

WHAT DOCTORS DON'T TELL YOU

How to heal your enlarged prostate

Remedies to banish
symptoms quickly

Leftovers from the lumber mill

More on DMSO's
all-round healing

PLUS 4 do-it-yourself medicines from parks or riverbanks
• Get into the fast lane for weight loss • Creatine: not just for gym rats • Covid-era mental health problems keep rising in millennials and kids as young as 6 • The best lifestyle choices to stay cancer-free in old age • Antidepressants: addictive after 2 years

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without drugs or
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¹ In the U.S., among professional supplement brands surveyed, Nutrition Business Journal® 2016, 2020, 2023 ² In the U.S., among practitioners and brands surveyed, The Institute for Functional Medicine® 2017

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D

uring a retreat that we were running in converted monasteries in Spain in 2019, I had a conversation with two American doctors, a husband-and-wife team, that has stayed with me.

“Don’t believe any DEXA tests you’re given—they’re going to show you have osteoporosis,” the woman doctor told me. “My test showed that I have osteoporosis, and it does for every thin woman out there.

“The problem isn’t the women, it’s the test,” she went on to explain. “It’s inherently inaccurate, particularly for women of your size.”

Now, she wasn’t a big woman, and I’m not either. I’m about five foot six and have always been pretty slim, which makes me a prime candidate for an inaccurate test, said the doctor.

Shortly after I met her, I had to go for the DEXA test and, sure enough, the result had me as borderline osteoporotic. There isn’t osteoporosis in my family. In fact, my mother, who was about five feet tall and ate a poor, sugar-laden diet, broke one of the vertebrae in her spine in a boating accident after menopause. The bones knitted back together beautifully and never gave her any trouble thereafter.

I’m not minimizing osteoporosis. It’s a terrible disease affecting some 200 million people worldwide. The UK’s Royal Osteoporosis Society claims that one in three women and one in five men will suffer an osteoporotic fracture in their lifetimes, so clearly we need to take care of our bones, figure out why they’re so delicate, and finger the foods and the particular lack of activity that cause them to give way too early.

The so-called gold standard for determining whether someone has potentially serious bone



Editors

Lynne McTaggart and Bryan Hubbard

COMMENT

NIX TO DEXA

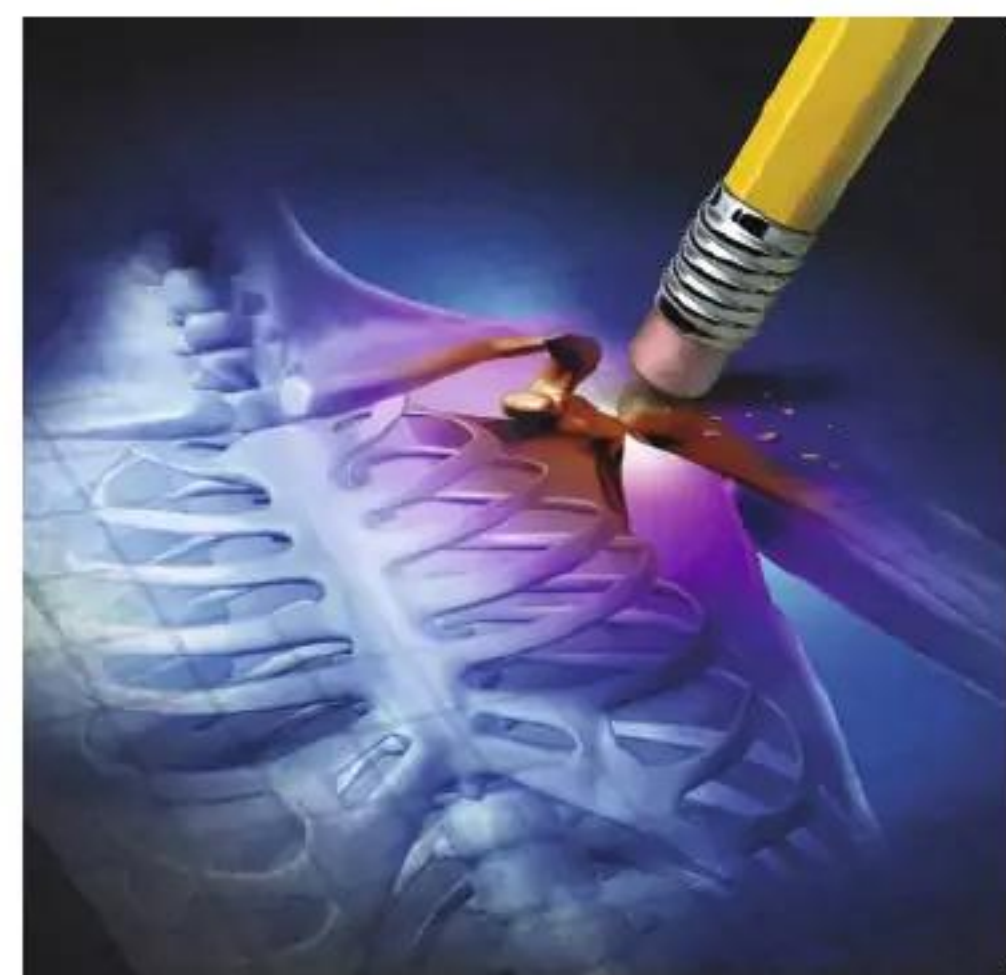
loss is a DEXA scan, which stands for dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry. It works by having the patient lie on his or her back while two x-ray beams scan the body part in question (usually the spine and hips), after which operators measure the amount of x-rays that the bone absorbs.

DEXA is now used for any suspicion of bone loss: to diagnose osteoporosis, monitor bone loss over time, assess fracture risk and even measure your body composition, or the percentages of your body made up of muscle, fat and bone mass.

Medicine continues to argue for the accuracy of DEXA, but decades ago, the late Herbert H. Bolotin begged to disagree. An award-winning

published an explosive paper in the scientific journal *Bone* arguing that the DEXA test had built-in inaccuracies leading to measurement errors that could be as high as 20 percent. And the most common inaccuracies occur in older adults, postmenopausal women and people with low bone density—in other words, the very people who experience the highest risk of osteoporosis.¹

The problem with the test, he said, is that DEXA also picks up the type and amount of soft tissue, like fat and muscle, that lies around the bones. People of very different shapes and sizes can get very different bone density readings, even if their bone density is comparable.



“One in three women and one in five men will suffer an osteoporotic fracture in their lifetimes”

professor of physics at the University of Melbourne, Bolotin was renowned for his groundbreaking work on nuclear structure (the arrangement and interaction of protons and neutrons in the nucleus of an atom) but also on bone densitometry (tests that reveal the density of bones).

In the early 2000s, he argued that DEXA scans were highly inaccurate. In 2001, he

And changing your body composition—for instance, losing weight or working out to improve your muscle mass and strength—can also create big changes in the test, even if your bones don’t change.

For years, after noticing DEXA tests showed some correlation between a patient’s weight and amount of fat and bone density, doctors and medical researchers simply assumed bigger, heavier

people naturally had stronger bones. But Bolotin argued the correlation was false—a result of DEXA’s measurement errors rather than any inherent difference in biology.

Aside from the problems with using the test to diagnose bone loss or osteoporosis, there are also problems with using DEXA to monitor whether antiresorptive drugs like Fosamax (alendronate), used to treat osteoporosis, are working well enough. Bolotin argued that any changes in body fat or muscle would also affect the test results, leading doctors to believe the drugs were working better than they actually were.

This means, of course, that all the studies measuring the effectiveness of particular drugs in battling osteoporosis may also have been inaccurate; any one of these osteoporosis drugs probably worked far less effectively than the studies showed. It may even mean osteoporosis isn’t quite the epidemic we’re told it is.

Calling DEXA “a contaminated and false measure of bone mineral areal density,” Bolotin argued that doctors should be cautious about using the DEXA test for anything, whether diagnosing osteoporosis, judging bone health or even evaluating whether a treatment is working.

It’s time to look to alternatives, such as radiofrequency echographic multi spectrometry (REMS). It’s an ultrasound tool that has been shown to have higher accuracy than DEXA and comes with the added bonus of not using radiation.

Initial results inspire optimism, showing it’s more specific than DEXA. But studies rate it 91 percent accurate—still wrong nearly 10 percent of the time.

How reliable is it for diagnosing osteoporosis? As the Buddha once observed, “We’ll see.”

Lynne McTaggart

REFERENCE

1 Bone, 2001; 28(5):548–55

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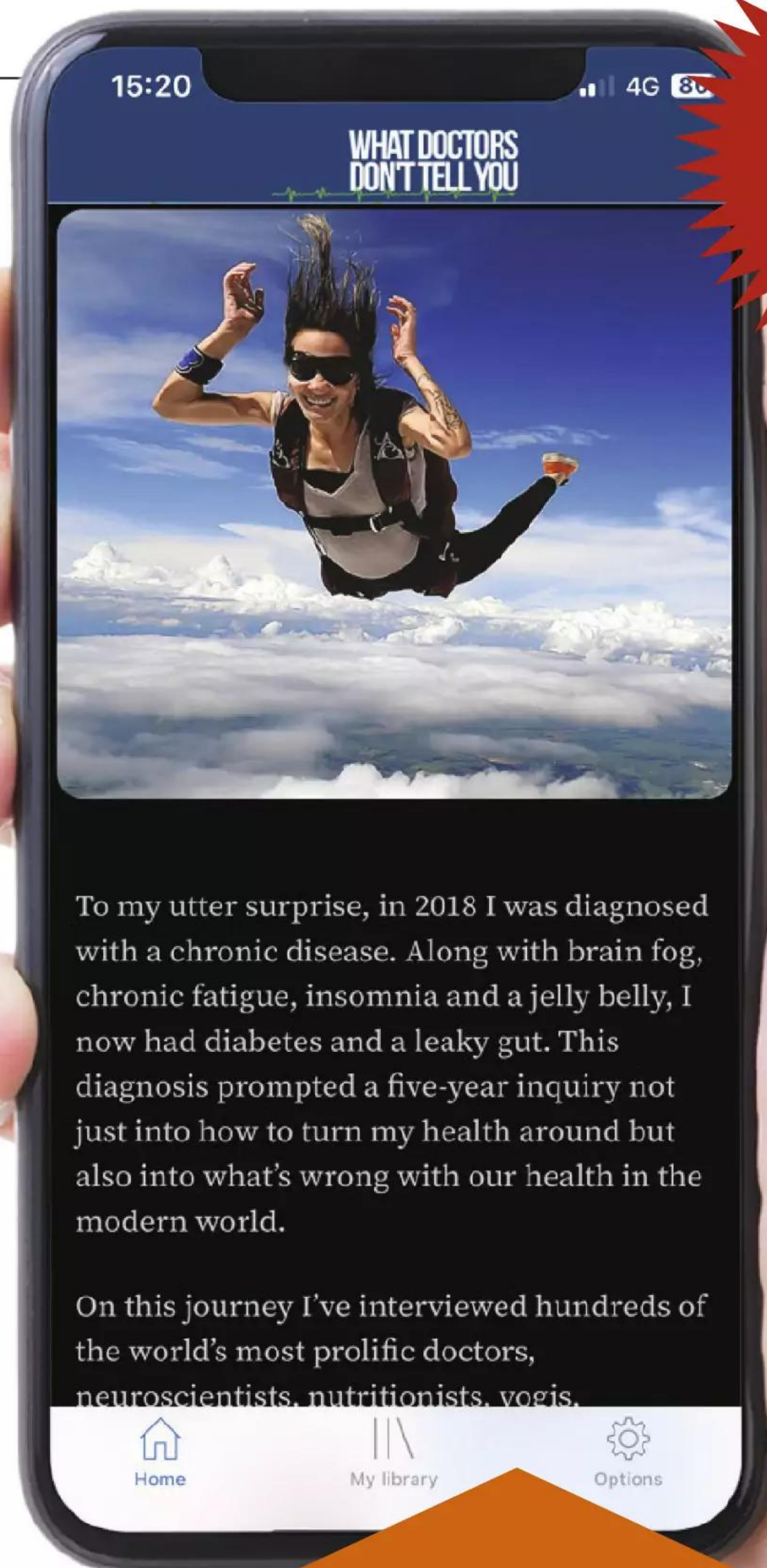


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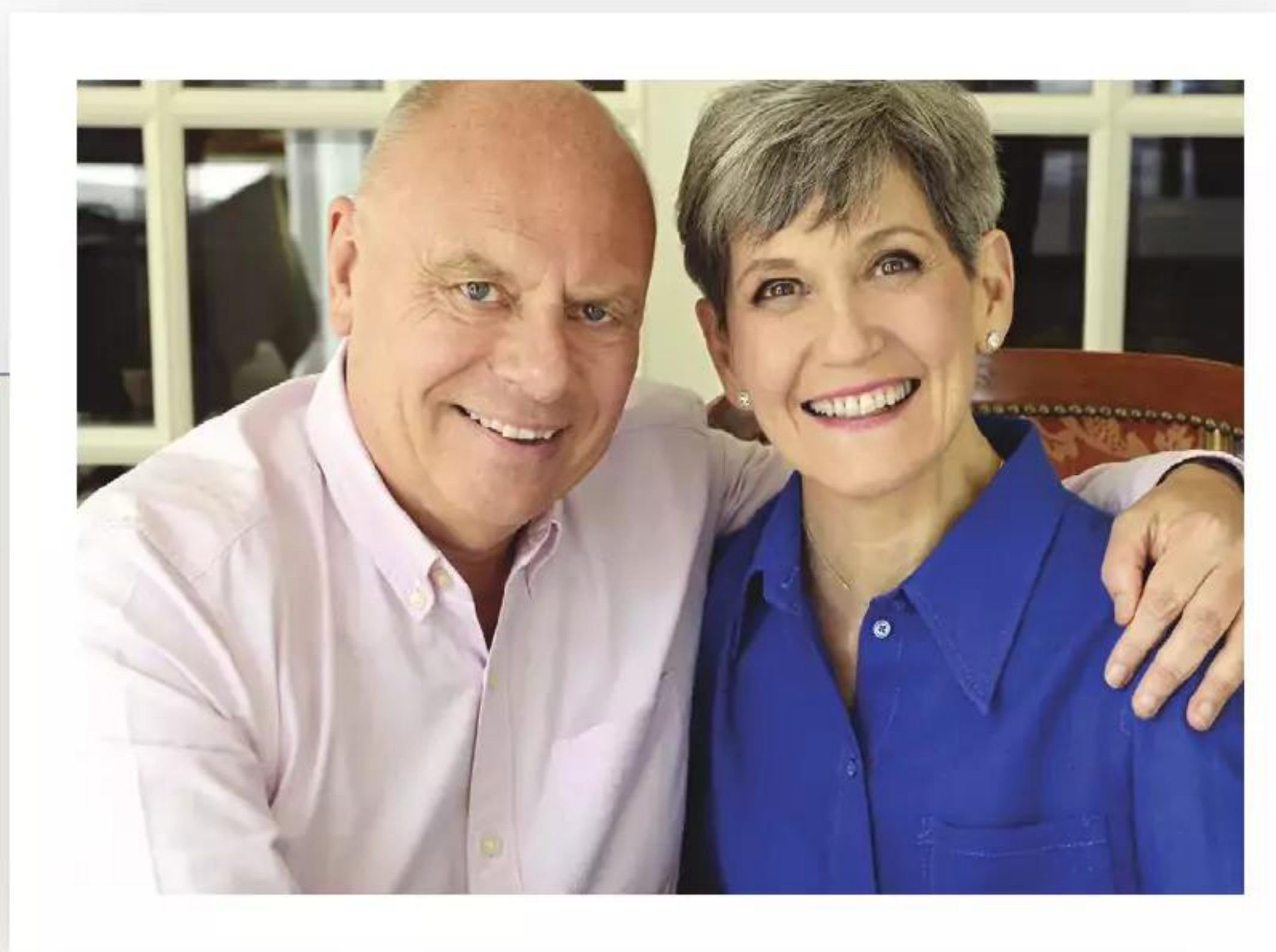
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Lynne McTaggart and Bryan Hubbard

Dear *WDDTY* subscriber,

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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.

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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.

Lynne McTaggart *Bryan Hubbard*

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Lazy bones

Just a few minutes a day of heavy weight-bearing exercise could end your worries about the risk of osteoporosis, Tony Edwards reports

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Fast lane to weight loss?

Intermittent fasting can be effective for weight loss, says Marcelle Pick. But it's vital to listen to your body—for some women, it can lead to hormonal imbalances

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Find your flow

An enlarged prostate can lead to all kinds of unpleasant symptoms. Homeopath David Needleman gives you the most effective remedies to relieve pain and empty your bladder effortlessly

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Out of the woods

Who would have guessed lumber mill leftovers could be a powerful anti-inflammatory and more? DMSO helps the body find its way out of health troubles, Cate Montana reports

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Deep into the weeds

With a bit of know-how, you can make your own medicines from plants in the nearest park or riverbank, says herbalist Samantha Almond. Here are four worth looking for





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Food poisoning in childhood leads to colon cancer in adulthood; antidepressants become addictive after two years; cage your inner party animal by age 36

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Body building (and maintaining)

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Right in the head

Covid-era mental health problems are a crisis that's still exploding.

Millennials have been hit the hardest, but kids as young as six to 10 years need help, too

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Some of what you're told about how to live longer and stay cancer-free is true, says Dr Leigh Erin Connealy. But some of it isn't. Try the methods her oldest healthy patients use

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Find top-tier DMSO, the most bioavailable creatine supplements and EVOX therapy providers with a little help from Joanna Evans

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The last word

Feel a flutter in your gut when you think about getting vaccinated? Two "researchers" have a new diagnosis for you. Bryan Hubbard shares the science



Around 12 percent of Americans, 31 million people, are using magic mushrooms, and the rate rose by 188 percent from 2022 to 2023 in adults over age 30

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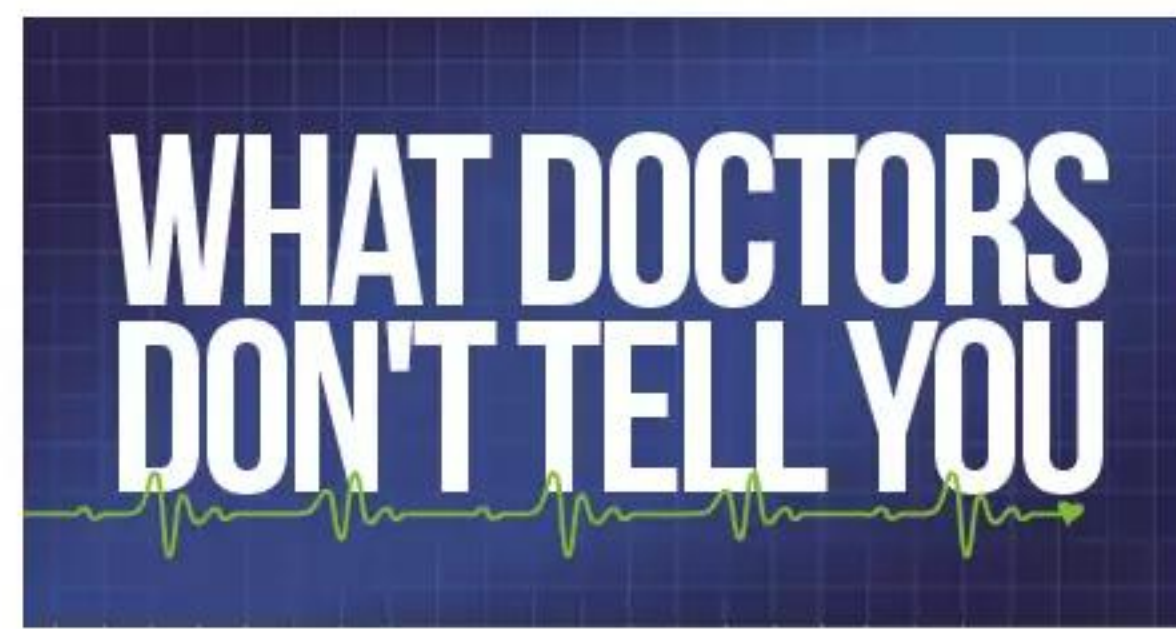
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EDITORIAL PANEL

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.



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



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



MSG and cardiac arrest

Inspired by your recent article about cardiac arrest (“My Heart Stood Still,” July/August 2025), I’d like to regale you with an encounter from when I was living in Hamburg, Germany, some 20 years ago.

I was running a small 11-bedroom hotel close to the Outer Alster. I had become interested in alternative treatments for cancer because my first wife had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 1983, at age 29. She was given three years to live and went through two chemotherapy treatments, which I’m happy to say she survived. She also survived the cancer!

Trawling through the internet, I came across an interview with an American clinician revealing the dangers of MSG. He warned it could be considered a neurotoxin that can block electrical messages to the heart, which are supposed to tell it to beat—the bodily pacemaker.

I found this fascinating as I often had headaches or muscle pain similar to flu symptoms after eating Chinese meals.

A few weeks later, the CEO of the German Brain Research Institute (Deutsche Gehirn-Forschungs Institut) arrived for a stay at the hotel. Emboldened by the information I had gleaned from the web, I approached him and tentatively asked whether he could confirm what the American had been reporting.

He was quite happy to tell me about a study they had done (not sure when) on 1,500 cases of sudden, unexplained death of people aged six months to 92 years. As I remember, the results showed that 85 percent of the people who died had consumed MSG in one form or another 30–60 minutes prior to the cardiac arrest.

I asked if this was proof that MSG was responsible. He answered that the study merely showed a strong link but was not proof. He commented that the Institut did not have the financial resources to conduct an effective study/trial.

I realize glutamate occurs naturally in many foods, but there’s always a biological link that seems to negate the possible dangerous neurotoxic effects. However, MSG (E621) is the commonest manufactured taste enhancer used in the food industry and seems to be the one causing these anecdotal incidents.

A Broadhurst, via email

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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.

Another thing about NO

Thanks for the excellent piece on the many benefits of nitric oxide (WDDTY July/August 2025). What it doesn’t mention, though, is that humans vary immensely in their ability to produce this molecule endogenously.

Some of us produce it easily, some hardly at all. You can check the presence or absence of this genetic glitch in your own body with a company such as LifeCode Gx.

The point is, if you’re one of those who don’t produce much nitric oxide, then the recommendations suggested in the July/August issue are all the more vital for you.

Dr Jenny Goodman

Just stop making jokes

Your article on weight loss drugs (The WDDTY Weekly Letter, May 17, 2025, and Last Word, WDDTY July/August 2025) devolves into telling junk food addicts to “just stop it.” That’s like telling alcoholics, heavy smokers and anorexics to just stop. Right.

I’m amazed to see this on your site. Not a whit of understanding that people have cravings for these substances or behaviors they will kill for, not to mention a fear that if they stop the prescription drugs (of any kind), they will die or at best come apart at the seams.

They need help to stop their desires and behaviors, and sometimes psychological medicine is needed as well—not being told that they should “just stop.” I know a 350-pound woman who received that advice (from doctors) countless times over maybe 60 years until it was discovered, just by happenstance, during testing for something else, that she had severe thyroid problems.

She was born fat, for God’s sake, and could polish off half a gallon of ice cream without taking a breath. She could not stop. Do you think she didn’t know she should? There is absolutely no prediabetes, diabetes or tendency toward diabetes in her family.

And, while I’m here, it’s strange that you are not aware of the fact that not all over-fatness is caused by overeating. People follow calorie-restricted diets and yet “the scales do not budge” (Adelle Davis, *Let’s Get Well*).

Seems as if virtually everything on the topic of health that I read today, everywhere, assumes we are all prediabetic, where exercise plus calorie restriction (with good food) usually does indeed produce weight and fat loss—but there appears to be no recognition of the different constitutional types. Not everyone will develop type 2 diabetes if they eat a lot of junk food.

Sonia

WDDTY replies: The article was meant to be lighthearted or even funny. However, your response demonstrates that humor is, indeed, very individual.

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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.



Food bug linked to rise in colon cancers in the young

What's been causing the sudden upsurge in cases of colon (colorectal) cancer in young people? Scientists think an episode of food poisoning in childhood could be a culprit—but they've left something unanswered.

They have pinpointed the bacterial toxin, colibactin, which is produced by strains of *E. coli*, the common cause of food poisoning, as the likely cause. Long after the food poisoning has passed, colibactin sits in the colon and rectum, and it starts to alter DNA. Children under age 10 could be primed for the cancer that happens years later.

It's vital for science to understand this sudden surge. Colorectal cancer is rising among young people in at least 27 countries, and rates in the under-50s have roughly doubled twice in the past two decades. If nothing changes, colorectal cancer will likely become the top cause of cancer death in young adults within five years.

An international team led by scientists from the University of California at San Diego believes exposure to colibactin in early childhood imprints a distinct genetic signature on the DNA of colon cells. This increases the risk of developing colorectal cancer before age 50.

They analyzed 981 colorectal cancer genomes from patients with both early- and late-onset disease across 11 countries and found that colibactin DNA mutation patterns were 3.3 times more common in early-onset cases among under-40s than in those diagnosed after age 70.

But their findings leave many questions unanswered. It's important to know how children are exposed to colibactin-producing bacteria and how to prevent or mitigate exposures.

Then there are the questions of what factors in a person's life promote colibactin production in the gut and how people can know whether they already have these DNA mutations.

And most pressing of all: Why are we seeing the alarming rise in cases right now, when many of the possible culprits—food poisoning and environmental factors, for instance—have been around a long time without having the impact we're seeing today?

While none of these have been answered, the scientists think taking probiotics after a bout of food poisoning could mitigate colibactin mutations in the gut.

Nature, 2025; 643(8070): 230–240

Music can reach children with severe brain damage

Music therapy could provide a way of communicating with children who have suffered severe brain damage and assessing their consciousness levels, say researchers from Anglia Ruskin University.

The research team developed MuSICCA (Music therapy Sensory Instrument for Cognition, Consciousness and Awareness), a technique that uses musical stimulation to help a patient demonstrate how conscious they are.

The music is specially selected for the patient, and a therapist performs it while manipulating different elements depending on the patient's response. The therapist aims to give the child the best chance of demonstrating their abilities, and they record their observations in comparison to a set of performance measures.

"MuSICCA allows the music therapist to conduct a rigorous assessment of the patient's response to various musical stimuli, giving the therapist a picture of the patient's level of consciousness and the strengths and weaknesses of their responses," says Jonathan Pool, one of the researchers.

"The information is easy to communicate to the rest of the care and medical teams and can support families in understanding what they can do to support their child's recovery."

Front Psychol, 2025; 16: 1441178



Major danger alert for new menopause drug

Veozah (fezolinetant) was the new hope for menopausal women who didn't want to take HRT. It was approved in 2023 in the UK and the US as a way to reduce the frequency and severity of hot flashes.

But less than two years since its release, the drug has been slapped with a "black box" warning, the most severe the US drug regulator, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), can impose before it decides to withdraw a drug from the market.

Last September, the FDA issued a warning that the drug could cause severe liver damage but has now amplified its concerns, warning that women shouldn't take the drug if they have a risk of developing liver disease. Even women who have no history of liver problems should undergo testing for the first three months, then again at six and nine months after starting the drug, to check for any liver damage, it advises.

Women who start to suffer worrying symptoms should immediately come off the drug. Symptoms include fatigue, vomiting, unusual itching, light-colored feces, dark urine, jaundice, abdominal swelling and pain in the upper right abdomen, which can all indicate liver problems.

Coming off the medication can help the liver recover, the FDA adds.

FDA, "Veozah (Fezolinetant) Tablets, for Oral Use: Highlights of Prescribing Information," Dec 2024, accessdata.fda.gov

Vitamin D slows biological aging

Even if you can't get out into the sun too often, taking a vitamin D3 supplement every day for four years can slow your biological aging by three years.

The vitamin protects our telomeres, the protective caps at the ends of chromosomes that shorten as we get older. The shortening exposes our DNA to damage, causing biological aging and increasing the risk of some cancers and autoimmune diseases, such as arthritis (for more about telomeres, see *WDDTY* March 2025).

Researchers from Mass General Brigham tracked the telomere health of 1,054 volunteers aged 50 years and older, giving them either 2,000 IU of vitamin D3, 1 g omega-3 fatty acid supplements or a placebo every day for five years.

They measured the telomeres in the participants' white blood cells every two years and found only the vitamin D supplements reduced telomere shortening.

The dose used in the test is equivalent to the vitamin D a person would make in around 15 minutes of sunbathing on a summer's day.

Am J Clin Nutr, 2025;122(1): 39-47



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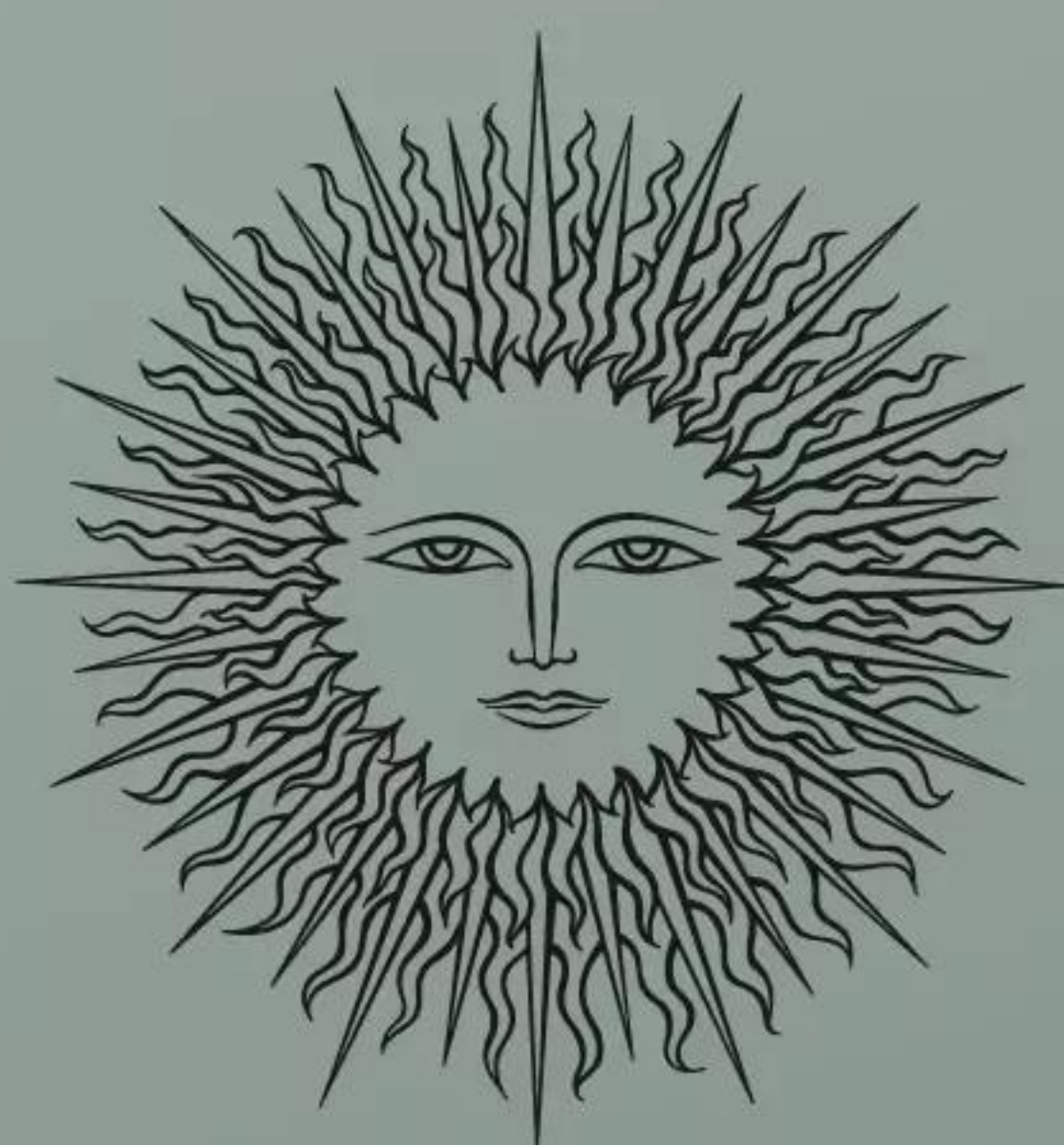
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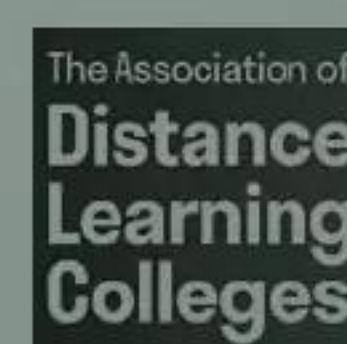
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TIME FOR GOVERNMENTS TO CLAMP DOWN ON PROCESSED FOOD

It's time governments got serious about regulating processed food. It's a major cause of premature death and chronic disease, according to a new study.

Ultra-processed foods (UPFs)—which usually include five or more additives such as sweeteners, preservatives and colorants—are responsible for around 14 percent of premature deaths in the US and UK,

where they form a major part of the overall diet.

This equates to around 124,000 premature deaths in the US and nearly 18,000 in the UK, say researchers from Darcy Ribeiro University in Brasília. They looked at diets and data on deaths in eight countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, the UK and the US.

Because the study was observational, the researchers say they can't absolutely establish that UPFs directly cause premature death and chronic disease. However, comparing how much of these foods were in the diets to the premature death and disease rates in the countries they studied suggests a clear connection.

Am J Prev Med, 2025; 68(6): 1091–1099

Eat berries and drink tea to age well

Foods that are rich in flavonoids can help us stay healthy as we get older. They can combat the usual symptoms of aging, such as frailty, mental decline and general physical incapacities, say researchers from Edith Cowan University in Australia.

To assess the benefits of flavonoids—antioxidants found in plants—the researchers analyzed data from 62,743 women and 23,687 men over 24 years. They found women getting the most flavonoids had a 15 percent lower risk of frailty and a 12 percent lower risk of impaired physical function than those getting the least.

These women were also 12 percent less likely to suffer poor mental health. The benefits were less apparent in men, although flavonoids were protecting them against mental decline. This difference could be due to follow-up time rather than real effects, the researchers note.

They recommend three daily servings of flavonoid-rich drinks and food, such as red wine, dark chocolate, tea, onions, red cabbage, citrus fruits and richly colored fruits and vegetables like leafy greens and berries.

"Flavonoids are well known for reducing oxidative stress and inflammation, supporting blood vessel health, and even helping to maintain skeletal muscle mass—all of which are important for preventing frailty and maintaining physical function and mental health as we age," said Aedin Cassidy, one of the researchers.

Am J Clin Nutr, 2025; 121(5): 972



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Yoga helps ease menopausal symptoms (but not hot flashes)

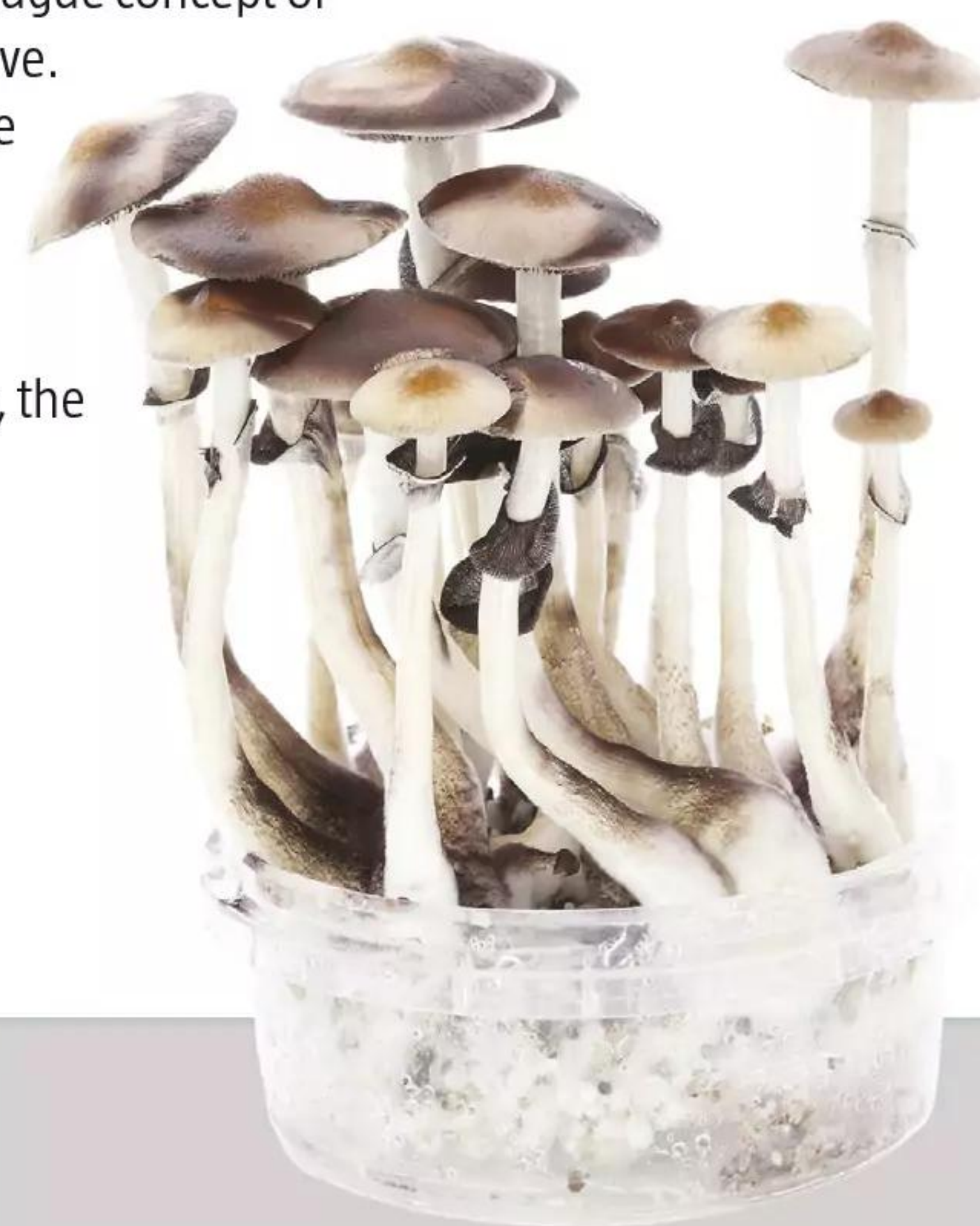
Women can suffer a range of problems when they're going through menopause, such as weight gain, high blood pressure, sleeplessness and anxiety—and yoga can help with all of these. Regular yoga sessions can improve common menopausal symptoms by as much as 73 percent, says a research team from the Xiangya School of Nursing in China.

They analyzed 24 studies that involved 2,028 menopausal women to discover the impact of yoga on a range of symptoms. Although the overall improvement was impressive—in some cases halving the effect of general symptoms—the exercise also helped with specific issues: sleep problems eased by around 60 percent, depressive episodes reduced by around 70 percent, blood pressure dropped dramatically and the women stopped gaining weight.

The one symptom yoga couldn't help with was hot flashes, one of the most common menopausal problems, and the vague concept of "quality of life" also didn't improve.

Aside from these two failings, the overall improvements were so impressive that yoga should be recommended as part of menopause care and therapy, the researchers say.

Int J Nurs Studies, 2025; 161; 104928



Depressed are self-medicating with magic mushrooms

More and more people are turning to psilocybin, the hallucinogenic chemical in magic mushrooms, to treat their depression, anxiety and chronic pain.

Around 12 percent of Americans—31 million people—are using magic mushrooms, and the rate rose by 188 percent from 2022 to 2023 in adults over age 30, researchers at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus have discovered. They're now more popular than cocaine, LSD, methamphetamines and opioids.

Although it's not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration, America's drug regulator, Americans are using psilocybin for conditions such as PTSD, depression and anxiety, especially in states that have decriminalized it.

It's not without its dangers. Psilocybin-related poison center calls rose dramatically between 2019 and 2023, doubling among adults and increasing sevenfold in children.

Ann Intern Med, 2025; doi: 10.7326/ANNALS-24-03145

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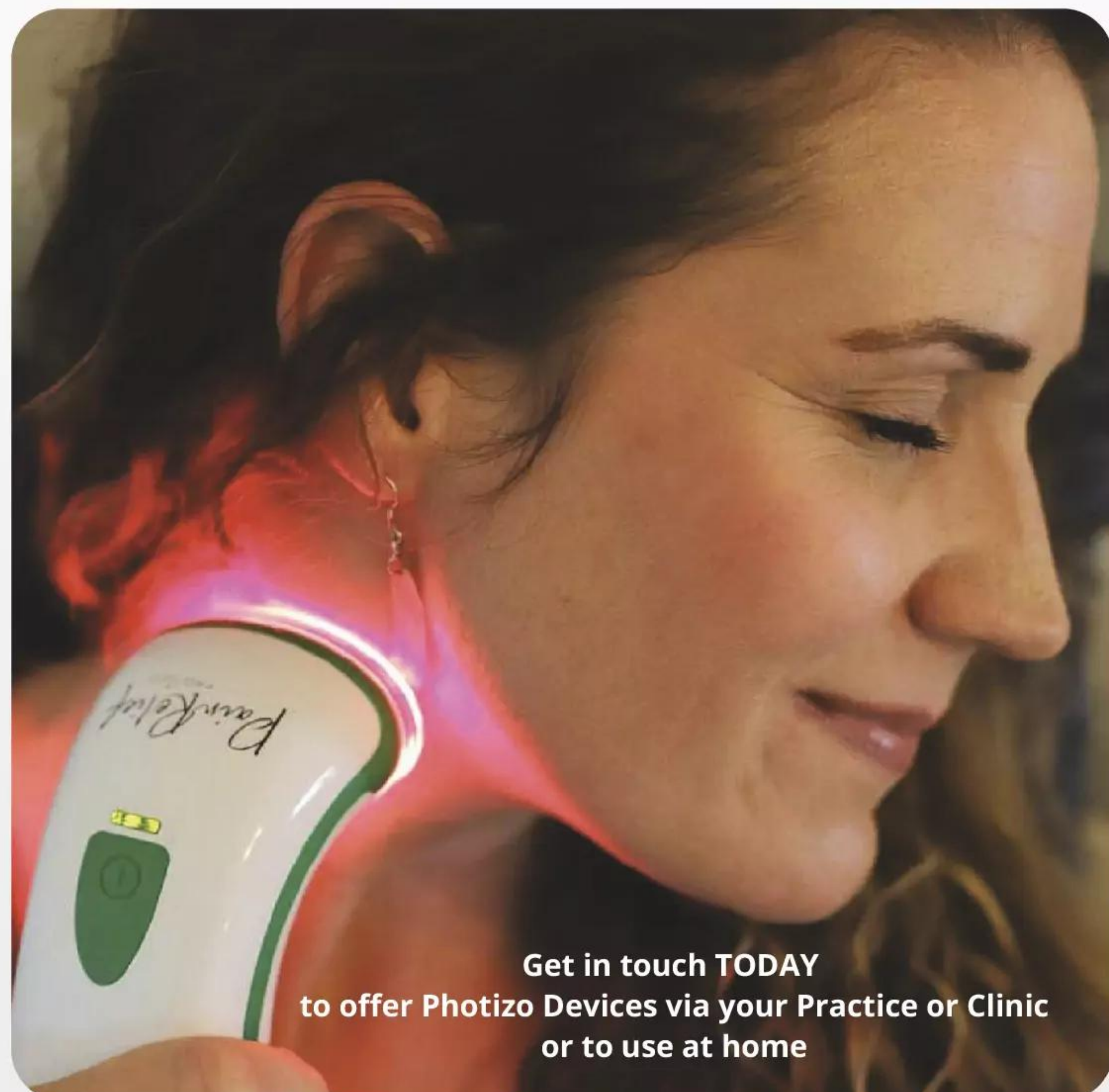
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People hooked on antidepressants after two years

If you've been on antidepressants for more than two years, you could be hooked on them—because the withdrawal symptoms are so awful. But if you haven't been taking the drugs quite so long, you may well suffer only mild effects when you try to come off them, say researchers at University College London. That applies to most users in the US, who on average have been on the drugs for far longer than two years.

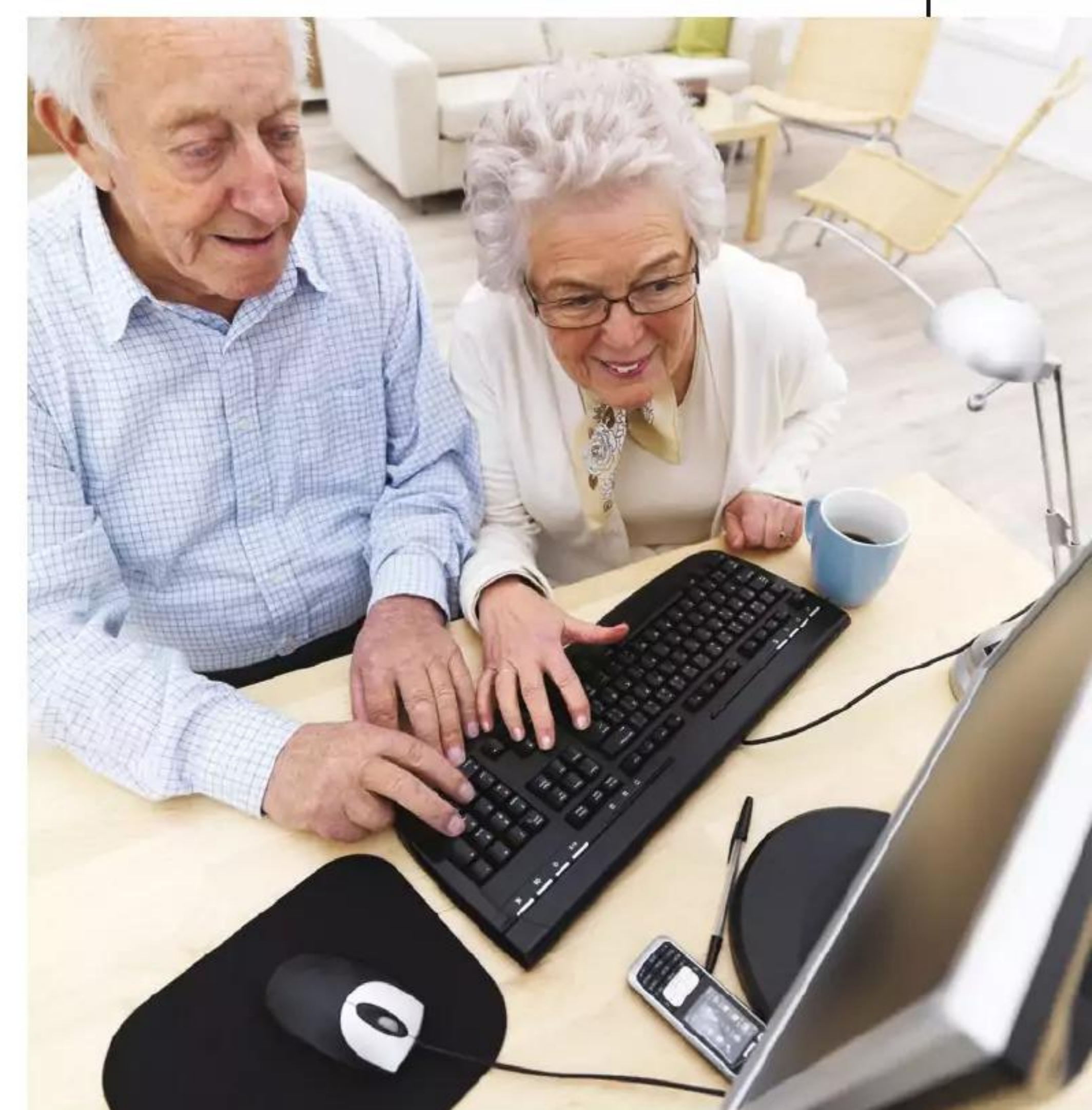
The researchers surveyed 310 Britons who had at one point attempted to stop taking their prescribed antidepressant. Of these, 79 percent reported suffering at least one withdrawal symptom, and 43 percent were classified as having a syndrome: four or more non-emotional withdrawal symptoms.

Across the entire group, 38 percent said they were unable to stop treatments because of withdrawal effects, and this rose to 79 percent among those who had been taking the drugs for two years or more. Withdrawal symptoms included anxiety, worsened mood, agitation and fatigue, along with depression and anxiety symptoms; 76 percent also reported physical reactions such as dizziness, headache, vertigo or nausea.

The researchers found that those who had been on antidepressants for more than two years were 10 times more likely to have withdrawal symptoms than those who had been taking them for less than six months.

In most, the symptoms lasted for around three months. But they lasted longer in around 20 percent of participants, and 10 percent said they were still suffering from them a year later.

PsychiatryRes, 2025; 350: 116497



Stay curious to ward off Alzheimer's

Continuing to be curious can keep you mentally sharp as you get older and could even ward off Alzheimer's disease. Learning new information and skills and being engaged and interested in the world are a great antidote to dementia, according to researchers from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

They say there are two types of curiosity: state and trait. State curiosity is the momentary curiosity people experience when someone asks them about a certain subject, while trait curiosity is how we tend to be in life, a personality trait.

To understand the two types, the researchers recruited people aged 20–84 to complete an online questionnaire assessing their general level of curiosity (trait curiosity). To measure state curiosity, they asked the participants to guess the answers to obscure trivia questions and then gauged their level of interest in the answers.

They discovered that the two kinds of curiosity are linked: People who have more of one type of curiosity also have more of the other type. In general, trait curiosity declines as we get older, while state curiosity falls away in early adulthood before increasing sharply into older age.

"A lot of older adults will go back to take classes or pick up hobbies or engage in bird watching. I think it shows that this level of curiosity, if maintained, can really keep us sharp as we age," said Alan Castel, one of the researchers.

PLoSOne, 2025; 20(5): e0320600



Stop partying when you reach 36

You probably don't need medical research to tell you that you need to slow down as you get older—but a new study has pinpointed the year when we need to start living a more sober life. Our health starts to decline at age 36, and that's when we need to cut back on the booze and late nights, say researchers at Laurea University in Finland.

For the study, scientists tracked the health of hundreds of children born in 1959 until they were 61 years old. They found those who consistently smoked, drank and didn't exercise when they were younger ended up sicker and more depressed, and that decline could be seen from the age of 36.

Excessive drinking and smoking and late nights could already be showing in our health by then, but the good news is that it's never too late to start leading a healthier life.

"Diseases such as heart disease and cancer cause almost three-quarters of deaths worldwide," said Dr Tiia Kekäläinen, one of the researchers. "But by following a healthy lifestyle, an individual can cut their risk of developing these illnesses and reduce their odds of an early death. . . . it is never too late to change to healthier habits. Adopting healthier habits in midlife also has benefits for older age."

Ann Med, 2025; 57(1): 2479233

Safe number of drinks might be lower than we think

How much alcohol can we drink before we do any serious harm to our health? Right now, the recommendation is 14 units a week—but make that eight, new research suggests.

Fourteen units equates to around six medium-sized glasses of wine, six pints of beer or seven double measures of the hard stuff. It should be far less, say researchers at the University of São Paulo Medical School.

They have been investigating the impact of alcohol on brain health and have found that heavy drinkers, those who have eight or more alcoholic drinks a week, have a higher risk of brain lesions. Called hyaline arteriosclerosis (HA), these signs of brain injury are associated with memory and thinking problems.

Drinking heavily causes the small blood vessels to narrow

and become thick and stiff. This makes it harder for blood to flow, which can damage the brain over time, creating lesions, areas of damaged tissue in the brain.

The study included 1,781 people who had an average age of 75 at death. The researchers examined brain tissue to look for signs of brain injury, including tau tangles and HA.

To assess the amount each participant drank, the researchers asked family members questions about participants' alcohol consumption. They then divided the participants into four groups: 965 people who never drank, 319 moderate drinkers who had seven or fewer drinks per week, 129 heavy drinkers who had eight or more drinks per week, and 368 former heavy drinkers.

They found brain lesions in each of the groups:

- 40 percent of never-drinkers
- 45 percent of moderate drinkers
- 44 percent of heavy drinkers
- 50 percent of former heavy drinkers

The researchers admit their research is observational and relies on the memories of the relatives. The link to drinking was also dubious; 40 percent of non-drinkers had brain lesions, which suggests lesions are simply a natural consequence of living.

Finally, there is no evidence that the lesions cause cognitive problems, although we know they increase the risk. The researchers didn't measure the memory and calculating abilities of the participants or discover whether they had dementia or Alzheimer's, so we'll never know.

Neurology, 2025; 104(9): e213555



HEART NEWS



Floss your teeth to protect your heart

Suffering from heart flutter or irregular heart rate? Then start flossing. Poor gum health—known as gingivitis or periodontitis, caused by *Porphyromonas gingivalis* bacteria—is a seemingly unlikely cause of irregular heartbeat, or atrial fibrillation (AFib).

When the gums become infected and bleed, the body's inflammatory responses don't always stay in the mouth. Instead they can get into the bloodstream and infiltrate the heart, where they distort the heart's architecture and interfere with electrical signals.

Researchers have long noticed a connection between gum disease and heart health. Around 30 percent of AFib sufferers also have periodontitis, a form of gum disease. Researchers have also discovered DNA from oral bacteria, especially *P. gingivalis*, one of the most commonly linked to poor gum health, in heart muscle, heart valves and even fatty arterial plaques.

It could also be driving other chronic diseases linked to inflammation, such as Alzheimer's, diabetes and some cancers. It has been detected in the brain, liver and placenta.

But although researchers have seen an association, they've never been able to track the actual processes that take place. To find out, a research team from Hiroshima University in Japan infected a group of mice with the bacteria and found that within 18 weeks, they were six times more likely than uninfected mice to develop abnormal heart rhythms. The bacteria had made their way to the heart as well.

The researchers also observed the effect in the heart's left atrial tissue taken from 68 AFib sufferers who had undergone surgery. The bacteria were there, too, and in greater amounts in those with severe gum disease.

Although diet and exercise have been promoted as the best ways to avoid heart disease, the researchers say that daily brushing and flossing and regular dental checkups could play just as big a part.

For more about the link between dental health and heart health, see *WDDTY* October 2023.

Circulation, 2025; 151(21): 1527–1540



Poor sleep can lead to heart problems

We all know how important it is to get a good night's sleep—but it may be even more significant than we realize and could be protecting us from heart disease. Quality sleep protects the heart, and the reverse is also true:

Chronic insomnia increases the risk of heart attack, stroke and AFib (atrial fibrillation), or irregular heartbeat.

Even a few nights of poor sleep can increase proteins that are linked to heart disease, say researchers from Uppsala University in Sweden. They tested the impact of sleeplessness on a group of 16 young men who usually slept well.

Half continued to have a full night's sleep, but the others had their sleep interrupted and slept for just four hours for three consecutive nights. By the end of the trial, the sleepless group had more proteins and inflammatory markers in their body that have been linked to heart disease—but the good news was that 30 minutes of high-intensity exercise significantly offset the negative effects.

While that's a good remedy when you've had a few bad nights, it's not a long-term solution and can't give the body the other qualities that deep sleep provides.

The results also underline the importance of sleep, and insomniacs need to find ways to improve their sleeping habits, such as exercising, eating a better diet, keeping the bedroom dark and switching off all electronic devices at least an hour before bed.

Biomarker Res, 2025; 13(1): 67



Creatine: The Cinderella supplement that aids healthy aging

Our bodies make creatine, but we also need to supplement—and it's not only for bodybuilders and athletes. It's for all of us, especially as we get older

Search for the best supplements for healthy aging, and the usual suspects pop up. High on the list are omega-3 fatty acids, which slow biological aging according to a major study this year.

Then there are magnesium, B12, calcium, curcumin, CoQ10 and vitamin C. However, no list includes creatine, which improves muscle strength and mental capacity, according to a growing group of advocates.

But then creatine is something of a Cinderella supplement. For years, it's been the preserve of athletes and bodybuilders who use it as a performance enhancer, and critics say it can cause dehydration, bloating and cramping. Researchers, however, think the downsides haven't been proven and creatine is something we all should be taking, especially as we get older.

Our bodies naturally create creatine, a compound made up of amino acids. It's stored in muscle tissue as phosphocreatine, which helps regenerate ATP, the body's main energy source,

especially during intense activity. It also supports muscles and keeps us flexible.

We produce about a gram of creatine every day, although one of its biggest champions, Dr Richard Kreider, professor and director of the Exercise & Sport Nutrition Lab at Texas A&M University, reckons we need 2–4 g, depending on our muscle mass and activity levels.

Most people fall short of getting enough from diet alone—the best dietary sources are meat and fish—which is why he recommends we top up levels with

Even without resistance training, 20g of creatine daily for a week improves hand-grip strength and muscle power and endurance in older people, researchers discovered

supplements. “You only get about a gram of creatine per pound (0.45 kg) of red meat or fish, like salmon, so it's expensive and takes a lot of calories to get a gram,” Kreider said.

When we get older and our bodies produce less creatine, supplementing becomes more important because it can protect aging muscles and bones, a study by researchers from the University of Regina in Canada has established.¹

Specifically, it can combat sarcopenia, the age-related decrease in muscle strength and physical performance associated with reduced bone mass and chronic low-grade inflammation. Creatine supplementation can increase aging muscle mass and muscle performance. It can also reduce the risk of falls and even slow inflammation and bone loss, the researchers found.

Adding resistance training to the mix produces an even better result, say researchers from the University of Saskatchewan. They found a significantly greater increase in lean tissue mass and upper- and lower-body maximal strength in people with average ages of 57–70 who supplemented with creatine during resistance training for up to a year, compared to those who only did resistance training.²

Even without resistance training, supplementing creatine significantly improves hand-grip strength and muscle power and endurance, researchers discovered when they gave older men and women 20 g supplements every day for just a week.³ And taking the supplements for a month reduced lower body muscle fatigue in older men, another study showed.⁴

Power to the brain

Although it's usually seen as a support for muscles and bones, creatine also helps maintain memory and cognitive function. Only about 5 percent of creatine makes its way to the brain, but it seems to play a vital role in cognitive abilities and functioning.

The brain needs plenty of energy, taking up around 20 percent of the body's energy stores every day, and insomnia, hypoxia (oxygen depletion) and cognitive decline are all signs of an inadequate energy supply to the brain.

Creatine may even help prevent neurodegenerative diseases like

WHAT FOODS CAN YOU EAT TO GET MORE CREATINE?

These values are for raw foods. Cooking, especially at high temperatures, can lower the amount of creatine they contain. Creatine occurs in only trace amounts in plant foods, though eating those that contain the three amino acids in creatine (glycine, arginine and methionine) can help the body make more.

Herring: 1.25 g per 4 oz serving

Salmon: 0.50 g per 4 oz serving

Plaice: 0.23 g per 4 oz serving

Tuna: 0.45 g per 4 oz serving

Cod: 0.35 g per 4 oz serving

Pork: 0.57 g per 4 oz serving

Beef: 0.50 g per 4 oz serving

Chicken: 0.41 g per 4 oz serving

Turkey: 0.30 g per 4 oz serving

Milk: 0.30 g per 8 fl oz serving

Cheese: 0.83 g per 1 oz serving

Eggs: 0.10 g per large egg

Alzheimer's, in which creatine levels in the brain diminish. In mouse models, supplementing for up to nine weeks helped protect the brain, a meta-analysis by Brazilian researchers reported.¹

Conversely, when creatine levels are low enough to deplete creatine stores in the brain, the result is mental and developmental disorders such as learning delays and seizures. However, taking creatine supplements can help to reverse these problems, researchers from Liverpool University have found. They also discovered that, in older people, supplements helped improve feats of memory such as number recall as well as long-term memory challenges.²

Best of all, creatine could even help us live longer. People who supplement creatine enjoy greater longevity, although the benefit isn't so clear when we factor in a poor diet and lifestyle choices, which can mitigate its positive effects, says a researcher from the University of Agder in Norway. He followed more than 4,000 Americans for nearly 20 years and found those who were supplementing with at least 1 g of creatine a day were living longer than those getting less.³

Looking deeper, other researchers think creatine slows aging at the cellular level. It improves cellular homeostasis (balance), reduces oxidative stress and interferes with nerve signaling that promotes the aging process, say other researchers at Agder.⁴

Not all good news

Despite the good news, creatine gets bad press, although stories about its safety or claims that it causes bloating and cramping don't stand up to scientific scrutiny, says Kreider. He has spent more than 30 years investigating the effects of creatine, and his latest research has explored adverse reactions to the supplement. After analyzing 685 human clinical trials involving 13,452 people, he found few reports of side effects.⁵

Other researchers aren't so sure. Having too much creatine could cause hypertension (high blood pressure), an international team of researchers says.

They studied over 3,000 people for a median of seven years and analyzed their levels of creatine. Those with higher levels were more likely to have developed hypertension, they found, though the

A researcher followed more than 4,000 Americans for nearly 20 years and found those supplementing with at least 1 g of creatine a day were living longer than those getting less

effect was significant only in the men after adjusting for other factors.⁶

Kreider is also concerned about pressure to restrict creatine supplementation among young athletes. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Sports Medicine advise against under-18s taking creatine because of potential side effects, but he argues there's no evidence to support their concerns.

We can all benefit

In fact, the very reverse is true, Kreider argues. Children and adolescents who consume less than 1.5 g of creatine a day tend to be shorter and weigh less. They have less lean body mass and lower bone mineral content.

Low creatine intake affects all ages. People over age 60 consuming less than 0.95 g a day tend to get lower scores on cognition tests.

Supplementing could benefit women in the third trimester of pregnancy, but it's required throughout the lifespan to help maintain strength, achieve lean mass and maintain cognitive function. Supplementation also

improves immunity and can promote mitochondrial, heart, vascular and brain health, says Kreider.

Therapeutic benefits have also been reported in the management of type 2 diabetes, though some reports suggest that sufferers shouldn't be supplementing. It may also benefit those who have sarcopenia, osteoporosis or neuromuscular diseases.

Although meat and fish are rich sources of creatine, they're also expensive ones, especially as it takes substantial amounts to get the levels of creatine the body needs. Instead, creatine monohydrate supplements are a relatively inexpensive alternative, and doses of 25 g can be safely taken for 10 days or so before reducing the amount. Supplementing is especially important for vegetarians and vegans, as there are few plant-based sources of creatine.

Only people who have kidney or liver diseases, type 2 diabetes or bipolar disorder should not supplement. Some researchers suggest that women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should also avoid it, although others believe there is little evidence to support the warning.

It's a pity that creatine has found itself in the ghetto of performance-enhancing supplements when it's something from which all of us could benefit. Creatine is a fuel for our energy cells and helps support our muscles and bones as we age, which could prevent falls.

Although creatine clusters around our muscles, some gets to the brain, and it's enough to help maintain memory and cognition. Taking 3–4 g a day seems to be the optimum to compensate for lower production as we age, help us stay healthy and possibly even help us live longer, just as long as we're getting all the other stuff right, too.

Bryan Hubbard

See page 64 for tips to find good-quality creatine supplements and some good options to choose from.

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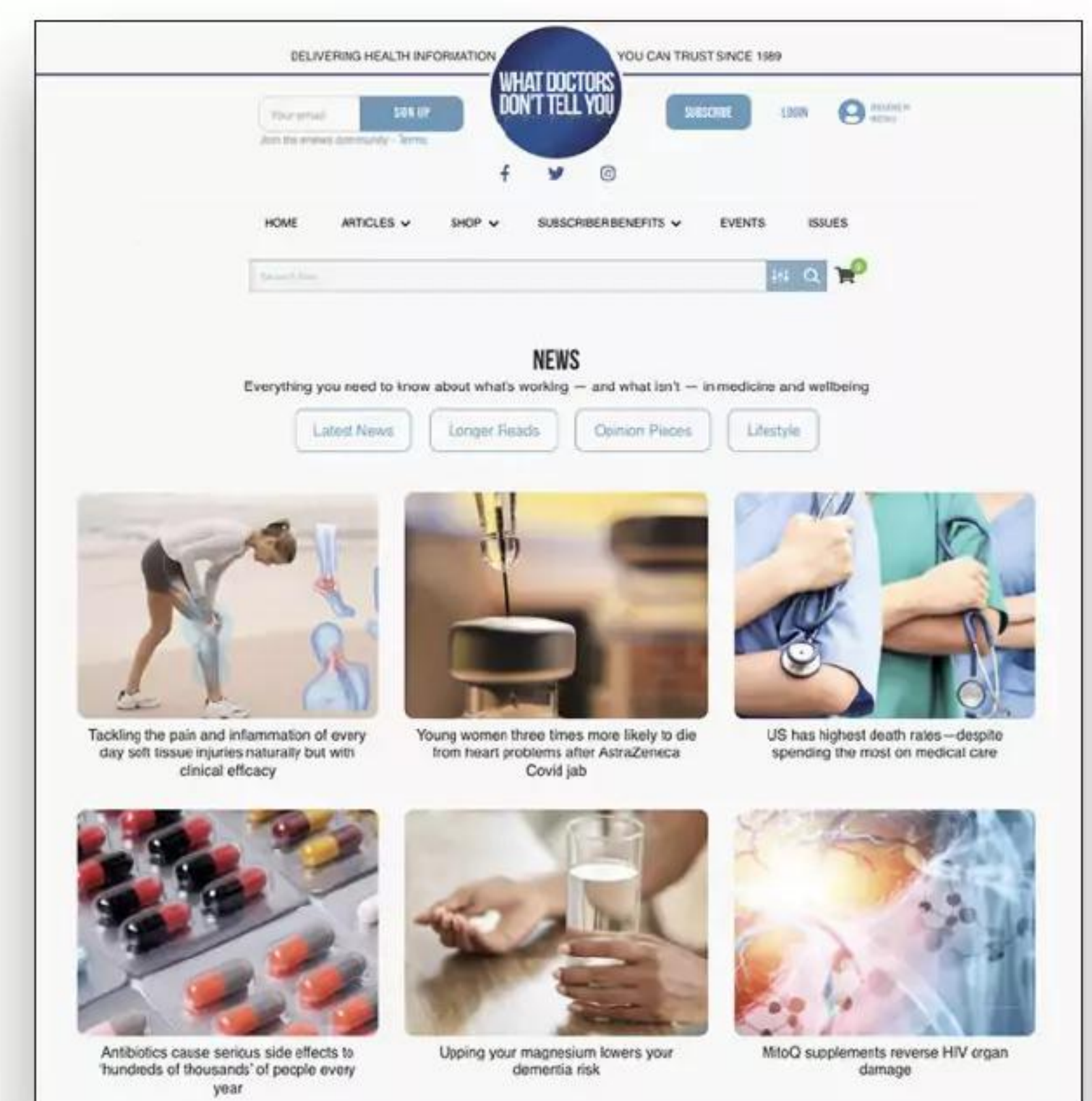
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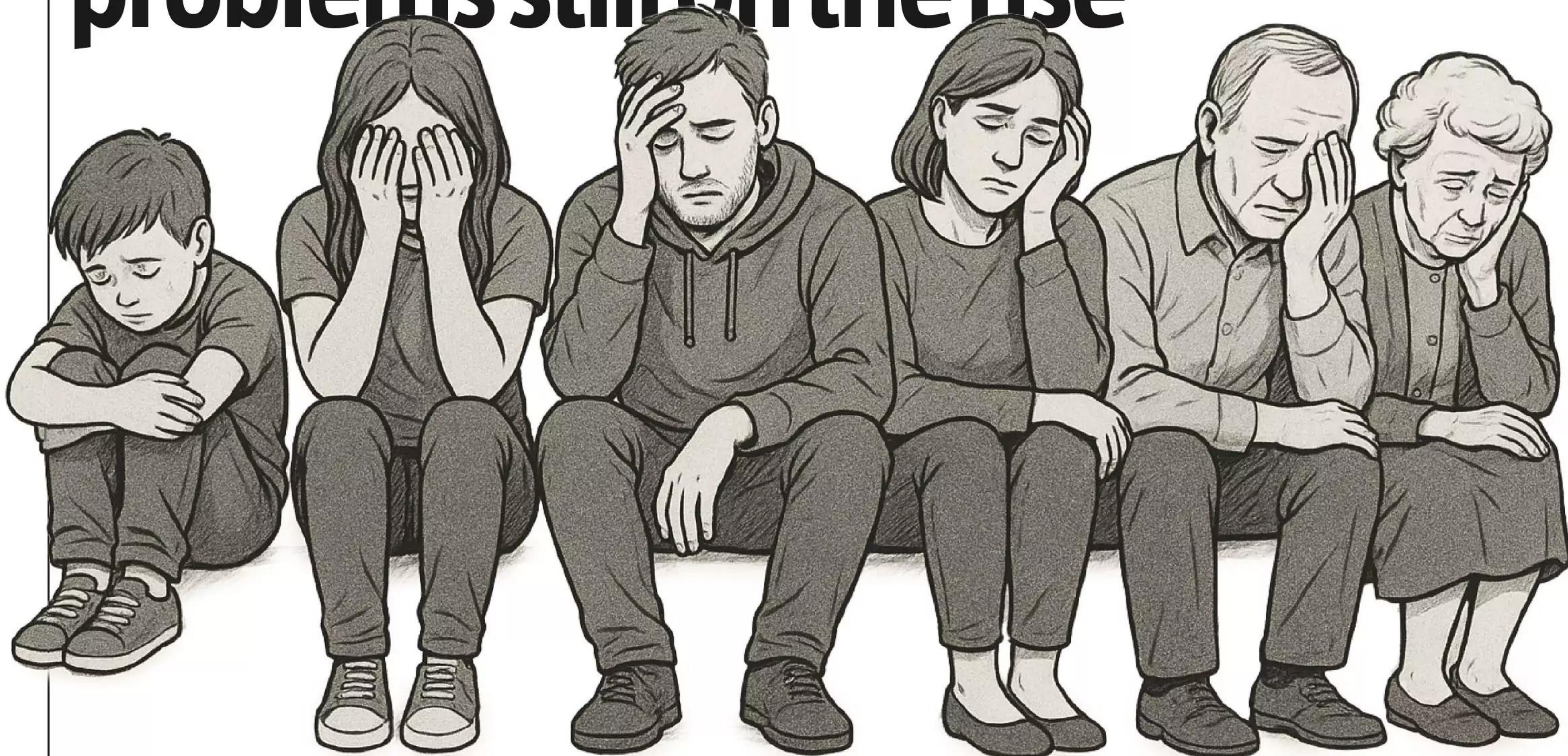
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Years after Covid, mental health problems still on the rise



Nearly every generation is reporting big increases in mental health problems, and it's a rise that hasn't stopped two years after the end of the Covid pandemic

You could blame the mental health crisis on the Covid-19 pandemic and all the lockdowns and social isolation we endured because that was when it seemed to explode. More of us needed help to cope with depression, anxiety and other mental disorders, and a disproportionately high number were young people.

But if the pandemic was the trigger, the trend has continued since its official end in 2023. Every month, more and more of us are seeking therapy for some mental problem, and most worryingly this includes Generation Alpha, children aged 15 years and younger.

Analysts from QR Code Generator have been sifting through the data from the UK's National Health Service (NHS) that reveals the growing mental health crisis,

but the problem isn't just in the UK. It's a phenomenon repeated around the world.

They found that the number of people seeking help for their mental health has risen by 21 percent in the past three years, with the biggest increase in the past year among Gen Z, people aged 16–29. Overall, 2.12 million Britons had approached the NHS for mental healthcare by last April.

One of the most worrying aspects of the trend is the rise in cases afflicting Gen Alpha, which has seen a 21 percent increase in the need for mental healthcare in the past three years.

But it's not affecting only young people. There was an 18 percent rise among Gen X, people aged 45–59; around 264,000 of them had accessed mental health services by last April. The Baby Boomers, aged













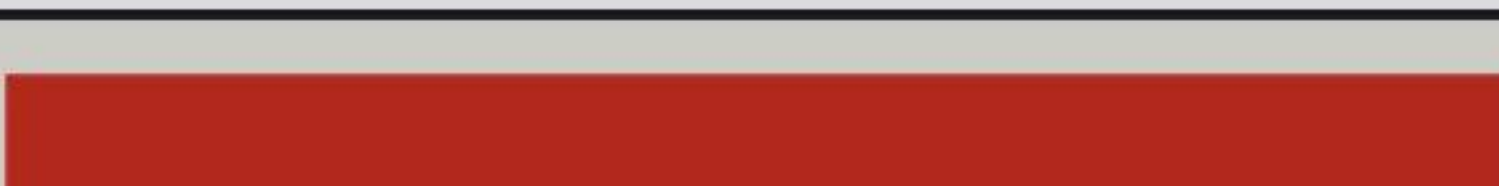







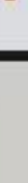
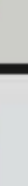
60–79, saw a relatively modest rise of just 7 percent over the past three years, but it was an increase nonetheless.

The biggest increase occurred among millennials, aged 30 to 44 years. About 435,000 sought help, representing a 35 percent rise in three years.

But what's driving the phenomenon? In part, it can be explained by a growing awareness of mental health issues and the near disappearance of the stigma surrounding problems such as depression. Among children, there has been a greater recognition of learning and behavioral problems, such as autism and ADHD, which can also lead to mental health issues.

But these factors still don't give us the full story. As the song puts it, there's something going on, but we don't know what it is.

The mental health crisis through the ages

GENERATION	AGES	CASES, APRIL 2023	CASES, APRIL 2025	% CHANGE
Gen Alpha	0–5	32,094	33,791	+5.3 
	6–10	141,226	188,357	+33.4 
	11–15	253,096	296,156	+17 
Gen Z	16	57,169	63,191	+10.5 
	17	46,595	53,384	+14.6 
	18	31,257	35,102	+12.3 
	19	27,904	32,403	+16.1 
	20–24	135,820	167,249	+23.1 
	25–29	132,988	172,759	+29.9 
Millennials	30–34	125,587	168,640	+34.3 
	35–39	106,649	147,560	+38.4 
	40–44	90,125	119,005	+32 
Gen X	45–49	75,159	95,060	+26.5 
	50–54	77,666	89,121	+14.7 
	55–59	71,296	80,108	+12.4 
Baby Boomers	60–64	56,584	66,745	+18 
	65–69	45,830	50,594	+10.4 
	70–74	48,342	48,477	+0.3 
	75–79	65,186	65,525	+0.5 
Silent Gen	80–84	63,432	64,772	+2.1 
	85–89	53,451	52,566	-1.7 
	90+	30,913	29,524	-4.5 

ALWAYS BONNIES



Once you hit midlife, you're told to lift heavy weights and work your bones hard to prevent fractures. But a new method has come along to revolutionize osteoporosis prevention—all in 10 minutes a week. Tony Edwards investigates

ast March, two astronauts were rescued from the International Space Station (ISS), having been trapped there due to a technical fault. Originally scheduled to spend a mere eight days in space, the pair had been stuck orbiting the Earth in zero gravity for over eight months.

After they successfully splashed down in the ocean, they might have been expected to leap for joy when ferried back to terra firma. But no. They were immediately placed on gurneys and wheeled off to a medical ward.

Why? Although it's fun to experience, prolonged weightlessness is dangerous to the human body. NASA doctors couldn't even risk allowing the astronauts to stand upright without thoroughly checking out their bones beforehand.

In fact, perhaps the most surprising discovery about the medical effects of space travel is that the body needs gravity to maintain its skeleton.

Bone health is usually measured as bone mineral density (BMD), and tests on astronauts routinely show that weightless living reduces BMD by up to 2 percent a month, mainly in the spine, hip and thigh bones. At that rate of loss, bones soon become brittle and vulnerable to fractures.

Bone is made up of a hard outer casing supported by an inner network of spongy bone, which is filled with a softer pulp of bone cells. The inside of a bone is popularly called marrow but is technically known as trabecular bone.

There's a constant interchange between the inner and outer bone layers—used-up bone cells are absorbed into the trabecular area, which in turn creates fresh bone material. To trigger this process, however, bones need to be put under stress, either by supporting muscular movement or by being subjected to the force of gravity.

As it's impractical to simulate gravity in space, the ISS has on-board exercise machines. Astronauts are required to spend as much as two hours a day working out on them. Their primary workout involves exerting whole-body strength against a set of pistons, but they also use a suitably tethered treadmill and a bicycle machine.

As a backup, astronauts must take a small cocktail of anti-osteoporosis pills, mainly a Big Pharma drug called Fosamax but also calcium and vitamin D supplements. Nevertheless, almost all astronauts return to earth with varying degrees of osteoporosis—hence the hurry to wheel them off to a medical center as soon as they land.

Bringing bone science down to earth

But what about us earthlings? The people at highest risk of osteoporosis are cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy.

No surprise there. After all, chemo is designed to destroy rapidly dividing cells, and bones contain a vibrant cell-division factory. Other cancer drug culprits are aromatase inhibitors (for breast cancer) and androgen deprivation therapy (for prostate cancer).

However, by far the most common cause of osteoporosis is Father Time. As we age, our sex hormones begin to ebb away, with catastrophic consequences for the skeleton.

Indeed, the iconographic picture of old age is a figure shuffling along with the aid of a stick, hunched low as if burdened by rounded shoulders. That's

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Who has the highest risk of osteoporosis?

People in these groups are the most likely to suffer from weakened bones, in order from the highest risk to the lowest.

- 1 Chemotherapy patients
- 2 Astronauts
- 3 Older women
- 4 Older men
- 5 Underweight people
- 6 Thyroid patients
- 7 Patients on long-term steroids
- 8 Patients confined long-term to bed
- 9 Adolescents on puberty blockers

Source: Royal Osteoporosis Society

osteoporosis writ large—testament to the spine having been shrunk by the inexorable loss of bone mineral density as the years go by. In fact, after menopause, women can lose up to 2 percent of their BMD every year, slightly more than men over age 50 lose.

It's a degenerative process that has no obvious symptoms... until it's too late. Often, someone first realizes they've got osteoporosis when they fall. A tumble that would have been brushed off at age 30 can crack a bone in the wrist, hip or spine 20 years later, leading to pain, immobility and hospitalization.

Shooting from the hip

The toll in death and disability is horrifying. Almost one in two women and one in five men sustain a bone fracture after age 50.

Many of these fractures are severe enough to dramatically affect quality of life—25 percent of hip fractures result in premature death. That's why osteoporosis has been called “the silent killer.”

Of those who survive, roughly half will be permanently unable to walk without assistance. Astonishingly, in women, the overall incidence of fractures is greater than the incidence of breast cancer, heart attack and stroke combined.

And yet, for such a devastating disease, osteoporosis gets very little coverage in the press. Perhaps that's because it also gets very little attention from medicine itself. That's not just because geriatrics itself is a Cinderella branch of medicine but also because preventing osteoporosis is fairly unexciting.



25 PERCENT OF HIP FRACTURES RESULT IN PREMATURE DEATH, AND HALF OF SURVIVORS ARE PERMANENTLY UNABLE TO WALK WITHOUT ASSISTANCE

After all, there are very few prescription drugs for weak bones, and they haven't changed in decades. The main ones are called bisphosphonates, which decrease the rate of cell turnover within the bone, in theory prolonging the life of the external bone structure.

The best-known brand name is Fosamax (alendronate), the drug given to astronauts. However, in older people, it has been linked to toxic side effects, not least a paradoxical increase in the risk of fractures with long-term use. Another drug, denosumab (brand names Prolia and Xgeva), appears to be more effective, but again there's the paradox of a raised fracture risk if you stop taking it.

Ramping up your sex hormones seems to work better than taking either of these drugs. For women, the loss of estrogen after menopause can be artificially reversed by hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

There was a huge hoopla when HRT was introduced in the 1960s, but since then it's been linked to an increased risk of heart disease and breast cancer. As a result, women have largely been discouraged from taking it for osteoporosis.

Medicine's answer? Change HRT's name and rebrand it.

HRT has now morphed into MHT, “menopausal hormone therapy,” but it's essentially the same thing—an artificial estrogen booster. Modern formulations also carry much the same set of risks as before, such as breast cancer and blood clots. As a result, physicians are warned to weigh the osteoporosis benefits of MHT (a modest 20–40 percent lower fracture risk) against its not-so-modest side effects.¹¹

Although one way to reduce MHT's toxicity is transdermal administration (a patch) rather than a pill,¹² the most effective nontoxic remedies come from a branch of medicine that hospital doctors often shun: micronutrients and diet (see box, page 31).

For example, ingesting 1,600 mg of freeze-dried kefir (fermented milk powder) daily has been found to partially reverse osteoporosis,¹³ an outcome

considered well nigh impossible within conventional pharmacology. Simple *Lactobacillus* probiotics are almost equally effective.¹⁴

Surprisingly, the lycopene in cooked tomatoes also appears to be of benefit.¹⁵ Even more astonishing, so does wine.

A US study has found that a third of a bottle of wine a day significantly improves BMD in postmenopausal women.¹⁶ Indeed, in Romania, researchers have noted that any amount of wine drinking halves the risk of fractures in both sexes (see page 31).¹⁷

How else to prevent osteoporosis?

The most common prevention strategies are various types of exercise regimes. Because muscles are attached

Have I got osteoporosis? The tests

Heel scan

The least accurate of the options listed here, this test uses ultrasound to measure bone density in the heel of the foot. That's where bone growth is most likely to take place (due to the mechanical effects of walking), so it's believed to be a proxy measure for the rest of the body.

But the evidence says it's not. As a consequence, its ability to predict fracture risk is relatively poor.¹

DEXA scan

The most common test, this one employs dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) to measure bone density. Although it's often considered the gold-standard BMD assessor, it has significant drawbacks.

For example, its two-dimensional imaging can't analyze structural aspects of bone, such as mechanical and elastic properties, which are important predictors of fracture risk. So it's not very good at spotting potential osteoporosis victims.²

Also, the equipment emits x-rays, so it's used mainly to confirm an osteoporosis diagnosis, not for routine mass screening. And finally, there are questions about its accuracy in women at the high and low ends of height and weight ranges because it doesn't account for bone size, which is closely linked to bone strength, and because fat distribution affects the x-rays' path through the bone (see page 3).³

Other tests

Due to the shortcomings of the methods above, osteoporosis specialists are increasingly turning to three-dimensional imaging. These scan types include quantitative computed tomography (QCT), peripheral QCT (pQCT), high-resolution pQCT (HR-pQCT), and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

CT scans deliver low doses of x-rays similar to those from a DEXA scan, 1–15 microsieverts (μSv), and about the same as normal background radiation (7–10 μSv). MRI uses no radiation.

A cheaper, more portable technology is radiofrequency echographic multi spectrometry (REMS), marketed as Echolight[®]. Some studies show it's more accurate than DEXA, particularly for assessing bone fragility and risk of fracture.⁴ It also doesn't rely on radiation, which makes it safer to use more often.

As well, artificial intelligence is increasingly being touted as the solution to frequent inaccurate diagnoses, whatever the technology.

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to bones, any extra activity during exercise adds to the gravitational force on the bones exerted during simple everyday living. This higher force signals the body to make the bones stronger.

Interestingly, the most effective exercise regimes involve high-impact movements, such as running, jumping and combat sports—activities that place sudden loads on the skeleton. The supportive evidence comes from experiments on laboratory rats showing that bone loading increases BMD.⁵

So far, so good. But studies assessing the value of exercise have been limited; some surprisingly show little or no subsequent reduction in the risk of fractures.

This has led to the development of exercise regimes specifically exploiting bone-loading techniques. There are three main contenders.

High-impact and resistance exercises A regime developed in Erlangen, Germany, in 1998 is both complex and highly intensive: two one-hour gym workouts and two half-hour home sessions per week. The gym workouts combine high-impact aerobic dance, multilateral jumping, high-intensity resistance training and weight training. After all that, if you've got any energy left to spare, the two home workouts are mainly rope-skipping.

Impressive, grueling stuff, but does it work? Well, yes and no.

A 16-year study of more than 100 early-postmenopausal women found the exercisers had half the number of fractures that were occurring in a matched control group. Strangely, though, the exercisers still lost some BMD, suggesting it's difficult to arrest the decline through exercise alone.⁶

LIFTMOR Another regime is LIFTMOR, a handy acronym for Lifting Intervention for Training Muscle and Osteoporosis Rehabilitation. As the name implies, it involves a lot of lifting, much of it very heavy.

There are three basic exercises: deadlift, back squat (both using a weighted barbell) and overhead press. The last is the most unusual: It involves jumping as high as possible, grabbing an overhead bar and then letting go, "landing as heavily as comfortably possible," the instructions say.

Although LIFTMOR's target customers are mainly older women, a surprising number manage to complete the exercises—some lift barbells weighing as much as 165 lb (75 kg). However, a few of them have complained of bone damage.

Does it work? An eight-month study of postmenopausal women found that two 30-minute exercise sessions per week had measurable benefits, such as slight gains in height. They also saw a 3 percent increase in BMD, but only in the lower spine.⁷ A bigger study of middle-aged Australian men was more promising; it showed up to a 4 percent improvement in overall BMD.⁸

Isometric axial loading The third anti-osteoporosis technique, isometric axial loading (IAL), is diametrically different. Rather than lifting weights or

What's so great about wine?

Among the medical papers on wine and osteoporosis, almost all show a favorable connection between the two.¹ The startling fact is that wine drinkers tend to have better BMD, and hence less osteoporosis, than non-drinkers. The question is why.

The obvious place to look is at wine's constituents, particularly the ingredients other than its alcohol content. Polyphenols are the hundreds of trace chemicals produced by the vine to protect its fruit from disease and the sun's ultraviolet rays. They give wine its color, and the good news is that they promote not only grape health but human health, too.

They behave as antioxidants, repairing the damage caused by free radicals, which the cells generate by simply being alive and using oxygen. A dramatic laboratory assay 25 years ago found a single medium-sized glass of red wine contains "antioxidant activities" equivalent to those in four apples, three glasses of blackcurrant juice, seven glasses of orange juice, or five portions of aubergine (eggplant) or onion.²

Other laboratories have examined polyphenols' direct effects on bone itself. Test tube experiments show that they accelerate healthy natural bone turnover.³ Similarly, feeding red wine polyphenols to female rats whose ovaries had been removed strengthened their bones within just six months, making them seriously fracture-resistant.⁴

So we have solid laboratory evidence that wine polyphenols have favorable effects on osteoporosis. But there's another reason wine is such a tonic for bones: It's not just the polyphenols but the alcohol itself.

Astonishingly, even a regular shot or two of whiskey or gin has been found to increase BMD, according to a meta-analysis comparing 300,000 vulnerable drinkers and non-drinkers. The study authors reported that "consumption of up to two standard drinks of alcohol per day was correlated with higher lumbar and femur neck BMD values, while up to one standard drink of alcohol was correlated with higher hip BMD."⁵

Drinking more than that is bad news, however—mainly because getting tipsy makes one vulnerable to falls and fractures.

But what if you don't like alcohol or wine? There are other sources of polyphenols, of course. Olive oil, for example, is packed with them, and science says it will increase your BMD. Choose top-notch extra virgin olive oil (see *WDDTY* October 2024) and consume a couple ounces every day.⁶

Less onerous and far cheaper are tea and coffee. They're full of polyphenols, but for unknown reasons, they don't appear to have a strong effect. You've got to drink a few cups of each every day to get any benefit.⁷ One factor could be consuming them alongside a protein, such as by adding milk, which some studies show helps to improve polyphenol absorption.⁸

“Wine is a tonic for bones not just because of the polyphenols but because of the alcohol itself”

Nontoxic osteoporosis prevention

Diet

Sardines (wild-caught)
Fruit and vegetables
Animal protein (meat, dairy, eggs)
Fermented milk (yogurt, kefir)
Nuts and seeds
Cooked tomatoes
Wine
Olive oil

Supplements

Calcium 1–2 g/day
Vitamin D 800 IU/day
Vitamin B9 (folate) up to 0.5 g/day
Vitamin C 1–5 g/day
Magnesium up to 1.8 g/day
Zinc over 15 mg/day

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performing jumps, patients exert all their strength against a static device, which records the amount of force exerted. It involves almost zero physical movement, simply maximum muscular exertion.

There are four static machines, each one designed to strengthen a particular part of the skeleton:

1. A vertical lift for the spine, similar to lifting a wheelbarrow's handles
2. A chest press for the upper body, like pushing against a brick wall
3. A leg press for the hip and thigh bones, like the chest press but using your legs
4. A core pull-down for abdominal, pelvic and back strength, similar to pulling yourself up on a bar

Astonishingly, the procedure involves no repetitions (as in conventional exercise), simply four separate muscular strength challenges, each one lasting about five seconds. So the therapy is done and dusted within 10 minutes.

How often must you do it? No more than once a week, "to allow bone growth to occur between sessions," say IAL's proponents.

Wait... that's it?

It sounds too good to be true, but there is some sound science behind it. This method was discovered 15 years ago in pioneering work by Professor Jon Tobias and Dr Kevin Deere at Bristol University's Musculoskeletal Research Unit.

They knew that for bone growth to occur, bones must be forcefully compressed with an impact, but no one had yet put a figure on exactly how much load is needed. The pair decided to find out.

To do so, they recruited a large group of adolescents and put them through a series of graded impact tests. Using measures based on the load exerted by gravity, they found the minimum load required to trigger bone growth in the hip (the most important area) is 4.2 times the force of gravity.¹²

Later experiments found different bone growth thresholds for other parts of the body. This gave IAL the science it needed, enabling it to set the target muscular output for each patient based on their body weight.

For example, once the patient has exerted a force above 4.2 times their weight during the hip exercise, they are assumed to have kick-started a bone "growth trigger" in the area of the body under test. Mimicking a slow-motion impact, the patient needs to maintain the trigger point for only a few seconds.

There are two companies offering similar machines: bioDensity® and OsteoStrong®. Note the trademark registrations, indicating that these are competing enterprises; both are US-based and have franchise outlets internationally.

But, again, does IAL actually work?

IN THE OSTEOSTRONG STUDY, ALL THE WOMEN MANAGED TO AVOID THE BONE DEGENERATION EXPECTED TO OCCUR OVER NEARLY A YEAR

The Australian LIFTMOR study mentioned earlier found that men using the bioDensity machine improved their BMD more than a control group of inactive men, but this method was somewhat less effective than the LIFTMOR exercise regime.

OsteoStrong has undergone about half a dozen tests, all of which have reported some benefit. However, these studies have been variously criticized for being too small or inadequately randomized or for having connections to the equipment manufacturer.

Sweden's prestigious Karolinska Institute recently completed the first independent, properly conducted trial. The (as yet unpublished) study recruited nearly 200 healthy postmenopausal women who were osteoporosis-free at the trial's start.

They were then randomly split into two groups: One received OsteoStrong therapy weekly, and the other was assigned an exercise regime involving two multitasked one-hour gym sessions per week. After nine months, the women's bone health was assessed. Remarkably, there was not much difference between the two groups, say the researchers in a preprint report.

"We saw no statistically significant differences between the two groups regarding [bone strength], BMD and bone markers at follow-up," they write. "However, we did observe improvements within the groups. In the OsteoStrong training, we saw a 2.9 percent increase in bone quality, and in the [exercise group], we saw a 0.8 percent increase in BMD in the lumbar spine."¹³

However, the really important overall finding was that all the women had managed to avoid the bone degeneration expected to occur in such a high-risk population over the course of nearly a year. "In both groups, the BMD in the lumbar spine and hips remained unchanged," the researchers point out. "This is a good thing as a decrease in BMD is normally seen over time."

So here's the question: Rather than toggling yourself up in gym gear for two hours of sweaty exercise a week, could osteoporosis prevention be as simple as spending a mere 10 minutes in your everyday clothes, pitting your strength against static machines?

Unlikely as it sounds, the prospect looks feasible—though these are early days, of course. The proof of the pudding will be in long-term studies to see whether IAL actually reduces fracture risk. If it does, osteoporosis prevention will have been truly revolutionized.

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Locations

OsteoStrong osteostrong.me

This is done on a set of machines called the Spectrum System, one machine for each movement. It has about 200 centers in North America, five in Scandinavia and one in southeast England.

bioDensity biodensity.com

A single machine is used to complete four exercises. The company has about 70 centers in North America, five in the UK, three in continental Europe and one in Dubai.

LIFTMOR has no specific centers, but the technique is generally available in specialist fitness gyms.

Think fast

Intermittent fasting and women's hormones don't always mix, says Marcelle Pick. Here are her top tips for safer fasting and better hormonal balance

Anyone searching for ways to lose weight has surely stumbled across intermittent fasting—and for good reason. There are myriad benefits to eating this way, and people are seeing such great results that they want to share the news.

I've been suggesting that women try intermittent fasting for several years. It can help your body—as well as your brain—function better by reducing inflammation levels.

Research has demonstrated that fasting decreases inflammatory activity and the number of cytokines the body produces.¹ Inflammation has an impact on so many conditions, and on your ability to lose weight. So reducing systemic inflammation is vital.

And that's not the only benefit of intermittent fasting. Others include improved mood, better energy, increased cardiovascular function, longer life expectancy, a healthier relationship with food, and of course fat burning and weight loss (a big reason people adopt this lifestyle these days).

But as with anything, you need to be well informed before trying it. I've heard some valid concerns about intermittent fasting and how it can impact hormonal balance. For some women, especially those already struggling with imbalanced hormones, intermittent fasting can *increase* symptoms, including weight gain. That rather defeats the purpose, doesn't it?

That's why it's critical to consider your own unique circumstances when approaching any weight loss journey. There's simply no program that's right for everyone. But intermittent fasting works for many people, partly because it doesn't limit what you eat.

What is intermittent fasting?

Fasting means going for a specified period of time without eating. But beyond that simple definition, fasting can get confusing. There are so many ways to fast: skipping one meal a day, eating one meal a day, fasting on alternate days, fasting for 24 hours a couple of times a week or setting a specific window of time for eating each day.

It can be hard to know which one is the “right” one. And the truth is, the answer may be different for everyone (we are, after all, unique individuals).

An important point to understand is that intermittent fasting is all about *when* you eat; there aren't typically restrictions on *what* you eat. Still, a healthy diet is key to sustained weight loss and good health, so you shouldn't expect to be able to lose weight while bingeing on desserts and fried foods whenever you do eat. And you should realize that if you have unaddressed food sensitivities, intermittent fasting won't make them disappear.

So, it's not a free-for-all, and it's not about going wild during your eating window. But it's a lot simpler than

having special food to eat and rules to remember. There's no calorie counting, no measuring, no expensive shakes or special “diet” food.

Simply eat a well-balanced diet full of fresh fruits, vegetables, seafood and lean protein within your eating times. And yes, you can throw a treat or two in now and again.

Intermittent fasting is a lifestyle, not a diet. Fad diets are unsustainable; no one can stay on them forever. But with intermittent fasting, once you set the routine, you're on your way to lifelong healthy habits.

Fasting for health

Research has shown that intermittent fasting provides many health benefits beyond weight loss. The following are just a few of them.

Heart health

Heart disease is the world's leading cause of death, according to the World Health Organization. Some of the top risk factors for heart disease are high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and high triglyceride concentrations (levels of fats in the blood).

Some research has shown that intermittent fasting can lower all of these, though the studies have been small and further research is needed. Still, even the possibility that it can help lower the risk of heart disease is encouraging since heart problems claim so many lives.

Diabetes

Diabetes has been steadily increasing in the US and the UK for decades. Intermittent fasting has a positive impact on some risk factors for type 2 diabetes, specifically by lowering insulin levels and reducing insulin resistance.

One randomized, controlled study of more than 100 obese or overweight young women found that intermittent fasting for six months reduced insulin levels by 29 percent and insulin resistance by 19 percent.² Other research has shown that intermittent fasting lowered insulin levels 20–31 percent and blood sugar levels by 3–6 percent in people with prediabetes in just eight to 12 weeks.³

But there are two sides to every story: One small study showed a negative impact on blood sugar control in women (but not in men) after 22 days

A woman with dark, curly hair is laughing joyfully, her eyes closed and mouth wide open. She is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved, ribbed t-shirt. She is holding a clear glass bowl filled with fresh green leafy vegetables, including lettuce and parsley, with a red bell pepper visible on the side. The background shows an open refrigerator with shelves containing various items, and a large, semi-transparent clock face is overlaid on the left side of the image. The overall scene is bright and positive, suggesting a healthy lifestyle.

Despite its many benefits, some women have reported serious issues when trying intermittent fasting, including binge eating, a pause in menstrual cycles, metabolic disturbances and early-onset menopause

of alternate-day fasting.¹⁴ This is a great demonstration of how fasting can have different impacts on women than on men. That's why it's important to know how and when intermittent fasting may work best for you.

Inflammation

Some research has shown that intermittent fasting can reduce some of the key markers of inflammation, including interleukin-6, C-reactive protein and homocysteine (to learn more about homocysteine, see *WDDTY* December 2024).

A small study conducted during Ramadan, for instance, showed significantly lower levels of each of these markers during fasting (which happens during daylight hours for a month) compared to levels taken one week before Ramadan began.¹⁵ Other research has had similar results, although more studies are required to really understand the impact of fasting on inflammation.

Psychological health

Beyond physical health, research has also demonstrated that intermittent fasting can have a positive impact on mood and overall psychological well-being. It's been found to decrease depression and binge eating as well as improve body image in obese adults.¹⁶

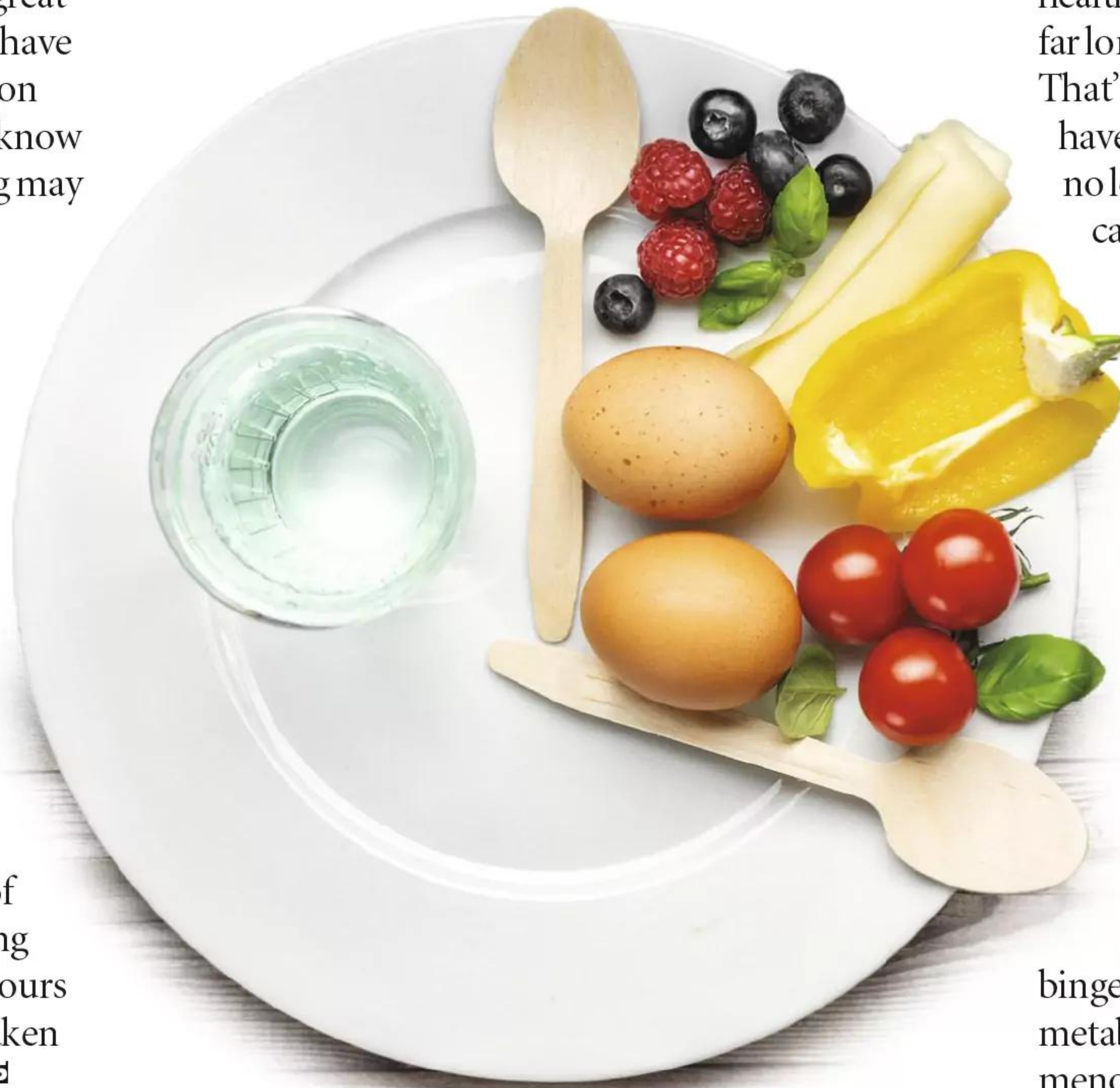
Muscle mass

When compared to traditional calorie restriction diets, animal studies show that intermittent fasting seems to help retain muscle mass.¹⁷ And a 2011 review of research found that obese people who practiced alternate-day fasting didn't lose as much lean mass as those restricting calories daily.¹⁸ For most people, weight loss is about getting rid of unsightly fat, not muscle.

Weight loss

Aside from religious fasting, the primary reason many people try intermittent fasting is to lose weight. Research indicates that intermittent fasting is as effective for short-term weight loss as traditional calorie-restricting diets.¹⁹

And because you can make intermittent fasting a part of a regular



Intermittent fasting: A lifestyle, not a diet

Intermittent fasting can be an amazing way to shift out of bad habits like snacking constantly and obsessing over food. Often, once they begin a fasting routine, people realize they may have been eating for reasons that have nothing to do with hunger.

It's important to plan ahead and start slowly; jumping right in might lead to those unwanted hormonal changes and side effects. Start with setting a time to stop eating in the evening.

Be sure to eat a balanced dinner large enough to satisfy you through the evening hours, then simply don't eat anything else until breakfast. Slowly stretch out the time of your fast by pushing dinner a little earlier or breakfast a bit later.

Another option is to choose just one day a week to fast, whether that means no food at all or a substantially lower number of calories that day.

If you've been a yo-yo dieter, you may be wary of this as just one more program. But remember, fasting isn't a diet. It can help you change old habits while allowing you to eat what you want (within reason, of course).

Less restriction and more freedom is certainly appealing to me—that's why I've practiced intermittent fasting for years!

healthy lifestyle, you can sustain it for far longer than many traditional diets. That's because traditional "diets" often have an end point, and once calories are no longer tightly monitored, the weight can come right back.

Intermittent fasting in women

With all those benefits, you might be wondering why someone wouldn't try it. I do recommend it to most of my clients—as long as they take specific factors into account.

Weight loss is a complicated matter for anyone, but particularly so for some women, it seems. These women have reported serious issues when trying intermittent fasting, including binge eating, a pause in menstrual cycles, metabolic disturbances and early-onset menopause, even in younger women. While much of this evidence is anecdotal, I've heard it often enough to recommend caution when starting a regimen of intermittent fasting.

Talking with a trusted healthcare professional is crucial to approaching fasting in a careful, thoughtful way. Every woman has unique circumstances, some of which may make their bodies highly sensitive to calorie restriction.

In some women, calorie restriction can lead to lower metabolism, fatigue, loss of fertility, nutrient deficiencies, weaker bones, and higher risk of infection or illness due to a compromised immune response. I'm not saying these things to scare you, and I still believe intermittent fasting can work well for most women. But it's important to understand the risks of any weight loss effort.

Where do these adverse effects come from? Like so many health concerns, particularly in women, it's all about hormones. Hormonal dysfunction can wreak havoc on almost every aspect of health. That's why it's so important to attend to hormone health as part of the complete picture, no matter what your goals are.

Low calorie intake can affect the hypothalamus, disrupting the production of gonadotropin-releasing hormone, which aids in the release of two reproductive hormones: luteinizing hormone and follicle-stimulating

hormone. These hormones are supposed to relay messages to the ovaries, and when they can't do so properly, irregular periods, infertility and other issues may arise.

This disruption in communication also affects levels of estrogen and progesterone, which are required for ovulation, healthy pregnancy and so much more.

So, does that mean women should just avoid intermittent fasting altogether? My answer is a resounding no. You just have to listen to your body and determine what will work for you.

And if you experience symptoms of hormonal imbalance after starting intermittent fasting, it's essential to work with your healthcare provider or a trained functional medicine practitioner to determine whether you should continue.

Additionally, there are a few groups of people who should avoid fasting:

- Pregnant women
- Infants and young children
- People with eating disorders
- People with type 1 diabetes
- Anyone who is severely underweight
- Extreme athletes
- People on certain types of medications, especially corticosteroids and medications for diabetes or seizures

5 tips for hormonally balanced and safe fasting

Now that you understand what intermittent fasting is, how it can benefit your health and the potential risks, particularly for women, I want to give you my top tips to reduce those risks. There is no right approach for everyone, but with all the fasting options out there, I'm confident that most women can find one that works for them.

1. Find the best method for you

In general, keeping fasting times shorter (perhaps 12 hours instead of 16) can help limit the hormonal impacts of fasting. Fasting on alternate days instead of daily and eating a small number of calories (about 25 percent of your usual intake) on fasting days are other methods that help women achieve weight loss success without side effects.

2. Avoid nutritional deficiencies

Whatever weight loss method you choose, make sure your body is getting the essential vitamins, minerals and other nutrients it needs. That's why eating

healthy, whole foods during non-fasting periods is key.

Unfortunately, it's not always enough. Getting the right nutrients can be difficult anytime because of poor agricultural practices and nutrient depletion from the soil.

That's why I always recommend a high-quality multivitamin to my clients, whether they're dieting or not. You may also need specific support for hormonal balance; work with your provider to determine the right regimen for your needs.

3. Take it easy on fasting days

That's not to say you shouldn't exercise at all, but if calorie intake is very low, you simply don't have the energy for high-impact cardio workouts. Yoga, stretching, Pilates and walking are all good choices to keep your body moving without pushing it too far.

4. Don't fast during your period

Your hormones are already working overtime during menstruation. It's best to honor your body and the hard work it's doing rather than adding extra strain.

Remember, limiting calories strains your body and activates the stress response as if there's a true famine. Too much stress can lead to chronic issues with hormonal balance and much bigger problems.

5. Pay attention to how you feel

You know your body best, and you'll know if something doesn't feel right. Don't ignore it; act immediately. Working with a trusted professional means gaining access to expert advice and the ability to find a new approach quickly if the one you're using isn't right for you.

Remember, to make weight loss sustainable, you must change your mindset as well as your eating habits. That's why it's so important to tweak your approach to find the best long-term solutions.



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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.

When going gets tough

Struggling with symptoms of an enlarged prostate? Homeopath David Needleman shares his top nine homeopathic remedies to ease pain and improve your flow

A condition I'm commonly consulted about as a homeopath is benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), also known as an enlarged prostate. Hyperplasia is an increased number of cells, and *benign* means the growth is not cancerous.

Older age is a key risk factor—some 70 percent of men aged 70 or older have an enlarged prostate.¹ But dietary factors (like heavy alcohol or caffeine intake), certain medications, and obesity or diabetes can also increase the chances of BPH.²

Because an enlarged prostate can press on the bladder and urethra (the tube that transports urine from the bladder to the outside of the body), BPH can cause a long list of urinary symptoms. These include difficulty starting urination, dribbling at the end of urination, needing to urinate more frequently or urgently (especially at night), having a weak urine stream and feeling that your bladder has not emptied fully.

Symptoms of BPH can overlap with those of prostate cancer (see box, page 39), and the two conditions can occur at the same time, so it's vital to regularly get checked out by a doctor to rule this out.

Immediate medical treatment is not always needed for BPH; watchful waiting and lifestyle changes may be advised instead. But for moderate to severe symptoms, drugs like alpha-blockers and 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors may be prescribed. These

can come with a range of nasty side effects, from lack of energy and low blood pressure to loss of libido and sexual dysfunction.³

Fortunately, homeopathy can help with the symptoms of an enlarged prostate. When I started my NHS practice in 1995, my first two patients were both suffering from BPH and waiting for a transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP—a surgical procedure recommended in severe cases when medications haven't worked).

I prescribed the homeopathic remedy *Sabal Serrulata*, and 30 years later they still have not needed the operation.

The best way forward is early diagnosis followed by constitutional treatment with a qualified homeopath and the appropriate remedy for your particular symptom picture. Constitutional treatment requires a more intense evaluation of the patient and their symptoms, considering every detail of their individual health experience; see my article in *WDDTY* May 2025 for more information about this.

But here are my top nine homeopathic remedies for BPH. I often recommend them alongside the herbal remedy saw palmetto (see *WDDTY* January 2021 and January 2022 for more useful herbs and other effective natural options for BPH).

These remedies are intended for short-term use. Make sure you see a doctor or qualified health practitioner if your symptoms don't resolve, or if they change or worsen.

Sabal Serrulata

This remedy is suitable if you have the following symptoms:

- A constant desire to pass water, especially at night
- Leaking with exercise, laughing or coughing
- Smarting or burning in the urethra (but it can also be painless)
- Sediment (creamy white) in the urine
- Heavy, achy pain and a sense of coldness in the bladder, extending to the genitals

Suggested dosage: 6C or 12C, raising the potency to 30C if necessary; start with a dose once a day and increase to twice a day if needed

Chimaphila

This remedy is suitable if you have the following symptoms:

- Foul-smelling urine that's cloudy; has a thick, stringy consistency; or contains mucus and pus
- Straining before urination
- Urinary retention—your bladder doesn't fully empty when you urinate
- Pain, burning, stinging or itching when urinating
- Ability to urinate only with the body inclined forward and the feet apart (something many of my patients with BPH have reported)

Suggested dosage: 30C once a day, increasing to twice a day if needed; works well in conjunction with *Sabal Serrulata*

Conium

This remedy is suitable if you have the following symptoms:

- Interrupted urination (it stops and starts again, taking a long time to empty the bladder)
- Dribbling after urination
- Urine that feels hot
- Impotence

Suggested dosage: 200C potency is best, but 30C will also work; take one dose twice a day until symptoms are relieved

Baryta Carbonica

This remedy is suitable if you have the following symptoms:

- A frequent urge to urinate and difficulty retaining urine
- A burning sensation in the urethra while urinating
- Urine that's dark brown and scanty
- Impotence

Suggested dosage: 30C three times a day



Prostate cancer symptoms

Prostate cancer can cause symptoms similar to those seen in BPH, such as these:

- Needing to urinate more frequently, especially at night
- Needing to rush to the toilet
- Difficulty in starting to urinate
- Straining or taking a long time to urinate
- Weak urine stream
- Feeling that the bladder has not fully emptied

These are some additional symptoms of prostate cancer:

- Blood in the urine or semen
- Pain in the lower back, hips or pelvis
- Unexplained weight loss
- Unusual tiredness or weakness

Thuja

This remedy is suitable if you have the following symptoms:

- A scalding sensation when urinating
- Difficulty initiating urination—a feeling that the bladder is paralyzed
- Involuntary urination at night

Suggested dosage: 30C three times a day

Narayani Prostate Mix no. 93

This combination remedy covers all the issues with the prostate. Here's a breakdown of what's in it:

- Gunpowder, for infection
- KBS, a combination remedy that stands for “kidney, bladder, stones” and is used to treat various prostate issues
- Sabal Serrulata, for the various BPH symptoms mentioned under this remedy above
- Sarsaparilla, for pain associated with the kidneys and prostate

Suggested dosage: The remedies in this mix are all in 30C potency; take two pills six times a day, reducing to three times a day as symptoms improve

See *WDDTY* June 2025 for more information about prostate cancer.

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Calcarea Carbonica

This remedy, albeit not commonly used, is suitable for the following symptoms:

- Urine that is dark, is brown or has a strong odor
- Blood or a white, milky sediment in the urine
- Polyps in the bladder
- Enuresis (involuntary urination) while sleeping or walking
- Increased sexual desire but problems with erections

Suggested dosage: Again, 200C is ideal, but 30C is fine, too; start with a dose once a day, increasing to twice a day if needed

Staphisagria

This remedy is suitable if you have the following symptoms:

- A frequent urge to urinate
- Urinating in thin streams or drop by drop

- A burning sensation in the urethra while urinating
- Hemorrhoids
- Prostatitis (inflammation of the prostate)
- Suppressed anger and persistent sexual thoughts

Suggested dosage: 200C twice a day

Pulsatilla

This remedy is most often associated with women's health issues, but it's also useful for treating BPH with the following symptoms:

- Involuntary urination when lying down, laughing, coughing, sneezing, hearing a sudden noise, passing wind or sleeping
- The sensation of a stone in the bladder
- Poor or weak urine stream
- Interrupted urination

Suggested dosage: 30C three times a day



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.

More than skin deep

This sulfurous byproduct of wood processing can penetrate deep into the body — and into many health problems, Cate Montana reports

Few health products have had as checkered a career as dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO). In fact, the acronym for this highly versatile byproduct of the wood pulp industry might as well stand for Demonized, Misunderstood, Scorned and Overlooked. An organosulfur compound with the formula $(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{S}=\text{O}$, as a polar aprotic solvent, DMSO displays some serious rockstar qualities in the chemistry world.

Polar means it has strong magnetizing qualities, and DMSO molecules have strong positive and negative poles. But they also have an “uneven charge distribution,” which is what gives DMSO its dissolving superpowers. Aprotic means it can’t donate protons (hydrogen ions), which is why it can speed up certain reactions while preventing unwanted side effects.

DMSO can act as either an acid or a base depending on what other chemicals are present. Basically, it’s so versatile and gets along with so many other substances that it’s been dubbed “the Switzerland of solvents.”

Nontoxic, relatively inert and stable at high temperatures with an extraordinarily high freezing/melting point of 65.3°F (18.5°C), DMSO is an industrial solvent for many products, including paint, hydrocarbons, synthetic materials, salts and even gases. As a laboratory solvent, it’s used in nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy, in biological studies and as a delivery vehicle for drug therapies. DMSO also acts as a cryoprotectant and is added to cell cultures and tissue samples to prevent the formation of ice crystals, which may damage the samples.

The health applications of DMSO and its healing capacities are so far-reaching, there’s good reason many have labeled it a “miracle cure”—a perception and designation that created enormous problems soon after it began to receive public attention in the 1960s. For DMSO is not so much a miracle cure as a miracle helper when it comes to treating an enormous variety of health issues.

Sulfur safety

DMSO is clinically proven to have a low toxicological profile, meaning it’s not harmful to the human body. And it’s extremely biocompatible.

Methionine, cysteine and taurine are all sulfur-containing amino acids vital to our health. Sulfur is a macro-mineral found in human breast milk and one of the most abundant minerals in the body.

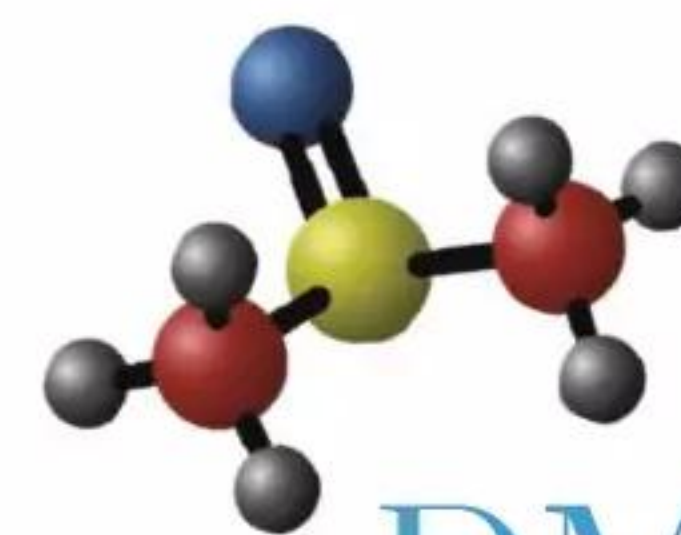
Sulfur compounds, such as S-adenosylmethionine (SAMe), MSM (methylsulfonylmethane) and glucosamine (chondroitin sulfate), have clinical applications in the treatment of numerous conditions, from depression to congestive heart failure.¹ Sulfur dioxide is produced in human tissue and regulates cardiovascular processes.²

Although it’s like many other sulfur compounds, because of its unique chemistry, DMSO demonstrates broad-spectrum therapeutic effects.

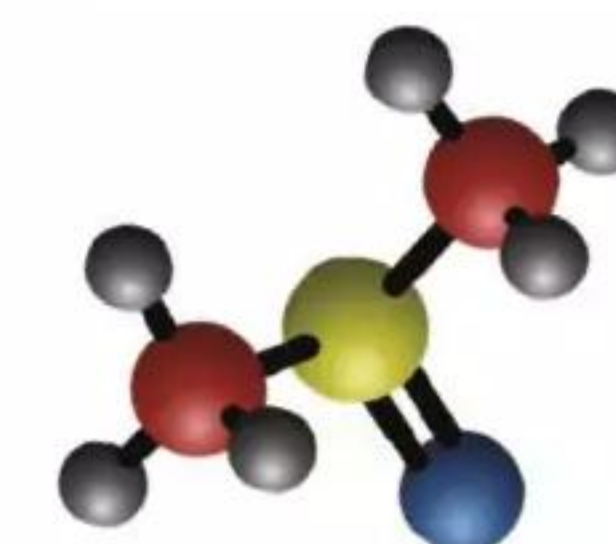
What can DMSO do?

Fight pathogens It’s clinically proven to be antibacterial and is effective against *Staphylococcus aureus*, Group B *Streptococcus*, *Escherichia coli*, *Corynebacteria* and other bacterial species.³ It’s also antifungal and antiviral.⁴

Heal tissue Lab studies show DMSO helps rapidly heal and regenerate tissue after burns without scarring.⁵ In rats, it was found to help heal corrosive esophagitis—damage to the esophagus caused by acid reflux or by (accidental or otherwise) ingestion of alkaline substances such as bleach and other household cleaners.⁶ Rat



DMSO is not so much a miracle cure as a miracle helper when it comes to treating an enormous variety of health issues



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studies also found it could ease pain from wounds, especially burns.¹⁴

Low-concentration DMSO has successfully treated diabetic skin wounds in mice.¹⁵ DMSO promotes tissue regeneration and is used by plastic surgeons to help speed breast reconstruction.¹⁶ It also helps promote nerve regeneration and is especially effective for healing nerve injuries common in arm and leg trauma, including simple ankle sprains.¹⁷

Relieve pain and inflammation Because it's rapidly and easily absorbed through the skin and slows pain signals through nerve fibers to and from the brain, it can rapidly relieve musculoskeletal pain when applied topically.¹⁸ By suppressing the production of inflammatory signaling proteins, DMSO is also effective for treating autoimmune disorders, including autoimmune forms of arthritis.¹⁹

In the sports arena, DMSO is famous for treating injuries, inflammation, joint pain and stiffness, and joint pain from movement under loading.²⁰

Restore brain function Clinical data suggests it's a powerful treatment for stroke victims, reducing neurologic disability and enabling them to regain upper and lower body movement and fine motor skills.²¹ Testing in roundworms showed that by regulating neurotransmitters, DMSO protects against the production of abnormal amyloid-beta proteins and plaques in the brain, which have been linked to Alzheimer's disease.²²

Boost skin and eye health DMSO also treats skin cancer, herpes simplex, fungal infections and pressure ulcers.²³ It is often used in skin rejuvenation treatments and is an excellent therapeutic agent and drug vehicle for eye diseases.²⁴ And because it protects cells against harmful molecules such as free radicals, DMSO shows anti-aging and longevity benefits in roundworm and fruit fly studies.²⁵

Destroy cancer Last, but far from least, DMSO is making a rapid entry into the cancer field in treating various cancers, making chemotherapy more effective, and easing side effects of both chemotherapy and radiation. One of the major characteristics of cancer cells is that they're immature and don't differentiate into the various types of cells they should. As well, cancer cells are aggressive and resistant to various treatments.

In new studies, DMSO shows promise for transforming cancerous cells into mature, noncancerous ones.²⁶ At relatively low concentrations, it blocks cancer cells' ability to multiply, shrinks and breaks them up, and causes apoptosis (cell death).²⁷

Studies show that DMSO stimulates the production of the tumor suppressor protein HLJ1 by activating a gene that controls cell maturity, multiplication and apoptosis.²⁸ DMSO alone, as well as combined with other drugs, can prevent tissue damage caused by radiation treatments.²⁹

DMSO assists many chemotherapy drugs to enter cancer cells, making chemotherapy more potent.³⁰ As a result, the amount and duration of chemotherapy



What happens when you use DMSO?

These are some common side effects of using DMSO:

- Garlic taste and mouth odor
- Itching
- Rash
- Roughened or thickened skin
- Headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

People vary as far as skin sensitivity is concerned, so it's wise to treat a small test area before using a broad application. Depending on the concentration, you may notice warmth, redness, itching and local hives on and around treated skin.

These symptoms usually disappear within a couple of hours, and using natural aloe vera can help mitigate or prevent this reaction. Because of these side effects, some practitioners advise

going on a liver-cleansing diet before starting to use DMSO.

"One of the reasons people get that garlic taste in the mouth or some people get rashes from using DMSO is because the liver isn't functioning very well," explains Dr Amanda Vollmer. "When that's the case, the body pushes toxins out through the skin because the liver is not able to handle the load and the body gets overwhelmed with the waste material being released."

NOTE: Do not use DMSO in any form on bites, stings, poison ivy or poison oak. "DMSO is not the remedy for these problems, and you could spread the irritation," says Vollmer.

"Once the bug bite is settled down, perfect. Let the body sort things out first, and then you can start to use the DMSO afterward."

a cancer patient needs can be reduced, producing fewer toxic effects on their health. As well, it effectively prevents many complications that follow higher doses of chemotherapy.

It also ushers chemotherapy drugs through the blood-brain barrier, making once-unreachable brain tumors vulnerable to treatment.³¹ And finally, it has proven invaluable in mitigating the pain so many people suffer from various cancers.

Pulp nonfiction

Although dimethyl sulfoxide was discovered in Russia as early as 1867, it didn't come into use until the 1950s, when the large American paper manufacturing company Crown Zellerbach decided to develop useful chemicals from its tree pulp waste. A sulfur alkylating agent was purified by distillation and oxidized to make dimethyl sulfoxide, DMSO, and its solvent capabilities quickly made it commercially viable.

Medicinal use began when Oregon Medical School researcher Stanley W. Jacob, MD, discovered DMSO's antifreeze properties could be used to preserve

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transplanted organs without any danger of ice crystals forming in the tissues. As the story goes, one day Jacob spilled some DMSO on his hands and within minutes experienced its characteristic garlic taste in his mouth.

Realizing that DMSO had the ability to pass through the skin and other cellular membranes, he began experimenting to see if it could be used for transdermal drug delivery. The big pharmaceutical companies quickly got involved.

Meanwhile stories began circulating about DMSO's curative powers. Rumors of injured animals coming to drink from runoff and puddles around pulp mills began to circulate throughout the Pacific Northwest, as did stories of DMSO being used to miraculously heal the wounds of local lumberjacks. Reports of lame thoroughbred race horses being healed with topical applications of DMSO added to the excitement.

But then, in 1964, the drug company Merck submitted data to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that included a report from a veterinarian claiming DMSO caused abnormal changes in the eyes of lab animals. Simultaneously, a story about an Irish woman using it on her sprained wrist and then dying of unknown causes three days later hit the news.

Both stories were reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, at which point the FDA jumped in and banned all clinical trials with DMSO in the US. The ban has since been lifted, but so far, the only FDA-approved use of DMSO for humans is a 50 percent DMSO solution for direct injection into the bladder via a catheter to treat interstitial cystitis (bladder pain syndrome).

Practical medicine

Today, the vast majority of DMSO products are made from manufacturing processes that have nothing to do with wood pulp. There are two common methods of creation. The first is the methylation (replacing a hydrogen atom with a methyl group, CH_3) of dimethyl sulfide (DMS), an organosulfur compound with the formula $(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{S}$. The other is "direct sulfuration of methane," combining methane and sulfur, then reducing the results to DMSO.

To this day, few practicing physicians even know about DMSO and its stunning variety of applications. Dr Amandha Vollmer (online at yummy.doctor), a naturopath from Toronto, Canada, first heard about DMSO in college but ignored it because it was presented as useful only in the context of sports medicine.

After several years in practice, she saw a tiny bottle on the shelf at a local health food store one day and bought it. "I didn't touch it for weeks and weeks," she says. "And then I treated a gardener who had this awful rash on his arms. He kept touching me, and, sure enough, I got it too.

"Unfortunately, what worked for him didn't work for me. But then I recalled

Testimonial

Back in 2022, Rita, a 52-year-old resident of Salt Lake City, Utah, was a patient of Dr Amandha Vollmer. She wasn't very knowledgeable about DMSO, but she had read Vollmer's book and had some on hand in the medicine cabinet.

The afternoon of August 31, she was watching her granddaughter and started feeling "weird." Her vision was a little off, but she ignored it throughout the day.

However, when the girl's father came to pick her up that evening and asked Rita a question, she couldn't answer him. She couldn't even tell if she'd answered him.

"Everything started leaving from there," she says. Although unable to talk, she managed to mumble "MMS" to her husband. (MMS, Miracle Mineral Solution, is a controversial supplement containing sodium chlorite.) He

immediately made some and gave it to her. Then he got on the MMS Telegram chat online, looking for answers.

"Everybody started telling him, 'She needs DMSO right now! Right now!'" Rita says. "They told him the amount to use in water, and I took it immediately. And within 30 minutes, everything came back. I kept using it every hour throughout the evening. And I kept using it every few hours over the next three days."

She says she was exhausted for a couple days afterward, but then that cleared up. She refused to go to the doctor even though looking at her symptoms convinced her that she'd suffered a mini-stroke.

"I don't like going to doctors. Besides, the DMSO nailed it," she says. "Took care of it good. It was intense, but we got through it, and I've been great ever since."

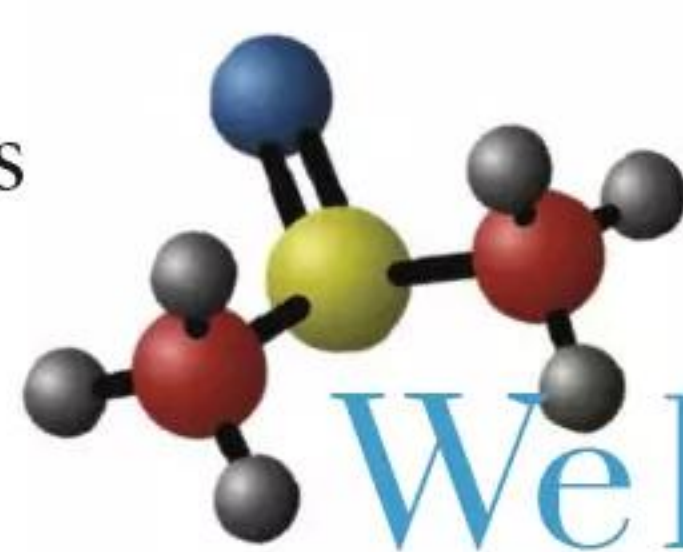
DMSO is good for skin rashes, and I put the 90 percent solution all over my arms. It started burning and turning red and itching worse. But then, within two days, it cleared everything up. That's when I started researching it."

DMSO enthusiast and retired chiropractor Charles Ruckel didn't start researching it until after he quit practicing. "I was amazed learning about all its uses," he says. "Most importantly, as a solvent, it has the ability to increase circulation.

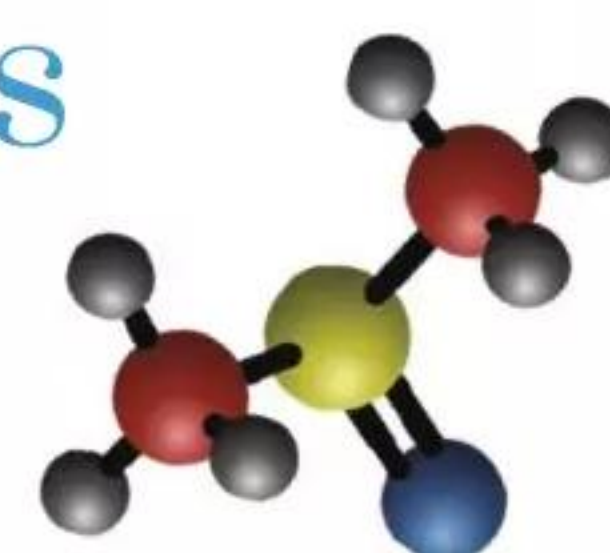
"We have over 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the body," Ruckel notes. "And in traditional Chinese medicine, one of the main diseases they talk about is blood stasis—the slowing or pooling of the blood, which may cause pain and other symptoms. So anything that can increase circulation, which DMSO does, is a blessing."

Ruckel says DMSO works wonders when combined with other healing substances. For example, when his neighbor (who is a nurse) told him how embarrassed she was about not being able to help her husband with carpal tunnel syndrome, he advised using DMSO along with Traumeel cream—a homeopathic trauma cream with calendula, arnica and other natural ingredients.

"I told her to alternate its use with castor oil. And the other day she was like, 'Oh, my God, I can't believe how it's working so well, so quickly.' But I had to caution her to alternate the DMSO with the cream and then the oil and not



We have over 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the body... So anything that can increase circulation, which DMSO does, is a blessing



Topical use of DMSO

Because of its ability to transport other substances through the skin, be certain the area of application is dry and free from dirt, lotions, cosmetics, sunscreens, detergents, etc. before applying DMSO.

Be sure your hands are clean, and use only pharmaceutical-grade DMSO at 99.9 percent purity or greater, mixing it with distilled water or pure aloe vera to adjust the concentration. When DMSO is diluted with water, heat is released in a temporary, normal reaction.

DMSO producers and healthcare providers such as Vollmer and Ruckel advise using a solution of 50 percent DMSO *or less* on face and neck areas. As well, topical concentrations of DMSO should be kept below 70 percent in areas of the body where there is reduced circulation. It's advisable to start with a lower concentration and, depending on skin reaction, work your way up to a higher concentration.

On average, DMSO mixed with distilled water in a 70 percent solution is well tolerated by most people. Apply on and around the injury in a wide area at least three times daily. According to Vollmer, a layered approach, using several applications approximately 15 minutes apart, is also effective for pain and symptom reduction.

Patients experiencing chronic pain may have to apply DMSO for as long as six weeks before a significant change occurs, but it varies from person to person. Overall, the more chronic the issue, the longer the treatment is required.

NOTE: Whatever comes in contact with DMSO solutions will be absorbed through the skin along with the DMSO.

Do not use in conjunction with medications, especially blood thinners, steroids and sedatives.

Do not use plastic containers or application tools with DMSO. Dilute only in a glass container.

Do not immediately handle soaps, lotions, plastics or other synthetic materials with your hands after application.

Do not place synthetic or dyed materials over areas treated with DMSO for at least 20 minutes after application. In other words, don't bother getting dressed for a while.

Do not apply cosmetics or any other substances to treated skin areas.



to combine all three. Sometimes too many cooks can spoil the soup.”

Don't sweat the side effects

Vollmer, who has written a book called *Healing with DMSO* (Ulysses Press, 2021), cautions that sometimes people get scared when they see even the slightest side effects because DMSO has been demonized for so many years and so little is understood about how it works.

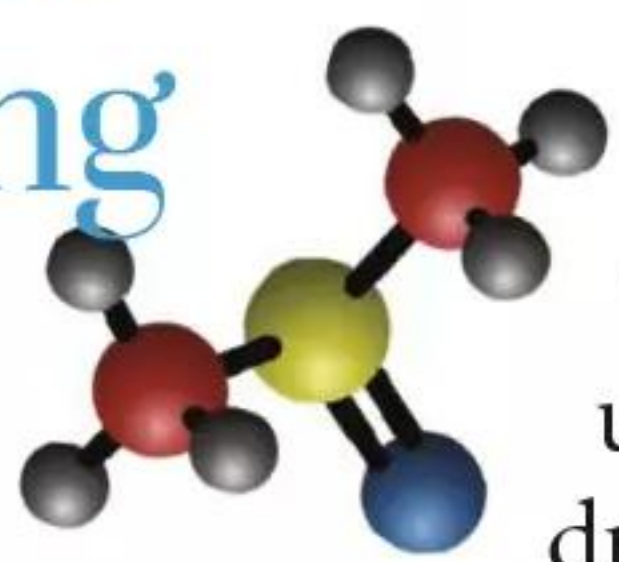
She emphasizes that in the process of using DMSO to treat some conditions, such as cataracts, other symptoms can arise that are part of the healing. A few of her many elderly patients who have healed cataracts using a 20 percent DMSO saline eyedrop solution she produces have experienced temporal arteritis, an inflammatory blood vessel condition with symptoms of headache, pain in the temples, double vision and difficulty opening the mouth.

“This can happen if you’ve got protein waste from the

cataracts—little bits of old calcifications from damaged tissue—moving out of the eyes,” she says. “The DMSO is dissolving the cataracts and moving the waste out through the temporal artery.

“It’s temporary, but people get scared. And yet the only solution they have is to keep using the DMSO drops until it’s done.”

In the process of using DMSO, other symptoms can arise that are part of the healing



She talks about another case—an eight-year-old boy who was having terrible gut pain. After several trips to the hospital, when the doctors still didn’t have a clue what was wrong, his mom came to Vollmer. She put him on an internal DMSO protocol appropriate for his weight, and the pain moved and then became worse.

“Everyone was freaking out,” she remembers, “and I was like, ‘Okay, I know it’s scary, but stay with me. I’ve seen this before. We just need to keep on the protocol to move it through the intestines.’”

She added topical DMSO and castor oil packs to soothe the pain. A couple of days later, she says, the boy expelled a black, tarry goo with chunks.

“It was unbelievably fetid—I mean, the odor was at a vomitous level,” she says. “God knows what he ate. But after that, everything was healed. So, if you’re using DMSO and starting to move stuff, just know you can have weird symptoms. In the end, you just have to trust the process.”

See page 65 for details about choosing high-quality DMSO and some brands to try.



How to take DMSO internally

Internal use of DMSO has many benefits, like reducing autoimmunity and general inflammation, increasing blood circulation, and healing injured tissues. “You can reach any part of the body by taking it orally, which opens things up for all kinds of applications,” says Vollmer.

“Half the battle is getting treatment to an area, and DMSO enhances circulation to hard-to-treat areas. Once there, it can act as a tissue regenerator and oxygenator. It helps the repair of actual tissues, improves cellular communication throughout the body and removes waste products.”

According to Vollmer, it can also be used to transport supplements, such as an herb or a homeopathic remedy, to a site that needs healing. DMSO is best used internally under the guidance of a health professional.

Only use pharmaceutical-grade DMSO that has been filtered

and purified for human medical applications. Synthetic DMSO is best. (It’s hard to find natural DMSO made from wood pulp anyway.)

Add two to four drops of DMSO to 5 oz filtered water, aloe vera juice or pomegranate juice and drink. (Polyphenols in pomegranate juice will reduce the garlic flavor that often accompanies both topical and internal use of DMSO.)

Less is better when it comes to DMSO. If a few drops don’t produce the desired effect (reduced pain and inflammation, etc.) then you can drink another 5 oz of water or juice with DMSO later or increase the original dosage to four to six drops or more, up to 1 teaspoon in 5 oz of water or juice.

NOTE: Do not drink DMSO with enzymatically active juices, such as pineapple or papaya juice. Do not take DMSO orally if your teeth have metal amalgam fillings.

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Healing in the hedgerows

Many overlooked “weeds” are some of the best natural healers, says forager and self-taught herbalist Samantha Almond. Here are four with a multitude of medicinal properties



Despite the great advances of modern scientific medicine, many people still prefer plant-based natural cures over synthetic pharmaceuticals. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and UK researchers, about 40 percent of people in the US and the UK use traditional medicines, mainly plant extracts or their active ingredients.¹

Here are four multipurpose medicinal plants often dismissed as weeds that can help support health and healing. All are commonly found growing wild in the UK and US, so you can wild-harvest these herbs—that is, collect them yourself from gardens, commons, woodlands, marshlands, riverbanks and roadsides. Or you can simply buy them in fresh or dried form from a trusted herbal supplier.

Just remember that if you do want to forage for herbs, you must make absolutely sure you've correctly identified the plant prior to harvesting it, as consuming or using some plants may cause serious illness or even death.

A note on the research

Research into many of these and other plants is in its infancy and may still be restricted to in vitro (laboratory) and in vivo (animal) tests rather than clinical studies in humans. These types of studies do not necessarily translate to humans in real-life situations.

Also remember that while herbal remedies are powerful, they are often not quick fixes. Their effects are cumulative and, in many cases, focus on assisting the body's ability to adapt and heal itself.

Angelica (wild)

Angelica sylvestris

Parts used: All

Edibility: Stems can be eaten fresh but are traditionally candied

Harvest: Summer for stems and leaves, and autumn for root and seeds

Angelica sylvestris, commonly known as wild or wood angelica, is a plant native to the UK that's also found in eastern North America. It belongs to the Apiaceae family, which also includes parsley, celery and carrots, and is typically found in damp or marshy areas, along riverbanks, and in woodland clearings.

Wild angelica has a long history of medicinal and culinary uses in Europe and Asia and was cultivated around the 10th century into the familiar garden angelica (*Angelica archangelica*).

While most modern research into angelica is largely in relation to the cultivated variety, the wild variety can be used in the same way. Research shows the plant has the following properties.

Analgesic, antispasmodic and anti-inflammatory Angelica has been used in Chinese medicine to treat arthritis and rheumatism and as an anti-inflammatory herb.² In a study using mice, a team of researchers identified a substance in the root with significant analgesic (painkilling) activity.³

Angelica can be found in the Turkish traditional herbal remedy Mesir paste, which is used to treat pain and other ailments.

Digestive support Thanks to a compound called angelicin, angelica helps stimulate digestion and metabolism as well as ease indigestion, bloating and gas.

Uterine support The stimulating effect of angelicin can also affect the uterus and promote menstruation. *Angelica sinensis*, another member of the family, is officially listed in the Chinese Pharmacopoeia (as dong quai) and is one of the most commonly used Chinese traditional drugs for treating menstrual

disorders and heavy periods.⁴ It's also known to help release the placenta when given after childbirth.

Expectorant Angelicin also has a stimulating effect on the lungs and can help soothe asthma, coughs, bronchitis, and colds or flu; this is particularly true of the root and seed.

Diuretic The seed encourages diuresis (increased urination) and has demonstrated anti-inflammatory properties. It also stops bacteria and fungi from reproducing, so it may well be useful against cystitis and other urinary tract infections (UTIs).

Antimicrobial Angelica may kill harmful bacteria, viruses and fungi. In a 2016 test tube study, the roots of wild angelica, as a component of Mesir paste, were found to act against several types of bacteria, especially *Enterococcus faecium*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Staphylococcus epidermidis* and *Staphylococcus aureus*.⁵

Another test tube study reported that compounds in angelica (in this instance, the cultivated garden version *Angelica archangelica*), including imperatorin, also fight the herpes simplex (cold sore) virus and coxsackievirus, which causes digestive illness.⁶



“This miracle gel cured my knee pain in just 1 week.”

No more knee pain for Rita, thanks to Advance 7 she can once again enjoy her beautiful garden



Report by M. Mackness

Mrs Rita Gravesande, London, aged 79

Sitting with Rita at her home in South London it is incredible to think that she turns 80 later this year.

A couple of years ago she suffered with excruciating knee pain, so bad that she could hardly walk and getting up and down stairs was agonising.

Yet today when she opened the front door and took me through to her living room I was in no doubt that this woman is as fit as a fiddle and clearly had no knee problems.

I was eager to find out more about the ‘miracle’ that turned her life around!

Mother of two, grandmother to six and great grand mother to four, she told me what happened...

“About two years ago I started to get pains in my left knee. I am not one to feel sorry for myself, so tried not to take any notice of it.

The pain had got worse and worse

“I am very active, always busy and on my feet most of the day. But as the weeks went by the pain got worse and worse, to the point where I couldn’t ignore it any more.

“It was painful to walk, I couldn’t bend my knee and getting up and down stairs was awful. My husband Laurel persuaded me to go to the doctors, who sent me to have an MRI scan.

“The MRI revealed that I had arthritis in my knee, the doctor said this was through general wear and tear and probably due to wearing high heels when I worked at the Stock Exchange years ago.

“The doctor prescribed me with anti-inflammatories and painkillers!

“I can tell you that was the last thing I wanted to hear, I don’t like taking pill, never have done – I grew up on a farm and we used to take natural remedies if we were ever poorly.

I prayed that I wouldn’t have to use a walking stick.

“I decided there and then that I was not going to touch the pills. But there were days when the pain got so bad, I was desperate to find some relief. I prayed that I wouldn’t have to use a walking stick.

“That’s when I heard about Advance 7 gel. I read a news paper article that said it contained all natural ingredients and that it could help with arthritis.

“I ordered a couple of tubes to try it out, the first few days I rubbed it on, but didn’t find much relief.

“I then read the instructions that came with it – it said it should be massaged in directly at the point of pain for a good few minutes, twice a day.

I massaged in the gel twice a day

“I did exactly what it said, every day, twice a day. Straight away I noticed the difference, and was very pleased. I thought, don’t expect miracles in just a week, but it was!

“And as the weeks went by the results were amazing, the swelling dramatically reduced and the pain disappeared.

I couldn’t believe it, it worked!

“This gel works wonders, I can now get up and down stairs no problem, the inflammation has completely gone and I can do all the things that I love doing.

“I am back exercising, I do lots of stretching, but now I can kneel on the floor, which I haven’t been able to do for years!

“I love this product, I tell every one about it, I sent some to my daughter in Canada who suffers with back pain, she loves it too.

“I’m always telling my friends to try it – if it works for me at 79, it will work for them too. “I tell them two things, there is no point just rubbing over the joint, that’s pointless, what you need to do, is massage it in so that it penetrates into the painful area.

Make it part of your daily routine

“The other thing I tell them is to persevere, make it part of your daily routine. I use it after I’ve had a shower in the morning and at the end of the day, when I have done every thing I need to do, I put my feet up and do the massage.

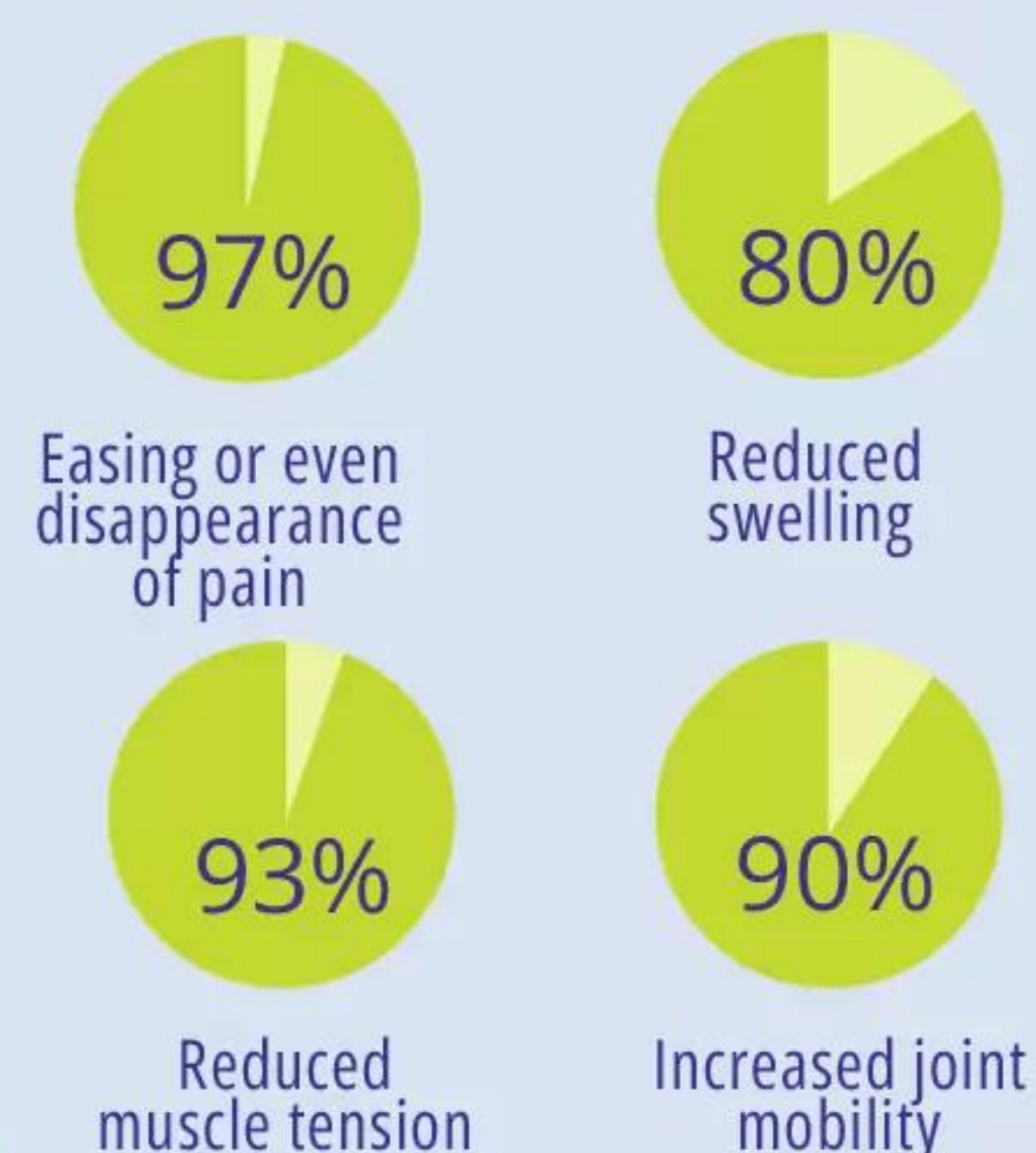
“Some people are looking for a quick fix and rely on taking pills, but what I say is persevere with this natural treatment, use it everyday, twice a day and it will work, don’t give up. I wouldn’t be without it.”



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● Soothing effects ● Innovative blend of powerful herbs and essential oils ● Relieves knees, back, neck, shoulders, feet and ankles

Anticancer An extract of angelica root was found to kill breast cancer cells in test tube studies and reduced the growth of tumors in mice. These effects were due to angelicin, a type of coumarin (coumarins are a set of compounds known for their anti-inflammatory, anti-clotting and other effects).¹⁴

Anxiolytic Rat studies found that coumarins isolated from angelica and its constituents imperatorin and isoimperatorin may reduce anxiety. The coumarins appear to have a greater effect together than separately, which is an argument for taking the whole herb rather than taking one of its coumarins as a supplement.¹⁵

Topical uses

Owing to its antifungal properties, the powdered, dried root of angelica can be used for athlete's foot. As well, a decoction can be used to treat ulcers, bites, gout and sciatica.

It also works to calm the skin and heal problems such as eczema and breakouts (it's excellent when added to a bath for this purpose).

Dosage

Decoction: 1 Tbsp or 15 g of root in 17 oz (500 mL) of boiled water, drink ½ cup three times per day

Tincture: 1:5, 50 percent alcohol; take ½ tsp or 2 mL per day

Precautions

Not for use during pregnancy or heavy menstruation, or by those with diabetes or on warfarin. May cause skin photosensitivity with prolonged use and also increases stomach acid. Not suitable for children or for those who are pregnant or lactating.

Recipe

Angelica decoction

Scant ½ cup (15 g) angelica root and leaf
16 oz (500 mL) water

1. Place angelica and water in a pan. Bring to a gentle boil, reduce heat and simmer for 20–40 minutes.
2. Remove from heat and allow to cool a bit.
3. Carefully strain off the herbs and drink as desired.
4. Use for easing menstrual pain, bloating, gas, asthma, bronchitis,

colds and flu. Can also be used as an antibacterial wash for the face, to prevent acne and in baths for eczema.

Dandelion

Taraxacum officinale

Parts used: All

Edibility: Young leaves are added to salads and are packed with many vitamins and minerals; roasted root makes a wonderful substitute for coffee

Harvest: Leaves in spring, flowers in spring and summer, roots in autumn (best in November)

There are several species of *Taraxacum* in the UK and US, including several hybridized species, but the best known is *Taraxacum officinale*, the common dandelion, a widespread plant found in gardens, grass verges and waste grounds. It is a member of the daisy and sunflower family, Asteraceae.

Dandelion is a well-known diuretic and is chiefly used in kidney and liver disorders. Modern research has found or confirmed the following properties.

Diuretic Dandelion leaves are a potent diuretic owing to their high potassium content and are far superior to over-the-counter diuretics.¹⁶ One study showed the leaves increase urinary frequency and fluid excretion in healthy people,¹⁷ while test tube and rat experiments show a potential positive effect on the treatment and prevention of kidney diseases, such as urolithiasis (kidney stones).¹⁸

Antidiabetic Some 40 percent of the mature dandelion root is composed of inulin, a mixture of complex carbohydrates that acts as energy storage, promotes beneficial intestinal microflora, improves bowel function, stabilizes blood sugar, and helps with absorption of calcium and magnesium.

One test tube study revealed that powdered extracts from the plant, particularly the stem, may help to slow the digestion and absorption of carbohydrates,¹⁹ making dandelion a potential candidate for the management of diabetes.

Anti-inflammatory A Chinese study showed dandelion root extract can help heal ulcerative colitis,²⁰ while another study found it's able to prevent colitis



altogether. In this study, the extract was reported to have a stronger effect than a comparable anti-inflammatory drug, seemingly due to a range of antioxidative, anti-inflammatory and regenerative activities.²¹

How to take the herbs

Some fresh herbs, such as dandelion and rosebay willowherb, can be eaten raw in a salad, but it's usually best to take the herbs in one of the following forms:

- **Tisane:** tea or infusion made by steeping dried herbs in boiling water
- **Decoction:** made by simmering the harder plant parts, like seeds and roots
- **Tincture:** liquid extract

Check the individual herbs for the suggested dosages and recipes, but a standard tisane is 1 tsp in 250 mL water, and a standard tincture is 1:5, which is one part marc (herb) to five parts menstruum (liquid).

See *WDDTY* April 2024 for how to make an herbal tincture, or you can easily buy them online from a trusted supplier. See *WDDTY* May 2024 for how to dry and store fresh herbs and where to buy herbs online.

Sustainable harvesting

Here are a few tips to help you harvest wild herbs sustainably:

- Harvest only for personal use.
- Harvest only from a large patch of growth.
- Do not harvest single standing plants that are not part of a larger plant community.
- Never take more than 10 percent of the plants from a site. It should look like you did not take anything at all, and your impact should be negligible. If there is not enough to harvest one day, just enjoy the plants that are growing and leave them intact.

Another study showed that dandelion extract is able to improve the symptoms of colitis by controlling fatty acid metabolism and dysbiosis (imbalance in the gut microbiome).¹⁵

Hepatoprotective Research backs up the traditional use of dandelion to support liver health. A team of researchers found that dandelion helped improve liver tissue function in rats and showed strong antioxidant effects. They concluded that dandelion may help stop liver damage from getting worse both by fighting against harmful free radicals and by calming inflammation.¹⁶

Covid-19 prevention A 2021 report showed dandelion leaf extract can block Covid virus spike proteins from binding to receptors in human lung and kidney cells, which is how the virus is able to “unlock” cells and infect them. The water-based extract stopped not only the original strain of the virus but also several mutant strains.¹⁷ This could be a major advantage in Covid prevention.

Topical use

As a natural anti-inflammatory, dandelion is perfect for sensitive skin or chronic conditions like rosacea and eczema. The root can be ground and mixed with water to treat skin disorders like acne, eczema and psoriasis as well as rashes and boils.

A Canadian study reported that dandelion leaf and flower extracts can block harmful ultraviolet radiation,

protecting the skin from sun damage and lowering the risk of skin cancer.¹⁸

Dosage

Tisane: 3–4 tsp or 15–20 g per 250 mL boiling water, drink ½ cup to 1 cup freely

Root decoction: 1 tsp or 5 g per 250 mL boiling water, drink ½ to 1 cup freely

Tincture: 1:5, 25 percent alcohol; take 5–10 mL three times per day

Precautions

Contact dermatitis has been reported, and dandelion may enhance diuretics. Avoid dandelion use if you have diarrhea, acid reflux, acute irritable bowel syndrome or ulcerative colitis. Not suitable for children or for those who are pregnant or lactating.

Recipe

Dandelion leaf tisane

8.5 oz (250 mL) boiling water

3–4 tsp (15–20 g) dried dandelion leaves

1. Boil the water and pour it over the leaves. Steep for 10–15 minutes.
2. Use as a diuretic, as an anti-inflammatory for joints, and to support digestion and promote liver health. It may also prove to be therapeutic when dealing with Covid-19 infection.

Willowherbs

Epilobium spp.

Parts used: All above-ground parts

Edibility: The young shoots and leaves of rosebay willowherb are edible and can be eaten raw or cooked.

Harvest: When in flower

In the UK alone, there are approximately a dozen species of willowherb, including the three focused on here: hairy (*Epilobium hirsutum*), hoary (*Epilobium parviflorum*) and rosebay (*Epilobium angustifolium*). These varieties are also found in the US.

Willowherbs are typically found in a variety of habitats, including grasslands, woodlands, heathlands and roadsides. They are often pioneer species, thriving in disturbed or recently cleared areas,

and play an important role in ecosystems as they provide nectar for pollinators like bees and butterflies.

Willowherbs have been studied for their potential health benefits, including their anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and antimicrobial properties. Research has discovered and confirmed the following effects.

Astringent The leaves have astringent properties and will therefore help to heal wounds. We now know that this is because they contain tannins, which are polyphenolic compounds with astringent properties.

Antimicrobial Studies have found that willowherbs fight bacteria. Hairy willowherb shows strong activity against *Staphylococcus aureus* standard strains and methicillin-resistant (MRSA) strains. It also works well with ampicillin or tetracycline antibiotics to increase the effect against *S. aureus*.

The polyphenols in hairy willowherb (combined with a water-alcohol extract) interfere with the reproduction of influenza viruses.¹⁹

The antimicrobial activity of the hoary willowherb was also confirmed against *S. aureus* and *Escherichia coli*,²⁰ and the root extract shows significant antifungal activity, such as against *Candida*

glabrata, *Candida lusitanae* and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.²¹

Rosebay willowherb extracts were found to block the growth of *E. coli*, *Micrococcus luteus*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *S. aureus* more effectively than the standard antibiotics vancomycin and tetracycline.

Later research confirmed these findings and found the extracts also worked against *Bacillus subtilis*, *Proteus mirabilis*, *Candida albicans*, *Candida tropicalis*, *Candida dubliniensis* and *S. cerevisiae*.²² Another study confirmed the effects were due to flavonoids and tannins, particularly oenothin B.²³

Antioxidant All of the willowherbs contain antioxidants, including flavonoids and phenolic compounds, which help protect



cells from oxidative damage caused by free radicals.

A study of hairy willowherb showed it had the highest antioxidant values among 32 plants tested, owing to the catechins and procyanidins it contains. It was also the only one of the plants selected for testing that contained the bioflavonoid myricetin, which is also found in berries, walnuts, onions and red grapes. This suggests it could be used as a natural antioxidant source.^[24]

Analgesic In a mouse study, hairy willowherb extracts appeared to block pain better than diclofenac and morphine.^[25] Another mouse study found rosebay tincture showed similar analgesic activity.^[26]

Prostate support A team of researchers investigated how well extracts of five herbal remedies treated benign prostatic hyperplasia (abnormal enlargement of the prostate; to learn more, see page 38). Hoary willowherb extract lowered inflammation, stimulated production of prostaglandin (a hormone that regulates prostate function), slowed the growth of *E. coli* and showed antioxidant activity.^[27]

The European Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products concluded that due to its long-standing use, willowherb can be used by patients with BPH to relieve lower urinary tract symptoms, such as difficulty starting urination or a frequent need to urinate.

Anticancer A 2021 paper was the first to show that hoary willowherb could block the growth of breast cancer cells in a test tube and might help treat human breast cancer. A root extract made with methanol had the strongest effect.^[28]

In laboratory experiments, hoary willowherb extracts made with water or ethanol stopped colorectal cancer cells from multiplying, which suggests the plant may be used as a therapeutic agent against colon cancers.^[29]

Likewise, treatment of androgen-sensitive human prostate cancer cells with willowherb extracts promoted the death of those cells.^[30] Various willowherb extracts, including extracts from rosebay willowherb, had a similar effect on human prostate, breast and brain cancer cell lines and inhibited DNA synthesis in human brain tumor cells.^[31]

Topical uses

A 2014 study shows the antioxidant benefits of hairy willowherb could help treat diabetic foot syndrome, a serious complication of diabetes.^[32] Rosebay willowherb is also used as a cleansing, soothing, antiseptic and healing agent for minor burns, skin rashes, ulcers and infections, and inflammations of the ear, nose and throat.

The photoprotective and anti-aging properties of rosebay willowherb extract have been revealed in both lab experiments and human testing, making it a potentially helpful addition to skin treatments.^[33]

Dosage

Tisane: 2 tsp or 10 g, drink freely

Decoction: 1 tsp root, half a cup three times per day

Tincture: 1:10, 45 percent alcohol; take 1–2 tsp three times per day

Precautions

Epilobium interferes with the hormone progesterone, so if you are pregnant, taking hormone replacement therapy or on birth control pills, you should avoid using this herb.

Recipe

Willowherb infused oil

Scant ½ cup (100 g) dried leaf of any of the willowherbs

2 Tbsp alcohol, such as Everclear

6–10 oz (200–300 mL) melted coconut oil, or enough to cover the herbs

1. Place the herbs in a jar with the alcohol, muddle and allow to steep for 10 minutes before adding the oil.
2. Infuse in coconut oil in a warm oven (75–100°F, 24–38°C) for 3–4 hours. Once infused, strain and keep in the fridge between uses.
3. Use to treat acne and itchy, inflamed skin.

Betony

Betonica officinalis

Parts used: All above-ground parts

Edibility: Leaves are generally used as a tisane substitute for black tea

Harvest: When in flower

Betonica officinalis, commonly known as betony or wood betony, is a woodland plant belonging to the mint family, Lamiaceae. Betony has a long history of use in traditional herbal medicine. It was considered a panacea in medieval times and was believed to have a wide range of medicinal properties.

I'm not sure there is an herb that has been held in higher repute than betony, yet it's not often used in modern herbal medicine. Betony fell out of favor because it can take a long time of continuous use to see results. According to medical herbalist David Hoffmann, its underlying action appears to be through toning and strengthening the nervous system while simultaneously soothing nervous tension.^[34]

Antioxidant Betony has demonstrated significant ability to fight free-radical cell damage. This is thought to be due to the strong antioxidant activity of its flavonoids and other polyphenols,^[35] which are also believed to help lower blood pressure.

Anti-inflammatory Betony extracts have anti-inflammatory activity with similar strength to the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) diclofenac, a study in rats has shown.^[36] A Romanian research team confirmed the anti-inflammatory effect and attributed it to the plant's ursolic acid, caffeic acid, rosmarinic acid, quercetin and anthocyanidin content.^[37] This supports its traditional use in the treatment of headaches and other pain conditions.





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Understanding tincture dosages

Many herbalists use duty-free grain spirit (such as Everclear), and it needs to be diluted from nearly 100 percent alcohol to the desired percentage using water. Here are a couple examples of how this might work:

Example 1: For a dosage of “1:5, 25 percent alcohol; take ½ tsp or 2 mL per day,” make a tincture of one part herbs to five parts alcohol. Then dilute the alcohol to 25 percent by adding three times the amount of water (for instance, if you start with 250 mL of alcohol, add 750 mL of water; the final product will be 1,000 mL, of which 25 percent is alcohol and 75 percent is water). Each day, you’ll take ½ tsp or 2 mL of the diluted solution.

Example 2: To make 750 mL of a tincture that is 45 percent alcohol, use 337.5 mL of grain alcohol (which is 45 percent of 750), then dilute it with 412.5 mL of water (which is 55 percent of 750).

If math isn’t your strong suit, you might choose to make your tincture using a spirit that’s already diluted to the right percentage. For instance, you could use an 80-proof vodka or white rum to make a 40 percent alcohol tincture, and no dilution will be necessary. But note that higher alcohol content is often more effective at extracting active compounds from plants.

You can easily measure milliliters of a tincture to take your daily dosage using these equivalents:

- 20 drops = 1 mL
- 1 tsp = 5 mL

Menstrual flow regulator Betony may be useful for treating abnormal uterine bleeding caused by polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), according to one clinical study. Women aged 15–45 with PCOS were randomly assigned to receive either medroxyprogesterone (a form of synthetic progesterone) or betony for three months. Both groups saw a similar reduction in abnormal uterine bleeding, but there were fewer side effects in the betony group.¹¹

Topical uses

A poultice made from the herb can be applied to heal wounds and bruises on the skin. Betony’s anti-inflammatory properties help to ease skin inflammation caused by eczema and other skin conditions.

Dosage

Tisane: 1–2 tsp or 5–10 g three times per day
Tincture: 1:5, 45 percent alcohol; take 2–6 mL per day

Precautions

Not suitable for children or for women who are pregnant or lactating.

Recipe

Betony-infused tincture

If you’re using 40 percent alcohol (80 proof), such as vodka, make a simple tincture by covering 1 part herb with 5 parts alcohol.

If you’re using Everclear or another nearly 100 percent alcohol, use the following method for a specific tincture:

Scant ½ cup (100 g) dried betony

7.5 oz (225 mL) alcohol

9.25 oz (275 mL) water

1. Cover half the dried betony with the alcohol.
2. Steep/infuse the other half of the dried betony in the water for 15 minutes.
3. Strain the herbs out of the water thoroughly and top up if the water is less than 275 mL.
4. Add the water infusion to the alcohol mix and leave for 14 days before straining out the herbs.
5. Use for diarrhea, ¾ tsp (4 mL) per day, and also for headaches and bleeding from PCOS.

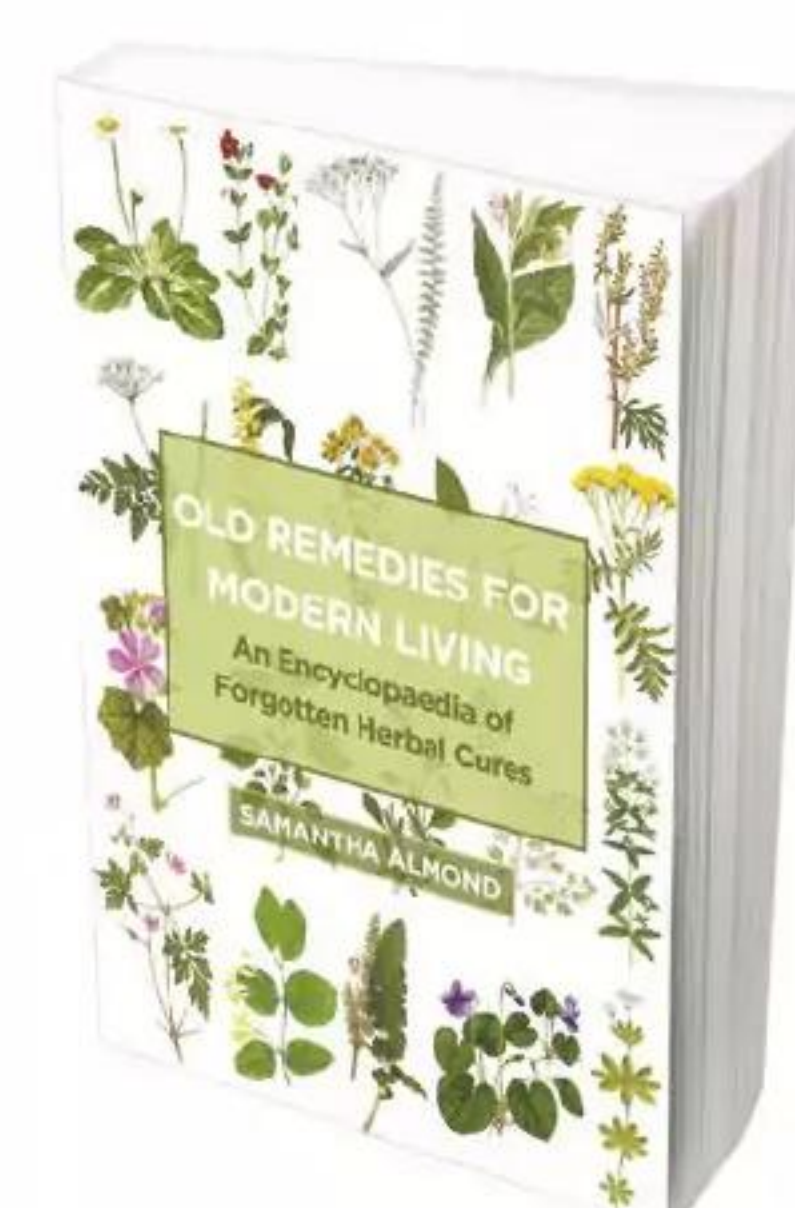
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Foraging warning

Foraging for wild plants and using herbal medicines can involve risks, including use of misidentified plants, allergic reactions or adverse health effects. Not all plants are safe for human consumption or medicinal use, and some may be toxic.

It is strongly recommended that readers seek advice from a qualified herbalist, botanist or healthcare professional before attempting to forage or use any plant for medicinal purposes.



Adapted from *Old Remedies for Modern Living* by Samantha Almond (Aeon Books, 2025). For 20 percent off the book, use code **ORM20** at health.aeonbooks.co.uk.

Your longevity blueprint

Dr Leigh Erin Connealy shares her secrets to staying cancer-free, disease-free and thriving for life

Every year, heart disease, cancer and prescription drugs claim the lives of millions of people across the globe. We're getting sicker and sicker and being diagnosed with often-preventable diseases earlier and earlier. Cancer and heart disease used to afflict only "old people." But times are changing.

Early in my career, I used to say that our bodies were under warranty until age 40–45, but unfortunately that's no longer true. Many people find themselves in repair and maintenance mode as early as their 30s and 40s.

I see patients every day in their 70s and 80s who are not sputtering along in states of disrepair and disease but instead thriving. So, what are their secrets?

It starts with prevention, early detection, and a commitment to supporting and nurturing the mind-body connection.

Make routine checkups a priority

My healthiest patients are those who come to see me regularly, typically for annual checkups.

To keep the car analogy going, you'd run out of oil and burn through your engine if you didn't get consistent oil checks and have a technician run routine diagnostics. The same goes for your body. During these annual checkups,

we examine several key aspects of your health closely.

Physical exams / bloodwork Like in any routine physical examination, we test a patient's vitals, conduct visual and manual assessments, and order bloodwork. We pay special attention to hormones, C-reactive protein levels (a key marker of inflammation) and any numbers that seem "off."

If a patient has a family history of cancer or a higher risk of disease, we may order additional testing. For example, the RGCC suite of tests can detect circulating tumor cells (CTCs) and cancer stem cells (CSCs) long before a lump or bump presents.

Bioimmune survey Many integrative practitioners, including me, use energy

I used to say bodies were under warranty until age 40–45, but many people find themselves in repair and maintenance mode in their 30s and 40s

testing to identify potential health issues in their patients. One way to do this is with the bio-meridian test (also called bioimmune testing).

This noninvasive, innovative method checks for interruptions along the body's meridians, the same energy paths used in acupuncture. Blockages along certain pathways indicate issues with specific organs and bodily systems. This testing can uncover potential problems months—or even years—before symptoms arise.

F-Scan Another noninvasive diagnostic device we often use, this biofeedback screening tool helps identify imbalances in the body quickly and painlessly by screening for harmful pathogens, parasites and other bodily stressors. It works on the premise that every living organism emits a unique electromagnetic frequency.

During the scan, electrodes are placed on the skin to detect the body's electromagnetic signals. The device then sends a frequency sweep that interacts with cells, tissues and organs. If a frequency emitted by the body matches that of a known pathogen, it may indicate an imbalance.

The results provide a comprehensive snapshot of the patient's current health, highlighting any areas that may warrant further investigation. Our practitioners use this feedback to tailor treatment plans that target the root causes of cancer and other diseases rather than just treating symptoms.

Heavy metal / mineral deficiency testing

The world is laden with toxic heavy metals. Known toxins, such as arsenic, lead, mercury, aluminum, cadmium, chromium, copper and nickel, can contaminate our soil, drinking water, air and personal care products.

In a new study published in the journal *Science*, researchers analyzed soil from nearly 800,000 sampling points around the world. Alarmingly, their analysis revealed that "14 to 17 percent of cropland is affected by toxic metal pollution globally and [scientists] estimate that between 0.9 and 1.4 billion people live in regions of heightened public health and ecological risks."¹

Heavy metals wreak havoc on health, causing neurological issues, gastrointestinal problems, cardiovascular concerns and even cancer.

On the other hand, low levels of minerals and nutrients are also a concern. According to a recent study by the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Medicine, at least half the global population is deficient in necessary vitamins and minerals like calcium, iodine, vitamin C and B vitamins.²² The lack of nutrients creates imbalances in the body, setting the stage for disease.

One remarkable noninvasive tool we use to detect excess heavy metals and mineral deficiencies is the Oligoscan. It provides an almost instant picture of a patient's trace mineral reserves, oxidative stress and toxic heavy metal burden. From there, we can craft a treatment plan based on the types and levels of minerals and metals it reveals.

Emotional healing with EVOX A significant aspect of integrative medicine is considering a patient's health as a whole. A big part of that is emotional well-being. We dive deep into past traumas, unresolved conflicts, and chronic stress and anxiety that may have been piling up for months or years.

Many people are unaware of the devastating effects that unresolved conflicts and ongoing stress have on the body. In fact, every cancer patient I've ever seen has noted some serious element of emotional healing that was left untreated. Emotional well-being is so crucial to good health that I recommend everyone, regardless of health status, undergo EVOX therapy.

EVOX therapy reduces stress and anxiety and heals emotional trauma through perception reframing. When a person speaks, the energy in their voice reflects their subconscious feelings about specific topics.

The device records this voice energy, maps it on a Perception Index graph, and identifies frequency signatures that shift those emotional patterns. These frequencies are then delivered through a hand cradle while the patient listens to calming music and focuses on the topic being addressed.

Some people see results in only a session or two, though often it takes more. EVOX is a powerful tool that supports emotional healing by helping to "remap the brain," relieve stress and anxiety at the root, and heal past emotional wounds. To find an EVOX provider near you, see page 65.



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Mainstream screenings Sometimes people are surprised to learn that we recommend a handful of more mainstream diagnostic tools in addition to integrative modalities. We may recommend whole-body MRIs for at-risk patients. And PET scans and CT scans are sometimes necessary to obtain an accurate picture of what's happening in the body or to track disease.

To see breast tissue clearly, other screenings, such as thermography or QT imaging, may be required.

A balanced body is a happy body

In my fully revised and updated second edition of *The Cancer Revolution*, I repeatedly discuss the importance of maintaining a balanced state within the body—homeostasis. When our organs and systems are in disarray, whether it's from chronic inflammation, hormonal imbalances, high blood sugar levels, emotional trauma or other disruptions, it sets the stage for diseases like cancer to take root.

The healthiest older people I know work hard to keep their bodies in homeostasis. Regular use of the modalities and screening tests above plays a significant role in the process.

Common practices of healthy people

People who genuinely care about their well-being are intentional about their health. They focus on nourishing their body, mind and spirit daily, approaching these goals in various ways.

Here are some common practices of my healthiest patients.

A clean diet The body simply can't function properly if you feed it garbage. Eliminate processed foods, added sugars, simple carbohydrates and toxic seed oils. Focus instead on green, leafy vegetables and colorful fruits (organic, if possible), grass-fed and pasture-raised lean protein, organic dairy, and healthful fats.

It's also crucial to drink plenty of clean, filtered water every day to stay hydrated. If you wait until you're thirsty to get a drink, dehydration has already begun.

Coffee and tea are both okay, but my go-to recommendation is water. And if it's hydrogen water, all the better.

Gut health support One of the first areas that integrative practitioners focus on is optimizing gut health. Research continues to confirm the crucial role



Prescription drugs are a leading cause of death

Another common theme among my healthiest older patients is that they avoid taking prescription drugs whenever possible. These medications—even when used as prescribed—can have disastrous effects on health.

According to a 2024 report from the IQVIA Institute, people are taking more prescription drugs every year.¹ Some experts have begun to speak up about the dangers—one, Dr Peter Gøtzsche, estimates nearly 900,000 people die in the US every year due to taking prescription drugs. In the UK,

thousands die every year just from peptic ulcers caused by taking “harmless” over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).²

Many people in their 70s and 80s are taking fistfuls of prescription medications every single day. These drugs have side-effect lists a mile long, may have adverse interactions with each other, and are often misused or abused.

Natural and safe solutions, ranging from lifestyle changes to therapies to nutritional supplements, exist for nearly every imaginable health condition. I urge you to

investigate your options and work with a practitioner skilled in holistic medicine if you're diagnosed with any disease that “requires” a prescription drug. It may well save your life.

To find a physician in your area who is well versed in natural approaches, visit the website of the American College of Advancement in Medicine (acam.org) or the Institute for Functional Medicine (ifm.org).

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of the gut in every aspect of health. In addition to ensuring proper digestion and assisting with metabolic function, good gut health has a profound impact on the immune system.

I strongly recommend a daily high-quality probiotic supplement. It's also helpful to eat probiotic foods regularly, such as yogurt, kombucha, sauerkraut, kimchi, miso, tempeh and kefir.

Good sleep hygiene Your body heals and repairs during slumber, and not getting a solid seven to nine hours of shut-eye each night can negatively impact your health in multiple ways. Improve your sleep by sleeping in a cool, dark room; going to bed at the same time each night (ideally around 10 p.m.) and waking at the same time each morning.

Avoid caffeine after noon if you're sensitive and opt for natural sleep aids such as melatonin, GABA, valerian or L-theanine if you need them. Avoid blue-light-emitting devices for at least an hour before bed and consider using blue-blocking glasses in the evening.

Physical activity Inactivity breeds ill health and disease, so it's essential to get moving if you want to stay healthy. A key area to focus on—especially as we get older—is resistance training.

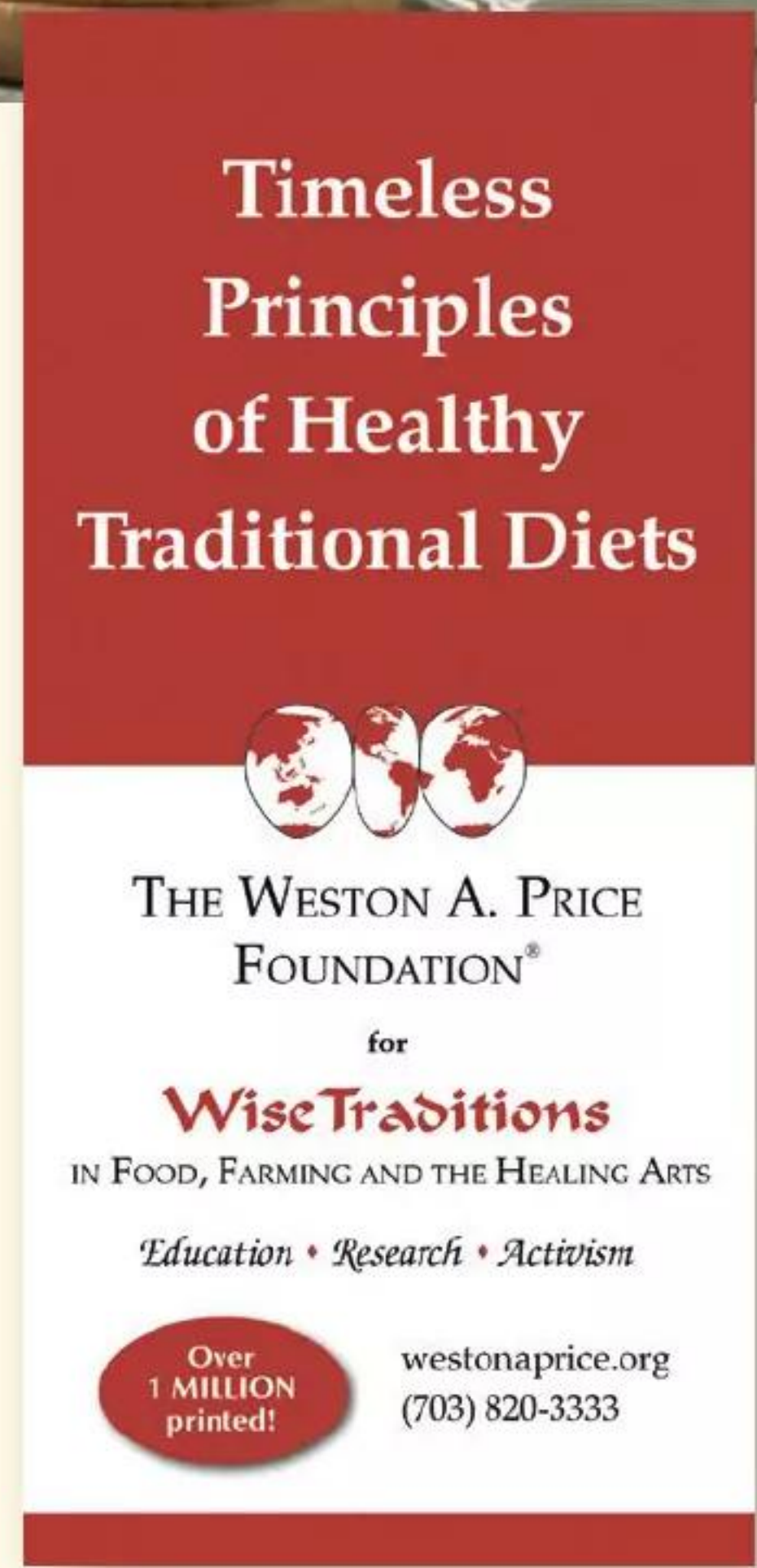
It's crucial to lift weights, do exercises that build muscle using your own body weight, or even use a Power Plate or other whole-body vibration platform, which helps to stimulate muscles throughout the body. Strength training at least twice a week is ideal.



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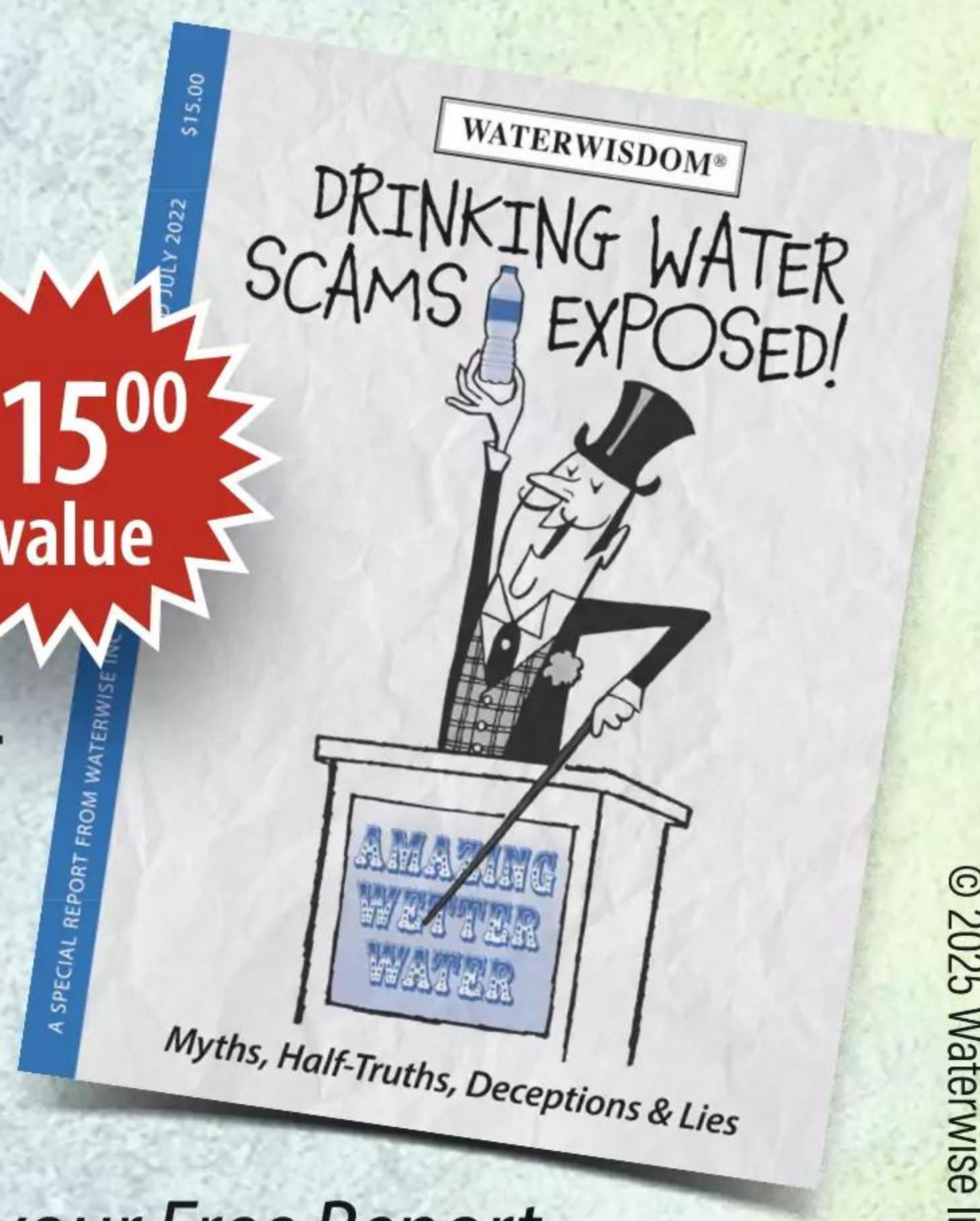
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WDDTY

Innovative therapies for health

Several innovative therapies offer alternatives to traditional medications, surgeries and other conventional medical interventions. Here are some of our most popular and regularly prescribed modalities, many of which are routinely used by my patients in their golden years.

IV treatments

Receiving vitamins, nutrients and other substances intravenously allows potent, higher doses to be infused into the body, ensuring optimal absorption and efficacy. This delivery system also bypasses the digestive tract, avoiding stomach upset.

High-dose IV vitamin C is a well-studied cancer treatment that creates an environment in the body that is selectively toxic to cancer cells. IV curcumin also has powerful anticancer and anti-inflammatory effects. Additionally, we regularly use IV mistletoe as it stimulates the immune system, promotes cancer cell death and helps protect healthy cells during chemotherapy treatments.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT)

Oxygen is vital to our health, right down to the cellular level. Breathing in 100 percent oxygen in a special pressurized chamber ensures that this crucial element is dissolved into all the body's fluids (blood, plasma, cerebrospinal fluid) and effectively delivered into every tissue, capillary and cell.

Inundating the body with this healing element facilitates wellness in several ways, including accelerating wound healing, reducing systemic inflammation, combating infections and enhancing cognitive function. It's a multifaceted therapy with endless potential for healing.

Frequency medicine

Every living being runs on electricity. The voltage that runs throughout our bodies powers every system, from the heartbeat and nerve signaling to muscle contractions and cellular repair.

Frequency medicine harnesses this natural energy by using specific vibrations to promote balance, alleviate stress and facilitate the body's healing process more effectively. The therapies under this umbrella are remarkable treatments for restoring the body's alignment, preventing disease and ensuring our cells remain healthy and "charged."

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is an ancient healing technique that helps restore the body's natural energy flow, or "qi," along pathways called meridians. It's widely used to relieve stress, improve circulation and support tissue repair. Rooted in Eastern medicine, acupuncture is a safe and holistic approach to improving overall health and addressing many common health conditions.



The important thing is to build—and retain—muscle mass. If longevity is your goal, you need to build muscle. Period. As for other exercises, find an activity that you enjoy and participate in that form of exercise most days of the week for at least 30–60 minutes.

Daily detox Our world is dirtier than ever, so daily detoxification is a must if you want to thrive. You can do most of these detox practices at home, in a wellness center or at a spa near you.

- Sauna
- Lymphatic stimulation (dry brushing, rebounding, massage)
- Nightly baths with Epsom salts and detoxifying minerals

Laughter and gratitude Laughter is powerful medicine, and the happiest people are often the healthiest. Laughing boosts the immune system, stimulates blood flow, reduces pain, mitigates stress hormones and improves lung function.

Gratitude offers similar benefits. Practicing gratitude enhances mental health, improves sleep, reduces anxiety and promotes a more positive outlook on life.

In that same vein, surrounding yourself with a loving network of friends, family members, neighbors and spiritual leaders can bring humor, a grateful heart and light into your life. These human connections are essential for optimal health and wellness.

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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 hunts down the best creatine powders, EVOX therapy providers and where to buy DMSO

The purest creatine powders

Not just for athletes and bodybuilders, creatine is a superstar supplement for almost everyone, says Bryan Hubbard in his latest *New Focus* (“Creatine: The Cinderella Supplement That Aids Healthy Aging,” page 20), especially if you want to protect your brain along with aging muscles and bones. But with countless creatine supplements out there, how do you choose one that’s safe and effective?

Here are some pointers on what to look for in a creatine supplement as well as a few standout brands to try. We’ve focused on creatine powder supplements, as these usually give you a better value for your money than tablets or capsules and are an easy way to get an effective dose (3–5 g) in one go.

What to look for

Creatine monohydrate

While many forms of creatine exist, creatine monohydrate is the most researched type. Numerous studies show it’s safe, effective and bioavailable (readily absorbed by the body).¹ And it’s also a cost-effective option.

Micronized creatine monohydrate

If a highly soluble powder supplement is a priority for you, go for micronized creatine monohydrate, which has been processed into smaller particles to more easily mix with water or other liquids. It also appears to be absorbed faster and is easier on the digestive system.²

Creapure® This ultra-pure (reportedly 99.9 percent pure), micronized, trademarked form of creatine monohydrate is the creatine of choice for several brands. Produced by Alzchem Trostberg GmbH in Germany, it’s widely considered the gold-standard supplemental creatine.

Creapure is rigorously tested for impurities and banned substances and is the form of creatine used most often in clinical trials to test creatine’s safety and effectiveness.³ “Creapure” on a label is a good sign of quality, but bear in mind the price for a supplement containing

it may be higher than for other options.

Just one ingredient

Check the ingredients list to make sure the formula is free of fillers and unnecessary additives like sugar, sweeteners, or artificial colors and flavors. Ideally, you want a single ingredient on the label: creatine monohydrate. Go for unflavored rather than flavored versions.

Third-party testing Is the product independently tested for potency and purity? In other words, does the label description match what’s actually inside, and is the product free of harmful contaminants like pesticides and heavy metals? If it’s not clear from the label or the company’s website, get in touch with them to check.

High manufacturing standards

Is the supplement compliant with current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP), regulations set by health authorities to ensure product quality and safety? Check the product label for certifications from trusted bodies such as NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) International, the world’s authority on good manufacturing practices.

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Products to try

Here's a small selection of creatine powder supplements available in the US and UK. All contain just one ingredient—creatine monohydrate. There's nothing else added whatsoever.

Momentous

**Creatine, \$39.95/£29.49
(15.8 oz / 450 g)**

US: livemomentous.com
UK: healf.com

Momentous uses Creapure®, a micronized creatine renowned for its purity, and every batch is NSF Certified for Sport®, meaning it meets strict quality and safety standards.

Sports Research

**Micronized Creatine Monohydrate,
\$17.95/£22.22 (10.58 oz / 300 g)**

US: sportsresearch.com
UK: uk.iherb.com

This micronized form of creatine monohydrate is non-GMO verified, gluten-free, third-party tested, cGMP compliant and certified by Informed Sport, which means it's been tested for banned substances and contaminants.

Vivo Life

**Creatine, \$29.99/£19.99
(8.89 oz / 252 g)**

US: vivolife.com
UK: vivolife.co.uk

Like all Vivo Life products, this micronized creatine is certified vegan and cruelty-free. It's also third-party tested for purity and safety, certified by Informed Sport and made in the UK.

Vilgain

**Creatine Creapure, \$26.18/£19.99
(10.58 oz / 300 g)**

US: healf.com
UK: vilgain.co.uk

Another brand using Creapure creatine, Vilgain regularly tests all its products to ensure quality, safety and purity. You can view the latest lab test reports for this creatine on the website.

Other good options**US**

Klean Athlete: kleanathlete.com
EarthNutri: earthnutri.com

UK

Bulk: bulk.com/uk
Myprotein: myprotein.com

Where to buy DMSO

In "More Than Skin Deep" (page 40), Cate Montana reports on the extraordinary healing power of dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO).

It's best to consult with a qualified practitioner if you'd like to try it for yourself, but here's a quick guide to what to look for when buying DMSO, plus some pure DMSO products available online in the US and UK. Just keep in mind that DMSO is not approved for general therapeutic use in either country, so it's sold by these companies for solvent purposes only.

What to look for

Pharmaceutical-grade purity The DMSO you choose should have 99.9 percent purity or greater. Make sure it's been filtered and purified for human medical applications. Industrial-grade DMSO may contain impurities not safe for human use.

Glass packaging As plastics chemicals can leach from packaging into the product inside, a glass bottle is best.

No added ingredients If you want a pure, undiluted DMSO product, make sure it's just DMSO on the label and nothing else. If you'd prefer a ready-to-use diluted product, check there are no unnecessary ingredients added, like fragrances or colorings. Ready-to-use formulas are often diluted with distilled water or aloe vera.

Products to try**US****Biogenic Foods**

**Highest Purity Grade DMSO,
\$27.99 (4 oz)**

biogenicfoods.com

This pharmaceutical-grade DMSO, manufactured in the USA, is 99.999 percent pure, which means it has less than 0.001 percent contaminants and moisture. It's available in five sizes; the largest comes in a jug made of high-density polyethylene (a plastic that won't leach into it), but the rest are sold in amber glass bottles.

UK**Regency Organics**

**Super Pure DMSO, £10.99
(50 mL)**

regencyorganics.co.uk

Claimed to be the best DMSO currently available in the UK—and recommended by *WDDTY* editorial panel member Dr Sarah Myhill—this pure DMSO is made to exacting standards and is

mainly used in the manufacture of medicines. It has a guaranteed purity of over 99.9 percent and is available in various-sized amber glass bottles (as well as high-density polyethylene bottles for larger sizes).

DMSO gels, made with remineralized water and/or aloe vera, and ready-to-use (prediluted) DMSO liquid products are also available from Regency Organics.

US and UK**Dr. Moran's**

**DMSO Pharmaceutical Grade,
\$32.90/£27.99**

(8.45 oz / 250 mL)

dmmorans.com

Made in Germany in line with high safety standards, this pharmaceutical-grade DMSO is 99.9 percent pure according to the European Pharmacopoeia. It comes in an amber glass bottle to prevent damage from sunlight. But note that it has a Teflon-lined plastic cap.

Where to get EVOX therapy

In "Your Longevity Blueprint" (page 58), Dr Leigh Erin Connealy recommends using EVOX therapy to reduce stress and anxiety and heal emotional trauma.

If you'd like to try it, search online for "EVOX perception reframing" along with the name of your city or state to see if you can find somewhere offering the therapy near you. There seem to be plenty of options in the US (see a small selection below), but we could find only two in the UK.

US**Center for New Medicine**

cfnewmedicine.com
Irvine, California

Honed in Health

honedinhealth.com
St Cloud, Florida

Gentle Strength Counseling & Holistic Center

gentlestrengthcounseling.net
Brighton, Michigan

Mindbody Solutions

nutrition-houston.com
Webster, Texas

Peak Life Holistics

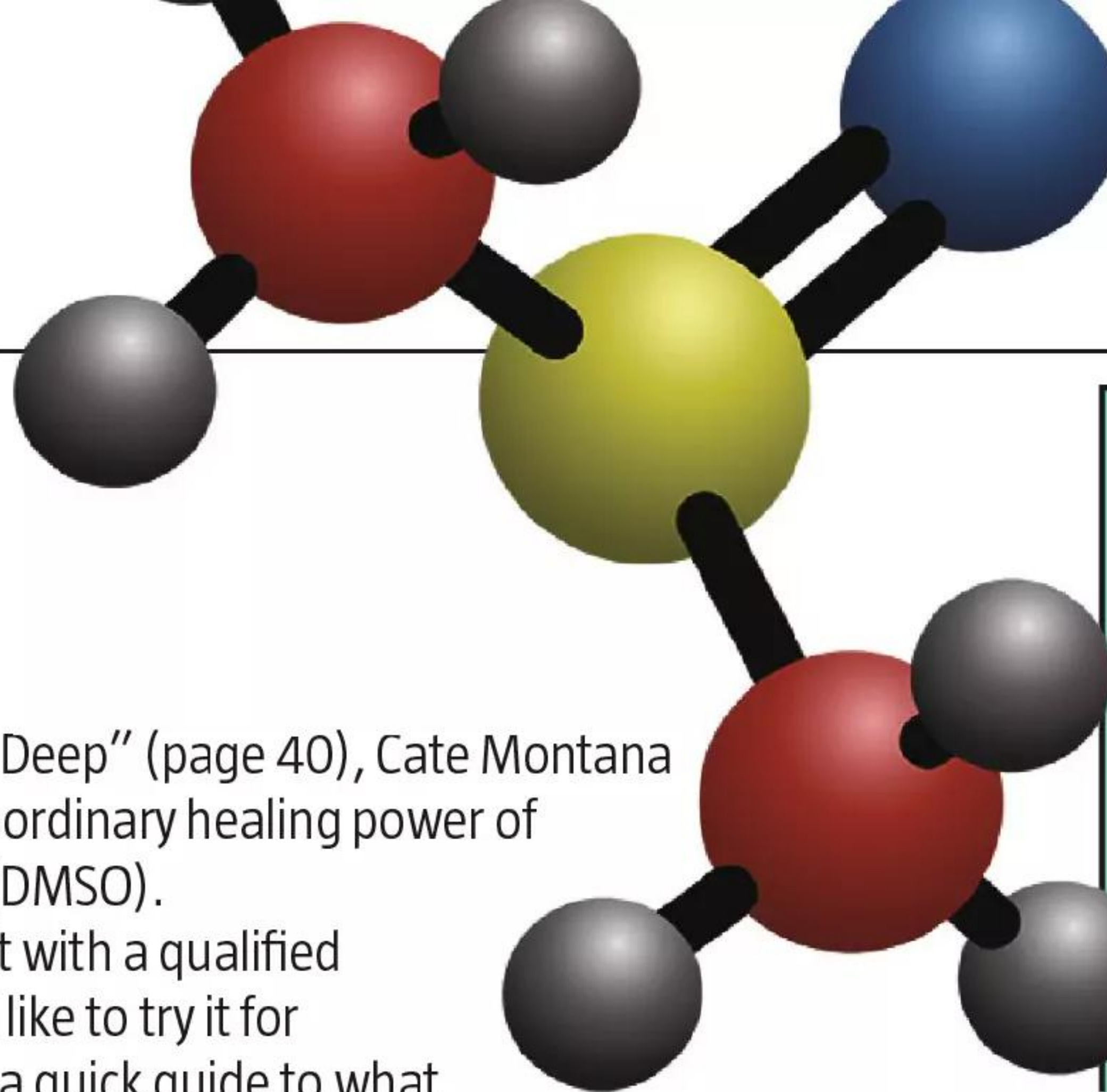
peaklifeholistics.com
Somers, New York

UK**Paradigm Pure**

paradigmpurehealth.com
London

Emotional Framing Therapy

emotionalreframing-therapy.com
Ascot, Berkshire



The vaccine-hesitant has butterflies in their stomach

Anti-vax? It's the heebie-jeebies

Bryan Hubbard

Are you “vaccine-hesitant” or even an “anti-vaxxer” (gasp)? If you are, you probably believe you’ve done the research and come up with a perfectly rational reason for your position.

But you haven’t—not according to the very latest science, at least. No, you have the heebie-jeebies, formerly known as the collie-wobbles or, as doctors put it, “butterflies in the stomach” (*Papilio stomachus*). After analyzing the psychology of the “anti-vaxxer,” two researchers from the University of British Columbia have declared that’s really what’s going on.

Alan Richardson is a philosopher, so he really, really understands what makes us tick. And the other researcher, Judy Segal, is an English professor, so doubtlessly her skills came to the fore for that mot juste.

Writing in Canada’s most prestigious medical journal, the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (CMAJ), the two try to lead doctors away from their standard response to the vaccine-hesitant patient, “You’re a complete moron, mate,” and toward a more nuanced and empathetic approach.

The conventional view shared by almost all doctors is the “deficit model.” Sounds good, but it just boils down to this: People who are pro-vaccine are informed and responsible; ergo, the anti-vaxxer is ill-informed and irresponsible. A bit thick, in fact.

A more tolerant doctor might instead hold to “epistemic pluralism.” This recognizes that there are many different views and opinions out there, and although they are all completely wrong, it’s beholden on the epistemic pluralistic doctor to meet them “where they are.” To wade into the murky water of thickness, in fact.

Richardson and Segal express astonishment that more doctors aren’t embracing epistemic pluralism but instead hold to the outmoded deficit model. “Just give

the thickos a good kicking” seems still to be the order of the day.

Anti-vaxxers aren’t rational beings; they don’t actually think, the two explain. No, it’s all emotional, so it’s no good coming up with “the facts” (e.g., the mRNA Covid vaccines have been fully tested and are perfectly safe. Oh, and they stop you getting Covid and passing it on). No, the emotional anti-vaxxer needs to be cajoled just as you would a five-year-old.

“People who are skeptical about vaccines are not always waiting to be filled with information better than the information they have. Nor are they always people who can provide accurate and refutable explanations for their skepticism,” they write.

No, they don’t want superior information to dissuade them, and they have absolutely no idea why they hold their view, anyway. It’s just a bad case of the heebie-jeebies.

Richardson and Segal suggest a way of introducing the difficult subject of vaccination. A patient comes in, complaining about having had a bad back for weeks.

“Don’t worry about that,” the doctor responds. “Are your vaccines up to date?”

“No,” says the patient, “but I want my bad back sorted.”

“That’ll probably just clear up sometime (or not, haha), so . . . should I vaccinate you now?”

“No!” says the patient.

“It’s free,” the doctor says, “and it means millions of people won’t die, probably today.”

The doctor could also embrace a spot of epistemic pluralism to seal the deal: “Look, I know there are some who don’t believe in vaccines, but I know you’re not one of them because you’re not a moron.” That should be the clincher and send those heebie-jeebies scurrying back to where they came from!

Richardson and Segal admit, in passing, that the anti-vaxxer might have a point. “Of course, many people have entirely reasonable explanations for their vaccine skepticism, especially when they have had little cause for confidence in the institutions of government and medicine,” they write.

Having “entirely reasonable explanations” suggests the anti-vaxxers have thought it through and have developed rational reasons for their views. In fact, often they have done more research and are better informed than those who don’t question vaccines, and they’re not anti-vaxxers (a pejorative term) but pro-informed choice. On the other hand, people who get vaccinated sometimes do so from a sense of fear (viz Covid), which is an irrational response.

And fear is the crowbar that Richardson and Segal suggest doctors use on the vaccine-hesitant as a final resort: Your child could die if you don’t get vaccinated. You could lose your job. Entire populations could disappear. Your dog won’t want anything to do with you.

If all that fails, we need the anti-heebie-jeebie vaccine, and quick.

Of course, many people have entirely reasonable explanations for their vaccine skepticism, especially when they have had little cause for confidence in the institutions of government and medicine

REFERENCE

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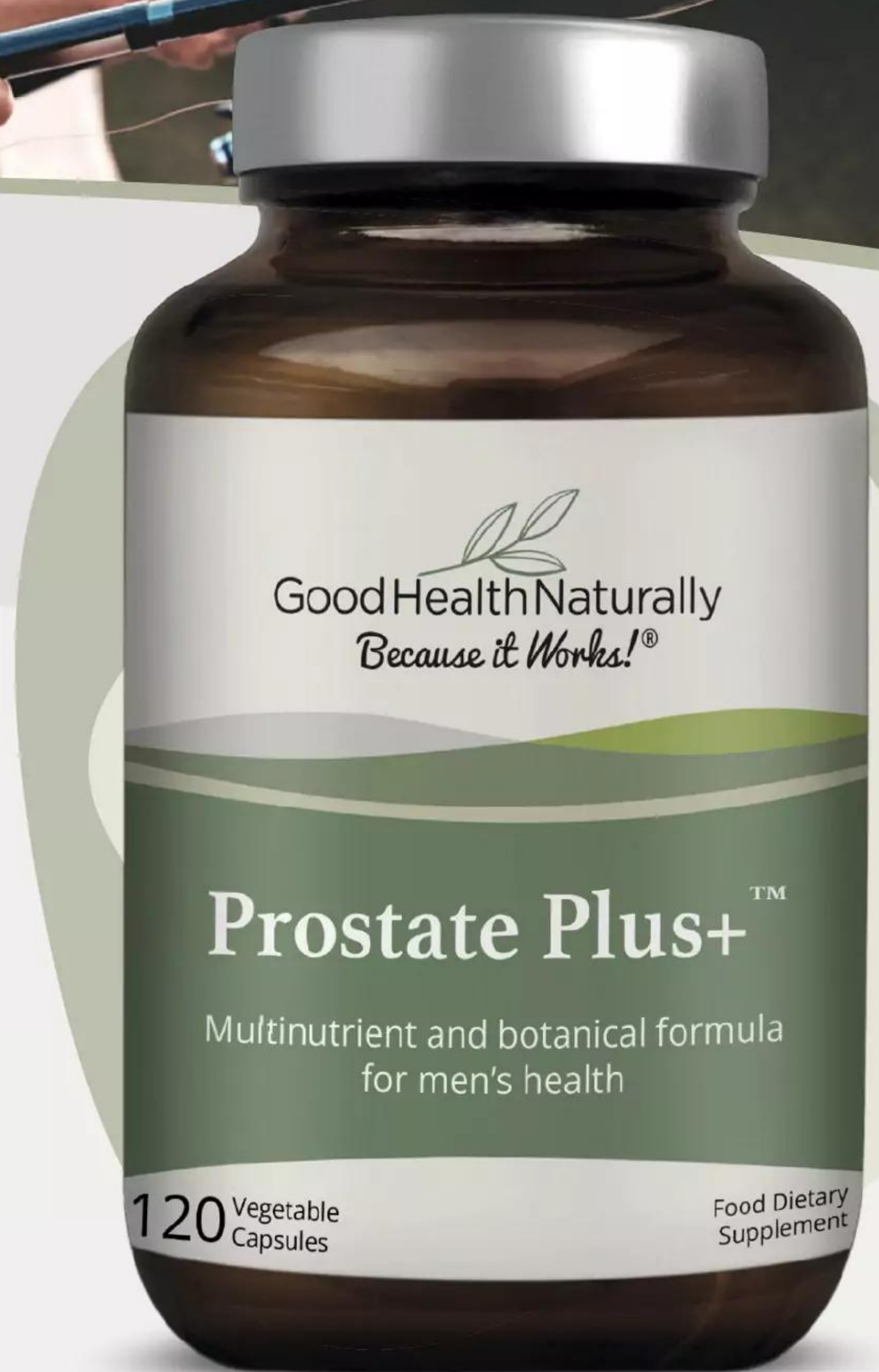
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Pomegranate Extract & Lycopene – Source of plant compounds.


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