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Editors
Lynne McTaggart and Bryan Hubbard

COMMENT

A HUMDINGER OF A HEALER

A very basic molecule, made up of just two simple atoms in the body—oxygen and nitrogen—could well be the key to healing most degenerative diseases, and it's been largely overlooked by modern medicine.

Nitric oxide is a colorless gas that forms when nitrogen is oxidized, and it plays a central role in distributing blood around the body, dilating blood vessels, raising the blood supply and lowering blood pressure. But it's also essential in protecting the body's tissues from damage when blood supply is low.

Besides affecting the blood, this neurotransmitter sends messages from the brain to smooth muscle, including in the gastrointestinal tract. It can quickly heal altitude sickness. It's even responsible for male erections.

Having adequate levels of nitric oxide affects heart rate variability (the time between beats, which vary ever so slightly, a measure of health or impending disease), plus blood pressure, breathing rate, immune functions, pain levels and even a person's ability to respond to stress, anxiety and many other physical and emotional states.

It can spark new neurons to form, new neurological connections and pathways to develop, and still others to be remodeled or even pruned away when they no longer serve their purpose. It helps increase availability of oxygen in the blood; closes pain "gates" (by stimulating the body's a-beta fibers in the painful area); stimulates the vagus nerve, the largest nerve in humans that affects virtually every important organ in the body; and plays an important role in lowering inflammation. Its effect on the vagus nerve is particularly significant, as this nerve regulates many functions of internal organs, including the mechanisms of the heart, breathing rate and digestion.

Nitric oxide (or NO, as it's often referred to) is also central to wound healing. It helps the body to form new blood vessels and even to produce more collagen, besides fending off bacteria and other microorganisms and calming inflammation.

As our cover story (page 26) makes clear, NO decreases in our bodies as we age. But with a few simple practices—eating certain NO-rich healthy, whole foods, particularly your greens; exercising; letting healthy bacteria flourish in your mouth; maintaining a healthy level of stomach acidity; and other easy-to-follow measures—you can boost your NO levels quickly.

But for those who can't, NO supplements and rub-on gels or creams are available. When used as a pill or ointment, its results in wound healing, cardiac illness and much more have been nothing short of miraculous.

Sorting a deficiency of nitric oxide with NO lozenges or ointments may well be the cure for all modern diseases.



"You know how to hum, don't you? Just put your lips together and hmmm"

But it's also central to the hearing system, which may also be central to NO's effects in healing the rest of the body. A team of scientists at the Neuroscience Research Institute at New York University discovered that nitric oxide and its signaling system play a central role in creating the auditory system itself, particularly blood flow within the cochlea, the snail-shaped and fluid-filled organ within the inner ear. It's also the fundamental molecule responsible for the sense of ease and well-being that people experience with music.

Nitric oxide creates a perfect feedback loop within the body. It's released when someone listens to music; the nerve fibers of the cochlea flow through the thalamus to the auditory cortex of the brain, but the thalamus is within the limbic system, the brain's emotional center.

All this means that when someone listens to music, they feel relaxation and enjoyment while also improving their hearing system by increasing blood flow to the ears—and of course, everywhere else.

That may be the ultimate reason for the simplest NO-booster of all.

Noted sound healer and musician Jonathan Goldman discovered that simple humming is one of the best ways to boost nitric oxide. The introduction to *The Humming Effect* (Healing Arts Press, 2017), which Goldman wrote with his wife Andi, noted evidence that humming causes nitric oxide levels in the body to increase 15-fold. You can enjoy all the extraordinary benefits above just by keeping your mouth closed and humming any single note your vocal range can easily reach for five minutes.

One of the most iconic scenes in movie history is in *To Have and Have Not*, when a young Lauren Bacall says, as a parting shot to an entranced Humphrey Bogart, that if he wants to see her again, "You know how to whistle, don't you, Steve? Just put your lips together and blow."

So perhaps for all those who need some healing, we could create a modern update: "You know how to hum, don't you? Just put your lips together and hmmm."

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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 48 – 49).

• 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.

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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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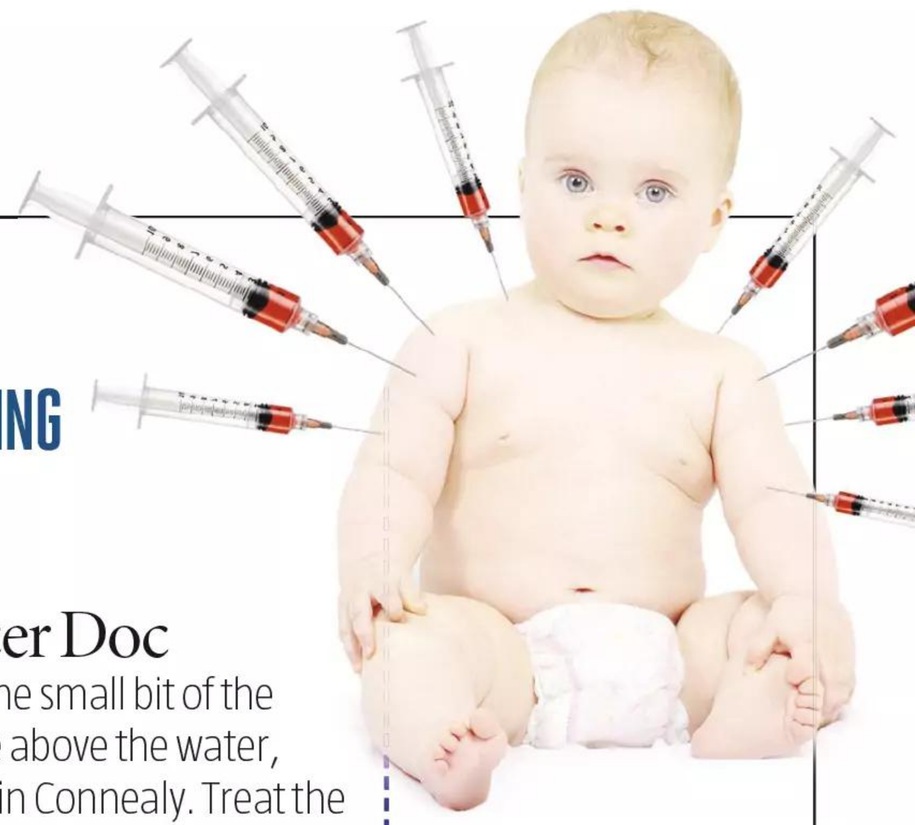
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EDITORIAL PANEL

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.



Dr Damien Downing, a specialist in allergy, environment and nutrition, is current president of the British Society for Ecological Medicine, on the editorial board of *Orthomolecular Medicine News Service*, Chief Medical Advisor of cancer charity Yes to Life (www.yestolife.org.uk), and author of numerous books including *The Vitamin Cure for Allergies*.



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.



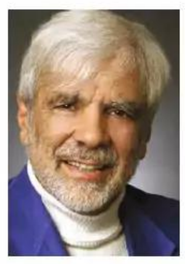
Dr Sarah Myhill has worked in the UK National Health Service and in private practice since 1981. Honorary Secretary of the British Society for Ecological Medicine for 17 years, she is a frequent lecturer and author of *Sustainable Medicine* and *Diagnosis and Treatment of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and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



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 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*.



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 Gary Smyth, a GP and homeopathic physician, is the president of the Faculty of Homeopathy, a fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine and a fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health. He advocates an integrative approach to medicine, offering patients the advantages of a range of treatment options.



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



HIFU for prostate cancer

I found your article on prostate cancer (*WDDTY* June 2025) very interesting and detailed, but it missed one important treatment: high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU).

I believe it's unavailable through the NHS at present. I also believe it's not a procedure that is offered if you have had a prostate biopsy. The thinking is that if the prostate capsule has been breached, it's possible for cancer cells to leak into surrounding tissue and beyond and cause eventual metastases.

The procedure involves an MRI scan of the prostate, and if cancer is observed, then a specially designed ultrasound scanner is used to kill the cancer cells.

It's a noninvasive procedure and has the advantage that if the cancer should return, it can be repeated.

The probe is inserted into the rectum, under anesthesia, and the doctor uses imaging techniques to guide it to treat the affected areas. I think the operation is referred to as "ablation."

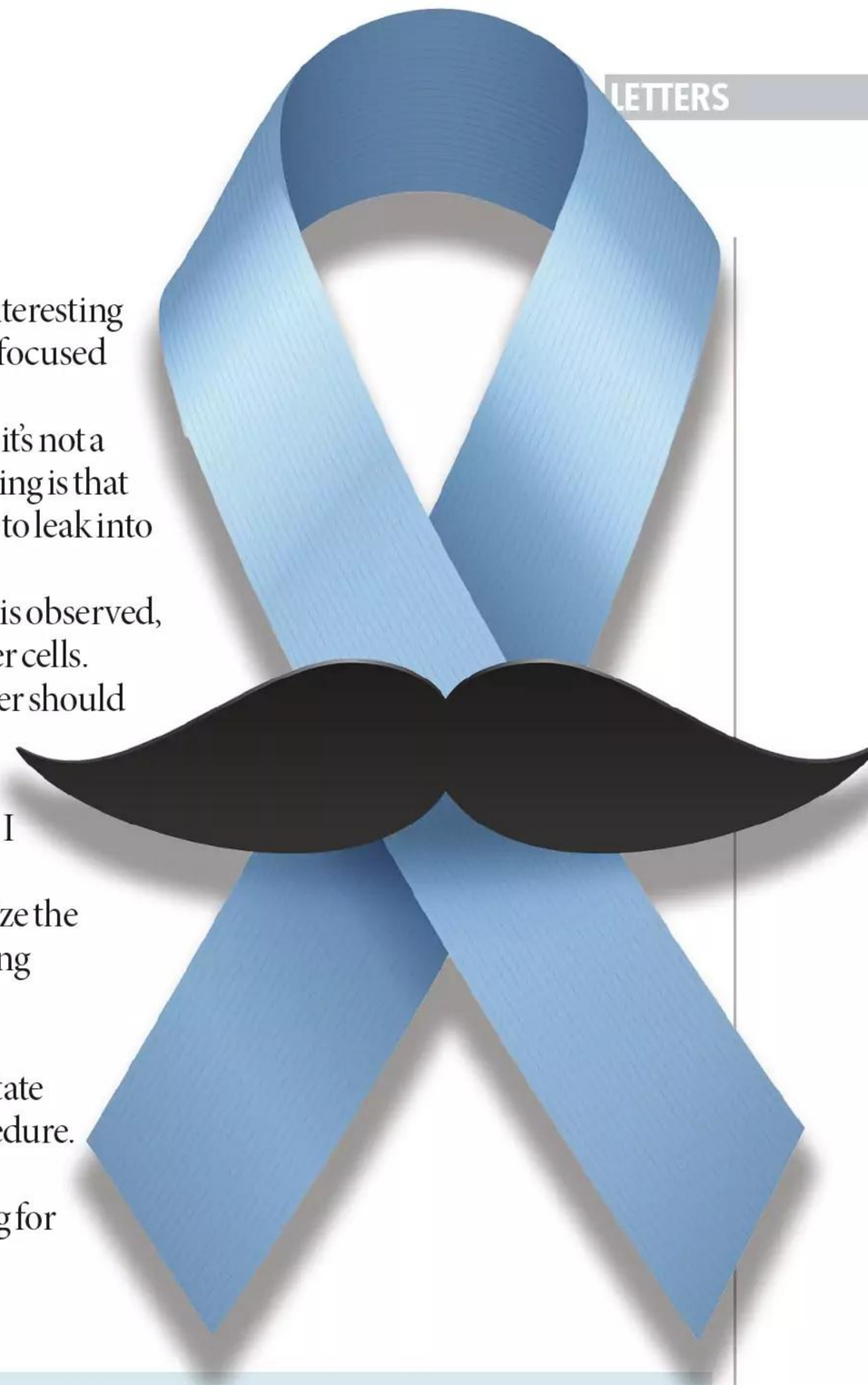
My understanding is that it's normal, post-procedure, to catheterize the bladder for a day or two. I also understand that it does not cause lasting dysfunction in that area for the majority of men.

It will be my procedure of choice should I ever need treatment.

I had always thought it was an obvious fact that to breech the prostate capsule was inherently dangerous, but it's apparently standard procedure. As is usual, the risks are not clarified.

My own GP says MRI scans are now the preferred way of checking for prostate cancer. Not before time!

G Chaplin, 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 by sharing 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.

Heavy metal detox

Does anyone have any advice on what to do about undiagnosed ADHD in adult women? I suspect in all three cases there has been exposure to heavy metals in utero/childhood, possibly via dentistry in the mother. Apart from taking chlorella and soaking in Epsom salt baths, any suggestions?

Rose

***WDDTY* replies** Dr Jenny Goodman discusses the link between heavy metals and ADHD, as well as some detox methods, in her column in *WDDTY* February 2023. Also see her article in the May 2021 issue for a more in-depth guide to detoxing from heavy metals and other harmful environmental contaminants.

Stop the stinging

I wonder if anyone has any information regarding a stinging sensation on my back and legs, but no rash. I have had this for about a year and tried various creams. I spoke to the consultant about it when I was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism. She said it could be a side effect from the tablets I take for my thyroid and suggested antihistamines. No help!

Zargleblat

***WDDTY* replies** Have you considered consulting with a functional medicine practitioner? You may be able to find one near you by visiting ifm.org, the website of the Institute for Functional Medicine.

A pain in the knee

Any info on how to relieve knee pain without surgery?

Imogen

Replies from the *WDDTY* Community Southern Belle suggests red light therapy and pure frankincense and/or helichrysum essential oils. Use a carrier oil and do a patch test to check if you have any sensitivity first.

***WDDTY* replies** Our *Joint Pain Report*, available from wddty.com, has lots of information on this topic.

HPV vaccine dangers

I'm looking for dangers of the HPV vaccine in the UK.

Marie

***WDDTY* replies** Rob Verkerk covered the HPV vaccine in his column for *WDDTY* in the June 2018, October 2017 and October 2016 issues. You can also search for "HPV vaccine" or "Gardasil" on the *WDDTY* website for lots more information.

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.

Eat these two power foods if you want to reach 100



Want to become a centenarian? Then eat plenty of fruit and nuts every day. These are two power foods in the Mediterranean diet that have the greatest impact on longevity, say researchers at the Autonomous University in Madrid.

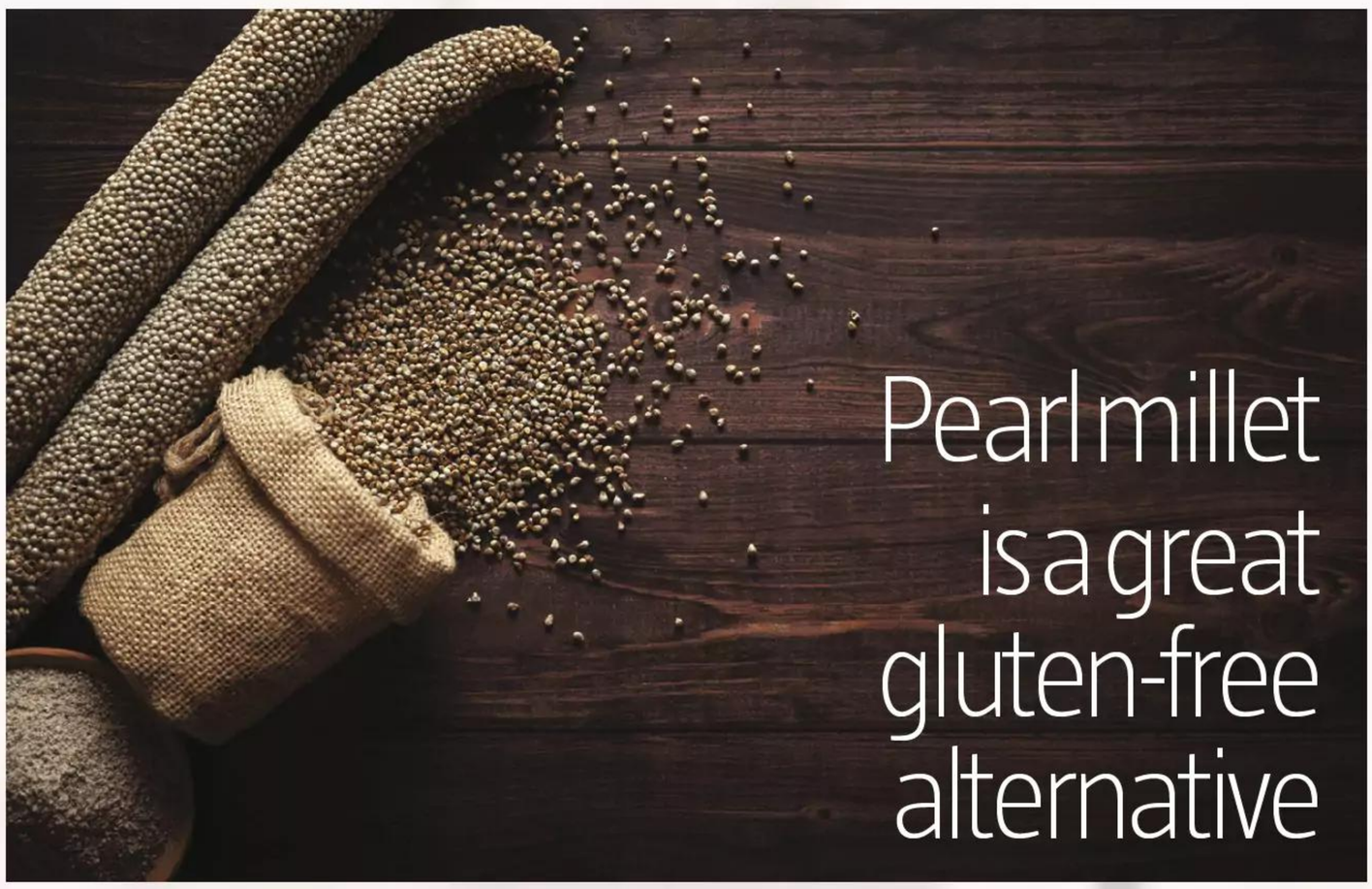
Although all the foods associated with the diet—including lean meat, fish, grains and vegetables—influence our overall health and well-being, fruits, nuts and olive oil matter the most if you want to reach your century.

Sticking to the diet could cut your chances of a premature death by more than 20 percent, but eating the typical Western diet that includes fizzy drinks and pastries could have the opposite effect and cut years from your natural span.

The researchers tracked the health and longevity of more than 11,000 people with an average age of 48 years. They assessed how closely the participants' eating habits matched either the Mediterranean diet or the Planetary Health Diet (PHD), which is primarily made up of plant foods and restricts the consumption of meat.

Over the 14 years the group was tracked, 1,157 died, but the risk of premature death was lower in those who closely followed either diet. Those who primarily ate the PHD were 22 percent less likely to die prematurely than those in the bottom third, who only occasionally consumed vegetables. And those who mainly followed the Mediterranean diet had a 21 percent lower risk.

Sci Total Environ, 2025: 968: 178924



Pearl millet is a great gluten-free alternative

Pearl millet could be a healthy alternative to wheat—and a good option for people on a gluten-free diet. Known as bajra in India, it's been a staple in Africa and on the Indian subcontinent for thousands of years but has never enjoyed the same status in the West, which is still dependent on wheat.

But droughts and crop failures are forcing farmers to look at durable alternatives, and pearl millet is top of the list. The question is whether Westerners would like the taste, and so researchers from Drexel University carried out a series of tests to find out.

The team found that up to 20 percent of fermented pearl millet flour could be used in sandwich breads before people start rejecting them—but less so beyond that level.

"This study highlights that simple food preparation methods, such as fermentation, can enhance the nutritional value of millet without compromising flavor—up to a point," says lead author May M. Cheung.

Pearl millet bran contains a considerable amount of phytic acid, an "antinutrient" that reduces the absorption of micronutrients such as calcium and iron.

In the first pilot study, 12 adults tasted flatbreads made with pearl millet fermented for different durations. The research team found that the longer the fermentation, the lower the phytic acid levels in the millet. But they also found that in flatbreads made solely of pearl millet, the longer the millet was fermented, the less participants liked its flavor.

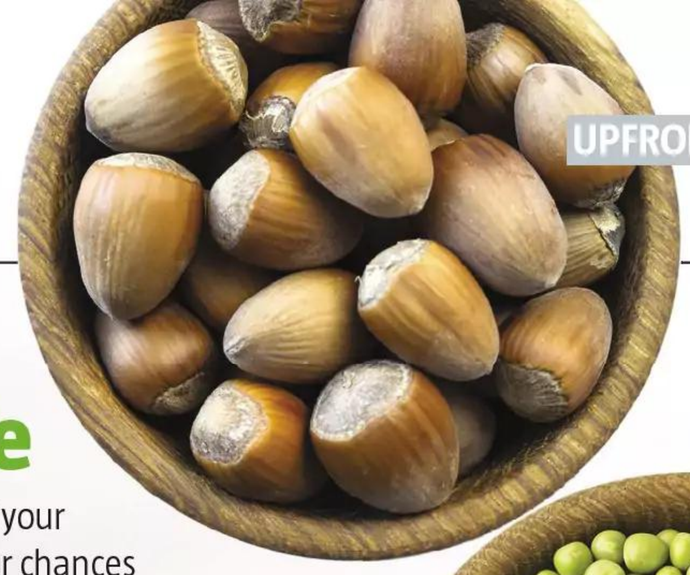
So, in the second pilot study, the research team substituted fermented pearl millet in whole-grain sandwich bread, in varying amounts, to find out how much consumers would tolerate. Thirty adult participants taste-tested sandwich breads made with up to half fermented millet flour as a partial substitute for wheat flour, and the researchers found the threshold of their tolerance was 20 percent.

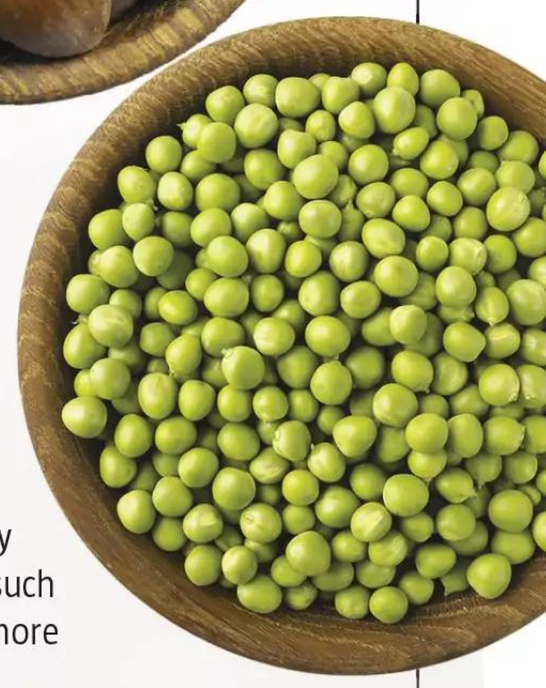
It may not be entirely to the taste of the average Westerner who likes their wheat, but this could be big news for people who have celiac disease or are otherwise gluten intolerant.

Foods, 2025; 14(5): 871



Eat more nuts and peas for a longer life





Like your meat? You might want to get more of your proteins from plants if you hope to increase your chances of a long life. People who eat more plant-based proteins, such as nuts, chickpeas, tofu and peas, generally live longer, researchers from Sydney University have discovered.

But that's true only for adults. Children under age five should be eating more animal proteins, such as meat and eggs, to survive the first few years of life. As we get older, we need less animal protein and more plant protein, the researchers say.

They collated data from 101 countries to understand whether the type of protein a population consumed had an impact on longevity. They found that countries with higher consumption of plant-based proteins, such as India, had relatively longer life expectancies than countries that got more protein from animal products, such as the US.

People who primarily eat plant proteins, including legumes, nuts and whole grains, have a lower risk of chronic disease and tend to live longer. Studies suggest plant-based diets have contributed to longevity in the most long-lived communities on the planet, such as Okinawa in Japan, Ikaria in Greece and Loma Linda in California.

Nat Commun, 2025; 16(1): 3431

Any exercise helps us stay mentally sharp

Exercise—almost any physical activity, in fact—is good for the brain, keeping us mentally sharp and boosting our ability to remember. Slow-movement exercises yoga and tai chi are some of the best activities for maintaining good cognitive function, and any low-intensity activity helps improve memory skills.

Researchers from the University of South Australia took another look at more than 2,700 studies involving 258,279 people, measuring their activities against any improvement in cognition. They discovered that any activity is better than none and that low-intensity exercise, such as yoga and walking, can improve cognition.

Improvements were seen within a month of starting any type of exercise, and benefits were amplified in children. It also helped people of any age who had ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) to focus and reduce impulsive behavior.

Br J Sports Med, 2025; doi: 10.1136/bjsports-2024-108589

Hair loss is down to a molecule you've never heard of

Losing your hair? Blame it on a protein molecule called MCL-1. It helps to keep our hair on, but lose it, and you lose your hair, say scientists at Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore.

In mouse experiments, the researchers discovered a link between MCL-1 and p53, the daddy of all proteins that's grandly called the "guardian of the genome." P53 proteins suppress cancer growth by regulating and triggering apoptosis, or cell death, including in hair follicle stem cells.

There's a critical balance between the two proteins, and while it's all early days, the researchers say tweaking the balance could be a key to hair regrowth. In other words, block p53 proteins to encourage more MCL-1 proteins, and hair starts regrowing.

Nat Commun, 2025; 16: 2829





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You only have to exercise one or two days a week for optimum health

Here's some good news for those of you who know you should exercise but get discouraged by the notion of sweating it out at the gym four or five days a week: You don't have to.

Being a weekend warrior—being physically active for just one or two days a week—could be all it takes to boost health and longevity. But the exercise you do needs to be pretty strenuous, and you need to do it for 150 minutes, or two and a half hours, whether that's achieved in one day or two.

It's good news for those who lead busy lives and can't find the time to exercise most days, say researchers from the School of Public Health at Southern Medical University in Guangzhou, China.

As long as you're doing 150 minutes of "moderate to vigorous" activity during your week, you get all the health benefits, even if you do it in just one day, the researchers found after they assessed the exercise levels and health of more than 93,000 people who had been tracked by a UK biomedical study.

The participants were divided into groups with three activity levels:

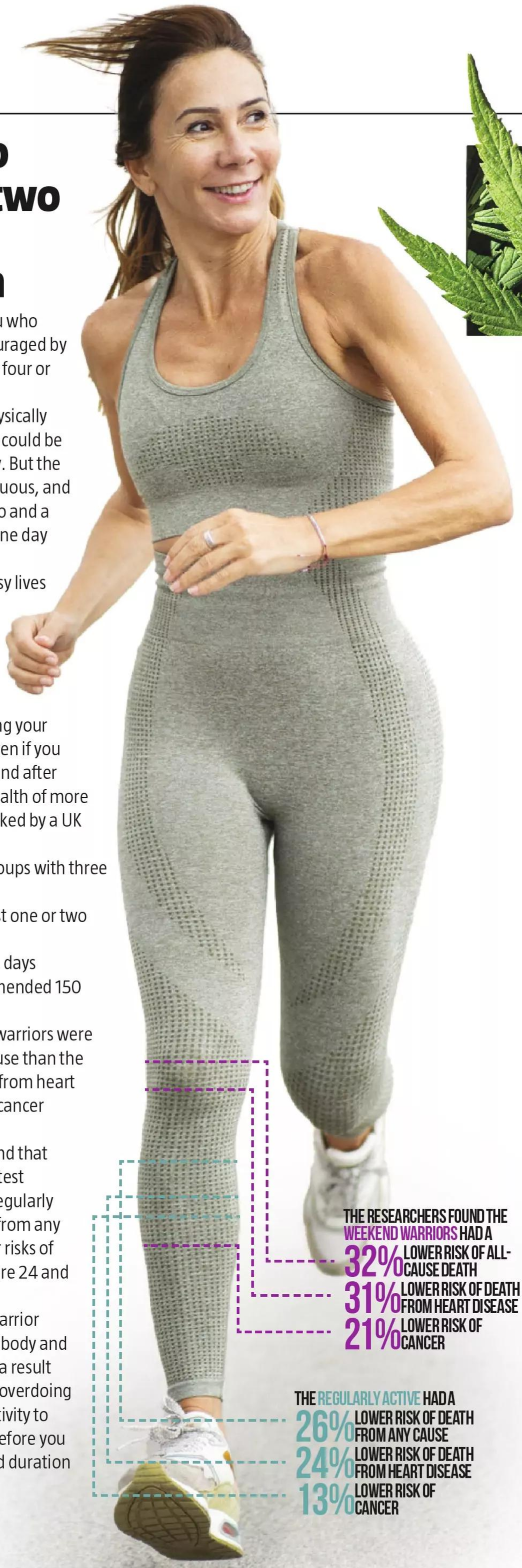
- Weekend warriors, who exercised just one or two days a week
- Regularly active, who exercised most days
- Inactive, who fell short of the recommended 150 minutes weekly

The researchers found the weekend warriors were 32 percent less likely to die from any cause than the inactive group, while their risk of death from heart disease was 31 percent lower and from cancer was 21 percent lower.

To their surprise, the researchers found that the weekend warriors enjoyed the greatest protective effects. By comparison, the regularly active were 26 percent less likely to die from any cause than the inactive group, and their risks of dying from heart disease and cancer were 24 and 13 percent lower respectively.

The only worry is that the weekend warrior may overdo it, put greater stress on the body and suffer more musculoskeletal injuries as a result (see *WDDTY* June 2025 for more about overdoing it). So, if you're going to restrict your activity to just one or two days a week, warm up before you start, and perhaps build up intensity and duration over a few weeks.

JAHA, 2025; 14(8): e039225





HOW TO BOOST THE POWER OF CANNABIDIOL

Plenty of people take cannabidiol (CBD) products to ease pain and cope with neurodegenerative problems such as epilepsy and multiple sclerosis (MS). The problem is that CBD, the non-psychoactive compound found in the cannabis plant, is poorly absorbed and its effectiveness is lessened.

Scientists at the University of South Australia think they may have solved the problem by creating a phospholipid complex. Phospholipids are a group of fat molecules that contain phosphorus. Similar to liposomal technology, bonding them to CBD increases its solubility by up to six times and improves its absorption in the digestive tract.

As one of the researchers, Thabata Muta, explains, "Improved bioavailability means that lower doses can achieve the same therapeutic effect, potentially reducing side effects and making treatment more cost effective."

The research team believes phospholipid complexes could be used to enhance the absorption of other substances, too. They're looking for other opportunities and clinical trials to confirm their new formulation works.

Their timing is good: The global CBD market is projected to grow nearly 10-fold by 2032.

Int J Mol Sci, 2025; 26(6): 2647

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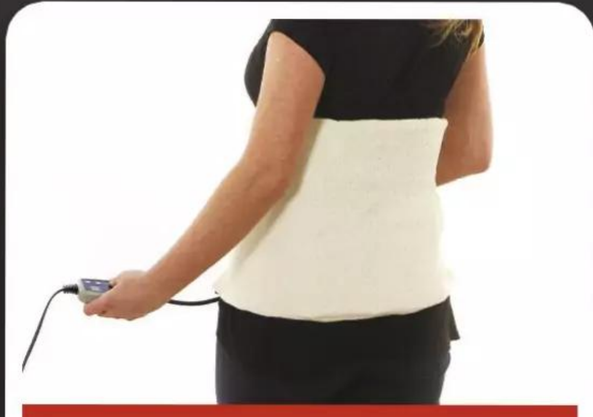
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The 17 ways to reduce your risk of stroke, dementia and depression

Chronic disease risk factors become ever more important as we get older, say researchers at Mass General Brigham—and the great news is that you can reduce your risk of stroke, dementia and depression when you modify even one of the risks.

The researchers trawled through previously published studies that had analyzed cases of the three conditions and discovered 17 common risk factors that kept cropping up. The biggest were high blood pressure (hypertension) and severe kidney disease, and the best ways to reduce the risk of developing any of the conditions were to be more active and do more leisure pursuits that involve problem-solving, such as puzzles.

Lack of leisure-time cognitive activity was one of the risk factors. The others were smoking, excess weight, high cholesterol, high blood sugar, excess alcohol consumption, poor diet, hearing loss, chronic pain, a sedentary lifestyle, lack of purpose, stress, depressive symptoms, poor sleep and low social engagement.

The three conditions are intertwined, and developing one substantially increases your chances of getting another, the researchers say. But because of the connection among stroke, dementia and depression, improving any of the risk factors reduces your chances of developing any of them.

J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry, 2025; doi: 10.1136/jnnp-2024-3344925



Babies given antibiotics more likely to develop diabetes

Babies who are given antibiotics in the first year of life are much more likely to develop type 1 diabetes, the disease in which the body attacks the cells that make insulin, so it can't process sugars in the blood.

During the first year after birth, insulin-producing cells are created in the gut, but this vital process can be disrupted by antibiotics, raising the risk of diabetes.

Although it's already known that type 1 diabetes has its roots in childhood, researchers hadn't worked out the biological mechanisms that cause it. But now a team from the University of Colorado at Boulder suspects antibiotics play a key role.

They identified key microbes that are essential to the pancreas's ability to produce insulin and discovered a critical window, usually in the first year of life, when there's a surge in the number of insulin-producing cells. "If, for whatever reason, we don't undergo this event of expansion and proliferation, that can be a cause of diabetes," said Jennifer Hill, one of the researchers.

Her research team tested the idea on a group of laboratory mice who were given broad-spectrum antibiotics in a phase in their life that was equivalent to the first seven to 12 months in human life. The mice developed fewer insulin-producing cells and had higher blood sugar levels, lower insulin levels and generally worse metabolic function when they grew into adults.



Science, 2025; 387(6738): eadn0953

How our diet increases our risk of chronic disease



Inflammation is a key factor in many chronic diseases, from heart problems to arthritis to some cancers, and the typical Western diet is to blame. The good news is that it can be reversed quickly—often in a matter of weeks—if you switch from processed foods to more vegetables and fruits.

Researchers at Radboud University Medical Center in the Netherlands discovered the big effects the Western diet has on our health when they analyzed the health and diets of 77 healthy men from Tanzania.

Those living in rural communities were still eating the typical African diet of fruit and vegetables, beans, whole grains and a fermented banana drink, while affluent city dwellers were eating more processed foods.

When the researchers switched the diets—the rural dwellers started eating processed foods, while the city people ate the typical African diet—they noticed a big change in both groups' inflammatory markers and immune function in just two weeks.

Nat Med, 2025; 31: 1698–1711

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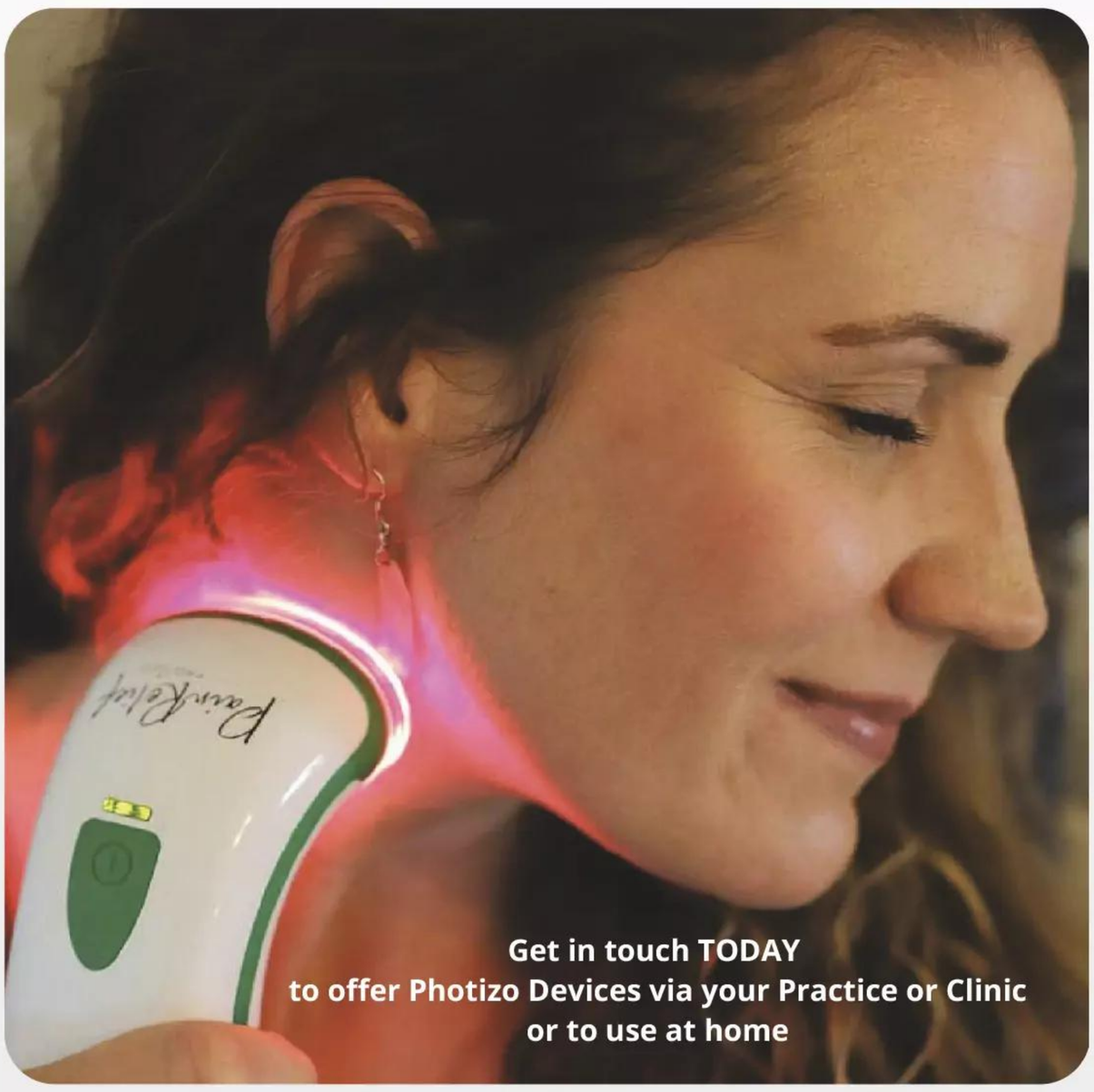
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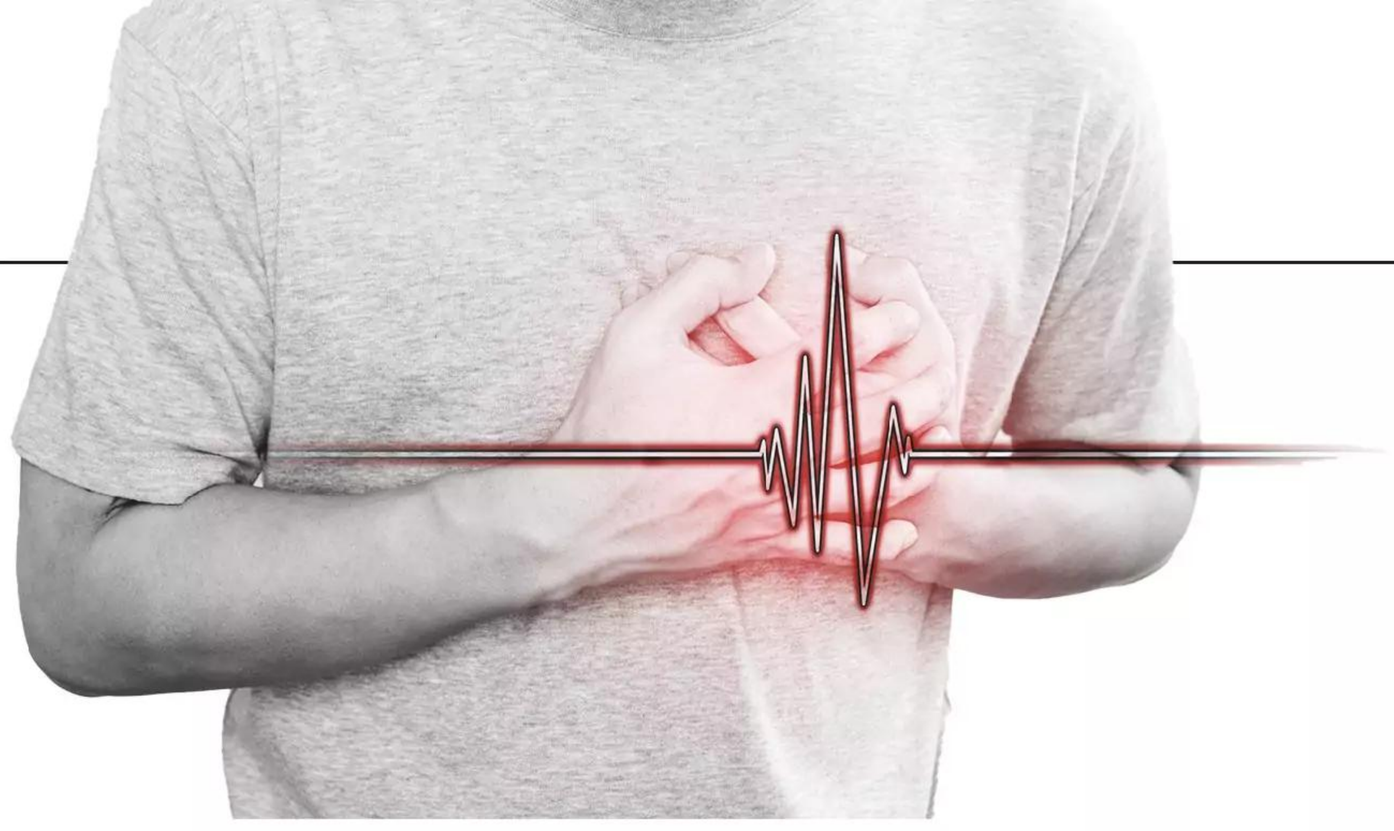
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The first warning signs of fatal cardiac arrest in young people

Young people are dying suddenly from cardiac arrest—and a few telltale symptoms that happen before the fatal attack could save lives if they're acted on quickly: sudden heart palpitations, syncope (fainting), nausea or vomiting, and symptoms of an infection.

Researchers at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden found the phenomenon, known as sudden arrhythmic death syndrome (SADS), accounts for 22 percent of all sudden cardiac deaths among young people. Young males are in the highest-risk group, the researchers discovered after analyzing 903 cases of sudden cardiac death in people aged one to 36 years.

Although a third of the victims had been treated for fainting fits and other SADS-like symptoms within six months before their deaths, nobody recognized these as warning signs of cardiac arrest. Overall, 52 percent of those who died experienced symptoms before the fatal attack.

Matilda Frisk Torell, Proceedings of the European Society of Cardiology, April 4, 2025

MICROPLASTICS COULD BE A MAJOR TRIGGER OF HEART DISEASE

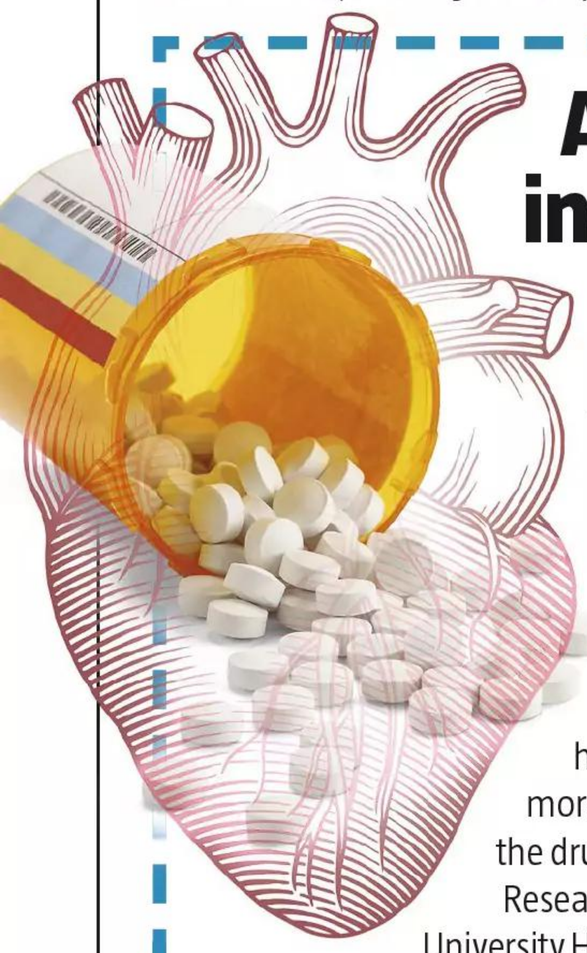
Microplastics—microscopic plastic particles in the environment—could be driving the epidemic of chronic disease. They've been linked to a rising number of cases of high blood pressure (hypertension), diabetes and stroke, say researchers from Case Western Reserve School of Medicine in Ohio.

They measured microplastic levels in bodies of water along America's East, West, Gulf and lake coasts and the prevalence of chronic diseases recorded in the areas. They found levels mirrored rates of heart disease but didn't see an increase in cancer cases.

These plastic particles, measuring 1 nm to 5 mm in diameter, are released as larger pieces of plastic break down. They come from countless sources—food packaging, bottles, toys, building materials and anything else made of plastic. We eat, drink and breathe them every day.

But the researchers emphasize that correlation isn't causation. Although higher levels are found in areas with raised heart disease rates, the findings don't conclusively prove the microplastics were responsible.

JACC, 2025; 85(12 suppl A): 374



Antidepressants increase risk of fatal heart problems

Taking antidepressants? Keep a close eye on your heart health if you're a longtime user. The drugs can increase the risk of sudden cardiac death, and the chances increase with the amount of time you've been taking them.

People who take antidepressants for one to five years have a 56 percent higher risk of dying from a heart problem, and the risk more than doubles in those taking the drugs for six or more years.

Researchers at Copenhagen University Hospital in Denmark analyzed deaths in the country in 2010 and found that 6,002 were the result of sudden cardiac arrest. One-third of these were taking antidepressants.

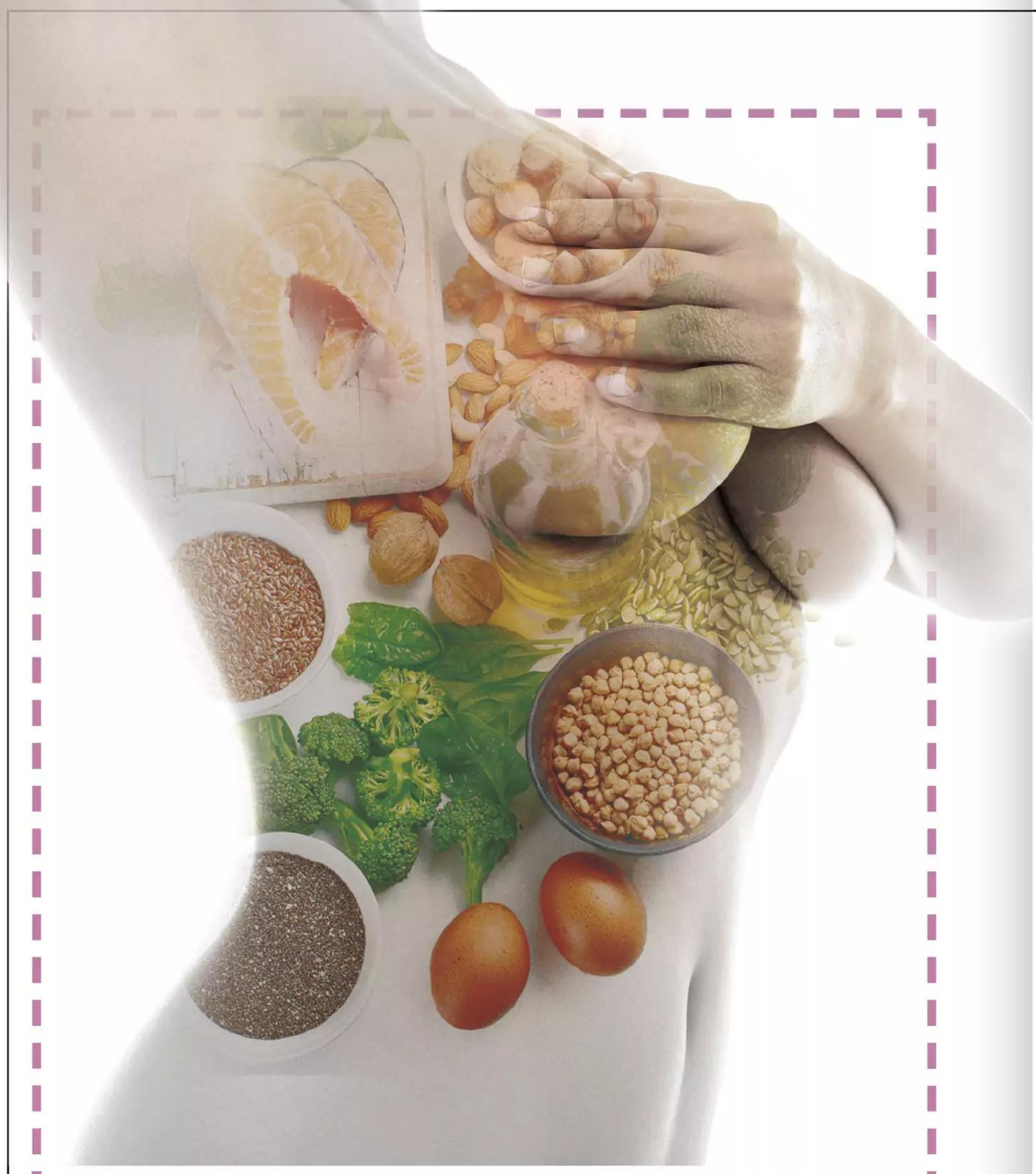
Surprisingly, the risk was greatest in people in their 30s. They had triple the risk if they were taking antidepressants for one to five years, and that risk was five times higher if they were on the drugs for more than six years.

It's already known that antidepressants can cause heart problems—but so can depression itself.

Alarming though the figures are, it's important to understand that the researchers are looking at the relative risk of cardiac arrest. The risk in the overall population is less than 0.2 percent, and so a 50 percent increase raises the absolute risk to 0.3 percent.

Heart, 2024; 110(23): 1365–1371





Too many omega-6 fatty acids raise the risk of breast cancer

We need our omega-6 fatty acids—healthy sources include nuts and eggs—but you can have too much of a good thing. A new study has found the polyunsaturated fats can accelerate the growth of an aggressive type of breast cancer.

The omega-6 fat linoleic acid can activate growth pathways for the "triple negative" form of breast cancer, one of the toughest types to treat. It binds to the protein FABP5, which is common in triple negative cancers.

So, how can a fatty acid that's essential to good health also activate killer tumors? Researchers at Weill Cornell Medicine investigated by feeding laboratory mice high amounts of linoleic acid and discovered the fats were increasing levels of FABP5 proteins, which triple negative cancer cells have more of. These cancers are so named because their cells lack three receptors targeted by standard chemotherapy.

Omega-6 is an essential fat, but our bodies can't produce it, and so we get it from our diet. It becomes deadly when we consume too much, as the researchers noticed in the mice. Since the 1950s, we've been consuming more than we need because of seed oils, such as soybean and safflower oils, in fried and processed foods.

Researchers have suspected that excessive omega-6 consumption from processed food is behind the surge in cancers since the Second World War, and now the Weill Cornell researchers have taken a step toward confirming their suspicions.

Science, 2025; 387(6739): eadm9805

WEIGHT LOSS NEWS

Try intermittent fasting instead of calorie-counting to lose weight...

What's the best way to lose weight? Eating less seems to be the obvious thing to do, but there are several ways of eating less, and two diets have just been tested against each other.

Currently fashionable is intermittent fasting—fasting for regular short periods of a day or less. It has been championed by celebs such as Jennifer Aniston, and it seems to be slightly more effective than the traditional calorie-counting.

Intermittent fasters lost 7.6 percent of their body weight in three months compared to the 5 percent achieved by calorie counters, according to a study by researchers at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, who road-tested the two approaches on a group of 165 people who were overweight.

The intermittent fasters cut their food intake by 80 percent every other day of the week (such as by eating only a small dinner on those days) and ate normally the other four days, while the calorie counters cut their daily intake by about a third (such as by eating 1,640 calories a day when normal intake is more like 2,500 calories).

Ann Intern Med, 2025; 178(5): 634–644

...or forget fasting and just cut back on the carbs

Intermittent fasting is one way to lose weight. Another approach to diet and weight loss may be simpler for some people: Just eat fewer carbs.

Researchers from Surrey University tested three diets on a group of volunteers who were obese or overweight. The participants ate either a normal-carb diet, a low-carb diet with balanced calorie intake or a low-carb diet with significant calorie restriction.

The researchers found that both low-carb diets, regardless of calorie reduction, improved the participants' metabolic markers and helped them better process a high-fat meal. The low-carb approach also reduced levels of triglycerides, fats in the blood that may be related to heart disease, and shifted their metabolisms toward burning fat for energy instead of glucose.

These changes became apparent in just a day on the new diet. Although the participants said they felt hungrier on the low-carb days, they didn't feel they needed to eat more calories to compensate.

In short, as Dr Adam Collins, one of the researchers, stated, "We found that by simply restricting carbohydrates, without enduring extreme calorie restriction, we can reap the metabolic effects associated with short-term fasting. This suggests that periodically reducing our carbohydrate intake could be a more accessible and sustainable way for people to manage and improve their metabolic health."

It could also be the best way to counter metabolic problems like type 2 diabetes, heart disease and obesity, the researchers say.

Eur J Nutr, 2025; 64(3): 133

Eat slower and lose weight

Mindful eating—chewing more slowly and savoring smaller bites—could help you lose weight. It's simple enough: Eat less and you'll put on less weight, say researchers at Fujita Health University in Japan.

They tested the theory on 33 volunteers, aged 20–65 years, who were eating pizza. Researchers measured meal duration, number of chews, number of bites, and rate or speed of chewing, then recorded changes in these variables as participants wore headphones and listened to a metronome tick at varying speeds.

Instead of just focusing on the food we eat, creating an environment that encourages slower eating and smaller bite sizes could be just as effective for weight loss, the researchers say.

Nutrients, 2025; 17(6): 962



It's not plaque, stupid: Alzheimer's false trail

For the past 30 years, medical science has been convinced that amyloid-beta and tau protein plaques are responsible for Alzheimer's disease. But the facts just won't fit the theory, and different ideas can't get a look in

When the UK's Dementia Research Institute opened its doors in 2017, its founding director, Dr Bart De Strooper, pronounced that Alzheimer's disease was probably the result of long-term inflammation. The amyloid hypothesis—the idea that deformed versions of amyloid and tau proteins were destroying brain cells—was a false trail.

This was a bold claim for a new organization that needed to attract funds. Around $2 billion (£1.5 billion) of funding has already been thrown at research projects that explore the amyloid hypothesis, leaving almost nothing for researchers who want to investigate other ideas.

When a new form of amyloid protein, amyloid-beta*56, was "discovered" in 2006, funding went from zero to $333 million in just 15 years as researchers scrambled to learn more about this new likely culprit. But there was nothing to learn: The protein's claimed discovery was based on evidence that had been tampered with.

The researcher had deliberately placed brain scans on top of each other to reveal a "new" protein that wasn't there—and the fraud was uncovered only in 2022. By then, the paper had been cited around 2,300 times by other researchers, who believed this "heavier" variety of amyloid protein was the real culprit behind the Alzheimer's surge.

But the fraud isn't an isolated case; Alzheimer's research is riddled with fraud, coercion and bullying of alternative voices as medical science tries to shoehorn the amyloid theory into the top spot among the possible causes of Alzheimer's. A new book—*Doctored: Fraud, Arrogance and Tragedy in the Quest to Cure Alzheimer's* (Icon Books, 2025) by investigative journalist Charles Piller—makes this clear.

30 percent of people with amyloid plaques never develop Alzheimer's, and 15 percent of people with Alzheimer's symptoms have no plaques at all

Drugs that target amyloid plaques in the brain aren't even stabilizing symptoms, and the theory behind them is confounded by annoying facts. For example, 30 percent of people with plaques—clumps of amyloid protein that destroy brain cells—never develop Alzheimer's, and 15 percent of people with symptoms have no plaques at all. One study of around 200 people with the disease found less than half had plaque formations in their brains.[1]

While medical science continues to gallop down the false amyloid trail, Alzheimer's disease is becoming more widespread. It affects around one in nine people over the age of 65, and it's already the world's fifth major killer; these worrying statistics will only worsen, warn groups such as the UK's Alzheimer's Association and the National Institute on Aging (NIA) in the US, who say there is no cure in sight.

Use your brain

Around 10 percent of over-65s suffer from dementia, chronic and progressive cognitive decline that affects memory, reasoning and motor abilities. Scans reveal that around 70 percent of these people have brain damage, and the disease of this large subset is called Alzheimer's, after the German psychiatrist Alois Alzheimer, who in 1906 discovered strange formations in the brain of a dementia patient.

He believed the clumps, or plaques, were responsible for the dementia. However, his colleague Claire O'Brien thought the patient had been suffering from vascular dementia caused by poor blood supply to the brain.

Other psychiatrists were also skeptical, but in 1984, researchers at the University of California at San Diego discovered the protein amyloid-beta, and soon after, other researchers isolated the tau protein. Although both of these proteins are essential for healthy brain functioning, when they start forming into "plaques and tangles," they kill brain cells.

It looked like an open-and-shut case; the trouble was that nobody could prove it. More than 40 drugs have failed to win approval after demonstrating no meaningful impact on Alzheimer's symptoms in trials.

In 2021, Aduhelm (aducanumab) became the first Alzheimer's drug to be approved in more than 17 years. In the US, it was controversially pushed through by Food and Drug Administration (FDA) executives who overruled its expert committee vote of 10 to one against granting approval.

In trials with Alzheimer's patients, Aduhelm's effectiveness improved symptoms by just 0.4 points on an 18-point assessment. Despite achieving this unlikely breakthrough, the drug's manufacturer, Biogen, pulled the drug last year after it was found to cause brain shrinkage, or atrophy, seen only in people with advanced Alzheimer's.

The same year that Aduhelm won its controversial approval, a team led by medical researcher Sarah Ackley carried out a meta-analysis—a review of previously published trials—of Alzheimer's drugs. They identified 34 trials to review, but the manufacturers refused to release data on 20 of them.

Even with the limited data that they could review, the researchers concluded that the use of anti-amyloid drugs is "not a viable strategy for the prevention or treatment of Alzheimer's disease and that other potential targets may merit more attention."[2]

Fake it till you make it

But if the data doesn't fit, cheat. That seems to be the modus operandi of some researchers who just can't accept that beta-amyloid plaques aren't causing Alzheimer's, says Piller in his new book. He played a big part in exposing the fraudulent amyloid-beta*56 brain scans published in the prestigious journal *Nature* in 2006.[3]

But it wasn't an isolated case. Hoau-Yan Wang, a professor at City University of New York (CUNY), faces charges of major fraud after being accused of producing fraudulent research findings that supported the effectiveness of simufilam, a new Alzheimer's drug made by Cassava Sciences.

Wang "made false, fraudulent and misleading statements about the mechanism by which drug A (simufilam) was designed to treat Alzheimer's disease, and the improvement of certain indicators associated with advanced Alzheimer's

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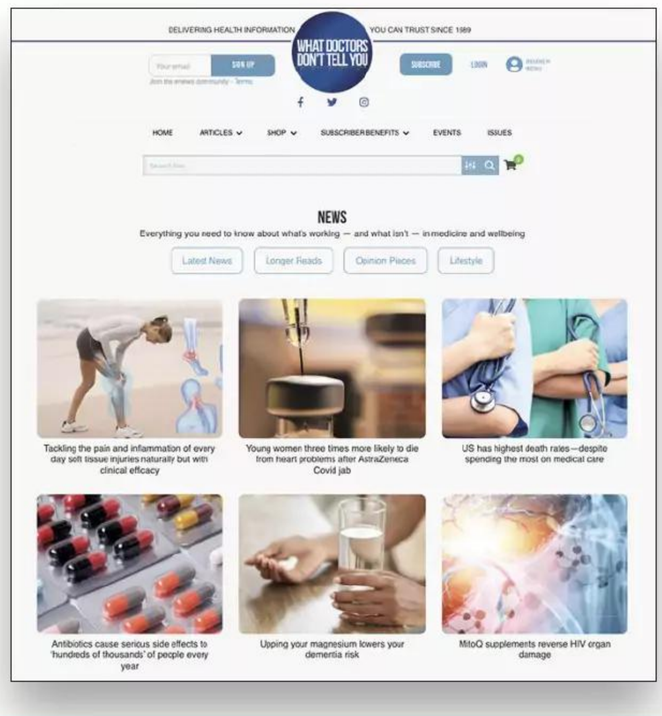
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PREVENTING ALZHEIMER'S

Alzheimer's disease isn't usually just one of those random things that can happen to any elderly person. The idea that our genes are responsible is also untrue: They account for fewer than 1 percent of all cases.

Instead, it's a complex and multifactorial disease that can be traced back to diet and lifestyle. Try the following if you're starting to forget where you left the keys:

Join a social group; isolation is one of the biggest causes of mental decline.

Try anti-inflammatory herbs such as frankincense resin, yarrow and cat's claw.

Take up meditation, and meditate first and last thing every day.



Keep your brain active. Read, solve puzzles or learn something new, such as a different language—all these activities can mitigate cognitive decline.



Supplement with pyrroloquinoline quinone (PQQ), an enzyme co-factor now considered an unidentified B vitamin, which protects mitochondria, the cells' powerhouses, and stimulates production of new mitochondria, supporting the theory that energy loss is a factor in Alzheimer's.

Start taking vitamin E. Taking 2,000 IU a day can slow cognitive decline.

Cut out processed foods, such as bacon, sausages, ham and processed cheeses; they're full of colorings, flavorings and nitrates that can cause cognitive decline (get your nitrates from veggies instead; see page 26).

Eat more turmeric, a staple of Indian curries. It contains curcumin, a powerful antioxidant that could be one of the ultimate brain foods, which is most effective within the whole root.

Cut back on all sugars, especially from processed food and drinks.

Take ginseng and huperzine A, proven brain boosters in Traditional Chinese Medicine. They may reverse many common dementia and Alzheimer's symptoms.

Take DHEA, an important hormone and precursor of other hormones. We make less of it as we age. Supplementing can top up levels of the neurosteroid, which promotes the production of new neurons.

Eat blueberries and drink coffee and green tea.

Take fish oil, enough to get around 1,400 mg of EPA and 1,000 mg DHA, brain-nourishing omega-3s.

Take high-dose B vitamins, up to 250 mg B6, 400 mcg B9 (folate or folinic acid, not folic acid), and 5,000 mcg of B12 (methylcobalamin, not cyanocobalamin) to combat high homocysteine.

Drink red wine or take resveratrol supplements, up to 250 mg a day.



As always, it's wise to check with your practitioner before taking any supplement to be sure it's safe for you.

disease neurodegeneration in patients treated with drug A," the charging document alleges. He received about $16 million in research grants from the National Institutes of Health between 2017 and 2021.

So what now?

A minority of voices has expressed concerns about the amyloid hypothesis. Henry Paulson, director of the Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center, says he has spent years looking for a cause of Alzheimer's that goes beyond plaque: "It's true that amyloid plays a role in the brain and dementia, but Alzheimer's disease is complicated and there's much more to it than one molecule."[4]

Sir Professor John Hardy, one of the world's leading scientists investigating the amyloid plaque theory, said he was never convinced by the possibility of an amyloid subset. "I myself did not believe it and I know others . . . including Professor De Strooper, were also skeptical of it from the start."[5]

Drug researcher Derek Lowe agrees: "Every single Alzheimer's trial has failed. I think that any ultimate explanation of Alzheimer's disease is going to have to include beta-amyloid as a big part of the story—but if attacking the disease from that standpoint is going to lead to viable treatments, we sure as hell haven't been seeing them.

"We have to put money and effort down on other hypotheses and stop hammering, hammering, hammering on beta-amyloid so much. It isn't working."[6]

Medical researcher Patrick Holford, who runs the charity Food for the Brain, reckons that amyloid and tau protein plaques are, at best, fellow travelers of Alzheimer's. They may increase the chances of developing the disease, but they aren't directly responsible for it.

Instead, he says, the amino acid homocysteine plays a far bigger part in the disease's development, and we can easily reduce our levels of it by taking a B-vitamin complex and omega-3 fatty acids together.

High homocysteine levels account for around 22 percent of all Alzheimer's cases, he argues in his new book *Alzheimer's: Prevention Is the Cure* (Holford Press, 2025), and insulin resistance—fueled by a high-sugar diet—is another likely culprit.

Another theory links it to other inflammatory diseases, such as heart disease, and to metabolic conditions like diabetes and obesity. In short, it's to do with inflammation, just as De Strooper declared when he opened his new research initiative.[7]

Bryan Hubbard

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My heart stood still

It might sound romantic, but you really don't want to suffer cardiac arrest. You can reduce your risk by following a healthy diet and even by drinking the occasional glass of champagne

Singers warble romantically about their hearts suddenly falling still—but it's a real thing, and it's known as cardiac arrest. It's not a heart attack; that happens when blood flow is blocked and the heart muscle is damaged.

Cardiac arrest, the third most common cause of death in industrialized nations, occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating for no apparent reason. A heart attack is a problem of circulation; cardiac arrest is electrical.

More than 600,000 people in the US and 40,000 in the UK suffer sudden cardiac arrest every year. Nearly half of US cases but only a quarter of UK cases happen in the hospital, which doubles the victim's chance of survival.

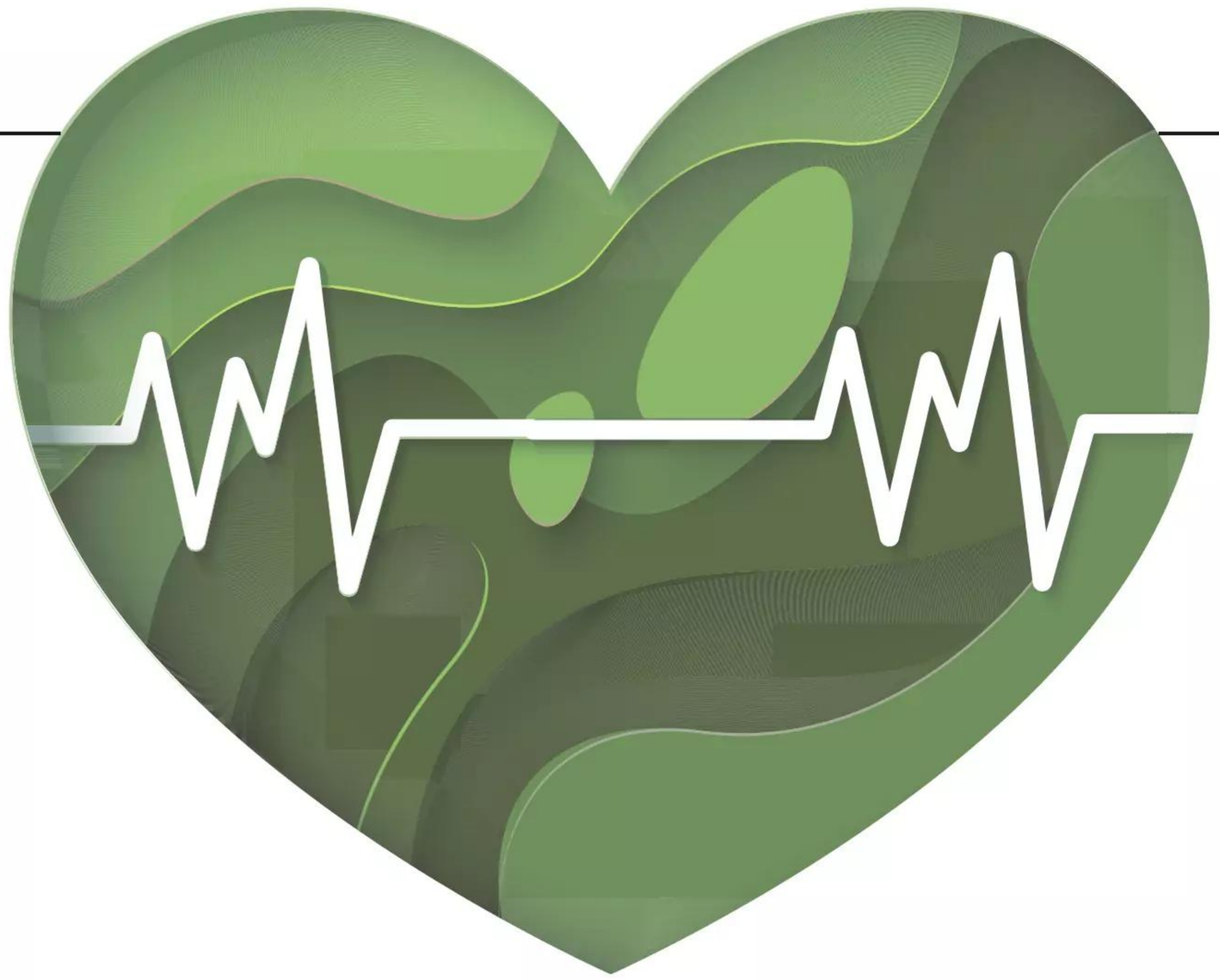
But what causes it, and is there anything we can do to prevent it?

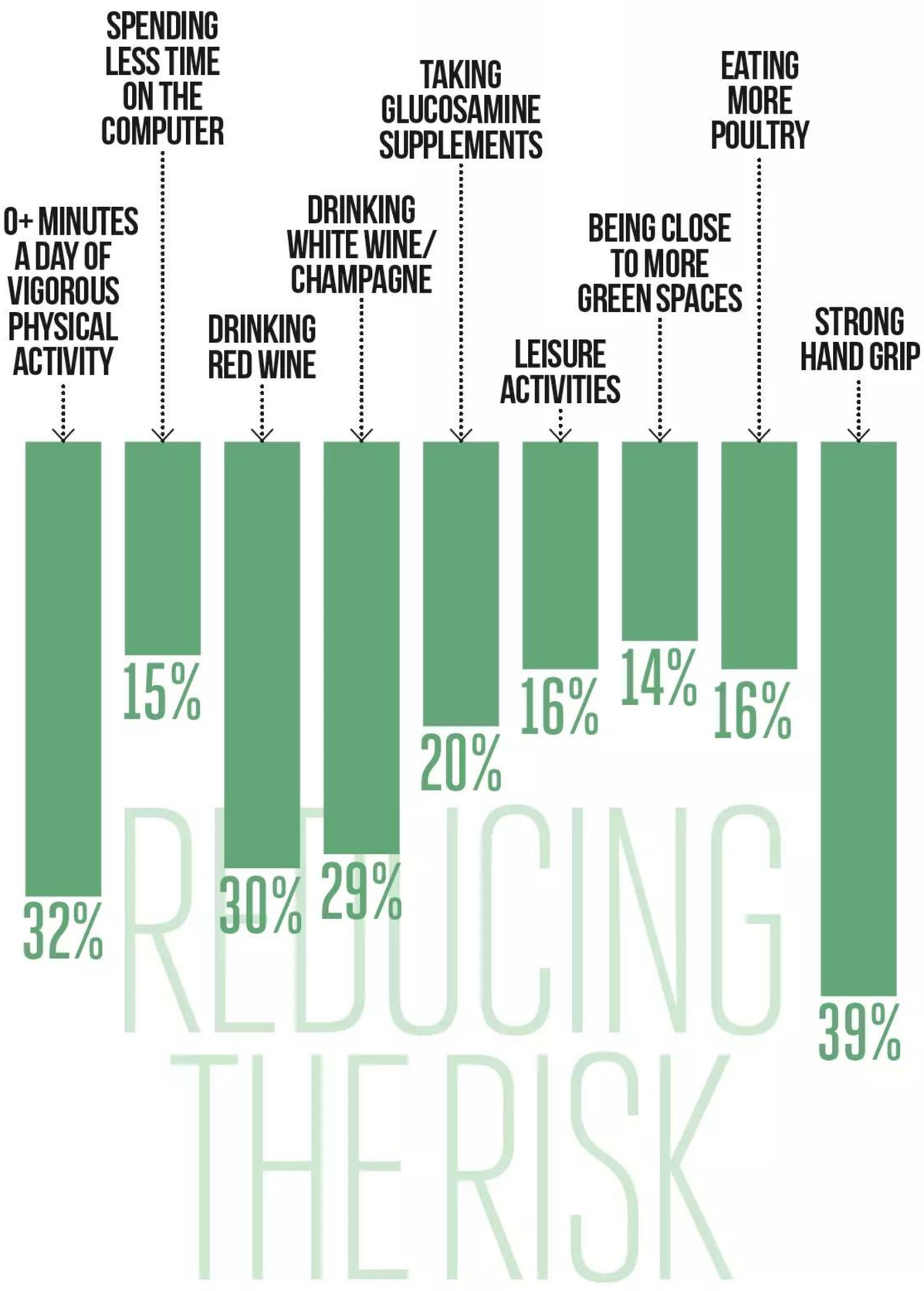
Researchers from Fudan University in China have analyzed 56 risk factors—including diet, lifestyle choices and environmental pollutants—and they reckon up to 63 percent of cases could be avoided if people adopted healthier habits.

They looked at data on more than 500,000 middle-aged people, 3,147 of whom suffered a cardiac arrest during the 14 years of the study.

Some of their findings were surprising, like that white wine and champagne seem to have a protective effect, reducing the risk by around 30 percent. And others were more expected, such as the benefits of exercising, eating a healthy diet, not smoking and losing weight.

Poor sleep quality and unemployment were also risk factors—but so too were psychological issues such as feeling "fed up" or depressed. But, as with all matters of the heart, it's complicated.





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INCREASING THE RISK

212%

62%

224%

37%
WATCHING TOO MUCH TV

27%
SLEEPING MUCH MORE OR LESS THAN 7 HOURS

36%
STRUGGLING TO GET OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING

SMOKING

29%
EATING CEREAL

37%
NOT EATING ENOUGH FRUITS/ VEGETABLES

28%
FEELING FED UP

30%
ISOLATION, LONELINESS

25%
REGULAR DEPRESSION

36%
LACK OF INTEREST IN THINGS

15%
WORRYING OVER EMBARRASSING INCIDENT

17%
EXPOSURE TO AIR POLLUTANTS

20%
EXCESS WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE

36%
RAISED PULSE RATE

33%
HIGH BMI SCORE

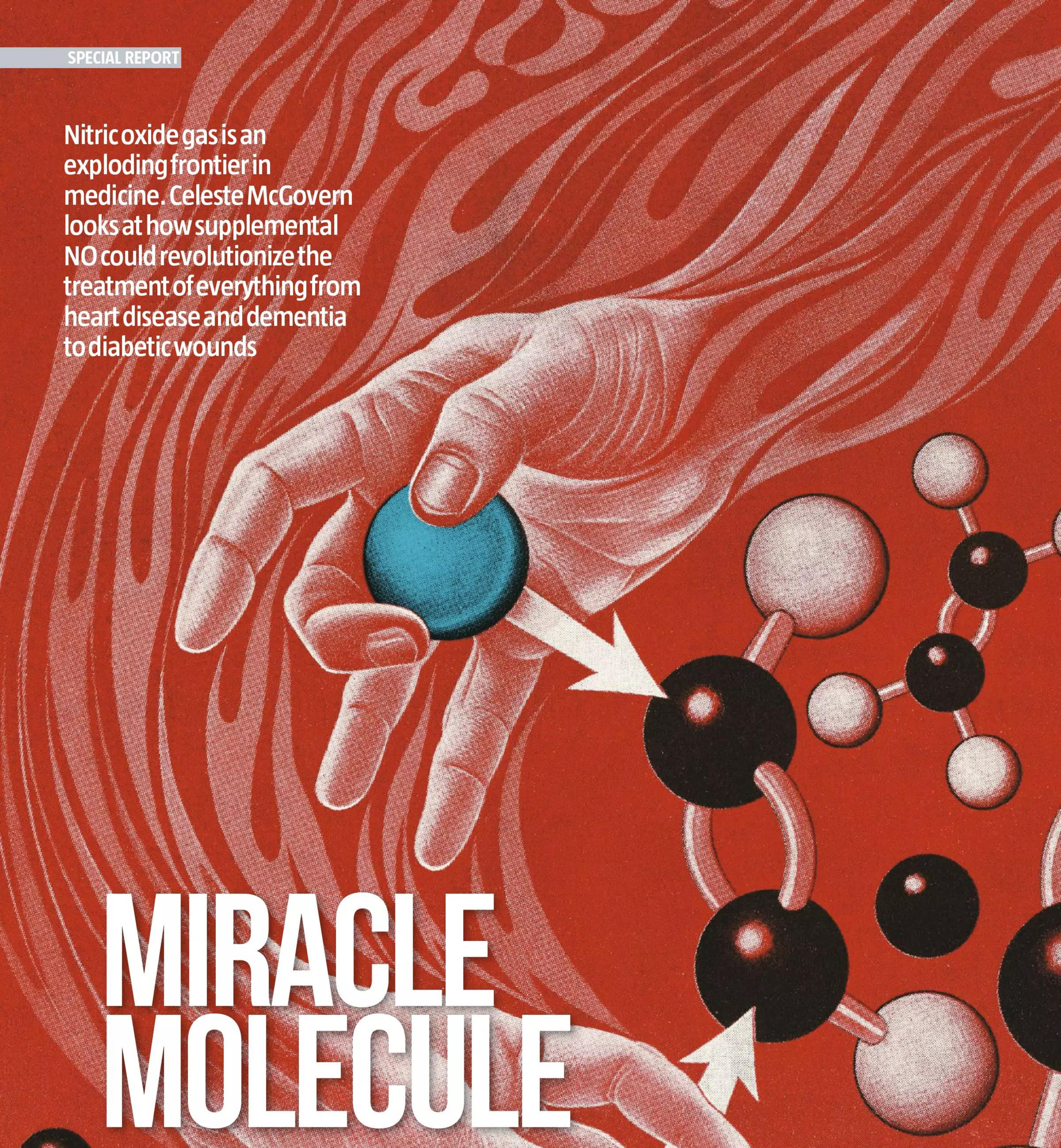
35%
OVERWEIGHT

POOR EDUCATION

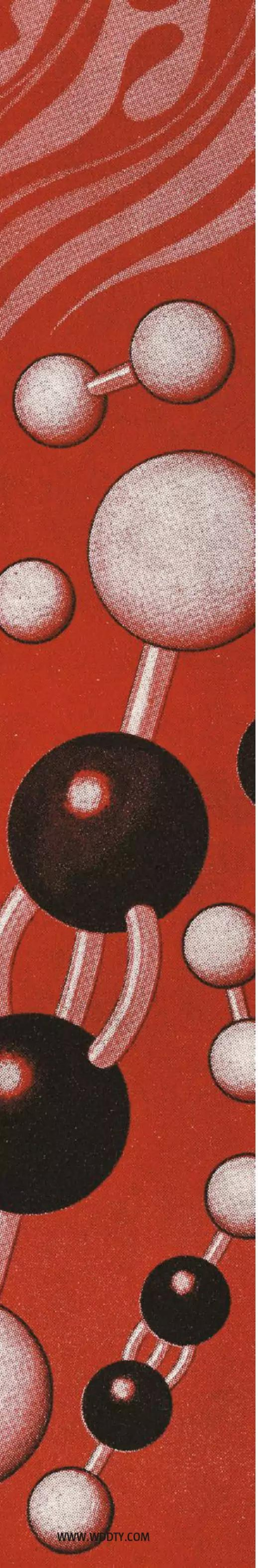
UNEMPLOYMENT



Nitric oxide gas is an exploding frontier in medicine. Celeste McGovern looks at how supplemental NO could revolutionize the treatment of everything from heart disease and dementia to diabetic wounds



MIRACLE MOLECULE



A 99-year-old woman was discovered unconscious at her home in Caldwell, Texas, and taken to the hospital by ambulance. Her breathing was extremely shallow, her heartbeat was irregular and her blood pressure had fallen dangerously low.

She didn't respond to oxygen, and her doctors had little hope for recovery. A "Do not resuscitate" order was placed on her file.

Her grandson, a physician, visited her and saw there wasn't much more that could be done, but he decided to try something unconventional. He pulled a little white lozenge from his pocket and crushed it into a powder, which he gently placed in her mouth with a bit of water. Then he walked away.

About 20 minutes later, a nurse came running to find him. His grandmother had woken up and was alert and talking. Her heart rate had returned to normal, her blood pressure was stable and her breathing had improved. She recovered—and lived to see her 100th birthday.

What was in this lozenge that resuscitated the old woman and took her from death's door to life in a matter of minutes?

The power of NO

It turns out it was nitric oxide (NO), a tiny molecule of gas made of a single atom of oxygen and a single atom of nitrogen. Discovered only in the 1970s and known primarily as an industrial gas and environmental pollutant, nitric oxide has enjoyed a dramatic perspective shift in science and medicine over the decades since.

It was hailed as Molecule of the Year in 1992. Then it brought three doctors the 1998 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their groundbreaking research showing that nitric oxide acts as a signaling molecule in the body, particularly in the cardiovascular system.

This was a landmark discovery because it revealed how nitric oxide helps relax and widen blood vessels, regulating blood pressure and improving circulation, oxygen delivery and overall cardiovascular health. It laid the foundation for revolutionary drugs like nitroglycerin for angina and heart failure and opened new avenues for treating heart disease, stroke and other vascular disorders.

Today, research into nitric oxide's health functions has exploded, with more than 200,000 published studies in the medical literature. Nitric oxide has changed the way scientists understand cell communication and vascular health.

Beyond its role in relaxing blood vessels to allow for increased blood flow to tissues, nitric oxide is now recognized as a master regulator of vascular tone, immune response, neurotransmission and cellular energy. It supports energy levels, endurance and cognitive function.

"Imagine a single molecule that can dramatically improve your health," says biochemist Dr Nathan Bryan, one of the foremost experts in the world on molecular medicine, and particularly on nitric oxide biochemistry.

According to Bryan, author of *The Secret of Nitric Oxide: Bringing the Science to Life* (Brick Tower Press, 2025), "NO sends crucial signals within every cell, tissue and organ of your body."

This molecule protects vital organs like the heart, brain and kidneys. It keeps arteries supple and clear, preventing blood clots that can lead to heart attacks and strokes, and lowers harmful triglyceride levels. It also reduces the risk of diabetes and its serious complications—such as slow-healing wounds, amputations, vision loss and kidney failure.

But its benefits don't stop there. Nitric oxide supports brain health, potentially slowing the cognitive decline that occurs in dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

It alleviates joint pain and swelling in arthritis, reverses erectile dysfunction, calms inflammation in asthma, guards against osteoporosis and helps regulate immune responses in autoimmune diseases. Its antimicrobial action helps fight off infections and cancer, and it even plays a role in protecting the skin from sunburn.

Health benefits of nitric oxide

Cardiovascular health Perhaps the best-known function of nitric oxide is its role in vasodilation. By relaxing the inner muscles of the blood vessels, NO increases blood flow and reduces blood pressure.

Recent case studies suggest that supplemental nitric oxide (especially via lozenges or skin-delivered systems) may rapidly stabilize cardiac and vascular function in emergency situations—rebalancing heart rhythms, normalizing blood pressure and restoring blood flow to compromised organs.

A double-blind, placebo-controlled crossover study involving 30 unmedicated hypertensive patients showed that a single dose of an NO-generating lozenge reduced systolic and diastolic blood pressures by 4 mmHg and 5 mmHg, respectively, within 20 minutes. The numbers fell by 6 mmHg each after 60 minutes. The study also noted improvements in blood vessel function within hours of the dose.[1]

In another 30-day randomized controlled trial at the California Medical Institute, prehypertensive adults who took NO lozenges saw a big drop in their resting blood pressure—from an average of 138/84 mmHg to 126/78 mmHg. They also showed improved physical endurance, as measured by the six-minute walk test, and reported improvements in quality of life.[2]

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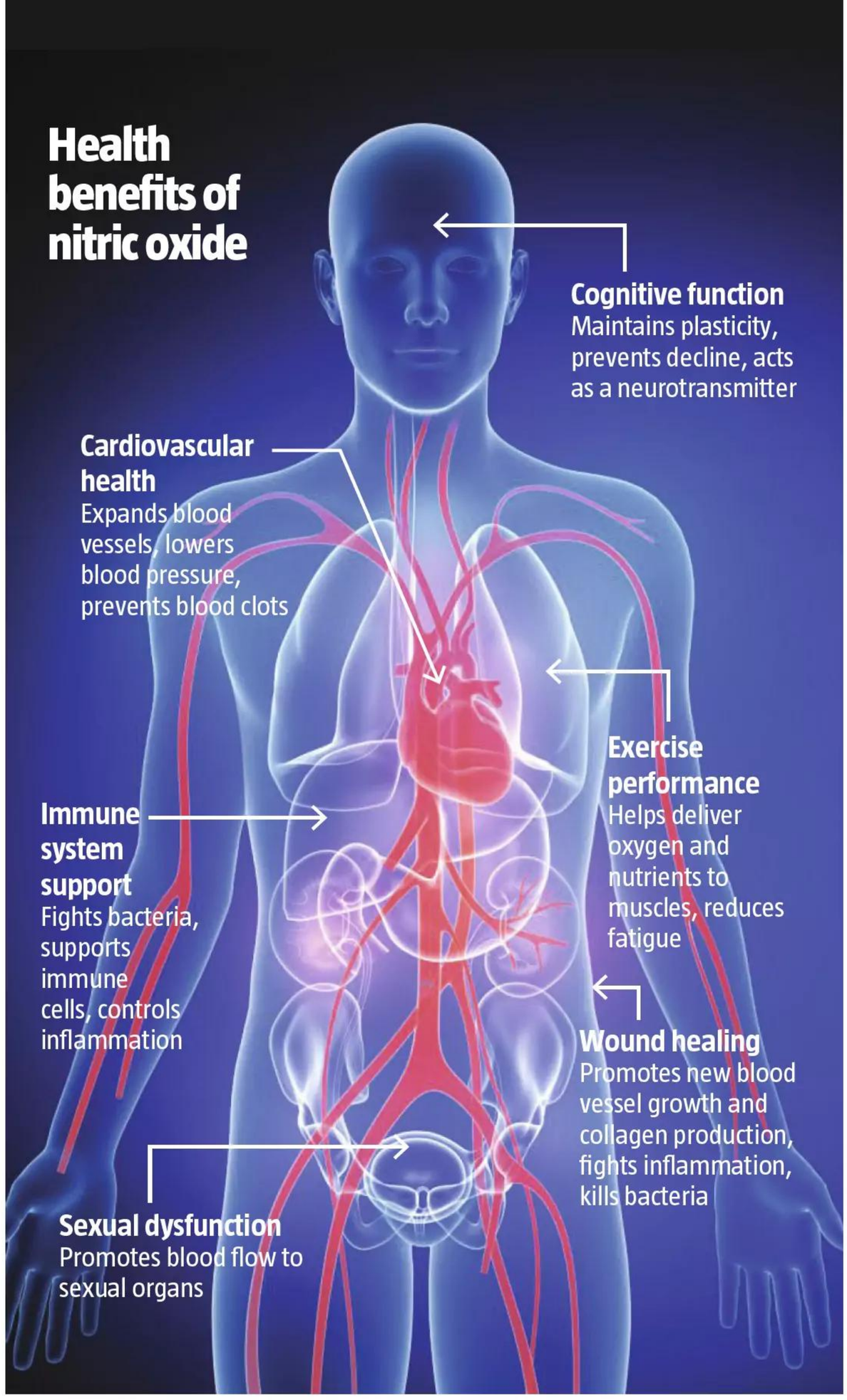
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Wound healing Nitric oxide plays several important roles in helping wounds heal. It helps grow new blood vessels (a process called angiogenesis), encourages the body to make collagen (which gives skin and connective tissues strength and structure), fights off harmful bacteria and helps to bring inflammation under control.

All these actions are key to repairing damaged tissue. Early results of using nitric oxide serums on surgical wounds and chronic ulcers show they may speed up healing—especially in people with poor circulation, diabetes or weakened immune systems. This could become a promising new treatment for hard-to-heal wounds, without side effects.

In one clinical study, 25 patients with various skin injuries—including surgical wounds, diabetic ulcers and burns—were treated with a nitric oxide–generating topical serum, with striking outcomes:

- A diabetic ulcer that hadn't healed in months closed within 30 days.
- A second-degree burn that had resisted healing for two months began closing within seven days and was completely healed in three weeks.
- A skin cancer surgery site showed rapid healing within seven days with almost no bruising.

Across the board, doctors noted faster healing, reduced swelling and less bruising, with no side effects.[3]

Cognitive function Nitric oxide acts as a neurotransmitter in the brain, influencing processes related to learning and memory. It supports synaptic plasticity, which is an essential aspect of cognitive function. Studies suggest that maintaining adequate nitric oxide levels may help protect against age-related cognitive decline.[4]

Immune system support Nitric oxide contributes to the body's defense mechanisms by fighting microbes. It aids immune cells in combating pathogens and plays a role in regulating inflammation.[5] This function is particularly important for middle-aged people, as immune efficiency can decline with age.

Sexual dysfunction Erectile dysfunction, which used to be considered a lifestyle condition, often precedes heart disease and is now considered an early marker of it. In both men and women, sexual dysfunction is a canary for poor blood flow to the sexual organs.

"If you have erectile dysfunction, you are NO deficient," Bryan explains, "and it's important to take corrective steps to restore your body's nitric oxide production."

Enhanced exercise performance For middle-aged adults aiming to maintain physical fitness, nitric oxide can be beneficial. It enhances oxygen and nutrient delivery to muscles during exercise, improving endurance and reducing fatigue. Research indicates that nitrate-rich supplements, like beetroot juice, can improve performance in various athletic activities.[6]

At high altitudes, oxygen levels in the air are reduced, triggering hypoxic stress in the body that can impair physical performance and cognitive function. Nitric oxide helps to optimize oxygen delivery to cells by increasing blood flow and supporting the mitochondria so they can work more efficiently.

Bryan recounts how he helped a group of US Navy SEALs who often had to fly quickly from their base at 3,000 feet to high-altitude missions at 10,000–12,000 feet. The rapid change in altitude often made them sick with headaches, nausea and fatigue, the classic signs of altitude sickness.

He gave them his nitric oxide–generating lozenges, which they took during their helicopter ride, and the results were striking: They arrived alert, focused and ready for rappelling into combat zones without the usual symptoms. The lozenges appeared to help their bodies use oxygen more efficiently at high altitudes.

It's real-world evidence of NO's potential as a performance enhancer and altitude acclimation tool. The molecule is finding popularity among athletes, climbers and emergency responders who operate in thin air.

> NITRIC OXIDE DEFICIENCY IS AT THE HEART OF HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, POOR CIRCULATION, SLOW HEALING AND VIRTUALLY ALL AGE-RELATED CHRONIC DISEASE

Young, healthy bodies produce nitric oxide all day long, on demand. Yet it vanishes within a second of being produced. As we age—or when we are ill or our nitric oxide production is blocked (see more on this on page 30)—we make less and less of this precious, fragile vanishing gas.

"A lack or deficiency of nitric oxide is basically at the root of most chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, which is the leading killer of women and men worldwide," says Bryan. NO deficiency is at the heart of high blood pressure, poor circulation, slow healing and virtually all age-related chronic disease, he adds.



Eat your greens

Numerous clinical trials now show that dietary nitrate can deliver all the key health benefits of vegetables, including these:

- Lowering high blood pressure
- Enhancing exercise performance and endurance
- Reducing vascular inflammation
- Improving markers of diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's, kidney function and more

In fact, some researchers believe nitrate may be the main reason for the health benefits of vegetables. It's no coincidence that diets known for promoting heart health—like the Mediterranean diet, DASH diet and traditional Japanese diet—are also some of the richest in dietary nitrates.

Which greens?

Eating more greens is Dr Nathan Bryan's first recommendation. But when he tested vegetables across the US to determine their nitrate content, he found surprising differences depending on where and how the food was grown.

Celery from California could have as much as 50 times the nitrate content as the same amount of celery grown in New York. This makes it impossible to advise on how much food to eat to get the right amount of nitrate.

Another surprising finding: Organic vegetables and fruits generally have up to 10 times less nitrate because inorganic fertilizers aren't used to grow them. It's a tough trade-off, but Bryan suggests looking for conventionally grown produce that hasn't been treated with pesticides.

However, efforts are underway in the US and the UK to reduce the use of nitrate fertilizers generally because they pollute ecosystems and groundwater. Another option is to eat produce grown with a rich compost and manure, which help to add nitrogen to the soil.

How does it work?

It seems impossible that one tiny molecule could be responsible for so many actions, but nitric oxide works in four crucial ways in the body:

1. It increases blood flow.
2. It reduces inflammation.
3. It dampens oxidative stress.
4. It resolves immune dysfunction.

Most diseases are characterized by inflammation, oxidation, immune system misbehavior or lack of blood flow, which brings nutrients and oxygen to tissues.

"Nitric oxide basically gets to the root cause of all chronic diseases," says Bryan. "This means there really is no disease or drug indication for which nitric oxide at the right dose would not provide therapeutic benefit."

His thoughts echo those of Louis Ignarro, the 1998 Nobel laureate for his nitric oxide discoveries, who said, "There may be no disease process where this miracle molecule does not have a protective role."

How is it made?

How do we get it, then? There are two pathways for NO production in the human body.

The first is a complex, enzyme-dependent process known as the endothelial pathway because it occurs in the endothelium, a thin layer of cells lining blood vessels. This production pathway is triggered by shear pressure, the friction that blood cells exert on the endothelium as they rush through the vessels, and by actions like exercise.

> WE LOSE 10–12 PERCENT OF OUR ENDOTHELIAL-PRODUCED NITRIC OXIDE PER DECADE. BY AGE 40, WE CAN MAKE ONLY ABOUT HALF AS MUCH AS IN CHILDHOOD

However, endothelial NO production inevitably wanes as we age. Even people with normal blood sugar and blood pressure have plummeting endothelial nitric oxide production as they age.

"The older you are, the lower your nitric oxide," says Bryan. "We lose 10–12 percent of our endothelial-produced nitric oxide every decade."

This means that by age 40, we can make only about half as much as in childhood.

NO production also wanes under high oxidative stress or in the presence of diabetes or high blood pressure. We now understand that a lack of nitric oxide production and signaling is responsible for the onset and progression of cardiovascular disease as well as many other age-related diseases.

There is a well-established vicious cycle involving diabetes, hypertension and endothelial nitric oxide production. High blood glucose (hyperglycemia) and high blood pressure (hypertension) cause oxidative stress and promote inflammation leading to endothelial cell damage.

This in turn, inhibits the enzyme needed for NO production in the blood vessels, and NO production plummets. Since nitric oxide is essential to vasodilation, preventing platelets from clumping and preventing atherosclerosis, the drop leads to more trouble:

- Vasoconstriction
- Blood pressure increases
- Impaired insulin signaling
- More endothelial damage

Impaired blood flow and vascular tone contribute to more insulin resistance, progressively higher blood pressure (from stiffened, poorly dilated vessels), and atherosclerosis and its complications.

And the negative feedback loop continues, worsening the conditions and leading eventually to cardiovascular disease, stroke and kidney failure.

The trouble with antacids

More than half of Americans and almost half of UK adults report using antacid medications for heartburn and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). These include over-the-counter medicines and prescription proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) like omeprazole.

Because they damage the epithelium of blood vessels[7] and lower the acidity in the stomach, PPIs can interfere with the body's production of nitric oxide, and this may explain the resulting higher risk of heart attack,[8] dementia[9] and systemic autoimmune disease.[10]

"Turning down stomach acid is a very bad idea," Bryan warns.

How to boost your NO levels

Eating healthily, eliminating mouthwash (see box, top right) and stopping antacid medication alone will go a long way toward restoring the body's nitric oxide production.

Eat nitrate-rich foods Fortunately, our bodies have a built-in backup system for producing NO, especially important because it's so vital to our health. This route is known as the nitrate–nitrite–NO pathway.

Unlike the primary pathway that depends on an enzyme (eNOS) in the endothelium, this backup pathway relies on nitrate from food. Nitrate is converted to nitrite and then to nitric oxide.[11]

The dietary pathway becomes even more important as we age or develop conditions like cardiovascular disease, in which the body's ability to produce NO through the endothelial pathway declines.

So yes—your mother was right when she told you to eat your greens. Leafy vegetables like spinach, kale and arugula (rocket) as well as beets (beetroot), celery and other nitrate-rich foods deliver the raw material (nitrate) we need for this process (see box, page 30).

Here's how it works:

1. You eat nitrate-rich foods.
2. About 25 percent of the nitrate absorbed into your bloodstream is concentrated in your salivary glands and released into your saliva.
3. Beneficial bacteria in the crevices of your tongue (especially the back third) convert this nitrate into nitrite. They do it by using the enzyme nitrate reductase, which humans don't naturally produce.
4. When you swallow, the nitrite travels to your stomach, where the acidic environment converts



The trouble with mouthwash

About 200 million people in the US and 17 million in the UK regularly swish with a mouthwash or dental rinse. It may sound like a good idea to keep your mouth fresh, but researchers have pointed out that there's a connection between mouthwash use and hypertension for years.

A 2024 review of data from 55 studies reported that mouthwash could increase the risk of developing high blood pressure and diabetes by 85 percent and 55 percent respectively.[1]

One 2019 study of a small group found that just one week of swishing with chlorhexidine mouthwash twice a day was enough to raise systolic blood pressure.[2]

Now there's an explanation for the connection: Antiseptic mouthwash blasts the nitrate-processing bacteria in the mouth, significantly reducing the conversion to NO.

"People think they're doing all the right things. They're exercising and eating their vegetables," says Dr Nathan Bryan, "but they're canceling those nitric oxide benefits by using mouthwash."

Antibiotics also damage the oral microbiome, so take only those you need. Fluoride is another cause of damage to the oral microbiome, says Bryan, who sells his own fluoride-free, bacteria-boosting toothpaste (n101.com).

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Skip L-arginine

If you search for nitric oxide supplements, you'll find hundreds that include the amino acid L-arginine or its precursor, L-citrulline. While the body uses these to make nitric oxide, Dr Nathan Bryan warns they may be not only ineffective but potentially harmful.

"Deficiency in L-arginine is extremely rare," he explains. "This amino acid is found in a wide variety of foods, from meat and seafood to beans. Nitric oxide deficiency is a completely different issue."

According to Bryan, the real problem is not a lack of arginine but the body's reduced ability to convert existing arginine into nitric oxide. "It's like putting gas in a car with a blown engine—it doesn't fix the problem," he says.

More concerning, he adds, is clinical evidence showing increased risk in those given L-arginine after a heart attack. One major study found these patients were more likely to die than those who didn't take the amino acid.[1]

"Buyer beware," Bryan cautions.

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it into nitric oxide, which then enters your bloodstream and gets to work.

What can go wrong? In order for this pathway to work well, a few things need to be in place:

- You must eat enough nitrate-rich foods.
- You need healthy oral bacteria, which can be harmed by antiseptic mouthwash.
- Your stomach needs to maintain enough acidity for conversion to NO.

According to Dr Bryan, we need at least 300 mg of dietary nitrate per meal to support optimal nitric oxide levels—especially for maintaining healthy blood pressure and circulation. Yet most of us consume only 150 mg per day or less on a typical Western diet, leading to widespread nitric oxide deficiency as we age.

These are some nitrate-rich foods to focus on:

- Leafy greens: spinach, kale, bok choy, arugula (rocket), beet greens, spring greens
- Cruciferous vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, cabbage
- Fruits: apple, pear, watermelon, pomegranate, grapes
- Beetroot
- Celery
- Artichoke

Exercise Exercise is one of the best natural ways to boost nitric oxide in the body, which helps keep your blood vessels healthy and your blood pressure in check. When you move—especially during activities like walking, running or cycling—your blood flows faster, which signals your body to make more nitric oxide.

This relaxes and widens blood vessels, improving circulation. Regular exercise also helps your body make more nitric oxide synthase, the enzyme it needs to produce NO, and increases the amounts of raw material compounds like nitrate and nitrite in your blood.

Breathe through your nose The paranasal sinuses are key sites of nitric oxide production. When you breathe through your nose, NO is released into the nasal passages and travels into the lungs, where it helps dilate blood vessels to improve oxygen delivery, open the airways, and fight off bacteria, viruses and fungi.

Studies show that nasal breathing significantly increases the body's production and use of nitric oxide compared to mouth breathing, which bypasses this process and reduces NO availability.[12]

Avoid sugar Sugar—particularly in the form of refined sugars and high-glycemic carbohydrates—can impair NO production through several mechanisms:

- Increasing inflammation
- Damaging blood vessels
- Promoting insulin resistance
- Blocking nutrients and enzymes needed to make NO

Get more sunlight Moderate exposure to sunlight can boost nitric oxide levels. Ultraviolet rays stimulate the release of NO from skin stores into the bloodstream, aiding in blood pressure regulation.



WHEN YOU MOVE, YOUR BLOOD FLOWS FASTER, WHICH SIGNALS YOUR BODY TO MAKE MORE NITRIC OXIDE

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Rapid recovery

Dr Nathan Bryan describes one published case in which his nitric oxide lozenges were able to work, even when the body's nitric oxide production pathway was prevented by inborn disease.

A 15-year-old boy with a rare genetic disorder called argininosuccinic aciduria couldn't make his own nitric oxide. As a result, he had long suffered from dangerously high blood pressure and kidney problems, and he was in the early stages of heart disease.

Although his doctors had given him several medications, nothing was bringing his blood pressure under control, and it was averaging around 185/110 mmHg. With nothing else in their tool kit, doctors tried a nitric oxide lozenge.

Within just four hours, the teen's blood pressure had dropped dramatically to a safe level of 135/85 mmHg, and it stayed there. After three weeks, his kidney problems disappeared, and five months later, his heart had healed.

This was the first time any treatment had made such a difference for him, according to the report in *The American Journal of Human Genetics*. It also underscored a crucial insight: Even in severe disease, the body retains its capacity to respond to nitric oxide, though it may lose the ability to produce it.

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Take supplements What's remarkable is that even when the body loses its ability to make NO, it still responds to the gas when it's provided as a supplement. That's why lozenges, skin creams and other NO-releasing treatments are being explored as powerful tools to restore balance in the body (see a few on page 64).

Nitric oxide may be a small molecule, but it's making a big impact on how we understand and treat disease. Whether it's helping a centenarian come back from the brink, healing chronic wounds or protecting elite soldiers in extreme conditions, nitric oxide is showing up as a key ingredient in health and healing.

In essence, NO acts as a biochemical "switchboard" modulating numerous physiological processes across nearly every system in the body.

The growing body of evidence—from published clinical studies to dramatic case reports—positions nitric oxide as a cornerstone of future treatment. As science continues to uncover its many roles in the body, NO could become one of the most versatile and valuable tools in modern medicine.

Rather than asking whether nitric oxide works, the better question may now be how many conditions it can help us prevent or treat.

Out of the blues

Could hormonal imbalances be hijacking your happiness? Marcelle Pick identifies the hormones linked to depression and seven ways to lift your mood naturally

When I asked Vivi a simple question, "How are you feeling?" I watched her dissolve into tears. I wish that were an uncommon reaction, but I've seen it happen time and again.

What is it about this question that evokes such a response? From my personal experience with overwhelming stress, part of it is relief. Finally, someone is asking—and really wants to know the honest answer.

Often what comes out is a flood of emotions they haven't even acknowledged yet: "I'm overwhelmed."

"Things that used to bring me joy don't anymore, and I don't know why."

"I feel hopeless."

"Nothing matters to me anymore."

"I'm so irritable toward people I love."

"I just feel sad all the time."

If you're feeling these things, you're not alone. In fact, I find it more rare to talk to women who *aren't* experiencing this kind of thing. Why are so many of us feeling so sad and overwhelmed?

Part of it is the stress of modern living and the crazy demands we put on ourselves every day. But another large part may be that finally people aren't afraid to talk about depression. The stigma of mental illness is diminishing, and we're now encouraged to discuss these issues, find the root causes and look for solutions that go beyond reaching for a prescription pad.

Depression is caused by a wide range of factors. And one of the most common—hormonal imbalance—is often missed by harried medical professionals who simply don't have time to explore the details of what women are going through. That's why I love practicing functional medicine.

In my role, I'm required to take the time to really listen, explore all aspects of a woman's life and help her make the best decisions for her own unique situation. There's no easy fix, but natural solutions for depression are available, and often this begins with looking at hormonal balance and digging deeply to find the root cause.

What is depression?

Everyone feels sadness and grief at some time in their lives. These feelings are often brought on by a loss of some kind, disappointing experiences or difficulty with relationships. As crushing as these feelings can be, they are not the same as clinical depression.

Depression is much more serious than "feeling blue." With depression, you can't ignore it or "just push through." In fact, expecting yourself to do so may have serious consequences.

According to the CDC and ONS, 15.3 percent of women in the US and 19 percent of women in the UK have depression

Depression, according to the American Psychiatric Association, is a common, serious medical condition that impacts how you feel, think and act in negative ways.[1] It can cause feelings of sadness and a lack of interest in activities you previously enjoyed. It can also make typical functioning at work or home difficult—sometimes nearly impossible.

Like in most illnesses, symptoms can range from mild to severe. These are some other symptoms of depression:

- Changes in appetite
- Sleep challenges
- Fatigue and lack of energy
- Feelings of guilt, shame or worthlessness
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Women like Vivi have told me that depression can cause a sense of hopelessness and despair. They say they feel disconnected from the world around them, even when they're able to move through their days as planned.

They sometimes wonder why they should even get out of bed in the morning. And for some of these women, the fatigue and physical pain they experience make it impossible to do so and desperate for answers.

The good news is depression can be treated. And that doesn't always have to be with a prescription.

A bad day or two doesn't mean you're depressed, but if you have at least four symptoms that linger for more than two weeks, your healthcare provider may diagnose you with depression. According to the World Health Organization, depression impacts over 300 million people worldwide, and it affects more women than men.[2]

Data from the US Centers for Disease Control shows that the number of American teens and adults with depression has risen by 60 percent in the past decade and that 15.3 percent of women have depression—twice the rate of men (7.4 percent).[3] The UK's Office of National Statistics reports that one in six people over age 16 has depression, including 19 percent of women and 14 percent of men.[4]

Too often, the first (and sometimes only) solution offered is prescription medication. But if you don't find out the root causes of the problem, the drug is

Don't ignore the signs of depression

One thing you absolutely should not do is ignore depression. Doing so can have dire consequences. If you have thoughts of hurting yourself or committing suicide, get to a hospital or call a crisis line immediately. If your symptoms are less severe, reach out to a trusted healthcare professional right away to get the support and guidance you need.

Working with a functional medicine practitioner can provide the essential information you need about hormones and depression. It can also help you look at all the factors that could be impacting the way you're experiencing life.



Foods high in Bs and omega-3s

Include foods rich in B vitamins and omega-3 fats in your diet to help boost your brain health. Here are some good sources.

Vitamin B-rich foods

Meat and poultry
Eggs
Salmon
Dairy
Leafy greens
Beans
Peas
Lentils
Sunflower seeds

Omega-3-rich foods

Oily fish like salmon, mackerel and sardines
Walnuts
Chia seeds
Flaxseeds
Hemp seeds
Eggs
Edamame

only masking the issue. Sure, it might help you feel better — but many people don't respond to drug therapy. And if they do, they end up on these drugs long term, often with major side effects to contend with.

That's why I look at the big picture. What's really going on here? And I've discovered that often, an imbalance in major hormones and depression go hand in hand.

Hormones and depression

Because of the variety of factors and uniqueness of each individual woman, it's important to look at all the angles when I talk to women about these issues. Certainly many social and biological factors—genetics, brain chemistry, medication side effects, trauma, societal expectations and so much more—can play a role in depression.

The fact that so many more women than men experience depression is of particular interest to me. While there's no definitive answer to why this is so, a connection between hormones and depression makes sense. Here's a quick look at some of the hormones that could be behind your depressive symptoms.

Female reproductive hormones A 2008 review in the *Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience* looked at the relationship between female reproductive events (menstrual cycle, pregnancy, childbirth and menopause) and increased risk of depression. It found ample evidence that hormonal fluctuations during these events can influence the neurochemical pathways to depression.[5] Both estrogen and progesterone have been shown to impact parts of the brain connected to behavior and mood regulation.

Estrogen helps form the neurotransmitter serotonin, which can have a significant impact on mood. Progesterone impacts the GABA receptors in your brain, promoting a sense of calm and helping you get quality sleep. Imbalances in either hormone can prompt mood issues.

And it's not just about the hormones in isolation—maintaining a proper ratio is important as well. When the ratio of estrogen to progesterone is off, estrogen dominance can result, counteracting the effects of progesterone.

Thyroid hormones Thyroid imbalances are another common issue for modern women. Because thyroid hormones also impact mood, it's important to consider your thyroid hormone levels when dealing with symptoms of depression. If you have either too much or too little of these important hormones, in addition to other serious symptoms, your mood can suffer.



Cortisol An imbalance in this vital stress hormone can have a big impact on your body, including your mood. Women face constant stress in modern times, which can mean constant cortisol production.

Too much of this powerful hormone can overload the adrenal glands. And adrenal fatigue leads to depression, anxiety and other mood issues.

DHEA DHEA is often called the "feel-good hormone." Even slight imbalances can make you feel like someone you just don't recognize—much like the symptoms of depression can do. See my column in the April 2024 issue of *WDDTY* for more on DHEA and how to spot a deficiency.

When we look at hormones and depression together, we start to see patterns. So many hormonal imbalances can impact mood, and depression can likely impact hormone levels too.

That's why I recommend comprehensive testing when women come to me with mood-related symptoms. The more data we have, the more likely we are to find real solutions.

7 natural ways to address depression

When we realize that hormones and depression are connected, we can stop turning to antidepressants as a first course of action and explore natural treatments instead. I've written extensively about how to naturally balance your hormones in my previous columns in *WDDTY*, but let's take a look at some ways to deal specifically with depression without prescriptions.

1. Eat well

Avoiding excess salt, processed foods, caffeine, unhealthy fats, alcohol and simple carbohydrates can help keep your energy levels and mood stable. Eating foods high in B vitamins[6] and omega-3 fatty acids[7] (see box, left) can also boost mood, as can getting enough iron in your diet.[8] Taking a quality multivitamin every day is a great way to be sure you're getting most of the nutrients your body needs to thrive.

And eating regularly is just as important as eating nutritious foods. You have to eat often enough to keep your blood sugar stable and avoid crashes, which can lead to irritability and upset.

A healthy diet combined with good sleeping and exercise habits is one of the

best ways to make sure your hormone levels stay balanced.

2. Prioritize sleep

Quality sleep is so important to your well-being. Finding ways to improve your sleep can also keep hormones



balanced and improve mood. Try setting a regular bedtime allowing for seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

Establish a good bedtime routine that includes turning off electronics an hour before you head to bed; it's best to leave screens out of the bedroom entirely. Set the scene for restful sleep by keeping the room cool and dark.

3. Keep moving

Keeping yourself active will help level out hormones and lift your mood. In fact, some studies have shown that regular exercise can do as much to boost energy and decrease fatigue as antidepressants do.[9]



And unless you're really overdoing it, exercise doesn't come with negative side effects. You don't need to have fancy equipment or a large block of time, either. A brisk 30-minute walk each day is plenty.

4. Get outside and soak up the sun

Vitamin D is vital to boosting serotonin and dopamine and improving mood.[10] Your body makes it when it receives proper exposure to the sun's UVB rays (between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.). Just a couple of hours of sun per week is all it takes to keep you on the right track—as long as you don't block out those valuable rays with sunscreen.

That doesn't mean you should lie unprotected in the sun indefinitely—just 15 minutes a day of basking in the sun will do. In some regions, the sun's rays aren't strong enough to produce the vitamin D you need for several months of the year (October to April), so you might want to consider a supplement as well. Ideally, get your D levels tested first to work out the dosage you need.

5. Seek out support

One of the most important messages I can give you is that you're not alone. Too often, women feel like they have to "power through" feelings of depression, never letting on that they're struggling. But reaching out to others is critical to get the help you need.

Whether you seek professional support in the form of therapy or ask your friends to help, reaching out can give you important new perspectives that you hadn't considered before. Talking to a trusted healthcare professional can also help you identify any hormonal imbalances that might be at play.



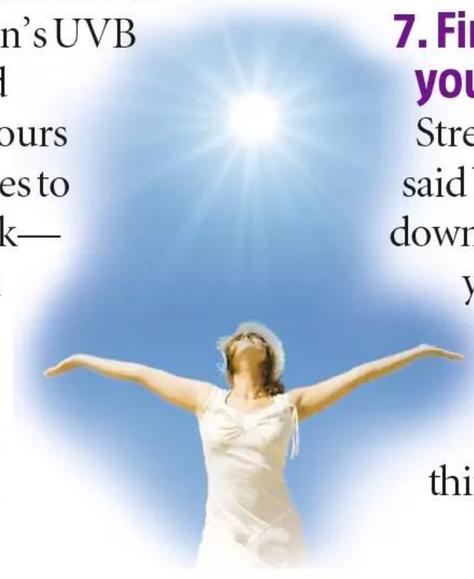
6. Spend time supporting others

Offering to lend a hand to others can be as much help in overcoming depression as reaching out for your own support. Research has shown that volunteering can improve mental health, particularly in people over 65 years old.[11]

Spending time in service to others will get you out of the house and out of your own head. You don't have to take on hours of volunteering every week to get the benefits. Something as simple as helping a friend in need can lift your mood as well.

7. Find stress relief practices you love

Stress can be constant, and as I said before, it can really bring you down if you aren't taking care of yourself. It's essential that you find ways to relieve stress—but these have to be things you love, not just more things to slog through.





Meditation, yoga and deep breathing are all relaxation techniques that can work wonders on your mood when you practice them regularly. But if these don't work for you, there are plenty of other options to consider.

Try expressing yourself creatively through art, music or dance, especially as part of a group (see *WDDTY* May 2025). Take a day trip to somewhere you love or have always wanted to go. Or find something that brings you joy and do it every day.

Live your best life

Depression is a serious problem, but it doesn't have to control you. Identifying what's behind your symptoms can give you the tools and strategies you need to balance your hormones and take control of your own life. And when you do, you'll finally feel like yourself again and live the joyful life you deserve.

Also see page 50 for the link between gluten and depression.

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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.

Beating the burn

UTIs spike during the summer months and can quickly disrupt your plans, whether you're at home or away. Keep these homeopathic remedies on hand to swiftly soothe symptoms, says homeopath David Needleman

As temperatures rise, so too does the risk of urinary tract infections (UTIs), those irritating infections that can make every bathroom trip feel like an ordeal. Typically caused by bacteria entering the urinary tract via the urethra (the tube that allows urine to pass outside the body), UTI symptoms include a persistent urge to urinate and burning pain when you go.

Women are especially susceptible because of their anatomy—the close proximity of the urethra to the anus and vagina and the short distance from the urethral opening to the bladder—but men can get UTIs too.

In the summer months, factors such as sweating, dehydration, and changes in lifestyle and hygiene habits can make UTIs more likely. And the warmer temperatures mean it's easier for bacteria to grow.

But you can stop UTIs in their tracks with the right homeopathic remedies. Here are nine I recommend. Check which symptoms match yours to find the most suitable remedy for you. Just remember to see a doctor if your symptoms don't improve after a few days or get worse.

Cantharis

This is the most commonly prescribed remedy for UTIs, and you'll find it in most of the homeopathic kits available from homeopathic pharmacies (see page 65 for pharmacies and homeopaths).

The main symptoms that indicate this remedy are a frequent urge or desire to urinate and sensations of burning, scalding or cutting. The symptoms are generally worse at the end of urination.

Berberis Vulgaris

Not to be confused with Berberis Aquifolia, which is often used for puberty-related acne and gallbladder support, Berberis Vulgaris is an ideal remedy for UTIs with burning pain accompanied by thick mucus.

Hydrating juice drink for UTIs

Hydration is vital when it comes to treating (and preventing) UTIs. It leads to more frequent urination, which helps to flush infection-causing bacteria out of the urinary tract. It also dilutes the urine, helping to prevent bacterial proliferation.

You can drink plain water—alkalized water is a good option—or try this drink I often recommend to my patients. It contains cranberry juice, a proven UTI preventive.[1] Combine the following ingredients:

1 part cranberry juice

1 part apple juice

2 parts water

Drink as much as you like throughout the day. You can also add a few drops of Berberis Vulgaris or Uva Ursi mother tinctures (see page 39 for suggested dosage) to the drink.

REFERENCE

1 Cochrane Database Syst Rev, 2023; 4(4): CD001321

The patient often feels worse when moving and standing and may experience burning pain even when not urinating. There can be pains in the thighs, hips and groin when urinating. This remedy is also suitable if you have a frequent urge to urinate but no pain.

Staphisagria

Choose this remedy if this is your symptom picture: Ineffectual urging to urinate, frequent urination and burning pain even when not urinating. There may also be pain at the end of urination.

It's the best remedy for "honeymoon cystitis," a UTI triggered by sexual intercourse. Symptoms may feel better with heat and after you've eaten breakfast.

Nitric Acid

If you need Nit Ac, you will surely know it as there are a number of unique indications. The urine can be scalding or very cold, and even when it's cold there may be burning or stinging sensations.

The defining symptom is dark, scanty, offensive-smelling urine (it often smells worse in the evening or at night). There can also be blood in the urine, and if there is, it's always worth getting a sample checked by your practitioner.

Lycopodium

Lycopodium is the right remedy if you experience back pain before urinating along with excessive urination at night. These symptoms tend to feel worse with heat and motion.

You may also feel worse on the right side and/or between 4 and 8 p.m. You might notice a heavy red sediment in the urine, too.

Apis Mel

Go for Apis Mel if you're suffering from burning and soreness when urinating along with frequent and involuntary urination. Stinging may also occur—usually it's the last drops that burn and smart. There may be casts in the urine (tube-shaped particles found when it's examined under a microscope).

The urine may be scanty and deeply colored. Symptoms may feel worse with heat, touch or pressure and in open air.

Uva Ursi

Use Uva Ursi if you're experiencing a frequent urge to urinate along with



involuntary urination and severe bladder spasms and burning pains. There may be blood, clots or mucus in the urine, and it can also appear green.

Kreosotum

This remedy is indicated for offensive-smelling urine combined with intense itching of the vulva and vagina. There is also an urgent need to urinate.

Symptoms are worse during urination and with warmth and motion. An unusual symptom that calls for this remedy is when the patient feels they can urinate only when lying down.

Pareira Brava

Use this remedy if you have black, bloody, thick mucus with a frequent urge to urinate and pain down the thighs. There may also be dribbling after urination and itching along the urethra and the thighs.

Suggested dosages

For all the remedies mentioned, I recommend a 30C potency, one dose every hour for four hours followed by one three times a day until the symptoms are gone.

Berberis Vulgaris and Uva Ursi can also be used as homeopathic mother tinctures, in which case the dose would be 5 drops in water three or four times a day—again, until symptoms are resolved.



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.

A tale of two remedies

Vaccines are considered the standard for preventing disease, but evidence has long supported the use of homeopathy for this purpose—and its superior safety profile. Cate Montana reports

In 2006, in Kerala, India, a group of doctors distributed a homeopathic preventive remedy for the mosquito-borne viral disease chikungunya to 1,061 people. Only 17 percent of those who took the homeopathic prophylaxis contracted the disease (with usually milder symptoms), while over 73 percent of unprotected people contracted it, resulting in an effectiveness of 82.19 percent. There were no reported side effects from the homeopathic treatment.[1]

On the other hand, on May 15, 2025, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended pausing the use of Ixchiq, the chikungunya vaccine, in people over age 60 years. The recommendation was due to serious adverse events, including neurologic issues, cardiac events and two deaths in individuals who received it.

Homeopathy has been around since the 18th century, when German doctor Samuel Hahnemann, frustrated by the toxic medical practices of his day, set out to investigate a strange phenomenon that ancient physicians like Hippocrates and Paracelsus had also noticed and written about: "similia similibus curantur," or "like cures like." In other words, a remedy created from a particular plant (or other substance) that causes certain symptoms can also stimulate the body to heal similar symptoms in someone who is ill.

For example, a homeopathic preparation of poison ivy, Rhus Toxicodendron, which causes inflammation and a rash, can be used as an anti-inflammatory to treat arthritis and various skin conditions. A homeopathic preparation of coffee known as Coffea Cruda calms the racing mind and "jitters" in people who have consumed too much caffeine from drinking coffee or black tea. (Speaking from experience, this author can testify that it works.)

Hahnemann stumbled across this effect after he ingested the cure for malaria (quinine) and experienced the same effects that malaria itself produced. Curious, he went on to laboriously research the phenomenon, eventually creating an entire medical system based on the Law of Similars.

Not only did he create at least 90 effective remedies for disease conditions ranging from skin lesions to scarlet fever but he also developed homeopathic prophylaxes—remedies that could be used to prevent disease from occurring in the first place.

Attacks on Hahnemann's research forced him to leave Germany in 1835. But despite ongoing onslaughts from the allopathic medical community since then, the results of Hahnemann's discovery have stood the test of time.

This includes his development of effective remedies for preventing disease—an issue of considerable importance and one still neglected by conventional medicine in our modern era. The following are a few examples of the effectiveness of homeopathic prophylaxis, also known as homeoprophylaxis (HP)—essentially homeopathic vaccination.

Homeoprophylaxis

One of the first modern recorded uses of homeopathic remedies for disease prevention was during the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918. The CDC archives estimate about 500 million people—one-third of the world's population at the time—got sick with an H1N1 virus. The number of deaths worldwide was estimated at 50 million.

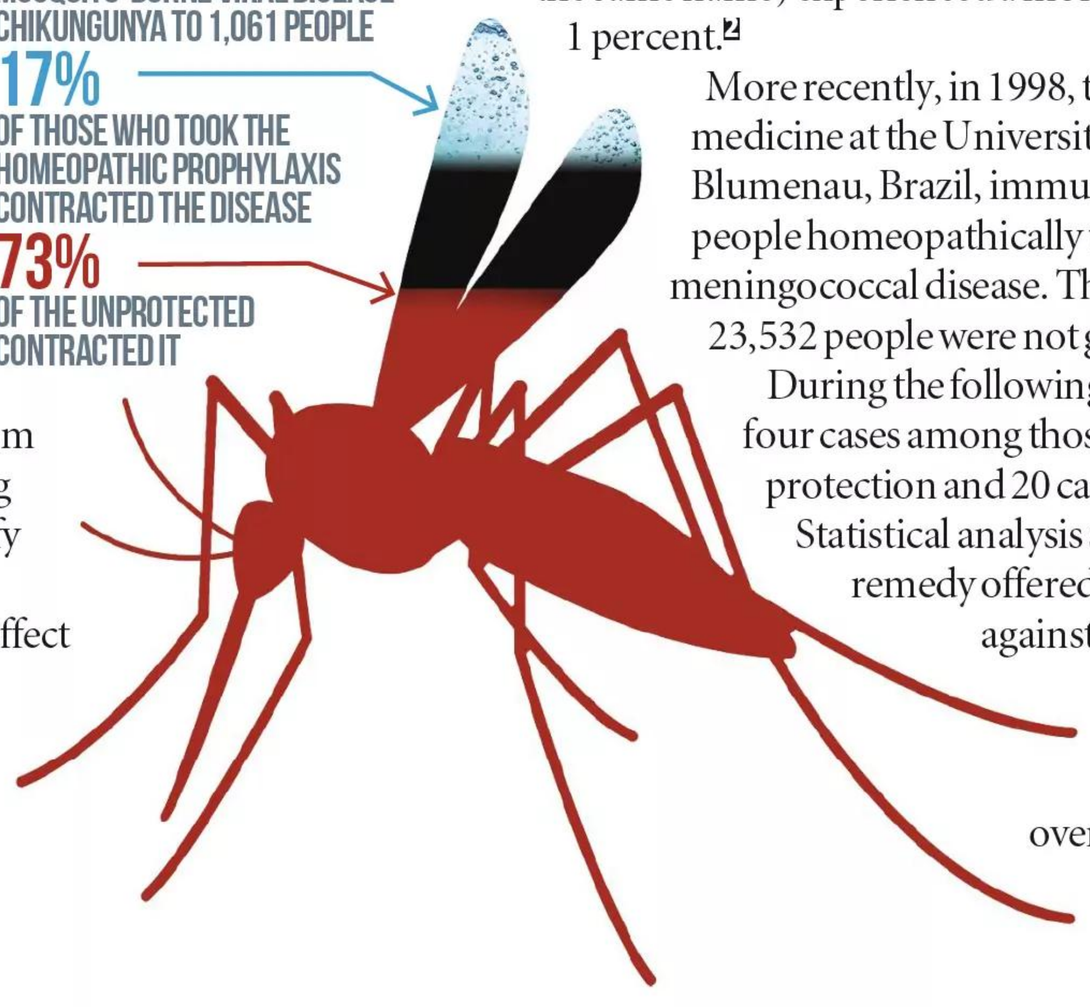
In comparison to allopathic physicians, who lost approximately 30 percent of their patients, records indicate that homeopaths using symptom-specific remedies including Gelsemium Sempervirens (made from the twining vine of the same name) experienced a mortality rate of just over 1 percent.[2]

More recently, in 1998, two professors of medicine at the University Foundation in Blumenau, Brazil, immunized 65,826 young people homeopathically to protect against meningococcal disease. The control group of 23,532 people were not given the remedy. During the following year, there were four cases among those with homeopathic protection and 20 cases in those without. Statistical analysis showed that the HP remedy offered 95 percent protection against meningococcal disease in the first six months and 91 percent protection over the year.[3]

IN 2006, A GROUP OF DOCTORS DISTRIBUTED A HOMEOPATHIC PREVENTIVE REMEDY FOR THE MOSQUITO-BORNE VIRAL DISEASE CHIKUNGUNYA TO 1,061 PEOPLE

17% OF THOSE WHO TOOK THE HOMEOPATHIC PROPHYLAXIS CONTRACTED THE DISEASE

73% OF THE UNPROTECTED CONTRACTED IT



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In late 2007, during an annual epidemic of leptospirosis (a bacterial blood infection), the Cuban government distributed a homeopathic nosode (a remedy made from the disease itself) to 2.3 million people at high risk of infection. The remaining population of 8.8 million was left untreated.

Incidence of the disease dropped 84 percent in treated areas within weeks, while the epidemic increased 22 percent in untreated provinces. The protective effect continued into 2008.[4]

In 2008, facing an outbreak of dengue fever, a county in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, carried out a "homeopathy campaign against dengue." A prophylactic homeopathic was given to 156,000 asymptomatic patients, and 129 doses of the Genus Epidemicus (GE) were administered to symptomatic patients at outpatient clinics.

A GE is a homeopathic remedy (or set of remedies) that numerous licensed homeopathic doctors have identified and agreed on as specific and appropriate for treating common symptoms of a particular epidemic, such as respiratory difficulties, barking cough, chills, fever, etc.

In three months, cases of dengue fever dropped 93 percent in comparison to the same period in 2007. But the rest of the untreated state experienced a 128 percent increase in cases.[5]

Vaccines vs homeoprophylaxis

The longstanding animosity between the two disciplines is not without merit; they stem from different views of the body, disease and the importance of root causes. But right from the beginning, there were some similarities between the allopathic and homeopathic approaches to disease prevention.

In 1796, Edward Jenner, an English surgeon, conducted the first successful vaccination of an eight-year-old boy for smallpox. Noticing that milkmaids, who were frequently afflicted with cowpox, seemed immune to the deadly smallpox ravaging 18th-century populations, he took matter from a cowpox lesion and introduced it under the skin of the boy, James Phipps, who had yet to contract either disease. Phipps was "slightly ill" over the course of the next nine days but recovered fully.

Hahnemann's first preventive use of a homeopathic remedy occurred just three years later during an outbreak of scarlet fever in Germany. He successfully circumvented a full-blown epidemic with widespread distribution of his homeopathic remedy Belladonna, derived from a perennial plant in the nightshade family.[6]

In a way, both approaches followed the Law of Similars. Cowpox had symptoms similar to those of smallpox, and the plant belladonna can stimulate red rashes and fever, the primary symptoms of scarlet fever. The difference was that Jenner used a tiny bit of the dangerous substance itself, while Hahnemann diluted belladonna so many times that he was simply using its "energy."

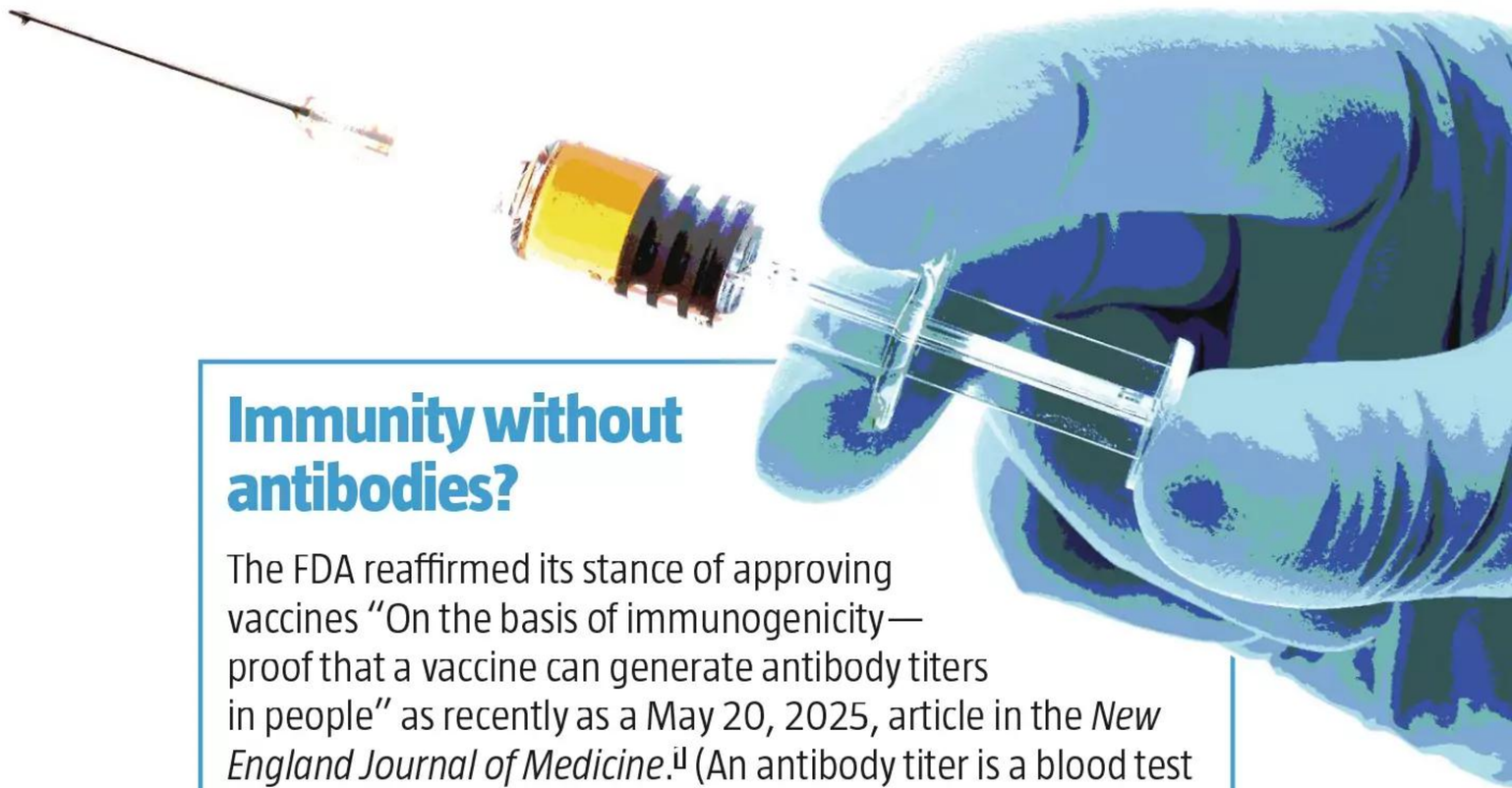
The delivery method was also very different. Jenner basically injected pus from a cowpox pustule under the skin, and Hahnemann gave an oral plant-based remedy.

Furthermore, people did not become "slightly ill" for nine days with scarlet-fever-type symptoms following preventive doses of Belladonna, as they had with the smallpox vaccine. Nor did they suffer any other serious side effects, like the ones that Jenner's smallpox vaccine had caused.

"The huge difference between a pharmaceutical vaccine and a homeoprophylactic is, of course, potentization and the lack of side effects of homeopathic remedies," says Isaac Golden, PhD(MA), DHom, ND.

Homeopathic remedies are prepared by placing a physical substance, such as belladonna, in a water and alcohol solution and letting it soak. The substance is mashed, then strained out, leaving a tinctured solution containing only the chemical properties of the original plant, animal or mineral substance.

IN THREE MONTHS, CASES OF DENGUE FEVER DROPPED 93 PERCENT IN HOMEOPATHICALLY TREATED AREAS. BUT THE REST OF THE UNTREATED STATE EXPERIENCED A 128 PERCENT INCREASE IN CASES



Immunity without antibodies?

The FDA reaffirmed its stance of approving vaccines "On the basis of immunogenicity—proof that a vaccine can generate antibody titers in people" as recently as a May 20, 2025, article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.[1] (An antibody titer is a blood test that measures the number of antibodies in the blood against foreign pathogens.)

And yet studies show that some people with no antibodies to a disease are immune to that disease anyway and may rely on T cell protection.[2] As well, some people with antibodies get the diseases they've been vaccinated against.[3]

Many people who received repeated doses of a Covid vaccine, and in some cases also became infected with the virus, largely failed to make special antibody-producing cells.[4] One study from Germany reported that 85 percent of people exposed to confirmed infected Covid-19 contacts failed to develop antibodies.[5]

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This "mother tincture" is diluted over and over again while being subjected to intermittent "succussion" (prolonged agitation) to create the specific potency desired. Strangely, Hahnemann and subsequent researchers found that the more absent the molecules of the original substance being potentized, the greater the healing impact.

In contrast to HP, use of the actual bacterium or virus (either living or dead) as the foundation of a vaccine means that, like Jenner's first patient, people can get sick from the vaccine. Researchers have to dilute and weaken the substance and then add chemical additives and adjuvants to make the vaccine more effective. In addition, they have to deliver it at a slow enough pace to avoid causing illness.

Golden, an author and expert in HP who consults with governments worldwide, says the adjuvants cause the weakened material to be dribbled into the person's system over a period of months. "That builds up the antibodies," he says.

"Or at least that's the theory. And of course, the theory has turned into the belief that building up antibodies is the only way to protect a person."

The immune system

While antibodies are an important part of the body's defense, confusion about whether they're necessary to it (see box, page 43) brings up the question of just how immunity actually works. The allopathic model has given us "the immune system," a grouping of components comprised of white blood cells, lymphatic system, bone marrow, thymus gland, spleen, adenoids, tonsils and appendix.

"But that's so limiting," says homeopath and HP expert Cathy Lemmon from Dallas, Texas (healthyhealingarts.com). "Immunity is so much more. It's a full-body thing. Thinking you can call someone immune by simply saying they've got antibodies, that's so restrictive.

"Immunity is more about lessening susceptibility, strengthening the vital force, which is what works to keep homeostasis within us." (Homeostasis is a self-regulating state of healthy balance in an organism.)

A US immunologist, who asked not to be named, had some interesting things to say about the field of immunology in general. "Immunology didn't exist prior to Jenner's invention of the smallpox vaccine, which became the cornerstone of vaccinology," she says.

"Had immunology as a science come first, perhaps things would be different," she continues. "As it stands, immunology, for the most part, has really been the handmaiden of vaccinology."

This narrow view of the body's defensive mechanisms provides important context. The fact that homeopathic prophylaxes don't stimulate antibody production in the human body continues to be one of the traditional allopathic community's two major arguments against the use of homeopathic remedies and HP for disease prevention.

Even though studies show it isn't true, in the allopathic model of the immune system, no antibodies equals no protection, and that's that.

And yet, when we widen the view beyond the narrow lens of vaccinology and its singular reliance on antibody production, we realize there's more to immunity. Not only is it vital to lessen susceptibility to disease by strengthening the whole body but the body already has multiple other defenses in place.

Cytokines, T cells and neutrophil extracellular traps, which are networks of fibers that bind pathogens, are just a few of the many adaptive cellular responses that function as natural mechanisms to fight invaders.

WHEN WE WIDEN THE VIEW BEYOND THE NARROW LENS OF VACCINOLOGY AND ITS SINGULAR RELIANCE ON ANTIBODY PRODUCTION, WE REALIZE THERE'S MORE TO IMMUNITY

Homeopathic "vaccines" for travel

A half-century before the first isolation of the tubercle bacillus, tuberculosis vaccine nosodes (homeopathic dilutions of the bugs causing the illnesses in question, given orally) were commonly used as just-in-case measures against a wide variety of diseases. In 1974, more than 18,000 children were successfully protected against a meningitis epidemic with the nosode Menigococcinum 11C.[1]

These are some other examples of homeopathic remedies you can use to proactively protect yourself against illness while traveling.

Hepatitis
One Chelidonium Majus 30 taken eight days before departure; repeat the dose once every week of your stay.

Polio
One Lathyrus Sativus 30 taken seven days before departure.

Meningitis
If meningitis becomes epidemic while you're away, take one Belladonna 30 weekly.

Rabies
One Lyssin 30C taken three times over 24 hours.

Japanese or tick-borne encephalitis
Nosodes of both available. Take at 30C potencies. Consult a homeopath for directions.

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The liquid tape recorder

Many scientists reject the idea of homeopathy because it doesn't seem to conform to the natural laws of science. The only way such a medicine could work, so the argument goes, is if there's both a special quality to water and an ability of molecules to leave behind essential "information" as a "memory."

The late French biologist Jacques Benveniste carried out countless studies decisively demonstrating that cellular communication relies on electromagnetic wave signaling at low frequencies. Over thousands of experiments, he recorded the activity of a molecule on a computer and replayed the recording to a biological system sensitive to that molecule.

In every instance, the biological system was fooled into thinking it was interacting with the molecule itself and acted accordingly, initiating a biological chain reaction just as it would have in the presence of the actual molecule.[1]

In his studies, when water was exposed to a chemical, then diluted to the point that none of the original chemical molecules remained, the water sample could still be used in place of the chemical to trigger a reaction.

So vital may water be to the transmission of energy and information that Benveniste found molecular signals could not be transmitted in the body unless it was done through the medium of water,[2] and rigorous shaking (succussion) of the containers, as is done in homeopathy, may serve to speed up the process.

Somehow water appeared to "memorize" the unique signature frequencies of molecules.

How can this be? Two Italian physicists at the Milan National Institute of Nuclear Research, the late Giuliano Preparata and his colleague the late Emilio Del Giudice, demonstrated mathematically that, when they are closely packed together, atoms and molecules exhibit collective behaviors and form what they termed "coherent domains," much as a laser does.

Single wavelengths of water molecules appeared to become "informed" in the presence of other molecules—that is, they tended to polarize around any charged molecule—and then store and carry its frequency so it could be read at a distance.[3]



> High dilutions of something are not nothing. They are water structures which mimic the original molecules

This suggests that water acts like a tape recorder, retaining and carrying information whether the original molecule is still there or not.

In Japan, physicist Kunio Yasue of the Research Institute for Informatics and Science, Notre Dame Seishin University in Okayama, confirmed that water molecules can organize discordant energy into coherent photons—a process known as superradiance.[4]

This means water, as the natural medium of all cells, may be acting as the essential carrier of a molecule's signature frequency in all biological processes and that water molecules organize themselves into a pattern on which wave information can be imprinted. Water appears to not only send the signal but also amplify it.

More recently a group of Italian scientists, including Claudio Cardella of the Sapienza University of Rome and Laura de Magistris of the Second University of Naples, carried out three years of research in which they confirmed Preparata's and Del Giudice's findings that certain electronic resonance signals can create permanent changes in the physicochemical properties of water.[5]

Benveniste's radical ideas were also vindicated by the work of the late French scientist and Nobel laureate Luc Montagnier, whose experiments demonstrated that some bacterial and viral DNA sequences can induce low-frequency electromagnetic waves at high aqueous dilutions.[6]

Montagnier's experiments suggested water can retain and carry information from various materials it's exposed to, whether molecules from the original material are still present in the water or not. In fact, he discovered that water could pick up electromagnetic information from materials without ever even touching them.

In one dramatic experiment, Montagnier showed that a virtually identical copy of a DNA fragment in one test tube could be "teleported" via electromagnetic signals to a second test tube containing nothing but pure water.[7] As he concluded, "High dilutions of something are not nothing. They are water structures which mimic the original molecules."

Lynne McTaggart

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Answers to a mystery

The second major allopathic argument against HP and homeopathy in general is the absence of any physical material in any homeopathic remedy, including GE remedies and nosodes. There's no teeny-tiny piece of poison ivy in the Rhus Tox remedy. No microscopic fragment of the Covid virus in the Novus-CV nosode pellets. There aren't even any molecules of the original substance in the remedies with the highest potencies. So how does homeopathy work?

This question has plagued homeopathy researchers and physicians for 200 years. It's not good enough that something works. We have to know *why* it works to believe it.

In recent decades, the proposed answer has been that the energetic "signature" or electromagnetic frequency of the potentized substance somehow imprints the water/alcohol solution with information. That data is then transferred to the patient via the remedy pellets.

As the editors of this magazine have pointed out in the past, this theory is substantiated by the work of Jacques Benveniste, who demonstrated that water has a memory—much like a tape recorder (see page 46). Benveniste's work was followed up by that of Italian physicists and Luc Montagnier, a French virologist who won the Nobel Prize for co-discovering the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Safety factors

Perhaps the most important distinctions between homeopathic and allopathic vaccines are safety and effectiveness. Prescription drugs are the third leading cause of death in the US and Europe[7]—and their victims more than doubled from 2014 to 2024, from 123,927 deaths to over 250,000 in the US alone.[8]

Only heart disease and cancer are bigger killers. Half of those who died took the drugs properly; the other half died due to prescription errors.[7]

In comparison, a clinical review of all adverse effects ever publicly reported against homeopathic remedies amounts to 1,159 cases worldwide that were mostly calls to poison control centers seeking information about remedies accidentally ingested. The four deaths reported in the study have since been questioned and attributed to "clinical negligence" and not to the remedies themselves.[9]

According to those in the industry, there has never been a single homeopathic medicine recalled in the method's 200-year history. And unlike allopathic doctors who pay enormous sums of money for insurance coverage, insurance companies that cover homeopaths charge very low rates precisely because of the lack of side effects and patient issues in general. Doctor after doctor of homeopathy, including Golden and Lemmon, stress its precision of application, effectiveness and incredible safety.

Turning to vaccines, the comparison between the allopathic and homeopathic approaches is equally stark. On May 21, 2025, a US Senate hearing cited FDA and CDC data revealing that as of April 25, 2025, vaccine-related deaths worldwide during the last 35 years totaled 21,725 people. And adverse events numbered over 1.5 million cases.[10]

"I've studied the large interventions in millions and sometimes tens of millions of people," says Golden. "We can say with great confidence that HP has a very comparable level of protection to vaccines because the best vaccines out there are hardly reaching above 90 percent effectiveness.

"Now, I know they claim 99 percent protection for measles, but even the editor of the journal *Vaccines* himself said that's impossible.

"Homeopathy and HP can offer an option which is comparably effective, but without the risk of toxic damage. You can't get the disease from the HP, because there's no molecules of any antigen there.

"There's no aluminum, formaldehyde and all the other stuff they put in pharmaceutically made vaccines that cause so many problems," he points out. "Plus, it's a more natural delivery pathway, using the oral pathway rather than injection."

Homeopathic "vaccines" for Covid-19

In March 13, 2020, prior to the initial peak of Covid-19 cases in the US and UK, a volunteer group of 846 people self-administered the homeopathic nosode Novus-CV in various potencies. Of that group, 135 were known to have been directly exposed to verified Covid carriers. By the end of the follow-up period, not one person in the protected group had contracted Covid, and none reported any side effects.

The case conclusions stated, "These results suggest Novus-CV nosode offers the world a low-risk disease prevention method that is 100 percent effective in those with definite exposure that deserves consideration in public health programs."[1]

On March 30, 2020, and August 20, 2021, using the remedy Corona 2019 Graft of Nosode, 116 patients took one dose of two pellets every two weeks, which they continued for two months. Patients who were exposed to positively tested, symptomatic persons were directed to take the remedy once a day for three days and then resume the bi-weekly protocol.

No one in the study got Covid even though 53 participants were exposed to coworkers or family members who tested positive. They also experienced no side effects.[2]



See page 65 for homeopathy resources.

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Grains on the brain

Could gluten be fueling your depression? Psychiatrist Dr Jessica Hellings, mental health researcher Dr Deanna Kelly and psychiatric physician assistant Sharon Pugh examine the emerging evidence of the link between gluten sensitivity and depressive symptoms — and how a gluten-free diet could transform your mental health

Depression, also called major depressive disorder, is one of the most common mental illnesses in the world. It is estimated to affect some 5 percent of the world's population at any given time and ranks among the leading causes of disability.[1] It's also thought to be a factor in at least half of all suicides.[2]

While the potential causes of depression are broad and often complex, mounting evidence suggests that for some people, untreated celiac disease (CD)—an immune reaction to eating gluten—and gluten intolerance, also known as non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS), could be playing a major role in their depressive symptoms.

Here's a look at the key evidence connecting gluten and depression—and how to recognize whether it could be affecting you or someone you know.

Early evidence

The link between depressive symptoms and intestinal disease was first described in 1932 when Dr Thaysen, a Danish researcher, observed unusual levels of fatigue in people with "sprue" (now called CD), an inflammatory disease of the small intestine that prevents normal absorption of nutrients.

Two decades later, a researcher proposed that a gluten-free diet could improve mood in adults with CD.[3] And in 1956, another researcher observed that avoiding gluten appeared to improve behavior in children with CD and that adults with CD who did not eat a gluten-free diet developed headaches, insomnia and depression.[4]

In 1970, David Goldberg at the Institute of Psychiatry in London studied a sample of 80 people with diseases of the small intestine and found that over a third of them had mood disorders. While they did not have CD, they were diagnosed with other chronic issues: Crohn's disease, idiopathic steatorrhea (a condition of fat malabsorption) or a form of lactose intolerance.[5]

Although Goldberg did not attribute the mood symptoms directly to malabsorption, he noted that these people with intestinal diseases had stronger family histories of psychiatric illness as well. His findings strengthened the idea that there is a connection between the gut and the brain.

Another group of researchers studied CD-gluten antibodies in 60 people with mood disorders (depressive disorders and bipolar disorder) and compared them with 48 healthy controls. They found those with mood disorders had much higher levels of the antibodies than controls did.

Each unit increase in the antibodies corresponded to a 5 percent increase in the likelihood of having a mood disorder.[6] These results demonstrate a direct relationship between the antibody levels and mood disorders.

Delving deeper

Today, the connection between CD and depression is fairly well established. Several large analyses have shown that people with CD are more likely to have a history of depression than people in the general population.[7] Still, other studies have shown no difference in such prevalence.[8]

One study of over 2,000 people with CD showed 39 percent had suffered from depressive symptoms at some point, which means that more than one in three people with CD will have depression in their lifetime.[9] But is it actually the autoimmune condition itself that's causing the depression, or could it be the difficulty of living with a chronic illness?

A meta-analysis (pooled analysis of multiple studies) analyzing depression and anxiety in adults with CD showed that depression was more common and severe in adults with CD than in healthy adults. But it also found depression was as common and severe in CD as in other types of chronic physical illness.[10]

Other studies have shown the severity of gastrointestinal symptoms correlates with depression in CD,[11] suggesting people may feel more depressed due to experiencing more physical symptoms and discomfort. And some researchers have found that people with CD who had gastrointestinal and other physical symptoms scored worse on quality-of-life measures than those with silent or atypical symptoms.[12]

This underscores the idea that distress about gastrointestinal symptoms could be a cause of depression. The theory is also supported by studies showing that sticking to a strict gluten-free diet might reduce depressive symptoms in people with CD, possibly by relieving gastrointestinal symptoms.[13]

Likewise, in a few studies, poor adherence to a gluten-free diet in people with CD has been linked to an increase in depression.[14] Other studies, however, have suggested a strict gluten-free diet is actually a cause of depression in CD.[15]

One study showed little difference in quality of life between people who fully versus partially adhered to a gluten-free diet. But the risk of developing anxiety and depression increased the more people struggled to adhere to the diet.[16] The study authors noted that dietitians should address these issues, especially since depression may make following a gluten-free diet more challenging.

But there are theories suggesting a more direct physiological link between CD and depression. They suggest the gut immune response in people with CD results in inflammation in the brain and leads to symptoms of psychiatric illness.

What is gluten?

Gluten is a Latin word meaning "glue" that refers to the stickiness in wheat-based dough used to make bread and pasta.[1] It's a mix of several proteins found in certain grains, such as wheat, barley and rye.

There are many varieties and crossbreeds of wheat, known by different names, that also contain gluten. These include triticale (a cross between wheat and rye), durum, spelt, farro and semolina, and they developed partly due to wheat's ability to self-pollinate.[2]

Oats are naturally gluten-free, but cross-contamination with gluten-containing grains during processing can occur and trigger a gluten reaction in those with CD and NCGS.

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> More than one in three people with celiac disease will have depression in their lifetime

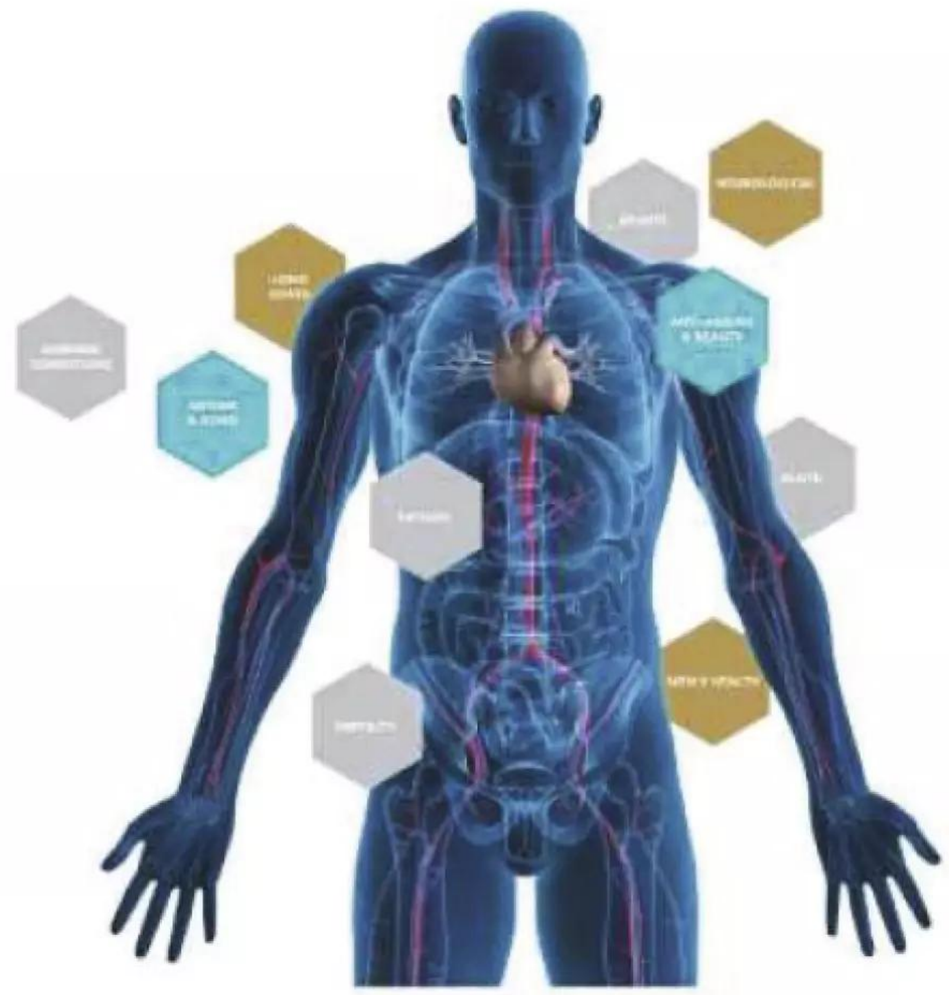
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A study looking at intestinal biopsies from patients in Sweden showed the risk of suicide was higher in patients with CD than in the general population. But it found suicide was also more common among those with intestinal inflammation. People with positive blood tests for CD but without intestinal inflammation in their biopsy results didn't have a higher suicide risk.[17]

Interestingly, when gluten was reintroduced in a study of over 200 people with CD, those who had been stricter about following a gluten-free diet experienced a more severe relapse in depressive symptoms.[18] Going back to gluten after strictly avoiding it may contribute to a more severe rebound inflammatory response.

Clues that gluten may be related to depressive symptoms

- Poor response to medications and other treatments despite adhering to treatment plans
- Gluten intolerance, CD or NCGS in family members
- Gastrointestinal symptoms including IBS, bloating, nervous stomach or stomach pains, diarrhea, vomiting, weight loss and/or constipation
- Autoimmune diseases (in the person or their close relatives), such as thyroid disease, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, lupus, ulcerative colitis and/or Crohn's disease
- Frequent joint pain
- Dermatitis herpetiformis, psoriasis and/or other skin manifestations

NCGS and depression

In addition to CD, depression has been linked to other gastrointestinal disorders including NCGS (see box, page 55), irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

While IBS and CD share many of the same symptoms, they are thought to have different causes, and correctly diagnosed IBS does not cause the sort of damage to the intestinal tract seen in people with CD. But some people with IBS may be sensitive to gluten, such as in NCGS, and in some cases this sensitivity may be associated with depressive symptoms.

> In people with IBS and markers for celiac disease, a gluten-free diet decreased their anxiety and depression scores after six weeks

In one study, researchers evaluated the effects of a gluten-free diet on people with IBS. The participants did not have CD but did have certain markers for CD. Results showed that the gluten-free diet decreased their anxiety and depression scores after six weeks as well as after 18 months.[19]

Another study of adults with IBS measured depression scores after switching to three separate diet plans—a placebo diet without gluten or whey, a diet with 16 g of gluten per day or a diet with 16 g of whey per day. Depression scores were higher on the gluten diet than on the placebo diet.[20]

In another study of people with IBS, a diet restricting FODMAPs was found to decrease depressive symptoms.[21] FODMAPS (fermentable oligo-, di- and monosaccharides and polyols) are carbohydrates found in wheat, garlic, onions, beans and several fruits that can be difficult to digest.

And in a study of people who had IBD without CD and whose symptoms were controlled on a gluten-free diet, eating gluten caused physical symptoms, including fatigue,[22] which is common in both gluten sensitivity and depression.

While these IBS studies may have included people with NCGS, there are also reports linking those with known NCGS to depression. Almost one in five people



with NCGS have depressive symptoms, according to one study.[23]

In a trial of people with NCGS who ate a gluten-free diet or a gluten-containing diet for one week, then switched, the researchers found that eating gluten increased depressive symptoms, but the gluten-free diet didn't.[24] Interestingly, one study that enrolled primarily women with fibromyalgia and NCGS found depressive symptoms dropped on a gluten-free diet.[25]

Another study comparing antibody levels in people with depression, people with IBS and healthy controls discovered that the depressed group had higher levels of antibodies to gluten.[26]

Others found these antibodies were gone after six months in over 90 percent of those with NCGS who fully complied with a gluten-free diet. Simultaneously, their gastrointestinal symptoms and depression improved.



Going gluten-free

Switching to a gluten-free diet requires some effort and is not a decision to be taken lightly. It's important to consider which foods you should eat to minimize excess sugar and fat intake while addressing potential diet-associated nutrient deficiencies. But here's a quick guide to what you can eat on a gluten-free diet.

A gluten-free diet includes foods that are naturally gluten-free and foods that are made gluten-free by manufacturing and purification. Foods that are naturally free of gluten include fresh fruit, vegetables, legumes, nuts, meat, fish/seafood, poultry and most dairy products.

Foods that would normally contain gluten, like bakery items, pasta and prepackaged foods, can also be eaten if they're prepared as gluten-free by using gluten-free ingredients like almond flour, buckwheat, rice, corn, quinoa, millet and amaranth.[1]

Pseudocereals or pseudograins are plants that produce seeds or fruits that function like grains but are not grasses like true grains. For example, quinoa (a gluten-free seed) functions as a cereal but is not a member of the grass family and is gluten-free.

Oats are generally gluten-free but may contain gluten, depending on their processing. So it's important to look for a "certified gluten-free" label on oats.

Non-wheat flours made from legumes such as chickpeas, peas and carob flour may also be used in gluten-free products. Though not a full list, the table on the right includes naturally gluten-free foods, common gluten-free cereals, pseudocereals and other non-grain foods that work well on this diet.[2]

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Naturally gluten-free foods	Gluten-free cereals	Gluten-free pseudocereals
Vegetables	Corn**	Buckwheat**
Fruits	Rice**	Quinoa**
Legumes: peanuts, peas, beans, lentils	Sorghum**	Amaranth
Soybeans***	Oats****	
Milk	Millet	
Plain meat	Teff	
Fish and seafood	Fonio	
Eggs		
Butter		
Cheese (most)		
Vegetable oils		
Nuts		
Tapioca		

**Available as substitutes for wheat flour[3]

***Soybeans in their natural form and soybean oil are gluten-free; however, soy sauce, unless labeled "gluten-free," contains gluten

****Often contaminated with gluten during processing; check the label



On the other hand, the antibodies disappeared in only 60 percent of those in the study with CD.[2] This difference was likely related to the immune differences between CD and NCGS.

How does gluten lead to depressive symptoms?

There are many psychological and biological ways in which gluten and depression may be related. Brain fog and fatigue may cause difficulties in managing the many stressors in life.

People with CD or NCGS may experience depressive symptoms related to having a chronic illness or chronic, painful intestinal and extra-intestinal symptoms. They may also be depressed as a psychological reaction to a strict diet affecting their social life and food enjoyment.

But what about biological mechanisms that could link gluten-related autoimmunity in the brain to depressive symptoms?

Biological mechanisms may be particularly relevant in NCGS. Many symptoms of depression, such as fatigue, poor concentration, sleep difficulties, appetite changes and brain fog, overlap with symptoms of CD and NCGS. What mechanisms might be underlying these symptoms, and could they be related both to malabsorption of essential nutrients and to an autoimmune reaction in the brain?

People with intestinal inflammation do not absorb vitamins and nutrients normally, and vitamin deficiencies may contribute to symptoms of depression.

Celiac disease vs non-celiac gluten sensitivity

CD and NCGS are both related to gluten consumption, but there are several differences between the two.

Celiac disease (CD)

CD is a lifelong autoimmune condition in which gluten consumed in wheat, rye or barley, by individuals who are genetically susceptible, affects the mucous membrane, also known as the mucosal lining (the moist soft-tissue lining of organs and cavities in the gastrointestinal, respiratory and reproductive systems) of the small intestine and may trigger gastrointestinal as well as other symptoms.

Not all people affected this way have symptoms; however, most people with CD continue to experience damage to their small intestines when they eat gluten, even if they don't have outwardly visible symptoms.

Risk factors for CD include the presence of specific gene variants, also called biomarkers (biological signs that can be measured and identified in a person) as well as a family history of CD or other autoimmune disorders.[1]

On biopsy of the duodenum (first part of the small intestine), CD is identified by a characteristic finding of atrophy (flattening) of the villi. These finger-like projections cover the lining of the intestines and increase the surface area, which helps to maximize absorption of nutrients from food.

Symptoms of CD may include gastrointestinal problems such as diarrhea, constipation, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, bloating, increased gas and/or lactose intolerance due to small-intestinal damage. Extra-intestinally (outside the gastrointestinal system), signs and symptoms can occur in every other system in the body.

About half of people who have CD do not have gastrointestinal symptoms. Instead they have other symptoms, or non-specific symptoms such as anemia, weight loss and vitamin deficiencies due to malabsorption of nutrients.[2]

Non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS)

Like CD, NCGS is associated with both gastrointestinal and extra-intestinal symptoms that worsen after consuming gluten and are relieved by switching to a gluten-free diet. But, unlike CD, NCGS is not believed to be an autoimmune disorder. Instead, it's thought to be a separate type of immune reaction, an "innate immune response."

Many NCGS patients have increases in lymphocytes and mast cells, which are types of immune cells in their gut, as well as inflammatory cytokines in their blood. While there is no confirmed test for NCGS, in just over half of those with the condition, the native antibodies to gluten are elevated, which suggests NCGS.

NCGS is much more common than CD. It's thought to affect some 13 percent of the population,[3] while the prevalence of CD is in the range of 1–2 percent.

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Also, supplementing B vitamins can significantly reduce depressed mood in people with CD on a gluten-free diet.[23]

Inflammation in the gut caused by gluten may also lead to lower absorption of dietary tryptophan, the essential amino acid that the body needs to make serotonin, one of the main neurotransmitters implicated in depression.[29] Interestingly, since the gut is where 90 percent of total serotonin production occurs, diseases of the gut may affect mood due to direct signaling between the gut and the brain.[30]

One study compared thyroid function tests as well as depression and anxiety rates in adults with CD to those of healthy controls with no family history of CD. It found the CD patients were more likely to have had major depressive disorder and/or panic disorder, both in their lifetimes and in the past six months.

And those with CD and anti-thyroid antibodies were especially likely to have had major depression and panic disorder. Subclinical thyroid autoimmune disease could be a big risk factor for these mental health conditions, the researchers concluded.[31]

Both depression and gluten sensitivity are linked to higher general inflammation in the body, which can also lead to stress and local inflammation in the brain.[32] Intestinal inflammation can result in leaky gut, in which small breaches in the lining of the intestine allow substances like bacterial toxins or inflammatory molecules into the bloodstream.

The general state of inflammation associated with gluten sensitivity can also make the blood-brain barrier lining the brain's blood vessels leaky, allowing some of these molecules and gluten antibodies to cross into the brain and contribute to impairments and damage.[33]

These bacterial fragments and inflammatory substances do not cause issues like major infections, but they can disrupt normal brain function and lead to psychiatric symptoms, including depression.

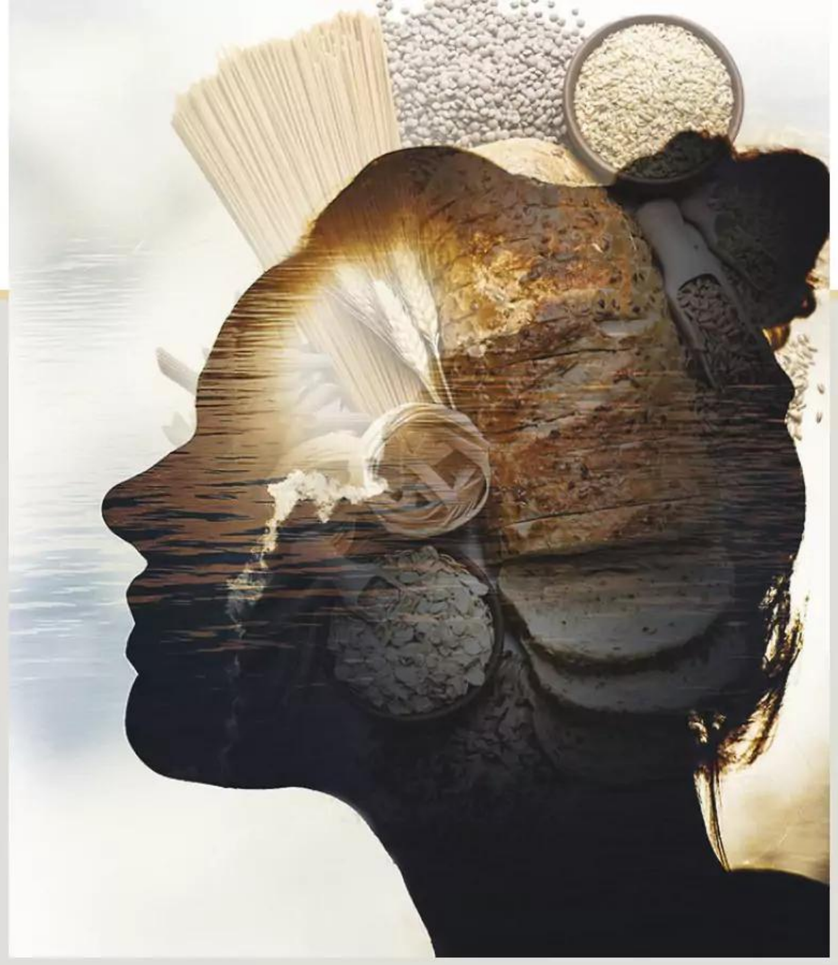
Grain and the brain

Evidence shows that foods containing gluten may be linked not just to depression but also to a host of psychiatric symptoms via an immune response—in up to one in 17 people. Few medical clinicians are aware of this although studies have documented the link for over 10 years now.

Even more surprising is the simplicity of the treatment program for those who need it: removing gluten from the diet can improve psychiatric and neurological symptoms, the research suggests.

We're not preaching that there's a cure-all or implying that diet should replace medications a person may be taking. Not everyone with psychiatric and neurological issues is gluten sensitive, and there are often many contributors to mental and physical illnesses.

But for those who are, or those with undiagnosed CD, a gluten-free diet may bring huge benefits. Still, continue to work with your provider and do not stop any medications before discussing it with them.



Going gluten-free: A case study

A 22-year-old woman consulted a psychiatrist for severe depressive symptoms. She had experienced alternating diarrhea and constipation in her first year of life, leading to hospitalization and a diagnosis of subocclusive syndrome (a disorder of gut motility). However, her intestinal symptoms had resolved after age two and did not return.

During adolescence, she had developed severe depression, anxiety and insomnia and had withdrawn significantly from her social life.

By age 22 her depressive symptoms were severely impacting her quality of life. She began the tricyclic antidepressant clomipramine but experienced only transient improvement during the summer months. Additionally, her symptoms improved slightly during her first pregnancy but then returned, and treatment with a different tricyclic medication, imipramine, was ineffective.

She also tried fluoxetine and paroxetine, both selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), for long periods but continued to experience recurrent depressive episodes.

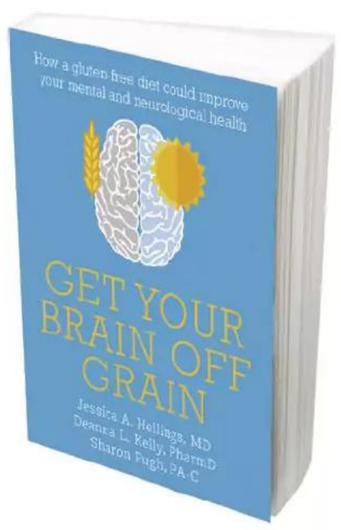
After her three-year-old child was diagnosed with CD, blood tests and an intestinal biopsy were completed on the woman and she too was diagnosed with CD.

She started a gluten-free diet and experienced rapid improvement in depressive symptoms within three months. She was able to stop taking all psychiatric medication and remained psychiatrically stable nearly two years later.

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Adapted from *Get Your Brain Off Grain: How a Gluten-Free Diet Could Improve Your Mental and Neurological Health* (Hammersmith Health Books, 2025) by Jessica Hellings, Deanna Kelly and Sharon Pugh



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It's never "just" cancer

To treat cancer effectively, you need to understand that it's a disease affecting the whole body, says Dr Leigh Erin Connealy. Here are her top holistic approaches to beating cancer and living a disease-free life

When I lecture about holistic approaches to cancer, I often use the iceberg analogy. You have likely seen an image of a small, snow-capped point rising above arctic water with a massive frozen mass looming below.

This is where the saying "It's just the tip of the iceberg" comes from. The same is true for cancer. It's not always about the lump or bump but what lies beneath.

Patients who come to see us at the Cancer Center for Healing are sometimes surprised by the multiple aspects of health and history we consider before beginning treatment. Our holistic approach leaves no stone unturned.

We go beyond the regular physical examination and routine diagnostics to uncover contributing factors to poor health, such as unresolved conflicts and past trauma, chronic stress and anxiety, a disconnect from regular self-care practices, sleep issues and general bodily terrain. As we peel back the layers, the truth is revealed: It's never just cancer.

Cancer is more than a diagnosis or a label. It's a cry for help from your body, a need for healing on a deeper level.

Cancer isn't simply a tumor or an afflicted organ. It's a systemic, total-body disease. As such, effective treatment must encompass various medicinal disciplines—both conventional and integrative—and lifestyle approaches that focus on restoring balance and engendering healing. Furthermore, you must address the triggers that set off disease in the first place.

A healthy body thrives in a state of homeostasis (balance), and getting the body realigned and back to equilibrium should be the goal if you wish to heal from cancer or other chronic diseases. Here are four key ways you can start making immediate changes to support your healing journey.

1. Focus on diet and nutrition

Proper nutrition is the foundation for health and healing. Sadly, modern lifestyles tend to be filled with suboptimal foods, such as convenience foods, as the fuel of choice for many. If you want to improve your health, start in the kitchen.

Most of my patients do well on a modified ketogenic diet, a nutritional plan based on these core components:

- Organic, grass-fed, pasture-raised, lean protein sources
- Healthy fats and oils
- Plenty of non-starchy, colorful vegetables
- Low-glycemic fruits
- Nuts and seeds

If possible, choose organic foods. They pack the most nutrient-dense, pesticide-free punch.

Avoid nutritionally void and carbohydrate-laden items such as baked goods, processed foods, desserts, sugary drinks and fast food. Select your foods as our ancestors did: If you can grow it, pick it or hunt it, go for it.

You should also steer clear of inflammatory foods like these:

- Toxic heat-treated seed oils (canola, corn, cottonseed, soybean, grapeseed, sunflower, rice bran and safflower)
- Processed meats (salami, bacon, hot dogs, deli meats)
- Refined carbohydrates (bread, pasta)
- Trans fats (partially hydrogenated fats found in baked goods, non-dairy creamers and fast food)

Even if you eat a well-rounded diet full of healthful foods, there may still be gaps in your nutrition. Over the years, our soil has become depleted, pesticides and toxins are used now more than ever, and water supplies carry potential contaminants as well.

This is where a solid nutritional supplement program can help. Working with a knowledgeable practitioner well versed in supplements and nutrition is essential to create a tailored plan that considers your personal vitamin, mineral and nutrient needs. To find one near you, visit the website of the American College for Advancement in Medicine (acam.org) or the Institute for Functional Medicine (ifm.org).

2. Address stress

I mentioned earlier that people are often surprised by how much we delve into a person's mental health, past traumas and unresolved conflicts. That's because every single patient I have encountered with cancer has a significant amount of stress and imbalance in their lives.

Whether it's divorce, financial struggles, conflicts with family or any other major stressor, it takes a toll on the body. Researchers agree that chronic stress not only is toxic but also contributes to unhealthy coping mechanisms and poor lifestyle habits. Stress creates a hospitable environment for malignant cells to grow and thrive.

If you're experiencing undue stress in your life, finding ways to ease your mental load is essential. Several practitioner-guided therapies and tools are available to de-stress at home. The following are some of my favorites.

EVOX therapy

EVOX therapy is a godsend for patients who need to reduce stress and heal

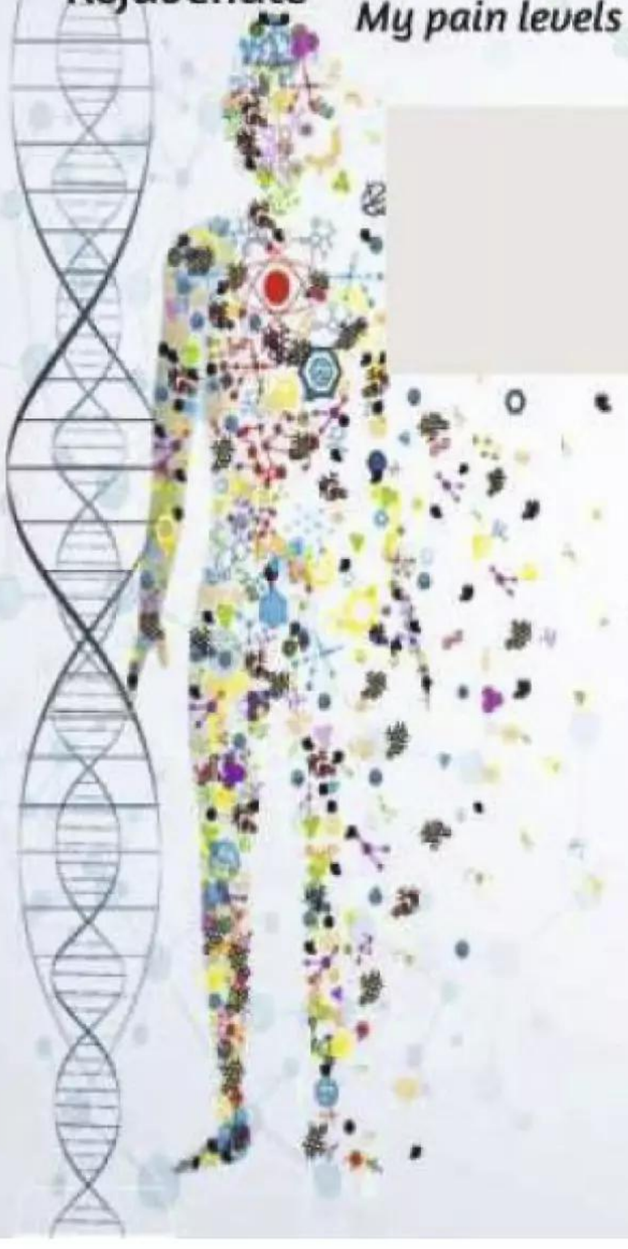


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emotional trauma. It works by using "perception reframing."

When a person speaks, the energy in their voice represents how they feel about specific topics. EVOX records voice energy, plots it on a Perception Index graph, and determines which frequency signatures would best reduce a patient's unique stressors.

These signatures are transferred to a hand cradle and transmitted back to the patient as they listen to relaxing music and concentrate on the topic at hand. EVOX therapy is a remarkable tool that "remaps the brain" and helps eliminate stress and anxiety. As one of the many biofeedback tools we use, it's so effective that we recommend it to every new patient who comes to the Center.

Meditation / deep breathing

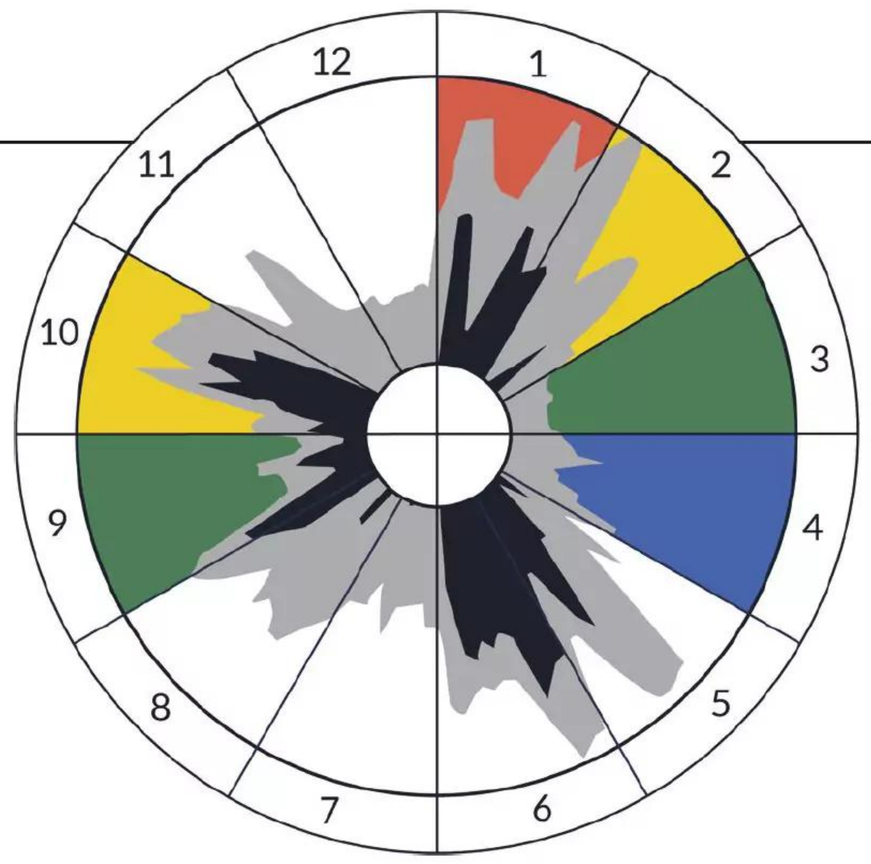
Instead of drawing deep, mindful breaths from the diaphragm, most people automatically take rapid, shallow breaths from the chest, to the detriment of their health. Deep, mindful breathing floods the body with healing oxygen, infusing cells with this life-giving element and reducing stress and anxiety.

Coupling deep breathing with meditation, which is sometimes called mindfulness meditation (MM), has profound effects on health and healing. In a groundbreaking study of Taiwanese patients with several different cancer types and disease stages, researchers found that those who practiced just a handful of MM sessions each month experienced markedly improved quality of life in several key areas.[1]

Furthermore, the benefits were still statistically significant three months after the participants were no longer practicing MM.

A handful of key areas they examined included pain levels, sleep quality, fatigue, need for medications, mobility, concentration, self-esteem, body image, sexual health, personal relationships, diet and overall health. This study and a vast body of growing scientific evidence suggest a powerful link between MM and well-being.

If you're new to meditation or deep breathing, watch some YouTube videos or download one of the many apps that can walk you through how to practice them correctly.



EVOX in living color

EVOX practitioners use a Perception Index Map to plot voice energies in 12 perception zones (such as self-critical vs self-love), and this visual representation makes it easy to see imbalances. The colors indicate the extent of imbalance in each zone.

Yoga, tai chi and qigong

Three excellent relaxation and stress reduction practices rooted in ancient healing are yoga, tai chi and qigong. All three involve calming the mind, focusing on breath work and performing specific bodily movements to engender health.

Regardless of their health status, I always encourage my patients to incorporate exercise and movement into their daily lives. Using the additional spiritual-physical connection of yoga, tai chi and qigong provides additional layers of benefits. Some examples are improved sleep, better balance, a more effective immune system, lower cortisol levels and lower anxiety.

Thousands of books have been written on the benefits and proper techniques for practicing these disciplines. You can also take classes at local gyms or studios, watch YouTube videos, or download apps to practice them in the comfort of your own home.

Additional de-stressing techniques

I won't delve too deeply into the following strategies since most of them are self-explanatory. Incorporate as many as possible into your days and evenings, and note how much less stress you feel after practicing them regularly.

- Nightly hot bath with epsom salts
- Aromatherapy
- Journaling
- Massage
- Daily laughter
- Positive affirmations
- Social time

3. Get serious about sleep

If you think missing out on the recommended seven to eight hours of sleep each night isn't a big deal, you may want to reset your mindset about sleep hygiene. Regular, good-quality shuteye boasts several benefits, from cardiovascular and brain health to immune function and weight management. Research also suggests that missing out on sleep increases your risk of developing cancer.

In 2023, researchers looked at nearly 15,000 people over age 45 in the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study. They examined the link between cancer and nighttime sleep duration, napping, and total sleep time.

The data showed that those who slept fewer than six hours per night had a 41 percent higher cancer risk than their peers who slept six to eight hours. Those who did not report napping for an hour or more each day had a 60 percent higher risk of developing cancer. And total sleep of less than seven hours a day resulted in a 69 percent higher cancer risk.[2]

It's clear that if you want to ward off cancer, you need to prioritize sleep. This means creating a regular sleep schedule with set wind-down activities and a consistent bedtime and wake time.

Start by taking these steps every night:

- Take a hot bath and meditate.
- Read a book instead of looking at blue-light-emitting devices such as your phone or the TV.
- Make your bedroom cool, dark and free of disturbances.

If you need help falling asleep, try a non-habit-forming natural sleep aid like the amino acid GABA or the sleep hormone melatonin, although melatonin is only available via prescription in the UK. Use as directed.

4. Cleanse your body, mind and home

Starting with a clean slate is always a good idea, and ridding your mind, body and home of toxins is necessary. Whether it's the toxic thoughts clogging our minds, the chemicals we ingest and lather on our bodies, or the environmental pollutants that sneak into our homes in the form of air pollution, paint fumes, or upholstery

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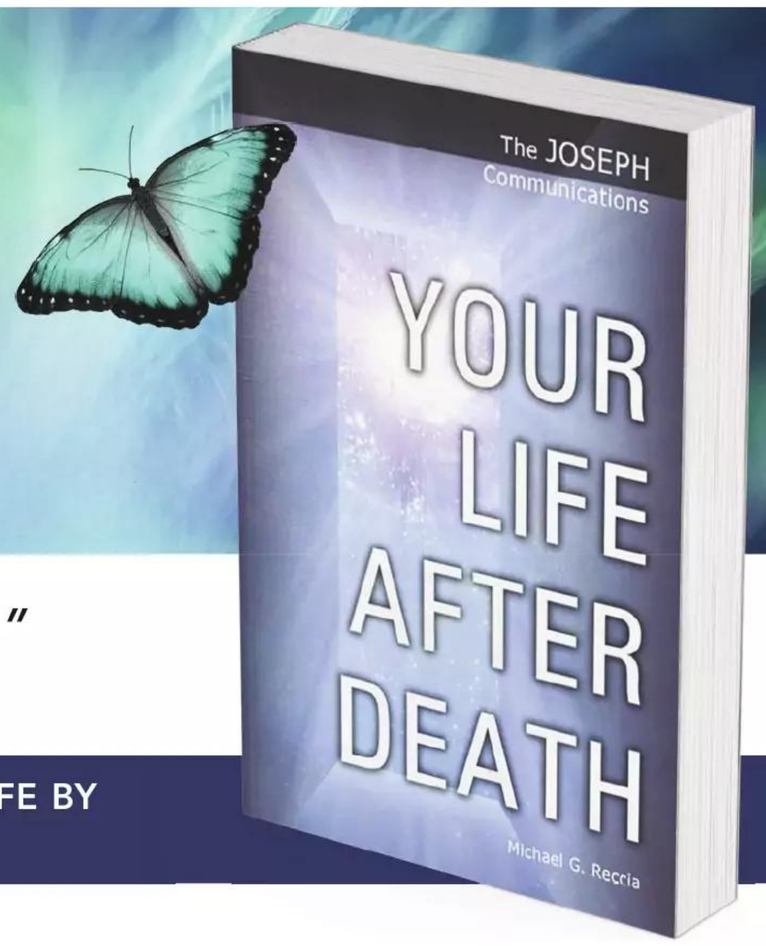
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and carpet off-gassing, most people need a solid cleanse to keep cancer at bay or prepare their bodies for healing.

Let's look at a few quick steps we can take to cleanse all areas of our lives.

Body

Almost all my patients undergo a 21-day cleanse to start their treatment regimens. Flushing out toxins and restoring homeostasis to the body is essential.

We use the Purification Process from Standard Process, which must be ordered through a physician's office, but other reputable cleansing systems exist. That said, I urge you to work with a practitioner who is well versed in cleansing so that you'll have the best chance of success and to ensure you follow protocols correctly.

Mind

Preparing yourself mentally to tackle a health battle is more important than many realize. I always tell patients to create their cancer care team.

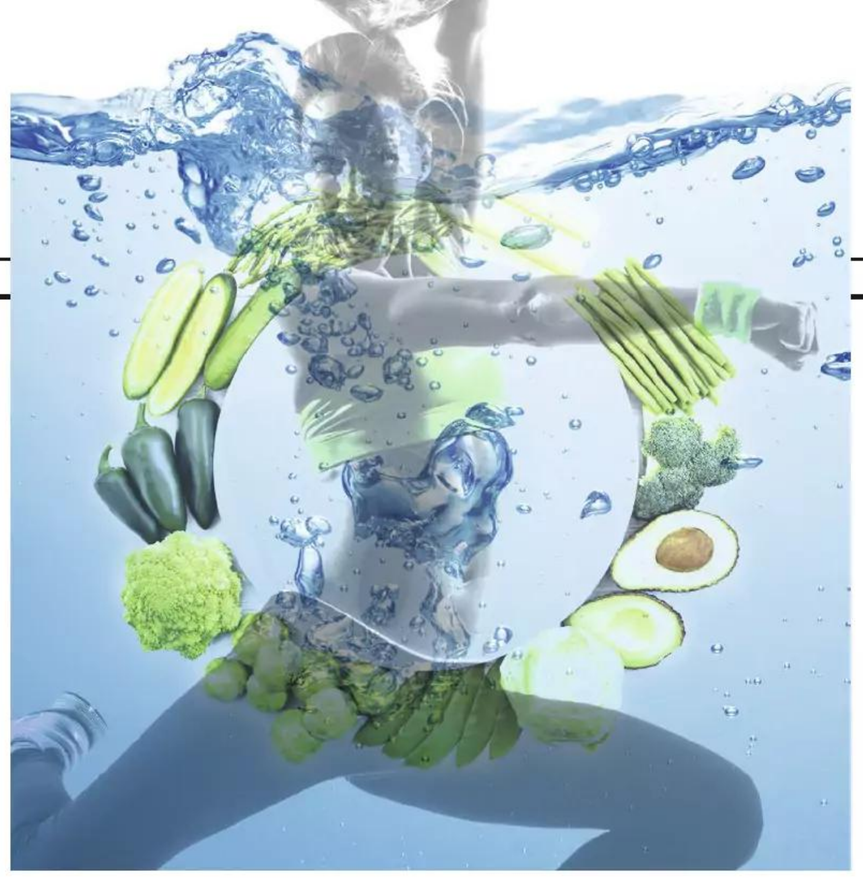
This group usually includes spiritual or religious advisors who can help guide them and lend a listening ear; dear friends and family members who can offer emotional support and help with medical and other tasks; and a solid integrative team specializing in the mind-body connection to healing.

Home

The number of toxins lurking around our homes and in our cleaning and personal products is alarming. Start reading labels closely and visit sites like the Environmental Working Group (ewg.org) to search their databases for safe-to-use household products, makeup and personal care items (also check out the wealth of information on this topic on wddty.com).

Clean up your indoor air by purchasing HEPA filters or propolis diffusers such as Propolair. These diffusers release bee propolis into the air to destroy mold, bacteria, air pollutants and more (see page 65 for some suppliers). You can also buy plants known for their air-scrubbing qualities, such as peace lilies, English ivy, aloe vera, philodendrons, snake plants, spider plants and bamboo.[3]

Finally, opt for hardwood flooring over carpet and search the internet for non-toxic mattresses and upholstery options (see *WDDTY* January 2022).



Keep your body alkaline

Many people don't realize how important it is to keep the body in an alkaline state. Cancer thrives in an acidic environment, so doing everything possible to help the body maintain its natural alkalinity can help promote health and treat disease.

A simple saliva test using a pH strip (available online from several retailers) can measure your body's daily pH levels and help keep you in the ideal range. The pH scale, an abbreviation for "power of hydrogen," is simple. It runs from 0 to 14, and 7 is neutral. Numbers lower than 7 indicate an acidic state, while numbers above 7.8 or 8.0 suggest an overly alkaline state.

The goal is to keep levels slightly alkaline, right around 7.43. One way to do this is to increase your intake of alkalizing foods, such as most fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds and legumes. Avoid or limit acidifying foods and beverages like processed foods, sodas and alcohol. And consider adding vitamins and minerals that help balance pH, such as calcium, magnesium and potassium, to your regular supplement regimen.

Note that this is about the effects of foods in the body, not whether the foods themselves are acidic. For example, lemons are acidic, but they have an alkalizing effect in the body. To learn more, see *WDDTY* April 2024.

Targeted cancer therapies

At the Cancer Center for Healing, we use a variety of diagnostic tests to determine which targeted cancer therapies will work best for each person on a case-by-case basis. There is no one-size-fits-all protocol for every cancer type, so tailoring treatments is essential.

One way we do this is by using specific blood tests from RGCC Labs that indicate the number of circulating tumor cells (CTCs) and cancer stem cells (CSCs) in the body and clue us in to which targeted therapies will be most effective for each patient. From there, we can explore innovative treatments such as high-dose IV vitamin C, fractionated chemotherapy with a bio response modulator (FCBRM), hyperbaric oxygen, nutritional and supplemental approaches, and other proven therapies that attack cancer from several angles.

Again, personalization of protocols is vital because every person is unique and every cancer is different. Working with a skilled practitioner who values this custom-made approach is essential. Find one near you by visiting acam.org or ifm.org or see Resources in the September 2024 issue of *WDDTY*.

A multipronged approach

Many factors and choices positively and negatively impact our health daily. This is excellent news because it means we can take steps every day toward greater health and well-being.

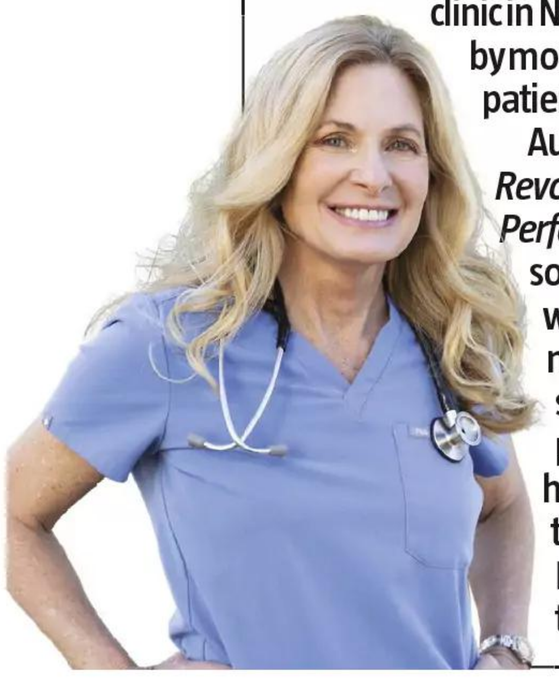
Using an arsenal of well-researched and effective integrative and conventional therapies coupled with healthy lifestyle measures allows patients to set the stage for the best possible outcome: a long, health-filled life that's free of disease.

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Leigh Erin Connealy, MD, is the medical director of the Cancer Center for Healing and the Center for New Medicine in Irvine, California. Dr Connealy's multidisciplinary treatment protocols, team of healthcare professionals, and holistic approach to health and healing have made the Centers the largest integrative/functional medicine clinic in North America, visited by more than 70,000 patients worldwide.

Author of *The Cancer Revolution* and *Be Perfectly Healthy* and a sought-after speaker who has appeared on numerous TV and radio shows, webinars and podcasts, Dr Connealy has been named one of the Top Functional & Integrative Doctors in the US.



HEALTHY SHOPPING

Joanna Evans tracks down supplements that boost nitric oxide, propolis diffusers and homeopathy providers so you don't have to



Nitric oxide booster supplements

Nitric oxide (NO) is a tiny molecule that can have big benefits for health, says Celeste McGovern in this month's Special Report ("Miracle Molecule," page 26). It does everything from boosting energy levels and cognitive function to protecting against heart disease and diabetes.

While the body naturally makes NO—a gas composed of equal parts oxygen and nitrogen—several factors can interfere with its production, including aging, certain medications, and a poor diet and lifestyle.

Eating nitrate-rich foods (like leafy greens and beets), getting plenty of exercise and making sure to breathe through your nose are some of the natural ways you can increase your body's production of NO (see page 33), but another way is to take NO-boosting supplements.

Many of these supplements contain NO precursors like L-arginine, L-citrulline and nitrates, which stimulate the body to produce NO naturally.

But there are also NO lozenges available, developed by prominent nitric oxide researcher Dr Nathan S. Bryan, which are claimed to deliver NO directly to the bloodstream without the need for conversion from other substances. This direct delivery system is intended to be more efficient, especially for those who may not convert precursors like L-arginine effectively due to age or health conditions.

Dr Bryan recommends avoiding supplements that contain L-arginine. If you want to try other NO precursors, though, research suggests L-citrulline and nitrates (from sources like beets) are more effective than L-arginine for boosting NO production because the body can absorb and use them more easily. L-arginine doesn't work as well because a lot of it gets broken down before your body can use it.[1]

Here are a few NO supplements available in the US and UK. Just bear in mind that research on the long-term effects of these type of supplements is still needed. And it's best to consult with a qualified practitioner before embarking on any new supplement program.

REFERENCES	
1	Nutrients, 2023; 15(3): 660
2	JACC, 2019; 73(9 suppl 1): 1729
3	J Clin Hypertens (Greenwich), 2014; 16(7): 524–529

N1o1
Nitric Oxide Lozenges, $59.98/£44.36 (60 lozenges)

n1o1.com
International shipping available

Developed by Dr Nathan Bryan, these lozenges are designed to release NO as they dissolve in the mouth. They consist of vitamin C, magnesium and a proprietary blend of magnesium ascorbate and sodium nitrate.

But the lozenge's formulation also contains a number of inactive ingredients, such as dextrin and maltodextrin (starch-derived carbohydrates), stevia (a natural sweetener) and croscarmellose sodium, a polymer made from cellulose (plant fiber) that helps the lozenge dissolve quickly.

NO skincare products, toothpaste and a beetroot-based powder supplement are also available from N1o1.

Berkeley Life
Nitric Oxide Foundation, $49.99/£58.49 (60 capsules)

US: berkeleylife.com
UK: healf.com

Clinically proven to reduce blood pressure,[2] this formula contains potassium nitrate, beetroot extract and organic fermented beetroot powder to stimulate NO production. Two capsules are claimed to have the dietary nitrate equivalent of 7 oz (198 g) of beetroot. There are also added vitamin C, thiamine (vitamin B1), vitamin B12 and magnesium to provide extra support.

Like all Berkeley Life products, the supplement is rigorously researched, validated and manufactured to the highest standards of quality, safety and transparency. The company also offers a noninvasive saliva test strip, which you can use to monitor your NO levels.

Nature's Truth
Nitric Oxide Max, Beet Root+ with Nitrates, $8.99/£11.26 (60 capsules)
US: naturestruth.com
UK: uk.iherb.com

A good budget option, these vegetarian capsules contain organic beetroot powder along with beetroot extract and grapeseed extract to enhance NO production. There are also small amounts of vitamin C, vitamin B12 and niacin, plus black pepper extract, which has both antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

The supplement is Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)-certified (made in a facility that follows strict quality and safety standards) and contains no gluten, wheat, yeast, milk, lactose, soy or preservatives. It's also free of artificial colors, flavors and sweeteners.

HumanN
Neo40® Nitric Oxide Formula, $39.95/£51.05 (30 tablets)
US: humann.com
UK: biovea.com/uk

Dr Nathan Bryan contributed to the development of this formula, but it works slightly differently from his N1o1 lozenges. It uses L-citrulline, beetroot powder, hawthorn berry extract and sodium nitrite to trigger NO production in the body.

The quick-dissolve tablets are free of gluten, GMO ingredients and artificial sweeteners, but they do contain the natural sweeteners xylitol and stevia along with other inactive ingredients, like mannitol (a sugar alcohol) and modified cellulose (a plant-based binder). This supplement was found to significantly reduce high blood pressure in one clinical trial.[3]



Homeopathy resources

If you're looking into homeoprophylaxis or homeopathic nosodes (see "A Tale of Two Remedies," page 40), consult with a qualified homeopath or contact your local homeopathic pharmacy for advice. Here are some useful resources for finding a homeopath near you, plus a list of reputable homeopathic pharmacies.

How to find a homeopath

These websites all have a search function allowing you to find a registered homeopath in your area.

US and UK

Faculty of Homeopathy
facultyofhomeopathy.org

US

National Center for Homeopathy
homeopathycenter.org

North American Society of Homeopaths
homeopathy.org

UK

4Homeopathy
findahomeopath.org

Society of Homeopaths
homeopathy-soh.org

Homeopathic pharmacies

Here's a handful of trusted homeopathic pharmacies in the US and UK. All sell a wide range of remedies online.

US

Washington Homeopathic Products
homeopathyworks.com

Boiron
boironusa.com

Castle Remedies
castleremedies.com

UK

Helios
helios.co.uk

Ainsworths
ainsworths.com

Nelsons Pharmacy
nelsonspharmacy.com

Propolis diffusers

In "It's Never 'Just' Cancer" (page 58), Dr Leigh Erin Connealy recommends using propolis diffusers as one way to improve indoor air. But what exactly are they, and where can you get them?

Propolis is a sticky, resin-like substance made by bees that's known to have antibacterial, antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties. Propolis diffusers gently heat capsules or tablets of pure propolis to release its vapors into the air, without the need for water or oils (unlike traditional essential oil diffusers). They're said to reduce indoor air pollutants such as mold, bacteria, viruses, allergens and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Some of these diffusers also include ionizers to enhance air purification.

Propolair, manufactured by Italian company Kontak, is considered a trusted, leading brand of propolis diffusers with a wide range of models sold around the world. Here are a few companies selling Propolair diffusers online. Prices start around $115 if you're in the US or £110 if you're in the UK.

US

Happy Culture
happycultureinc.com

Bee Healthy Farms
beehealthyfarms.com

Perfectly Healthy
perfectlyhealthy.com

UK

Amazon
amazon.co.uk

KI Science
kiscience.com

IP-ROCO Apitherapy
ip-roco.com



The weight-loss jabs are not a long-term solution to the obesity epidemic

Just stop it

Bryan Hubbard

In a sketch by American comedian Bob Newhart, he plays a psychiatrist. The patient explains that she has constant thoughts of being buried alive and asks what she should do about them. "Just stop it," Newhart retorts.

The routine comes to mind with the news about the two main weight-loss drugs—Eli Lilly's Zepbound (tirzepatide) and Novo Nordisk's Wegovy (semaglutide)—slugging it out for dominance of the multibillion-dollar slimming market.

Eli Lilly paid for the research and declared itself the winner with a drug reducing body weight by around 20 percent compared to a meager 14 percent among the Wegovy group.[1] Its prize could be the lion's share of the weight-loss drugs market anticipated to tip the scales at $150 billion by 2030.

The study observed around 750 obese people who were given one of the two drugs for 72 weeks—a good place to stop as pretty much all the weight loss on either drug is achieved in the first 60 weeks of treatment. After that, the weight plateaus and even starts to rise again.

And that's the first problem with the drugs. Their effects don't last even though their manufacturers argue they are drugs for life. At $1,350 a month in the US and around £260 in the UK, they would say that.

What they might not mention are the adverse reactions. These pharmaceuticals have led to more entries in the US's Adverse Event Reporting System than any other.

Around 20,000 "serious" reactions have been logged among people taking Wegovy, including septic shock, pancreatic cancer, gastrointestinal blocks, blood clots in the lungs, anorexia, suicide, and psychotic and depressive episodes. Add Eli Lilly's Zepbound to the mix and the picture gets even darker, with around 40,000 serious events reported.

Blindness is another problem with the drugs. American doctors who tracked more than 37 million people said the injections put users at a higher risk of nonarteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy (NAION).

The condition, also known as an "eye stroke," occurs when the vessels supplying blood to the optic nerve become blocked, depriving it of oxygen. The result is damage to all or part of the nerve.[2]

Then there's death. Susan McGowan, 58, of Lanarkshire, suffered multiple organ failure, septic shock and pancreatitis after taking Mounjaro (tirzepatide), as Zepbound is branded when it's used to treat type 2 diabetes. She took low doses of the jabs for just two weeks before her death.[3]

And then there are the lawsuits, oh my! New York attorney Robert King was, in November 2024, representing more than 400 clients who are preparing claims against Eli Lilly or Novo Nordisk. The most common complaints were serious gut problems and blood clots, and there are one or two instances of people losing their sight.

In a monumental understatement, Mr King commented, "I don't think anyone would agree to potential blindness. You know, that's a major life event that no one would ever suspect is related to a weight loss issue."[4]

But 42 percent of US adults over the age of 20 are obese—that's around 100 million Americans—and something has to be done. Wegovy and its ilk are one answer: The injections imitate the hormone GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) to slow digestion, lower blood glucose and control hunger.

Yes, it's an answer, but weight loss on the drugs is relatively modest. Much the same could be achieved by following a sensible way of eating, such as a low-glycemic diet, which categorizes foods by the speed at which their sugars are metabolized.

And that's the real problem. More than 60 percent of the typical Western diet is made up of fast-release sugary foods. They're called "fast foods" for a reason, it seems. And they're highly addictive, training the brain to crave another sugar boost.

Ultimately, a fast-food diet is a lifestyle choice—but the drugs aren't. They're too expensive, any weight loss is achieved in the first 14 months or so, and the risks are frighteningly high.

At some point, we must heed Bob Newhart's advice: When it comes to choosing fast foods, one day we have to just stop it.



I don't think anyone would agree to potential blindness. You know, that's a major life event that no one would ever suspect is related to a weight loss issue

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4. Maiya Focht, "Americans Left Blind, Paralyzed and with Teeth Falling Out After Ozempic—Now They're Suing for Millions," Nov 7, 2024, dailymail.co.uk



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