the US Navy's beloved trained dolphins live happy, healthy lives may just help dissipate a global tsunami of metabolic disease in humans.

"It shows that when we combine compassion with innovation to improve life for other species, we can improve life for all," Venn-Watson says, adding what has become her team's motto: "Save the dolphins, save the world."

What to eat to boost C15:0

Grassfed dairy products—including cheese, milk and butter—are the most practical dietary way to boost C15:0 levels. Other contributors include certain fatty fish, like anchovies, sardines, herring and salmon.

As well, bacteria in the gut use inulin (not insulin), a prebiotic dietary fiber, to produce small amounts of C15:0. One study showed people who eat very high amounts of inulin, about 30 g daily, had up to 17 percent higher C15:0 levels.[1]

The trouble with butter

Butter contains roughly 1 percent C15:0, which is modest but meaningful for those aiming to increase this beneficial fatty acid. However, butter also contains about 40 percent even-chain saturated fats, such as palmitic acid (C16:0), which are pro-inflammatory and linked to increased cardiovascular disease risk and type 2 diabetes.

"This could help explain why hundreds of studies with dairy fat, including butter intake, have had mixed results," says C15:0 researcher Stephanie Venn-Watson.

Moderation is key. Choosing high-quality butter from grassfed cows can slightly increase C15:0 intake while minimizing exposure to inflammatory saturated fats. "I personally use a high-quality butter from grassfed cows, in moderation," says Venn-Watson.

Aged cheeses

For those looking to maximize benefits, pairing butter with other grassfed dairy products and C15:0-supportive foods is a good idea. In Sardinia, Italy, where people routinely live to see their 100th birthday, pecorino cheese made from local sheep's milk has very high C15:0 content and is a staple in the diet. Many aged cheeses in general have higher C15:0 content if you can't find pecorino.

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Your New Year adrenal reset

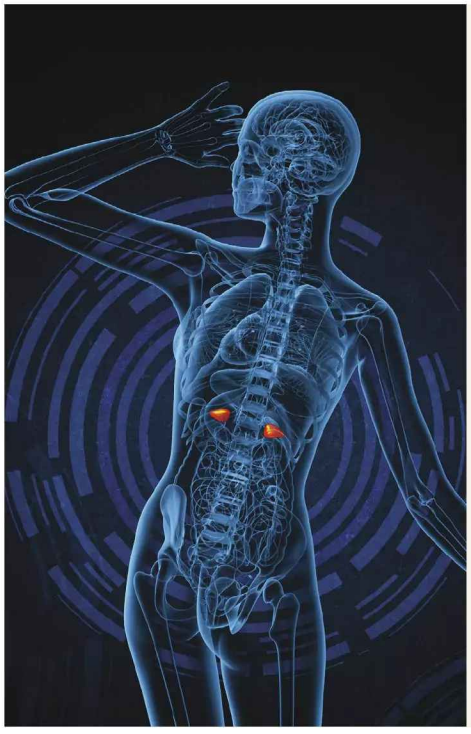
Marcelle Pick shares her top strategies for stopping adrenal dysfunction in its tracks and getting back to the healthiest version of you

My friend Becca made a massive list of New Year's resolutions last year. She felt motivated and ready to make all kinds of positive changes in her life, both personal and professional.

But when I checked in with her throughout the year, she was struggling to meet her goals. This is common and relatable. But something she said really stuck with me.

"Every day, I want to do those things," she said. "I never forget about them, and I'm not lazy. I just feel too tired."

This year, I helped Becca come up with a different kind of resolution: to beat adrenal fatigue, restore her healthy stress response and get her energy back. If you've been struggling with adrenal fatigue, or if you can relate in any way to Becca's story, I want to help you, too.



Signs of adrenal dysfunction

- Frequent or excessive fatigue
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Feeling anxious or overwhelmed
- Brain fog or difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Frequent sugar cravings
- Overreliance on caffeine
- Waking up feeling unrested
- Afternoon "crashes"

Is your stress response faulty?

A lot of women struggle to understand whether they have adrenal fatigue. Not only is information available online confusing and often contradictory but there's no conclusive test for it.

Beyond that, your holistic practitioner might say you have adrenal fatigue, even as your family doctor says it doesn't exist. This and its variable and nonspecific symptoms can make it incredibly challenging to figure out the truth.

From my experience, most women deal with some degree of adrenal fatigue throughout their lives. Whether we call it adrenal dysfunction, HPA axis dysfunction or something else, collectively, our stress responses are suffering. But there is a way to heal your stress response and your overall health.

How to beat adrenal fatigue

The first step in beating adrenal fatigue is recognizing something is off. If you feel tired more often than you should, that's one key indication. See the box above for some of the most common signs and symptoms of adrenals that have been in overdrive, leading to physiological burnout and an impaired stress response.

Here are some simple holistic strategies to restore healthy adrenal function.

Set boundaries One of the toughest but most important resolutions is to learn to say no. So many women know on some level that certain commitments or relationships are wearing them out, but they're not sure how to pull back or walk away.

Take some time to reflect on the situations that are draining you and ask yourself what boundaries you can set to relieve this stress. You might decide to delegate certain tasks, take a break from a friendship or turn your phone off on Sundays. Finally, communicate those boundaries to the relevant people.

Eat anti-inflammatory foods What you eat plays a huge role in how well your adrenals function. Opt for a variety of whole, anti-inflammatory foods—healthy fats, lean proteins, leafy greens and high-quality sea salt. Say no to pro-inflammatory choices like sugar, processed foods and refined flour.

Practice mindfulness There are lots of ways to introduce more mindfulness into your life—beyond just meditation. For example, you could take a walk every morning without your phone or other distractions. Or sit and listen to a beautiful piece of music, with or without your eyes closed. There's no right or wrong way to practice, so explore what makes you feel present and connected to yourself.

Heal your gut Restoring your gut health is one of the best things you can do to improve adrenal function. Stress goes beyond the mental and emotional. Things like leaky gut or an imbalanced gut microbiome also stress your body and can throw your hormones and adrenal function out of whack.

Add probiotic foods to your diet, like kefir, yogurt, miso, tempeh, kimchi and sauerkraut, to help balance your microbiome. You can also take a high-quality probiotic. And consider having a functional medicine practitioner order a stool test to see if there's something going on in your gut that you're unaware of.



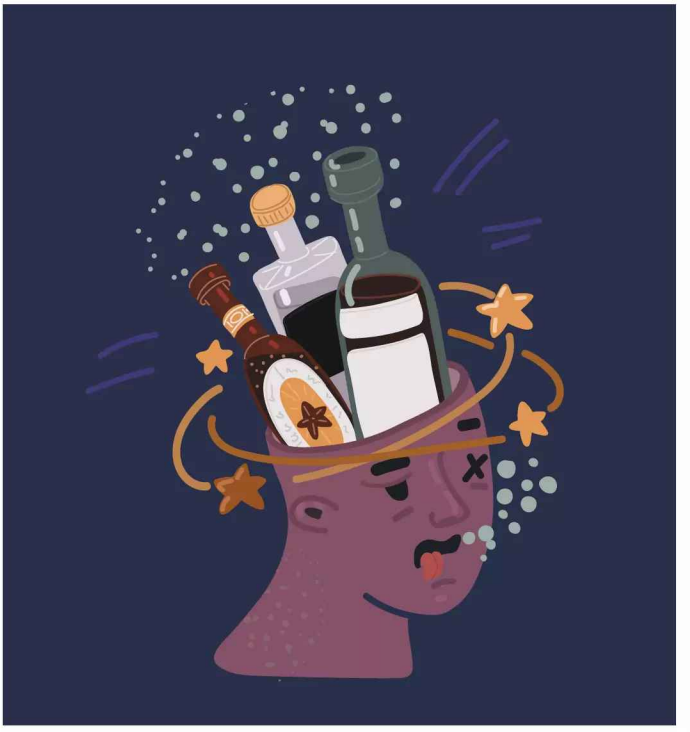
Marcelle Pick (marcellepick.com), ob-gyn nurse practitioner, is passionate about transforming the way women experience healthcare through an integrative approach. She cofounded the world-renowned Women to Women Clinic in 1983 with the vision not only to treat illness but also to support her patients in proactively making healthier choices to prevent disease. She has successfully treated thousands of individuals through her unique approach to wellness.

Too much of a good thing

Are you paying the price for overindulging? Homeopath David Needleman offers a handful of helpful remedies to get you through the post-party season

With leftover treats still in the cupboards, social gatherings spilling into the new year, and holiday eating patterns lingering, it can be hard to shift out of the routine of overindulging at this time of year. Whether it's from too much food or alcohol, or both, overindulgence can lead to an assortment of digestive symptoms, such as bloating, indigestion and diarrhea.

Here are five homeopathic remedies that can help you counter these unpleasant symptoms as well as other common problems associated with the post-holiday period.



Nux Vomica

The best remedy for overindulgence, whether from food or alcohol, is Nux Vomica. If you buy only one remedy, make it this one. These are some of the symptoms it can help with:

- Headache at the back of the head, often with vertigo
- Sensitivity to light
- Nausea or a sour taste in the mouth after eating
- Dyspepsia (indigestion) and trapped wind
- Drowsiness after meals
- Excessive drinking to the point of confusion
- Revulsion at the sight or smell of food
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Gray or pale skin
- Indigestion with burning pain in the abdomen and burping

Arsenicum Album

Also called Ars Alb or Arsen Alb, this remedy is often used to treat "ailments from alcoholism" but is also useful for occasional alcohol overindulgence, such as from a celebratory lunch or dinner. It's especially helpful for the following:

- Pain in the abdomen
- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Marbled-looking skin that's cold to touch

Carbo Vegetabilis

This is a remedy made from charcoal, which has a long history of traditional use for easing digestive discomfort. It's amazing at reviving a person, and you can often note a visible change very quickly. Carbo Veg is the remedy of choice for symptoms such as the following:

- Feelings of heaviness, fullness and sleepiness
- Bloating and excess wind

Lycopodium

This remedy is suited to recover from overindulgence with food but not with alcohol. Lycopodium can help if you have these symptoms:

- A ravenous appetite, even after eating
- Extreme bloating and excess wind that doesn't relieve it
- Pressure in the stomach
- Diarrhea or constipation with ineffectual urging (the first passing may feel like releasing a very hard plug, after which the diarrhea may follow)

Phosphorus

Another common problem during the winter months is seasonal affective disorder (SAD), which is often related to reduced sunlight exposure during the shorter days in autumn and winter. Symptoms are similar to those of depression—low mood, lethargy, despair, reduced libido and difficulty concentrating, to name a few—but they occur with a seasonal pattern.

Phosphorus is the number one homeopathic remedy for SAD and general low mood. But it's especially useful for those who are "easily intoxicated" and prone to vomiting. For best results, take it from late September through early April—have a good supply on hand.

Suggested dosages

For all the remedies mentioned above, I suggest a 30C potency, starting with one dose every hour until you've recovered—up to four doses. If symptoms persist, you may need to change the remedy. Consult a qualified homeopath for individual advice.



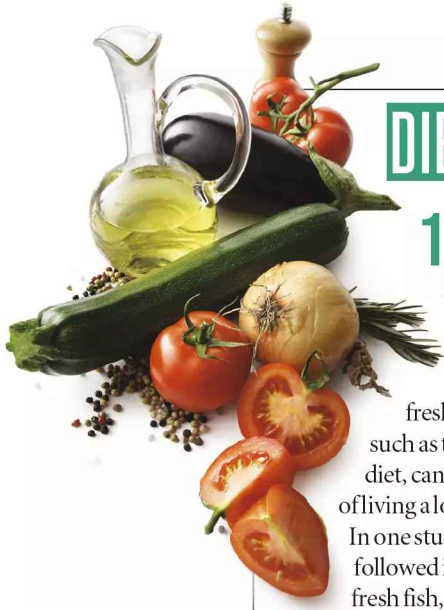
David Needleman is one of the founding directors of the Alliance of Registered Homeopaths. Qualified as both a pharmacist and a homeopath, he has worked in community pharmacies for most of his professional life and lectured on homeopathy in the US, the UK and Japan as well as treating clients in 24 countries.

In 1996, David set up the Homeopathic Helpline, a 15-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year acute advice service manned by him and other qualified, experienced homeopaths. They have successfully helped 350,000 callers to date. You can reach the Homeopathic Helpline at +44 (0)9065 343404.

To have David answer a question in *WDDTY*, write to info@wddty.co.uk.

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To celebrate *WDDTY*'s 150th issue, we've trawled through our immense database to bring you 150 of the best tips for living a long and healthy life. To find out more about any of these, use the search function on wddty.com. Here's to a healthy 2026 and beyond!



DIET

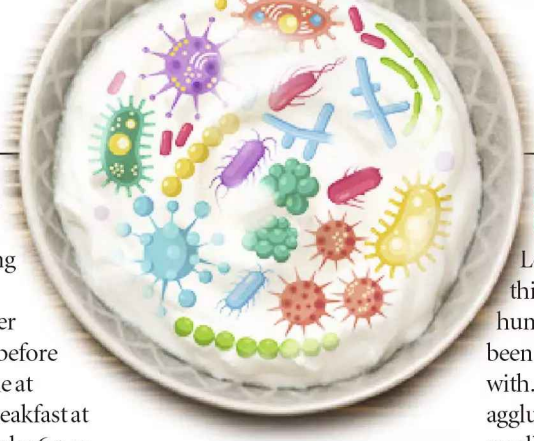
1 Follow a Mediterranean-style diet

Scores of studies have demonstrated that a diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, such as the Mediterranean diet, can increase your chances of living a long and healthy life. In one study, those who followed it most closely, eating fresh fish, nuts and olive oil, were about 20 percent less likely to die of any disease, including cancer and heart problems.[1]

2 Eat the rainbow

Eat a wide variety of brightly colored fruits and vegetables to make sure your body gets the nutrients it needs. "Rainbow" foods are especially good for keeping your brain sharp as you age—they're packed with powerful antioxidants called polyphenols that help arrest mental decline, a forerunner of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.



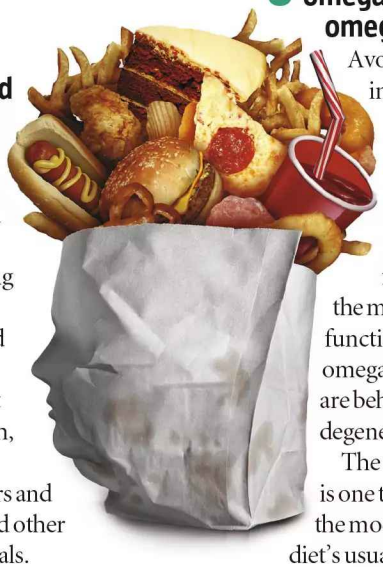


3 Include Nrf2 activators

Nuclear factor erythroid-2-related factor 2, more simply known as Nrf2, is the body's master regulator of aging and detoxification. Include plant foods and compounds that are powerful Nrf2 activators in your diet, such as these:

- Cruciferous vegetables
- Turmeric
- Nuts and seeds
- Berries
- Avocados
- Garlic

4 Avoid processed foods



Eat whole, unprocessed foods as much as you can. Avoid anything that's white when it should be brown, frozen when it should be fresh, or laden with artificial flavors and sweeteners and other added chemicals.

Especially avoid ultra-processed foods (UPFs), such as supermarket bread, prepared meals, breakfast cereals, sausages and deli meats, pastries, chips (crisps), colas, packaged fruit juices and other sugary drinks. Depending on the amount eaten, a diet high in UPFs can increase the risk of dying from heart disease by as much as 66 percent.[2]

5 Try intermittent fasting

Restricting your eating time to a window of eight to 10 hours can reduce body weight, glucose intolerance, hypertension and dyslipidemia (abnormal levels of fats in your blood). All of these are risk factors for a host of chronic diseases.[3]

Use your time in bed as a guide to work out your best 10-hour eating window. Avoid food for at least one hour after waking and two hours before bedtime. So, if you wake at 7 a.m., you could eat breakfast at 8 a.m. and finish dinner by 6 p.m.

Note, though, that fasting is not recommended for anyone who is pregnant, is breastfeeding or has an eating disorder.

6 Boost your omega-3 to omega-6 ratio

Avoid an imbalance between omega-3 and omega-6 essential fatty acids. These fats regulate the major bodily functions, and omega-3 deficiencies are behind many degenerative diseases.

The optimal ratio is one to one,[4] but the modern Western diet's usual ratio is around one to 20 in favor of omega-6 from vegetable oils (like safflower, sunflower and corn oils). As a general rule, get more omega-3s (like eicosapentaenoic acid, or EPA, and docosahexaenoic acid, or DHA) and less omega-6s (like gamma-linolenic acid, or GLA).

People with higher blood levels of omega-3 fats live up to 4.7 years longer than those who have lower levels.[5] They're also less likely to suffer from heart attacks or strokes or to die prematurely from any cause.[6]

Good food sources include oily fish, chia seeds, flaxseeds, seaweed, and walnuts.

7 Include prebiotics and probiotics

A healthy gut microbiome is essential for aging well and living long.[7] An imbalance of gut bacteria, known as dysbiosis, is widely viewed as a potential marker of a range of diseases.[8] And critically ill patients have a better chance of surviving if they have higher levels of good bacteria in the gut.[9]

To look after your gut microbiome, eat plenty of foods rich in probiotics (friendly bacteria) and prebiotics (fibers that feed friendly bacteria).

Probiotic foods include kefir, yogurt, miso, tempeh, kimchi and sauerkraut; prebiotic foods include bananas, onions, leeks, chicory root, oats, dandelion greens and Jerusalem artichokes.

Polyphenol-rich foods and drinks, such as berries, grapes, almonds and green tea, are also important for gut health.[10]

8 Eat less wheat

Lots of people can't tolerate this relatively new food in the human diet, particularly as it's been so genetically tampered with. It contains wheat-germ agglutinin (WGA), which in small quantities can inhibit the nerve growth factor that's vital for healthy neurons.[11]

WGA can also disrupt endocrine function, causing rheumatoid arthritis, ulcers, insulin resistance, and kidney and digestive problems.[12] In addition, it can bring about cell death[13] and chronic inflammatory conditions.

Millet, quinoa, buckwheat and rice are good wheat alternatives.

9 Make your own bread

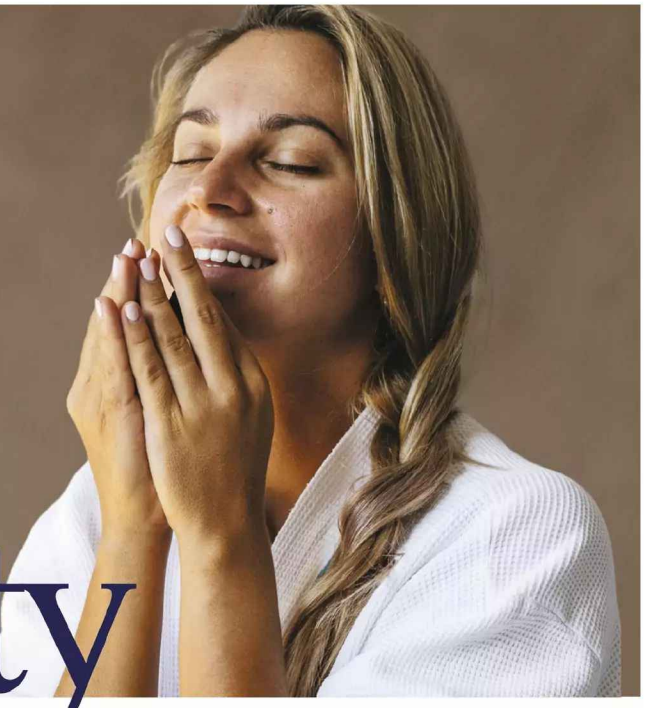
If you can't live without wheat, dodge the downsides of processed wheat by milling your own flour and baking your own bread with whole wheat berries and a countertop mill. However, it will still contain WGA.

10 Root out allergies or intolerances

Besides wheat, suspect the other big seven: corn, soy,



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sugar, nightshades (potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant/aubergine, peppers), yeast, egg and dairy. Find out if you're intolerant by following an elimination diet.

If you have an autoimmune or mental health condition, look into gluten allergy or intolerance—it could be key to your recovery.

11 Don't cut out fats

Fats play an essential role in maintaining health and are vital for a functioning brain. This is why cholesterol-lowering statin drugs are often linked to memory loss and mental decline; they reduce cholesterol to dangerously low levels.

As we age, we need fats including cholesterol, a saturated fat, to "feed" the brain. A study looking at the fat intakes of 28,098 middle-aged men and women for five years noted no increased risk of heart problems with high saturated-fat intakes.[14]

12 Focus on low-GI foods

The Glycemic Index (GI) measures how quickly a carbohydrate-containing food raises blood sugar. High-GI foods cause a rapid rise, triggering insulin release.

Low-GI foods release glucose more gradually into the blood, which helps prevent large blood sugar swings and large releases of insulin. Low-GI foods include meat, fish, pulses (beans) and most vegetables.



#21
Add spice
Spices are loaded with phytochemicals, so they pack a big nutritional punch even in small amounts.

13 Consider a keto diet

Following a ketogenic diet, which is high in fat and low in carbs, has proved beneficial for several health conditions, including type 2 diabetes and obesity, epilepsy, mood and anxiety disorders, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and neurodegenerative diseases.[15]

14 . . . or a ketobiotic diet

Holistic menopause expert Dr Mindy Pelz recommends a "ketobiotic diet" for menopausal women—a keto diet with plenty of fibrous plant foods to fuel your microbiome. Very strict keto diets (20 g carbs per day) don't allow for enough of these foods to feed your microbiome, which is vital for hormone balance, says Pelz. That's because fiber often comes from foods with more carbohydrate content.

She recommends keeping net carbs around 50 g/day and including plenty of greens and foods rich in probiotics, prebiotics and polyphenols (see Rule 7) to help break down excess estrogen.

15 Add egg to your veg

Eating cooked eggs with your vegetables can boost the absorption of carotenoids in the veg. The fat in the egg yolk helps the body absorb these potent antioxidants known to have numerous health benefits, especially when veggies are raw.[16]

16 Eat nitrate-rich foods

According to molecular medicine expert Dr Nathan Bryan, we need at least 300 mg of dietary nitrate per meal to support optimal nitric oxide levels—which maintain healthy blood pressure, circulation and overall health. Here are a few nitrate-rich foods to focus on:

- Leafy greens
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Fruits
- Beetroot
- Celery
- Artichoke



#15
Add eggs
Protein and fat help your body absorb more vitamins and polyphenols from other foods.

17 Drink beetroot juice

Daily beetroot juice is a good way to get your nitrates. It's been shown to boost nitric oxide production in the body, which dilates blood vessels, boosting blood flow in women after menopause.[17] It's also been found to reduce arterial stiffness quickly in men and may ease stress on the heart.[18]



18 Enjoy a cup of coffee

Coffee appears to help protect against several cancers and enhance longevity. But drink it only in the morning to ensure the caffeine won't affect your sleep. Go for a light or medium roast over a dark one to get more health-promoting polyphenols per cup.[19]

19 . . . or make your morning brew matcha

Drinking Japanese matcha, a powdered green tea made from the leaves of *Camellia sinensis*, is an excellent way to give your health a boost. Matcha tea plants are grown in the shade, which stresses them.

The stress activates survival mechanisms that boost the production of biologically active compounds such as theanine, chlorophyll and epigallocatechin gallate (ECGC). These antioxidants, especially ECGC with its anticancer, anti-inflammatory, antiviral and brain-boosting properties, can have big benefits for humans.[20]

20 Drink chamomile tea

If you'd rather avoid caffeine, choose chamomile tea. Women over age 65 who regularly drink

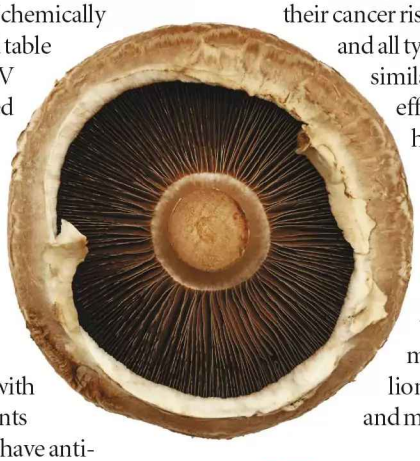
it have a 29 percent lower risk of premature death than those who don't.[24]

21 Spice up your cooking

Common kitchen herbs and spices—like cinnamon, cayenne pepper, garlic, ginger, rosemary, sage and thyme—have powerful healing properties. Incorporate them into your diet daily.

22 Skip the table salt

Choose a good artisan sea salt, rich in beneficial minerals, instead of chemically processed table salt or PDV (pure dried vacuum) salt.



23 Add some vinegar

Vinegar, with components known to have anti-obesity, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, antimicrobial, antitumor and antihypertensive effects, has been used to treat obesity for centuries.[22]

Metabolic health expert Ben Azadi recommends taking a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar diluted in water 15–20 minutes before each meal to improve digestion and mitigate blood sugar surges. You can also take it after a high-carb meal to improve insulin sensitivity.

24 Eat an apple a day

When it comes to protecting against death from heart disease, eating just one apple a day nearly matches the claimed benefit of taking a statin. Choosing apples rather than statins, though, may prevent more than 1,000 excess cases of myopathy (muscle disease) and more than 12,000 excess diabetes diagnoses.[25]

25 . . . and a handful of peanuts

Eating a handful of peanuts every day could lower your chances of heart disease death by up to 40 percent and of premature death from any disease by 21 percent.[26]

26 . . . and some mushrooms

People who eat 4 teaspoons of mushrooms each day reduce their cancer risk by 45 percent, and all types have a similar protective effect.[27] To harness the therapeutic properties of mushrooms, consider supplements with medicinal mushrooms like lion's mane, Reishi and maitake.

27 Opt for extra-virgin olive oil

A staple of the Mediterranean diet, olive oil contains a polyphenol called oleocanthal with potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Having just 1½ teaspoons of olive oil a day can cut your risk of dementia-related death by 28 percent.[28] Go for extra-virgin to get more health-promoting polyphenols or, even better, search for "high polyphenol olive oil."

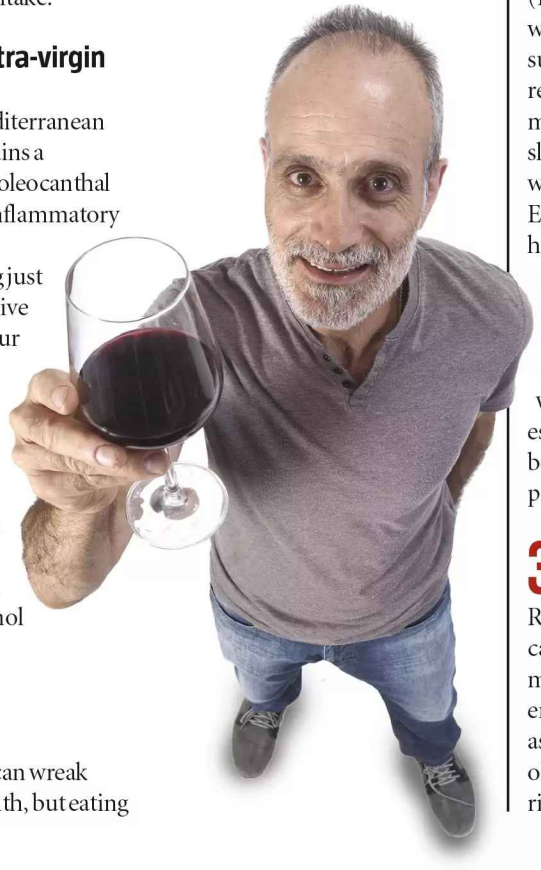
28 Say yes to chocolate

A high-sugar diet can wreak havoc on your health, but eating a little chocolate every week appears to protect against heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and death from any cause. Make it the dark kind, which is lower in sugar and higher in health-giving polyphenols.[29]

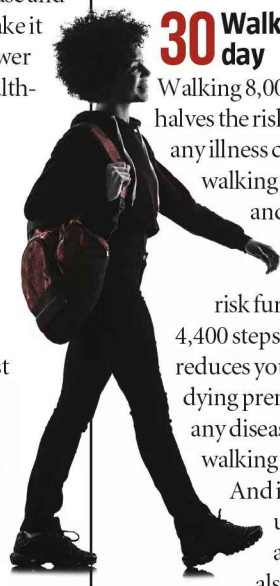
29 Drink a bit of alcohol

Drinking moderately (one or two glasses a day) rather than heavily or abstaining seems to be the safest and healthiest overall drinking pattern for preventing heart disease.[23] But make it red wine, which is packed with health-giving polyphenols such as resveratrol.

Red wine also contains hydroxytyrosol (HT), which is antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, neuroprotective, immunomodulatory, antiviral, antimicrobial, anticarcinogenic and heart-protective.[30]



MOVEMENT



30 Walk every day

Walking 8,000 steps a day halves the risk of death from any illness compared to walking 4,000 a day, and walking 12,000 steps reduces the risk further.[31] Even 4,400 steps a day greatly reduces your chances of dying prematurely from any disease compared to walking 2,700 steps.[32] And if you get in just under 10,000 a day, you can also cut your risk of dementia in half.[33]

31 Walk after meals

According to functional medicine practitioner Dr Mariza Snyder, author of *The Perimenopause Revolution* (Hay House, 2025), taking a walk after you eat "blunts a blood sugar response, reduces insulin resistance, improves intestinal movement, promotes better sleep and boosts your mood while lowering stress levels." Even just two to five minutes can have a positive effect.[34]

32 Wear a weighted vest

Add some weight while you walk to boost your workout. It's especially good for maintaining bone mineral density in postmenopausal women.[35]

33 Dance yourself fit

Regardless of the style, dancing can significantly improve muscular strength and endurance, balance, and other aspects of functional fitness in older adults.[36] It also reduces the risk of falling (a leading cause

of death and disability in the elderly) and defends against cognitive decline.[7]

34 Include strength training

Besides aerobic exercise, strength-building is vital for a long, healthy life. As well as improving muscle strength and balance, it's one of the most effective ways to support your bone health.

It can also boost memory and cognitive function and may even reduce the risk and symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.[8] Research suggests incorporating both strength training and aerobic exercise into your life will lead to the biggest longevity benefits.[9]

35 Lift weights

One study found that lifting weights for an hour three times a week can slash your biological age by eight years.[10] Another revealed that lifting weights for less than an hour a week can cut your risk of a heart attack or stroke by up to 70 percent.[11]

36 Don't pass on plyometrics



Plyometrics are explosive, high-impact movements like jump squats, box jumps and kettlebell swings. These exercises can improve muscular strength, bone health, body composition, posture and physical performance in older adults.[12]

37 Boost your NEAT

If you find it hard to get to the gym or an exercise class, increase your nonexercise activity thermogenesis (NEAT)—the calories you burn from everyday physical activity that's not planned exercise.

These are simple ways to do it:

- Take the stairs instead of elevators and escalators.
- Walk or cycle instead of driving whenever possible.
- Walk or pace while taking phone calls.
- Sit on a stability ball instead of a chair.
- Play more—with kids, with pets or just by tossing a ball around.
- Do light household chores daily.

#33 Dance yourself fit

In one study, those who danced had a 37 percent lower risk of falling and significantly better balance and mobility.

38 Add in exercise snacks

These are short bursts of movement done several times throughout the day—anything from 30 seconds to five minutes—to quickly raise your heart rate and improve fitness. Think stair climbing, jumping jacks or a brisk walk. Research confirms they can be a time-efficient alternative to more traditional workouts for improving cardiorespiratory fitness.[13]

39 Wear a fitness tracker



Wearable fitness trackers can motivate you to move more and live healthier, whether you're simply tracking daily steps or more advanced metrics like heart rate, sleep, blood oxygen levels and calories burned. But choose one without Bluetooth or Wi-Fi, or one with airplane mode, to minimize exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMFs; see Rule 77).

40 Don't sit for too long

Swapping just 10 minutes a day of sedentary time for moderate to intense activity, such as a brisk walk or heavy housework, can reduce your risk of a fatal heart attack by 38 percent. Bump that time to 30 minutes a day, and the chances reduce by 77 percent.[14]

41 Incorporate mind-body exercise

Exercise that combines physical movement with mental focus and controlled breathing—such as yoga, tai chi and qigong—can slash stress, support sleep, and improve flexibility, balance and mobility. It can even reduce symptoms of chronic conditions like back pain, arthritis and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes and mood problems also respond well to mind-body exercise.[15]

42 Don't forget to stretch

Regularly stretching helps to maintain mobility and flexibility, ease stiffness, support a healthy posture, and reduce the risk of injuries. It can also help you relax.



MIND & BODY

43 Sort out stress

High stress that continues over long periods can contribute to heart disease, stroke, cancer, dementia and lots of other health problems. There are scores of proven ways to keep stress in check, from mind-body techniques like meditation and yoga to adaptogen supplements (see Rule 92) to time outdoors. The key is to figure out what works for you.

44 Stay connected

Relationships are vital for a long and healthy life. Living with a partner and being socially active with lots of friends increase your chances of living 50 percent longer than someone who lives alone and is isolated.[1]

If you don't have lots of friends or family around you, consider joining a social group nearby or online. The type of group doesn't seem to matter—it might be a church or community group, or a tennis or book club. What's important is that you identify with it or see it as a meaningful part of your life.[2]



45 Find your purpose

People who have a sense of purpose are more likely to live long and healthy lives.[3] If you're struggling to find your purpose in life, think about what you care about, what you're good at and what you enjoy doing—and consider volunteering.

46 Seek out the new

Not only is routine deadening to the senses but it can actually make you ill. According to Bowling Green State University psychologist Jaak Panksepp, one of the most important basic human instincts is the "seeking" mode, a nature that remains intensely engaged in the search or the puzzle or is simply curious about what's new.

An interest in new things and change and, most of all, a "pioneering spirit" seemed to be the longevity elixir of a group of long-lived US Civil War nurses. Vary your activities and be sure to engage in tasks that involve problem-solving.[4]

47 Keep your brain busy

Even simple daily tasks and activities like cooking, reading, writing letters or emails, and playing cards can help keep your memory sharp and ward off dementia.[5] Keeping your brain active is especially important in your 60s and beyond.



#55 Get some green
One example of healthy time outdoors is the Japanese practice of "forest bathing."

48 Get creative

Creative activities like crafting, expressive writing, coloring and doodling can ease stress, anxiety and depression.[6]

49 Believe in something

People with religious and spiritual beliefs live longer and are less likely to get ill, suffer from depression or become suicidal. If they do get ill, their symptoms are less severe than in those with no religious beliefs, and they recover quicker.[7]

50 Think positive

Being more optimistic is tied to a longer lifespan and "exceptional longevity"—living to age 85 or older.[8] And those who maintain a positive outlook after suffering a stroke are more likely to have a good recovery.[9]

51 Laugh lots

Laughter really is the best medicine—especially when it comes to heart disease. People with heart problems who regularly laugh are less likely to suffer a stroke or heart attack.[10]





52 Get a pet

The decision to get a pet shouldn't be taken lightly, but pet ownership has been associated with improved mental health.[11] Even just petting a dog or cat for 10 minutes can significantly reduce stress levels.[12]

Other research shows owning a dog is associated with lower blood pressure and better lipid profiles. It comes with a 24 percent reduction in all-cause mortality (compared to non-ownership) and a 31 percent reduction in death related to heart disease.[13]

53 Meditate

Not just good for relieving stress, meditation can ease pain and depression, protect the heart and even delay brain aging. Fifty-year-old meditators had brains an average of 7.5 years younger than those of non-meditators in one study.[14]



54 Listen to music

Listening to music is proven to reduce pain and anxiety, lower blood pressure and help people recover after a stroke or brain damage.[15] It can also improve cognitive impairment in patients with Alzheimer's.[16]

55 Get some green

Exposure to outdoor green spaces like parks, gardens and forests is linked to improvements in both physical and mental health, such as lower blood pressure and inflammation and better concentration and overall recovery. Even indoor plants and natural elements can positively affect health and well-being.[17]

56 Think yourself well

Guided imagery, the use of your imagination to create calming, positive mental pictures that help your mind and body relax, can dramatically reduce chronic pain and the use of pain medication.[18] It's commonly used to lower anxiety and depressive symptoms[19] and improve general well-being in those who have musculoskeletal disorders.[20]

57 Deal with trauma

According to world-renowned integrative cancer specialist and *WDDTY* contributor Dr Leigh Erin Connealy, past traumas and unresolved conflicts can have devastating effects on the body. She therefore recommends an emotional-healing treatment called EVOX to all her patients.

"It's a powerful biofeedback tool that supports emotional healing by helping to 'remap the brain,' relieve stress and anxiety at the root, and heal past emotional wounds," she says.

Search online for "EVOX perception reframing" along with the name of your city or state to find the therapy near you. Or try *WDDTY* publisher Bryan Hubbard's Time-Light therapy, a method of understanding and processing trauma (learn more at timelighttherapy.com).

58 Empathize and forgive

One of the greatest antidotes to stress is heartfelt forgiveness and empathy. Forgiveness is associated with lower levels of depression, anxiety, hostility and substance abuse and fewer self-reported health symptoms. It also leads to greater satisfaction with life.[21]

59 Practice gratitude

Acts of gratitude, like keeping a gratitude journal or simply expressing gratitude to others, can reduce anxiety and depression and enhance your general well-being.[22]





#53 Meditate
Focusing the mind can help to calm and heal both the mind and the body.

Time-Light

Has Conventional Therapy Got Trauma Wrong?

Are you a therapist, coach or healer whose clients keep repeating the same patterns . . . no matter what you try?

Many therapies help clients manage trauma, but few reach its energetic root. At the moment of trauma, an energy is released that rewires how a person experiences life, creating a self that "has" the problem. Until this is addressed, deep transformation remains out of reach.

Time-Light® is a groundbreaking spiritual therapy developed by Bryan Hubbard, author of *The Untrue Story of You*. It reveals how to help clients release the hidden energy of trauma—often with life-changing results.



Special Invitation for What Doctors Don't Tell You Readers:

Join Bryan for an exclusive, free live online webinar introducing this revolutionary approach to trauma therapy. Discover how Time-Light works, why it's different from conventional therapy, and how you can train to become an accredited Time-Light® practitioner.

Reserve your FREE place today at
https://courses.timelighttherapy.com/WDDTY

Spaces are limited for this special event.

ENVIRONMENT



#60 Eat organic
Leafy greens such as spinach, kale, collards and mustard greens are on the Dirty Dozen list in the US but not in the UK.

60 Eat organic

Switching to organically grown food can significantly reduce pesticide levels in the body after just one week.[1] And eating organic food is associated with a lower risk of cancer.[2]

If you can't afford to go fully organic, check out the "dirty dozen" lists published by the Environmental Working Group (ewg.org) in the US and the Pesticide Action Network (pan-uk.org) in the UK for the 12 fruits and vegetables with the most pesticides, and prioritize these. Also wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly—adding a little baking soda can help get rid of pesticides.

61 Eat fresh

Consume fresh, unprocessed foods and limit canned and packaged foods as much as possible, as these can contain BPA and other health-degrading plastics chemicals.

62 Eat fish with caution

Most are now tainted by industrial waste and mercury (a toxic heavy metal), including "farmed" fish, which have been fed inappropriately with grains. Avoid swordfish, tuna and other deep-water fish, as these are likely to have more mercury than smaller fish from shallower waters. Rotating your protein sources helps minimize your exposure to specific chemicals.





63 Filter your water

Use an effective water filter, such as ZeroWater jug filters (zerowater.com; zerowater.co.uk), which remove virtually all dissolved solids from tap water including chlorine, lead and mercury, or the plastic-free countertop filter The Water Machine (thewatermachine.com). Also consider under-sink and whole-house water filters; just check with the company what exactly is filtered out. Avoid water sold in plastic bottles as the chemicals in the plastic can leach into the water.

64 Use safe cookware

To avoid toxic chemicals leaching into your food, steer clear of aluminum cookware, aluminum foil and anything coated with Teflon or labeled "nonstick." Safer cookware options include glass, ceramic, stainless steel and cast iron.

65 Choose all-natural ingredients

When shopping for beauty, personal care, cleaning and home products, check the ingredients on the label or the website you're buying the product from. Look up any you're not sure of (the Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep Cosmetics Database, ewg.org/skindeep, is a useful resource).

As a general rule, choose products with a short list of simple, natural ingredients you've heard of rather than a long list of unpronounceable, unrecognizable ingredients.

66 Avoid artificial fragrances

Anything with a synthetic fragrance could contain harmful chemicals. Choose unscented products or those fragranced with natural ingredients, like pure essential oils, instead.

67 Opt for untreated furnishings

Choose natural materials for curtains, rugs, bedding, throws and cushions, and avoid anything with added flame retardants, stain-proofing or moth-proofing and anything labeled "permanent press" or "wrinkle-resistant."

Check with companies directly to see if they add any chemical treatments to their products. Some good fabric options are organic wool, cotton and hemp.

68 Go plastic-free

Choose plastic-free alternatives whenever possible to minimize exposure to hormone-disrupting chemicals like phthalates and BPA. Glass and stainless steel are great for storing food and drink, while reusable beeswax wraps are a good alternative to plastic wrap or cling film. Go for natural fibers for clothes and home fabrics and choose wood over plastic for furniture, toys and other items in your home.



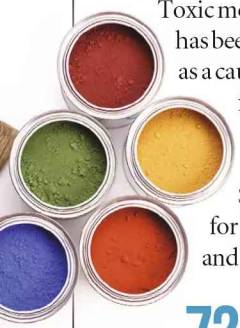
69 Vacuum regularly

Household dust is a major source of pollutants in the home, so vacuum often.[3]

70 Leave shoes at the door

Place a doormat by any exterior doors and don't wear shoes in the house to avoid tracking in pesticides, heavy metals like lead and other harmful contaminants from outside. These simple steps can reduce chemicals in the home by around 60 percent.[71]

71 Be mindful of mold



Toxic mold exposure has been proposed as a cause of chronic fatigue[72] and cognitive impairment.[73] See wddty.com for how to mitigate and heal from mold.

72 Choose VOC-free paints

If you're planning home decor or DIY projects, go for nontoxic paint, varnishes, fillers and other products with the lowest VOC levels you can find. VOCs—volatile organic compounds—are chemicals that readily release vapors at room temperature.

They're a major contributor to indoor air pollution and have been linked to a range of short- and long-term health effects, from headaches, liver damage and memory problems[74] to asthma, eczema and low sperm count.[75] Several VOCs, such as benzene and formaldehyde, are recognized carcinogens, and others are suspected carcinogens.[76]

73 Look out for lead

Watch out for this toxic heavy metal if you're decorating your home or upcycling vintage furniture—it could be hiding in old paintwork and varnish. Before sanding suspect surfaces, get a lead testing kit, such as those offered by 3M and Abotex.

If lead is present, deal with it safely. Paintwork in good condition can simply be sealed with an overcoat of modern lead-free paint. If it's in bad condition and needs to be removed, avoid methods that create dust or fumes, such as dry sanding or a heat gun. And always wear protective clothes, gloves and a face mask suitable for lead particles.

74 Get an air purifier

These machines can help remove dust, mold spores, odors, VOCs and more from the air in your home or workplace.

75 Watch out for fluoride

Exposure to fluoride has been linked to lowered IQ,[10] ADHD,[11] hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid),[12] bone fractures[13] and bone cancer[14]—even at relatively low levels. Choose fluoride-free dental care, and if your water supply is fluoridated, get a water filter that removes fluoride (see Rule 63).



#77 Minimize EMF exposure
In newer phones, it may be that airplane mode shuts off only cellular signals. For stronger protection, turn off Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and location settings as well.

76 Avoid amalgam

Although the EU has banned the provision of new amalgam dental fillings due to health concerns over mercury (which makes up about 50 percent of amalgam), these fillings can still be used in the US and UK. Ask your dentist for a safer alternative, like BPA-free composite fillings.

77 Minimize EMF exposure

The electromagnetic fields (EMFs) emitted by technology such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets, "smart" meters, Wi-Fi routers and power lines are associated with a host of modern illnesses, such as cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

Turning your Wi-Fi off at night, putting your phone on airplane mode when you're not using it and avoiding wireless headphones are a few simple ways to reduce your exposure (see wddty.com for more).

78 Detox regularly

Although the body has an inbuilt detoxification system to rid itself of unwanted substances, several factors can affect this process, including genetics, diet and toxic load (the buildup of toxins in the body from various sources). This is why many functional medicine practitioners agree that actively detoxing, i.e., helping your body to detox using various methods, is one of the best things you can do for your health.

A few simple, natural and effective ways to do this include using saunas, particularly far-infrared saunas (or anything else that makes you sweat), drinking vegetable juices and supplementing with nutrients to support the body's natural detox processes, such as magnesium, selenium, zinc and glutathione.

SUPPLEMENTS

79 Stay youthful with a multivitamin

Taking a daily multivitamin is associated with having longer telomere length (a marker of biological aging) and slower cognitive aging.[1] Look for a high-quality formula that fits your lifestyle (for example, a one-a-day capsule may work better for you than one taken several times a day).

80 Fight disease with vitamin D

Vitamin D is vital for warding off chronic conditions like cancer, diabetes, dementia and heart disease. But many of us aren't getting enough of this much-needed nutrient, which the body makes naturally when skin is exposed to sunlight.

In fact, vitamin D deficiency affects over a billion adults and children worldwide and has been linked to all sorts of short- and long-term illnesses, from dental problems to infectious diseases to neurological disorders.[2] Go for a vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) supplement, as it's the form your body naturally produces and is considered more effective than D2.[3]

Suggested dosage: 2,000 IU throughout the winter (and none in the summer) is enough for most people; get your levels tested and adjust the dose to your needs

81 Boost your energy with magnesium

An essential mineral in hundreds of processes throughout the body, magnesium plays a key role in supporting the health of mitochondria, the tiny powerhouses inside cells that fuel virtually every bodily function. However, deficiency is common.

Look for magnesium malate, glycinate (or bisglycinate) and

citrate, which are all well-absorbed forms.
Suggested dosage: 200–400 mg daily

82 Dodge dementia and heart disease with omega-3s

Omega-3 supplements reduce your risk of a fatal heart attack by 35 percent and a non-fatal one by 13 percent.[1] A daily dose of these natural anti-inflammatories can also reduce your risk of dementia and cognitive decline.[2]

Omega-3 supplements can be sourced from fish or plants. Look for fish oil that's sustainable, as natural as possible and free of contaminants like heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). It should contain generous doses of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)—the active forms of omega-3s our bodies use and the most important ones for health.

Vegan sources should be pure and natural and in a form your body can effectively use. Algae like the *Schizochytrium* species is a good fish-free option.
Suggested dosage: 2–3 g of combined EPA and DHA daily

83 Protect your gut with a probiotic

Top up your good-guy bacteria with a probiotic supplement, which can counteract age-related gut microbiome shifts and promote healthy aging.[3]

Choose a multi-strain probiotic with both *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* species at effective dosages (at least 5 billion colony-forming units, or CFUs). Certain strains, like *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG and *Saccharomyces boulardii*, are especially useful if you need to take antibiotics.
Suggested dosage: Choose a high-quality product and follow the label instructions

84 . . . and with cranberry extract

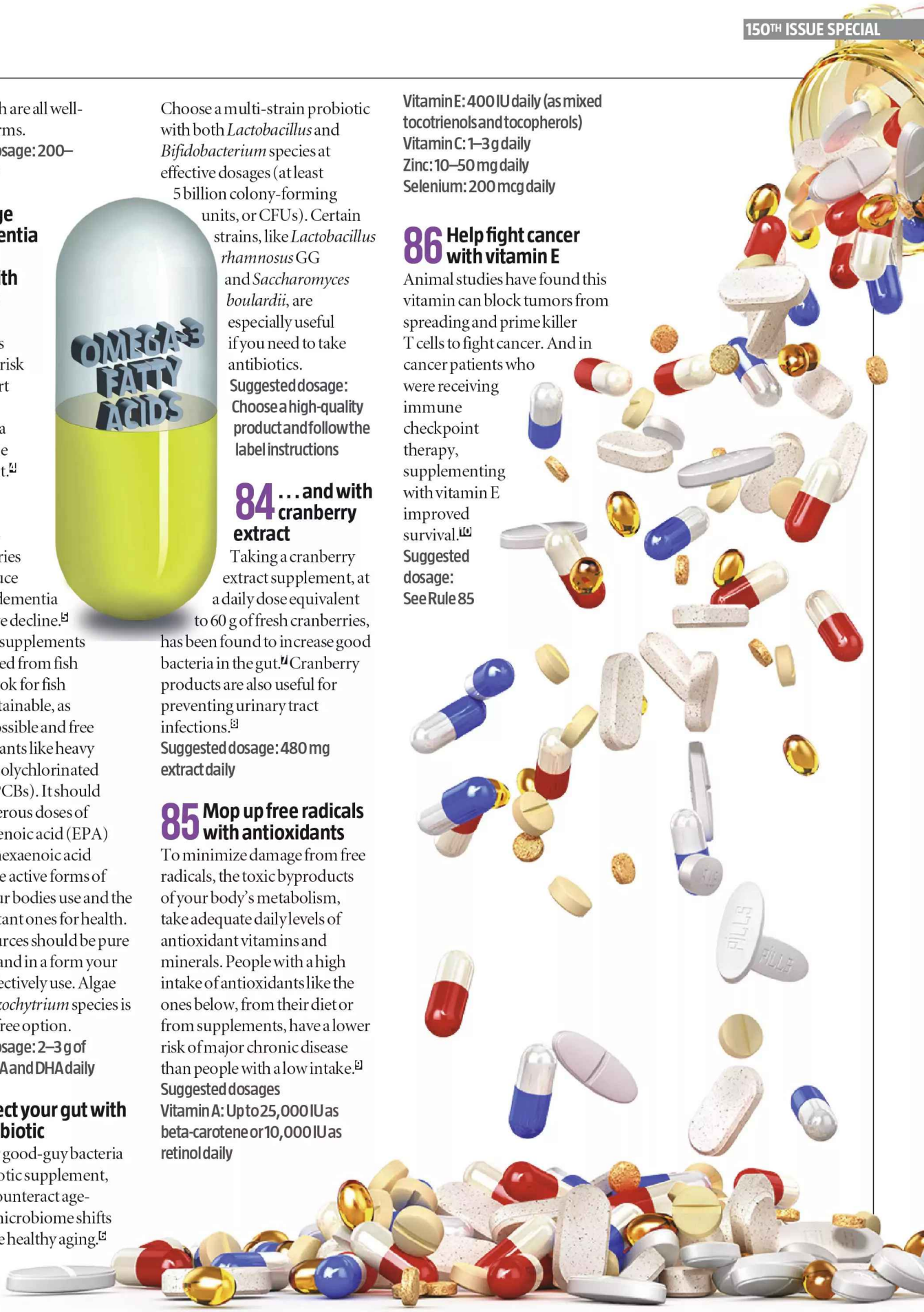
Taking a cranberry extract supplement, at a daily dose equivalent to 60 g of fresh cranberries, has been found to increase good bacteria in the gut.[4] Cranberry products are also useful for preventing urinary tract infections.[3]
Suggested dosage: 480 mg extract daily

85 Mop up free radicals with antioxidants

To minimize damage from free radicals, the toxic byproducts of your body's metabolism, take adequate daily levels of antioxidant vitamins and minerals. People with a high intake of antioxidants like the ones below, from their diet or from supplements, have a lower risk of major chronic disease than people with a low intake.[5]
Suggested dosages
Vitamin A: Up to 25,000 IU as beta-carotene or 10,000 IU as retinol daily
Vitamin E: 400 IU daily (as mixed tocotrienols and tocopherols)
Vitamin C: 1–3 g daily
Zinc: 10–50 mg daily
Selenium: 200 mcg daily

86 Help fight cancer with vitamin E

Animal studies have found this vitamin can block tumors from spreading and prime killer T cells to fight cancer. And in cancer patients who were receiving immune checkpoint therapy, supplementing with vitamin E improved survival.[10]
Suggested dosage: See Rule 85



87 Protect your heart with vitamin C

Vitamin C is most famous for supporting the immune system and fighting infections, but research also shows it's essential for a healthy heart and blood vessels.[11] According to noted cardiologist Dr Thomas Levy, author of *Primal Panacea* (Medfox Publishing, 2011), effective supplementation is the key to preventing heart disease and can even halt its progression.

Suggested dosage: Monthly or even weekly, take spaced doses of vitamin C powder in water until the onset of diarrhea; the dose just below this one is the ideal daily dose for your current needs

88 Age well with astaxanthin

This standout antioxidant, found in marine animals such as salmon, shrimp and crab, could protect against a range of health problems linked to aging, including dementia, failing eyesight, and skin sagging and wrinkling.[12] It's best to take it after a meal that includes fats, especially healthy fats such as olive and flaxseed oil.

Suggested dosage: 2–4 mg daily

89 . . . and coenzyme Q10

Another potent antioxidant, CoQ10 has been found to slow telomere degradation, which is important for aging well.[13] It also appears to help with migraine, chronic fatigue syndrome, Parkinson's, cancer, heart disease, infertility and more.[14]

Suggested dosage: 200 mg daily

90 . . . and creatine

Not just for athletes and bodybuilders, creatine is a superstar supplement for almost everyone, especially if you want to protect your brain along with aging muscles and bones. Creatine monohydrate is the most researched type; numerous studies show it's safe, effective and bioavailable (readily absorbed by the body).[15]

Suggested dosage: 3–5 g daily

91 Stop brain shrinkage with B vitamins

B vitamins are vital for brain health, and supplementing may prevent dementia, especially if you have high levels of homocysteine, an amino acid linked to cognitive decline. People with mild cognitive impairment given daily vitamin B supplements had 30 percent slower brain shrinkage and less cognitive decline than those given a placebo.[16]

A high-quality B complex vitamin or a multivitamin that includes the Bs at decent dosages can be good options, but look for the naturally active forms that your body can use straightaway.

Suggested dosages
B9: 200–800 mcg as methylated folate (L-methylfolate or 5-MTHF, not folic acid)
B6: 20–40 mg
B12: 10–500 mcg as methylcobalamin (not cyanocobalamin)



92 Ease stress with adaptogens

Adaptogens, nontoxic plants that help the body adapt to physical, emotional or environmental stress, are a great option if you're struggling to cope. Top ones to consider are below.

Suggested dosages
***Rhodiola rosea*: 200 mg twice daily**
Ashwagandha: 240 mg daily
***Panax ginseng*: 200–400 mg daily**

93 Boost your brain with nootropics

Many plants are effective nootropics— substances that improve thinking, learning and memory.[17] These are some of the best ones to try:

- Gingko (*Gingko biloba*) for perceptual and motor function
  Suggested dosage: 120–240 mg standardized extract daily
- Water hyssop (*Bacopa monnieri*) for language, learning and memory
  Suggested dosage: 150–300 mg standardized extract daily
- Eleuthero or Siberian ginseng (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*) for stress and memory
  Suggested dosage: 300–600 mg root extract daily
- Maca (*Lepidium meyenii*) for age-related cognitive decline
  Suggested dosage: 250–500 mg extract daily

94 Live longer with glucosamine

Glucosamine supplements aren't just for arthritis—they can help you live longer and may even be as good for you as regular exercise. Taking one a day for a year reduces your risk of heart disease death by 65 percent and premature death from any illness by 39 percent.[18]

Suggested dosage: Choose a high-quality supplement and follow the label instructions

95 Biohack weight loss with slimming supplements



They're no substitute for the right diet and lifestyle, but if you want to lose weight, certain natural supplements may help boost your results. Below are a handful to consider.

Suggested dosages
Green tea leaf extract: 250–750 mg daily
L-carnitine: 1–2 g daily
Conjugated linoleic acid (CLA): 3 g daily
Forskolin (*Coleus forskohlii*): 250 mg of a 10 percent extract twice daily
African mango (*Irvingia gabonensis*): 150 mg twice daily



96 Fend off colds with beta-glucans

Found in yeasts, algae and mushrooms, these prebiotic fibers can help reduce the incidence of colds as well as their duration and severity.[19]

Suggested dosage: 250–900 mg daily extracted from yeast or algae

97 Sleep better with L-tryptophan

This amino acid, found naturally in chocolate, oats, bananas, turkey and peanuts, seems to improve sleep quality and the time it takes to get to sleep. Unlike many sleeping pills, it doesn't impair mental performance or make waking up difficult.[20]

Suggested dosage: 250–1,000 mg daily in the evening

98 Choose high-quality supplements

Quality varies widely between brands, so select products from reputable companies committed to safety, potency and real results. Here's a quick checklist to follow:

- Bioavailable ingredient forms
- Helpful amounts of the nutrients you need
- The purest formulas available, free of fillers, binders and other unnecessary additives (check the ingredients)
- Strict sourcing standards, using exclusively natural, high-quality, non-GMO and science-backed ingredients
- Transparency about manufacturing processes
- Third-party testing for purity and potency

99 Get guidance from an experienced practitioner

To get the most from your supplements, work with a qualified naturopathic practitioner who can organize relevant testing—such as for nutritional deficiencies—and recommend supplements and dosages for your individual needs. This is especially important if you're taking medication or dealing with a chronic condition.





DRUGS

100 Remember that drugs rarely cure

After nearly 40 years of publishing *WDDTY*, we're still searching for a single drug besides antibiotics that actually cures something. Virtually all prescription drugs are for maintenance—that is, they manage, ease or suppress symptoms, but they do not cure.

And in spite of assurances from the pharmaceutical industry that drugs can target certain receptors in the body with laser-like accuracy, the fact is that many unrelated systems in the body have identical receptors—which is why drugs invariably affect other parts of the body indiscriminately and cause side effects.

Look instead to holistic solutions that address the underlying cause of disease. (But never stop taking any medication suddenly, and work with a qualified practitioner for individual guidance).

101 Sidestep statins

These cholesterol-lowering drugs have been linked to muscle pain and weakness, cognitive impairment and even certain cancers.[1]

102 Say no to SSRIs

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), the main treatment for depression, come with a long list of side effects, from disturbed sleep to an increased risk of stroke and premature death.[2] The drugs may also cause aggressive and suicidal behaviors.[3]

What's more, the whole theory behind SSRIs—that depression is related to low levels of serotonin in the gaps between brain cells—has never been proven, and there's no evidence to back it up.[4]

103 Dodge benzodiazepenes

These sedative drugs, which include alprazolam (Xanax) and diazepam (Valium), have been found to more than triple the risk of dementia.[5]

104 Think twice about TNF-blocking drugs

Used as a replacement for painkilling COX-2 inhibitors, drugs that block tumor necrosis factor (TNF) receptors have been linked to a higher risk of tuberculosis and cancer.[6]

105 Be cautious of anticholinergics

Prescribed to treat conditions from asthma and hay fever to depression to overactive bladder and peptic ulcers, these have a long list of side effects, and dementia is one of them.[7]

106 Bypass bisphosphonates

These osteoporosis drugs can slow down bone loss, but



#112 Watch out for weight loss jabs
The list of side effects is terrifying, and lawsuits have begun.

digestive and flu-like side effects are common. They've also been linked to high rates of atrial fibrillation, a heart rhythm disorder that can lead to stroke.[8]

107 Avoid aspirin



It's the ultimate just-in-case lifestyle drug, taken to prevent heart disease and stroke, but aspirin can actually increase the risk of hemorrhagic stroke (life-threatening bleeding in the brain) and major gastrointestinal bleeding.[9] Other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) now carry warnings regarding their cardiovascular and gastrointestinal risks.

108 Skip HRT and the Pill

Their cancer connections are finally indisputable[10] even though drug companies keep fighting the evidence.

109 Be mindful of antiepileptics

These can lead to suicide and also cause potentially fatal liver failure. Many of the newer ones, like Keppra (levetiracetam), Topamax (topiramate) and Sabril (vigabatrin), increase the risk of depression and suicide or self-harm threefold.[11]

110 Pass on PPIs

People taking proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), a group of drugs that reduce stomach acid production, have a much higher risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke. The drugs also increase their risk of dying from any cause compared to non-users.[12]

111 Steer clear of finasteride

Used to treat an enlarged prostate (as Proscar) and hair loss (as Propecia), this drug has been linked to depression, suicide[13] and a deadly type of prostate cancer.[14]

112 Watch out for weight loss jabs

People taking GLP-1 receptor agonist drugs like semaglutide (marketed as Ozempic and Wegovy) have been reporting serious side effects including septic shock, gastrointestinal blocks, pancreatitis, pancreatic cancer, blood clots in the lungs, blindness, anorexia, suicide, episodes of psychosis and depression, and more.

113 Beware of beta blockers

Beta blockers are routinely given to heart patients, especially after they've suffered a heart attack—but the drugs can cause a second heart attack or heart failure.[15]

114 Avoid antibiotics unless absolutely necessary

One in five hospitalized adults suffers side effects after taking antibiotics prescribed by their doctor, nearly 20 percent of which were unnecessary in the first place.[16]

TESTS

115 Reconsider routine mammograms

This blunderbuss approach, which uses x-rays to detect breast cancer, doesn't see cancer at its earliest stages and fails to recognize aggressive tumors. For every woman whose cancer is correctly detected, 10 healthy women go through unnecessary worry, further testing and even treatment before doctors realize they've been misled by a false positive.

Consider thermography and ultrasound instead, and don't underestimate the value of the humble breast self-exam.



116 . . . and routine dental x-rays

Your dentist keeps telling you it's safer than an airplane flight, but dental x-rays could triple the risk of meningioma, a kind of brain tumor. Children who undergo a Panorex or full-mouth x-ray before they reach age 10 run the greatest risk.

Even bitewing x-rays increase the risk. Regular exposure may also cause heart disease. Annual checkups should be urgently reconsidered, say Yale University researchers.[1]

117 Be wary of blood pressure readings

Many factors can distort a BP reading by as much as



5 mmHg: exposure to cold, recent alcohol intake, incorrect arm position, incorrect cuff size—and even the presence of the doctor, now so common that it's called "white coat" hypertension.

Blood pressure falls at night, and nighttime blood pressure is considered the most accurate predictor of heart attack.[2] Consider 24-hour blood-pressure monitoring, not the old-fashioned cuff.

118 Avoid annual smear tests

Many doctors still offer women an annual smear test for cervical cancer even though they've been told the test can do more harm than good. It throws up many false positives—incorrectly "seeing" abnormal tissue that triggers further and more invasive tests, plus needless worry.[3] Even the NHS advises testing only once every three years at ages 25–49 and every five years at ages 50–64.

119 Question CT scans

This whole-body, 3D imaging system is one of the most sensitive early-warning detectors of cancer, internal bleeding, heart problems, stroke and neurological disorders. However, the standard course of two or three CT (computed tomography) scans can expose you to radiation equivalent to that of the Hiroshima or Nagasaki atomic bombs.[4]

Just one scan equals around 500 standard chest x-rays, reckons the Royal



#115 Reconsider routine mammograms
False positives are common, so consider alternatives like thermography and ultrasound for greater safety and accuracy.

College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Children who are scanned run a far higher risk of developing cancer.[5] Ask for any other kind of imaging exam first.

120 Think twice about biopsy

In a biopsy, a small bit of tissue is removed under local anesthetic to diagnose a serious illness like cancer. Besides leading to infection, puncturing nearby organs, and causing tears and bleeding, the greatest danger is that biopsies can inadvertently "seed" or spread cancer. With breast biopsies, the risk of recurrent cancer from a "needle metastasis" is about one in 15.[6] Request PET (positron emission tomography) or MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) instead.

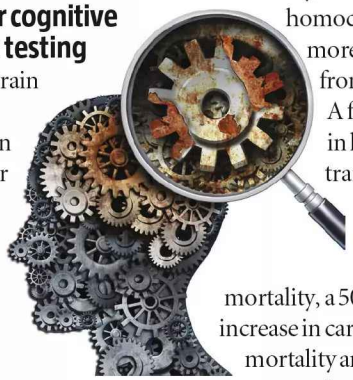
121 Don't always trust DEXA scans

DEXA, or dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry, is a noninvasive test to measure bone mineral density (BMD) considered the gold-standard test for diagnosing osteoporosis. But its results can be imprecise.

A major problem is that a larger bone seems to indicate superior strength but may in fact have the same density as a smaller bone.[7] This means a person with a smaller frame stands a higher risk of misdiagnosis with a DEXA scan than a large-boned person.

WDDTY contributor and women's health expert Marcelle Pick recommends assessing your actual risk of fractures by talking to your provider about your personal risk factors: "Ask about the World Health Organization's tool FRAX, which accounts for age, weight, previous fracture history, family history and other risk factors to determine a more accurate score than one bone density scan can provide."

122 Consider cognitive function testing



The Food for the Brain Foundation's Cognitive Function Test is the first-ever free, validated, digital version of what gets measured in memory clinics. Complete it at foodforthebrain.org, along with a health and lifestyle questionnaire, to see your future "Dementia Risk Index" and learn about ways to dementia-proof your diet and lifestyle.

123 Get your hair tested

Hair tissue mineral analysis (HTMA) measures the levels of minerals and heavy metals in a small hair sample. Because hair grows slowly and incorporates minerals over time, HTMA gives a long-term picture of your mineral status. But it can also reveal toxic metal exposures (such as lead or mercury) and metabolic patterns.

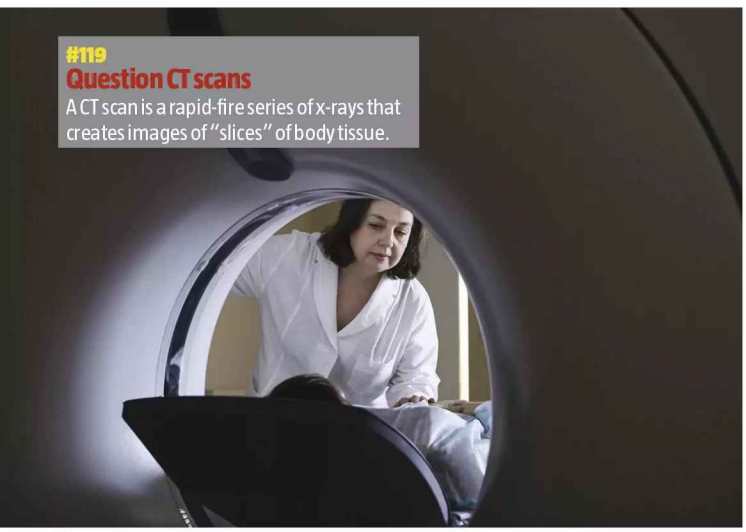
A lot of functional medicine practitioners use HTMA as part of their holistic treatment programs and can organize testing for you. Or you can order a test online from a company such as Hair Analysis Report (hairanalysisreport.com) in the US or Mineral State in the UK (mineralstate.co.uk).

124 Check your homocysteine

Forget cholesterol levels—your homocysteine levels more accurately reflect your risk of developing dozens of conditions, including heart disease and cognitive decline.

In one study, those with higher homocysteine were more likely to die from any cause. A five-point rise in homocysteine translated into a 49 percent increase in all-cause mortality, a 50 percent increase in cardiovascular mortality and a 26 percent increase in cancer mortality. The risk of death from other causes rose 104 percent.[8]

According to Patrick Holford, author of *The Homocysteine Solution* with Dr James Braly (Piatkis Books, 2012), a good starting point for lowering homocysteine is to supplement with the Big Four B vitamins—vitamin B2 (riboflavin), B6 (pyridoxine), B9 (folate) and B12 (cobalamin)—plus the minerals zinc and magnesium and the amino acid trimethylglycine (also called betaine).



#119 Question CT scans
A CT scan is a rapid-fire series of x-rays that creates images of "slices" of body tissue.

ALTERNATIVES

125 Heal with herbs

Herbs can treat all sorts of health problems, from heart conditions to haywire hormones. Standouts include St John's wort for depression, ginger for nausea and vomiting, maca for menopause symptoms and turmeric for its anti-inflammatory effects. For best results, work with a qualified herbalist or naturopath to find the right herbs and dosages for your needs.

126 Have homeopathy on hand

Invest in a homeopathic home remedy kit and check out homeopath David Needleman's columns in *WDDTY*, and you'll be ready to deal with all sorts of everyday ailments. For chronic conditions, it's best to consult a qualified homeopath.

127 Find a functional medicine practitioner

While conventional medicine usually focuses on suppressing symptoms, functional medicine aims to identify and treat the root causes of illness using a holistic approach that incorporates nutrition, lifestyle changes and other evidence-based strategies.

To find a functional medicine practitioner near you, visit the website of the Institute for Functional Medicine (ifm.org) or the American College for Advancement in Medicine (acam.org).

128 Opt for acupuncture

This traditional Chinese technique is effective for a wide range of conditions, including chronic pain, sleep issues, menopausal symptoms, anxiety and stress. To find an acupuncturist near you, visit the website of the Acupuncture Now Foundation (acunow.org).

129 Reach for manuka honey



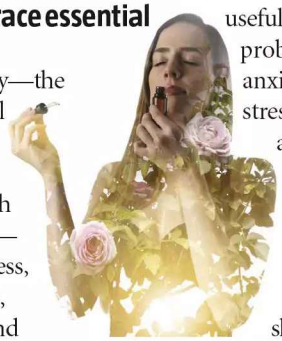
This superstar honey is liquid gold when it comes to healing wounds. It can also help ease eye conditions and boost your microbiome, and it may even shrink breast tumors.

But not all manuka honey is created equal (see wddty.com for how to choose a good one).

130 Consider castor oil

This old medical staple is making a comeback. Keep it close to treat constipation, osteoarthritis and eye conditions and promote healthy skin and hair.

131 Embrace essential oils



Aromatherapy—the use of essential oils from plants to improve health or well-being—can soothe stress, lift depression, ease anxiety and balance hormones. It may even have a role in treating neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

132 Try TMS

If you have a mental health condition like generalized anxiety disorder, depression, bipolar disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder, a noninvasive brain therapy called transcranial magnetic stimulation can be effective.



#134 Cure with cold water
Many women say a cold plunge relieves hormone-related symptoms and emphasize listening to your body at various times in your cycle.

133 Get help from HBOT

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy—exposure to pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber—stimulates the growth of new blood vessels and promotes brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which is like Miracle Gro for new nerve cells in the brain.[1]

HBOT has also been shown to lengthen telomeres, meaning it slows cellular aging.[2] It's showing promise for aiding in stroke and heart attack recovery, treating long Covid, and reversing cognitive decline.

134 Cure with cold water

Cold-water therapy can be useful for mental health problems like depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress.[3] More generally, it can also lower stress levels, improve sleep and boost quality of life, although the effects seem to be short-lived.[4]

A cold swim has been shown to relieve many common premenstrual and menopausal symptoms as well.[5]

If you don't fancy a daily ice bath, try taking a hot-and-cold alternating shower or dipping your face in cold water for up to five minutes two or three times a week.

135 Try tapping

Emotional freedom technique (EFT), a mind-body method that involves tapping on a specific set of acupressure meridian points while verbally addressing an emotional issue, has proven effective in reducing intense fears relating to numerous causes.[6] It also works for weight loss,[7] depression,[8] anxiety[9] and fibromyalgia.[10]

136 Investigate PRP therapy

Platelet-rich plasma injections, which involve using a concentrated dose of your own blood's healing platelets to help repair injured tissue and reduce inflammation, are showing promise for treating early-stage osteoarthritis.[11]



#135 Try tapping
The inner eyebrow is one of the nine acupressure points activated in EFT to send calming signals to the brain.

HABITS



137 Don't smoke

Heavy cigarette smoking can shorten your life by nearly nine years.[1]

138 Maintain a healthy body weight

Keeping your body in a healthy weight range is a cornerstone of chronic disease prevention and healthy aging.[2]

139 Stay well hydrated

Pale, plentiful and odorless urine is a good indicator that you're drinking enough fluids.

140 Get enough sleep

Seven to eight hours of shuteye a night appears to be the ideal amount for a healthy adult.[3]

141 Sleep in the very-dark dark

Too much light at night interrupts the body's production of melatonin, the hormone that regulates our internal sleep-wake cycle. Working at night and sleeping in a too-bright bedroom also raise the risk of cancer.[4] Use a sleep mask or blackout curtains, particularly during the bright summer months.

142 Go to sleep before 11 p.m.

It's the Goldilocks time for sleep: nod off between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. to lower your chances of heart disease.[5]



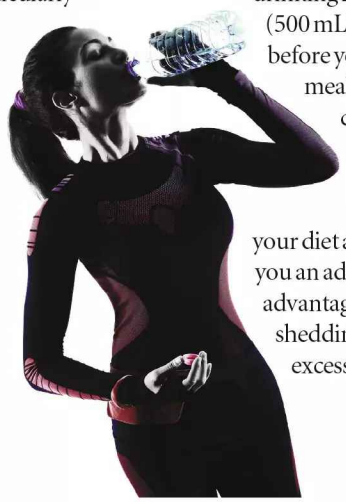
#140
Get enough sleep
Just enough—studies show too little (less than seven hours) and too much (more than nine) both increase the risk of death, but getting too much is worse.

143 Eat prebiotics before bed

Prebiotics are types of fiber and protein that good gut bacteria feed on. Eating foods that contain them, such as dairy and legumes, before bedtime could help overcome stress-related insomnia. These prebiotics contain compounds that help to restore deep sleep known as non-REM (rapid eye movement) and REM sleep.[6]

144 Drink water before a meal

If you want to lose weight, drinking 2 cups (500 mL) of water before your main meals each day can help. It can supercharge your diet and give you an added advantage in shedding the excess pounds.[7]



145 Look after your teeth and gums

Indicators of poor oral health, such as dental plaque, inflamed gums and missing teeth, have been linked to an increased risk of dying from any cause.[8]

146 Get enough sunshine

The sun is our best source of vital vitamin D, which appears to protect against numerous diseases and conditions. Just five to 15 minutes of sunshine a day between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., without sunscreen, is about enough to do the job.[9] Failing this, take a vitamin D supplement (see Rule 80).

147 Breathe through your nose

Compared to mouth breathing, nasal breathing significantly increases the body's production and use of nitric oxide, a gas molecule that's vital for health.[10]

148 Take regular screen breaks

Reduce digital eyestrain by following the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

149 Do your research

Don't just take your doctor's word for it that a procedure, drug, test or vaccine is safe (there's no such thing as a totally safe vaccine). Do your own research, weigh the pros and cons, look into alternatives, and make sure you're fully informed before making any decision about your health.

150 Read *WDDTY*

After nearly 40 years, *WDDTY* is still committed to keeping up to date with the latest health information—information you can trust.



To see all the references for these tips, go to wddty.com and search for "150 health rules" or scan this QR code.

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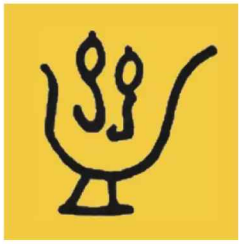
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An ancient cure for the incurables

In searching for a cure for long Covid, Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners found answers with Gu syndrome treatment, an ancient protocol for intractable conditions. Cate Montana investigates



Since 2020, many Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners around the world have been turning to classical Chinese medical texts, looking for viable treatment strategies for long Covid. At the top of the list are protocols for treating Gu syndrome (*Gu zheng*).

For 3,500 years, this condition has been portrayed by a Chinese hexagram with two or three worms squirming in some sort of vessel. At first glance, it seems to mean that Gu is simply an aggressive parasitic affliction. And yet it's much more.

Gu zheng translates as "black magic" or "possession syndrome" because its symptoms are so intense; so widespread, affecting both body and mind; so diverse and mercurial, shifting from one presentation to the next and then back again; and so utterly untreatable that the patient feels as though someone put a hex on them.

Healers are equally frustrated by Gu. They can't see what's really going on or effectively treat a condition with symptoms ranging from chronic pain to seizures to chronic fatigue to light sensitivity to chronic diarrhea and constipation to depression to hallucinations and suicidal ideation. They describe their increasingly ill patients as "having their bodies hollowed from the inside out by dark, invisible yin forces."

Ancient medical texts compare the body to a mountain and describe Gu as a condition in which "a feeble wind cannot penetrate the dense area at the mountain's base, creating a place that does not receive air and thus becomes decayed and rotten."

In other words, as Heiner Fruehauf, PhD, a licensed acupuncturist and renowned expert on Gu syndrome (thehealingorder.com), describes it, "Gu marks a state of extreme stagnation where corruption and decay have already manifested and can no longer be ignored. Gu, in short, is the ancient Chinese symbol for extreme pathological *yin*, the dark side of life, the worst nightmare of… progressive organ decay accompanied by torturous pain and insanity."

This seems to be an extreme statement describing no real disease until you look at the health—or lack of health—in Western nations today. Since Covid, the numbers of people who are suffering with chronic pain have jumped dramatically.

Over 43 percent of UK adults live with chronic, unrelenting pain. Sixty percent of US adults live with at least one chronic disease, and 40 percent have two or more—conditions that account for 70 percent of deaths annually. In the UK, nearly one in three working-age people have a long-term, basically untreatable health condition. As many as 25 million Americans suffer from undiagnosable conditions.

Meanwhile diagnoses are thrown at patients seemingly as a last resort. Conventional medicine appears to hope somehow a label can relieve the myriad mysterious and debilitating symptoms that recur for decades without respite.

These symptoms are truly a kind of dark nightmare from which people can't awaken and which drive many to the brink of sanity and beyond.

Mystery solved?

Into this scenario comes Gu (pronounced "goo"), an ancient Chinese diagnosis with profound modern applications. A superficial look at it through the modern medical lens seems to point solely to aggressive parasitic infestations—protozoan, fungal, helminthic, spirochete or viral infections—addressed through equally aggressive use of anthelmintic and antiprotozoal agents and antibiotics.

After all, humans host more than 70 species of single-celled parasitic organisms and nearly 300 kinds of parasitic worms, aka helminths (see *WDDTY* January 2024). Parasitic infections are among the most common health issues on earth, affecting some 3.5 billion people, about 450 million of whom experience prominent symptoms.[i]

Doctors have been treating such infestations for decades with anthelmintic and antiprotozoal agents like oral albendazole, mebendazole, ivermectin and pyrantel, and antibiotics like tetracycline and erythromycin. Functional medical doctors and alternative practitioners often turn to nonmedical parasite cleanses using herbs, wormwood, extracts of wormwood called artemisinins, black walnut tincture and cloves.

All these treatments, medical and alternative, are effective… until they're not.

Diagnosing Gu syndrome

Here are the major characteristics of Gu syndrome compiled by Heiner Fruehauf. They cover a wide range, but the most consistent element is "the distinct presence of mental symptoms," he says, "usually in combination with digestive problems."

Intestinal symptoms
- Chronic diarrhea or constipation
- Alternating diarrhea and constipation
- Explosive bowel movements
- Abdominal bloating, cramping or pain
- Poor or ravenous appetite
- Peculiar food cravings
- Nausea
- Intestinal bleeding and/or pus

Neuromuscular symptoms
- Muscle weakness, soreness heaviness or spasms
- Wandering muscle and body pains
- Sensation of heat
- Cold night sweats
- Sensitivity to bright light

Mental symptoms
- Depression
- Unpredictable emotions
- Flaring anger or fits of rage
- Frequent suicidal thoughts
- Muddled, chaotic thinking and confusion
- Hallucinations (auditory and visual)
- Epileptic seizures
- Feeling "possessed" or "not yourself"

Constitutional indicators
- Progressive physical and mental exhaustion
- Mystery symptoms that evade clear diagnosis
- Dark circles under the eyes
- History of travel to tropical regions
- Prior parasitic infections
- Red tongue tip or red dots on top of tongue
- Floating, big pulse or congested (choppy) pulse
- Stagnation in sublingual veins
- Rooted, damp tongue coating

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"Typical parasite cleanses, whether involving antiparasitic drugs, antibiotics or the common herbs introduced by Dr Hulda Clark, unfortunately still involve Western medical thinking—I gotta kill, kill, kill the pathogen," says Fruehauf. "And they all have this very depleting and cooling effect. Yes, they may help at a certain point. But over time they're actually making things worse."

These harsh approaches stress the body. And research shows that powerful antiparasitic drugs, though successful at first, can eventually force protozoan organisms and yeasts deeper into the body, where they become systemic, wreaking havoc on internal organs.[2] And they do not address the autoimmune complexity of Gu cases, which, according to Fruehauf, is the heart of the matter.

"Gu syndrome is not just driven by the toxins produced by parasites themselves," he says. "Immune deficiency, chronic inflammation and autoimmune hyperreactivity together make standard treatment impossible." This deadly recipe is responsible for what TCM practitioners term "the 20,000 symptoms of Gu," which should perhaps now be renamed mysterious undiagnosable disease syndrome (MUDS).

Oil and flour

Unfortunately, the Western medical approach, going after each symptom as if it's a little stone dropped in a bag of flour that can be easily extracted, is exactly the wrong course, according to TCM. With Gu, you're not dealing with one stone. It's 20,000 stones in an ever-shifting, complex dance. Fruehauf likens its biological complexity to a gallon of oil poured into that bag of flour. How do you get it out?

"Gu syndrome seems like this exotic, bizarre diagnosis and protocol," says Eric Grey, a licensed acupuncturist and the owner of Watershed Wellness in Astoria, Oregon (watershedwellnessastoria.com). "And yet when I step back, it's absolutely addressing what humanity is facing today."

We have stress. There's chronic inflammation caused by all the antibiotics, steroids and vaccines we're given as children and adults. We use drugs and alcohol and eat processed foods filled with sugar, pesticides and additives that drive inflammation into compromising the immune system.

Low-grade autoimmune complications then arise, and colds and infections become common. We don't want to miss a day of work with a sore throat, so we take endless rounds of drugs, driving the immune system into hyperactivity.

"So many people endure this kind of immune system degeneration with no recourse," says Grey. "You feel completely debilitated or trapped in illness, the psychological element becomes really powerful and mental complications arise.

"Symptoms keep adding up, and the likelihood of proper diagnosis and treatment from the Western model is nil. It's a truly scary situation."

Mental repercussions

People with chronic conditions—mystery illnesses—usually end up wrestling with the mental and emotional consequences. Living in constant pain and fatigue while remaining undiagnosed and, worse, improperly treated takes its toll.

But on top of that stress, there's the little-known fact that parasites exert influence on the consciousness of their hosts. Hence the surprising accuracy of the ancient Chinese label "possession syndrome."

Inflammation caused by parasite infections affects the brain and central nervous system via the blood-brain barrier, activating the vagus nerve, immune cells and genes linked to mental illness.[3]

Studies show certain parasites can increase aggressive traits, impair memory and trigger a rapid decline in executive function. They can stimulate paranoia and/or paranoid hallucinations,[4] schizophrenia and bipolar disorder[5]—even suicidal behavior.[6]

They also drive behavior on the physical level, making us crave foods that are bad for us but good for them. Sugar cravings, for example, drive us to eat sweets and carbs that parasites love, making the body more acidic and thus more prone to infection.

> **"Symptoms keep adding up, and the likelihood of proper diagnosis and treatment from the Western model is nil"**

Diagnosing Gu syndrome

Gu syndrome is not a specific disease or pathogen but a systemic pattern. It can affect any bodily system but is most closely associated with digestive and neurologic issues. Common

Diet for Gu

Both Heiner Fruehauf and Eric Grey insist that dietary changes are an essential part of Gu syndrome treatment. When the first few problem food types are eliminated, says Grey, "it's incredible how quickly things start to clear up."

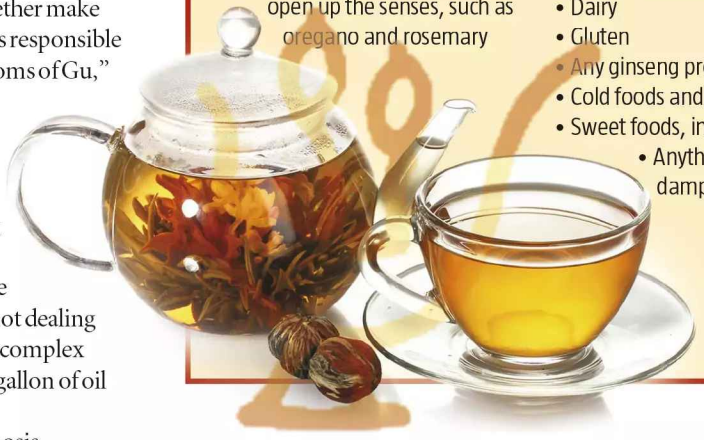
If you can't find a TCM practitioner familiar with Gu syndrome, be sure any herbal formulas they prescribe are pungent in taste. It's the aromatics that really treat Gu.

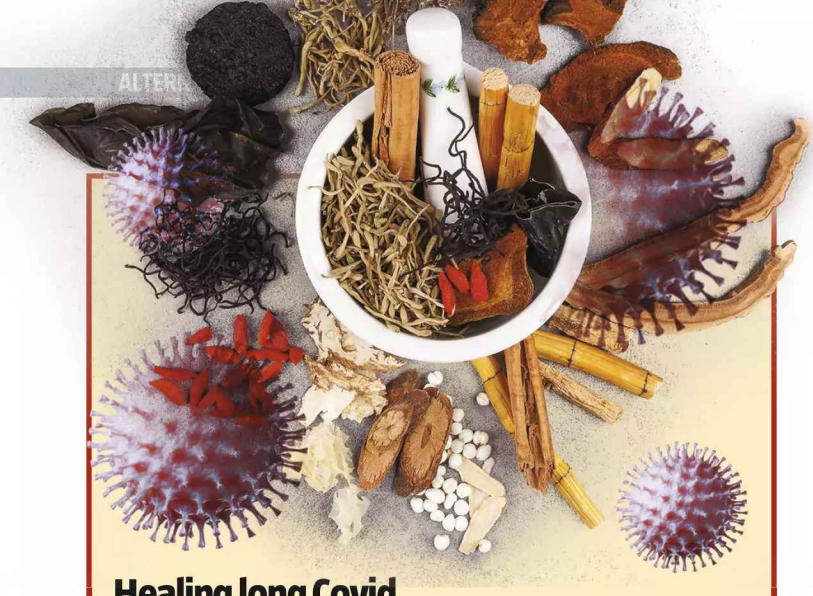
Be sure to include these:

- Very strong mint tea
- Aromatic substances
- Foods, drinks or spices that open up the senses, such as oregano and rosemary

But avoid these:

- Sugar
- Alcohol
- Highly processed foods
- Dairy
- Gluten
- Any ginseng product
- Cold foods and iced drinks
- Sweet foods, including fruits
- Anything that provokes dampness in TCM





Healing long Covid

Besides treating classic Gu, Eric Grey treats long Covid patients using the Gu protocol: "Covid is just a very weird pathogen with a type of inflammatory process that is like nothing we've seen really. And it has a pernicious nature that opens the door for pathogens and secondary infections in multiple organ systems, which makes treatment exceptionally complex—just like Gu."

His first long Covid case was a woman with a horrible bacterial lung infection. Nine courses of antibiotics hadn't helped. Very weak and stressed, she had trouble breathing at night and suffered from brain fog, migraines and vomiting on and off for hours. She also caught every cold or virus that passed by.

Grey got her off the antibiotics, persuaded her to change her diet and treated her using Fruehauf's Thunder Pearls, changing the formula as needed. (It helps to switch formulas every six weeks or so to ensure the parasites don't adapt—which they're very good at doing.)

She was rigorous with the regime, all her symptoms went away, and he stopped treating her after nine months. "I didn't see her again until I ran into her at her place of work, and she looked like a different person," he says.

misdiagnoses are Lyme disease, Epstein-Barr, chronic *Candida*, pernicious anemia, chronic fatigue syndrome, autoimmune disorders, IBS and other chronic digestive or pain syndromes.

Fruehauf says a classic sign of Gu is treating symptoms like diarrhea with specific diarrhea formulas and getting no results. "Chinese master physicians have continuously pointed out that Gu-induced chronic diarrhea, ascites [fluid buildup in the abdomen], wasting syndrome, mental symptoms, etc. must be diagnosed and treated completely differently from the general occurrence of these disorders."

Grey says he knows it's Gu syndrome when a patient has had endless doctors and treatments, but nothing works. They've done 900 different diets. They're at their wits' end. And if they try to treat it with ginseng, their symptoms get worse.

This is something people suffering from Gu need to watch out for. The symptom of fatigue goes hand in hand with inflammation and autoimmune disorders.

And when alternative practitioners hear the word *tired*, they want to give patients stimulating tonics like *Cordyceps* mushroom, ginseng or astragalus, which normally give a healthier person more energy. But in someone with Gu, these tonics also tonify the viruses, bacteria and spirochetes, causing symptoms to worsen.

Fruehauf's treatment protocol

The first stage of treating Gu syndrome is educating the patient about what they're dealing with and how long it'll take to get better—which both Fruehauf and Grey say can take anywhere from one to five years.

"I tell people up-front it's going to get worse before it gets better," Grey explains. "And you're going to be in this for a real long time."

Second is getting them off prescribed drugs—anything that's telling their immune system to calm down. These do make them feel better but inevitably make the course of the disease worse.

The trouble is, when people get off these medications, everything erupts. That means the first six months of treatment often focus on treating the rebound symptoms and improving their diet.

After that, five actions are necessary to treat Gu. They combine anti-Gu herbs with a special selection of tonics that boost the body's source qi (or chi, energy), strengthening the patient's health defenses while fighting parasites.

Fruehauf has created a specialty line of formulas to treat the many variations and presentations of Gu; the main two are Thunder Pearls and Lighting Pearls. These are currently available only to licensed TCM practitioners, but they contain many of the herbs listed below.

1. Disperse Gu toxins (*san du*)

Detox the body with diaphoretic (sweat-generating) herbs to maintain a balanced body temperature and promote overall health, while incorporating cooling herbs.

These herbs' sweat-inducing properties are much weaker than those of standard diaphoretics like Ma Huang (Herba Ephedrae, Chinese ephedra) or Gui Zhi (Ramulus Cinnamomi Cassiae, cinnamon twigs), and they carry a strong fragrance and penetrating energy that can go deep into the body where Gu pathogens hide.

Zi Su Ye, *Folium Perilla Frutescentis,* Chinese basil (diaphoretic)
Zi Su Zi, *Folium Perillae Frutescentis,* Shiso seed (diaphoretic)
Bo He, *Herba Menthae,* wild mint (diaphoretic)
Bai Zhi, *Radix Angelicae,* wild angelica root (diaphoretic)
Zi Su Ye, *Folium Perillae Frutescentis,* Chinese basil (cooling)
Bo He, *Herba Menthae,* wild mint (cooling)
Bai Zhi, *Radix Angelicae,* wild angelica root (cooling)
Lian Qiao, *Fructus Forsythiae Suspensae,* forsythia fruit (cooling)
Gao Ben, *Rhizoma et Radix Ligustici Sinensis,* Chinese lovage root and rhizome (cooling)
Sheng Ma, *Rhizoma Cimicifugae,* black cohosh rhizome (cooling)
Ju Hua, *Flos Chrysanthemi Morifolii,* chrysanthemum flower (cooling)

2. Kill parasites (*sha chong*), expel demons (*qu gui*)

Raw garlic (Da Suan) is often recommended as the most effective single remedy for Gu syndrome. The herbs below also help to remove disease-causing pathogens from the body.

Da Suan *Bulbus Alli Sativi,* garlic
Yu Jin, *Tuber Curcumae,* wild turmeric root
Ku Shen, *Radix Sophorae Flavescentis,* sophora root
Huai Hua, *Flos Sophorae Japonicae Immaturus,* pagoda tree bud

She Chuang Zi, *Fructus Cnidii Monnieri,* cnidium fruit
Jin Yin Hua, *Flos Lonicerae Japonicae,* honeysuckle flower
Qing Hao, *Herba Artemisiae Apiaceae,* sweet wormwood
Shi Chang Pu, *Rhizoma Acori Graminei,* sweetflag rhizome
Ding Xiang, *Flos Caryophylli,* clove
He Zi, *Fructus Terminaliae Chebulae,* myrobalan fruit
Lei Wan, *Sclerotium Omphaliae Lapidescens,* thunderball fungus mycelium
Bing Lang, *Semen Arecae Catechu,* betel nut
Ku Gua, *Momordica Charantia,* bitter gourd
Chuan Shan Jia, *Squama Manitis Pentadactylae,* pangolin scales

3. Calm the spirit (*an shen*)

Calming herbs work by nourishing the qi and yin of the lung and heart. The first two herbs below are key; Huang Jing is an energy tonic and antiparasitic that promotes calm meditation, and Bai He is effective for anxiety.

Huang Jing, *Rhizome Polygonati,* Solomon's seal rhizome
Bai He, *Bulbus Lilii,* lily bulb
Bei Sha Shen, *Radix Glehniae Littoralis,* upright ladybell root
Jiang Xiang Lignum, *Dalbergiae Odoriferae,* scented rosewood
Fu Shen, *Poriae Cocos Pararadicis Sclerotium,* poria mushroom with hostwood
Sheng Di Huang, *Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae,* rehmannia root
Xi Yang Shen, *Radix Panacis Quinquefolii,* American ginseng root
Xuan Shen, *Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis,* black figwort root

4. Tonify qi and blood (*bu qixue*)

Here, pungent and detoxifying herbs do the work. The pungent Dang Gui and the detoxifying Gan Cao feature prominently. He Shou Wu is best left out in cases with diarrhea as a major symptom.

Dang Gui, *Radix Angelicae Sinensis,* dong quai root
Gan Cao, *Radix Glycyrrhizae Uralensis,* Chinese licorice root
He Shou Wu, *Radix Polygoni Multiflori,* Chinese knotweed root
Bai Shao, *Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae,* white peony root
Huang Qi, *Radix Astragali,* astralagus root
Wu Jia Pi, *Cortex Acanthopanacis Radicis,* Siberian ginseng root bark

5. Move qi and blood (*xingqi poju*)

In addition to antiparasitic qualities, these herbs are crucial for relieving symptoms such as bloating, swelling and pain. Furthermore, they help to resolve the stagnation caused by internal scar formation and the ongoing encystment of parasitic organisms.

Chai Hu, *Radix Bupleuri,* Chinese thorowax root
San Leng, *Rhizoma Sparganii,* burr-reed rhizome
Chuan Xiong, *Radix Ligustici Wallichii,* Szechuan lovage root
E Zhu, *Rhizoma Curcumae Zedoariae,* zedoaria rhizome
Chen Pi, *Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae,* tangerine peel
Mu Xiang, *Radix Saussureae seu Vladimirae,* costus root
Ze Lan, *Herba Lycopi Lucidi,* Chinese bugleweed
San Qi, *Radix Notoginseng,* pseudoginseng root

It's as if Gu is the perfect dark storm—the virulent result of bad diets, pollution, too much stress, way too many pharmaceutical drugs and interventions throughout life, and chronic inflammation that's barely detectable by Western medical titers (measurements of antibodies in a person's blood). Autoimmune complications go undetected and we're given false diagnoses.

All of it takes place under the aegis of a Western medical model that takes a shotgun approach to health, dealing with isolated symptoms rather than root causes. All the while, it ignores the intricate, interdependent, holistic nature of life and the body itself.

"In Buddhist terms, there's this concept of *yin guo*, which is karma. It means, literally, seed and fruit," says Fruehauf. "You plant a banana seed, you harvest a banana. You plant a bitter gourd, you harvest a bitter gourd. We've planted the seeds of Gu and are reaping the harvest of Gu."



Solving the mystery of bad digestion

Acupuncturist Eric Grey recalls a woman in her mid-50s who came to him with digestive complaints that seemed food allergy related but couldn't be identified despite years of different doctors, testing, elimination diets and more. Most worrisome was her severe loss of appetite and concomitant weight loss, which had even her primary care physician concerned.

"She came to see me after a 'natural medicine' OTC parasite cleanse that ended up doing more harm than good, and she was just miserable," he recalls.

The first two to three months of treatment were rocky, trying to find the right herbal formula. It ended up being Fruehauf's Thunder Pearls based on a classical Chinese formula called Lizhong Wan, which is very gingery.

Three months in, she was having markedly fewer flare-ups of symptoms, even eating food she normally wouldn't. Then, because she was feeling so much better, she started experimenting with big allergens like gluten.

"This happens in about one out of three patients," Grey says. "And it set us back. But we developed some agreements about experimenting, and after another solid six months her appetite truly returned."

She continued following his protocol for another three to four months and gained at least 10 pounds in that time frame before ending the treatment.

"This was in 2022," he says. "I just heard from her last week, and she's had no major flareups since. She's up to her goal weight and just ran a half-marathon. She's over the moon."

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HEALTHY SHOPPING

Joanna Evans tracks down the safest plastic-free water bottles, C15:0 supplements and TCM practitioners near you



Plastic-free water bottles

Compared to people who drink tap water, people who regularly drink from plastic bottles have an extra 90,000 microplastic particles in their body after just one year, a new study has revealed. And microplastics have been linked to chronic inflammation, microbiome changes, reproductive problems, cancer and more (see page 18).

Switching to a plastic-free water bottle could therefore be a simple way to cut your exposure to microplastics and improve your health (for more ways to avoid plastic, see *WDDTY* February 2024).

Stainless steel and glass are widely considered the safest options for water bottles because they don't leach chemicals into the water. Stainless steel is an excellent choice if you want a bottle that's durable and travel-friendly, while glass is ideal for a neutral taste.

Here are a few more things to look for when shopping for a nontoxic water bottle, plus some top products to try.

A practical design that suits your needs will ensure you keep using it. Glass may not be best if you plan on throwing your bottle into your gym bag daily—unless it comes with a protective sleeve.

Food-grade stainless steel (also known as 18/8, 304 or 316 stainless steel) is highly resistant to corrosion, bacteria and other contaminants.

Plain, uncoated, unlined interiors won't contaminate the water. Plastic linings or enamel coatings can leach chemicals and break down over time.

Plastic-free lids or caps can be hard to find, but look for bottle designs that ensure no plastic touches the water. Avoid plastic straws and spouts too.

Wide-mouth bottles are easier to clean, whether with a bottle brush or in the dishwasher.

Klean Kanteen

Reflect bottle, $32.95/£29.95 (27 oz / 800 mL)
US: kleankanteen.com
UK: kleankanteen.co.uk

Made from high-quality, 18/8, food-grade stainless steel, this simple and sleek water bottle features an electropolished interior, a leak-proof bamboo and stainless steel cap, and a food-grade silicone seal. If you want an insulated option, check out the Rise Reflect line.

Black+Blum

Glass Water Bottle, $24.95/£21.95 (20 oz / 600 mL)
US: blackblum.com
UK: black-blum.com

Along with a stylish range of stainless steel water bottles, London-based company Black+Blum offers this practical bottle made of durable borosilicate glass, which comes with a non-slip protective silicone sleeve and a handy carry loop. Unlike those of many other glass water bottles, the lid is made of stainless steel to ensure no plastic comes in contact with the water.

Ever Vessel

Glass Multi, $49/£39 (14 oz / 420 mL)
evervessel.com

Ideal for home or office use, this double-walled borosilicate glass bottle comes with a stainless steel tea infuser accessory and keeps drinks hot for up to three hours (and cool for up to six hours). While the lid is made of plastic, it has a stainless steel inner plate that keeps liquid away from the plastic thread.

Other brands to try

US

Love Bottle
lovebottle.com

Mesh Bottles
meshbottles.com

Healthy Human
healthyhumanlife.com

UK

Moon Bottles
moonbottles.co.uk

Bambaw
bambaw.com

Elephant Box
elephantbox.co.uk



Where to buy C15:0 supplements

As Celeste McGovern reveals in "The Dolphin Clue to Combating Metabolic Diseases" (page 26), C15:0, or pentadecanoic acid, is an odd-chain saturated fatty acid gaining attention for its potential health benefits.

You can boost your levels of C15:0 naturally by eating plenty of full-fat dairy—the best dietary source of this fatty acid. It's also found in some fish and meat. But if you're vegan or don't eat much dairy, a supplement is probably your best bet.

Epidemiologist and veterinarian Dr Stephanie Venn-Watson and her husband, US Navy physician Dr Eric Venn-Watson, have developed a pure, vegan-friendly C15:0 supplement called Fatty15. It appears to be the only C15:0 supplement available in the US and UK right now.

Finland-based supplement company VitaMondo offers a C15:0 powder with worldwide shipping, although it's currently not shipping to the US.

Here are the details for both options.

Fatty15

C15:0 Fatty Acid Supplement, $119.95/£103.99 for a one-time 90-day starter kit (90 capsules)
US: fatty15.com
UK: healf.com

Supplied in a refillable glass bottle, Fatty15 contains 100 mg pentadecanoic acid per capsule with nothing else added besides the vegetable cellulose capsule. It's manufactured in the USA under the highest cGMP (current Good Manufacturing Practices) conditions, and every batch is lab-tested to confirm a purity of 98 percent or higher.

VitaMondo

Premium Pentadecanoic Acid 98% (C15:0), £32.88 for 1.8 oz (50 g)
vitamondo.eu

This powdered form of C15:0 has been lab-tested to confirm it's at least 98 percent pure and free of heavy metals and other contaminants. It's also vegan, non-GMO and available in three size options.

Each package comes with a small measuring spoon, and the suggested dosage is 200–500 mg daily. Mix it with some fat-containing food to ensure the best absorption.

How to find a TCM practitioner

If you're looking for a practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine (see "An Ancient Cure for the Incurables," page 58), visit the websites of these professional organizations. All have a "Find a practitioner" search function to help you locate a qualified TCM practitioner near you.

US

National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM)
nccaom.org

Practitioners listed in the NCCAOM directory, which includes over 20,000 acupuncturists, have completed accredited training, passed national board examinations and maintain ongoing certification in acupuncture and/or Oriental medicine. They also adhere to NCCAOM's professional and ethical standards.

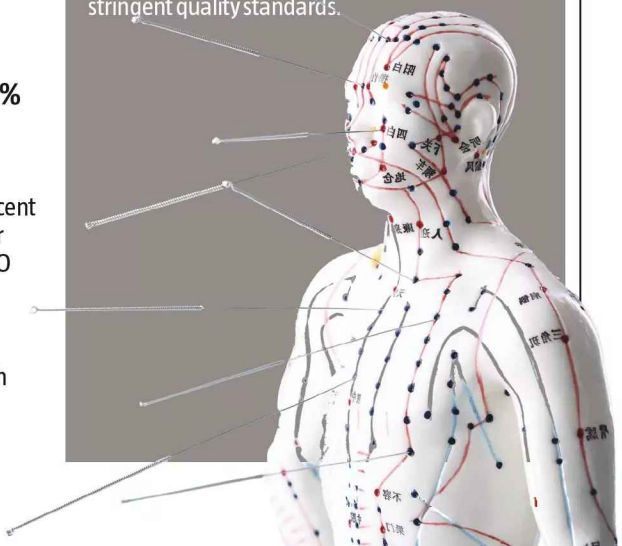
UK

The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture (ATCM)
atcm.co.uk

One of the main self-regulatory bodies that govern the practice of TCM in the UK, the ATCM has over 700 TCM practitioners as members. All members have completed at least three years of training in traditional Chinese acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine or both.

The Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine (RCHM)
rchm.co.uk

The more than 300 members of the RCHM have high minimum standards of training and adhere to the RCHM code of ethics and practice. You can also search for a practitioner under the RCHM Approved Suppliers Scheme, which audits herbal medicine suppliers to check that they adhere to stringent quality standards.



The drug is the star of Big Pharma despite a risk of memory loss

Hey, statins—leave those fats alone

Bryan Hubbard

AI is one clever fellow. Ask it anything, and it has a perspicacious response at the ready. Ask it about cholesterol-lowering statins, and it's especially insightful.

"Statin drugs are a modern success story. They are the medical treatment for coronary disease and the star of the pharmaceutical industry. Worldwide, sales of statins are running at about $19 billion a year and growing quickly," Google's AI search engine informed us .

Yes, they are a modern success story, mainly because docs are pushing them at every 50-year-old patient, telling them to pop a statin a day to keep heart disease at bay. And they're perfectly safe, everyone is told, but here's something your doctor doesn't tell you: They have a a warning on the label stating they could cause memory loss and confusion.

Label warnings are a device used by America's drug regulator, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and they're not something it dishes out willy-nilly. The FDA is funded almost entirely by the drug industry, the sector it's supposed to be controlling, and its oversight committees are packed with drug company executives. So when the agency is cajoled and crowbarred into issuing a warning, you should take notice.

It seems to have passed everyone by, but the FDA issued the warning on the whole family of statins way back in 2012, and nobody has mentioned it since. The warning wasn't about muscle aches and pains or even about digestive problems, the usual things people associate with statins. It informed doctors and consumers that the drugs could cause serious liver problems and dementia-like symptoms, such as confusion and memory loss.

To a man (and woman), doctors have ignored the warning and still hand out statins as a safe "just-in-case" remedy. Nearly 100 million Americans and Britons pop a statin every day, and they do so because they've been told that statins reduce levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol.

LDL has been demonized as the "bad" cholesterol because it gathers around artery walls and blocks blood flow. The buildup can cause atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and heart disease.

Ignoring the warning was made easier because neuroscientists argued that it should never have been issued in the first place. Statins can't interfere with cognition, they said, as the brain feeds exclusively on sugars.

But a new study disproves the theory. The brain also needs fats—and in the absence of sugars, it can feed on fats entirely. Neurons can revive and energize within 48 hours on a diet of saturated fats, and they aren't dependent solely on sugars, breakthrough research at the University of Helsinki has discovered.[1]

Even more remarkably, when the brain's energy demand increases, neurons can produce certain fats by recycling their own cell components, a process that depends on a protein known as DDHD2. And they regulate levels of these fats based on their needs.

When we eat these same types of fats, they raise our cholesterol levels.

The discovery may mean cholesterol is vital brain food we shouldn't reduce. Nourishing the brain becomes increasingly important as we get older. So, just when we need to ramp up our fat supplies to support an aging brain, we suddenly reduce them by taking a statin.

Are statins wholly, or partly, responsible for the epidemic of dementia and Alzheimer's cases? We couldn't possibly say, although the FDA—and quite a few others—could.

But, despite all that, isn't LDL cholesterol "bad," as we're told? Many years back, *WDDTY* established that LDL is a healing agent, and it accumulates around artery walls to repair damage caused by inflammation. We likened it to blaming the fire brigade because they always seemed to be around when there was a fire.

So, what causes inflammation in the first place? Step forward all the usual suspects: stress, pollutants and, most important, diet and malnutrition, or a lack of inflammation-fighting nutrients.

More than 50 years ago, researcher John Yudkin put forward the idea that sugar was the primary cause of heart disease. However, he was banished for his troubles.

Aided by the partial research of Ancel Keys, the fat theory was born—and since then it has not only dominated dietary guidelines (see page 26) but also launched the multibillion-dollar statins industry. And no warning on the label is going to stop that money machine a-rollin' along, just as Google's AI predicts.



The FDA issued the warning on the whole family of statins way back in 2012, and nobody has mentioned it since

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