

# True Natural Health



The Magazine of the Natural  
Health Society of Australia

Winter 2024



- **Mushroom Health Benefits - Cardiovascular Disease**
- **Mastering the Power of the Mind - Glaucoma**
- **Your Questions Answered & more**

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**And the results continued to get better over the 3-month duration of the study. After 3 months, the participants in the group taking PROSTATE EZE® Max reported a 39.3% reduction in the number of times they had to get up to urinate at night.**

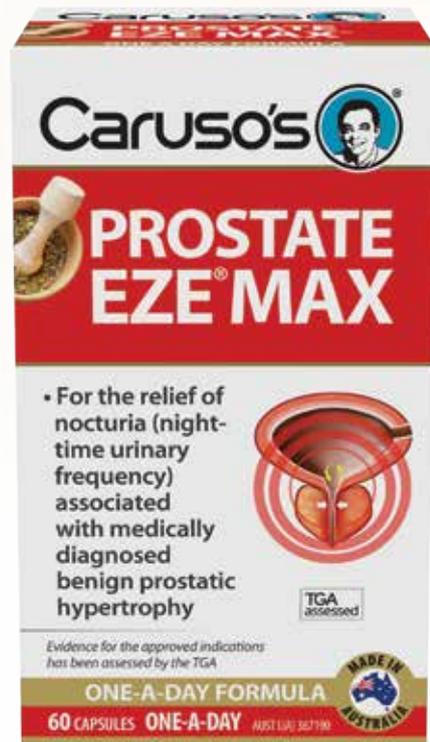
**Imagine fewer night-time bathroom visits, better sleep and waking up in the morning refreshed! What are you waiting for? Try Caruso's PROSTATE EZE® Max today!**

If you'd like more information about Caruso's PROSTATE EZE® Max please call **1300 304 480** or visit [carusoshealth.com.au](http://carusoshealth.com.au)

**Always read the label and follow the directions for use. If you have not had your symptoms diagnosed, or if your symptoms persist or worsen, consult a medical practitioner.**

See Caruso's Natural Health website for terms and conditions of 100% Money Back Guarantee.

<sup>1</sup>Coulson S, et al. A phase II randomised double-blind placebo-controlled clinical trial investigating the efficacy and safety of Prostate EZE Max: A herbal medicine preparation for the management of symptoms of benign prostatic hypertrophy. *Complement Ther Med* (2013), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ctim.2013.01.007>. Funding and study medication for the project was received from the clinical trial sponsor Totally Natural Products, Sydney, Australia.



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# Winter

Welcome to our winter edition, I hope you enjoy what we have put together for you. This July 27 the Natural Health Society will be holding our Annual Seminar in Sydney. It's a great day of community and inspiration. Two of our presenters on the day have articles in this edition. Herbalist and Nutritionist, Ally Sanchez, who has written about herbal medicine and cancer therapy on page 24, will be presenting her holistic perspective on nutrigenomics at the seminar. Dr Greg Fitzgerald (Allied Health) whose take on ageing and healing is on page 26, will be talking to us about how to build and sustain energy. Dr Fitzgerald is currently in the US presenting at the huge National Health Association conference on this very topic. We are lucky to get to hear the same inspirational presentation in a smaller setting. Dr Giselle Cooke (PhD) will also be presenting on the day. Anyone who has seen Dr Cooke present before will know that we are in for a fact-filled and insightful presentation. I hope to see you there!

During March the Society hosted a weekend away. It has been years since we have hosted a weekend away, and it was great to get back to this Society tradition. We have some great photos from the weekend in Thredbo on page 12. If you couldn't make it this year, don't worry, we have booked again for March 2025. Early bird bookings are now available.

Also in this edition, Roger French writes about the power of the mind and tackles some tricky topics in *Your Questions Answered*, Candace Coughlan shares her mushroom knowledge, Lyn Craven writes about her personal and clinical experience with glaucoma and more.

Thank you for being a part of our Natural Health Community,  
Rebecca

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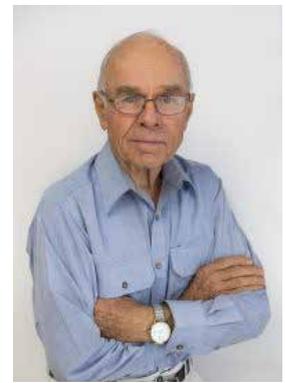
The Natural Health Society gratefully acknowledges the continuing and generous support of the Australian Youth and Health Foundation, which established the Society.

THIS MAGAZINE WAS SENT TO YOU IN BIODEGRADABLE POLYWRAP

True Natural Health p.1

# How to Use the Power of the Mind

by Roger French, Natural Health Society Patron



We humans have a conscious mind and a sub-conscious mind. The former is, of course, where we do our thinking, planning, calculating and so on. The latter is taking in a lot of information and storing it for later use. It is also capable of providing answers to simple or perplexing questions if we can manage to access it.

Using the full power of the mind involves engaging the conscious and sub-conscious minds. This article is about accessing the elusive sub-conscious mind.

## The sub-conscious mind at work

When I was about six years old, my mother took me to consult our regular naturopath, who happened to mention that recently he had had a bad feeling about his wife who was at the other side of the planet in England. A phone call to her soon after revealed that she had been in a car accident at the exact time that the naturopath had had that uneasy feeling. How remarkable that extra-sensory perception can travel so far.

At a course I attended in more recent years, we were told that in the early days of space travel, the Russians wanted to find out how they might communicate with their cosmonauts if the radios failed. To test ESP, they put a mother rabbit in a laboratory and connected her head to an ECG. Then they took the babies out to sea in a submerged submarine and they killed the babies one by one. The mother rabbit's brain registered the instant of death of each of the babies. *Not* a nice thing to do, but it did demonstrate the incredible power

of the sub-conscious mind even in a rabbit.

I am impressed by what my own sub-conscious mind is capable of. In my house we have solar heated water with a booster switch to top up the heating electrically. In cooler weather I commonly turn on the switch at around 2.30am to take advantage of off-peak electricity. The switch is above my head on a wall. Without turning on a light, I walk along the wall and throw my finger up to the wall randomly and it almost always lands right on the button. But if I think about hitting the switch, I invariably miss it by inches. Another extraordinary example of the skill of the sub-conscious.

At a Rotary meeting last September, I won a lucky door prize which entitled me to attempt to locate the Joker in a pack of cards spread out face down. So I glanced at where the pack was in front of me, closed my eyes and dropped my finger randomly onto the pack. To my delight, I hit the Joker which won me a very handy sum of money. In 20 months of members winning weekly lucky-door prizes and attempting to find the Joker, not one other person has succeeded. How did my mind know which of the identical face-down cards was the winning card? I haven't the faintest idea; I only know that it found the Joker.

## HOW TO ENGAGE THE SUB-CONSCIOUS

First and foremost, it requires bringing the conscious mind into the present moment. This is what meditation does. It is the way to use the full power of the mind.

Meditation stimulates the immune system, increasing our resistance to illnesses ranging from minor ailments to cancer. We fall asleep quicker, sleep is deeper, blood pressure reduced and we display more intelligence and creativity.

When we practise meditation, there is a change in brain waves. Alpha waves increase in proportion to beta and delta waves. More alpha compared to beta waves means a more relaxed state and heightened wakefulness.

The following techniques have no religious or other connection, they simply enable you to bring your thoughts into the present moment – and hold them there.



## A two-minute meditation for busy people

This can be practised almost anywhere, sitting, standing or lying down, although it's most effective in the sitting position.

Sit comfortably in a chair with feet flat on the floor, hands resting on your thighs or lap, back straight and upright. Close the eyes.

Imagine your body is floating freely in space with various pressures acting on it. Feel the floor pressing upwards on your feet. Feel the pressure of the chair upwards on your buttocks. Still be aware of the floor pressing on the feet.

Now become aware of your clothes contacting the skin all over your body.

Become aware of sound. Without straining to listen, note each sound coming to your ears.

Now feel the breath going into the nose and down to the lungs. Be aware of the air going in and out.

Let your attention go back to each of these. Practise keeping all these mentally in view together and hold this state for two minutes.

If your mind wanders onto other things – as it will at first – don't get worked up about it, simply bring your attention back to the exercise and continue.

Do this two-minute exercise two or three times a day, preferably on an empty stomach.

With practice, it will bring you quickly to a relaxed state and fully aware of the present moment, in which you are at peace with the world.

## For a shorter meditation

Just focus on your breathing.

## Eye Relaxation Technique

Because the eye muscles are triggers of tension throughout the body, you can expect to feel muscles everywhere letting go and relaxing.

Sit comfortably and let the eyelids fall shut, then let the little muscles surrounding the eyes relax. Persist until there is full relaxation of the eyelid muscles. Progressively locate other little muscles around the eyes and let these go also. With practice, more and more eye muscles will be located and can be relaxed.

## Progressive Relaxation

This means commencing with the feet, gradually relax the muscles all the way up the body to the head. Hold the fully relaxed state for as long as you have time for, say 20 minutes.

## STRESS MANAGEMENT COURSES

These are run by experienced teachers and take some time, but can be invaluable.

## RELAXATION APPS, AUDIOTAPES OR DVDs

There are many relaxation tools available. Relaxation apps or tapes can be listened to while walking or as you settle to sleep.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Exercise is a great stress breaker. It releases tensions around the body and is excellent for defusing emotions such as anger and frustration, and it enhances mood.

As little as 20 minutes of brisk walking stimulates the release of endorphins from the brain, generating a sense of wellbeing. You can double the benefit by walking and talking with a good friend for even better therapy.

## YOGA

The benefits are twofold – the exercises are designed to systematically stretch and flex the whole body, and the group 'therapy' enhances emotional security.



## DEEP BREATHING

Take nice gentle deep breaths, counting 8 seconds in, hold for 8 seconds and then 8 seconds out. If you wish, sigh as you breathe out. Repeat a number of times. However, never do more than 12 – 15 deep breaths at a time or you risk hyperventilation.

## LAUGHTER

Laughter is one of the best stress circuit-breakers we have. A good bout of laughter coaxes the body to release *endorphins*, which over-ride pain and ease some of the physical effects of stress. It also stimulates the immune system. Prolonged laughter lowers high blood pressure and thoroughly oxygenates the body.

Why is it possible to 'laugh till we cry'? Laughter and crying are controlled by the same area of the brain. The tear glands come into play to keep our eyes moist.

Try to find humour in positive situations and laugh freely. As an example, a fellow was flying on a budget airline and the flight attendant asked, "Would you like some dinner, sir?" "What are my choices?" inquired the passenger. "Yes or no," she replied.

## LOOK ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

The difference between positive and negative thinkers is that negative people focus on their problems and fears; while positive thinkers focus on the good things they have, see problems as challenges and look for the good in people.

*Not only do positive people live positive lives, they attract more positive*



ity to themselves. Negative people live negative lives and attract more negativity.

Never say anything negative about other people – or yourself! Catch a person doing something right – instead of wrong – and praise them for it!

## BE PHILOSOPHICAL AND MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR YOURSELF!

Worry only about those things you can do something about, and do it, and forget all the rest! This is not being callous. If you can't do anything more to help others, there is not point in harming yourself with worry.

## THE FOOD CONNECTION

Research on the mind-body-food connection has exploded in recent decades. It is now understood that the exchange of information between our brain, our gut and microbiota impacts our human experience. Our experience of stress, fatigue, anxiety, depression, how we make decisions and how we socialise are

all influenced by this gut-brain connection.

## A Sea of Stress

In modern society we are living in a sea of potential stressors, with the number and intensity growing as technology expands.

There are four emotions that, if persisting for months or years, are known to be potentially dangerous. They are **anger, hostility, fear** and **anxiety**.

**Hatred and resentment** arouse hostile feelings in others which bounce back on us and can easily fuel long-running cycles of mutual harm.

**Extreme repression of feelings**, in which anger, etc, are bottled up, can be very destructive.

Now there is the latest form of stress... **techno-stress**, which can be insidious. It happens when the automatic teller machine gobbles up our card, when we can't remember a PIN or when computer idiosyncrasies at vital time get us thoroughly exasperated. "We are like a person weighed down carrying two heavy suitcases,"

says chiropractor, Paul Galbraith, in *Meditate Rejuvenate*. "One is filled with thoughts of the past (regrets and guilt) and the other is filled with thoughts of the future (worries and expectations). A person who carries two heavy bags all day will be tired all day." Tomorrow usually won't be any better because sleep is disturbed.

A lot of our problems are caused by rigid, inflexible thinking patterns. Dr Sarah Edelman, a Sydney psychologist and researcher, lists some common ones as:

- 'I should be perfect in everything I do.'
- 'People must always love and approve of me.'

## The Greatest Stress Makers

**Dr Dean Ornish of the University of California**, years ago made the observation of people with heart disease that, "Underneath their differences, they, almost to a person, felt a sense of isolation from parts of themselves and their own feelings, isolation from other people and isolation from a higher force, whatever that meant to them."

**A 20-year Swedish study** of 1,000 men, followed from 50 to 70 years of age, found that one of the most important factors protecting them against disease and death, even after allowing for lifestyle factors like saturated fat or smoking, is *the number of people that live under the one roof!* The more people you live with, the more emotional security you are likely to have, which is why the family network is so important.

For people who aren't part of a family, the next very important factor is the amount of social contact that you have outside the home. In other words, the number of people in our lives is likely to be of major significance in our wellbeing and survival.

**Dr Robert Buist**, nutritional biochemist of Manly NSW, has declared that *“Intimacy and communication are healing, while isolation, alienation and loneliness are probably among the great predictors of heart disease.”*

**An Indian gentleman** in Sydney some years ago was seeking volunteers for Community Aid Abroad. After spending two weeks in Sydney, he made the observation: “Never among the poorest of poor in India have I seen the spiritual poverty that I see around me in Sydney every day. You drive in your cars alone, you watch television alone and you turn to your cats and dogs for company!”

**And how about looking at the bright side of employment?** Instead of whingeing and moaning about having to go to work as we sometimes do, let us appreciate the fact that the emotional support from being part of a team at work may be second only to the family in satisfying a major need that keeps us alive and well.

**The conclusion** is that the most harmful kind of stress for most people is that associated with social isolation, alienation and loneliness. So let us never take our relationships for granted.

**Grief.** This is another kind of stress that is potentially dangerous. If it is *unresolved* and goes on for many months or years, serious harm to health can result. Such chronic stress can produce a persistent depression of the immune system, and studies have found that, when this is prolonged, there is an increased rate of deaths from heart disease and cancer.

On the other hand, if there is the support of family members, workmates and/or professional counsellors, the grief will frequently be resolved and normal life resumed. The danger will have passed.

## Not All Stress Is Harmful

Emotional stress is a normal part of being alive. It is impossible to live a completely stress-free existence. Stress adds excitement to many of the things we do. Whether we're skiing down a mountain slope, watching a thriller movie or playing tennis, it's the adrenalin 'high', that makes the activity so enjoyable. Without a certain amount of stress, goals would never be pursued and challenges would not be met. It is the stress of a reasonably demanding job that keeps us on our toes, performing well. This is reflected in the adage, 'If it wasn't for the last minute, nothing would ever get done!'

Stress is only harmful when we are not handling it properly. The strain inside us is not the result of the events around us, but rather the view we take of these events and how we react.

## How to Take the Distress Out of Stress

There is much we can do to protect ourselves from stress and to ease the distress that it can cause.

### HOW TO BE COOL ABOUT ANGER

#### 1. Do, don't stew!

If there is nothing you can do, let it go. Accept that life won't always be fair. There is a lot of wisdom in the saying: *'Give me the serenity to accept the things that I cannot change; the courage to change those that I can; and the wisdom to know the difference.'*

#### 2. Change inflexible beliefs.

Such as that the world should be a fair place and you should always be treated fairly, or that you should never be inconvenienced.

For example, if you are cursing a slow driver in the car in front of you, but he/she is totally oblivious of you, instead of feeling angry, you might then focus on a more rational

thought. For instance, “This guy is a lousy driver, which just goes to show that people aren't perfect and, for that matter, neither am I”.

#### 3. Develop empathy, it dissolves anger.

This means mentally placing yourself where you can view the situation through the other person's eyes to try to understand where they are coming from. For example, if your supervisor at work is in lousy mood, consider that they may have awful problems at home, which, if you knew about, you would feel very sympathetic.

#### 4. Practise meditation/deep relaxation.

This lets go tension within the body. After regular practice, situations that would normally raise your ire will no longer trigger the usual responses.

#### 5. Physical exercise.

Nothing soothes an attack of rage as effectively as a brisk walk, run, swim, cycle, gym workout or digging the garden.

#### 6. Talk to someone.

You feel much better when you have talked to someone about a problem. It is wonderfully therapeutic, as if part of your load has been lifted.

### HOW TO EASE ANXIETY AND WORRY

Anxiety and worry are the same thing – fear that something bad might happen.

Fortunately, studies consistently show that over 90 percent of the things that we worry about never happen.

### PSYCHOLOGIST SARAH'S SIX STEPS FOR MANAGING ANXIETY:

#### 1. Do something constructive.

Taking action can often eliminate the problem, particularly if it is an

unpleasant task that you are putting off. If it is an unpleasant task, stop procrastinating and get it over and done with.

In situations where there is no easy solution, work on the next point:

## 2. Change the way you think.

For instance, if you are going to a party where you are not likely to know anyone, you may feel anxious about standing alone all night looking like a gooseberry, or that people will think you have no friends or social skills.

To change such thoughts, focus on more rational thoughts such as, "I may not know anyone, but I might meet some interesting people", and "Even if I did end up standing around by myself, who is going to notice or care anyway?"

In changing the way we think, affirmations can be very helpful. For example: *'I remain calm and relaxed, I know I am safe.'* *'Whatever comes my way, I'll handle it. I always do.'*

## 3. Meditation/deep relaxation and deep breathing.

These can be instant tension relievers. Deep breathing is most effective for dealing with acute anxiety.

## 4. Learn coping strategies.

We can do things that distract us from the anxiety, such as breathing exercises, counting backwards from 100, listening to relaxing music, or repeating the affirmation: *'There is nothing to fear, all is well.'* Reading, watching television or calling a friend are also very effective distractions.

## 5. Feel the fear and do it anyway.

The reason we never outgrow many of our fears is that we tend to avoid the things we are afraid of. If you get anxious when you are alone, you

probably make sure that you are never alone. If you have a strong fear of failure, you probably avoid taking risks. The trouble with playing it safe is that you never learn to overcome your fears. The best way is to go right ahead and do it – over and over again.

## 6. Talk about it.

Talking is therapeutic and whether it's with your psychiatrist, hairdresser, caring friend, partner, family member or work colleague, they can all make marvellous counsellors. All they need to do is allow you to talk.

If the anxiety has reached the point of causing you trauma, it would be wise to consult a counsellor or therapist. You could start with your family practitioner or community health centre for guidance.

## DALE CARNEGIE'S APPROACH

Let us look at an approach similar to that taken by Dale Carnegie. Firstly, ask ourselves what are we afraid of. Then ask "What can I do about it?" Ask ourselves, "If this does happen, can I handle it? Well, if I can handle it, what am I worrying about?!" How ridiculous is much of the worrying we do. If in five years' time we look back on the things that are worrying us now, in many instances we will wonder, "Well, what the heck was all the fuss about!"

Remember, most of the things we worry about never happen!

## SLEEP, SUMPTUOUS SLEEP!

### How Can We Get To Sleep Without Pills?

If the cause of insomnia can be identified and rectified, the insomnia will often evaporate.



In addition, there are practices that can help us get to sleep:

- Consistent sleeping habits.
- No daytime sleeping.
- Beware of coffee, nicotine and alcohol.
- Postpone worrying. If your mind is churning like a can of worms, put the light on, write down what is worrying you and resolve that you will deal with it in the morning.
- Exercise regularly. Next to meditation, regular physical activity is probably our best tranquilliser.
- Sex promotes sound sleep.
- Count sheep. OR count down from 300, going in threes.
- Have pleasant thoughts or fantasies.
- Use a relaxation technique.
- If still awake after 30 minutes, don't just lie there, get up and do something!
- Take a bath – a warm, *not hot*, bath.
- Herbs for sleep – *valerian, passionflower, skullcap, gentian* and *hops*.
- Sound nutrition.
- Some nutrients are particularly conducive to sleep, especially magnesium.

## Smile

A final tip on the subject of stress and relaxation – remember that a smile will always make you feel better. *A smile increases your face value!*

# YOUR QUESTIONS

## ANSWERED

BY ROGER FRENCH

### Q. HIGH CALCIUM IN ARTERIES:

I have a very calcium score in my arteries – 3,000, but even 300 is considered high. I am age 77. I eat a lot of vegetables now and get my protein from nuts, eggs (only two a week) and wild salmon twice a week. I have never taken calcium supplements, although in the early part of my life, I consumed a lot of most kinds of dairy products – that is, up to about five years ago.

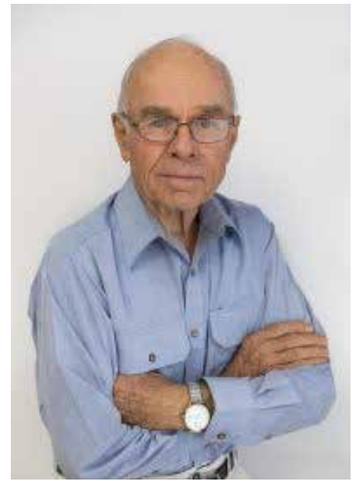
My blood pressure recently was 110/61 and my resting pulse rate is 50. I do a lot of exercise, and have done for 60 years. Earlier in my life I did a lot of hard physical work. A CT scan has shown mild atherosclerosis in my coronary arteries, including some calcium deposition, although the doctor said that it is not enough to worry about unless symptoms begin to show, of which I don't have any. A recent stress test on a treadmill showed that I was above average for my age for handling workload.

A further puzzle is that my sister doesn't exercise at all, but has a calcium score of zero.

I am puzzled by why I have a high calcium score. – G. M., email.

**A.** The issue of calcium build-up in the walls of the arteries in the heart is an extensive subject. Your health statistics, G. M., say that you should not have high calcium in your arteries, yet the figures are there.

If you have a question, please send it to [rfrench@health.org.au](mailto:rfrench@health.org.au). We regret that it is not possible to answer questions personally, nor can all questions be answered. As always, seek your health professional's advice for health conditions.



If blood calcium and coronary artery calcium are high, the first thing to do would be to check the levels of parathyroid hormone, because too much of this hormone takes calcium from the bones and into the bloodstream. If one or both of the parathyroid glands is overactive, the gland may make too much parathyroid hormone (PTH), causing calcium levels in the blood to rise too high, which can lead to health problems, including bone thinning and deposition of calcium in the coronary arteries.

It is possible that your three servings a week of animal protein could increase acidity of the bodily fluids, which tends to leach calcium from the bones and into the bloodstream. Fine tuning often makes all the difference with otherwise healthy people like yourself.

Regarding exercise, your level is most impressive, but keep in mind that only when feeling well and energetic is the time for exercise, and when feeling tired, rest and allow full recovery of energy before resuming training. Excessive exercise could possibly adversely affect your thyroid and parathyroid glands.

I now want to give a detailed account of coronary artery calcium. Firstly, what is a coronary artery calcium score?

### Coronary artery calcium score

The coronary artery calcium (CAC) score measures the amount of

calcified plaque in your coronary arteries. It is important because coronary plaque is the main underlying cause of – or precursor to – atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke.

Over time, the innermost layer of an artery can become calcified and the artery hardened, which will slow blood flow and prevent areas of the heart from receiving adequate oxygen. The plaque deposits can also cause a blood clot which may trigger a heart attack.

The time for plaque to calcify is usually around five years from the start. In contrast, for plaque to build up in the first place takes many years, even decades.

### How is CAC measured?

South Denver Cardiology explains that a CT scan is used to measure the amount of calcified plaque in the coronary arteries in the same way that X-rays show bones.

Calcium score (CACS) can range from zero to very high numbers and is proportional to the risk of having a heart event in the following 15 years. The extent of calcium deposits is normally measured from 0 to 1,000, and the risk increases with the score.

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



## How reliable are the tests for CAC?

CACS is a reliable predictor of coronary heart disease. It is a widely available, accurate and dependable tool for predicting the risk, and is particularly useful in individuals with no symptoms.

The prestigious Mayo Clinic in the US states that false-positive results of CACS are extremely uncommon. Nevertheless, they can sometimes happen.

## What is the significance of CAC levels?

A calcium heart score tells us a lot about your potential for a heart attack in the near future.

People with no coronary artery calcium have low absolute risk of coronary heart disease, while people with high CAC scores have an elevated risk, even if they don't have any symptoms of heart disease and appear to be the picture of health.

A score between 100 and 300 means a moderately high risk of developing heart problems in three to five years from the test time. A score above 400 means that the risk of a heart attack in next five years is high.

Nevertheless, it is possible for a person with a high calcium score to live a long time. Cumulative eight-year survival rate has been estimated at 95 percent in individuals with a low CAC score (less than 100), 90 percent in those with a score between 100 and 400, and 82 percent in those with a high CAC score (400 units or higher). These statistics are relatively encouraging.

Looking at age groups, the median CAC score for individuals aged 40 – 54 years as been found to be 0 units, while the median score for individu-

als aged 65 – 75 was 110 units.

There are many things a calcium heart score doesn't tell us – notably whether you have an actual blockage, what is your absolute risk of a heart attack and whether you might have an attack soon.

We need to be aware that the CAC score only detects calcified plaque; it doesn't detect soft plaque which could be blocking the coronary arteries.

G. M., your calcium score of 3,000 does not mean that you will have a heart attack, but that there is a higher danger of an attack within several years.

A high CAC does not necessarily mean artery blockage.

A high CAC score does not exactly show blocked arteries; other tests can show how well blood is flowing through the arteries.

Most people with a high CAC score have no symptoms. If the problem has been present for a long time, symptoms may develop and may include nausea or vomiting, poor appetite or constipation.

In short, a high calcium score doesn't mean you will have a heart attack, nor does it indicate when a heart attack might occur.

## What are the signs of hardening of the arteries?

Whether or not there is calcification, if plaque builds up in the coronary arteries, symptoms can develop. They depend on which branch or branches are affected and to what degree blood flow is blocked.

Symptoms of blockage typically include chest pain (angina), cold

sweats, dizziness, extreme tiredness, heart palpitations (feeling your heart beating), shortness of breath, nausea and weakness.

## What causes high CAC levels?

Stress can contribute to high CAC levels. A study found that people who had increased levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, were more likely to have high calcium deposits in the arteries.

Excessive levels of vitamin D can be associated with extensive arterial calcium deposits. Note that excessive vitamin D is normally only possible through taking supplements.

Because dairy products are high in calcium, the obvious question is do they increase arterial calcification. Research published in the *Int J Cardiol* (1994 Oct;46(3):197-207) found that there is a correlation between mortality from ischaemic heart disease and intake of dairy products. However, butter and cheese, which have low contents of lactose, show moderate and zero correlations, respectively.

According to *Med Hypotheses* (2000 May;54(5):701-3), lactose promotes the intestinal absorption of calcium, tending to confirm that milk can be a risk for calcification.

In a 2017 Swedish study, intakes of milk and butter were found to be associated with higher mortality than were intakes of fermented milk (including yoghurt and cheese) (*Am J Clin Nutr*, 2017 Jun;105(6):1502-1511).

Statin drugs are prescribed to reduce heart attacks. However, five recent randomised controlled trials have demonstrated that not only does statin treatment not reduce coronary calcium, but in fact it allows its pro-

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



gression. There has been found to be a significant association between duration of statin therapy and CAC score.

## Is it possible to lower high CAC levels?

People with high calcium scores – or who just want to eat healthily – need to avoid high-calcium foods, which include milk, cheese, yoghurt, ice cream, calcium-fortified cereals and canned salmon or sardines.

For clearing blocked arteries in the first place, artery cleansing foods include omega-3 fatty acids (sourced from micro-algae for plant origin), garlic, pomegranate, vitamin C, niacin (vitamin B<sub>3</sub>) and turmeric. These recommendations are by Quora.com.

In the same vein, numerous studies have shown that populations with higher daily intake of vitamin K<sub>2</sub> (more than 32 mcg) have a 50 percent reduction in the risk of death from cardiovascular disease (mountsania.org).

Another study found that people who took in at least 32 mcg per day of vitamin K<sub>2</sub> were 50 percent less likely to die from heart disease related to hardened arteries (mysurgery-website.co.uk).

According to the US National Institutes of Health (nih.com), vitamin K<sub>2</sub> is essential to avoid calcium deposits in the arteries as well as to build and maintain strong bones.

After a nine-month course of vitamin K<sub>2</sub>, patients with advanced coronary artery disease achieved reduced progression of atherosclerosis, but no significant reduction in the progression of calcification.

Perhaps vitamin K<sub>2</sub> needs to be in combination with vitamin D. It has been found that vitamin D<sub>3</sub> (cholecal-

ciferol) taken beside Vitamin K<sub>2</sub> will help pull calcium out of arteries.

Foods rich in vitamin K<sub>2</sub> include natto (a Japanese dish made from fermented soybeans), sauerkraut, egg yolk, butter and cheese [plus some flesh foods]. However, butter and cheese are to be avoided to reduce intake of calcium.

Some people should not take vitamin K<sub>2</sub>, including those on blood-thinning warfarin and those receiving dialysis for kidney disease.

A medical procedure for reversing CAC is EDTA-tetracycline long-term chelation therapy (dublincornersden-tal.com). The procedure is described to involve 1500 mg of EDTA in a rectal suppository base, 500 mg of tetracycline orally and a mixture of various nutrients in powder form orally, taken every evening for four months. There can be side-effects – some people may have an allergic reaction to EDTA (ethylene diamine tetra-acetic acid), and other serious side effects may include low blood sugar, diminished calcium levels, headache, nausea, dangerously low blood pressure, kidney failure, organ damage, irregular heartbeat, seizures or even death (in extreme cases). However, EDTA therapy has been in use for many years.

## Q. HIVES:

Can you tell me what causes hives and how to get relief from them – M. O., Castle Hill, NSW

**A.** Hives, or urticaria, are reddish lumps which are itchy and inflamed, ranging from discreet spots to rashes covering significant areas of the body.

They can be caused by a lot of things,

particularly diet, chemicals and emotional stress. Remember that the skin is an organ of elimination and that many skin diseases occur because the eliminative burden is too great for the liver and kidneys to handle.

**Dietary Causes.** Hives are commonly an allergic reaction to some food or food constituent, particularly salicylates which occur in aspirin and a wide range of natural foods, such as tomatoes. Other common causes of allergic skin reactions are chocolate, cheese, shellfish, eggs, coffee, alcohol, oranges and other acidic fruits, strawberries, red meat, chicken, milk, wheat and nuts. In the case of chicken, the reaction could be to the antibiotics added to chicken feed.

**Chemicals** can be a major cause of hives, and if additives are regularly present in the diet, they can easily cause hives to be chronic. Major offenders include tartrazine, other food colourings, preservatives, fluoride compounds, mercury, saccharine and many others. These substances will not necessarily cause an outbreak, but can in some people.

Some medical drugs can lead to hives, including penicillin, quinine, morphine, phenacetin, phenobarbital, barbiturates and others.

Skin contact with a chemical can sometimes cause hives. When looking for an association between hives and something you have eaten or contacted, consider contact with pesticides, soaps, shampoos, hair sprays, residues from laundry products, dry-cleaning chemicals on clothing, or any of a vast array of other household chemicals.

**Emotional stress** can precede an outbreak. The high level of energy consumed by stress can divert energy away from normal elimination, causing a build-up of toxic wastes in

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



the body and extra elimination via the skin. This can manifest as skin disease in many forms, including hives.

**Infections**, including bacterial, viral and the fungus *Candida albicans*, can be associated with hives.

**Obtaining relief.** The first step is to look for an association between the outbreak of hives and one of the above causes and then avoid that cause. If the cause is salicylates, it would be better not to have to avoid a lot of vegetables and fruits except as a last resort.

If allergy to a food constituent is suspected, an elimination diet may identify which food is involved. One way to do this is to start with a bland diet and then introduce suspect foods one at a time, a few days apart, and watch for a reaction.

If anxiety or other forms of stress are the cause, relaxation can be

improved by meditation, relaxation tapes or calmativ herb teas, in particular, valerian, chamomile, passionflower, peppermint or catnip. Alfalfa may be helpful and is also useful as a preventative.

For immediate relief apply the old faithful, aloe vera gel, to the affected area, or try diluted apple cider vinegar dabbed on with cotton wool. A warm bath can bring relief; add five tablespoons of oatmeal to the bath or three tablespoons of sodium bicarbonate.

A localised form of 'bath' that has been found to be effective is a cold compress. Apply cold, moist cotton sheeting to the area and completely cover with a piece of woollen fabric. Synthetic fabric will not work. Or try rubbing an ice cube over the hives – provided they are not associated with cold weather.

If the hives cannot be associated with a specific food constituent or

chemical, then avoid all foods which tend to load up the eliminative system, particularly refined carbohydrates, saturated fat, excessive protein, eggs, chicken and perhaps nuts.

Should the hives develop in the throat and interfere with swallowing or breathing, it would be necessary to seek medical help immediately. Hives are associated with the release of histamine, so urgent medical treatment is possible.

## Q. RAW FOODS DIET:

Why do some nutritional authorities recommend that the best way of eating for us humans is 100 percent raw foods? – E. F., Casula NSW

**A.** Raw foods are the most nutritious foods, simply because heat destroys some nutrients and renders some others inorganic.

It is well known that cooking destroys some vitamins, particularly vitamins C and B<sub>9</sub> (folate). It also destroys other phytonutrients, particularly the anti-cancer compound, sulforaphane, in broccoli and the other Cruciferous vegetables. At high enough temperatures, cooking may also render minerals inorganic and denature some proteins, and it certainly destroys the life force in all raw plant foods.

But the catch is that eating all-raw would cut out of the diet bread, rice and all other grain foods, which are staple foods for many people. For people who do eat meat and eggs, some would 'rather die' than eat them raw.

It is not well known that cooking

*True Natural Health p.10*

## The Natural Health Society of Australia

Helping people live healthier lives for the past 60 years



**We want to continue to help people live happier, healthier lives. Our aim is to become cost-neutral so we can promote the Natural Health approach for years to come. If you would like to help us, here are some options. Whatever action you can take, big or small, we are deeply appreciative.**

### Donate

Some members generously provide us with donations, any donation great or small is gratefully received. You can donate via our website at [www.health.org.au](http://www.health.org.au), call our office on 0432 396 701 or send a cheque to the "Natural Health Society of Australia" PO Box 22 Lawson NSW 2783.

### Help us expand our membership

Do you have a friend you think would enjoy our magazine? Lend them a copy of *TNH* or perhaps buy them a gift subscription? Let your friends know of upcoming events and share our socials posts to help spread the word.

### Bequeath

Another way people support the Society is through bequest. Should you consider doing this, the following wording may be helpful. "I bequeath to the Natural Health Society of Australia (NSW) Inc. ABN 91 080 087 725 the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (or part or all of residue of Estate) free of all duties to be applied for the purposes of the Society (or as directed by the donor) and the receipt of the Secretary of the Society shall be sufficient discharge for the same." It may be wise to consult a solicitor to ensure that the bequest is valid.

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



also destroys enzymes, with effects that are far-reaching. Like vitamins, enzymes occur in all vegetable and animal tissues in their natural state. They are the biological catalysts that trigger off every single one of the million-plus chemical changes that occur within the human body every second of our lives. There are tens of thousands of enzymes working away in our bodies – with something like 50,000 in the liver alone! – and each type has a very specific purpose.

Unfortunately, cooking kills all food enzymes. At room temperature, their activity increases as the temperature rises, but only up to around 42°C, after which enzyme activity tapers off. If the food is heated to 48°C for more than half an hour, all enzymes are completely destroyed. In contrast, dry heat would not be destructive to enzymes until around 150°C, but this is hypothetical as all foods contain moisture.

Thus, cooking and pasteurisation destroy the natural, health-giving food enzymes.

Research has demonstrated repeatedly that, provided food intake is above starvation level and all the necessary nutrients are provided, the less food that is consumed on a long-term basis by humans and also insects and animals, the longer they live.

Raising the air temperature accelerates enzyme activity, which causes cold-blooded animals and insects to be much more active. But they die sooner because their enzyme supply is used up more rapidly. The total enzyme supply may well be the yardstick of vitality.

It is generally assumed that the enzymes in food cannot work in our bodies, but an American medical scientist, Dr Edward Howell, wrote

in his classic book, *Food Enzymes for Health and Longevity*, that there is strong evidence to the contrary.

The enzymes in raw food commence the digestion of each morsel of food the moment the cell walls are ruptured by chewing. The food enzymes assist our own digestive enzymes, thus easing the load on the organs that produce our enzymes, particularly the pancreas. In humans who eat mainly cooked food, the pancreas is enlarged due to overwork. In fact, Oriental people on a high-carbohydrate cooked diet, mainly rice, have pancreases approximately half as big again as do us Westerners.

All animals in the wild consume abundant enzymes in their always-raw diets. Some have a separate stomach in which the food enzymes pre-digest food before the body's digestive enzymes are called upon, for example, the rumen in the cow.

Significantly, the enzyme content of organically-grown foods allowed to ripen on the tree, vine, etc, is much higher than for conventionally-grown foods.

When raw-food enzymes reach the bowel, they encourage the friendly gut bacteria by binding any oxygen present, thus eliminating the aerobic conditions in which harmful bacteria thrive and cause putrefaction, toxæmia and ultimately degenerative diseases, including cancer. With the harmful bacteria out of the way, beneficial bacteria like *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacteria* can flourish and carry out their vital functions, including the manufacture of B vitamins, digestion of fibre and production of natural 'antibiotics' against pathogenic bacteria.

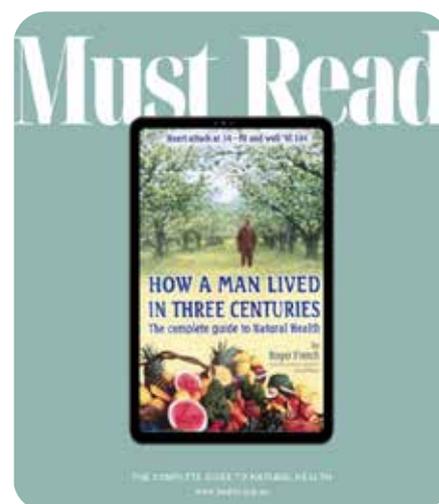
In the largely-cooked Western diet, a high incidence of arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other

degenerative conditions is exactly what would be expected as a result of damage to enzymes and also nutrients.

For many of us, a compromise between raw and cooked foods that is still reasonably nutritious is 70 percent or more raw foods and the remainder cooked foods.

For people who cannot handle raw foods – which is usually because the fibre is too harsh on their unaccustomed intestines – the alternative to raw salads is lightly steamed vegetables. Steaming does destroy all enzymes, but there aren't many enzymes in veggies in the first place, so this is not a great disadvantage. Enzymes are richer where protein, carbohydrate and fat are richer – and so digestion is more demanding.

The advantage of steaming is that it softens the fibre while retaining most of the minerals and vitamins – in contrast to boiling, where much of these nutrients go down the drain with the cooking water. Of course, the shorter the steaming time, the better.



## How A Man Lived In Three Centuries, By Roger French.

RRP \$30

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# Society Weekend

During March we had an excellent weekend away in beautiful Thredbo. Dr Greg Fitzgerald and Roger French both gave fantastic health talks during the weekend and attendees were treated to a small group masterclass in natural health. (Don't tell our American National Health Association friends who had to line up with hundreds of people to listen to Dr Fitzgerald speak at the NHA 2024 conference that we are this lucky!)

The weekend was filled with gorgeous fresh food, time to socialise and relax and some exploration of the beautiful nature that surrounded us. We had such a great time that we booked in again for next year.

Here's what some of our attendees had to say about the weekend.

"Thanks for a great weekend. I thoroughly enjoyed it."

"I really enjoyed myself. It was my first time away by myself since my husband had passed away. There were beautiful people and great food. Wonderful company."

"I had a great time, I've never gone to a weekend like this by myself before. I'm so glad I did. I enjoyed helping prepare the beautiful healthy fresh food we were served all weekend."

"The talks were excellent. So inspiring. I reorganised my kitchen into a wholefood kitchen when we got home."



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# Society News



After many years working part time in our office, Tracey has moved into a full time role with Scouts NSW. We wish her all the best and thank her for her years of service.



## **Auto-renewal of memberships now available! Opt-in for less life admin and more time for life.**

Once you are set up with auto-renewal we will keep your membership active, unless you notify us, so you never miss a magazine.

To set up auto-renewal visit the **members/renew** section of our website [www.health.org.au](http://www.health.org.au) and choose your membership type from the 'Save with automatic subscription' section. If you would like help with this, please call 0432 396 701 and we will talk you through the process.

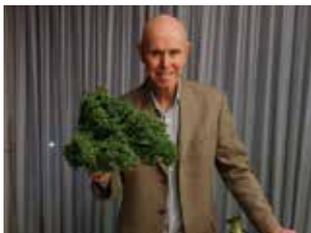
1-year memberships are still available for those who prefer.

## **Our Annual Seminar Day is on July 27. Join us for a day of learning and community.**



The Natural Health Society annual seminar is a wonderful day of learning, inspiration and community. It is one of the most important days on the Society calendar, we would love to see you there. Between talks we will serve a vegan lunch and have seminar specials available.

We have put the day together to make sure you can learn and spend time socialising with like-minded people. Our plan is for you to walk away inspired and energised to look after your health.



### **Dr Greg Fitzgerald (Allied Health): Energy For Life, From Tired to Terrific in 21 Days!**

Being TATT (Tired All The Time) is one of the most common presentations to all health-care practitioners. The extreme form of TATT is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Without energy there is no life but with abundant energy life is a joy! And today, lack of vitality and energy is even common in young people. Why is TATT so pervasive in modern society? How do we maintain our energy as we age? What is the biggest medical mistake in treating TATT? Greg recently presented on this topic at the American National Health Conference in Cleveland Ohio. Do not miss Greg's deep dive into Energy for Life!



### **Dr Giselle Cooke (PhD): Precision Medicine and Artificial Intelligence.**

Last year at our annual conference, Dr Giselle Cooke (PhD) sat on our Future of Natural Health panel. Giselle spoke about her pioneering work bringing allied health practitioners into the world of hospitals and mainstream medicine and lamented the lack of progress decades later. On the day we realised we needed much more time to hear Giselle's fascinating views on the future of health so we have invited her back this year. In her presentation this year, Giselle will discuss the future of healthcare delivery, precision medicine and the current status of the artificial intelligence in medicine debate. Anyone who has seen Dr Cooke speak will know that attendees are in for an engaging, thoughtful

and fact-packed presentation.



### **Ally Sanchez: The Power of Food, A Nutrigenomics Lens on Wholefood Plantbased Eating.**

Nutrigenomics is a science studying the relationship between our genome, nutrition and health. It looks at the relationship between nutrients, diet and gene expression. This approach also looks at how the whole body responds to a food via systems biology. Ally Sanchez's presentations are always filled with passion, great information and the wisdom of lived experience. In her presentation, Ally will provide details on the science of nutrition, but also provide practical advice that you can implement straight away to improve your health. We look forward to learning from Ally and hearing her holistic take on the science of nutrigenomics.

**Early bird tickets (\$69) available until the end of June.  
To register visit [www.health.org.au](http://www.health.org.au) or call 0432 396 701.**

# Salad For Lunch



By Rebecca Smith, NHSA Manager

Last year the Natural Health Society ran a 'Salad For Lunch' campaign during winter. It was a great success, so we are running it again this year. It was wonderful to hear stories of people who had previously avoided salads tucking into a daily bowl of raw veg during the coldest months of the year.

'Eat salad for lunch' is a nutritional approach that is both simple and powerful. If you switch your thinking from "What am I going to have for lunch?" to "What kind of salad am I going to have for lunch?" you are off to a great nutritional start.

In the last *True Natural Health* edition we revisited the *NHSA Dietary Principles*. Two of these principles are, "Use vegetables or fruits as the base of every meal" and "Each day have a protein meal and a starch meal". Adopting a salad for lunch practice will help you follow these principles. The base of any decent salad will be vegetables, although sometimes fruit, and there are lots of options to make your salad either a protein or starch meal. With so many salad combinations out there, this approach is flexible enough to be sustainable in the long term.

Eating salad for lunch is not a NHSA Dietary Principle, but it is a practice that can help you follow the principles. Our salad for lunch campaign will hopefully get Australians eating more vegetables. If you want to get involved, share some pictures of your salad lunches with us on facebook.

## Vegetarian Poke Bowls

Not everyone would consider a poke bowl a salad, but this is a reflection of my no-fanaticism approach. If I'm going to eat salad for lunch every day, a vegetarian poke bowl must be included in the mix. Poke bowls are a great way to enjoy the flavour profile of individual vegetables; the minimal mixing style of preparation also make these salads kid-friendly.



Wholefood plant-based eating can feel preparation heavy at times. Keeping frozen peas and edamame, pickled ginger, seaweeds, herbs and seeds handy will make sure your poke bowl creation is simple and delicious. I like to keep a few poke bowl salad ingredients in my fridge and freezer for busy days. Having a container of pre-cooked wholegrains, roast vegetables and legumes on hand make putting together a delicious poke bowl easy.

## Roast Sweet Potato and Quinoa Poke Bowl (Starch Meal)

Quinoa is a great source of magnesium, iron, zinc, folate, protein and fibre. Cooked quinoa comprises 21% carbohydrates (83% of these are starches), 14.6% protein and 14.2% fat. Quinoa also contains phytonutrients, quercetin, kaempferol, squalene and phytic acid.

Whenever I roast vegetables I make sure I prepare enough to have leftovers to use in a dish like this. Cooked and cooled starch foods like sweet potato make excellent prebiotic foods thanks to their increased resistant starch content.

Ingredients:

- 1 pinch of dried wakame, soaked in water for 10 minutes, then rinsed and drained.
- ½ an avocado sliced
- 6 cherry tomatoes sliced
- ½ a grated zucchini
- ½ a roasted sweet potato
- ½ a cup of lightly steamed broccoli
- ¼ a cup of thinly sliced purple cabbage

Optional topping: A 1 teaspoon of chopped parsley and mint, 1 teaspoon of tahini for drizzling and sesame seed sprinkle to finish.



## Edamame and Wakame Poke Bowl (Protein Meal)

Wakame is an edible seaweed rich in minerals. It is a yummy way to boost your intake of minerals like iodine, manganese, folate, magnesium and calcium. Any seaweed may contain heavy metals such as arsenic, mercury, cadmium or lead, depending on the habitat from which they were sourced, so go for good quality brands. Wakame is considered to be lower risk and safer than some of the other seaweeds and including it in your diet can help improve your mineral profile.

### Ingredients:

1 pinch of dried wakame, soaked in water for 10 minutes, then rinsed and drained.

½ an avocado, sliced

6 cherry tomatoes, sliced

½ a grated carrot

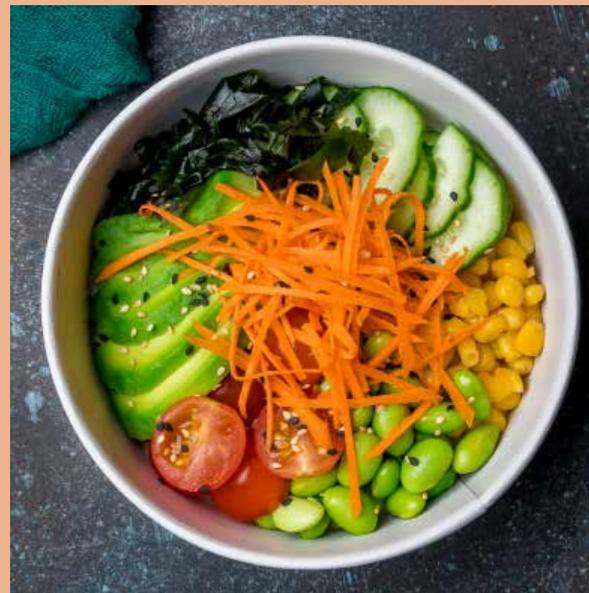
½ a sliced cucumber

½ a cup of edamame

½ a cup of corn kernels

**Optional:** A squeeze of lime and sesame seed sprinkle to finish.

A good poke bowl provides a variety of flavour and texture profiles. This bowl provides sweet from the corn, crunch from the carrot and cucumber, umami from the seaweed and edamame, sour from the lime squeeze and creaminess from the avocado. Making this deceptively simple dish very satisfying.



## Rocket and Mung Bean Sprout Salad (Protein Meal)

Mung beans are an excellent source of protein. They're rich in essential amino acids, including phenylalanine, leucine, isoleucine, valine, lysine and arginine. Sprouted mung beans contain more free amino acids and antioxidants than unsprouted ones. Enzyme-rich sprouts make a great protein topping to this salad.

Wild rocket leaves are considered one of the most nutrient-dense foods in the world. Rocket is an excellent source of beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin. Rocket also contains sulforaphane, the compound most associated with broccoli's anti-cancer powers. The mustard powder sprinkle on top of this salad provides myrosinase. Myrosinase helps increase the bioavailability of sulphurophane.

### Ingredients:

1 cup of salad rocket leaves

1 cucumber thinly sliced

½ an avocado sliced

¼ a cup of mung bean sprouts

**Optional topping:** A small pinch of mustard powder and chilli flakes and a squeeze of lemon.

# Spicy Lentil and Avocado Salad (Protein Meal)

## Ingredients

### Salad

- 3 chopped tomatoes
- 2 ripe avocados, finely diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 large red, yellow or orange capsicum cut into matchsticks
- 1 cup cooked brown lentils
- 1 cup finely chopped coriander
- ¼ a red onion sliced

### Dressing

- (omit olive oil and tamari for a SOS free dressing)
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons low-salt, wheat-free shoyu or tamari (pure soya sauce)
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon minced red or green chili
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin

### Method

- Chop and blend all salad ingredients.
- Dressing:** For best flavour, lightly toast cumin in dry pan before mixing with dressing ingredients.
- Serve on a bed of greens.



**Plantbased wholefood (WFPB) cooking can involve a lot of food preparation work if you're not careful. This slaw is a great example of how a good food processor can make WFPB eating much more sustainable.**

## Tahini Slaw

### Ingredients

- 5 shallots, sliced or shredded in a food processor
- 1 carrot, julienned or thinly sliced in food processor
- 1 red capsicum, julienned or thinly sliced in food processor
- Handful of coriander and parsley, chopped
- 2 cups of shredded cabbage

### Dressing

- 2½ tablespoons Tahini
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 2 chillies, sliced
- 1 cm ginger, grated
- Black sesame seeds
- ½ teaspoon tamari

### Method

- Combine dressing ingredients and sit to the side for flavours to develop while you prepare the salad. Wash and process vegetables. If using a food processor, use a couple of different settings to provide variation in the salad.
- Serve on a bed of greens, or as a side to another dish.

**VARIATION:** Add 1 cup of cooked soba noodles to make a more filling 'starch meal' or half a cup of edamame and a sprinkle of cashews to make a 'protein meal'.

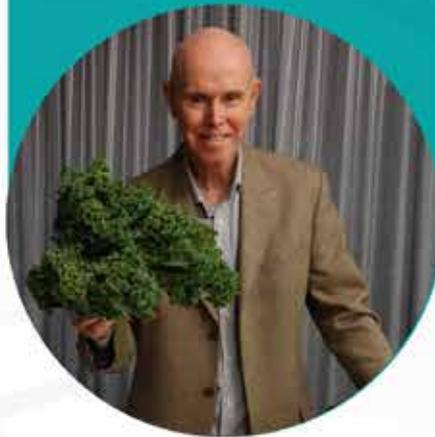


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# Glaucoma

By Lyn Craven, Naturopath



Lyn Craven first wrote an article for *TNH* about her experience with glaucoma over five years ago. In this article, we revisit some of the information she had for us then and provide an update on what she has learnt since.

Firstly, I need to point out that I am not an eye surgeon or optometrist. Yet I have had first-hand experience with glaucoma.

## There are a few types of glaucoma, namely:

- *primary open-angle glaucoma* (POAG) – the most common type, which I will base this topic around;
- *normal-tension glaucoma* (NTG);
- *low-tension glaucoma* (LTG)
- *pseudo-exfoliation glaucoma* (PEX);
- *narrow-angle glaucoma* – intermittent narrowing of the angle.

The topic is complex, so this is a brief overview of how natural therapies can help the most common type of glaucoma, POAG.

I have spent a lot of time researching POAG and my journey took me to the US with the hope that micro-current devices could assist. However, it did not lower my intraocular pressure. A device attached to it called a 'transducer', was to help regenerate cells, but I am not sure if this was happening over the eight months of using it.

However, my journey was not futile, I discovered I had intermittent narrowing of the angles, which six local doctors had not seen. As this was a 'mechanical' issue, no remedy would help it except a laser procedure called *peripheral iridotomy* (PI), which is specifically for opening the angles. Since no Australian doctor would accept the diagnosis or be willing to conduct PI, I had to fly back to the US for treatment six weeks later. I am told that intermittent narrowing of the angle is difficult to detect, yet the US doctor saw it immediately and so did the doctor who

performed the PI.

At the time people said 'he' could be wrong considering six local doctors disputed it, but I knew otherwise. The slight intermittent ache I had experienced for many months in the left eye was resolved with the PI procedure and to date has not returned. The ache was a sign that the angle was narrowing, and you don't want the angle to close because sight is lost when this occurs.

I experienced head trauma many years ago due to a car accident. This caused damage to tiny lymph channels which the doctor detected, along with *peripheral anterior syn-echia* (PAS), which is often present after physical trauma.

I am pleased that I travelled to the US, since selective laser trabeculoplasty, would not have opened the angles. This type of laser is commonly used to assist with aqueous drainage to help lower intraocular pressure (IOP). All laser procedures for various eye disorders perform specific things, and it is important that you receive the correct type for your particular disorder and symptoms.

I must stress that if two dozen people were diagnosed with POAG, they would all have manifested it due to different circumstances – aside from a genetic tendency – such as physical head/eye trauma, metabolic problems or conventional drugs. I feel the hormonal changes in midlife also play a role, which is often considered an 'ageing disorder', but I don't agree with this.

I agree that people with ocular hypertension for a lengthy period of time, without remedial action, could progress to optic nerve damage and

glaucoma, but there are many other factors that contribute to the disorder. Even the world's experts are baffled about some aspects of glaucoma, especially when it comes to helping those with low or normal tension glaucoma.

## Conventional treatment

Laser or glaucoma eye drops help lower the IOP and improve aqueous fluid drainage. However, there are many side effects with the drops. For some fortunate people they are minor, but others suffer systemically and locally, despite diligently following directions.

## Selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLT)

SLT is not long-lasting and the effectiveness can range from six months to five years. SLT is repeatable. Some eyes can only tolerate a few treatments, others several. Success will depend on the person's overall health and chronicity of the glaucoma. I also feel the skills of the doctor and whether they treat a third of the eye or 360 degree impact outcomes.

## Types of glaucoma drops

*Prostaglandin analogues* (PA) appear to be the most popular. My observations were that this kind of drop interacts with the endocrine (hormonal) system. I experienced a lot of side effects with these. My liver enzymes doubled in two-and-a-half weeks, I experienced IBS-like symptoms, was sore and bloated, had brain fog, was weepy, depressed, fatigued, had excessive thirst and craved chocolate after lunch. Traditional Chinese Medicine uses a 24 hour clock that indicates which organ system is active. Between 1 and 3pm indicates the small intestine, this is when the sweet craving was uncontrollable, my pancreas was being

challenged. I also developed sinusitis and headaches.

*Beta blockers* (BB) – can interfere with cardiac and respiratory systems, but medical people may dispute this. These drugs can cause shortness of breath, asthmatic type symptoms, dizziness and fatigue. I knew of one man who had a seizure, yet had no history of seizures and was in good health prior to taking the drugs.

*Timolol* is a beta blocker, which can cause impotence. A man advised me that his eye doctor had said it doesn't matter if he became impotent since he was 65 and not about to father children.

*Alpha agonists* decrease the production of fluid and increase drainage. They contain pruit as a preservative, which breaks down into a natural tear component and is often better tolerated. I have heard of some respiratory issues with this medication.

*Carbonic anhydrase inhibitors* reduce IOP by decreasing the production of intraocular fluid. They can affect the kidneys.

The aqueous fluid (AF) provides nutrients, amino acids and glucose to the ocular tissues, posterior cornea, trabecular meshwork, lens and anterior vitreous. So, if some glaucoma drops reduce the AF how does that impact your eye's nutritional status over the years?

If you have glaucoma, I recommend you thoroughly research the type of eye drop that you have been prescribed.

The problem is, there are realistically only these two treatment options – laser or drops. Worse cases would require general surgery, but a doctor advised me that there is a 50/50 chance of sight loss after surgery!

## Things that can increase intraocular pressure

Computer screens, TVs, staring at any machinery for too long, eye strain and working under bright lights or insufficient lighting.

In some cases, pressure can be increased by aerobics, weightlifting, running and jogging.

There are restrictions with some yoga and Pilates exercises, of which some instructors are unaware. You must never do roll-down exercises (placing the head low towards the knees), leg raises, headstands in yoga or the plank. Some fitness instructors appear to lack understanding of appropriate exercises for people with glaucoma. Also avoid sports where you may encounter head impact, too much jumping or over-exertion.

Avoid very hot drinks and food; eat just warm to cool in all cases. Overly spicy food, stimulants, gusty winds, small tight swimming goggles, diving into pools and scuba diving can all increase IOP. Avoid coffee and consume no more than three black/green teas daily.

Heavy metal toxicity must be resolved. One young man had excessive levels of arsenic. He had been a welder and at age 32 was diagnosed with POAG. It's important to get these levels down, even if you take the glaucoma drops, otherwise damage can occur at the cellular level despite medication.

Common pressure raisers are eating, drinking, stress, anxiety, fear, adrenal and thyroid fatigue, blood sugar problems and excessively high or low blood pressure. There is a ratio between IOP and blood pressure.

## What helps stabilise or lower IOP?

Meditation, good sleep, walking, gentle yoga (stretches, no leg raises), warm temperature foods and drinks, palming (palms over eyes), head/fa-

cial/neck lymph drainage, anti-glare glasses, wearing black lens sunglasses, having fun with friends/family, reading in natural light (preferably black font on white paper). Swinging exercises and various eye exercises to work tight muscles and destress the eyes. Some people find relief with bed elevation.

## Natural Therapies

Warning: Please see a glaucoma specialist, do NOT rely on natural therapies alone.

This is a complex disorder, and what helps one person may not help another. If you opt for conventional medications, you can still use natural remedies. Glaucoma drops are designed to lower pressure, open up drainage channels or reduce aqueous fluid, they do not provide antioxidant properties, aid cellular integrity or help with metabolism.

The complexity of the disorder means we must tailor-make remedies, and they will change over time.

Functional lab tests to assess health status may be required prior to individual remedy selection.

Both Chinese and Western herbal medicine assess the metabolism of the person. They have slightly different approaches but agree that the liver and gallbladder play huge roles here. Improving digestion is important for supporting the endocrine system, nervous system and brain. Various supplements and perhaps probiotics and enzymes to optimise gut integrity and function may be employed.

Balancing hormones is also very important. It is necessary to assess levels of iodine and other vital nutrients. Vitamin C is mentioned on 'Dr Google', but may not be appropriate, since I've noted that it can relax the tissues, and if you have damage to tiny lymph channels, this

can increase the pressure, since they struggle to drain.

Optimising nutrition for the eye and brain is vital, regardless of taking glaucoma medication or receiving laser treatment.

I often show people simple head, facial and neck exercises that can help with drainage, including lymph drainage.

I had two-and-a-half weeks of distress with one eye drop, so I created a herbal eye rinse to counteract the local inflammation and it worked perfectly.

After this experience I had weekly acupuncture treatments for almost 20 months, which brought the IOP down from 42/44 to 19/19. I was fastidious with what I did, but after all this good work, drugs for an unrelated surgery increased my IOP to the high 50s, hence the US visit.

I do not use glaucoma drops due to dreadful side effects and support the past laser with all natural therapies including Bowen therapy and acupressure points.

## UPDATE ON GLAUCOMA

I have learnt a lot about glaucoma, having observed my responses over the years. I measure my IOP daily using a non-contact tonometer. Glaucoma is not caused by the IOP; this only plays a part in contributing to damage to the optic nerve, nerve fibre layer and deterioration of the nerve ganglion so we aim to keep IOPs under control.

I find that people who have received laser (like myself), instead of opting for the drops, are far easier to treat and support. The eye appears more receptive, though I can also help people who are taking the glaucoma drops.

Natural remedies do not specifically target the eyes but they work on your entire body. This is something

overlooked by medical people. We cannot just focus on one part of the body that is not working correctly - we must work on the whole person for optimum results.

Some people find they need laser treatment every one to three years. I am informed that if they do not last more than a few months more serious surgery may be required. Likewise, if you are prescribed a certain type of glaucoma drop your body may get used to it and you may need to change or in stubborn cases, they may require two different types taken up to three times a day.

To date, my longest-lasting SLT laser is now in year six! I am determined to make it to year seven - and year eight would be amazing! This is very important if you have longevity in your genes as I do. I think the less invasive treatments on the eye the better.

## Ongoing Testing

There are many types of tests conducted for glaucoma and these are often done every six months initially, then once a year depending on your stability. One test is called a peripheral field test. Many people do not like it due to it being rather monotonous requiring you to press a button on the device each time you see tiny lights appear. It is usually conducted over a five minute duration. I have observed false positives occur. I did enquire as to the natural aging process of a person the same biological age who does not have glaucoma and one who does, how they can differentiate between the two with a natural aging process. I was informed they cannot! I personally found this discouraging, since I have heard of some cases being recommended to have further laser if the PFTs were changing over time. Obviously, doctors do not want you to deteriorate and they offer the only options available.

I question everything including testing. For instance, the baseline figure

for IOP is 21 in Australia. They don't want to see a reading above this. Ideally, 12-16 is considered a healthy level. However baseline is 20 in the UK and US. Why the difference? No doctor has advised me. I feel this could be due to differences in environment.

## Treatment

I must stress that if two dozen people were diagnosed with POAG, they would all have manifested it due to different circumstances. Genetics aside, a trigger could be physical head/eye trauma, metabolic issues or medications. I think hormonal changes in midlife also play a role, this is often considered an 'aging disorder', but I don't agree with this.

I only treat and support people who are under the care of a specialist eye doctor since to do otherwise would be too risky to your eyesight. We can work together on this but most doctors are not trained in homoeopathy or herbal formulas. They rely on ready-made supplements when offering any natural therapy advice. Such remedies in my opinion are not adequate for glaucoma treatments. Natural remedies will not interfere with conventional glaucoma treatment if prescribed and taken appropriately. This is important for everyone to abide by, and so will require the cooperation of doctors, patients and natural therapists.

You may find an eye specialist who is receptive to natural therapies. My doctor, like many, is busy and does not have time to study extra modalities, but he is open to what I do.

I must point out that this is not the magic solution! There is presently no cure. However, I have known of people still losing quality sight by taking their glaucoma drops diligently and likewise with those who may have regular laser.

## Natural Therapies

Recent research indicates that nicotinamide (from B<sub>3</sub>) can be helpful

for glaucoma cases. I investigated this and trialled it a few years ago but I did not observe any change in IOP. The dosage can be as much as 3 grams a day. Few multivitamin formulas will contain this much. Niacin, also from B<sub>3</sub>, is not going to do anything. Since we are all unique, some people may experience a reduction of IOP and future scans may show stability with the nerve fibre layer and optic nerve along with nerve ganglion, yet others have no change. Remember, all facets of the eye naturally deteriorate with aging. You never take a single B vitamin without supporting it with a B complex otherwise you throw out the balance of the other B vitamins. They work best synergistically.

Be wary of people who make claims for cures on the internet, sorry there are none presently for degenerative eye disorders. In fact, this applies to all genetic disorders.

If you are compliant with remedies and follow through then you may see some improvement or maintain stability with IOP's. I recommend you choose an optometrist who uses a non-contact device and stick with this model. I do not trust hand-held smaller devices since you rely on the therapist having a very steady hand. Try to get your IOP readings done same time of day if you can, many Optometrists may only test you every couple of months or at most monthly. I test myself daily to see the movement and provide my doctor with all measurements when I see him. It's wonderful to be independent but the devices can be very expensive. It takes away all the stress of seeing someone worried over your IOP or hearing some negative talk. You are in control and can provide this valuable information to your treating doctor. Many devices are available, just a matter of checking them out on the internet.

I do not take any herb or homeopathic that might increase ocular pressure. For the last few years, my routine has been pretty much the

same with some recent additions for various reasons. I muscle test everyone when considering remedies to formulate in such cases. The body never lies.

**Do not over-hydrate.** The 'health info' people read on the internet advises to consume over two litres of water a day is too much if you are drinking other beverages. High fluid intake can increase IOPs.

**Bowen technique** is used to help rebalance the body along with acupressure and point pulse laser. This is not used on the eyes! This is applied on various meridians and acupressure points (not to be confused with acupuncture), I do not needle anyone.

**Resolve** allergies, sinusitis, headaches/migraines and metabolic imbalances. Avoid root canal therapy and if you require fillings request the white composite, no amalgams please. The teeth connect to meridians in your body that flow throughout the body and towards the brain and eyes.

**Read** a book, not an e-reader, avoid staring at the phone and computer. Read black font in books on white background. Reading is very therapeutic for your eyes especially if you enjoy the topic. I read every time I visit my eye doctor. Reading lowers your ocular pressure. Screen reading of any type will increase it.

**Daily exercise** is important, walking (not running), swimming, dancing, table tennis, badminton and roller skating all allow you to move and swing. Remember to avoid excessive jumping.

If you live by the ocean, go walking on the sand and in the water as often as you can, it is very healing. It grounds you and clears your energetic field. Grass walking is also good.

**Wear good quality sunglasses** ideally with the side protective panel.

It's no good spending a fortune on fancy sunnies if they do not have the side panel to protect your peripheral vision.

**Use blue light-blocking glasses** when using screens. Consider Wifi protection for the back of your phones, computers and entire home.

Take an **Epsom salt bath** a couple of times a week. This also helps to cleanse your energy field. The magnesium is also a great relaxant encouraging a good night's sleep.

It is not just one remedy that is required – it could be many depending on your case. Unfortunately, there is not one natural product that contains all the necessary ingredients for brain/eye health.

Check your blood pressure (BP); investing in a device for home use is the best. Keep a record, don't panic if it goes up a bit. Your body is fluid and it's all dependent on your moods, time of day, sleep, stress and diet.

I only met one ophthalmologic doctor that checked my BP. I met with six others that didn't even mention it! So, I stay in charge of my BP. If it creeps up a little, I use herbs and homeopathics as a first course of action. However, it is best not to self-medicate.

If you would like to improve stability with your eyes using natural therapies, please contact me to arrange an appointment. You can read my glaucoma blog at the website quoted below.



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# Embracing Nature's Bounty: Exploring the Health Benefits of Mushrooms

By Candace Coughlan of Wild Health Hub

In the realm of natural health, few ingredients rival the versatility and nutritional richness of mushrooms. These unassuming fungi have captivated cultures for centuries, celebrated for their medicinal virtues and culinary allure. From the gourmet elegance of oyster mushrooms to the robust flavours of shiitake, and potent medicinal mushrooms such as lion's mane, turkey tail and reishi, the mushroom kingdom offers a bounty of health benefits waiting to be discovered.

## Nutritional Powerhouses

Mushrooms stand as nutritional powerhouses, offering a cornucopia of essential nutrients in a low-calorie package. Bursting with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, they provide a vital boost to overall wellbeing. B vitamins such as riboflavin, niacin and pantothenic acid are abundant

in mushrooms, aiding in energy metabolism and cellular health. Riboflavin plays a key role in the production of red blood cells while niacin supports nerve function. Pantothenic acid is essential for synthesising cholesterol and hormones.

Mushrooms are also rich in minerals crucial for various physiological processes. Selenium, an essential trace mineral, acts as a potent antioxidant, protecting cells from oxidative damage and supporting thyroid function. Copper, another essential mineral found in mushrooms, contributes to the production of red blood cells and collagen synthesis, promoting healthy skin and connective tissues. Potassium helps maintain fluid balance, regulate blood pressure and

**Pictured above: Candace with Australian native coral tooth (*Hericium coralloides*). This mushroom species belongs to the *Hericium* genus, along with lion's mane. Dubbed 'snowflake' by local commercial growers, this is an absolutely delicious mushroom, popular with top chefs.**

supports muscle and nerve function.

Mushrooms boast an impressive array of antioxidants, including ergothioneine and glutathione, which help combat oxidative stress and inflammation in the body. Ergothioneine is a unique antioxidant found abundantly in mushrooms,

**Pictured left: Oyster mushrooms. Oyster mushrooms tend to have a subtle, savoury anise flavour. Because their flavour is mild, without the strong earthiness of some mushroom varieties, they work well in a range of different dishes. Oyster mushrooms also take on a tender, pleasing texture when cooked.**

**Pictured right: The beautiful lion's mane (*Hericium erinaceus*). This mushroom grows on trunks of dead hardwood trees. Other names: bearded tooth, monkey head, pom pom and yamabushshitake.**



with research suggesting potential protective effects against neuro-degenerative diseases and age-related decline.

## Medicinal Mushrooms

Medicinal mushrooms, renowned for their immune-boosting properties, have attracted considerable scientific interest. Lion's mane, with its unique appearance resembling cascading icicles, boasts cognitive-enhancing effects and potential neuroprotective properties. Research suggests that lion's mane may stimulate nerve cell growth, offering benefits for memory, concentration and cognition. Turkey tail, named for its colourful concentric rings resembling, as the name suggests, the tail feathers of a turkey, is another medicinal marvel. Rich in polysaccharides and antioxidants, turkey tail has shown promise in supporting immune function. Studies indicate that compounds found in turkey tail may fortify the immune system, aiding in the body's defence against infections and diseases.

Reishi, revered as the "mushroom of immortality," holds a prominent place in Traditional Chinese Medicine. Laden with triterpenes and polysaccharides, reishi exhibits adaptogenic properties, promoting resilience to stress and supporting overall vitality. Its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant potential may shield against chronic ailments and promote longevity.

## Culinary Delights

Beyond their medicinal prowess, mushrooms offer a tapestry of culinary possibilities, enriching dishes with depth and nourishment. Gourmet varieties like shiitake, with their robust umami taste, and porcini, prized for their meaty texture and earthy aroma, elevate the dining experience. Sautéed, grilled or simmered mushrooms lend themselves to a myriad of culinary creations.

**Pictured right: Snow white oyster mushrooms. These mushrooms have crisp white, very large caps. They can grow to dinner plate size in the right conditions. This variety is great to grow at home, it is a high yielder and forms dense heavy clusters. The caps are thick and robust.**

To incorporate mushrooms into your daily repertoire, experiment with diverse varieties in your favourite recipes. Whether tossed in salads, stirred into risottos, or stuffed with savoury fillings, mushrooms infuse dishes with their distinctive character. Additionally, mushroom supplements, available in capsules, powders and extracts, offer a convenient way to harness the health benefits of mushrooms on the go.

Mushrooms, in all their diversity, emerge as veritable treasures of nature, offering an array of health benefits and culinary pleasures. From the delicate elegance of oyster mushrooms to the robust flavours of shiitake and porcini, each variety contributes its unique virtues to the tapestry of wellness. Whether savoured in gourmet dishes or integrated into daily routines through supplements, mushrooms hold the promise of enhancing overall health and vitality. Embrace the bounty of mushrooms and embark on a journey to unlock their boundless potential for wellbeing.



**Are you interested in learning how to grow your own mushrooms at home?** Discover the joy of harvesting your own culinary delights and therapeutic treasures with Candace as your guide. Join Candace in a hands-on workshop. Gain practical skills from selecting the right growing medium to mastering cultivation techniques. Scan the QR code below to find out about upcoming events.

**Candace Coughlan is an integrative nutrition health coach committed to transforming the way you approach wellness. Candace has a specialised focus on gut health and culinary nutrition. Contact via 042662095 or [candace.coughlan@gmail.com](mailto:candace.coughlan@gmail.com)**



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# Herbal Medicines During Chemotherapy

By Ally Sanchez



**Cancer rates continue to rise, with one in two people developing some form of cancer during their lifetime.**

## But what is cancer?

### Cancer cells vs Normal cells

All cells divide, replicate and die off within a preprogrammed lifespan. Cancer cells divide and replicate also, but unlike 'normal' cells, they do not die off. Under ideal conditions, natural killer cells will kill these malfunctioning cells, but when conditions are not ideal, for a multitude of reasons, cancer cells will continue to grow until an accumulation of cells presents as a tumour or lump.

As cancer cells continue to replicate, they will eventually impinge on the natural processes of the affected organs or body systems. The rate and speed at which this happens are determined by the type and place the cancer cells grew.

Left untreated, they will continue to spread (metastasize) to other organs and body systems, causing them to malfunction as well. Eventually, our body becomes overridden and struggles to function.

The type and stage of cancer describe where and how far along this path you are. The grade of cancer often refers to the speed of growth. These three categories will give the framework of time you have to explore all your options.

## Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy drugs target cells that grow and divide quickly, i.e., cancer cells. The earlier the cancerous cells are found, generally, the better the outcomes. However, not every cancer cell responds to chemotherapy.

Side effects occur because chemotherapy affects not only cancer cells but also all fast-growing healthy cells, such as those in the skin, hair, intestines and bone marrow, leading to damage. This damage to healthy cells creates the majority of side effects, such as hair loss, impaired immunity and digestive upsets.

## The choice is yours

When deciding to go ahead with a toxic protocol like chemotherapy, it is important to first understand the predicted outcomes both with or without this treatment. Is there a statistical advantage or not? This is your body, and only you will know what is the right choice.

You may spontaneously have an answer drop into your heart. For some, it may be clear after they have sought God or the universe to open a path forward. Going beyond the oncology unit and seeking out others who have successfully recovered or are living well with a cancer diagnosis helps to make your choice clearer.

### A yes or a no is not the only choice

This is your body, the only one you have; you are in control. If you choose to take personal responsibility for your health, hang on tight,

it's a wild, yet rewarding ride and be prepared to butt heads with modern medicine's fixed ideology.

Many people have chosen to combine chemotherapy with a supportive lifestyle to enhance positive outcomes and alleviate side effects. This may include a diet of nutrient-dense foods, fresh juices, water fasts, changes in attitude, new goals and leaving stressful situations. All to keep focused on optimal healing.

Herbal medicines are perfect for supporting the body through chemotherapy.

## Why use herbal medicines alongside oncology treatments?

Traditional Western herbal medicine does not replace a pharmacy drug with a herb. Traditional herbal medicine works under an energetic philosophy to channel and nurture the innate healing energy within our body, also known as our vital force, *prana* or *chi*. Herbs are used alongside cancer treatments to alleviate side effects, clear heat from the body, support detoxification pathways and boost the immune response.

Particular herbs will support the organs and body systems most affected. When using herbal medicines, it is most beneficial to seek a professional herbalist for advice on your individual needs to ensure a tailored formula specifically for you.



function increases resilience during cancer treatment. For example, echinacea, astragalus, garlic, liquorice, rosehips and reishi mushrooms.

### Digestive system

Chemotherapy damages the gut lining and microbiome,

leaving a tender inflamed digestive tract. Cooling, mucilage-rich herbs soothe this inflamed tissue, creating a slimy protective coating.

Herbs to nourish the digestive tract include marshmallow, slippery elm, comfrey root, plantain and oats. To further reduce inflammation meadowsweet, aloe vera and shatavari.

### Nausea

Ginger is the stand-alone herb for nausea and chemo-induced vomiting, as a cup of tea, ginger lollies, or in tincture form. Peppermint has also been shown to alleviate nausea, improve digestion, and bring relief to tummy pains while on chemotherapy.

### Loss of appetite

Herbal bitters given before a meal, 10-30 drops in water swished and swallowed, stimulate digestive enzymes to improve appetite and absorption. Bitter herbs that may be used include gentian, wormwood and dandelion.

### Diarrhoea

Herbs to tone the tissues of the bowels and reduce diarrhoea include bayberry, raspberry leaf, agrimony,

shepherd's purse, black walnut and plantain.

### Kidneys

Kidneys flush out waste products and toxic byproducts of chemotherapy. Kidney tonics include dandelion leaf, nettle, parsley and celery.

### Stress support

Cancer treatment can be an incredibly stressful experience, taking a toll on mental and emotional wellbeing and impacting sleep and energy levels.

Choosing Mother Nature's nurturing herbs such as lavender, chamomile, oats and passionflower can ease the impact of stress on the body and allow for peaceful sleep.

Herbal support through chemotherapy can be part of a holistic approach to cancer care; using traditional drop dosing prevents interference with medications.

Thankfully more (but not all) oncologists are starting to support the use of herbs throughout the treatment process.

### Liver support

The liver is involved in all physiological processes, including the metabolism and detoxification of chemotherapy drugs from the system. Alongside the immune system, the liver is possibly the most vital organ to support as it's working super hard.

As the liver heats up, herbs that are bitter, cooling and dispersing help this precious organ along. For example, dandelion, St Mary's thistle, artichoke, burdock, yellow dock and barberry.

### Immune system

Two weeks into chemotherapy treatment, the general procedure is to take a blood test to analyse the amount of white blood cell (our immune cells). White blood cells are fast replicating, so are affected by the chemotherapy drugs. Therefore, an oncologist uses this test to give insight into the effectiveness of the dosage used. If the count is too low, the dose may be reduced, or if it's too high, increased.

Immune-supporting herbs are best used after these initial tests are completed. For the following length of chemotherapy treatment, the immune system will be suppressed, leaving patients vulnerable to infections and illnesses. Using herbal medicines to support immune



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# AGE IS NOT TOXIC!

By Dr Greg Fitzgerald (Allied Health)

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**“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less travelled by, and that has made all the difference.”**

**Robert Frost: *The Road Less Travelled***



## **The power that grows us is the same power that heals us!**

The innate, silent power that enables us to grow from a microscopic egg-sperm union in-utero into an adult is the SAME power that can heal us when we are sick and reverse disease. It is truly remarkable. This surprises many people because we have been so conditioned to believe that ‘external things’ heal us. The truth is the human body grows and heals itself with that same power, or life force.

What has amazed me over the years is the power to heal, reverse illness and increase life force even in old age. We all have two ages: our chronological age (calculated in years from our date of birth) and our biological age (how old our organs and our organ systems REALLY are).

Someone who is 75 chronologically could have a biological age of 55, and conversely, someone who is 55 chronologically could be 75 or older biologically. Thankfully, our biological age is modifiable or reversible, dependent upon our lifestyle and dietary choices. Of course, aging is not modifiable. We all must age. However, our rate of aging IS modifiable. This is GREAT news for all of us.

In this article, I want to emphasise that healing is not age-selective. The

following examples are real, with real first names. The patients have given permission to use their whole names, but that is unnecessary.

## **Nola “Shocks” Her Doctor**

Nola was 84 and recommended to see me by her daughter Sandie, who had done our Transform Your Health in 21 Days Program and had received major health benefits from it. She thought her mum could also benefit.

Nola was taking eight different medications for various complaints and was, in her words, “falling apart”. She was overweight, had no energy, was chronically sick with upper and lower respiratory infections, she had high blood pressure, high cholesterol and was always congested. “I’ve always got lots of mucus.”

Surprisingly, her biggest desire was to be able to walk up a steep hill in her area without stopping, which she had been unable to do for 20 years. Nola was desperate to improve her state of poor health, which she admitted was making life miserable. I emphasised that for her to improve, she had to make some dietary changes, which she had never done before, and make some other lifestyle adjustments. “No problem, done, if you think these changes will help me, I’ll do them, I am sick of falling apart” she confidently replied.

Because she lived a long train trip away, we made her next appointment six weeks later. To say she was thrilled when she returned was an understatement. Nola returned six kilos lighter, off four medications (overseen by her “shocked” doctor), energy high, no mucous, but more importantly, she had been able to walk up the hill after just 14 days on the program.

Six months later I received an email from her daughter Sandie: “Mum has now turned 85 and has joined the dragon boat club in her town. She is a new lady. We cannot believe the changes in her. Thanks for putting her on the right path.”

## **Nancy Drops Ten Kilos and Ten Years Off Her Biological Age in 21 Days**

Nancy, 74, had to be helped to her feet by Dawn, my wife and assistant, from the waiting room chair. Her legs had lost all power, and to walk was painful. Her breathing was laboured, and she was always short of breath. She had slept poorly for many years, was exhausted (enervated), had widespread muscle and joint pain and had been on high blood pressure medication for 20 years, and yet it was still dangerously high. At 92 kg she was obese and had ongoing back problems. She was taking painkillers

and anti-inflammatory drugs daily. Nancy was due to fly out to Europe in just over three weeks and had paid for a 28-day European coach tour but was now thinking of cancelling due to the fact she was unable to walk properly and didn't want to burden other tourists with her disability.

I outlined the 21 Day Program recommendations and she said she would start immediately, as she had no time to waste. Her keenness was understandable as her trip was uninsured.

Nancy's vitality was so low, her body so toxic, her pain so diffuse and her biological age so far over her chronological age of 74, that my usual confidence was replaced with "let's see how you go". To compound matters, Nancy had been this way for many years.

But when she came in a day before her trip, three weeks later, even I was shocked at her rejuvenation. My wife Dawn did not have to help her rise from the waiting-room seat, as she arose unaided. In Nancy's words: "All my aches and pains have improved by 70 percent. My legs are also about 70 percent improved, and I can walk without pain. I can get up and down from seats with no trouble. I'm sleeping better than I can remember, I'm breathing much easier and I feel overall much younger. My blood pressure is the best it's been in 20 years, and the only medication I'm still on is one for my blood pressure. I've lost ten kilos and now weigh 82 kilos. I'm thrilled at how much better I feel, I'm confident I can take the coach tour now and so I'm flying out tomorrow."

It is hard to believe that someone can lose 10 kgs in 21 days, but it happened with Nancy and it happens regularly. As she said; "I cannot believe how easy it was".

## Reversing Neuropathy in a Week at 86

Bob attended one of my seminars with his daughter.

Feeling inspired, he approached me after the talk, aided by his walking stick, and asked if he could come and see me for an appointment. "I still feel I can learn more and improve my health", he said, "after all, I'm only 86," he said with a smile. I loved his sense of humour.

Bob had neglected his physical health all his life, yet his mind and attitude were quite remarkable. He was the typical example of polypharmacy (10 medications) for various health issues, which he had summarised on a sheet of paper that he brought in.

"My main problem is the excruciating pain in my feet and lower legs, which the doctors told me is peripheral neuropathy. I've had it for eight years, since I was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes". Bob became quite emotional: "To be honest Greg, I do not want to live any more with this pain".

Bob had been put on endone and many other opioid medications over the years, and had seen many doctors, specialists and pain clinics, all to no avail. The pain kept him awake at night and ruined his life during the day. The drugs zonked him out, and he was desperate. "Do you think there's any hope Greg?" he asked. "I can guarantee one thing Bob, and that is your health overall will improve, but whether your pain goes only time will tell."

Seven days later Bob came back to my office, without his walking aid. As he sat down, he looked me in the eyes and stated emotionally: "Greg, I can tell you man-to man, face-to-face, I do not have a pain in my body, let alone my feet". Bob was understandably ecstatic. He had no need for any painkillers, and this

**Dr Greg Fitzgerald (Allied Health)**

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improvement lasted until Bob passed away at age 90.

## Credit Goes To a Change of Game Plan

These case stories are not written to impress you. They are written to impress upon you one piece of great news: age is not toxic!

Our chronological age is not reversible, but our biological age is. We determine how quickly we age. You can turn your energy, weight and health around in a relatively short time with a different game-plan. You will be surprised how much energy you will gain, how much weight you will lose (if that is needed), how much better you will sleep, how much less inflammation and pain you will experience and how much younger you will feel and look. You will also find your bowels improve, your skin will become clearer, your moods will improve and you will be less anxious.

When the tide rises, all the boats lift; in other words when your body becomes less toxic and inflamed, all internal organ systems improve and 'become younger'.

Although these results sound too good to be true, they are possible, and not that difficult to achieve. They happened in people who were not young chronologically, but who, through adopting lifestyle and dietary changes, became younger biologically.

Do not buy into the popular myth that we must fall apart and rattle with drugs as we age. As popular as this myth is, nothing could be further from the truth.

# NATURAL HEALTH NEWS

Compiled By Roger French



## Pink Noise Helps Us Sleep Better

By Lindsay Powers, Naturopathic Nutritional Therapist with Naturally Healthy News

15th March 2024

World Sleep Day back in 15th March 2024 prompted us to examine the important topic of sleep more closely. We'll also explore an area that caught our attention recently – the differences between white noise and pink noise and how these can impact sleep quality.

Poor sleep has become pervasive in modern society, affecting a significant portion of the population worldwide. The number of sleep-related problems has been on the rise, and their consequences extend far beyond simply feeling tired or groggy the next day.

### The consequences of poor sleep

The consequences of poor sleep extend beyond feeling fatigued. Chronic sleep deprivation or poor sleep quality is associated with a range of health issues, including:

#### Impaired Cognitive Function

Sleep plays a crucial role in memory, learning and problem-solving. Poor sleep can impair concentration and memory and reduce mental performance.

#### Mood Disorders

Chronic sleep problems can contribute to the development or exacerbation of mood disorders, including anxiety and depression.

#### Weakened Immune System

Adequate sleep is essential for a well-functioning immune system. Chronic sleep deprivation can make us more susceptible to illnesses.

#### Weight Gain and Metabolic Issues

Poor sleep is associated with disruptions in hunger-regulating hormones, leading to increased appetite and a higher likelihood of weight gain. It is also linked to insulin resistance and increased risk of type 2 diabetes.

#### Cardiovascular Problems

Sleep deprivation has been linked to increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, including hypertension, heart attack and stroke.

#### Increased Inflammation

Lack of sleep can contribute to the development of chronic inflammatory conditions.

#### Impaired Physical Performance

Athletes and individuals engaging in physical activities may experience reduced endurance, slower reaction times and increased risk of injuries.

#### Reduced Quality of Life

Poor sleep can significantly impact an individual's overall quality of life, affecting relationships, work performance, and overall wellbeing.

## Achieving better sleep

Establishing a consistent sleep routine, creating a conducive sleep environment and addressing underlying factors contributing to poor sleep can go a long way in promoting overall health and wellbeing.

## White noise and pink noise

### White noise versus pink noise for restful sleep

An area of sleep research that lately caught our attention is around sound and its impact on sleep quality. Recently, there has been a growing interest in the differences between white noise and pink noise, with pink noise emerging as a potential ally in promoting a better night's sleep.

### Understanding white noise and pink noise

White noise uses a mix of sound frequencies to create a static-like sound. It can be intense and high-pitched, like a fan, air conditioner or vacuum cleaner, but it still makes a steady, uniform sound. It's often called broadband noise.

Pink noise is characterised by a consistent power per octave, resulting in a more balanced and natural sound to the human ear. Unlike white noise, pink noise has more energy in the lower frequencies, giving it a softer and more soothing quality. It is also called ambient noise.

According to Webmd.com, like white noise, pink noise is a steady background hum, but it uses deep-

er sounds, so it may be gentler and more soothing. Basically, pink noise has a lower pitch than white noise. Pink noise uses a consistent frequency to create a more even, flat sound, like steady rain, wind rustling through trees or waves on a beach. It filters out higher sounds like people talking or cars going by. As a result, you hear more relaxing, lower-frequency sounds.

## The promise of pink noise

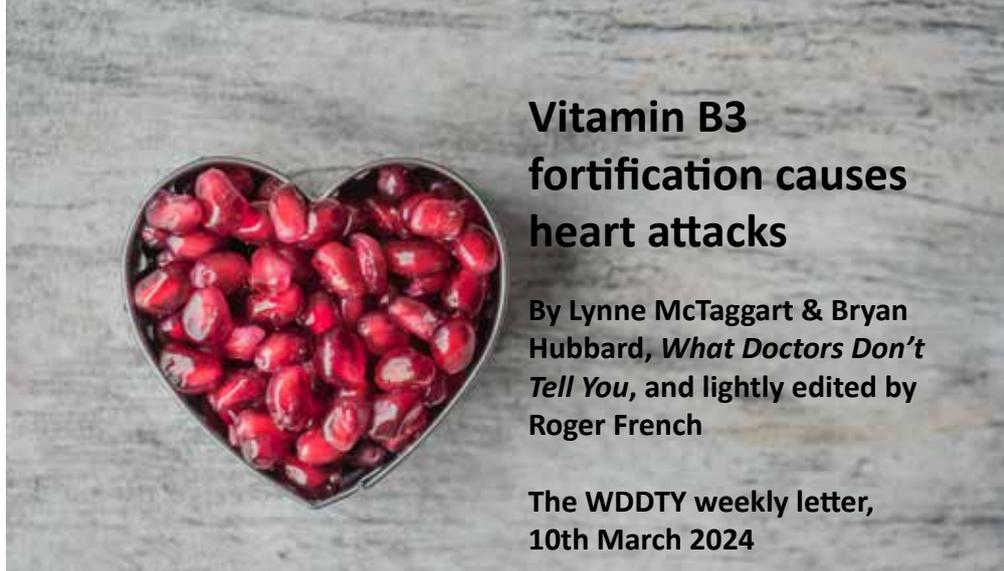
Recent studies have suggested that pink noise may hold a distinct advantage over white noise for promoting better sleep. One study published in the journal, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, found that exposure to pink noise during sleep leads to improvements in deep sleep and overall sleep quality. The researchers believe that the balanced distribution of energy in pink noise may have a more harmonious influence on brain activity during sleep, facilitating a more restorative sleep cycle.

Moreover, pink noise has been shown to have a positive impact on brain wave patterns. A study conducted by Northwestern University in Illinois, USA, found that older adults who listened to pink noise exhibited more synchronised brain wave activity, specifically in the slow-wave and delta frequency ranges associated with deep sleep. This synchronisation is crucial for memory consolidation and overall cognitive function.

If you want to try this, you can access pink noise on many music streaming services.

## In conclusion

While pink noise appears to offer promising benefits for sleep, it's crucial to recognise that individual responses may vary. Experiment with different soundscapes, including pink noise, and combine these efforts with a holistic approach to sleep hygiene for the best results.



## Vitamin B3 fortification causes heart attacks

By Lynne McTaggart & Bryan Hubbard, *What Doctors Don't Tell You*, and lightly edited by Roger French

The WDDTY weekly letter, 10th March 2024

Imagine you're looking at a medical intervention in the most complex thing of all – the human body – and you quadruple the level of complexity and likelihood of unanticipated consequences. They happen with surgical interventions and with almost every drug that's been licensed for use, the unanticipated consequences of which are known as adverse reactions.

A fascinating example came to light just this week, and it was to do with fortifying food. The fortification of foods sounds like a good idea, in principle at least. Most people don't eat a nutritious diet, and so it makes sense to add nutrients to the food they do eat, such as breakfast cereals and supermarket bread.

Niacin, or vitamin B<sub>3</sub>, has been added to flour, cereals and oats for many years, and manufacturers have been mandated to do so in more than 50 countries. It's supposed to lower cholesterol levels and so, in turn, reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease (CVD), at least according to the diet/cholesterol theory of CVD.

But the body does a very strange thing when there's too much niacin in the system – it creates something to break down those levels, and that something is a metabolite called '4PY'.

And guess what 4PY does? It triggers vascular inflammation, and that damages blood vessels and can make cardiovascular disease more likely.

So, adding niacin to food causes the very thing it's supposed to prevent. Now that's an unanticipated consequence!

Researchers at the Cleveland Clinic [which has centres in the US, Canada, the UAE and London] made the discovery when they tested niacin levels in a group of volunteers. Those with the most niacin in their bodies also had high 4PY activity.

The problem affected a quarter of the participants, so it may be reasonable to assume that 25 percent of a population that's eating niacin-enriched foods are also at a greater risk of heart disease.

Lead researcher, Stanley Hazen, likened it to an overfull water tank that's being filled from four different taps. We get niacin from fortified foods, from natural foods, from nutritional supplements and from over-the-counter remedies. To cope with the overflow, the body produces 4PY – which then creates its own unanticipated consequences.

The remedy is clear – eat fresh fruits and vegetables, and avoid processed foods, especially the ones fortified with niacin.

In addition, tell food manufacturers to stop putting niacin into their products in the first place.

**What Doctors Don't Tell You Principals and Editors are Lynne McTaggart and her husband Bryan Hubbard.**  
Website [www.wddty.com](http://www.wddty.com)

# Embrace the Winter Season With Vibrant Vegetarian Vitality

By Hopewood Lifestyle

As the cooler months approach, it's essential to nurture our bodies with the warmth and nutrition they crave. For those of us embracing a vegetarian lifestyle and Natural Health philosophy, winter in Australia presents a unique opportunity to fortify our wellbeing with seasonal produce and mindful practices.

Hopewood's proven Natural Health philosophy and wellbeing wisdom passed down over 55 years at Australia's original health retreat, encourages people to lead a healthy and happy life. Here are some simple steps you can take this winter to stay well and make the most of the colder months.

## Boost your immune system:

With the onset of the cold and flu season, it's important to boost your immunity. Incorporate warming spices like cinnamon, turmeric and ginger into your meals. These spices not only enhance the flavours in your

food, but also offer immune boosting properties to keep you resilient through the winter months.

## Savour seasonal produce:

Indulge in winter's bounty of fruits and vegetables. Apples, oranges and rhubarb can add a refreshing twist to your meals, while carrots, pumpkin and sweet potatoes are perfect for hearty soups, stews and curries. Balance your diet with wholegrains, legumes, nuts and seeds for a complete nutritional profile. Remember, consuming a wide variety of plant-based foods is the best way to ensure you support your health with the vitamins and minerals it needs.

## Stay hydrated:

While it's easy to overlook hydration when it's cold, maintaining fluid intake is crucial. Herbal teas and warm water can keep you comfortably hydrated.

## Look after your skin:

Taking care of your skin during the winter months is essential too. The extra heating inside and the cold air outside can cause your skin to dry out and become brittle.

Protect your skin from harsh winds and low temperatures. You should avoid over-cleansing, because this can lead to dryness and irritation. A thorough evening cleanse and a simple splash of water in the morning is best. Consider using a thicker moisturiser during winter. Look for formulations that provide extra hydration and create a protective barrier against dryness.

## Soak Up the Sun:

Vitamin D is vital for bone health and immunity. With shorter days, make the most of sunny moments to naturally boost your vitamin D levels. Even a brief walk during the day can make a difference.

## Mindful Movement:

Gentle exercise, whether it's yoga, stretching or a brisk walk, can invigorate your body and mind, keeping the winter blues at bay.

By aligning with nature's rhythm and honouring our body's needs, we can thrive through the Australian winter with vitality and joy.

Stay warm and cozy, and let the natural goodness of a vegetarian lifestyle be your guide.





## A delicious winter recipe from Hopewood:

This stew is not only a flavourful and hearty meal, but it's also packed with nutrients. Enjoy it with some crusty bread or a side salad for a complete winter feast!

### Roast Butternut Pumpkin and Lentil Stew

#### Ingredients:

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cubed
- 1 cup green or brown lentils, rinsed
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Fresh parsley or coriander, for garnish
- Olive oil, for roasting

#### Method:

1. Preheat your oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Toss the cubed butternut pumpkin with a drizzle of olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread it out on a baking sheet and roast for about 25-30 minutes or until tender and caramelised.
3. In a large pot, heat some olive oil over medium heat.

Add the chopped onion, minced garlic, carrots and celery. Sauté until the onion is translucent.

4. Add the rinsed lentils, vegetable broth, ground cumin, ground coriander and smoked paprika. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for about 20-25 minutes or until the lentils are cooked and tender.

5. Once the lentils are cooked, add the roasted pumpkin to the pot. Season with additional salt and pepper if needed.

6. Simmer the stew for another 10 minutes to allow the flavours to combine.

7. Serve hot, garnished with fresh herbs.

Did you enjoy this article? Then you will love *Lifestyle – Hopewood's recipe for wellbeing*. Get your copy today and embark on a transformative natural health journey. Embrace mindful eating, stress management and self-care rituals to cultivate a balanced holistic life. Packed with professional advice crafted by specialists in nutrition, meditation, yoga, massage and healing. Includes over 100 mouth-watering, easy-to-prepare vegetarian recipes. Its 270+ pages are designed to inspire readers to eat, move, heal and nurture their bodies naturally. Embrace the winter season with vibrant vegetarian vitality.

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# Most Back Pain Caused by Repressed Emotions

Abstracted from an article  
by Dr Joseph Mercola, 6th March 2024

## Back Pain – It's All in Your Head

The late Dr John Sarno, a professor of rehabilitation medicine, used mind-body techniques to treat patients with severe lower back pain. His specialty was those who have already had surgery for low back pain and did not get any relief.

This is a tough group of patients, yet he claimed to have a greater than 80 percent success using techniques like the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).

A Sarno devotee, named Steven Schroeder, said the doctor changed his life. Schroeder's back pain flared whenever he was stressed – a busy time at work or an illness in his family.

Though he may not be a household name, Dr Sarno is probably America's most famous back pain doctor. Before his death on June 22, at age 94, he published four books and built a following of thousands of patients.

## The Psychological Underpinnings of Pain

One of the most controversial aspects of Sarno's theory is that spine

and disc abnormalities have no bearing on pain. He dismisses these issues as "normal abnormalities" that are unrelated to any pain you may be experiencing. Many people with back pain have no detectable abnormalities or structural problems, while some that do have them suffer no pain.

According to Sarno, you unconsciously cause your own pain. The pain you're experiencing is your brain's response to unaddressed stress, anger or fear. When these kinds of emotions are suppressed, your brain redirects the emotional impulses to restrict blood flow to certain parts of your body, such as your back, neck or shoulder, thereby triggering pain.

This pain acts as a distraction from the anger, fear or rage which you don't want to feel or think about. The pain essentially acts as a lid, keeping unwanted emotions from erupting. You may feel anger at the pain, but you won't have to face the fact that you're actually angry at

your spouse, your children or your best friend, or that you hate your job, or the fact that you feel taken advantage of.

As noted by Dr Sarno, working hard and constantly trying to do everything perfectly to keep everybody around you happy, "is enraging to



the unconscious mind." and he firmly believed most people can overcome their pain by acknowledging its psychological roots.

Even if you struggle to accept such a concept, the mere knowledge of it can have therapeutic power. In other words, by considering the idea that your problem is in fact rooted in stress factors opposed to a physical problem can allow the pain to dissipate.

While many of Dr Sarno's patients became well without psychiatric help, he would often recommend seeking out a psychotherapist to explore repressed emotions, or to take up journaling to put your feelings on paper.

## Studies Support Mind-Body Connection in Painful Conditions

A study published last year found that emotional awareness and expression therapy (EAET) reduced chronic musculoskeletal pain by at least 30 percent in two-thirds of patients and 70 percent in one-third of

patients. (*Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 2016 Feb;81:1-8)

More recently, a study concluded that treating fibromyalgia pain with EAET was more effective than cognitive behavioural therapy and general fibromyalgia education. (*Pain*, August 8, 2017 [Epub ahead of print])

## All Pain Is Regulated by the Brain

It may be helpful to remember that while pain may be largely a product of your own mind, the pain is still 'real'.

As noted by Dr Mel Pohl, a professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences at the University of Nevada School of Medicine, "All pain is regulated by the brain – whether there is an actual nail in your thumb or an old injury that should have healed by now but inexplicably keeps hurting – in both cases it is nerve fibres that are sending messages to your brain that cause you to feel pain." (*Psychology Today*, January 2, 2013)

An acute injury doesn't have to have a psychological trigger, but if the pain persists long after the injury has healed, there may well be an emotional aspect involved.

Pain can also carve figurative grooves in your brain. When pain is perceived over an extended period of time, the number of pain-causing neurotransmitters in your nervous system increases and your pain threshold tends to get lower. Essentially, you become more sensitised to pain.

Like Sarno, Hanscom and many others, Pohl also believes that emotions are a primary cause of pain, triggering as much as 80 percent of all pain.

One of the most important things people with chronic pain can do to help themselves is to notice what they are feeling.

## Physical Movement Is a Crucial Treatment Component for Most Pain

Your body needs regular activity to remain pain free, and this applies even if you're currently in pain. Not only does prolonged sitting restrict blood flow, which may trigger or exacerbate pain, sitting may even be the cause of the pain in the first place.

When the muscles that connect your lumbar region to the top of your femur and pelvis are shortened, it can cause severe pain upon standing, as they will effectively pull your lower back forward.

Most people tend to 'baby' the pain and avoid moving about as much as possible, but in most cases, this is actually contra-indicated. In fact, experts now agree that when it hurts the most, that's when you really need to get moving. (*The Guardian*, November 30, 2015)

A scientific review of 21 studies found that strength exercises, aerobics, flexibility training and stretching were all beneficial in lowering the risk of recurring pain. (*JAMA Internal Medicine*, 2016 Feb;176(2):199-208)

## Treatment Guidelines for Back Pain Stress

Dr James Weinstein, a back pain specialist and chief executive of Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health System, told *The New York Times*, February 13, 2017:

"We need to stop medicalising symptoms. Pills are not going to make people better, so why not just go back to your normal activities. I know your back hurts, but go run and be active instead of taking a pill."

This view has now become the new norm. In fact, on February 14, 2017,



the *American College of Physicians* issued updated treatment guidelines for acute, subacute and chronic low back pain. They now sidestep medication as a first-line treatment and recommending non-drug therapies instead. This is a significant change, and one that could potentially save thousands of lives by avoiding opioid addiction.

### The new guidelines include the following recommendation:

For patients with chronic low back pain, clinicians and patients should initially select non-pharmacologic treatment with exercise, multidisciplinary rehabilitation, acupuncture, mindfulness-based stress reduction, tai chi, yoga, motor control exercise, progressive relaxation, electro-myography biofeedback, low-level laser therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy or spinal manipulation.

## Alternative Solutions for Pain Relief

The following suggestions are among a long list put forward by Dr Mercola:

**Eliminate** most refined grains and refined sugars from your diet.

Supplement with a high-quality, **plant-based omega-3** oil, sourced from micro-algae.

Optimise your sun exposure and production of **vitamin D**, which will usually reduce your pain. Sun exposure also has anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving effects that are unrelated to vitamin D. [But be sure not to sunburn, as this is what makes sunbathing dangerous.]

**Medical cannabis** has a long history as a natural analgesic.

**Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT)** borrows from the principles of acupuncture. It helps resolve underlying - often subconscious and negative, emotions that may be exacerbating your physical pain.

**Meditation and mindfulness** training.

**Chiropractic** – Qualified chiropractic, osteopathic and naturopathic physicians have received extensive training in the management of musculo-skeletal disorders

**Acupuncture** – Has clear and robust effects in the treatment of back, neck and shoulder pain and osteoarthritis and headaches.

**Massage** – This relieves pain better than getting no treatment at all.



## Playing an instrument or singing may help preserve brain health

By Dr Joseph Mercola  
9th March 2024

Practising music is linked to healthier cognitive aging and increased volume of areas of the brain that play a role in memory, executive function, emotion and language.

Research shows that people who play a musical instrument have significantly better performance in working memory and executive function.

Singing is also associated with executive function, while musical ability is linked to working memory.

The piano has the strongest links to improved cognitive health, followed by woodwinds and brass. No association has been found for percussion instruments, bowed instruments such as the violin, viola double bass or guitar.

Music also helps shape our memories by triggering changes in emotion that, in turn, make events more memorable.

**These articles by Dr Joseph Mercola are lightly sub-edited and published under his generous policy of permission to publish for not-for-profit organisations.**



## Professionally Supervised Fasting, NSW

The supervisor is Doug Evans, who is well known to many Natural Health Society members. Doug was a practitioner at the now closed Hopewood Health Retreat. He has had 40 years' experience in supervising nutritional programs and therapeutic fasting, including 22 years at Hopewood Health Retreat.

Set in Bundeena, comfortable accommodation is provided among trees and quiet garden setting for your fast. Modest fees for daily consultations, monitoring tests, access to health library and healthy lifestyle talks. Plantbased meals for preparing and breaking of fast are provided.

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or 0416 254 409**

# Report From Our Most Recent Webinar Series.

By Rebecca Smith



## NHSA Webinars: Education, inspiration and your health community.

During March the Society held it's 10<sup>th</sup> webinar series. This series we had five great sessions from four wonderful speakers. As always, it was lovely to see and learn with our community during the sessions.

Optometrist and Nutritionist Dr Jenny Livanos ran two sessions during the series, one on eye exercises and one on nutrition for healthy eyes. Here are some notes from her eye exercises presentation. All webinars from our series are available for purchase via our website individually if you would like to catch up on any you missed. Both of Jenny's recorded sessions can be purchased together for the special price of \$10.

### Tips for better eye health

- Take glasses off during the day when you don't need them.
- Wear a slightly lower script.
- Switch from contact lenses to glasses.
- Use pinhole glasses.
- Be comfortable with the blur.
- Don't stare!
- Learn about your eye condition and look at your lifestyle choices and environment that may be contributing – physical, chemical and emotional.
- Make a commitment to yourself to work on your vision every day.

### Improve visual habits

- Work environment, if you can, work in environments with lots of natural light and avoid clutter on your desk.
- Reading distance, do not sit too close to screens.
- Take visual breaks.
- Take physical breaks.
- Look into the distance often.
- Be aware of your peripheral vision.
- Be mindful of your posture.
- Be careful with blue light.
- Blink regularly.

**Dr Jenny's motto - Blink, breathe and relax!**



## Natural Eye Care

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## Eye exercises

Dr Jenny also talked us through some eye exercises. These started with massage around the eyes, face and shoulders, blinking and mindful breathing – very relaxing! We then moved onto more specific eye exercises. One interesting one we discussed was the Tibetan eye chart. This chart was developed by Tibetan monks as a tool for improving eye health.

### Instructions for using Tibetan eye chart:

- Attach the chart (shown below) to a convenient wall with the white centre spot in line with your nose.
- To begin, stand 50 cm away from the chart, keeping the tip of your nose in line with the white spot at the centre.
- With your eyes, trace the outline of the figures. Start clockwise, move your eyes slowly.
- When you get to the black circles at the end of each arm, trace the circle with your eyes two or three times.
- Once you have completed this cycle clockwise, repeat it counterclockwise.
- As your eyes strengthen you can slowly step closer and closer to the chart.
- The Tibetan monks goal was to complete these exercises while their nose touched the centre circle.





# News from Dr Greger



## How much sleep is needed for brain cleansing?

Sleep is a great mystery. A trait shared across animal species, sleep must be of vital importance to have survived natural selection pressures to eliminate such a vulnerable state.

One function of sleep that has been elucidated in recent years is the clearance of toxic waste byproducts through a newly discovered drainage system in the brain.

With the invention of the encephalogram (EEG) to measure brain wave activity, the scientific world was quickly disabused of the notion that sleep was only a time of rest for the brain. During certain stages of sleep, there is brain-wide activity going on, but what is the brain actually doing?

Until 2012, it was thought that the brain was singular among organs for recycling nearly all of its own waste. The thinking was that it had to, since it was separated from the rest of the body by the blood-brain barrier. Then in 2012, a brain-wide fluid transport network was discovered, termed the glymphatic system.

By microscopically tracking dye injected into the brains of mice, scientists discovered fluid-filled tunnels surrounding blood vessels in the brain. The pressure wave of arterial pulses with every heartbeat pushes the fluid along before eventually draining into the cerebrospinal fluid surrounding the brain [to be eliminated].

### What does this have to do with sleep?

The whole system is only fully active during sleep. During wakefulness, these tunnels are clamped down,

reducing glymphatic flow by 90 percent. The thought is that the fluid shifts might interfere with neurotransmitter communication in the awake state. So the biological need for sleep may reflect the need for the brain to enter into a state to filter out neurotoxic waste products, like the beta-amyloid protein, which is implicated in Alzheimer's disease.

Perhaps this could be one reason why people who routinely get fewer than seven hours of sleep a night are at increased risk of developing cognitive disorders, like dementia.

In a sleep laboratory, randomising individuals to have their sleep disrupted by a series of beeps administered through headphones increases amyloid levels, whereas improving sleep – by treating sleep apnoea patients with CPAP, for example – improves deep sleep and appears to lower amyloid levels. PET scans show that even a single night without sleep can cause a significant increase in the accumulation of beta-amyloid.

A problem is that glymphatic brain filtration appears to decline with aging. Old mice have only 10 to 20 percent the glymphatic function of young mice. As we age, we achieve less of the deep, slow-wave sleep during which brain waste clearance appears to be most active.

Further, our arteries tend to stiffen as we age, reducing the pulsations that drive the glymphatic pump. This also offers one possible explanation as to why high blood pressure is tied to dementia. The thickening of artery walls with high blood pressure also has a stiffening effect on them.

To minimise the waste build-up in our brains, we need eight hours of sleep a night, or at least seven hours.

## Garlic For Health

### What does it do?

Garlic lowers blood pressure, regulates cholesterol and stimulates immunity. Eating garlic appears to offer the best of both worlds, dampening inflammation while boosting protective immunity.

The common cold has been called the most widespread viral infection in the world, and most people get two to five colds annually. In the first study to use a double-blind, placebo controlled design to investigate prevention of viral disease with a garlic supplement, those randomised to the garlic suffered 60 percent fewer colds and were affected 70 percent fewer days. So, those on garlic not only had fewer colds, but they also recovered faster, suffering only one and a half days instead of five.

### Raw VS Cooked.

If you compare raw chopped garlic to garlic simmered for 15 minutes, boiled for six, or stir-fried for just one minute you can get a three-fold drop in one of the purported active ingredients called *allicin*. What about roasted garlic? Surprisingly, even though roasting is hotter than boiling, it preserved about twice as much. Raw has the most, but it may be easier for some folks to eat two to three cloves of cooked garlic than even a half clove of raw.

**Safety.** Meta-analysis on garlic suggests there are no real safety concerns with side effects or overdosing, though that's with internal use. You should not stick crushed garlic on your skin. It can cause irritation and, if left on long enough, can burn you.



## AGM, Herb Display and Shared Lunch

VegSA held its AGM on the 21st of April. This was preceded by a talk by the President of The Herb Society of South Australia. The speaker, Sandra Stuart, and her offsider, Anthony Medcalf, came armed with a considerable collection of beautiful herbs. These were passed around for everyone to see and smell, giving a great sensory experience. The salvia display (some of which also have healing properties) was stunning in its range of colours. The Herb Society has its own garden at Fulham Community Centre and twice a year has sales of salvias at Findham Community Centre. It does not give health advice but suggests that people contact a qualified herbalist. To top off the talk we all had a hot cup of lemon verbena tea, followed by our shared lunch with a number of tasty treats.

## Duck and Quail Hunting Season

On a more serious note, sadly the open season to shoot native waterbirds was allowed to go ahead in South Australia with an even larger daily bag and with a shorter season in Victoria. Footage taken on the first open day in South Australia has been submitted to RSPCASA by the South Aussies for Animals group, showing activities that they say contravene the *SA Animal Welfare Act*. Shooters groups claim that these actions are within the rules set by the Department of Environment and Water. They assert that they should be allowed to access fresh food this way.

Animal rights groups are naturally horrified by the ongoing slaughter. A protest rally organised by Animal Liberation SA on the first day of the open season was promoted by a number of groups in SA, by Animals Australia and Vegan Australia and was well attended. Sadly, the conclusion of the SA Select Committee on the Hunting Of Native Birds was that "The values held by the opposing parties are unlikely to ever be reconciled because they are so distinct and deeply held." It seems we still have quite a long way to go.

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# We need your help to keep *True Natural Health* a Print Publication. Please help us reach our 2024 goal

We hope you are doing well and that you enjoyed reading the Winter 2024 issue of *True Natural Health*. In March, we launched our 'Keep *True Natural Health* a print publication campaign' via email. For those who don't receive our emails, please find the details below. I would like to give my sincere thanks to those of you who have already donated. We certainly couldn't achieve the Natural Health Society's mission without you.



## Please keep *True Natural Health* a print publication campaign.

Our goal is to raise \$24,000 to ensure that we are able to continue to publish the magazine in print form. We are very lucky to have people who donate to the Society, however we will need more supporters to reach our goal.

From the many conversations and emails we receive, we know that *True Natural Health* is our most cherished member benefit. Our readers regularly tell us that having a printed magazine is important to them, "I look forward to getting my magazine in the post every three months, and I read it cover to cover". They treasure it as a lifeline of support, education and inspiration.

This year we need your support more than ever since our ability to keep publishing *True Natural Health* as a print magazine is more challenging than ever. The magazine continues to be an expensive undertaking. Because of the increasing costs associated with printing and mailing, many organisations have downsized their publications or abandoned print publications altogether by converting them to digital versions only. We hope and plan to avoid that ...and with your help, we will.

We have steadfastly resisted moving to an only e-publication model. We know that that is not what the majority of our members want and because we recognise that a number of our members are elderly and are not part of the online world.

We only have a few advertisers that help offset some of the magazine production costs, as we refuse to promote products that don't align with the Society's principles.

Please don't let *True Natural Health* go the way of so many other prominent magazines and newspapers by becoming an e-publication only.

As I am sure you can tell, publishing *True Natural Health* is mostly a labour of love for the NHTA team, and the wonderful feedback we receive concerning each issue provides enormous motivation to make each issue better and better.

Once again, please make a donation to our 2024 *True Natural Health* appeal – we hope you will do so today.

Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth French  
Natural Health Society of Australia President

## Options for donations:

Go to the 'support us' tab on our website [www.health.org.au](http://www.health.org.au)  
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