

Fred Pescatore, MD

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logical health  
ALTERNATIVES

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# **THE TRUTH EXPANSION PACK: Cures from the cutting room floor**

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## **Volume 1**

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# The hidden danger of diabetes

## Surprising signs you might be at risk...and the surprisingly simple solutions you can start TODAY

There's certainly no shortage of diabetes complications to choose from: dementia and memory loss, vision loss, gum disease, heart attacks, kidney disease, hypertension, erectile dysfunction, peripheral neuropathy, and much more. It's a condition that affects you from head to toe.

But the fact is, there's a single culprit behind all of these dangers — and it's not the one you're probably thinking of...

While everyone focuses all the attention on blood sugar, this problem actually goes much deeper. I'm talking about small blood sugar and capillary disease. And this little-known hazard can lead to some enormous problems.

In fact, the leading causes of death in this country are almost all related to blood vessels, whether it's stroke, heart disease, or any of the others.

### **It's all about maintaining healthy blood vessels**

Luckily, scientists are starting to unravel the mysteries of this chronic and debilitating illness. And, as it turns out, research is showing that focusing on maintaining — and repairing — small blood vessels may be the first step in reversing some of the most devastating complications of blood sugar problems, including diabetic nerve damage.

Unfortunately, that's just not something many people are equipped to do these days. Especially considering that conventional medicine only treats the symptoms of ailing blood vessels (with potentially dangerous prescription drugs to boot). If they recognize the problem at all, that is.

Today, we're going to change all that.

I'm going to give you a complete rundown of all the tools you need to keep your small blood vessels strong and healthy — and ensure you never have to worry about the dire consequences of diabetes.

But before we get to that, there are...

### **Three important facts you need to know about this hidden danger**

**No. 1:** When small blood vessel disease occurs, the blood flow to critical areas of your body becomes impaired. Without adequate blood flow, there's not enough oxygen being delivered to your organs.

And that's when bad things can happen.

**No. 2:** That's why diabetes affects so many different organs — because every system in your body relies on oxygen and blood flow to survive.

For example, medical experts have believed for years that the neuropathy so many diabetics struggle with is caused by nerve damage. But a new study from Johns Hopkins published in June in the journal *Brain* reported that small blood vessel damage may actually be at the root of the excruciating pain, numbness, and tingling that can drive many people with diabetes mad.

**No. 3:** These sorts of blood-vessel-related problems don't just start when you've been diagnosed with full-blown diabetes. Damage to your small blood vessels can begin well before a diagnosis. In fact, you're putting your small blood vessels at risk each day your blood sugar starts to elevate.

Every time you eat a meal that is filled with a lot of simple carbohydrates — i.e., any white breads, pasta, etc. (you know, the usual American diet) — it destroys your blood vessels, slowly

but surely.

So focusing on your food choices should certainly be your first priority. Yes, you'll probably have to make some changes. That's the bad news...the GOOD news is, making those changes doesn't have to be so hard.

And you don't have to go out and buy anything special. In fact, you can start today – at your next meal, even – with things you already have in your kitchen.

For example, one of my favorite ways to fill up without reaching for the bread basket is to begin each meal with a savory vegetable appetizer.

Here's one of my go-to, quick, easy recipes:

Blanche some veggies – green beans, broccoli...whatever you've got in the fridge (lightly steam them for 30 seconds or so, then run cold water over them). And then just dip them in rich cream cheese, ranch dressing, peanut butter, or sour cream.

That's what my New Hamptons Health Miracle is all about – simple, easy ways to indulge your way to amazing health...and healthy blood vessels. And in the meantime, to support those efforts, there are also a handful of nutrients that can help...

### Surprising symptoms of small blood vessel disease

Take a look at the following list. If any of these symptoms sound familiar, your small blood vessels may be the culprit...

- Cold hands and feet
- Feeling cold all the time
- Numbness or tingling in the hands or feet
- Blurred vision
- Skin bruising that doesn't heal quickly
- Frequent urination
- Leg and/or toe cramping

## Speed up the healing

First on the list is one you've probably already heard of: *resveratrol*.

Resveratrol appears to help keep blood vessels healthy by stimulating nitric oxide synthase activity. Which is simply a fancy way of saying it helps to keep the blood vessels open. It may also help keep blood platelets from sticking together, so blood flows more smoothly. The same reason your physician probably recommends that you take an aspirin each day. But there are some significant risks associated with daily aspirin intake. Resveratrol can have a similar affect without the risk.

Other blood-vessel-supporting supplements that I recommend to my patients include diosmin, pomegranate, and an herb called butcher's broom.

*Diosmin* (and its cousin hesperidin) are specific citrus bioflavonoids that are commonly recommended by doctors in Europe for vascular support and protection. Pomegranate and butcher's broom have been used for centuries in supporting leg and vein health. Science is finally catching up and starting to understand the mechanisms behind why these nutrients work – and the research is very exciting. Really I could devote a whole newsletter to each of these supplements, that's how strongly I believe in their ability to help strengthen your blood vessels. But for the sake of space, I'll move on to...

### My No. 1 pick for protecting your blood vessels

If I had to choose my favorite supplement for blood vessel support (and just about everything else, for that matter), it would have to be Pycnogenol®.

Pycnogenol is an extract from the bark of a particular type of pine tree that only grows along the southwest coast of France, in the Les Landes de Gascogne area.

Since researchers began looking at it more closely over 60 years ago, more than 220 studies have been published on the benefits of Pyc-

nogenol — demonstrating its antioxidant properties, its ability to help reduce blood sugar, and its effects on cardiovascular and circulatory health. And clinical research has shown that one of the primary ways Pycnogenol benefits your circulation is by targeting collagen and elastin, which are the building blocks that line your blood vessels.

Unfortunately, a combination of aging and less-than-ideal food choices cause collagen and elastin to break down. But Pycnogenol helps the body replenish these two critical substances — and keeps your blood vessels working the way they're supposed to in the process.

It's something that everyone can benefit from, and I recommend 50 to 100 mg a day for general health. If you have diabetes or blood sugar concerns, you may need additional support. I have my diabetes patients take 100 to 200 mg of Pycnogenol per day.

Between easy mealtime swaps to keep your blood sugar balanced (and, in turn, keep it from wreaking havoc on your circulation), and the added support of Pycnogenol and the other nutrients I mentioned above, you'll keep your blood vessels healthy without having to give it a second thought. Simple as that.

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## The shocking secret standing in the way of your weight loss

### Plus, six easy tips to tackle this hidden problem

By now, you've probably heard all about the health benefits of probiotics. They're being touted everywhere these days for their role in helping regulate your digestive system, boosting immunity, even tooth decay.

But there's one major health benefit to probiotics that no one's talking about...

#### **Friendly bacteria can actually help you lose weight**

Here's how it works...

The body has an amazing number of bacteria — about 90 trillion, in fact. And this enormous population of microbes is made up of both “good” bacteria that help keep you healthy and “bad” bacteria that, if left unchecked, can make you sick. Keeping the good and the bad in balance is not only key to maintaining optimal health — it can also be critical when it comes to losing weight as well.

First, research has shown that good bacteria can help your body absorb and metabolize food.

Second, the balance between the good and the bad regulates the genes involved in energy metabolism.

And third, when there's an imbalance — which is more common than ever, thanks to the stress of everyday life, antibiotic use, and many other factors these days — your body doesn't absorb all the nutrients from the food you eat. And when that happens, you crave more food to get the nutrition and important nutrients you're lacking.

In other words, when the body doesn't get the nutrients it needs, you'll get hungry more often, so you'll tend to eat more. And, in turn, the number on the scale will start creeping up...your pants will start to feel tighter...and, before you even realize what's happening, you'll have packed on 10, 15, 20 pounds — or more.

It's really that simple.

But if you balance the bacteria in your body, managing your weight — and losing those unwanted inches — can be much, much easier.

## Just DON'T reach for the yogurt!

We've all been conditioned to think "yogurt" the minute we hear the word "probiotic." But there's actually a much more important step to take before stocking your fridge with Activia, Yoplait, and every other variety you can get your hands on (in fact, there's an important reason you may want to skip the yogurt altogether – more on that in a minute...)

To help strengthen your body's good bacteria, it's critical to reduce your sugar intake.

"Bad" bacteria feeds on sugar, and the more of it you eat, the stronger the harmful bacteria will become, until it eventually overpowers the good bacteria. Eliminating sugar – and processed, carb-loaded foods that turn into sugar in the body – gives the good bacteria in your system a leg up.

But as important as it is to "starve" the bad bacteria of its food supply (sugar), it's equally important to...

### Feed your good bacteria

And the best way to do that is with foods known as prebiotics.

These include high-fiber fruits and vegetables – like berries, garlic, onions, flaxseed, leeks, spinach, kale, chard, arugula, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, lentils, chickpeas, and black beans.

But you may also want to consider taking a prebiotic supplement. Researchers think that daily consumption of a prebiotic may be able to suppress levels of hormones linked to hunger.

In one study, 48 overweight and obese adults received 21 grams of prebiotics or a placebo for 12 weeks. At the end of the study, those taking a prebiotic lost an average of 2.3 pounds, while

the people taking the placebo actually gained an average of 1 pound.

Of course, probiotics are also important. But, despite the media blitz surrounding it, yogurt just doesn't provide sufficient amounts of friendly bacteria, and some (most) brands add sugar, which defeats the purpose. And the sugar-free varieties use artificial sweeteners which have a laundry list of negative side effects associated with them.

This is why I recommend taking a quality probiotic supplement. But be sure to choose your probiotic supplement carefully...

A 2006 ConsumerLab.com evaluation of probiotic products found that nearly half (44 percent) of products tested contained fewer viable organisms or lower levels of the organisms than the manufacturers claimed.

My No. 1 choice is a supplement called Dr. Ohhira's Probiotics.

Here are a few more easy – yet often overlooked – tips to balance your gut bacteria:

- **Eat more fish** – cold-water fish (wild Alaskan salmon, mackerel, sardines, herring and black cod) have important omega-3 fatty acids such as EPA and DHA that support proper bacterial balance.
- **Eat plenty of fiber** – 25 to 30 grams daily to encourage healthy digestion and elimination.
- **Drink plenty of pure water.** Water helps flush out toxins, encourages proper elimination, and hydrates the cells.

The last two are things that the "good" bacteria in your body will work to correct. But if you do your part, they won't have to work as hard, which means there will be more available for other purposes, like helping you slim down and look – and feel – better than you have in years.

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# Taking your blood panel beyond the basics...

## Seldom-run tests that can give you REAL answers when your doctor says there's "nothing wrong."

Tell me if this sounds familiar...

You go to your doctor because you don't feel well. He runs some tests, but tells you there's nothing wrong with you. But you still don't feel like yourself, so you go see another doctor...who asks all the same questions, and runs all the same tests. And, once again, you're told everything looks "normal." So you try again and again until you start to wonder if you're imagining your symptoms.

Well, I'm here to tell you it's NOT in your head. I've seen it time and again with my patients. They've been told by dozens of doctors that "nothing's wrong" — and are amazed when, finally, I manage to pinpoint the real problem.

And the reason I've been able to help so many people find the answers that eluded other doctors is that I do something most M.D.s don't...

I look at each patient's FULL blood panel.

### How the "same old tests" fall short

All physicians are trained to run the basic blood tests. Everyone runs a "CBC" (or complete blood count) which tells you how your red and white blood cells are doing. And most doctors will also do the comprehensive metabolic profile which looks at kidney function, electrolyte balance, liver function, and fasting glucose levels.

These tests are a good start, but where many mainstream doctors fall short is in their interpretation of the results. For example, most docs think a fasting glucose level less than 100 is fine. Not so! Your fasting glucose should be under 80 in order to really be considered normal.

But what's worse than relying on outdated ideas of what constitutes "normal"...is the fact

that most mainstream physicians stick to the same old tests they learned about in medical school — decades ago.

New tests with the potential to save lives come along all the time. And, there are innovative ways of looking at the traditional tests. Unfortunately, it is the rare physician who bothers incorporating these techniques into their testing routine. There are a few reasons for this phenomenon.

The first is often that the physician has never heard of the test, doesn't think it's important, or doesn't believe it lends any clinical value. Read that as, "there is no pharmaceutical medication to prescribe, so why bother testing for it."

The second factor at work here is most mainstream physicians go strictly "by the book" when it comes to interpreting the results of the tests they do run. As long as the result is in the "normal" range established by the particular lab they're using, they tell you nothing is wrong.

The problem is, many of these "normal" ranges are out of date. And that means you may not be getting the most accurate results.

Let's take a fresh look at these tests one by one, starting with...

### Why you could still be at risk — even with a "normal" thyroid level

Most physicians — heck, even most endocrinologists (doctors who specialize in glandular and hormone issues) — will only order a TSH test. This test measures the amount of thyroid stimulating hormone in your blood. And if it comes back normal, they'll tell you there's nothing wrong with your thyroid.

Traditionally, a result of 5 or lower would be

considered normal. But this lets a lot of people with thyroid symptoms fall through the cracks. Thyroid issues can increase your risk for sudden cardiac death (especially in women), so it isn't something you want to leave inadequately treated. It's a serious enough problem that the endocrine society is reconsidering whether to decrease the normal range to 2 or less. I treat every patient whose TSH is greater than 2.

But it's not just your TSH you should be aware of. When it comes to complete thyroid health, the screening should also include free T3, free T4, thyroid binding globulin (TBG), reverse T3, and thyroid auto-antibodies.

Free T3 and free T4 are thyroid hormones and screening them tells you the amount available to your cells and tissues. TBG is a protein that carries thyroid hormones in the blood. Testing your levels is important because it lets you know whether the thyroid hormones in your blood are bound, or if they're "free" to do their job. And thyroid auto-antibodies tell you if your body is destroying its own thyroid gland. If these are even mildly positive, you need to be treated to help preserve your thyroid function.

### **The eye-opening blood sugar test most doctors never run**

With the diabetes epidemic in full swing, hemoglobin A1C (HBA1C) has become a more common test. It's an important biomarker for diabetes (and diabetes risk) that tells you how well controlled your blood sugar has been for a period of 6 weeks prior to taking the test.

I've used this test on all my patients for the past 19 years. And I like to see them all at 5.5 or less – and preferably under 5. Anything greater than 5.7 I consider pre-diabetic and any number greater than 6.0 is diabetic.

But to get an even more precise idea of where your blood sugar stands, ask to have your fructosamine tested, too. Fructosamine is a byproduct of glucose metabolism. This is one of those tests that most mainstream doctors would never

order. But it can be a real eye-opener because it tells you how well your blood sugar was controlled in the past two weeks prior to the test.

Knowing what your blood sugar has done in the past six weeks and the past two weeks makes it easier to draw a pattern of how you eat. Six weeks gives the body too much leeway to make up for those seemingly minor slip ups. A two-week test shows you just how much that "little slice" of cake at the birthday party you went to, or that pig out on Sunday, can really affect your blood sugar and put you in danger.

If your HBA1C and fructosamine levels aren't where they should be, it doesn't necessarily mean you need to be on medication to lower your blood sugar. It just means you need to be more diligent with your diet and nutritional supplement regimen.

### **The hidden cause of countless nagging symptoms**

Food allergies and sensitivities are one of the most common – and most overlooked – causes of unexplained symptoms. In other words, it may be the reason you just don't feel good – but your doctor tells you there's nothing wrong. And most conventional physicians don't test for food sensitivities.

The most common food allergens are eggs, nuts and dairy. The most common food sensitivities are gluten, yeast, and casein.

If you are allergic or sensitive to one or more of these foods, and you are eating them (which in all likelihood you are), it will lead to inflammation in the body. And chronic inflammation can lead to diabetes, heart disease, or obesity – all of which can be deadly.

The best way to determine if these foods are problematic for you is to be screened for gluten, gliadin, and casein IgG and IgE levels. IgG and IgE are antibodies that occur when your body has an allergic reaction – in this case to wheat, gluten, and/or dairy.

### **The four heart health markers that are more important than cholesterol**

Homocysteine has become a more accepted risk factor for heart disease in recent years. But the problem is, most M.D.s still don't really understand what it means. Elevated homocysteine levels are actually a marker for B vitamin deficiency. And most Americans don't have enough B vitamins, because processed foods and sugar actually steal these essential nutrients from your body.

I like to see my patients' homocysteine levels at 8 or below. If yours are higher, it's easy to correct by supplementing with B6, B12, and folic acid.

Oh, and if you enjoy an occasional cocktail (which is perfectly fine!), just keep in mind that alcohol does deplete B vitamins, so you will need more of all the "Bs." You want to make sure you are taking at least a B100 complex. However, to really improve your homocysteine levels, you need at least 2,000 mcg of B12, 5 mg of folic acid, and 100 mg of B6 per day.

Fibrinogen is another important screening, because it tells you how thick your blood is, which is an important indicator of future stroke risk. I like to see this number below 300. If yours is higher, be careful which treatment option you choose. Believe it or not, the mainstream go-to blood thinners — warfarin and aspirin — actually raise fibrinogen levels. I recommend nattokinase — a nutritional supplement made from fermented soy beans that helps bring fibrinogen levels down safely. I recommend 1,000 to 3,000 fibrin units per day (3,000 fibrin units equals roughly 150 mg).

The next two heart screenings aren't ones many mainstream doctors order, but they're critical in giving you an accurate picture of your cardiac health. The first is cardio specific c-reactive protein (CRP). This is a marker for inflammation around the heart. Oxidative stress (which occurs when you eat foods high in sugar) causes inflammation and plaque to form in your arterial cell walls. Ideally, you want your level to be less than 1.0.

The other seldom-run heart-health test is your

ferritin level. This indicates how much iron is stored in your body. It's a critical health marker because excess iron can cause organ damage — and too little can cause heart disease. Generally this level should be around 75.

### **Mind your minerals**

The RBC mineral screening measures magnesium, potassium, chromium, zinc, copper, manganese and calcium. These are trace minerals that play a role in every function in our body, so it's important to know your levels. And if they're low, you should take a multi-mineral supplement.

On the vitamin side of things, make sure you have your vitamin D 25 hydroxy level tested. This crucial vitamin helps to protect you from bone loss, high blood pressure, prostate and breast cancer, and more. In fact, as researchers are discovering, there's almost nothing vitamin D doesn't help with.

Unfortunately, many doctors would be happy if your level was 25. But I always make sure my patients' levels are between 80 and 100.

### **The three hormone tests everyone needs — regardless of your gender!**

Even when they do hormone screenings, many doctors only run certain tests for men and others for women. But everyone should have the following tests run:

**Testosterone.** The current "normal" level for men is between 200 and 1,500. That's an enormous range — and is basically meaningless. For women, it's 20 to 80 (and be aware that most doctors don't screen for testosterone in women). You should interpret your level based on your age: the younger you are, the higher it should be.

**Estradiol.** This is the most protective estrogen for women. And if it's too high in men, it can mean too much testosterone is being converted into estrogen (which can be easily fixed by supplementing with indole 3 carbinol and DIM).

**DHEA sulfate.** This tests for adrenal function.

Unfortunately, many conventional docs don't even know there is a test for adrenal function — let alone what to do about a deficiency. But DHEA-S is an important diagnostic indicator that can explain symptoms like fatigue, inability to lose weight, malaise, waking up in the middle of the night, and, most importantly, improper aging. Your level again depends on your age and needs to be carefully interpreted. Labs are variable in their numbers but you will always want to be on the higher end of normal for this test (and with most labs, you want to be higher than even the highest reference range). DHEA can be taken in supplement form but only under the care and advice of your personal physician.

So there you have it. These are the blood tests you need to get a complete picture of what is going on in your body.

I know it might seem like overkill...and I'm sure a lot of mainstream physicians would say that it is. But given conventional medicine's track record in helping people avoid diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and any number of other deadly diseases... maybe it's time for a little more "overkill."

### **Take control of your own health — one test at a time**

If your doctor is resistant to the idea of running all of these tests, you have a few options...

There are some online sources that will let you order your own lab tests. But I don't typically rec-

ommend this route for a few reasons.

First of all, there's no way to vouch for the credibility of the lab. Also keep in mind, you'll still need a doctor's help interpreting some of the results — things like your thyroid hormone levels, RBC minerals, estradiol, and DHEA sulfate — where "normal" ranges vary widely from person to person and according to the lab used. Plus, you'll also be paying for all of the tests completely out-of-pocket. (You may incur some expense regardless, but a doctor's office will likely be able to help you get at least some of them covered.)

So it may actually be easier — and in your best interest in the long run — to find a doctor who is willing to work with you to get all the information you need...and to help you decide the best way to put all of that information to use.

Two good sources that can help you find a more open-minded physician near you are The American College for the Advancement in Medicine ([www.acam.org](http://www.acam.org); 800-532-3688) and the International & American Associations of Clinical Nutritionists ([www.iaacn.org](http://www.iaacn.org); 972-407-9089).

The bottom line is that while it might take some more legwork on your part, testing ALL of these things is absolutely essential — and well worth the effort. It brings the "big picture" of your overall health into focus, and gives you the very best chance of avoiding diabetes, balancing your blood sugar, keeping yourself strong and healthy, and living a long and healthy life.

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## **The ancient diarrhea remedy changing the future of today's deadliest epidemics**

Centuries ago in China, village doctors used a simple herbal remedy to treat one of their most devastating illnesses — a lethal form of diarrhea known as dysentery.

In ancient Egypt, this same secret remedy cured the plague and hepatitis.

In fact, this amazing substance has been used successfully to treat every epidemic in history, from cholera to dengue fever to malaria.

Today's scientists have put this ancient medicine under the microscope, testing it again and again, in laboratories and in humans, to evaluate

its full potential. And, as it turns out, this one herb is showing tremendous promise in treating, slowing, even preventing all of our “modern-day plagues,” too... high cholesterol, hypertension, Alzheimer’s disease, even cancer.

But perhaps the most exciting research to-date has unveiled this herb’s power to...

### **Bring today’s No. 1 health threat to a virtual standstill**

Traditional Chinese healers also used this remedy to treat what they referred to as “Wasting-Thirst Syndrome.” Today, we know it better as Type 2 diabetes. But, in those very primitive times—long before donuts and delivery pizza—dysentery was an even bigger killer than diabetes.

And since this “golden medicine” also saved the Chinese from death by dysentery, that became its primary claim to fame.

Over time, its blood sugar effects faded into obscurity, and it became known as THE cure for diarrhea...for stomach upsets of all kinds, in fact.

Fast-forward to the 1980s, when a team of researchers accidentally re-discovered its diabetes-defeating potential. (More on that in just a minute.)

Today, new research is pouring in, with results that have researchers’ jaws hitting the floor (and Big Pharma’s eyes widening in terror). And the whisper in the alternative health world is that this ancient diarrhea remedy is about to be re-born as...

### **The biggest diabetes breakthrough of the 21st century**

What is this ancient healing miracle? The Traditional Chinese Doctors called it Zhi Mu, but today it’s more commonly known as berberine, which translates as “golden thread.”

And this potent natural substance, discovered by wise Chinese healers over 2,500 years ago, is standing up to 21st century medical scrutiny.

The studies are giving some exciting insights into the chemical complexity of berberine—and revealing at least some of its secrets to longevity, including...

### **The stunning “side effect” no one saw coming**

The modern-day rediscovery of berberine’s blood sugar potential began in 1983 in a hospital in northeast China.

A local doctor, Ni Yanxi, was treating several patients for diarrhea...patients who also had diabetes. As expected, berberine took care of the patients’ stomach issues. But much to Ni Yanxi’s surprise, something else happened too...

All of his patients’ blood sugar levels had gone down significantly.

He re-tested his results to make sure he was right. Once again, berberine brought down subjects’ blood sugar—this time by a whopping 86 percent, with effects that started in as little as an hour after taking it.

And with that, the diabetes-defeating potential for berberine was re-born.

Over the past 29 years, study after study—conducted in the best laboratories all over the world—have proven berberine’s amazing blood sugar balancing powers.

In fact, clinical trials indicate that...

### **This “golden thread” stands up to the mainstream’s “gold-standard” treatment**

In one study, again conducted in China, researchers put berberine to the test against Metformin, one of the most widely prescribed blood sugar drugs.

The researchers were blown away to find that in both groups...

- Hemoglobin A1c fell by 2 percent
- Post-meal blood sugar levels plummeted by more than 8 points

- Insulin resistance dropped by one third

In other words, the results in the patients taking berberine were just as positive as those taking the drug.

And all of these benefits began after just one week.

### **How a bit of GOLD DUST slashes blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, and diarrhea**

It's easy to be skeptical when one substance seems to "do it all"... and scientists are. But their studies have started to unlock some of berberine's healing secrets.

Research has revealed a new understanding of how diabetes develops. Scientists believe that diabetes is caused by a low-grade inflammation (as is high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and other chronic diseases).

And that's how many Traditional Chinese Medicine remedies work—they quiet inflammation, bringing the body's internal mechanisms into balance.

Studies show it takes just a bit of berberine to ease this inflammation, and, in turn, to get blood sugar into check.

But there's still more to the story. Let me back up a step and explain just how...

### **Berberine attacks the root of the problem**

A group of scientists in Haikou, China, have come up with a hypothesis on the link between inflammation and blood sugar problems. And, believe it or not, they pinpoint an imbalance in gut bacteria as the culprit.

Their research, published in the July 2011 issue of *Medical Science Monitor* suggests that an imbalance

in gut bacteria causes the low-grade inflammation that, in turn, leads to diabetes. When the imbalance is corrected, diabetes doesn't develop.

And these researchers believe that berberine has significant power to kill bad bacteria, thus reducing inflammation...and balancing blood sugar.

In fact, this unique ability to act as a natural antibiotic explains how berberine has been able to tackle some of the toughest epidemics in history.

Berberine certainly appears to be one of the safest, strongest natural tools for balancing blood sugar.

I started using it in my practice recently, after looking for other options for my patients with diabetes or high fasting blood sugar levels. When I saw the research on berberine I knew I had to use it at my office.

I started out with my most troublesome patients, and, wouldn't you know—in all five of them, blood sugar decreased so much I actually needed to lower their medications (which is why it's important to work with your doctor if you decide to take berberine).

After that initial "trial," I've used berberine in all of my patients with diabetes and blood sugar problems—and in the overweight patients—with incredible success.

In fact, I would venture to say that berberine has changed my practice more significantly than any nutrient I can remember.

I recommend starting with 500 mg of berberine per day, and monitoring the effect on your blood sugar. You can safely increase the dose gradually, up to 1,500 mg per day—until you reach the optimum blood sugar level.

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# Healing power that rivals resveratrol... from *the last source you might expect*

It's been a little more than five years since a Harvard professor named David Sinclair single-handedly made resveratrol famous...and only a few months since a University of Connecticut researcher named Dipak Das single-handedly made it infamous.

Without delving too far into the scandal, suffice it to say that Das' research fraud — as unethical as it is — can't really undo the solid reputation resveratrol has built since it first made headlines in 2006.

Based on a wealth of solid evidence, gathered by dozens of truly brilliant and respectable researchers, there's simply no doubt it's one of the strongest antioxidants on the planet. In fact, resveratrol is what put the whole concept of polyphenols on the map.

And since its rise to fame, study after study has trumpeted resveratrol's benefits for protecting you from the ravages of free radicals, and all the chronic health problems they can cause — like heart disease, diabetes, memory deficit, and cancer.

With such solid and impressive science behind it, resveratrol has been a fixture on my "Desert Island" list of nutrients for a few years now — meaning it's one of the supplements I wouldn't ever want to be without...and one that I think everyone should be taking.

And, antioxidant-wise, nothing has come close to matching it.

## Until now.

You see, emerging science has revealed another natural substance that may be even more potent than resveratrol. And it comes from the last source you might expect...

## **The super-antioxidant growing under our noses for thousands of years**

Any of my patients will tell you that I'm not one to jump on every new health bandwagon as it rolls by.

I like to be sure the research on any new discovery is solid before I give it my thumbs-up and start recommending it to my patients.

But that's what makes this particular breakthrough so exciting. It comes from a fruit that has been growing right in our own backyard for thousands of years.

In fact, Native Americans in Maine ate this fruit voraciously for its healing powers.

And it already ranks as the No. 1 fruit on the USDA's list for oxygen radical absorbance capacity (ORAC), which means the antioxidant nutrients are the most potent and most readily absorbed by the body. Higher, even, than grapes — the primary source of resveratrol. And it has a lower sugar content than grapes, which makes it a go-to fruit on my New Hamptons Health Miracle plan.

I'm taking about *blueberries*.

Actually, modern research has revealed that blueberries are a rich source of several powerful antioxidants. And over the last 10 years, as scientists put blueberries under the microscope, increasing interest has developed about the antioxidants called polyphenols, which are abundant in this super-fruit.

Study after study revealed more positive health benefits from these nutrients.

Intrigued, scientists began honing in even closer on these powerful polyphenols in blueberries, and found one more potent than the rest.

This compound is known as pterostilbene (tero-STILL-bean), and it's making some pretty big waves in the natural health world. In fact, I predict you'll be hearing about it – and seeing it – everywhere in the coming months.

So today I want to give you some details about pterostilbene, including its intriguing potential – and why you don't necessarily have to run out and replace your resveratrol in favor of this up-and-coming nutrient superstar...

### **Turn back the clock – and turn deadly disease on its ear**

Pterostilbene is a type of plant nutrient called a stilbenoid. Plants make stilbenoids to fight off infectious attacks.

In the 1990s, scientists in the U.S. began investigating pterostilbene more deeply. Their laboratory, animal, and human tests – and other studies from around the world – revealed that...

- Pterostilbene is more easily absorbed and used in the body's cells, tissues, and in the bloodstream, compared to resveratrol. In fact, the body absorbs 80 percent of pterostilbene, and only 20 percent of resveratrol.
- Pterostilbene lowers inflammation throughout the body by preventing damage from free radicals caused by pollution, cigarette smoke, and other carcinogens.
- Pterostilbene helps to regulate blood sugar and cholesterol... protects cells in arteries, in the brain, in the colon...helps prevent type 2 diabetes, heart disease, hardening of the arteries, dementia, and cancer cell growth.

What makes all of this research especially exciting is that pterostilbene appears to reverse damage caused by just about every major disease, starting with today's biggest killer...

### **Pterostilbene's exciting effects on type 2 diabetes**

Studies have shown that pterostilbene helps insulin-secreting cells in the pancreas to regenerate, which may help your body regulate insulin production more effectively on its own.

Researchers have also found that pterostilbene enhances insulin activity. In fact, it actually acts like insulin, prompting fat cells and organs to absorb oxygen, which naturally balancing blood glucose.

And when researchers pitted pterostilbene against the antioxidant all-star resveratrol, they found that pterostilbene is actually more effective in shutting down the pathway to diabetes.

This particular study, published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, concluded that pterostilbene is a "potential natural inhibitor" of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), which can lead to diabetes.

But diabetes isn't the only heavy hitter that pterostilbene is shaking up...

### **Even more heartening results from this natural wonder**

Another breakthrough came from a group of researchers in Korea, who found that pterostilbene can tackle some of the biggest risk factors involved in heart disease.

These researchers conducted a laboratory study to investigate the effects of pterostilbene on various mechanisms that cause narrowed arteries, which lead to high blood pressure.

They found that pterostilbene significantly regulated the DNA within the inner lining of the arteries, protecting them from damaging plaque buildup.

And if you're concerned about cholesterol (which I don't necessarily think you should be – see the article on page 19 for more on that topic), pterostilbene appears to activate receptors in the cells that control cholesterol levels, making it a natural alternative to statins and other prescription cholesterol drugs.

In fact, the University of Mississippi researchers discovered that pterostilbene had similar effects as a drug called ciprofibrate. Pterostilbene was just as effective at lowering

LDL cholesterol and — more importantly — triglycerides.

And the subjects in the pterostilbene group didn't have any of the side effects — like muscle pain and nausea — associated with ciprofibrate.

### **The “magic bullet” for Alzheimer’s?**

Pterostilbene also appears to block the potentially harmful effects of inflammation that lead to chronic diseases like Alzheimer’s.

In addition, one study in mice found that pterostilbene surpasses resveratrol in protecting the brain from the type of cell damage that leads to Alzheimer’s.

And while it’s still just an animal study, and research is very preliminary, researchers believe that pterostilbene stimulates signaling chemicals in the hippocampus, the “memory center of the brain.” Pterostilbene may also help by promoting growth of blood vessels and neurons in the hippocampus.

By now, I’m sure you can see why researchers are so excited about pterostilbene. But we’ve barely scratched the surface.

You see, some of the most impressive results have occurred in studies on the disease that has baffled the experts for centuries...

### **Could pterostilbene stop cancer in its tracks?**

Some of the earliest research on pterostilbene involved breast cancer cells. Since then, studies have revealed that pterostilbene works on so many levels that it may help prevent all types of cancer.

The first significant discovery came in 2002, when researchers found (in tests on mice) that pterostilbene possessed cancer-fighting properties.

And since then, research has indicated that pterostilbene may actually be much more potent than resveratrol when it comes to preventing cancer.

A major finding in 2007 demonstrated the can-

## **May give breast cancer drugs a power boost**

Not only does pterostilbene appear to prevent cancer, but it may also boost the effects of traditional therapy.

For example, in a study published in the *American Journal of Surgery*, researchers tested the effects of the chemotherapy drug tamoxifen and pterostilbene on breast cancer cells.

While the tamoxifen did destroy cancer cells on its own, the researchers found that the combination of pterostilbene and tamoxifen was even more effective.

cer-fighting potential of pterostilbene against colon cancer.

In this small animal study, rats getting pterostilbene had 57 percent fewer colon cancer tumors, compared to the control group. And the “pterostilbene rats” that did develop tumors had slower-growing colon cancer cells.

Another rat study, published in the journal *Clinical Cancer Research*, found that pterostilbene suppressed cancer cell formation. In other words, it acted as a preventive.

In fact, another study found that pterostilbene was more potent than resveratrol in preventing inflammatory bowel disease from turning into colon cancer.

Granted, these were all rat trials...and, generally speaking, I don't always put a whole lot of stock into animal research. But these studies do clearly build on the other research which shows the power of pterostilbene in stopping cancer cell growth, even halting metastasis — the cancer spread to other organs.

Researchers believe it's the anti-inflammatory activity of pterostilbene that's the key. Pterostilbene blocks the damaging oxidative process that changes cells into cancer, making it a promising

cancer preventive compound.

### **Why you shouldn't throw the baby out with the bathwater**

With all this good news about pterostilbene, it's proving to be a "super-antioxidant" — much like Pycnogenol and berberine, and, of course, resveratrol.

But what often happens when something new and impressive comes along...is that people give up on the old standbys in favor of the "latest and greatest" discovery. And usually, that's just not necessary.

In fact, it may be a *huge mistake*.

Most of these nutrients work in different ways. And even ones that do have similar mechanisms of action — like pterostilbene and resveratrol — may work synergistically, meaning they could give each other an added boost...and give you even more potential health benefits in the process. In other words, there's no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater here.

As far as I'm concerned, you should keep on taking your resveratrol. But go ahead and incorporate more blueberries or a pterostilbene supplement into your daily routine, too.

If you're going to take it in supplement form, make sure you're getting at least 50 mg per day.

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## **Feed your sexual stamina — without the little blue pill**

There's no denying that the little blue pill has been a miracle for Big Pharma...and for thousands of men who have put it to use in the decade since Bob Dole became the world's most unlikely poster boy for erectile function. (Remember those commercials? Feels like ages ago!).

But for years, I've been telling my patients the same secret I'm about to share with you today: You don't need the little blue pill to rev up your sex life.

In fact, you may not need any pills at all.

There are dozens of easy ways to get the libido boost you crave simply by indulging in some delicious — and decadent — foods. So let's start with one of the more well-known aphrodisiacs and take it from there...

### **Igniting the spark**

The first food that comes to everyone's mind when you say the word "aphrodisiac" is the oyster. Raw oysters are the richest source of natural zinc. Zinc has been shown to increase testosterone production. And testosterone is the hor-

mone that controls sex drive in both men and women.

So, yes, even women need to make sure their testosterone levels are optimal (something many mainstream M.D.s completely overlook).

Of course, I've found that when it comes to oysters, there doesn't seem to be any "in between" — you either love 'em or you hate 'em. But don't worry if you fall into the latter category... I've got lots more ground to cover. And I can guarantee that my list of aphrodisiacs has something for everyone, including some items that might surprise you.

Like black tea, for example.

It has been used by the Chinese for centuries to enhance sexual performance. And there have been a handful of clinical studies to back up that traditional use — including one published a few years ago in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*.

In this study, researchers noted that black tea offered "marked aphrodisiac activity." Even better, the effects occurred quickly — and didn't

cause any harmful side effects.

And if you want to bump the libido-boosting effects up another notch, throw a few cloves into the cup while you're steeping your tea. Some research published in the journal *BioMed Central* showed that clove may enhance both performance and desire.

Granted, these particular studies were done in mice, which isn't typically my first choice when looking for supporting data. But given their long histories of use—not to mention their spotless track records in terms of safety—there's no reason not to give black tea and clove a try if you need a libido boost.

Of course, it can't hurt to support the mechanics involved in a healthy sex life while you're at it. And there are some equally simple, easy foods that can help you with that as well...

### Stoking the fire

Topping the list of foods that help support sexual function on a physical level are things that increase nitric oxide production in the body.

Nitric oxide helps blood vessels relax, which eases blood flow throughout the body. And this isn't only good for helping men achieve erections—it also helps bring blood flow to the clitoris, enhancing sexual stimulation for women as well.

Foods that can give you this boost include:

**Garlic.** I know—you spent years avoiding “garlic breath” on dates. But it turns out garlic's active ingredient, allicin, has been proven to pump up nitric oxide, making it a key performance-booster. Also, have you ever tried roasted garlic cloves? It's amazingly simple and so delicious served warm with macadamia nut oil...an absolutely sensual indulgence!

**Walnuts, pistachios, and almonds.** According to a study in the *International Journal of Impotence Research*, walnuts and pistachios are abundant sources of l-arginine, one of the primary building blocks of nitric oxide. And almonds are rich in vi-

tamin E, which can also increase nitric oxide.

**Salmon, mackerel, herring, lake trout, sardines, and albacore tuna** are rich in omega 3 fatty acids, which deliver a three-fold increase in nitric oxide production, according to the journal *Fertility and Sterility*. A daily fish oil supplement can also help get the job done (and is a good idea anyway)...but eating the real thing is much more enjoyable, and will boost your efforts further.

**Watermelon** is high in citrulline, yet another nitric-oxide star. (Plus, watermelon's fructose content is remarkably low, so it's one of the fruits you can indulge in without increasing your waistline—or your diabetes risk.)

The next class of biological wonders that enhance sexual performance and desire are flavonoids. The flavonoids in cherries, red, blue, and purple berries cleanse free radicals from to improved blood flow.

But no discussion of aphrodisiacs is complete without mentioning the next item on my list...

### Keeping the embers hot

Of course, chocolate lends itself well to romance as it is, but there's quite a bit of scientific evidence behind it, too.

According to a study published in 2006 in the *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, women who reported eating chocolate on a daily basis had significantly higher scores on the Female Sexual Function Index—particularly when it came to desire—than women who didn't eat chocolate. There's also been a tremendous amount of research linking chocolate to improved blood flow. For example, another study, published in 2009 in the journal *Circulation* found that dark chocolate significantly improved circulation—which, again, is an integral part of arousal in both men and women.

Of course, when you're choosing chocolate, it's important to go for the dark variety—which has shown the most benefits in studies. And the darker the better!

The good news is, these days you don't have to go out of your way to find it. I've seen bars containing as much as 80% cacao in the regular supermarket (the higher the percentage the better).

But your best bet is to buy unsweetened chocolate or cocoa powder and sweeten it yourself with stevia. That way you get all the health benefits of the chocolate and none of the harmful effect of sugar.

Finally, rounding out my list of performance-boosting delicacies is my own personal favorite: butter.

It's rich, creamy, decadent...and when it comes from grass-fed and -finished cows (meaning they've never been fed grains), it's a fantastic source of vitamin K2. Vitamin K2 helps improve circulation to those ever-important areas of the anatomy. You can find organic, grass-fed butter in markets like Whole Foods and Trader Joes.

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## Forget cholesterol! Two numbers you don't know could save your life.

There are two critical components in your blood that will tell you exactly how healthy you are. And cholesterol isn't one of them. Yet, I bet you know what your cholesterol level is.

I would also bet that your physician spent lots of time discussing it with you at your last visit...and convincing you that it should be lower. Maybe he even wrote you a prescription for a statin drug.

But chances are good he never once mentioned the two numbers that could truly save your life.

So today I want to change that. I'll give you all the tools you need to make sure you get this invaluable information. But, even more importantly, I'll tell you my top 3 secrets for turning "danger zone" readings into perfect scores—in three months or less.

### **The numbers you really need to know**

Cholesterol shouldn't be your primary health concern. (I explained some of the reasons why in the February 2012 issue.) But, somehow, it gets all the attention. I have yet to meet someone who couldn't rattle off his or her cholesterol level quicker than their phone number. But ask someone what their blood sugar number is and chances are you'll get a blank stare in return.

Which is a sorry state of affairs, considering

blood sugar is a much bigger killer than cholesterol. Only it won't be a quick death (unless you count the silent heart attacks that diabetics are very prone to). In most cases, it will be a slow and painful downward spiral.

You see, the end result of high blood sugar is diabetes. And diabetes destroys your body little by little.

First your waistline goes. Of course, it won't matter how you look because you won't have a sex life. Diabetes will see to that too. Then the really serious problems set in. And, one by one, it kills your eyesight, your kidneys, gums, heart, and nervous system—just to name a few. You may even need a limb amputated.

So if blood sugar is at the root of all these problems, shouldn't you know what yours is?

It just makes sense.

The good news is, most doctors actually DO test your blood sugar levels. The bad news is, they don't always tell you the results. And they often don't test them thoroughly enough. More on that in a minute.

First, let's get into the blood sugar test you've probably taken a dozen times—and what you need to know about it.

## Think fast

If your doctor orders a full blood panel, it almost always includes a fasting blood sugar test. The “fasting” part is critical. Make sure you don’t eat or drink anything (except water) for 12 hours before you have your blood drawn.

If your doctor doesn’t mention the results when you go in for a follow-up, ask! Like I said, this is critical, life-saving information.

You deserve to know.

Here’s what to make of the number he tells you:

A healthy fasting blood sugar level is between 70 and 80. If your number is 80-95, consider it a “yellow light.” You need to start taking extra precautions now, to stop things from getting any worse. If your blood sugar is between 95 and 110, you’re pre-diabetic. Anything over 110 is diabetic until proven otherwise.

I say “proven otherwise” because it is possible to have a high fasting blood sugar and not be diabetic. That’s why I make sure all of my patients also get another blood sugar test. One that many doctors still don’t order...

### **The number you need to keep “just right”**

I test all of my patients for hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C). This test tells you how well-controlled your blood sugar has been for the past six weeks. And it is possible to have a high fasting blood sugar but still have a normal HbA1C. They usually go hand in hand—especially if you’ve had blood sugar problems for awhile. But in the very early stages, they may not since your body is still trying to win the battle and keep you healthy.

Here’s how to interpret your HbA1C test results:

**An HbA1C under 5 is healthy. A result between 5 and 6 indicates prediabetes. You officially become diabetic when this number goes above 6.**

In the “prediabetes” stages, you want to work towards getting your HbA1C down below 5, to the healthy range. But if you already have diabetes, trying to force it down too low may actually be a huge mistake.

A study published two years ago showed that diabetics with HbA1C levels under 7 had the highest death risk. So if you have diabetes, aim to keep yours as close to 7 as possible.

## Keep your eye on the prize

You should keep tabs on your HbA1C and your fasting blood sugar regularly. I recommend that my patients have theirs tested at least every three months. Especially if they’re overweight or diabetic.

This might sound like overkill. But having your blood tested regularly means you’ll find out right away if your levels start to creep up.

And that gives you a chance to do something about it before it’s too late...

### **The only blood-sugar cure that will make your mouth water**

The best way to improve your fasting blood sugar and HbA1C results is with food. And I’m not talking about rice cakes or bean sprouts. In fact, some of the best foods you can eat to balance your blood sugar are ones that would make mainstream diabetes experts’ hair stand on end.

Hearty eggs. Goopy cheese. Creamy avocados. Juicy burgers and steaks. Decadent sweet potatoes drizzled with real butter. All of these mouth-watering foods are things that you can—and SHOULD—eat to improve your blood sugar and HbA1C scores.

Protein, fat, and complex carbs all take longer to break down into glucose in the body. Which means they don’t cause your blood sugar levels to spike. Instead, they stay on an even keel. Just the way you want them.

That’s what makes the New Hamptons Health

Miracle so perfect. It works for anyone who falls into any of the categories I listed above — healthy, prediabetic, or diabetic. If you're healthy, it will make sure you stay that way. But if you're not, it will help you get there.

And it's so *easy* to follow.

All you have to do is steer clear of a few specific things. Foods you know contain sugar (think donuts, candy bars, and cupcakes) and simple carbs like white bread, pasta and rice.

To make it as simple as possible, start by cutting out as many packaged foods as you can. These are usually the biggest offenders when it comes to hidden sugar.

And you don't have to shop in specialty health food stores. Just stick to the produce section, the deli, the cheese case, and the meat and seafood section. Shop this way in ANY supermarket and you'll be on the path to better blood sugar and HbA1C scores without doing anything special.

Once you've got your fridge stocked with healthy foods, there are a few more things you can do to help your efforts even further...

### **Two tools no one should be without**

The first supplement I recommend to every patient who comes in with high blood sugar and HbA1C is **Pycnogenol®**.

It's actually one of my all-time favorite supplements for just about any health concern. But there's ample research on its ability to decrease both fasting blood sugar and HbA1C levels.

I usually recommend 100-200 mg of Pycnogenol per day to help support healthy blood sugar and HbA1C levels.

The other supplement I recommend is **berberine**. This is the new kid on the block when it comes to blood sugar control. But studies are pouring in on its effectiveness. Like the following one from China, for example...

Researchers gave 116 patients 500 mg of berberine or placebo twice a day for three months. They found that the patients taking berberine had lower HbA1C and fasting blood sugar levels. The berberine group also lost weight. The placebo group didn't show nearly the same improvement.

Either one of these ingredients alone could help with blood sugar control. But combining them can make an even bigger difference.

That's the strategy I usually recommend to my patients. Of course, you should work with your doctor to determine the best approach for your particular needs.

### **Change for the better — in a matter of days**

Between the healthy, decadent foods you'll be eating and the two supplements I just mentioned, you should see your blood sugar improve in a matter of days.

By six weeks, you'll feel the effects of better blood sugar control. No more moodiness. No more afternoon slumps. No more sugar cravings that turn into binges.

And after just three months, your fasting blood sugar and your HbA1C will both be down significantly.

It works that quickly.

I encourage you to find out your blood sugar and HbA1C numbers. Even if you're healthy as a horse. It's the only way to take control of your blood sugar before it takes control of you.

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# EXPOSED: The great olive oil scam

**Plus, how America's other favorite cooking oil could kill you--  
and the inside scoop on the ONLY oil you'll find in my kitchen**

Most of my patients have never even heard of macadamia nut oil before they come to see me. And when I tell them to toss their other oils and start using it exclusively...

Well, let's just say most people are skeptical, to say the least.

It's no wonder.

For years, we've been told that olive oil reigns supreme. That nothing else holds a candle to its health benefits. And, as a result of all this hype, olive oil has become a fixture in just about every kitchen in America.

Most people use it for pretty much everything.

I was in the same camp — until I started re-searching oils. What I learned made my hair stand on end. And led me to what I consider the ONLY oil worth using.

But before I get into that, let me tell you the REAL story behind a few of those supposedly "healthy" cooking oils...

## **Olive oil doesn't live up to the hype**

Olives are a staple on my New Hamptons Health Miracle. They're a wonderful source of antioxidants, vitamins, and omega-3 fatty acids — all of which fight disease-causing inflammation.

But olive oil is a very different story.

I'll just come right out and say it: Olive oil isn't as great as everyone thinks.

Have you ever noticed that different brands have their own unique color, taste, and smell? That's because they're influenced by a few specific factors. The kind of olives used. The soil and climate in which they were grown. When they

were picked. All of these things also make a big difference in how good the oil is for you.

But the most important factor is how the oil is processed. And just like any other food, the more processed an oil is, the worse it is for you.

## **Beware: "Pure" and "light" are anything but**

You may have seen olive oils labeled as "pure" or "light." Don't let these terms fool you.

The so-called "pure" variety is actually a blend. It starts out with oil that has been processed to have such a high acidity level that it tastes terrible. So manufacturers have to add less-processed virgin oil to make it palatable.

But aside from affecting the flavor, an oil's acidity is a direct measure of its quality. But, in this case, less is more.

The lower the acidity level, the more polyphenols and antioxidants the oil contains. So the fact that "pure" olive oil contains high-acidity oil raises a major red flag.

And "light" isn't what you might think either. We've been conditioned to associate this word with products that are supposedly better for us because they're lower in calories and/or fat. That's not the case with olive oil. It has the same amount of calories and fat as any other variety of olive oil.

All the word "light" means here is that the color is paler and the taste is less pungent than extra virgin olive oil. But the way manufacturers achieve those effects is what causes problems.

You see, light olive oil is usually highly refined. It's also typically steamed and bleached with hydrogen peroxide to make it look and taste "light."

Of course, these days, most people use the kind of olive oil that's been exalted by nutrition and health experts all over the world: extra virgin olive oil.

But even these gold-standard "extra virgin" varieties have some dirty little secrets lurking in their bottles...

### **Supermarkets are chock full of "substandard" olive oils**

Olive oil labeling regulations are so riddled with loopholes they may as well be made out of Swiss cheese.

Some manufacturers blend refined and virgin oils to bump up the acidity level so that they can slap an "extra virgin" label on the bottle. Others send their product to Italy for bottling so that they can claim it's a "Product of Italy" on the label. And others "water down" their extra virgin oil with cheap oil.

In fact, a report exposing some of these tactics came out last summer. It went largely unnoticed by the media, but it contained some pretty shocking revelations.

Researchers tested some common brands of olive oil sold in supermarkets. They found that many were past their prime.

Worse, many bottles were spiked with cheap refined non-olive oils.

Overall, 69 percent of imported oils didn't pass quality standards. Neither did 10 percent of California oils.

And the worst part is, these low standards don't phase people in the olive oil industry.

I once overheard a distributor say, "People know from the low price that I can't possibly be selling them 100% extra virgin olive oil. But they buy it anyway."

Yet, thanks to the shoddy regulations, all of this is perfectly legal.

Don't get me wrong – good, quality olive oil does exist.

But it doesn't come cheap.

### **You get what you pay for**

If you're going to use olive oil, opt for one that's estate-bottled.

Yes, they are as expensive as they sound. But estate-bottled oils are made from olives grown on one property located in a cool climate.

In these settings, the olives are picked right before they ripen. They're also milled within three to four hours after harvest. And they're minimally processed. So these oils have the lowest acidity level you can get.

Which means they're the healthiest option.

However, there are still a few things to keep in mind, even if you're using an estate bottled olive oil...

### **Warning: Olive oil's benefits can easily go up in smoke**

Olive oil has a low smoke point. An oil's smoke point is the temperature at which it begins to break down into damaging trans fats.

Extra virgin olive oil's smoke point is around 320, depending on the kind you use. But even a light sauté can reach 350 degrees. So olive oil really isn't a good choice for cooking.

If you like the taste of it, use it as a finishing oil. Drizzle it on a salad or roasted vegetables.

But I wouldn't even recommend doing that with the next oil on my list...

### **The worst oil money can buy**

Somehow, canola oil duped its way into the public's good graces. Many, many people perceive it to be "healthy." Even some of the most seasoned health writers still talk about canola oil as if it's a healthful option.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Canola oil should be called “trans-fat oil.” Or have a skull and crossbones on the label.

It’s that bad.

### **Damaged beyond repair**

Canola oil comes from the rape seed. Which is actually a member of the mustard family that includes broccoli and cabbage. And in its unrefined form, the oil from rape seed has a high omega-3 fatty acid content. A good start.

But to get the oil out of the seed, manufacturers use a combination of solvents and high-temperature mechanical pressing. The high heat causes the natural omega-3s to go rancid. It also makes the oil smell disgusting.

So then it has to go through a deodorizing process. And that’s when the omega-3s turn into deadly trans fats.

Long story short, the canola oil you see in the supermarket has been refined, heated and damaged beyond repair.

It should not be part of the food chain, let alone part of your kitchen.

### **What about coconut oil?**

I’ve been getting questions about coconut oil for nearly a decade now. There are many people who believe it’s the best oil there is. And they want to know why I don’t recommend it.

I’m not denying that it has its share of benefits. For instance, it contains lauric acid. Lauric acid is an amazing anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-viral extract. And it’s only found in coconut oil and breast milk. Coconut oil also has a high smoke point.

So it’s not that I think coconut oil is *bad*. It’s just that I’ve found a better option...

### **The only oil worth using**

Australian macadamia nut oil is my No. 1

choice for cooking oil. In fact, it’s the **ONLY** oil I use in my kitchen.

There are lots of reasons why. First and foremost, it has the highest level of healthy monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs) of any oil.

Research has shown that people with type 2 diabetes who follow a MUFA-rich diet reduced their fasting blood sugar by 30 points. That’s enough to decrease or even eliminate medications.

And macadamia nut oil has a whopping 80 percent MUFA content. That’s 10 percent more than olive oil.

Macadamia nut oil also...

- Has low levels of omega-6 fats. These fats can lead to inflammation and chronic disease.
- Contains many essential nutrients: potassium, magnesium, calcium, selenium, vitamin E, niacin, and folic acid.
- Is a rich source of palmitoleic acid. Palmitoleic acid is a close relative to the oil in our skin. So it can help you get that “healthy glow.”

And that’s just scratching the surface of what this oil has to offer...

### **A diabetic’s best friend for lowering blood sugar and losing weight**

When my patients start using macadamia nut oil, the results are almost immediate. Their blood sugar improves dramatically. And those stubborn extra pounds seem to melt off.

That’s because the oil retains high amounts of leucine.

Leucine is an amino acid that helps regulate glucose. It also helps burn deep belly fat. The kind that generally takes a lot longer to respond to diet and exercise alone.

### **How to find the highest-quality, healthiest cooking oil**

As you’ve read, the quality of cooking oils vary a lot—even within the same category of oil. That applies to macadamia nut oil, too. So how do you

choose the right one?

First of all, it should come from Australia. Why Australia? Well, because macadamia trees are native to Australia. The soil, climate, and growing conditions are ideal. So that's where the very best nuts will grow.

Think of it this way: Just as you'd prefer champagne from France, you should insist on macadamia nut oil from Australia.

The second factor to consider is how the oil is extracted and processed.

Manufacturers use several different methods. These processes have their pros and cons. Some use solvents that may remain in the oil. Other processes refine the oil so much that the natural antioxidants are lost and they have to add preservatives. None of these processes are ideal.

You really want the purest, least processed macadamia nut oil you can get. The best one I've found is called MacNut Oil.

MacNut Oil is pure, unrefined oil. It is simply crushed, filtered, and bottled. There is no degumming, deodorizing, bleaching or anything else.

This gentle process preserves the nutrients in

the oil — the fatty-acid content, antioxidants, and minerals — as well as the vitamin E, which acts as a natural preservative.

I also like MacNut Oil because no other nuts are processed in the plant. So people with peanut allergies don't have to worry about cross-contamination. And no pesticides have been used on the macadamia nuts during growing.

### **The most versatile cooking oil ever**

It's not the cheapest oil out there. But macadamia nut oil is no more expensive than a comparable grade of extra virgin, estate-bottled olive oil. In fact, it is often cheaper.

And it's much more versatile than olive oil. Its smoke point is 410 F. So you can safely use it for just about any cooking method. Searing, browning, sautéing, frying, and baking. In fact, macadamia nut oil is the only un-refined oil that can be used at such high temperatures without burning. But it's just as delicious drizzled over salads or roasted vegetables. It has a rich, buttery flavor that isn't overpowering.

It really does enhance any dish you use it in. And it enhances your health at the same time. That makes it the simplest, smartest, most delicious thing you can possibly do for your health.

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## **Your ultimate guide to the “gluten-free” craze: The truth behind the hype...plus, the simplest way to solve the problem**

Today's hottest food trend is one I've actually be following for years — “gluten free.” And I'm proud to have led the way. Because the truth is, gluten sensitivity IS a real problem. It can wreak havoc on your everyday health. Causing an endless list of frustrating symptoms.

But buyer beware! The current trend in solving this problem is ALL WRONG.

Fortunately, I've got an incredibly simple solu-

tion that breaks down this complicated mess, and takes care of all the mystery and frustration. And will have you feeling better — and having more fun eating — than you have in decades.

### **Big problems hiding inside tiny grains**

A lot of my patients are very interested in going gluten-free. But hardly any of them actually know what gluten is.

So here are the basics.

Gluten is the main form of protein found in grains. There are probably close to 100 (if not more) foods that contain gluten. I listed some of the most common and most surprising ones in the box on page 20. (For a more comprehensive list, you can search online. Or head to your local library and check out some of the many books available on gluten-free diets.)

But grains have been around for thousands of years. So why is gluten suddenly such a big problem?

Well, the truth is, there's nothing "sudden" about it...

### **The modern epidemic 1,000 years in the making**

The reason you've been hearing so much about gluten sensitivity lately is largely because doctors are looking for it more often. So, obviously that will increase the number of people who get diagnosed.

But chances are, gluten has been a problem for humans since we first began eating it. That was about 1,000 years ago. Which seems like a long time. But "modern" humans have been on the planet for 200,000 years. When you look at it that way, in the grand scheme of things, we actually haven't been eating grains all that long. And our bodies still haven't really figured out how to process them. Especially not in the staggering amounts many people consume today.

To make matters worse, the grains that we eat today are genetically modified. They don't even remotely resemble the wheat that our ancestors ate 1,000 years ago.

So as far as your body is concerned, wheat — or anything that contains gluten — is a foreign substance. And every time you eat it, it sets off an immune response.

The other reason it has become such a prevalent problem is that gluten, like sugar, is in almost everything we eat. Or at least in almost all the packaged foods that account for the bulk of

the standard American diet.

### **One cause, hundreds of effects**

One of the biggest challenges with gluten sensitivity is that it's different for everyone.

There are so many symptoms that can be traced back to gluten sensitivity that it would be impossible to list them all here. But the most obvious one is stomach distress of any kind. Indigestion, GERD, stomach ache, bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome. They're all strongly associated with gluten.

But there are also many other symptoms that have nothing to do with digestion. Things like inability to lose weight, fatigue, brain fog, allergies, asthma, ADHD, behavioral problems, learning delays. The list is literally endless. Because if you are sensitive or intolerant to anything, your body responds by creating inflammation. And that inflammation can manifest itself in hundreds of ways.

So if you have a nagging symptom you just haven't been able to explain, there's a good chance that gluten might be the culprit.

So how do you find out for sure if you're officially gluten sensitive?

### **Persistence pays off**

If you want to be tested for gluten sensitivity, it's probably going to take some insistence on your part.

Most conventional doctors really only test for celiac disease. Celiac disease is the most extreme form of gluten intolerance. And many mainstream physicians still operate under the assumption that if you don't have full-blown celiac disease, then you don't have a problem with gluten.

Unfortunately, it's just not that simple. In fact, there's a huge spectrum of gluten intolerance, with degrees ranging from mild to severe.

It's tough to pinpoint the specific degree of each person's problem. But it's relatively simple to uncover the problem itself.

In my practice, I use blood tests to help me determine whether a patient is sensitive or allergic to gluten or gliadin (another protein in grains).

It's important to test for both. And to do a variety of tests. Why so many? Well, the immune system is complex. And it doesn't always respond exactly the same way in every person. So it's always good to cover as many bases as possible.

I start with a test called the ALCAT, which screens for food sensitivities. You can actually order the ALCAT testing kit yourself either online at [www.alcat.com](http://www.alcat.com) or by calling 1-800-872-5228. They will send someone to you directly to draw your blood sample then overnight it to the lab. Then they will help you find a doctor in your area to review the results or provide a wellness advisor. At the very least, get the "100 Food Panel". But of course if you can afford it, go for a more comprehensive test panel.

It's expensive, but the information you'll get is priceless. It doesn't just tell you whether or not you're gluten sensitive. You'll get a complete rundown of ALL the foods that are problematic for you. Eliminating them from your diet can quite literally transform your health. I've seen it happen. But, I digress.

I also have each patient's blood tested for a few specific antibodies.

- Gliadin IgG
- Gliadin IgA
- Endomysial IgA
- Transglutaminase IgA
- Reticulin IgA
- Gluten IgG
- Gluten IgE

If you test positive for any of these, then you have some degree of gluten sensitivity.

These are tests any laboratory can do. But most labs require a referral or prescription from a doctor.

Your best bet is to take the list above to your

doctor and tell him these are the tests you want to have done. Keep in mind you may have to pay out of pocket.

If you aren't able to get these tests done, or can't afford to, there is another way to determine whether or not you're gluten sensitive. But fair warning: It's more complicated – and time consuming.

### **When in doubt, cut it out**

I'm talking about an elimination diet.

An elimination diet is exactly what it sounds like. You eliminate all the foods that contain gluten from your diet. Not just the grains listed in the box on page 20, but everything.

Keep them out of your system for three full weeks and see if you feel better. Just keep in mind, you may actually feel worse before you feel better. That's your body going through withdrawal. Stick with it though, and you'll likely notice a huge difference.

After 21 days, you can reintroduce one new food every 72 hours and see how you feel. If your symptoms return, you know that particular food is one you'll have to eliminate for good.

I'll admit, I don't know many people with the resolve to carry out an elimination diet. Luckily, there's a much easier way...

### **Taking the guesswork out of going gluten-free**

No, I don't mean stocking your pantry with all those "gluten-free" products that are taking supermarkets by storm. In fact, the best thing you can do is to stay as far away from this stuff as possible. It's just the latest gimmick food manufacturers are using to make a buck (or billion). They did it with fat and carbs and now they're doing it with gluten. The problem is, what they create is never actually good for you.

But it's possible to go "gluten-free" without the help of these overhyped products. In fact, there are many, many foods that are naturally gluten-

free. Things like lean meat, cheese, vegetables, nuts, seeds. Even some grains, like brown rice, amaranth, millet, and teff.

Sound familiar?

That's right. My New Hamptons Health Miracle is essentially a gluten-free way of eating. I've taken the guesswork out of it completely. If you follow my program, all the work is done for you.

You get all the benefits of a gluten-free diet without putting forth a tremendous amount of effort. And without shelling out tons of money on those "gluten-free" toxic bombs manufacturers call food.

In fact, once you start following my New Hamptons Health Miracle, those nagging symptoms will most likely start to fade within the first few days. They'll disappear entirely in a matter of weeks. And better yet, they'll never return.

If you stick with it, you can completely heal your body from the ravages caused by gluten intolerance in about 6 to 12 months. Every once in a while it does take a bit longer. But the results I've seen in my patients are truly incredible. And yours will be too.

## Got Gluten?

Some of the most common sources of gluten include:

- Oats
- Barley
- Beer
- Bread crumbs
- Cracker meal
- Flour
- Matzoh/matzoh meal
- Semolina
- Spelt
- Tabbouleh
- Wheat (in all forms bran, flour, germ, and starch)

Sometimes gluten makes its way into foods you might not expect. Like baby food, chocolate bars, licorice, flavored coffees and teas, bottled salad dressings, soy sauce—even canned soup. Yet another reason to avoid packaged, processed foods as much as possible!

## How to have your fruit and eat it, too

### Without spiking your blood sugar or widening your waistline

Fruit. It's one of the most confusing parts of limiting carbs in your diet. In fact, one reader wrote in recently asking if there are any fruits that aren't carb nightmares. And if fruits are even included in my New Hamptons Health Miracle.

The confusion is understandable. There are some low-carb plans out there that do require you to cut out fruit. But I can't imagine they're much fun to be on.

A bowl of fresh blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries with a generous dollop of real whipped cream. A thick slice of water-

melon dripping with juice. Fresh-picked peaches from the farm stand in the summertime. Who wants to live without those?

Well, the good news is *you don't have to*.

In fact, there are no fruits that are completely off-limits on my New Hamptons Health Miracle. But if you're trying to lose weight or reign in your blood sugar, there are some fruits that you should be more careful with.

This is something you don't see many mainstream nutrition "experts" own up to. But the fact is, not all fruits are created equal.

## Better than bananas

When I tell my patients they shouldn't eat bananas on a regular basis, I always get the same response: "But what about potassium?"

Here's a great swap that will ensure you get plenty of potassium, without all the sugar of a banana: macadamia nuts.

They're a great source of potassium. Not to mention lots of other vitamins, minerals, polyphenols, flavonoids, antioxidants, and amino acids. Plus, macadamia nuts contain those all-important monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs). MUFAs will help keep you satisfied far longer than a banana.

### The four basic fruit groups

Fresh fruits are important in your diet, no doubt about that.

Like vegetables, fruits are rich sources of micronutrients you simply can't get from a pill. They're also invaluable sources of antioxidants and phytochemicals that fight free radicals and help prevent chronic diseases.

But, some fruits have a higher sugar content than others. Some break down in the body more quickly, which means they trigger blood-sugar spikes.

And if you have diabetes or pre-diabetes — or you're trying to lose weight — you have to take these factors into consideration when you're choosing fruit.

When you follow the New Hamptons Health Miracle, there are four different categories of fruits.

**"Everyday" fruits.** These have the lowest sugar content. So they won't significantly impact your

blood sugar — or your waistline. You can enjoy as much of them as you'd like.

Everyday fruits include all berries (blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries) and all melons (watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, cas-sava).

**Once or twice a week.** These fruits are still somewhat low in sugar. But not quite as low as berries and melons, so it's best to limit your intake to just a few times a week.

This category includes grapefruit, plums, nectarines, peaches, cherries, and grapes.

**A few times a month.** These are some of the most common fruits. Unfortunately, they also have relatively high sugar content.

So be careful when it comes to apples, oranges, kiwis, and pears.

**Occasional treats.** This category is reserved for the tropical fruits. Bananas, pineapples, guava, mango, papaya, passion fruit, etc.

They have the highest sugar content of all the fruits. And that makes them a bad idea for people with blood sugar problems or excess weight to lose. Every once in a while is OK. But definitely not on a regular basis.

So, as you can see, you don't have to give up fruit. There are lots of options to choose from. They're nature's desserts, so go ahead and indulge!

**One final tip:** Fresh, in season, locally grown fruits will always taste better than anything you can buy in the supermarket.

So find the nearest produce stand or farmer's market and stock up!

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# The strongest – and most overlooked – anti-aging remedy there is...and it's tucked inside your fridge right now!

## Plus, 12 more of nature's toughest wrinkle-fighters

Everyone wants flawless skin. They want that glow they had in their 20s. But, from what I've seen, most people are going about it the wrong way. A lot of my patients spend a small fortune on all sorts of so-called "anti-aging" products to slather on their faces. But those serums and creams will only get you so far.

If you really want to smooth out those crow's feet...firm up those sagging eyelids...and shave a decade (or more) off your appearance, you've got to start by focusing on what's going on inside your body.

The key to that youthful, vibrant glow actually lies in your stomach. Or, more specifically, what you put into it. And what you don't.

### **The single worst food for speeding up the aging process**

The wrong food choices cause inflammation right down to the cellular level. Slowly but surely, that inflammation leads directly to wrinkling, sagging, and premature aging.

And the No. 1 offender here is sugar. Or anything that quickly turns into sugar in your body. (Think white foods such as bread, pasta, rice and other refined grain products.)

Sugar bonds with protein in the body and creates something called advanced glycation end products. Otherwise appropriately known as AGEs. These AGEs cause collagen to become inflamed and stiffen. Which leads to wrinkles (among many other things).

Eating sugar also leads to free radical formation. And free radicals feed on collagen and elastin.

Collagen and elastin are the proteins that keep skin firm and supple. In fact, collagen makes up 30 percent of all body protein. But collagen starts to break down in your 20s. Which is why, by the time many people hit 40, those laugh lines and forehead creases have already started to set in.

But it is possible to rebuild your collagen and smooth out those lines and creases. And the secret to doing that is a food you may not be getting enough of...

### **The wrinkle-fighter you should be eating with every meal**

The human body is made up mostly of water and one other substance...

### **Protein.**

So it just makes sense that protein is the very foundation of my New Hamptons Health Miracle.

I've emphasized before how eating protein helps keep you satisfied longer. And that helps you slim down without feeling hungry all the time. But protein's benefits for your appearance go way beyond your weight...

Your skin cells get replaced every 24 days. Protein is an integral part of that process. Protein also helps build and strengthen collagen. And that helps keep your complexion firm and radiant. You also need protein for healthy hair and nail growth.

But protein is also the basis for all new body tissue, antibody formation, hormones, enzymes, and blood cells. And don't forget that your liver, kidneys, heart, lungs, nerves, brain, and sex glands are all comprised of protein, too.

When you look at it that way, protein may be the strongest – and most overlooked – anti-aging remedy there is.

The problem is, many people aren't getting enough. Here are a few telltale signs:

1. Puffy eyes in the morning
2. Water retention
3. Thin or ridged nails (or nails that won't grow quickly)
4. Thin hair, hair that doesn't grow quickly, or split-ends

If any of these apply to you, it's time to take a closer look at your diet.

Are you eating protein with every meal? It doesn't necessarily have to be red meat. Poultry, fish, eggs, and cheese are all good sources. Nuts and legumes contain protein, too. But they don't contain all the essential amino acids you get from animal protein. So if you're a vegetarian, you should consider investing in a good quality essential amino acid supplement. And if you need a little extra protein through the day, try a whey protein shake. They're a delicious and easy way to boost your protein intake. (You can check out my WheyLogic protein shake on my website, [www.logicalhealthalternatives.com](http://www.logicalhealthalternatives.com)).

And keep in mind that a low-fat diet will never give your body the amount of protein it needs. Not just for looking young – but for being healthy.

### **Eat your way to smooth, supple skin**

Here are some other specific age-defying foods you may want to consider eating more often...

**Wild salmon.** One study found that eating a single serving of wild salmon every five days can prevent actinic keratoses. Actinic keratoses are those scaly, brown patches that can form on your face, neck, arms, and hands. And they're just as dangerous as they are ugly. Left unchecked, they can turn into cancer. So if eating a serving of wild salmon every week can keep that from happen-

ing, it's well worth it.

And yes, it has to be wild. Because the pigment that naturally makes the fish pink – astaxanthin – is a powerful free-radical fighter. But if you buy farmed salmon, chances are, there's nothing natural (or beneficial) about that pretty pink color you see. Most salmon farms use artificial coloring to make farmed fish appear a more appetizing "salmon" pink. Without it, the flesh would be the color of dirty dishwater. In fact, salmon farmers have a palette wheel similar to the kind you get when you shop for paint colors. They can pick any color they think will sell the most fish. (Frankenfood strikes again.)

**Leafy greens.** This includes things like spinach, kale, and collard greens. They're all excellent sources of lutein. Studies show this nutrient helps rehydrate skin and restore its elasticity. Your body can't make lutein on its own, so it's especially important to make sure you're eating plenty of greens.

**Sweet Potatoes.** These are a much healthier option than white potatoes. They contain beta-carotene, which helps to balance your skin's pH. If your skin's pH is too high, you wind up with oily skin and acne. If it's too low, it leads to a dry, flaky complexion. And wrinkles. But the beta carotene in sweet potatoes helps keep your pH right where it needs to be to keep you looking fresh. Beta carotene also helps combat dryness and promotes cell turnover. All of which results in smoother skin.

One caveat with sweet potatoes: If you're trying to lose weight, you're still better off avoiding them for the time being. The good news is, the leafy greens I mentioned above are also good sources of beta-carotene. Stick with those instead until you've reached your weight loss goal. Then, feel free to add sweet potatoes into the mix.

**Vitamin C-containing foods.** Vitamin C is essential to building collagen, the key component to younger-looking skin. And humans are among the few species that don't produce vitamin C in-

ternally. So you should be eating foods that contain it every day. These include red and green peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, berries, cantaloupe, and of course, citrus fruits. These foods also contain bioflavonoids which protect skin from UV rays and help prevent cell death.

**Lycopene-containing foods.** Lycopene is a potent antioxidant. So it fights the free radicals that feed on your skin's precious collagen stores. It also shields skin from sun damage from the inside. (Not like sunscreen which works from the outside.)

But PLEASE don't use ketchup as your go-to lycopene source. The media has spun this one way out of proportion. Yes, tomato products like ketchup and spaghetti sauce contain lycopene. But ounce for ounce, ketchup contains as much sugar as ice cream. And many jars of spaghetti sauce you see in the supermarket aren't much better. (Besides, the pasta it's intended to go with is a health disaster waiting to happen.)

The fact is, there are other food sources of lycopene that are much better for you than these processed nightmares. Fresh tomatoes are great. Pink grapefruit, watermelon, and red peppers are all good, too. (Just keep in mind the peppers and tomatoes need to be cooked in order to get the most lycopene from them.)

I always recommend starting with food. It's the simplest, most natural way to enhance your appearance. And your overall health. But there are also some supplements that may help those efforts along even more.

### **Seven supplements your skin will thank you for**

Here are my top seven anti-aging nutrients...

**1. Fish oil** helps keep your blood flowing smoothly through your body. And when the blood flows, so does oxygen. And that helps to keep every organ in your body healthy, including your skin. (Don't forget that the skin is actually your body's largest organ.) I recommend 3,000

mg of fish oil containing both EPA and DHA (essential fatty acids) per day.

**2. Vitamin E** is a powerful antioxidant that helps keep free radicals from damaging your skin and making you look older than you are. I would recommend 400 to 800 IU per day for healthy skin, hair, and nails. Just make sure you get one that is higher in gamma tocopherol and has all of the other tocotrienols and tocopherols, too. You can also get vitamin E from food sources like almonds, spinach, peaches, tomatoes, cabbage, asparagus, and avocados.

**3. Silica** is a trace mineral that strengthens the body's connective tissues — muscles, tendons, hair, ligaments, nails, cartilage, and bone. It's also vital for healthy skin. I recommend 1,000 mg of silica per day. Foods rich in silica include leeks, green beans, garbanzo beans, strawberries, cucumber, celery, asparagus, and rhubarb.

**4. Zinc** is an important component of healthy skin. Especially if you suffer from acne. In fact, acne itself may be a symptom of zinc deficiency. Zinc helps control the production of oil in the skin. It may also help regulate some of the hormones that can lead to acne. I recommend 30 mg per day. Foods rich in zinc include fresh oysters,

### **What about the sun?**

I can't help it. I love the sun. Just the thought of a warm sunny day is enough to make me smile. And I have been known to sport a tan, so I can't be too hypocritical about sunscreen and sun exposure.

Having said that, exposure to the sun can increase your chances for wrinkles. Which is one of the reasons I never go outside without sunblock. No matter what season.

I use SPF 30 in the summer and 25 in the winter. But the risks of using chemical-laden sunscreens are just too great. So make sure you choose a natural, organic sunscreen. Lavera, Aubrey, Earth's Best, and Soleo are a few of my favorites.

pumpkin seeds, ginger, pecans, Brazil nuts, oats, and eggs.

**5. Selenium** is another powerful antioxidant. It's also responsible for tissue elasticity. And it can protect the skin from UV damage. So it may play an important role in preventing skin cancer. I recommend 200 mcg per day. Dietary sources of selenium include seafood, garlic, and eggs. But Brazil nuts may be the best source. Eating just 3-4 Brazil nuts per day provides enough selenium for most people.

**6. Vitamin A** promotes proper repair and maintenance of the skin. Deficiencies can result in a dry, flaky complexion. Foods high in vitamin A include liver, chili peppers, dandelion, carrots, apricots, collard greens, kale, sweet potatoes, spinach, and cantaloupe.

**7. Pycnogenol®** is my all-time favorite supplement. It comes from the bark of the French maritime pine tree. And I've talked about its numerous health benefits. But it's also great for your skin. Multiple studies have shown that it supports collagen and elastin. I usually recommend 100 mg per day.

All of the things I've told you about here help support healthy collagen. And that's the No. 1 factor involved in looking as young as you can. But collagen isn't just in your skin. It's also found in the lining of your blood vessels and helps them to expand and contract. So everything you read about here may also help prevent high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease in general.

Eating well and indulging in the best nature has to offer is truly the best way to make your whole body younger. From the inside out.

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## Fishing for the best source of omega-3s

By now, even the mainstream has come around to acknowledging the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids. Over the last decade, study after study has shown that omega-3s are the key to controlling inflammation. And inflammation is the No. 1 cause of many chronic diseases — heart disease, high blood pressure, dementia, depression, and more.

But even though they're widely accepted, most people aren't getting enough through diet alone. In fact, the majority of people only eat 1/10 the amount of omega-3s necessary for good health.

That's because the best food sources for omega-3s are cold water fish. Like herring, mackerel, and salmon. (Yes, other fish contain these all-important fats, too. But these three are the standouts.)

And plenty of people (including some of my patients) simply don't like fish. Even those who do, probably won't eat it often enough to get their omega-3 requirement.

So that leaves supplements. And this is where things get confusing. There are dozens of products claiming to give you all the omega-3s you need. Including fish oil, krill oil, flax oil, chia, and hemp...

And as you can probably guess, they're not all created equal. In fact, one of them is far superior to the rest.

But before I get ahead of myself, let's back up a step and go over some of the omega-3 basics...

### The omega-3 family tree

When you hear about omega-3 fatty acids, it's actually a collective term. It refers to three specific fatty acids:

1. docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)
2. eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA)
3. alpha-linolenic acid (ALA)

DHA is the most biologically active essential

fatty acid. It's the one that does the heavy lifting in keeping your brain, heart, and blood glucose healthy. EPA comes in a close second. It's also easily absorbed by the body. The only natural sources of these fatty acids are fish and seaweed.

The second-string player — ALA — is a nutritious fat. But it's not actually absorbed by the human body very easily. Your body has to convert it into DHA and EPA first. And, unfortunately, the gut isn't very efficient at doing that. Especially if you have diabetes. So you don't always get the full omega-3 benefit from ALA. ALA comes from plant sources.

So how does all this relate to all those omega-3 supplements on the market? Well, let's take a look at them one by one.

### **The facts on flax**

Flax is one of the go-to “non-fish” sources of omega-3s. You can find it as an oil, in capsules, or in its original form — seeds. Flax seeds are a rich source of ALA. But, again, your body must convert the ALA into EPA and DHA to get any anti-inflammatory benefits.

One other thing to consider with flax. Some people like to sprinkle the whole seeds on their salads, in soups, whatever. But in order to get the fatty acids from flax seeds, they must be ground up before you eat them. (Otherwise, they can pass through your system whole.)

When you take all of these factors into account, you really only get a very small amount of omega-3s from flax.

### **Chia seeds chalk up some impressive benefits**

Chia seeds have become more and more popular over the past few years. And they are an excellent source of ALA. In fact, they contain more than flax seed. Chia seeds are also high in protein, fiber, calcium, several minerals, and vitamins (B vitamins, C and E). And chia contains boron, which helps the body absorb calcium. So chia seeds are especially good for your bones. There's also some evidence that chia can help bal-

## **Are you getting enough omega-3s?**

It's not always easy to pinpoint an omega-3 deficiency. But here are some of the common symptoms:

- fatigue
- frequent colds
- depression
- poor concentration
- joint pain
- lack of physical endurance
- dry and/or itchy skin
- brittle hair and nails
- constipation

ance blood sugar.

Unlike flax seeds, chia seeds don't need to be ground. And, interestingly, when chia seeds sit in water, they absorb it and produce a gel. This is likely how it controls blood sugar. It forms a gel in the intestine. Which slows the breakdown of carbs into sugar. It can also help you feel full.

Chia seeds have a neutral flavor, and are great sprinkled on salads, soups, or other foods.

Chia seeds are okay if you enjoy the taste. But because they're strictly ALA, they won't give you all the omega-3s you need.

### **Hemp holds its own**

Hemp seeds are similar to chia seeds in terms of nutritional value. They contain an amazing number of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. All of which help nourish immunity, heart health, tissues, and organs.

And like chia seeds, hemp seeds are easily sprinkled on salads, soups...just about anything. Hemp flour is also a good alternative to the regular white variety (though I only recommend using it if you're not actively trying to lose weight).

## The bad news about ALA fatty acids

On the surface, all these seeds and oils look pretty nutritious. And they seem so easy to add to your daily diet.

But there are a few reasons ALA foods and supplements fall short from being a reliable source of omega-3s.

First of all, as I mentioned above, it takes more work for the body to convert them into the active DHA and EPA fatty acids. And people with diabetes may not be able to convert ALA fatty acids

### Head-to-toe protection

Research shows that omega-3 fatty acids reduce inflammation. And that may help lower risk of chronic diseases. Omega-3s help prevent:

- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE)
- Osteoporosis
- Depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Cognitive decline
- Skin disorders
- Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)
- Asthma
- Macular Degeneration
- Menstrual pain
- Menopausal symptoms
- Colon cancer
- Breast cancer
- Prostate cancer

at all. So there's no guarantee you're getting the complete omega-3 benefits.

Also, flaxseed oil may affect absorption of other medications and can even interact negatively with blood sugar and blood pressure drugs.

But there may also be some major health risks in getting too much ALA in your diet.

Two major studies – the famous Nurses' Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study – found that diets rich in ALA may substantially increase the risk of macular degeneration. And, ALA may increase risk of prostate cancer, too.

So relying on ALA from these seeds and oils for all your omega-3s isn't ideal.

### The best source of omega-3 fatty acids

I always recommend getting your omega-3s from fish oil supplements. They naturally contain the all-important DHA and EPA fatty acids. Your body doesn't have to do any extra work to convert them into their usable forms. Which guarantees that when you take that capsule, those fatty acids get delivered to your cells, tissues, and organs.

Of course, there are still a few things to keep in mind when you're choosing a fish oil supplement...

- **Check the label for the EPA/DHA content.** This is the most important part of any fish oil supplement. And you want to get the most bang for your buck. For instance, some generic brands may contain 2,000 mg of fish oil per capsule. But only 300 mg of it are EPA/DHA. Considering you need 3,000 mg of EPA/DHA (not just fish oil) per day, supplements like these actually aren't a good option.
- **Look for supplements in dark glass or plastic bottles.** Clear containers allow light to hit the capsules. And light oxidizes the oil and makes it rancid.
- **Heat also oxidizes fish oil.** So store your supplements in a cool location, like the refrigerator.

- **Don't buy in big quantities.** I know it's tempting to buy a gallon jug-sized bottle of fish oil capsules from Costco. But it will take you a long time to go through all of those. And in this case, that's not a good thing. The longer fish oil sits around, the more likely it is to go rancid.
- **Obviously, make sure to check the expiration date on the label.** If it's already passed or is coming up soon, pick a different bottle.

Carlson and Nordic Naturals are two high-quality, reputable sources for fish oil supplements. And they're widely available in health food stores and online.

### How does krill stack up?

You've probably heard about krill. It's the latest trend in the supplement world. And it is a

form of fish oil. Krill is a tiny crustacean (similar to shrimp). And yes, krill contains EPA and DHA fatty acids.

But I haven't seen any compelling evidence to convince me that krill oil supplements are any better than regular fish oil supplements. A major study comparing the two is underway, but the results haven't been published yet.

Until then, I say stick with fish oil for your omega-3s. Both in its natural form AND in supplement form. Indulge in a nice wild-caught Alaskan salmon filet, steamed or lightly sautéed in macadamia nut oil to retain all those essential fatty acids. And invest in a high-quality DHA/EPA fish oil supplement to take every day. I recommend 3,000 milligrams per day.

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## The top five drugs I love to hate

### And the safe, natural alternatives I prescribe to my patients instead

Prescription drugs cause more deaths each year than car accidents.

They've also become the biggest cause of fatal drug overdoses. (Yes, in many ways, that makes them more dangerous than heroin.)

But even so-called "normal" doses can be risky. In fact, prescription medications taken as directed kill roughly 106,000 Americans each year.

And the older you are, the more likely it is that you're on one or more of these medications. So it's time to take on the overdosing of America.

I could have easily filled the entire issue naming all the drugs I despise. And if you've been reading my Reality Health Check e-letter, then you already know some of my least favorites — like statins, aspirin, and certain diabetes medications.

So today I thought we should discuss some of the other drugs I love to hate. Particularly because there are plenty of safe, natural alternatives for ALL of them. Starting with...

#### Boniva: No bones about it

I've loved Sally Field since she was a flying nun but the osteoporosis drug she's the poster-girl for — Boniva — is incredibly bad for you. So are its cousins Fosamax and Forteo.

They may increase bone mass, but with a side effect of decreasing bone stability. Which actually raises your risk of bone fractures. And leaves you vulnerable to a painful condition called osteonecrosis. Which has NO cure. That clearly doesn't make much sense. So here are some alternatives that do:

**Vitamin D3.** Studies have shown that low levels of vitamin D are associated with poor bone density. Which increases your risk of osteoporosis. Not to mention broken bones. Your body needs ample amounts of this vitamin in order to produce a specific protein, called osteocalcin, required for the formation of new bone.

You should have your blood level of vitamin D checked periodically. It should be in the 50+

range. I usually recommend taking 5,000 to 10,000 IU per day for bone health.

**Vitamin K2.** This vitamin works with vitamin D to help your body form new bone. It also helps guard against excess bone breakdown.

According to the famous Framingham Heart study, people with the highest vitamin K intake were 65 percent less likely to break a hip than people with the lowest intake of this nutrient.

I recommend a product called MenaQ7. It contains the most absorbable form of vitamin K2. As for dose, I generally advise 45 mcg twice per day.

**Calcium.** Like vitamins D and K2, your body needs calcium to produce new bone. But contrary to popular belief, milk isn't the best source (that's another myth I'll discuss one of these days). You're much better off taking a supplement. But no need to go overboard – 600 mg per day is plenty to help maintain strong bones.

**Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement Therapy.** A 2003 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association showed that women taking bio-identical HRT along with calcium and vitamin D had 43 percent less bone loss than the control group. But keep in mind this isn't the standard, garden-variety HRT most doctors prescribe. That form – which is made from horse urine and synthetic chemicals – won't help build bone density. But it WILL put you at risk for heart disease. So be certain you're opting for bio-identical hormones.

**Exercise.** This one really should have gone at the top of the list. Bone mass starts to decrease in women starting around 25 to 30 years of age. Resistance training in particular helps to build and strengthen bone.

### **Tylenol: The most dangerous drug lurking in every medicine cabinet in America**

You can include Aleve, Motrin, etc. in this category, too. They all relieve pain by reducing inflammation. But they wreak havoc in your body in the process. Tylenol itself is the leading cause

of liver failure in the United States (not to mention cirrhosis and chronic liver disease).

I haven't taken one of these drugs in probably 15 or 20 years. There's simply no need to when the following alternatives are widely available.

**Arnica.** This is a homeopathic remedy that works extremely well for acute pain. I recommend 5 tablets under the tongue 5 times per day.

**MSM.** This natural sulfur compound has powerful anti-inflammatory properties – without the organ-damaging side effects of the medications listed above. I recommend 2,000 mg three times per day.

**Wobenzyme.** This is a unique combination of natural enzymes that help your body deal with inflammation, both long-term and when you've got an immediate ache or pain. In fact, it's used by the Austrian ski team for its acute injuries. I recommend 4 pills three times each day.

**Alkaline foods.** If your body's pH balance is too acidic, it can create excess inflammation. And that leads to pain. Luckily, incorporating more alkaline foods into your diet is quite easy to do. Most of them are things you can find in the supermarket or your local farmers' market. Cucumbers, kale, and garlic are just a few examples. You can find more complete lists of alkaline foods all over the internet.

**Avoid nightshades.** This group of foods includes: tomato, potato, eggplant, pepper, and tobacco. They contain an alkaloid called solanine that can cause inflammation in some people. But not everyone. The only way to know for sure if they're contributing to your pain is to eliminate them and see if it makes a difference for you.

### **Beware the beta blockers**

These are blood pressure drugs like Atenolol, Lopressor, Metoprolol (really any drug ending in "olol"). And if it were up to cardiologists, everyone in America would be on one.

The reason I don't like these drugs is because

they tend to make people fatigued. Plus, they can slow down your metabolism (which, obviously, isn't good if you're trying to lose weight or are diabetic).

And here's something your doctor and pharmacist may not tell you about beta blockers... They can actually bring on asthma attacks, so they should never be taken by asthmatics.

If you need to get your blood pressure under control or need to slow your heart rate down because you have atrial fibrillation, try these safer alternatives:

**Hawthorne.** This is an herb that can help keep your heart in the proper rhythm. It comes in pill form or as drops that you take under your tongue. I generally recommend 500 mg three times per day for the pill form. Or 5 to 10 drops of the extract under the tongue.

**Cayenne.** Don't worry. You don't have to eat spicy food to get the overall heart benefits. You can get cayenne in supplement form. I recommend 40,000 HU (which stands for "heat units") twice per day.

**Garlic, magnesium, coenzyme Q10, taurine...** The list of heart-and blood pressure-supporting supplements is practically endless. I could really devote an entire issue to this topic. In fact, I'll add that to my to-do list. But in the meantime, there are still a few more entries on the list of drugs I love to hate...

### **A bitter Pill to swallow**

It's not that I have anything against birth control. But I do have issues with interrupting your body's hormonal regulation. There can be long-term ramifications...things like not being able to get your menstrual cycle when you do want it. Increased risk for blood clots (especially if you smoke). And, most important, oral contraceptives can cause dysbiosis, or leaky gut. And that leads to an entire host of problems, like yeast overgrowth, and any number of inflammatory conditions.

Other birth control methods have been discussed ad infinitum in many other forums, but here's the method I most commonly recommend to my patients...

**IUDs.** These have made a comeback in recent years and are much safer than the ones used back in the 70s. Primarily because they don't interfere with hormones. There are a few different types to choose from, including one that releases a small amount of progestin. At this point, any type is better than the alternative.

### **The sad facts about anti-depressants**

Just about everyone seems to be taking SSRIs and/or SNRIs these days. These anxiety and depression medications include Prozac, Paxil, Zoloft, Cymbalta, etc. But just because they're common doesn't mean they're good for you.

Not only do they mess with your brain chemistry, but they also wreak havoc on your metabolism. It's close to impossible to lose weight while taking one of these types of medications. If you suffer from anxiety or depression, there are more logical alternatives you can try:

**SAM-e.** This is an amino acid that can help regulate stress and brain chemistry. I recommend 400 mg in the mornings.

**5HTP.** Another amino acid that's great for helping to restore a more natural brain chemistry. (Plus, added bonus—it can help you fall asleep.) I recommend between 100 mg and 1,000 mg at bedtime. Start with the lowest dose, and gradually increase it until you notice your symptoms have improved.

**L-theanine.** This is the calming agent found in green tea. I recommend using it on an as-needed basis at 200 mg a pop.

**Dr. Ohhira Probiotics.** Since the gut is our "second brain" and helps to produce neurotransmitters, it makes sense to keep it healthy. And these probiotics will help do the trick.

As you can see, there's absolutely no reason to

become one of the statistics I mentioned at the beginning of this article.

And I've only listed a small sampling of the natural alternatives to drugs here. There are literally hundreds – even thousands – more.

So, the next time your doctor reaches for his or her prescription pad, remember that there's probably a safer solution to whatever ails you.

Don't be afraid to speak up and ask him or her

to support you in trying something natural to start. Bring along this list. And look for a naturopath in your area to help if your doctor isn't knowledgeable about alternatives or willing to learn. You can contact the American College for the Advancement of Medicine (ACAM) at [www.acamnet.org](http://www.acamnet.org) or by calling 1-800-532-3688. Or email the International and American Associations of Clinical Nutritionists at [ddc@clinicalnutrition.com](mailto:ddc@clinicalnutrition.com).

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## The single, secret cause of your most nagging aches and pains

### And the easy way to squelch them all – starting TODAY

Migraines. Arthritis. Back pain. They couldn't be more different, right?

Actually, they're more similar than you may think. In fact, they all boil down to one, single underlying cause...

Inflammation.

Of course Big Pharma has made billions selling the idea that all the different types of pain require a different bottle in your medicine cabinet.

Tylenol Back Pain...Advil Arthritis...Excedrin Migraine – the list is endless. But really, they all address pain the same way. By relieving inflammation.

Problem is, their effects are only temporary. So as soon as they wear off, the inflammation – and your pain – comes back. But here's a little secret those drug makers don't want you to know...

You CAN get rid of pain and inflammation entirely – with just a few simple steps. And it's important to do so, because left unchecked, inflammation can be killer.

#### When good inflammation goes bad

In itself, inflammation is a good thing. It's how

your body protects itself. And how it heals itself. Without it, wounds and infections would never get better.

Here's how it works. Any time you injure yourself or are exposed to some sort of infection, your immune system responds by sending out substances called "inflammatory mediators." Histamine, prostaglandins, and cytokines are probably the most well-known.

The inflammatory mediators increase blood flow. They also allow more white blood cells to get through your blood vessel walls to the site of the infection or injury.

All of this is necessary to heal you. But in the process, it can also cause redness, fever, swelling, and – yes – pain.

This sort of response is known as acute inflammation. And it generally goes away on its own within a few days (at the most).

But when it doesn't go away, it results in something called chronic inflammation. Which causes ongoing pain (among other symptoms) – and generally makes your life miserable.

This sort of inflammation is at the root of

arthritis pain, fibromyalgia, back pain, etc. And if you don't rein it in, it can lead to more serious conditions.

Research has linked chronic inflammation to heart disease, cancer, and Alzheimer's disease.

But as complicated as the inflammatory process is, keeping it under control is actually quite simple. And like most health problems, the best place to start battling inflammation is with food.

### Balancing your body

I believe there's a simple reason arthritis, back aches, and so many other forms of pain are at record highs these days. It all comes back to the dreadful diet that's become the "standard" in this country.

You see, the Standard American Diet relies heavily on packaged, processed foods. And these contain large amounts of omega-6 fatty acids. I've talked before about the importance of fatty acids. But even more important than fatty acids themselves is the ratio of fatty acids in your body.

Omega-6s are generally known as "pro-inflammatory" fatty acids. So you need to balance them out with other essential fatty acids to neutralize this effect. Otherwise, your body is in a constant state of inflammation. And you're much more likely to suffer from ongoing aches and pains.

And being overweight – which is also much more likely if you're eating a lot of packaged, processed carbs – compounds the inflammation problem even more. Body fat, especially belly fat, triggers a low-grade inflammatory process throughout the body. Studies show that people with chronic low-grade inflammation have two to three times the levels of inflammatory markers such as TNF-a, IL-6, and C-Reactive protein.

To put it simply, immune cells mistake fatty deposits as intruders. When fat cells expand and leak, your body releases more inflammatory chemicals. It's a vicious cycle. But there's an easy solution...

### Start slashing inflammation right at the supermarket

Cut out the processed, packaged foods. Instead, focus on whole, natural, minimally processed foods.

That single, simple step alone will make a huge difference in easing inflammation throughout your body. In fact, it will probably get you most of the way there without doing anything else.

### Relief for acute flare-ups

Of course, even if you've taken every step outlined above to protect yourself from chronic inflammation and pain, every now and then you're bound to have an acute flare-up. Whether it's a headache, a bruise, or sore muscles from overdoing it in the garden. So here are some of my go-to recommendations for nipping acute pain in the bud.

**Arnica.** This herbal, homeopathic remedy has been used for more than 500 years to treat pain and inflammation. But it's got some modern science behind it as well.

One study published just five years ago looked at 204 people with osteoarthritis in their hands. Researchers found that a topical arnica gel worked just as well as ibuprofen for relieving pain. You can use topical arnica creams. Or you can look for homeopathic sublingual tablets (in the 30x potency). If you opt for tablets, I recommend 5 under the tongue five times per day.

**White willow bark.** This is Nature's aspirin. In fact, aspirin is actually a synthetic form of salicin, the natural compound in white willow bark. But the natural form is much, much safer. I typically recommend 400 mg tablets up to four times per day.

**Curcumin.** This extract comes from the spice turmeric. One study found that 2 grams of curcumin extract provides pain relief similar to ibuprofen.

And it's not as difficult as it might seem to make the switch. You've probably heard this advice before, but shopping the "perimeter" of the grocery store is the simplest way to bypass most processed foods altogether. (Avoid "foods" like crackers, granola bars, cereals, bottled salad dressings, etc. All the products that fill up the center aisles in the supermarket.) Stock your shopping cart with vegetables, fruit, cheese, meat, and seafood. Another good option is to do as much food shopping at your local farmers' market as you can. Not only are the foods you'll find there unprocessed, but they're also more likely to be organic, are locally grown, and seasonal. So you can be sure they're truly healthy. (Plus, they taste better, too.)

My New Hamptons Health Miracle makes it simple – and delicious – to cut out the processed foods that contribute to chronic inflammation. If you need a refresher on the six easy steps involved in making the "Miracle" a way of life, check out the bonus report *Diabetes-Free in Just Six Weeks*, which you received when you first subscribed to *Logical Health Alternatives*.

In the meantime, there are also a few supplements that can help you get even better results...

#### **Five inflammation-fighters you need every day**

**Fish oil.** This is the best source of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). Studies show that omega-3s have powerful anti-inflammatory effects. And you need plenty of omega-3s to balance out those pro-inflammatory omega-6s. For fish oil supplements, check the label for the EPA/DHA content. This is the most important part of any fish oil supplement. And you want to get the most bang for your buck. You need 3,000 mg of EPA/DHA (not just fish oil) per day. (For more on omega-3s, see page 33.)

**Vitamin D.** Two new studies show how important vitamin D is for pain and inflammation. The first study, published in March 2012, showed that vitamin D is directly related to how well

your body handles inflammation. Based on their findings, the researchers concluded that people with low levels of vitamin D aren't able to regulate inflammation. But people whose levels are within the normal range can keep inflammation from raging out of control and contributing to problems like asthma, arthritis, and cancer.

The second study (this one published in April 2012) was even more impressive. Researchers looked at 2,070 adults over age 65. More than half – 53 percent – reported having moderate to severe pain. Every single one also had low vitamin D levels. Just 10 minutes of sun exposure daily is all it takes. But if you're wearing sunscreen, you probably aren't getting sufficient amounts. That's where supplements are essential. I recommend at least 2,000-5,000 IU per day of vitamin D3. And be sure to get your blood levels checked periodically by your physician. It should be in the 50+ range.

**Bromelain.** This pineapple extract is best known in the natural medicine world as a digestive enzyme. But it also has powerful anti-inflammatory effects. In fact, in 2008 Duke University researchers found that bromelain can decrease migration of white blood cells to sites of acute inflammation. A dose of 200 mg per day is usually plenty.

**MSM.** This sulfur compound has been around in supplement form for a long time. Most of the evidence supporting its powerful pain-relieving effects is anecdotal. But in 2009, a Korean study showed that MSM does inhibit a number of inflammatory mediators. I generally recommend 2,000 mg three times per day.

**CoEnzyme Q10 (CoQ10).** On its own CoQ10 has some solid research supporting its ability to reduce inflammation. But a new study conducted at the University of Cordoba in Spain made an interesting discovery. You can get even more anti-inflammatory benefits when you add CoQ10 to a diet based on lean protein, fruits, vegetables, and monounsaturated fatty acids. (Sound familiar?)

Researchers found that the diet alone made a big dent in curbing participants' inflammation. But when they took 200 mg of CoQ10 too, they got even better results.

### **One more reason to get moving**

I know. When you're in pain, exercise is the last thing you want to think about. But it's actually one of the best things you can do to overcome it.

Research has shown that regular physical activity decreases markers of inflammation. Activity also releases endorphins, the brain chemicals that improve a person's mood, which simply

helps you cope better. And exercise will help you lose weight, which helps ease inflammation even further. Plus, it takes some excess stress off your knees and hips, and that helps relieve back pain.

I advise my patients to start with stretching and muscle strengthening exercises. You'll be surprised what a big difference it can make. But don't stop once your pain starts to subside!

You need to keep moving – and keep eating healthy foods and taking the right supplements – to keep those anti-inflammatory, pain-relieving benefits going.

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## **Gut check: Your 9-step guide for defying disease**

### **Plus, a squirm-free alternative for keeping tabs on your colon health**

I'm not generally a big fan of invasive procedures, but there is one I think pretty highly of. I'm talking about colonoscopies.

My father and two of my uncles died from colon cancer so this is a subject that has deep personal meaning for me. And I keep pretty close tabs on my own colon health. In fact, I get a colonoscopy every three years. (I just had one a few weeks ago, as a matter of fact.) But it's not just important for people with a family history.

Colorectal cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the United States – and the second deadliest. And the Centers for Disease Control estimates that 60% of these deaths could be prevented if everyone over the age of 50 were screened regularly.

And in May 2012, a group of researchers from Washington University in St. Louis announced the results of a recent study. It indicated that people with diabetes are at an even higher risk for developing pre-cancerous colon lesions and polyps. They recommend that anyone with diabetes should begin screening at age 40. I'd take

that one step further and include anyone with ANY blood sugar disturbances.

Unfortunately, less than 50% of people who should get colonoscopies actually do. Most likely because of the "squirm factor" involved.

Despite the fact that you get sedated very well before the procedure, many people still can't bring themselves to have the long black tube inserted in such a sensitive area. But I've got good news...

There's a new, widely available, much less invasive test that may help you avoid getting colonoscopies as frequently as recommended. More on that in just a minute.

But first, let me explain why it's so important to keep your colon healthy.

### **Good health begins in the gut**

The health of your gut is directly associated with the health of your body. In fact, I believe that most illness stems from an unhealthy digestive tract.

And I don't just mean conditions directly related to the gut, such as diverticulitis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, irritable bowel, etc. Those are certainly challenges that result directly from an unhealthy digestive tract. But the effects go way beyond your gut.

The digestive tract houses 70 to 80% of your immune cells. It also produces more neurotransmitters than your brain.

So if you have a healthy colon, it's entirely possible that conditions such as asthma, allergies, eczema, food intolerances, depression, and even weight issues could completely disappear. And, of course, your risk of potentially deadly colon cancer goes way down, too.

Until recently, though, the much-dreaded colonoscopy was the only way to monitor your colon health and, in particular, your colon cancer risk. But now, I'm happy to report that there's a new test that can help you keep tabs on this critical health issue.

### **A less-invasive way to pinpoint your colon cancer risk**

Actually, there are two new blood tests available that can help pinpoint your risk of colon cancer. With one needle stick, these blood tests can tell you if you have an increased risk of getting colon cancer.

The first is called Colon Sentry, and it's available through Enzo Laboratories. This test measures the messenger RNA expression of seven blood-based genetic biomarkers for colorectal cancer risk. It then generates a unique genetic profile to assess how likely it is that you currently have colorectal cancer. In other words, this test gives you a general idea of where you fall on a scale of likelihood for disease.

The other blood test is called ColoVantage, and it's available through Quest Diagnostics. ColoVantage is a DNA blood test that detects DNA from a marker for colon cancer known as the SEPT9 gene.

The studies on ColoVantage report a 70% sensitivity for colorectal cancer detection and an 89% specificity. Which means that the test can pick up colon cancer about 70% of the time. And if the test is positive, then 89% of the time, that result is correct.

Both of these tests are covered by most insurance companies – even Medicare. And your primary care physician should be able to order one of them for you.

One important thing to note – as with most blood tests, neither Colon Sentry nor ColoVantage can tell you for sure if you have cancer or not.

But, either of these tests will tell you if you are at higher risk for colorectal cancer. And if you are at higher risk, you should consider going for the more invasive procedure. Yes, you may still need a colonoscopy.

But, I will tell you both from my own personal experience and from watching patients succumb to this illness – it is well worth overcoming any fear or squeamishness. There is nothing sadder than watching someone you love slowly starve, have to be fed through a tube, lose control of their bowels, have their abdomen fill with fluid, and turn yellow as their liver starts to fail. It happened to my father, and I don't want it to happen to any of you. So, please, get screened.

### **In the meantime...**

You don't have to wait for blood test results to start improving your colon health. That's something you can – and should – do starting TODAY. And there are lots of nutritional supplements that can help you do that.

Here are some of the best options:

- **Zinc carnosine** helps repair and stabilize the small bowel. I recommend 100 mg per day.
- **L-glutamine** is an amino acid that keeps the mucosal lining of the intestine healthy. Take 5,000 mg a day.
- **Arabinogalactans** are a type of soluble fiber that act as prebiotics to nourish the friendly

bacteria in your digestive system that are essential for keeping it in good working order. They also activate immune cells in the colon, and help regulate the amount of acid in the intestines. I recommend 1,000 mg per day.

- **Deglycyrrhized licorice (DGL)** may inhibit colon cancer growth, according to a couple of studies. It also helps relieve inflammation, which helps keep you – and your gut – healthy overall. But don't rely on Twizzlers to get these effects. The sugar in most licorice candy will negate any potential benefits. Instead, opt for a DGL supplement and take 500 mg per day.
- **Aloe vera leaf extract** has anti-cancer properties, according to a study conducted in Egypt in 2010. It also helps stimulate the bowels, keeping you regular. Which is a critical part of overall colon health. I recommend 250 mg per day.
- **N-acetyl glucosamine** helps protect the lining of the stomach and intestines. Try 250 mg per day.
- **Slippery elm bark** contains a substance called mucilage that turns into a gel when it comes into contact with water. This gel helps coat and soothe the digestive tract. Slippery elm bark also has anti-inflammatory and colon cleansing properties as well. I generally recommend 200 mg per day.
- **Marshmallow root**, like slippery elm bark,

contains mucilage. So it has similar soothing and anti-inflammatory benefits. I recommend 100 mg per day.

### **But by far, the No. 1 choice for keeping your colon healthy is a good probiotic formula**

Studies have pointed to the colon cancer- preventive benefits of probiotics for years. Evidence shows that they help protect the colon by reducing inflammation (one of the primary causes of any disease) in the gut. They also help eliminate toxins that can build up in the colon and potentially lead to cancer.

I recommend Dr. Ohhira's Probiotics. It is a live formula, but doesn't need to be refrigerated. It contains its own natural prebiotics (which feed the probiotic bacteria and have numerous health benefits of their own), bacteriocins (substances that help kill off bad bacteria). It's also the only source of an ingredient called TH-10, one of the most powerful strains of lactic acid (a type of probiotic) on the planet.

I recommend a starting dose of 5 capsules of Dr. Ohhira's Probiotics twice per day for one week. After that, you can taper down to a maintenance dose of 1 capsule twice per day.

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## **How healthy is your heart?**

### **Surprising symptoms, critical tests, and healing nutrients you need to know**

I discussed microcirculation – small blood vessels and capillaries – in the November 2011 issue. Keeping them healthy is one of the most important things you can do for your overall health. Those small vessels are the lifeline to every point in your body, from head to toe.

But once you've addressed your microcirculation, it's important to turn your attention to the "Big Picture" – your heart and arteries.

It's a far more complex issue than mainstream medicine wants you to believe. Here's what you need to know...

1. This is not a battle between HDL "good" cholesterol vs. LDL "bad" cholesterol. It's not even about total cholesterol. There are far more important markers of heart health than cholesterol.

2. Chest pain isn't the only symptom that can signal a problem.

3. Seven natural supplements can improve heart and artery health, without risky side effects.

But first, there's one aspect involved in heart health that is still overshadowed by the mainstream's incessant focus on cholesterol...

## The heart risk the “experts” aren’t warning you about

Inflammation plays a huge role in this risk picture. I wrote about chronic inflammation and pain in last month’s issue. But that same inflammatory process also takes a toll on your heart and blood vessels.

Chronic inflammation damages artery walls. That damage gives them a rougher surface. And that gives a foothold for plaque to latch on to.

Then the plaque continues to build up, which narrows arteries. And prevents blood from flowing freely. In turn, your blood pressure goes up. And your risk of potentially fatal stroke-inducing blood clots goes up, too.

But the big question is...

How can you tell if this is happening to your heart and arteries? How can you tell if they’re healthy or not?

### Six surprising symptoms of heart problems

Sure, chest pain is a big red flag of a heart attack. But it’s also one of the last signs. And sometimes it never occurs at all.

The truth is, there are many more symptoms that can indicate the heart isn’t as healthy as it could be. And these can occur well before an actual heart attack. Which gives you more time to correct the underlying problems...and avoid a heart attack altogether.

A few of the most surprising symptoms include:

- **Neck, jaw, throat, or ear pain.** Damaged heart tissue can send pain signals up and down the spinal cord to nerves that radiate out to these areas.
- **Swollen feet or ankles.** When you take off your socks, do you see an indent or mark where the elastic band at the top touched your ankle or calf? If so, it may indicate that your heart isn’t pumping effectively, allowing fluid to leak out from your blood vessels.

- **Hair loss.** Men who are losing or have lost hair at the crown of the head have a 23% higher risk of heart disease.
- **Yellow bumps on the skin.** Technically, these are called “xanthomas” and they can be a sign of high triglycerides.
- **Frequent urination.** Most people assume this is a symptom of diabetes. And it can be. But it can also result from decreased blood flow from the heart to the kidneys.
- **Coughing at night.** This can signal a buildup of fluid in the chest and heart that occurs when you lie flat at night.

Of course, these symptoms may have other causes, too. But if you have more than one, or if it doesn’t go away within a few days, it’s a good idea to get a full heart workup done.

There are a handful of time-tested medical tests that can track heart rate, blood flow, and heart function. And, scientists have honed in on several blood tests that can help you monitor your heart and artery health. There’s also solid research that support some easy-to-find nutritional supplements to protect, strengthen, and improve the markers that threaten your circulatory system. So let’s start with...

### Three tests I use to monitor my own heart health

**EKG (Electrocardiogram).** An EKG is a simple, painless test. It usually takes only 5-10 minutes. During an EKG, you’ll have electrodes attached to your arms, legs, and chest. The electrodes are attached to a machine that detects and records the heart’s electrical activity. It shows how fast the heart is beating and its rhythm, so it can detect signs of heart damage. I recommend getting an EKG every year.

**Echocardiogram.** An echocardiogram uses sound waves to monitor blood flow. It provides information about the heart’s size and shape, and how well the heart and valves are working. During an echocardiogram, you’ll lie on a table and an ultrasound technician will press a small, microphone-like “wand” against your chest and move it around slowly. The “wand” (technically

called a “transducer”) sends sound waves into the chest and picks up the echoes as they bounce off various parts of the heart. The echoes are sent to a video monitor that records pictures of your heart for your doctor to review. I recommend getting an echocardiogram yearly.

**Ultrafast computed tomography (CT).** An ultrafast CT can take multiple images of the heart in the time it takes for a single heartbeat. It can also detect very small amounts of calcium within the heart and the coronary arteries. So it provides much more detail about heart function, and can detect even very early signs of heart disease. During an ultrafast CT scan, you’ll lie on a table that slides into the scanning machine. You’ll be asked to lie very still as the scanner rotates around you, generating X-rays that your doctor will review later. You’ll hear loud clicking sounds, which are normal. I recommend getting an ultrafast CT scan every five years.

### **Simple blood tests that show hidden dangers**

In addition to the regular scans above, there are six blood markers that can help predict your risk for heart attacks, stroke, and overall cardiovascular disease.

But one important note: Some of these aren’t tests that mainstream physicians commonly order. So you may want to bring this list with you to your next appointment, to be sure you’re getting a complete picture of your heart health.

**B-type natriuretic peptide (BNP).** BNP is a biomarker of tension in the heart wall. It can be an indicator of heart failure. The higher your level, the worse your risk. You want yours to be below 100.

**C-reactive Protein (CRP).** The body produces CRP during the inflammation process. In the Harvard Women’s Health Study, women with the highest CRP levels were more than four times as likely to die from coronary disease, or to suffer a non-fatal heart attack or stroke, compared to those with lower levels.

Less than 1.0 = Low risk

1.0-2.9 = Intermediate risk

Greater than 3.0 = High risk

I recommend getting your CRP tested twice per year.

**Homocysteine.** Research shows that homocysteine (an amino acid) can injure the endothelium, or lining of arteries. Homocysteine also contributes to production of pro-inflammatory chemicals called cytokines. And, it promotes oxidation of the fat and LDL cholesterol that can build up in arteries damaged by inflammation.

Elevated levels have been linked with atherosclerosis (artery damage), and higher risk of heart attack, stroke, and dangerous blood clots.

One little-known fact about this blood test: It actually measures the level of B-vitamins in your blood (folic acid, vitamins B-12, and B-6). If you have a vitamin B deficiency you will have a high homocysteine level. And most Americans are B-vitamin deficient, because processed foods and sugar actually steal these essential nutrients from your body.

I like to see my patients’ homocysteine levels at 8 or below. And I recommend having it tested every three months if your first test shows elevated levels. (Or twice per year if they’re normal.)

**Fibrinogen.** Fibrinogen is a sticky protein that promotes blood clots and affects blood “thickness.” It can help predict numerous heart risks, including stroke risk and heart attack.

In fact, a decade ago, a large-scale study conducted in Europe showed that “fibrinogen is a powerful predictor of stroke, including fatal and non-fatal strokes, first-time strokes, and hemorrhagic and ischemic strokes.”

Another study found that high fibrinogen levels predicted recurrent angina, cardiac catheterization, and major events like heart attack and death.

I like to see this number below 300. If yours is higher, be careful which treatment option you choose (I've outlined the best – and safest – options to the right). Believe it or not, the mainstream go-to blood thinners – warfarin and aspirin – actually raise fibrinogen levels.

Get your fibrinogen tested every three months if your first test shows elevated levels. (Or twice per year if they're normal.)

**Lipid profile.** This test measures levels of fats (lipids) in the bloodstream. A lipid profile will show HDL, LDL, total cholesterol, and – most importantly – triglycerides.

There's also a new test that I've been recommending to my patients, called the Vertical Auto Profile (VAP) Cholesterol Test. It gives you a detailed analysis of HDL and LDL. You see, your HDL cholesterol may not be all good. And even if your LDL is high, a more detailed analysis can show whether those LDL particles are truly "bad" or not.

As I've said many times before-both here in *Logical Health Alternatives*, and in my *Reality Health Check* e-letter, cholesterol isn't the danger it's been made out to be. And it's not the most important of the heart-health markers. But for the sake of giving you a "barometer" for this particular test, here are the ranges I would look for in a patient:

- Total cholesterol around 200 mg/dL
- HDL-cholesterol 60 mg/dL or higher
- LDL-cholesterol less than 110 mg/dL or lower
- Triglycerides 100 mg/dL or below

Get your lipids tested every three months. But keep in mind, this is more about the total lipid profile. These numbers can't stand alone. In fact, the cholesterol numbers can be higher than the ones I listed above and still be acceptable if your triglycerides are low. And if the ratio between HDL to triglycerides is greater than 1.0 and the ratio of total cholesterol to HDL cholesterol is less than 2.5.

**Lipoprotein(a).** Lipoprotein(a) (or Lp(a), for short) is a substance that builds on the inner lining of arteries, promoting inflammation and damaging artery walls. Lp(a) also contains a blood clotting component, which compounds the risk for heart disease and stroke even further.

You should get your Lp(a) tested every year. And you want your level to be below 10.

**Ferritin.** This is a seldom-run heart-health test, but it's a critical one. It indicates how much iron is stored in your body. Which is important because excess iron can cause organ damage – and too little can cause heart disease.

I recommend having your ferritin level tested yearly if your level is normal. Generally this level should be around 75. If yours is higher or lower than that, you should have follow-up testing done quarterly.

### **Kick the No. 1 cause of heart disease**

If you haven't already given up sugar, now is the time. Before you run out and buy any of the supplements I mentioned in the box at the left. Because sugar is the No. 1 cause of oxidative stress on your heart and arteries. The No. 1 trigger for damaging inflammation. The No. 1 cause of heart disease.

And don't forget that regular table sugar is only one source. High fructose corn syrup is another (look for it on package labels). Simple carbohydrates – potatoes, rice, pastries, jams, crackers, cereals, candy bars, cookies – are also sources. They all need to go.

But before you start getting depressed about the things you can't eat, I've got good news...You don't need to be afraid of saturated fat. Its role in heart disease is way over-stated. Which means you can enjoy that thick, deliciously marbled steak, or that juicy cheese-burger without worrying.

Just make sure you also get plenty of the following:

- Omega-3 fatty fish like salmon, tuna, and mackerel.
- Monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs), from sources like MacNut® Oil, nuts (almonds, walnuts, macadamias), and avocados.
- Fresh, non-starchy vegetables-spinach, broccoli, bell peppers, kale, collard greens, string beans, cabbage.
- Whole grains like quinoa, millet, spelt, teff, etc.

Last, but certainly not least...

You knew I would say it. You've got to get moving. No getting around it.

It's a sure-fire way to decrease damaging inflammation. And the best therapy to cut your risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Not to mention that exercise will help you lose weight, which helps ease inflammation even further. Get out after dinner, and get that 15-minute brisk walk. Make it a daily habit... and you'll add years to your life.

## The seven heart supplements everyone should be taking

These seven supplements will help support every important aspect of heart health. They're all easy to find, so there's simply no reason not to take them on a daily basis.

- **CoEnzyme Q10 (CoQ10).** I recommend a CoQ10 supplement called Ubiquinol—100 to 600 mg daily. The dosage will vary depending on whether you already have heart disease (higher dose) or are preventing it (lower dose).
- **Omega-3 Fish oil.** I recommend 3,000 mg of fish oil daily (one that contains both EPA and DHA fatty acids).
- **Folate & B-vitamins.** Take at least a B100 complex. However, to really improve your homocysteine levels, you need at least 2,000 mcg of B12, 5 mg of folic acid, and 100 mg of B6 per day. If you enjoy an occasional cocktail—which is perfectly fine—just keep in mind that alcohol does deplete B vitamins, so you will need more of all the “Bs.”
- **Nattokinase.** Nattokinase is an extract derived from Japanese fermented soybeans. I recommend 1,000 to 3,000 fibrin units per day (3,000 fibrin units equals roughly 150 mg).
- **Pycnogenol.** I recommend a 100 mg daily dose of Pycnogenol for optimal heart health.
- **Resveratrol.** I recommend 500 mg of resveratrol daily.
- **Vitamin D.** I recommend at least 2,000-5,000 IU per day of vitamin D3 (the active form of the nutrient). And be sure to get your blood levels of 25 hydroxy vitamin D checked periodically by your physician. This is the most critical of the vitamin D levels. And I like to see my patients' between 80 and 100.

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