

# WELL BEING JOURNAL™

VOL. 24, NO. 4

July/August 2015

U.S./Canada \$6.95

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## Nutrient-Dense Foods Activate Crucial Protein

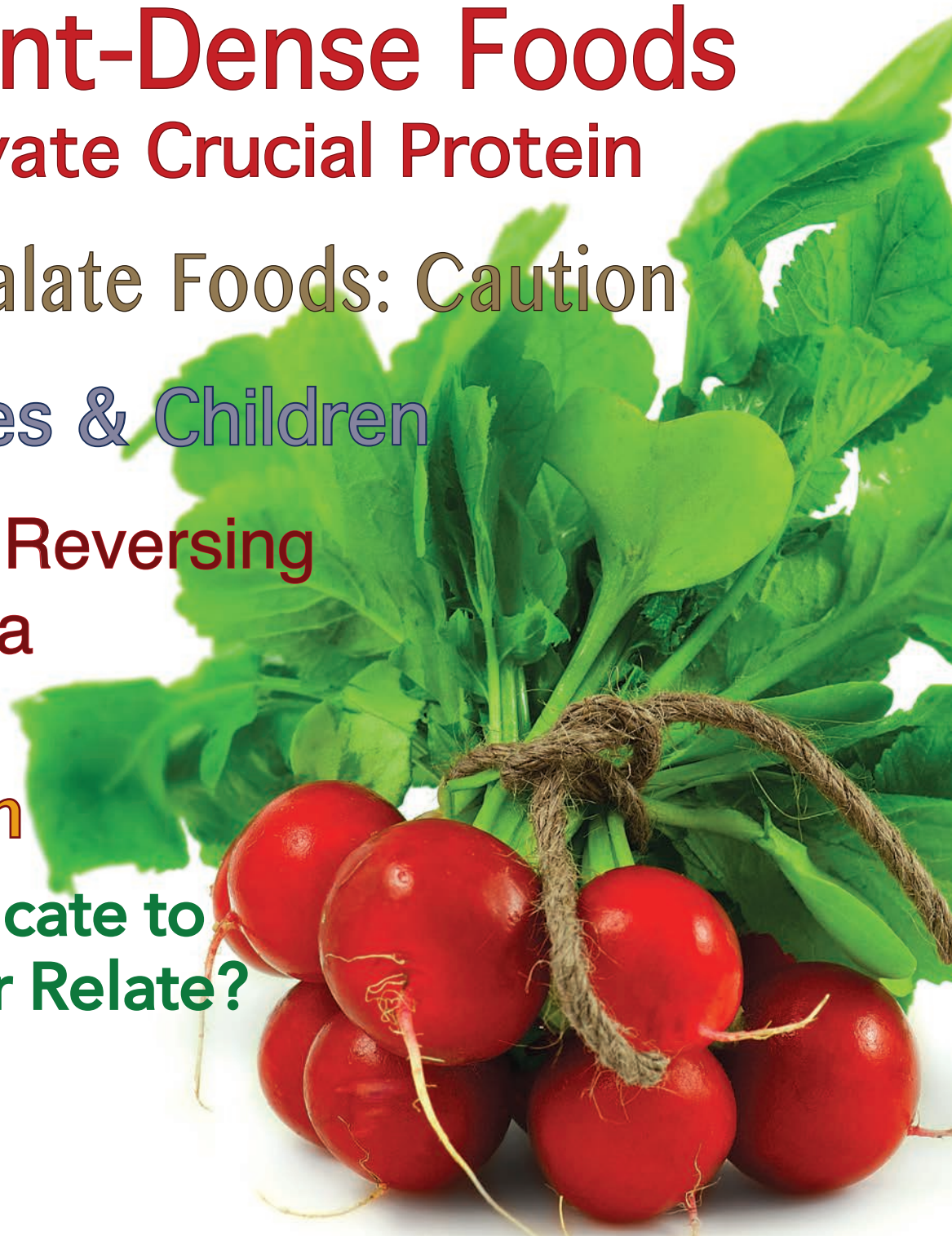
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Editorial submissions: Editor, Well Being Journal, Inc., 10371 N. Oracle Road, Suite 205, Tucson, AZ 85737-9392 or [editor@wellbeingjournal.com](mailto:editor@wellbeingjournal.com). See [www.wellbeingjournal.com](http://www.wellbeingjournal.com) for guidelines.

The WELL BEING JOURNAL (ISSN 1559-4955) is published 6 times per year at 10371 N. Oracle Rd. Suite 205, Tucson, AZ 85737. Periodicals Postage Paid at Seattle, Washington.

Postmaster: send address changes to *Well Being Journal*, 10371 N. Oracle Rd. Suite 205, Tucson, AZ 85737.

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# UP FRONT

## A Note from the Editor

QUANTUM PHYSICISTS SAY SOMETHING unseen, some cosmic order, maintains the well-being of the physical universe. Let's dream and focus on ideals that demonstrate this universal theme of well-being in daily life. The sun shines every day, there is air to breathe and foods to sustain us, and billions of people are working on improvements globally.

Some argue, "Well, okay, but there are hard things taking place and then we all die." True, but many die gracefully, having maintained good health throughout their lives and feeling complete with their relationships and accomplishments, and satisfied with the compassion with which they lived. You can focus on what is wanted rather than on the problem, and live a long, happy life.

Consider that every physical body, despite almost any disease condition, can return to its natural state of well-being. However, too much unmanaged stress perpetuates adverse conditions in the body. It's wise to be careful what you focus upon and be discerning about what you watch on TV or read in the news, because stressful thoughts create stress hormones. It's preferable to focus continually on the beauty in life and the improvements you want; you get to choose what you think. Perhaps incorporate Yoga into your routine, as Margie King suggests in the following pages.

Bailey O'Brien's story in this issue is more evidence that the body can return to its natural state of well-being despite disease conditions.

Bailey's physicians said she had cancer, but through nutrition, lifestyle changes, and assistance from caring health professionals, Bailey returned to health. Her experience inspired her to spread this hope to others.

Is it service to others in some way, or just self-concern that supports our ideals?

How do you create more well-being in the world? What about living in the clarity of mind that comes from appreciating the gifts of life no matter what is transpiring? Monisha Vasa, MD, explores this question. Teach children to appreciate, she writes, and their vision shifts toward what is working

rather than what isn't. Children are the future adults who will create a new world.

Let's be so bold as to dream a dream where we feel well-being as the basis of life. We can look for signs of it peeking out from within hidden nooks everywhere. We can find something to appreciate everywhere, no matter the condition. Δ

—S.M.

Upcoming in the next issue: a personal story of healing breast cancer naturally; impact of avoiding

nightshade vegetables on arthritis; dental health and a comparison of brushing and flossing, vs. eating nutrient-dense foods; an expert discussion about death and the end of life; and stress, is it a choice? Oh, and so much more!

*"Consider that every physical body, despite almost any disease condition, can return to its natural state of well-being."*



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# Nutrient-Dense Foods Activate Crucial Protein

By Alvin Danenberg, DDS

**NRF2** IS NOT JUST A FEW random letters with a number attached. Nrf2 actually means something—something important. For those inquisitive minds that like scientific names, Nrf2 stands for nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2. Actually, Nrf2 is critical for your health. I will describe what this strange “word” is and how it becomes a powerhouse for your body.

Nrf2 is a protein—but a very specific protein called a transcription factor. As a transcription factor, it lives in the cytoplasm of the human cell, and it is ultimately responsible for sending genetic information from the DNA located in the nucleus of the cell to the RNA, which then creates chemicals that help cells perform many health-promoting functions.

The DNA is the unique biological formula for each of us. Every cell in our body (except red blood cells) contains in its nucleus this architectural script for the entire body. There are approximately 25,000 genes in the human DNA. Nrf2 assists more than 500 of those genes to function in ways that increase antioxidant activities, produce anti-inflammatory effects, stimulate mitochondrial biogenesis, improve mitochondrial function, trigger death of damaged cells, and remove toxic material.

Recently, a great deal of research has uncovered Nrf2’s ability to facilitate detoxification and excretion of both organic pollutants and toxic metals. This is critical in light of our repeated exposures to these toxins. However, much of what Nrf2 does and how it works are still being discovered.

In order for Nrf2 to function properly, an activator must awaken it. Without an activator, Nrf2 is stored quietly in each cell without benefit to the cell. Once Nrf2 is activated, it moves to the nucleus of the cell to begin its communication with the DNA.

Current research has identified some of the activators that will awaken Nrf2. The majority of these activators turn out to be various nutrient-dense foods, moderate exercise, low-level oxidative stress (hormesis), and caloric restriction (intermittent fasting).

Once activation has occurred, Nrf2 has been shown to prevent and treat a large number of chronic inflammatory conditions, including various cardiovascular, kidney, lung, and liver diseases; cancer (prevention only); diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and obesity; sepsis; autoimmune conditions; inflammatory bowel disease; HIV/AIDS; and epilepsy.

Modern diets throughout the world cannot provide

the necessary nutrients to activate Nrf2 effectively. However, diets like the Paleo diet are effective in activating it. Some of the more powerful nutrient activators are:

- Olives
- Sweet potatoes (especially purple sweet potatoes)
- Tomatoes
- Leafy, dark green vegetables
- DHA and EPA from fatty fish
- Garlic
- Onions
- Cruciferous vegetables

*“Nrf2 has been shown to prevent and treat a large number of chronic inflammatory diseases.”*

Martin L. Pall and Stephen Levine, in a paper titled “Nrf2, a master regulator of detoxification and also antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and other cytoprotective mechanisms, is raised by health promoting factors,” published in *Acta Physiologica Sinica*, February 25, 2015, review the recent research surrounding Nrf2. They looked at 141 peer-reviewed studies. The entire article is well worth reading. In their summary, they make the following statement, “We may be on the verge of a new literature on health effects of Nrf2 which may well become the most extraordinary therapeutic and most extraordinary preventive breakthrough in the history of medicine.” Δ

This article is adapted for *Well Being Journal* from the original article at <http://drdanenberg.com/nrf2-is-not-a-new-password>.

ALVIN DANENBERG, DDS, has been practicing periodontics since 1974 with an emphasis on saving teeth and creating a healthy mouth. In 2010, he began to use the Laser Assisted New Attachment Procedure (LANAP) as a primary treatment for periodontal disease because it eliminates the need for scalpels or sutures. In 2013, he incorporated evidence-based research on ancestral nutrition and healthy gut bacteria into treatment plans for all his patients, and in 2014, he earned the designation of Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner. More at <http://drdanenberg.com>.

## Epigenetic Benefits of Exercise

It is common knowledge that exercise can improve our health, but only recently have some of the mechanisms behind its benefits been uncovered. Modern science reveals that epigenetics—the ability of factors outside the gene to influence genetic expression without changing the DNA blueprint—plays a major role. Exercise, along with other lifestyle factors such as diet, alters the methylation patterns of our genes, influencing the way they respond to biochemical signals and the type of proteins they express. In vigorous exercise, muscular contraction results in immediate changes in the methylation patterns of genes in the muscle cells, and this appears to play a role in the genetic reprogramming of the muscles for increased strength. Other genes activated by acute periods of exercise seem to promote increased fat metabolism. A recent study conducted in Sweden found that endurance training can also have positive epigenetic effects, inducing methylation changes that benefit energy metabolism, insulin response, and muscle inflammation. Both endurance training and high-intensity exercise can promote good health by normalizing glucose and insulin levels, and thus helping us avoid chronic degenerative diseases. However, high-intensity interval training—a strategy that alternates periods of short, intense exercise with less-intense recovery periods—has been shown to be more effective than endurance training at promoting these positive health effects.

—Adapted from “How Exercise Affects Your Genes, and More,” by Joseph Mercola, DO, <http://fitness.mercola.com>.



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# Pesticides & Children's Health

## —The Myth of Safe Pesticides

By Andre Leu

A LARGE BODY OF published, peer-reviewed scientific research shows that pesticide exposure in unborn and growing children is linked to:

- Cancers
- Thyroid disorders
- Immune system problems
- Lower IQs
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Lack of physical coordination
- Loss of temper—anger management issues
- Bipolar and schizophrenia spectrum disorders
- Depression
- Digestive system problems
- Cardiovascular disease
- Reproductive problems (in adults)
- Deformities of the genito-urinary systems
- Changes to metabolic systems, resulting in conditions including childhood obesity and diabetes

### **The Special Needs of the Developing Fetus and Newborn**

Many scientific researchers have expressed concern that the current pesticide testing methodologies are grossly inadequate for children. The US President's Cancer Panel (USPCP) 2008-2009 report, written by eminent scientists and medical specialists from the US Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes





of Health, and the National Cancer Institute, stated, “[Children] are at special risk because of their smaller body mass and rapid physical development, both of which magnify their vulnerability to known or suspected carcinogens, including radiation.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition, according to the USPCP, “Chemicals typically are administered when laboratory animals are in their adolescence, a methodology that fails to assess the impact of in utero, childhood, and lifelong exposures.”<sup>1</sup>

This is a very important issue given that around 80 percent of cancers are from environmental causes, including pesticide exposure. The panel reported that “approximately 40 chemicals classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as known, probable, or possible human carcinogens, are used in EPA-registered pesticides now on the market.”<sup>1</sup>

This issue is critical, as there is a large body of published science showing that the fetus and the newborn are continually being exposed to numerous chemicals. The USPCP stated, “Some of these chemicals are found in maternal blood, placental tissue, and breast milk samples from pregnant women and mothers who recently gave birth. These findings indicate that chemical contaminants are being passed on to the next generation, both prenatally and during breastfeeding.”<sup>1</sup>

The USPCP not only expressed concern about the levels of these chemical contaminants, but also pointed out that this issue is being ignored by regulators because of the critical lack of knowledge and researchers. “Numerous environmental contaminants can cross the placental barrier; to a disturbing extent, babies are born ‘pre-polluted.’” Children also can be harmed by genetic or other damage resulting from environmental exposures sustained by the mother (and, in some cases, the father). There is a critical lack of knowledge and appreciation of environmental threats to children’s health and a severe shortage of researchers and clinicians trained in children’s environmental health.”<sup>1</sup>

A number of studies show the link between chemical exposure—particularly to pesticides—and the increase of cancer in children. The USPCP report states, “Cancer incidence in US children under 20 years of age has increased.”<sup>1</sup>

The information from USPCP shows that current regulatory systems have failed to protect unborn and growing children from exposure to a massive cocktail of toxic pesticides. This has many serious implications, especially the increase in a range of serious health issues in both children and adults.

### **Developmental Neurotoxicity**

Scientific research shows that many pesticides affect the normal development of the nervous system in fetuses and children. The brain contains the largest

## **Roundup Probably Causes Cancer, WHO Report Says**

Monsanto is the developer of the herbicide Roundup, one of the world’s most widely used weed killers and the most popular in the US.

Roundup’s active ingredient, glyphosate, has just been “classified as probably carcinogenic to humans” in a new report from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the World Health Organization’s France-based cancer research division. Glyphosate has also been linked to other health issues, including Parkinson’s disease and fatal kidney disease.

The report, which focused on agricultural use of the weed killer, stated that traces of glyphosate were found in the blood and urine of farmworkers who use the herbicide, slightly increasing their risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Researchers also found that traces of glyphosate can be detected in food, water, and air after the weed killer has been sprayed.

In fact, according to a separate study from the US Geological Survey that focused on Mississippi’s highly fertile Delta agricultural region, the herbicide was present in 75 percent of air and rainfall test samples.

Since the release of the WHO report, the US Environmental Protection Agency, which approved Monsanto’s request for increased tolerance levels for glyphosate in 2013, said it would consider the agency’s evaluation.

Adapted from “Monsanto’s Roundup—Most Popular Weed Killer in U.S.—‘Probably’ Causes Cancer, WHO Report Says,” by Lorraine Chow published on <http://ecowatch.com> March 23, 2015.

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*“These findings indicate that chemical contaminants are being passed on to the next generation, both prenatally and during breastfeeding.”*

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collection of nerve cells, and there are several scientific studies showing that when the fetus and the newborn are exposed to minute amounts of these pesticides, below the current limits set by regulatory authorities, they can significantly alter brain function.<sup>2</sup>

Researchers at Duke University Medical Center found that the developing fetus and the newborn are particularly vulnerable to amounts of pesticides lower than the levels currently permitted by regulatory authorities around the world. Their studies show that the fetus and the newborn possess lower concentrations of protective serum proteins than adults.<sup>2</sup> A major consequence is developmental neurotoxicity, where the poison damages the developing nervous system. This damage interferes with the normal development of the brain and other parts of the nervous system, such as auditory nerves, optic nerves, and the autonomous nervous system, resulting in lower IQs, ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, lack of physical coordination, anger management issues, bipolar and schizophrenia spectrum disorders, and depression, as well as problems with eyesight and hearing.

This means that contact with chemicals at levels well below the current permitted residue quantities in food can harm the fetus and the breast-feeding child, even if the mother shows no side effects from the contact. Eating food with pesticide residues can harm young children, as they are still developing their nervous systems.

### **Brain Abnormalities and IQ Reductions in Children**

Studies conducted independently by researchers at the Columbia University Center for Children's Environmental Health, the University of California, Berkeley, and the Mount Sinai School of Medicine found that fetal exposure to small amounts of organophosphate pesticides caused a range of brain abnormalities that resulted in children with reduced IQs and shortened attention spans and who were more vulnerable to ADHD.<sup>3-5</sup>

Parents should have considerable concern that the studies found no evidence of a lower-limit threshold of

exposure to organophosphates in the observed adverse impact on intelligence. This means that even very low levels of exposure could lead to reductions in a child's intelligence.

A study by Rauh et al., published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, has confirmed the findings of the previous studies. The researchers used MRI scans, which revealed a large range of visible brain abnormalities present in children who had been exposed to chlorpyrifos (CPF) in utero through normal, non-occupational uses.<sup>6</sup>

Exposure to CPF in the womb, even at normal levels, resulted in "significant abnormalities in morphological measures of the cerebral surface associated with higher prenatal CPF exposure" in a sample of forty children between five and eleven years old.<sup>6</sup> The researchers stated that the current regulatory safety limits and testing methodologies are inadequate for determining safe exposure levels for children.

It is important to note that most children are exposed to pesticides in utero by the residues in their mothers' diets. Some of the most concerning studies show that pesticide damage can be passed on to the next generation. Not only are the offspring born with damage to the nervous system, the reproductive system, and other organs, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren can be, as well.<sup>7-9</sup>

In a 2012 study, pregnant rats and mice were exposed to the fungicide vinclozolin during the period when the fetus was developing reproductive organs. Researchers found a significant increase in spermatogenic cell defects, testicular abnormalities, prostate abnormalities, kidney abnormalities, and polycystic ovarian disease in subsequent generations.<sup>7</sup>

Another study showed that when pregnant rats were exposed to a combination of permethrin (a common insecticide) and DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, the most common insect repellent), an increase in pubertal abnormalities, testis disease, and ovarian diseases (primordial follicle loss and polycystic ovarian disease) were seen in subsequent generations.<sup>8</sup>

The critical issue from these two studies is that small

*"A major consequence is developmental neurotoxicity, where the poison damages the developing nervous system. This damage interferes with the normal development of the brain and other parts of the nervous systems."*

exposures to pesticides at critical times in fetal development can cause multiple diseases that are passed on to future generations. It means that pregnant women eating food with minute levels of pesticides could be inadvertently exposing their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to permanent damage to their reproductive systems and other organs.

This study is particularly distressing because DEET is the most common repellent used for mosquitoes and other insects. It is widely used on children and pregnant women.

### Endocrine Disruption

Children are more vulnerable than adults to the effects of endocrine disruptors because their tissues and organs are still developing and are reliant on balanced hormone signals to develop in orderly sequences. Small disruptions in hormone signals by endocrine-disrupting chemicals can significantly alter the way these body parts and metabolic systems will develop. These effects will not only last a lifetime, but can be passed on to future generations.<sup>10-13</sup>

More than sixty recognized international experts worked throughout 2012 to contribute to a meta-analysis by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) to ensure that the compilation was up to date with current scientific knowledge on endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs), including pesticides. They found that “there are particularly vulnerable periods during fetal and postnatal life when EDCs alone, or in mixtures, have strong and often irreversible effects on developing organs, whereas exposure of adults causes lesser or no effects. Consequently, there is now a growing probability that maternal, fetal, and childhood exposure to chemical pollutants play a larger role in the etiology of many endocrine diseases and disorders of the thyroid, immune, digestive, cardiovascular, reproductive, and metabolic systems (including childhood obesity and diabetes) than previously thought possible.”<sup>10</sup>

The fetus is most vulnerable during the times when genes are turned on to develop specific organs. Small amounts of hormones provide genes the signals to start developing various body parts and systems, such as the reproductive tract, nervous system, brain, immune system, hormone systems, limbs, and so on. Small disruptions in these hormone signals can significantly alter the way these body parts and systems will develop.



Senior MIT researcher Stephanie Seneff suspects that, unless something is done about it, glyphosate toxicity from the overuse of Monsanto's pesticide Roundup on our food supply will result in half of the population of children having autism by the year 2050.

—Full article: <http://trueactivist.com/half-of-all-children-will-be-autistic-by-2050-according-to-mit-scientist>

## Natural Bug Repellents as an Alternative to DEET

There are natural insect repellents that are generally considered much safer than synthetic ones. Most of these repellents are derived from oils in plants. Most notable are essential oils—plant oils that are obtained by distillation and have the characteristic fragrance of the plant from which they are extracted. Some of these oils produce strong odors that are offensive to mosquitoes and other insects and prevent them from landing and biting. Oils reported to possess insect-repellent properties include: clove; citronella; eucalyptus; lemon eucalyptus; cinnamon; castor; rosemary; lemongrass; cedar; peppermint; geranium; thyme; and neem.

**Clove Oil:** Clove oil has a long history of use in dentistry as a topical anesthetic and antiseptic. The oil is applied directly to the gums to ease toothaches, reduce inflammation, and kill infection. Clove oil has very potent antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal properties, which makes it useful as a disinfectant and antiseptic. It is also an effective insecticide and repellent.

In an attempt to discover the most potent natural insect repellents, researchers in Thailand tested thirty-eight essential oils with reported repellent properties. The investigators tested the oils at three different concentrations under laboratory conditions using human subjects. The tested oils were applied at 10 percent, 50 percent,

*Continued on following page*

## Natural Bug Repellents as an Alternative to DEET

*Continued from previous page*

and 100 percent concentrations. Most of the oils could not match the long-term effectiveness of DEET. The most effective oils evaluated in the study were citronella, patchouli, clove, and a Thai herb called makaen (*Zanthoxylum limonella*). At a concentration of 100 percent, these four oils provided two hours of complete repellency. Clove oil gave the longest complete protection, up to four hours, against the three mosquito species tested.

In a follow-up study, the researchers tested the mosquito-repellent properties of gel products containing either 20 percent clove oil or a mixture of 10 percent clove oil and 10 percent makaen oil. The oil mixture showed complete protection for four hours and an efficacy of 95.7 percent after five hours. The 20 percent clove oil provided full protection for four hours and 86.8 percent repellency after five hours. In comparison, a DEET-containing product showed similar protection for up to four hours but dropped to 82.7 percent repellency after five hours. Each of these three products gave full protection for the first four hours, with the two essential oil products outperforming the DEET product afterwards.

—For more information on natural insect repellents, see the full article “Natural and Chemical Insect Repellents,” by Bruce Fife, ND, in *Well Being Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 4. Available in print and digital editions at <http://wellbeingjournal.com>.

“This does not diminish [EDCs’] importance [in adults], but contrasts with their effects in the fetus and neonate where a hormone can have permanent effects in triggering early developmental events, such as cell proliferation or differentiation. Hormones acting during embryonic development can cause some structures to develop (e.g., male reproductive tract) or cause others to diminish (e.g., some sex-related brain regions). Once hormone action has taken place at these critical times during development, the changes produced will last a lifetime.”<sup>10</sup>

The actions of EDCs on the endocrine and physiological systems’ development in fetuses are considered to be programming events; they set how these systems will function in adults. The WHO and UNEP study found that, in some countries, up to 40 percent of young men have low semen quality. The study also found an increase in genital malformations in baby boys, such as non-descending testes and penile malformations. Adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as preterm birth and low birth weight, have increased, as have children’s neurobehavioral disorders that are associated with thyroid disruption. Girls are developing breasts at a younger age; this is considered a risk factor for breast cancer later in life. Breast, endometrial, ovarian, prostate, testicular, and thyroid cancers, all of which are endocrine system-related cancers, are increasing.<sup>10-13</sup>

### Protecting Our Children

Currently, the only way for consumers to avoid synthetic pesticides is to eat organically grown food. Most children are exposed to pesticides from the residues in food, either directly, by eating food with pesticide residues, or



Jane Dever developed GMOs at Bayer CropScience but now breeds organic cotton varieties at Texas A&M University’s AgriLife Research. It’s rare that a plant breeder goes from developing genetically modified crops at a major biotechnology company to breeding varieties for organic and non-GMO farmers. Jane Dever, associate professor at Texas A&M’s AgriLife Research and Extension Center, is unique in having done just that. As global cotton breeding manager for Bayer CropScience, Dever put GM traits into cotton plants. Now she focuses on keeping GM traits out of organic cotton varieties. Dever prefers the latter role. “I am just very comfortable here,” she says. “This is a great opportunity to work for Texas cotton producers and the more than 90 percent of US organic cotton producers located on the Texas High Plains.”

—Full story at: <http://non-gmoreport.com/articles/june-2014/genetic-engineer-becomes-organic-cotton-breeder.php>

by absorbing the residues from their mothers' diet through the placenta and breast milk. Several scientific studies show that eating organic food is the best way to protect children, as most pesticide exposure comes from eating food from conventional farming systems.

A study published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* found that children who eat organic fruits, vegetables, and juices can significantly lower the levels of organophosphate pesticides in their bodies. The University of Washington researchers who conducted the study concluded, "The dose estimates suggest that consumption of organic fruits, vegetables, and juice can reduce children's exposure levels from above to below the US Environmental Protection Agency's current guidelines, thereby shifting exposures from a range of uncertain risk to a range of negligible risk. Consumption of organic produce appears to provide a relatively simple way for parents to reduce their children's exposure to OP [organophosphate] pesticides."<sup>14</sup>

In a 2006 study, researchers found that the urinary concentrations of the specific metabolites for malathion and chlorpyrifos decreased to undetectable levels immediately after the introduction of organic diets and remained undetectable until the conventional diets were reintroduced. Researchers from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia; the University of Washington in Seattle; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia, stated, "In conclusion, we were able to demonstrate that an organic diet provides a dramatic and immediate protective effect against exposures to organophosphorus pesticides that are commonly used in agricultural production. We also concluded that these children were most likely exposed to these organophosphorus pesticides exclusively through their diet."<sup>15</sup> Δ

ANDRE LEU is the author of *The Myths of Safe Pesticides* and the President of IFOAM—Organics International, the world umbrella body for the organic sector. IFOAM has around 800 member organizations in 125 countries.

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## Does Dirt Make You Happy?

There's no denying that standing in the garden and picking the first summer vegetable gives you a good feeling. But is there a scientific reason that getting your hands dirty makes you feel good?

Researchers have shown that certain bacteria found in soil may play a role in the regulation of emotional behavior. The study showed that these bacteria lead to suppressed inflammation, which may be helpful in preventing or treating diseases related to excess inflammation, such as asthma. They may also help with major depressive disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder.

It's not surprising that we may benefit from microorganisms in the soil, given that we need them to live. The human body is filled with microbes, most of them living in the gut. Many of these organisms originate from outside the body, which may explain why being exposed to a natural environment containing animals feels so good; it's a resource for the good bacteria we need to survive.

How much exposure do we need to soil and its bacteria in order to reap the rewards? Scientists aren't sure yet, but they do know that just breathing (or eating) certain organisms found in dirt confers health benefits.

Now you can feel good about going outside and getting your hands dirty.

—Adapted from "Does Dirt Make You Happy?" by Anna Brones, published at <http://modernfarmer.com> on August 27, 2014.

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## Direct from the Farm

At age 27, with a newborn baby girl, single mom Ashley Tyrner became a food stamp recipient. She moved to New York City and landed a job in the fashion industry, where she excelled. Three years later, Ashley decided to venture into a field she loved: helping others understand the strong impact food has on our lives. Her mission was to make organic produce accessible and affordable by bringing it right to the customer's doorstep. This inspiration led her to create Farmbox Direct.

With the click of a button, Farmbox Direct delivers customizable boxes of USDA certified, 100 percent organic produce right to your door. Ashley personally engages with every farmer, artisan, and vendor to ensure that Farmbox Direct offers foods only from local and organic sources.

Ashley started Farmbox Direct with a vision of how food could be. She was raised on a Midwest farm in a family of farmers, and she understands how much care could go into our foods by those who grow it. She wanted to ensure that her daughter, and all children, have access to fresh, organic produce.

Farmbox Direct is now available nationally, so check the website at <http://farmboxdirect.com> to see if it is offered in your area.



# Grassfed: Farm Wins Award for Welfare of Animals

**T**HE L6 CATTLE RANCH in Corona, New Mexico, is the first sustainable farming business in the US to be Certified Grassfed by AWA (Animal Welfare Approved). The AWA certification is the only one in the United States and Canada that guarantees food products come from animals fed a 100 percent grass and forage diet, raised outdoors on pasture or range for their entire lives, and managed according to the highest welfare and environmental standards on an independent family farm.

Sharie and Bill Leibold, owners of the 4,000-acre L6 Cattle Ranch, have been producing strictly grassfed and finished Angus-Jersey cross beef since 2006. Although the Leibolds were already certified by AWA in 2009 for their high welfare and environmental management practices, they gained the Certified Grassfed by AWA status for their grassfed cattle herd when the new program was launched in January 2015.

Sharie said, “We decided to apply for Certified Grassfed by AWA status for our grassfed cattle because AWA has a great reputation.... Both AWA and L6 Cattle Ranch are committed to making sure we treat our animals with the highest welfare standards. Our customers are primarily concerned that animals are raised naturally and treated humanely, so the Certified Grassfed by AWA logo will mean a lot. It will give our customers confidence that the food they give their families is the highest quality grassfed beef.”

As consumers wake up to the damaging impact that intensive farming is having on health, the environment, and animal welfare, many are seeking truly sustainable alternatives—including grassfed meat. According to recent research, demand for grassfed beef has increased by 25 to 30 percent every year over the last decade.<sup>1</sup>

But while demand for grassfed meat is skyrocketing, not all grassfed certifications are meeting consumer expectations—and some continue to permit highly questionable practices. Under the USDA Grassfed label, for example, farmers can confine their cattle on dirt feedlots for long periods outside the growing season, or use growth hormones and sub-therapeutic antibiotics, and yet still market the beef as grassfed—just as long as they feed the animals cut grass or forage.

AWA’s new Certified Grassfed label is the only grassfed program in North America to guarantee that ruminant animals are raised outdoors on pasture for their entire lives, with an entirely grass-and-forage diet; that animals are raised according to the highest animal welfare and environmental standards in the US and Canada; and that there is high-welfare handling, transport, and slaughter of animals—including an annual review of slaughter facilities.

AWA Director of Communications Emily Lancaster Moose says, “No other grassfed label can match the breadth, integrity, and transparency offered by AWA’s practical and achievable Certified Grassfed standards and certification procedures. We’re proud to support farmers like Bill and Sharie Leibold and to help them promote their high-quality grassfed meat and sustainable farming practices to the public.”

To learn more about the AWA Certified Grassfed label, visit <http://animalwelfareapproved.org/standards/awa-grassfed>. For more about L6 Cattle Ranch grassfed beef, visit <http://l6cattleranches.com>.

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# Simple One-Pot Gardening

By Cinead McTernan

**Y**OU DO NOT NEED to own a wicker basket or rent a community plot to grow your own fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Picking a homegrown tomato straight off the vine or unearthing a carrot is not just for those who have hectares of space and very green fingers. If you have only a small patio, balcony, or roof garden, you can have plenty of success with container-grown crops.

Fruits, vegetables, and herbs will thrive in pots if given the right position and a bit of care and attention, especially during watering and feeding. These days there are even cultivars of fruits and vegetables that have been bred specifically to cope with growing in pots and still provide bumper crops.

Even if you have room for only one pot, you can still enjoy the experience of growing a crop, caring for it, and then harvesting it. And then, of course, you get to eat it, freshly picked and in season—just as mother nature intended. Going outside to see what crop is ready to pick is always a thrill, and eating it the same day is the cherry on top.

The unbeatable taste of freshly picked, homegrown produce is a good reason why growing your own is such a popular pastime, but there are other considerations and benefits, too. Home growing may be a reaction to

the number of air miles involved in stocking our supermarket shelves; or in defiance of supermarket buyers who assume we want to buy strawberries out of season; or because tasteless, characterless apples are all that are on offer in late summer and autumn, rather than one of our delicious heritage varieties. Growing at home also means you know exactly what has—or, more to the point, has not—been sprayed on the produce you are feeding your family. Of course, it is also a huge amount of fun, and the ever-growing community plot waiting lists are testament to this general enthusiasm for getting dirt under our fingernails.

Homegrown produce may look a bit more knobbly than its supermarket counterparts, but the taste is far superior. With the promise of delicious crops on your doorstep, deciding what exactly to grow can pose a dilemma. Some growers suggest sticking to favorite varieties, others recommend growing produce that is expensive to buy, and experienced growers champion the idea of experimenting with unusual crops. All great advice, but it still can be overwhelming once you start looking at seed catalogs or wandering around your local nursery or garden center in the hope of picking up ideas.

When space is an issue, the reality is that you need



to be strict about what you can actually grow. Combining the main ingredients of a recipe in the same container is a nifty solution. This also offers the bonus of harvesting the crops all together to make the dish, then inviting friends and family around to enjoy it. Most crops do well in pots—albeit in generously sized ones that give the plants plenty of room to grow—and numerous dwarf or compact varieties have been bred to thrive in a container.

Herbs and salad vegetables are ideal for smaller containers and work well on windowsills and balconies. A good rule of thumb is to stick to crops that like the same growing conditions (such as soil or compost type, amount of sunlight, and temperatures) and will be ready to harvest at the same time. Some recipes call for herbs with the vegetables or fruits; these can be an issue to grow together because of the varying amounts of water and food the different plants need. Growing herbs in their own pots within the larger container allows you to grow them in a free-draining compost with extra grit. You can then keep thirstier crops well watered by, for example, using an upturned water bottle to direct-water the roots.

Certain crops, such as potatoes, are better suited to being grown in their own pots; otherwise, their foliage may swamp the entire growing space and smother another plant trying to share the space. Container-grown vegetables are useful if you need to have a degree of flexibility in your garden. If the plot is small, chances are that the ability to move things about will be helpful, whether to make room for a table when friends come around or to keep your patio looking its best each season.

Most pots are moveable—very big and heavy pots can be moved with the help of coasters—so if you want to change their positions or introduce seasonal containers to maintain a year-round display, this is easily done. Moveable containers provide a great opportunity to make the most of growing perennial tender crops, such as citrus or chives, which you can grow in containers that can be brought indoors and overwintered. Container growing also helps to restrict vigorous plants that may otherwise overpower your borders, such as mint and comfrey. Δ

This excerpt is adapted for *Well Being Journal* from the book *One-Pot Gourmet Gardener* by Cinead McTernan, published by Quarto Publishing 2015. Copyright © Frances Lincoln Limited 2015; text copyright © Cinead McTernan 2015.

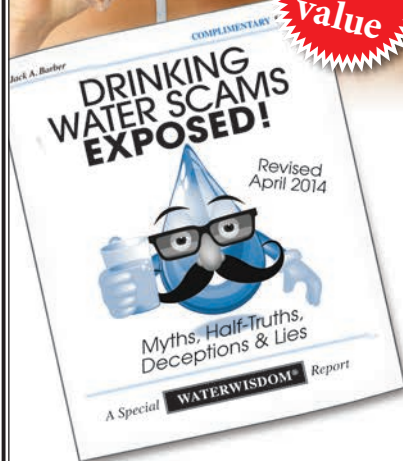
CINEAD McTERNAN is a horticulturally trained editor of *The Simple Things* and *The Edible Garden* magazines, and deputy editor of *The English Garden*. She has previously worked on BBC Gardener's World. She calls Bristol, UK, home.

*School would be better if teachers weren't so rigid. We are all different individuals. Also, adults could make the world a better place by picking up litter.*

—Elly B., a nine-year-old girl

*“Homegrown produce may look a bit more knobbly than its supermarket counterparts, but the taste is far superior.”*

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# When Healthy Isn't: The Risks of High-

By Sally K. Norton, MPH

SOMETIMES OUR SOLUTIONS create new problems. This is the case with antibiotic drugs, which, after 60 years of heavy use, have left the human microbiome in dismal shape. We are just beginning to get a sense of the scope and severity of the downstream effects from the widespread dysbiosis created by antibiotic use.

Our gut flora problem is contributing to another health paradox that may be in play for some who frequently eat “health foods” like nuts, spinach, and whole grains. Such foods have the power to reduce the availability of nutrients, especially minerals, because of naturally occurring chemicals that are part of the defense system of plants and their seeds. Examples of known antinutrients in plant foods include phytic acid, lectins, phenolic compounds (tannins), saponins, and amylase and protease enzyme inhibitors. Another, less familiar, antinutrient is oxalic acid, often found in the form of oxalates.

Oxalates are tiny organic salts that form when oxalic acid is bound to mineral elements, such as potassium, magnesium, and calcium. In foods, oxalic acid primarily occurs as sodium oxalate, potassium oxalate, or calcium oxalate.<sup>1</sup>

Oxalates ingested from plant foods are especially good at “locking up” minerals in food. They grab and

hold nutritionally valuable minerals, such as calcium, zinc, and copper, in the digestive tract, making it difficult for the body to absorb them in a useful form. Some dietary oxalates are themselves absorbed into the blood stream, where they can also bind minerals already in the body. This two-pronged mineral depletion can inhibit growth, bone development, and tissue repair.<sup>2</sup>

Oxalate molecules also cause problems by directly affecting cell physiology.<sup>3,4</sup> Oxalate molecules are highly reactive and damage cell structures and cell function. They deplete glutathione, which is the key antioxidant produced by cells, and trigger oxidative stress. If not kept in check, oxidative stress leads to damaged DNA, cell injury, and cell death, promoting aging and disease. The body has no way to disarm or transform oxalates and must excrete them, a job left primarily to the kidneys.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, oxalates cause damage to kidney cells (and other cells) as they exit.<sup>6</sup> Oxalates may be one reason that kidney function declines with age.<sup>7</sup> Many people develop kidney stones, which are made of calcium oxalate. Kidney disease has grown more common over the last 40 years, especially in women and children.<sup>8</sup> Over half of US adults age 30 and older are predicted to eventually develop chronic kidney disease.<sup>9</sup>



# -Oxalate Foods

Changes in our diets are a key cause, including lower intake of minerals (especially calcium and magnesium), higher intakes of fructose and glucose, and greater year-round availability of high-oxalate foods.<sup>10,11</sup> Routine use of pharmaceutical drugs and other toxic chemicals also plays a role in the rise of kidney disease.<sup>12</sup>

The kidneys must be at their best to completely remove oxalates from the blood. Some of the oxalates not excreted in urine may be excreted via the colon, but otherwise they attach to cells throughout the body, where, even in very small quantities, they can disrupt normal cell function in nerves, glands, bones, eyes, heart, and other areas.<sup>13</sup> They can gradually accumulate in tissues outside of the kidneys either as sharp microcrystals that are irritating and inflammatory or in non-crystalline lipid-oxalate bonds.<sup>14</sup> These toxic accumulations don't always cause dramatic symptoms, but they do play a role in the current epidemic of inflammatory diseases and disorders. Oxalates can cause fragile bones, pain, fatigue, hormone imbalances, joint problems, restless

legs, sleep disorders, headaches, nerve damage, and other complaints often associated with aging. You don't have to be old to run into trouble with oxalates, however.<sup>15</sup> Oxalates may be a factor in autism, and perhaps other brain function problems.<sup>16</sup>

The body can move oxalate into the colon for disposal. There are several strains of friendly bacteria that can digest some oxalate when deprived of other food sources, but overeating oxalate can harm them, especially lactobacillus acidophilus. One gut bacteria, oxalobacter formigenes, depends completely on oxalate for energy. If the colon is colonized by oxalate-eating bacteria, the transfer of oxalate into the gut can successfully eliminate oxalate from the body.<sup>17</sup> However, oxalate-eating microbes can be killed by antibiotics. Even without antibiotic exposure, these microbes may not colonize in some people. Deliberate colonization with oxalate-eating bacteria is difficult to achieve. Without these bacteria (or adequate free calcium) present in the colon, oxalates will flow back into the body. Thus the

*“Oxalates can cause fragile bones, pain, fatigue, hormone imbalances, joint problems, restless legs, sleep problems, headaches, nerve damage, and other complaints often associated with aging.”*

## Non-Dietary Sources of Oxalate

Diet is not the only source of oxalates and oxalic acid. Three other sources are:

1. Human metabolism—especially in liver cells that make oxalate from glyoxylate, glycine, and hydroxyproline, and by converting ascorbic acid (individual variations in the amount of oxalates produced internally have a genetic component and are influenced by nutritional factors, including vitamin C intake); internal production of oxalates is elevated when one is deficient in vitamin B6.<sup>35</sup>
2. Fungus in the body such as aspergillus, penicillium, and perhaps candida.<sup>36</sup>
3. Accumulated body stores of oxalate that may be released back into circulation for excretion by the kidneys. This mobilization of body stores in acquired oxalosis has not been rigorously studied, but is reported in medical case reports and by people on a low-oxalate diet. During episodes of clearing oxalates from tissues, a person who is enjoying an overall improvement in health may experience acute, temporary relapses of various symptoms and sometimes new transitory symptoms.

—Sally K. Norton, MPH  
For references, see page 24.

### CHELATION THERAPY

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excretion of oxalate via the colon is undermined, increasing the odds of oxalate accumulation and kidney stones.

Oxalates, over-the-counter drugs, and other antinutrients can diminish the health and function of the digestive system, specifically in the intestinal tract.<sup>18</sup> If you already have digestive problems, oxalates can make things worse. And anyone with altered digestive function is at risk for excessive

*“For some people, regular use of high-oxalate foods can cause tissue deposits of oxalate to develop.”*

absorption (>10%) of ingested oxalates. This includes people with celiac disease, small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO), inflammatory bowel or Crohn’s disease, irritable bowel syndrome, pancreatic insufficiency, poor fat digestion (steatorrhea), ileal disease, a history of intestinal resection or bariatric surgery, or repeated or extended use of antibiotic drugs such as erythromycin, doxycycline, and Flagyl.<sup>19</sup>

Excessive absorption of oxalate occurs even in people without gastrointestinal disorders.<sup>20</sup> Increased oxalate absorption can quietly lead to kidney problems and oxalate accumulation throughout the body.<sup>21</sup> Even without intestinal problems, absorbed dietary oxalate may contribute as much as 67 percent of the oxalate excreted in the urine. (The body produces the rest as a waste product; see sidebar this page.)<sup>22</sup>

Oxalate accumulation in tissues (not due to a genetic defect) is called acquired oxalosis. Oxalates tend to accumulate in injured or degenerating tissues and prevent healing.<sup>23</sup> They are commonly found in the thyroid and have been detected in every tissue type, including arterial plaque.<sup>24</sup> Mild oxalosis is a progressive toxicity disease that has been given little attention by researchers or clinicians, among whom it is generally presumed to be rare or insignificant. For now, the science is focused on the kidneys, with

### Low-Oxalate Beverages

- Coffee
- Herbal Teas
- Mineral Water
- Kefir Water
- Apple Cider
- Apple Juice
- Cherry Juice
- Cranberry Juice
- Lemon Juice
- Lime Juice
- Orange Juice
- Pineapple Juice
- Milk
- Kefir
- Barley Water



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few serious investigations into the effects of oxalates on the rest of the body.<sup>25</sup> This gap leaves us without any meaningful prevention expertise, a path to diagnosis, or targeted therapy that can safely stop and reverse the disease, in whatever form it manifests.

No doubt, for some people, regular use of high-oxalate foods can cause tissue deposits of oxalate to develop. Patients with this problem may become chronic health seekers who don't respond sufficiently to treatments that do not address the oxalate issue. Perhaps they appear to live a healthy lifestyle and are dismissed as the "worried well." And indeed, without understanding the risks of high-oxalate foods, people in trouble with oxalosis have little chance of overcoming their health problems, which can be numerous.

It is easy to overlook the gradual accumulation of oxalates in the body because so few of us are aware of this possibility. Even some patients with known high-oxalate problems due to internal production of oxalate are described as "asymptomatic" in the medical literature. This means it can be hard to know if oxalates are causing damage to your health, especially in the early stages. Doctors are not taught to look for acquired oxalosis, and medicine lacks standardized testing. Yet anyone has the potential to get into trouble with oxalates. With my encouragement, my husband had been snacking on a small handful of nuts daily for a decade. For seven years, he suffered with worsening carpal tunnel symptoms, including daytime grip weakness and nighttime numbness. He was heading for surgery at the time we started our low-oxalate diet (for my arthritis), yet after eight weeks on the new nut-free and reduced oxalate diet, he didn't seem to need surgery. We did not initially connect the dietary change with the surprising reduction in his symptoms. He cast off his wrist braces; the grip weakness went away, and the remaining nighttime numbness became occasional, minor, and transitory. After a year and a half of low-oxalate eating, we both believe that the diet helped significantly in this happy outcome.

*"The idea of cutting back on dietary oxalates runs contrary to the current faith we have in unprocessed plant foods as "the solution" to our declining health in an era when commercial junk food has displaced fresh foods and home-cooked meals."*

Some common risk factors for acquired oxalosis include:

1. A diet consistently high in one or more high-oxalate foods, including soy, spinach, Swiss chard, potatoes, nuts, seeds, wheat bran, beans, dried fruit, chocolate, and buckwheat
2. Chronic digestive issues
3. A history of repeated or extended use of antibiotics (e.g., acne treatment)
4. Chronic aspergillus yeast infection
5. Mildly impaired kidney function
6. A family history of kidney problems, including but not limited to kidney stones<sup>26</sup>

My husband's only apparent risk factor was our diet.

Anyone with serious digestive issues or known kidney problems can benefit from a precautionary gradual switch to low-oxalate foods (see page 21) containing ample calcium. (Dietary

calcium lowers oxalate absorption.)<sup>27</sup> The idea of cutting back on dietary oxalates runs contrary to the current faith we have in unprocessed plant foods as "the solution" to our declining health in an era when commercial junk food has displaced fresh foods and home-cooked meals.

But many of today's food heroes, the ones that are said to be essential if we are to get control of our weight and avoid diabetes and heart disease, are problems for those who are susceptible to the poisonous effects of ingested oxalate. For example, many people are advised to remove milk (a low-oxalate food) from their diet and encouraged to use an almond beverage, which is high in oxalate. While commercially processed milk from conventionally raised animals can be difficult to digest and trigger allergy, fresh, unprocessed full-fat dairy from pastured animals is usually well tolerated, and may reverse dairy intolerance.

Switching away from dairy milk lowers the amount of calcium in the gastrointestinal tract. Ingested calcium can bind food oxalates into calcium oxalate, a form that is difficult to absorb and is likely to be excreted



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in the feces. Thus, less dairy in the diet may increase the amount of oxalate that is absorbed into the body. Also, increasing numbers of people are using gluten-free or low-carbohydrate flour substitutes that include almond, soy, and buckwheat flour; all are higher in oxalates than the foods they replace. In addition, vegetable juicing and green smoothies made with high-oxalate foods are heavily promoted in the media as a way to supercharge your health. Juicing increases oxalate absorption by lowering fiber and increasing the water content of a meal.<sup>28</sup>

*“I found this diet to be the only way for me to recover from a sleep disorder, arthritis, muscle pains, back pain, headaches, and fatigue.”*

Despite our present enthusiasm for spinach, nuts, and soy, our faith in these foods is unearned, given that researchers have warned about the nutritional problems presented by the oxalates in spinach since the 1930s.<sup>29</sup> There is no established maximum “safe” daily dose of dietary oxalates. Nor are there known and measurable indicators of individual differences in tolerance to dietary oxalates. We know that digestive disease and bariatric surgery increase susceptibility and ample calcium intake lowers oxalate absorption. Including sufficient citrate from lemon and lime juice (about half a cup per day) may prevent oxalate crystals from forming and growing, and may prevent kidney stones.

It is very difficult to find accurate data on the oxalate content of foods. To date, no mainstream nutrition, public health, or medical agency has compiled a comprehensive and up-to-date database of this information in a consumer-accessible form. Because of measurement errors, the food-oxalate data published before 1980 is unreliable, even those published by the USDA. The Internet is replete with inaccurate lists of high- and low-oxalate foods. Even the dietitians’ bible, *Bowes & Church’s Food Values of Portions Commonly Used*, has recently published faulty data on oxalates in foods.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the health professions are lagging far behind the efforts of two peer-to-peer educational organizations that are helping people obtain accurate information about oxalates in foods, the VP Foundation and the Autism Oxalate Project.<sup>31</sup>

Reducing the oxalate content of the diet can be an effective and simple way to gauge oxalate tolerance or susceptibility. The first step is to reduce the portions and frequency of high-oxalate foods while adding known low-ox-

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*Calcium needs magnesium for proper absorption. Carolyn Dean, MD, notes that the best ratio for intake of magnesium is 1:1 with calcium. She says, “It’s important to remember that you might be getting enough calcium from your daily diet, since dairy products, nuts, seeds, home-made bone broth, and leafy vegetables all have high calcium content; however, it is difficult to get an adequate amount of magnesium from today’s modern diet.” You may need to supplement.*

—See full story in “Magnesium Balances Calcium and Rescues the Heart,” *Well Being Journal*, July/August 2014, Vol. 23, No. 4, pages 2-5

alate foods (see following page). Use this process to gradually edge out very high-oxalate foods altogether. Technically, a low-oxalate diet is defined as 50 mg or less of oxalate daily, although one pilot program for kidney stone prevention limited oxalate intake to under 75 mg.<sup>32</sup> The 50 mg limit translates to less than 15 mg per meal (two slices of whole wheat bread contain about 15 mg of oxalate, and a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on whole wheat contains about 70 mg, mostly from the peanut butter).<sup>33</sup> Keeping oxalate intake this low requires extensive and careful attention to foods, beverages, supplements, and portion sizes based on accurate and comprehensive data about oxalate content of foods and supplements.

Learning about oxalates in foods takes time and effort. The scarcity of accurate information makes it challenging, but luckily, a gradual approach is best. Even if you make mistakes, systematically lowering oxalates in your diet can provide useful information if you know what to look for. Once the diet is sufficiently low in oxalate (how low varies among people), a few weeks of eating this way may be long enough for health improvements to become apparent. If a pain syndrome is in play, benefits may take longer because oxalate clearance from tissues can sometimes trigger unpleasant symptoms as the body slowly disposes of accumulated oxalates. The VP Foundation Newsletters suggest that sometimes symptoms get worse before they get better.

## Calcium Sources

In foods, calcium provides important protection from oxalates by binding to them, forming calcium oxalate, which is much less likely to be absorbed into the blood. Cream and cheese-based sauces were once a standard way to serve vegetables, which makes complete sense when you understand the dangers of oxalates in plant foods and their tendency to bind with calcium.

Good sources of calcium include: organic, minimally processed dairy milk and milk products, such as yogurt, kefir, and cheese from grassfed animals; the bones in canned sardines and salmon; cabbage; and mustard greens.

—Sally K. Norton, MPH

## Low-Oxalate Food Alternatives

### Instead of:

- Raw: spinach salad or mixed field greens
- Cooked: spinach, chard, or beet greens
- Potatoes (all varieties, including sweet potatoes)
- Tomato sauce
- Soy, soy products, and most legumes (except some peas and lentils)
- Almond beverages
- Nuts and all nut products (including snack bars and beverages)
- Carrots or celery
- Dark chocolate or carob
- Most whole grains or whole grain flour (including wheat, all forms of bran, quinoa, and amaranth)

### Try:

- Raw: romaine, butter, or Boston lettuce
- Cooked: arugula, cabbage, or mustard greens
- Mashed cauliflower or turnips, or winter squash
- Cream sauce
- Pasture-finished meats and poultry, low-mercury fish, green peas, or black-eyed peas
- Coconut milk or dairy milk
- Sprouted seeds such as pumpkin and flax, or high-quality raw milk cheese
- Cucumber or radishes
- White chocolate or fresh fruit
- Coconut, chestnut, potato starch, and rice starch flour, pearl barley, barley flakes, or winter squash



# Storing Fruits and Vegetables

Do your fruits and vegetables spoil too quickly in the refrigerator? Red Fire Farm, in Granby, Massachusetts, provides some helpful tips for keeping them fresh:

- Don't store produce in the refrigerator unprotected. Loosely wrap greens, cucumbers, broccoli, roots, peppers, and corn in plastic bags before refrigerating.
- Cut the edible greens from bunched vegetables, such as beets, radishes, carrots, and kohlrabi. Otherwise, the greens will draw moisture out of the roots.
- Preserve the vegetables' circulation by removing rubber bands and twist ties.
- Keep fruits and vegetables separate. Many fruits release ethylene gas, which will cause other produce, especially sensitive greens, to spoil and change in flavor if they are kept in close proximity.
- Avoid washing or chopping vegetables before storage, if possible. If you must wash them, dry them thoroughly and store with a dry paper towel.
- If greens or other produce are wilted from traveling in warm conditions, briefly perk them up in a bowl of cold water before drying and storing.

Produce that should not be refrigerated includes basil (store on the countertop in a vase of water) and tomatoes (they lose flavor and texture when chilled). Also recommended for room-temperature storage are melons, onions (without green tops), winter squash, potatoes (keep in the dark; refrigerate for long storage), garlic, shallots, and sweet potatoes.

—Adapted from “Keeping Your Produce Fresh—Storage Tips for Summer,” at <http://redfirefarm.com/newspages/?p=590> on July 22, 2013.

Many people have successfully employed the low-oxalate diet to solve difficult and painful conditions.<sup>34</sup> For example, I found this diet to be the only way for me to recover from a sleep disorder, arthritis, muscle pains, back pain, headaches, and fatigue. Both the VP Foundation and the Autism Oxalate Project have helped thousands improve their health and well-being with a low-oxalate diet. Anyone interested in trying this therapy should connect with these organizations to obtain accurate information about the

*“You can control how much oxalate you take into your body, and doing so with care can be both safe and beneficial.”*

oxalate content of foods and suggestions about how to use supportive supplements, such as calcium citrate, to impede oxalate absorption. Vitamin B6 and biotin are helpful because oxalates can deplete them.<sup>35</sup> Correctly doing a test of the low-oxalate diet is easier with some guidance from qualified people who have experience with the diet, know the support therapies, and can tailor them to the individual. Long-term low-oxalate dieters should be sure to include adequate amounts of calcium and wholesome fresh foods and may want to review their diet with a nutri-

tion professional who is experienced with the low-oxalate diet.

Oxalates in foods are toxic and over time can create significant problems, yet the long-term effects of diets that are persistently high in oxalate haven't been systematically studied. In the twenty-first century, some big shifts in our health and diets are increasing our vulnerability to the oxalates in food. The health of our digestive systems has declined, allowing a larger proportion of food oxalates to get into our bodies. Declining kidney function has diminished the effective removal of oxalates from the blood, and the increasing popularity of almond beverages, nut bars, seeds, green juices and smoothies, kale chips, and spinach salads has increased oxalate consumption like never before.

Oxalates can be a factor in a wide range of mysterious health problems. You can control how much oxalate you take into your body, and doing so with care can be both safe and beneficial. Δ

**Recommended vegetables:** winter squash, pumpkin, green peas, asparagus, bok choy, mustard greens, lettuce, cucumbers, red pepper, mushrooms, kohlrabi, yellow onion, broccoli, and cabbage (green, red, and napa).

**Recommended fruits:** apples, avocados, cherries, cranberries, lemons and limes (avoid peels), kumquats, melons (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon), mangos, plums, seedless grapes, lychees, and small servings of blueberries and pineapple.

**Note:** Boiling does not destroy oxalates in foods but may leach a portion if the water is discarded. Soaking nuts may increase oxalate levels in some nuts, such as pecans. Very few varieties of soaked nuts have been tested for oxalate content.

To learn more about oxalates and health, visit The VP Foundation at: <http://thevpfoundation.org> and The Autism Oxalate Project at the Autism Research Institute at: <http://lowoxalate.info/research.html>.



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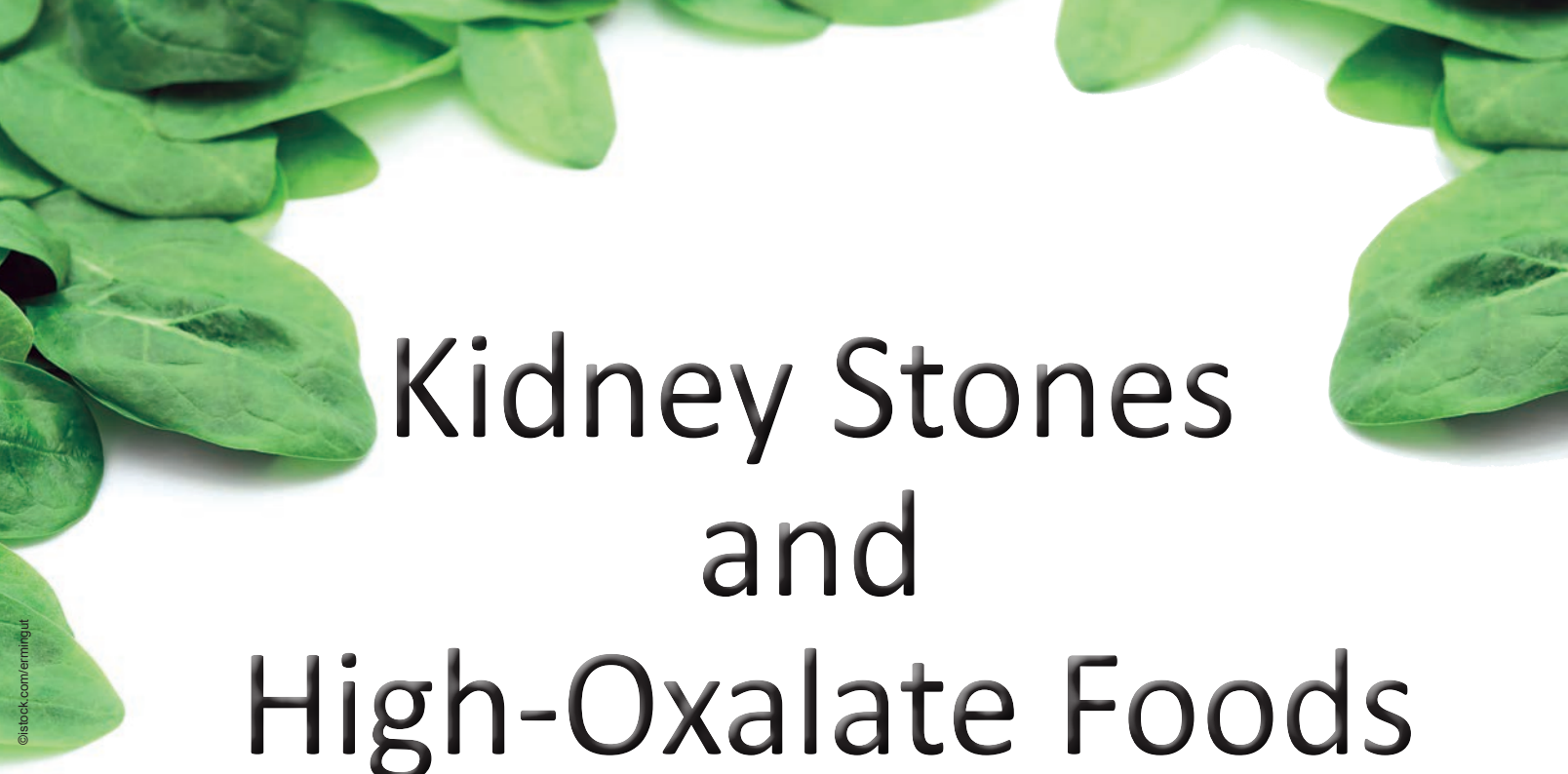
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Continued on page 48



# Kidney Stones and High-Oxalate Foods

I RECENTLY SPOKE WITH A YOUNG WOMAN I will call Sarah. A few years ago, Sarah, then about age 18, had terrible pain below her rib cage on both sides of her body; the pain was so severe that she went to the local university medical clinic. The doctors there performed four MRIs, two CT scans, and localized X-rays but could not be sure of the cause. Both kidneys were infected, and the doctors thought she also had a urinary tract infection (UTI). Because she had a 110-degree fever, they put her in isolation. They also removed her appendix, which turned out to be healthy. She was very frustrated and still in pain when the clinic staff released her. They did not prescribe antibiotics for the UTI.

Sarah continued to experience severe pain in her sides and had great difficulty urinating. Her grandmother recommended that she see a natural, or traditional, healer who was in a town in Mexico near where Sarah grew up, just over the US border.

Sarah agreed, as the US doctors were unable to help her. She traveled to Mexico. There, the healer placed magnets on various points on Sarah's torso and placed a magnet in each of her hands. Sarah said she thought the healer used magnets to help her determine the cause of the illness. The healer said Sarah's solar plexus was imbalanced, and then she asked Sarah to turn over onto her stomach so her kidneys could be tested. She

tested them with magnets, and Sarah could feel a sort of pulling sensation when the healer moved the magnets; the healer said she thought there were kidney stones in both kidneys, and referred Sarah to a naturopathic doctor in the same small town.

The naturopath performed an ultrasound test and told Sarah there was a kidney stone just about to come out and another one right after it. The stones were causing the pain and blockage in the urinary tract. The doctor gave her an injection for the pain and several doses of a painkiller to take home with her in case she needed them. He also gave her several tablets of herbal medicines, including yerba buena, which he said would help the stones come out. Sarah took the herbs, and the stones passed within a day. At last, she was pain free.

I told Sarah I had just learned that certain foods are high in oxalates, and too much oxalate-rich food can cause kidney stones. I told her spinach, for example, is a food high in oxalates. Sarah became quiet for a moment, and then said she had become a vegetarian four years earlier and had been eating massive amounts of spinach in those years, prior to the kidney stone formation. Sarah continues to be a vegetarian but decided to become much more cautious about her intake of spinach.

—SCOTT MINERS, ED.



# 15 Healthy Reasons to Unroll Your Yoga Mat

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By Margie King

**F**OR MORE THAN 5,000 YEARS, people have practiced the ancient Indian art of yoga. Long revered for its spiritual and mental benefits, yoga is fast becoming equally valued for its benefits in reversing the effects of modern chronic diseases.

A new study from Harvard University found that yoga has benefits for the heart. In a meta-analysis of 32 randomized, controlled trials, researchers concluded that a yoga practice lowers heart disease risks as well as the risks of metabolic syndrome.<sup>1</sup>

Metabolic syndrome is defined as having at least three of the following metabolic risk factors: increased blood pressure, high blood-sugar level, excess body fat, and abnormal cholesterol levels. Metabolic syndrome greatly increases the chance of cardiovascular problems.<sup>2</sup>

Compared to people who didn't exercise, yoga practitioners had:

- lower body mass index and weight
- lower blood pressure
- lower LDL cholesterol and higher HDL cholesterol
- lower triglycerides
- lower heart rate

The researchers aren't sure of all the reasons for the beneficial effects of yoga in reducing cardiovascular disease, but they noted that yoga helps reduce the effects of stress, leading to positive impacts on the neuroendocrine system, metabolic function, and inflammation. In fact, they found that yoga might provide the same benefits in heart risk reduction as traditional physical activity such as cycling and brisk walking. That makes yoga a good alternative for people who can't or won't engage in traditional aerobic exercise.<sup>3</sup>

**Besides its heart benefits, yoga has been proven to:**

- improve insulin resistance<sup>4</sup>
- help smokers quit—twice-weekly Vinyasa-style yoga improved smokers' odds of seven-day and 24-hour abstinence<sup>5</sup>
- benefit patients with cardiac heart failure
- reduce urinary incontinence by 70 percent
- reduce chronic lower back pain<sup>6</sup>
- reduce blood sugar in type 2 diabetics<sup>7</sup>
- improve brain function<sup>8</sup>
- improve bronchial asthma<sup>9</sup>

- relieve carpal tunnel syndrome
- lower cortisol levels and relieve stress<sup>10</sup>
- help fibromyalgia patients<sup>11</sup>
- improve obsessive-compulsive disorder<sup>12</sup>
- improve behavioral skill in children with autism
- relieve computer eyestrain<sup>13</sup>
- improve osteoarthritis of the hands

*Yoga* means “union” in Sanskrit. It is a whole-person approach to health that incorporates physical, mental, and spiritual elements. Hatha yoga, which is one form commonly practiced in the West, focuses on stretching and stimulating the spine and muscles in coordination with breath control. Some styles of Hatha yoga that are popular in the West, include Ashtanga, Iyengar, Vinyasa, and Restorative. Δ

MARGIE KING is a graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. A Wharton MBA and corporate attorney for 20 years, she left the world of business to pursue her passion for nutrition. She is the author of *Nourishing Menopause: The Whole Food Guide to Balancing Your Hormones Naturally*. For more information, see <http://nourishingmenopause.com>. This article has been adapted for *Well Being Journal* from the original version at <http://greenmedinfo.com>.

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## Yoga Reduces Age-Related Changes

Can yoga help with age-related degenerative changes in the male body? Researchers designed a study to look at specific changes in men who practiced yoga and were in good physical shape.

The researchers studied healthy, active males belonging to several age groups: 20 to 29, 30 to 39, and 40 to 49. They randomly assigned some of the men in each group to practice yoga an hour a day for three months. The researchers found that, initially, the older group had “significantly higher values of heart rate, blood pressure, load in heart, myocardial oxygen consumption, and total cholesterol.”

At the end of the study, the older group showed significant decreases in all of those parameters following yogic practice. Researchers also found significantly decreased levels of catecholamines, cortisol, and adrenocorticotrophic hormone, all of which are hormones released into the blood when a person is under stress. Furthermore, the older group showed an increase in serotonin and dopamine following yogic practice.

—Adapted from “Age-related changes in cardiovascular system, autonomic functions, and levels of BDNF of healthy active males: Role of yogic practice” by R. Pal, S. N. Singh, A. Chatterjee, and M. Saha. *Age* 36, no. 4 (2014): 9683. doi:10.1007/s11357-014-9683-7.

# Reversing Melanoma Naturally

## A Personal Story of Healing

By Bailey O'Brien

WHEN I WAS AGE TWENTY, two weeks after supposedly getting over stage-3 melanoma in my head and neck area after surgery and radiation, I discovered a suspicious bump under my chin. My doctor performed a biopsy and determined that it was another melanoma, and then she ordered a CT scan to see if the cancer was anywhere else in my body. The scan revealed seven tumors in total, in my neck, lung, and spine.

When I first heard the diagnosis of stage 4 inoperable melanoma, my initial reaction was hopelessness. Every scenario I imagined ended in death. At this point, I decided I did not want to pursue conventional treatments anymore because I did not want to challenge my body with more toxins from the treatments.

I resolved to stand up in a new way for my health. I would, against my doctor's wishes, go with my gut and pursue alternative treatments. A close friend of my mother's, Patricia (Tish) Tamowski (<http://healthadvocatesworldwide.com>), reassured my mom and me that there were nontoxic options out there that could help.

Jon Gordon (<http://jongordon.com>), who spoke at my school to inspire my fellow student-athletes, told me in a telephone conversation that he believed I would make it. Jon and Tish transferred their positive belief to us, so my mom and I had hope that we would find the right treatments and I would be healed.

My mom and Tish sifted through all the options for me, and I decided my best option was to go to CHIPSA hospital in Playas de Tijuana, Mexico. CHIPSA administered several controversial but seemingly effective treatments, including a modified version of the Gerson therapy, which is something we thought would help detoxify and restore my cells back to normal.

Although CHIPSA closed in the summer of 2013, American epidemiologist Gar Hildenbrand (<http://garhildenbrand.com>), who

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had worked there, partnered with other physicians to open St. Andrew's Clinic (<http://standrewsclinic.com>) just a few blocks from the old CHIPSA location. I have referred many people there, mostly because of Gar and his wife, Christeene—they are one in a million in intellect and genuine compassion—but also because they administer Coley Fluid, which has a very high five-year survival rate, unlike other treatments. I accompanied an acquaintance to St. Andrew's in September, and I know firsthand that it is a safe and reliable facility.

While I was reviewing all the alternative options, my doctor here in the US urged me to have chemotherapy, which felt stressful to me. However, since I had heard about CHIPSA and talked to Gar, I felt at peace knowing I had found an option I considered optimal, and I knew what I needed to do. At first it was a terrifying leap of faith, but ultimately I had hope that my treatments, diet, and detoxification regimen would work.

Once I arrived at CHIPSA in February 2011, I received Coley Fluid treatments (<http://mbvax.com/index.php>) and started a modified version of Gerson therapy, including a strict organic, very-low-sodium, plant-based (but not vegetarian) diet with lots of vegetable juice. I also took laetrile (IPT with vitamin B17), high-dose vitamin C infusions, and vitamin supplements, and had three coffee enemas per day. Several people, including Jon and my high school diving coach, Ron Kontura, encouraged me to trust in a higher power and to pray, so I prayed frequently, asking for a miracle.

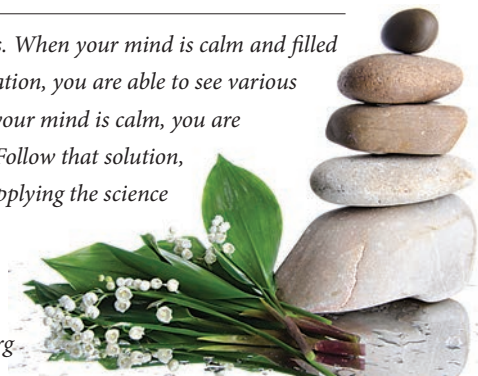
I tried to stay positive while in the clinic in Mexico. I knew my attitude affected my health, but I have to be honest and say I was a rotten roommate to my mom sometimes! I was not very happy to begin with because of all that I was experiencing both physically and emotionally; however, even though I felt a lot of stress, I was optimistic during the entire process.

The Coley Fluid caused swelling and soreness at the injection site, along with a fever that lasted a couple of hours, resulting in fatigue and irritability. After three weeks in Mexico, I returned home. By the time I left CHIPSA, the tumor under my chin had disappeared. I felt encouraged and very

*“By the time I left CHIPSA, the tumor under my chin had disappeared, so I was encouraged and very hopeful the treatments were working.”*

*God does help those who help themselves. When your mind is calm and filled with faith after praying to God in meditation, you are able to see various answers to your problems; and because your mind is calm, you are capable of picking out the best solution. Follow that solution, and you will meet with success. This is applying the science of religion in your daily life.*

—Paramahansa Yogananda in Sanctuary of the Soul: A Guide to Effective Prayer, <http://yogananda-srf.org>



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## Politicians Go Organic

Jeffrey M. Smith, author of the book *Genetic Roulette: The Documented Health Risks of Genetically Engineered Foods*, writes: “The Obama family has wisely opted out of exposing themselves to GMO foods by requiring organic—and therefore non-GMO—foods served at the White House. They planted an organic garden on the south lawn of the White House, to feature 55 types of vegetables, during the first years in office.

“The Bush family also had an organic kitchen policy. Laura Bush was ‘adamant’ about it.... “Even at Monsanto, many in-the-know employees won’t consume the company’s own GMO creations. Back in 1999, the management of the cafeteria at Monsanto’s UK headquarters in High Wycombe, England, wrote: ‘In response to concern raised by our customers...we have decided to remove, as far as possible, genetically modified soy and maize (corn) from all food products served in our restaurant.... We have taken the above steps to ensure that you, the customer, can feel confident in the food we serve.’ And one former Monsanto scientist told me that his colleagues, who were safety-testing milk from cows injected with the company’s genetically engineered bovine growth hormone, decided to stop drinking milk—unless it was organic.”

—Jeffrey M. Smith is executive director of the Institute for Responsible Technology, <http://responsibletechnology.org>, which is spearheading the Campaign for Healthier Eating in America.

hopeful that the treatments were working. Part of the home plan was that I was to prepare all my food, which took several hours each day (though I had help from my mom and then community volunteers once my mom went back to work), but I had some stress about the food, as I didn't want to make any mistakes and mess up or delay the healing process.

The hardest part of my healing protocol was trying to explain everything to family members who wanted to cook for me, because there were many restrictions I just didn't understand at the time. "Can you have this?" became the most common question I was asked, and half the time I just answered no, because I wasn't sure and wanted to play it safe. Everything I ate had to be organic and unprocessed, with no added sodium or refined sugar, and with limited amounts of animal protein.

When it came to healthy cooking, however, there were important factors to consider besides food, including the kinds of pots and pans used (stainless steel; no iron pans or ones coated with nonstick substances)

and how hot and how long the foods were cooked. In general, low temperatures and long cook times are better than high temperatures and short cook times, as the slow and low method keeps food enzymes alive and active.

The kind of water used is also important; I used spring water for cooking and drinking (and coffee enemas) to get the minerals not found in distilled water while avoiding contaminants from tap water. Those who have only city water would do well to have specially filtered water because of toxins, such as fluoride and chlorine, found in municipal water systems. When washing produce in regular tap water, I was careful to thoroughly dry everything, and that took up a significant amount of time during food prep (especially when juicing leafy greens—I would spin them, then dry them with a towel).

I kept praying for a miracle, and after another three weeks of detoxifying, toxin-avoiding immunotherapy; nutritional therapy; and my at-home attitudinal



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and prayerful regimen, a PET scan revealed that all seven tumors had gone away! When I got the news from my doctor, it was like someone removed an invisible weighted vest I had been wearing ever since the stage-4 diagnosis. It was such an overwhelmingly emotional experience that I cried almost non-stop for a couple of days. But it was all for good reasons, because I felt free, overjoyed, and just so excited and hopeful to have a future ahead of me with my loved ones.

During the entire healing process, I was very focused on my end goal, which was getting rid of the cancer. From the moment I committed to going to Mexico, I had decided I was going to adhere as closely as possible to my treatment protocol, and I never compromised at all on any part of it. I may have been a little too rigid at times, which caused some stress, but I did what I thought was best. Once I was healed, I continued my strict treatment protocol of Coley Fluid, diet, detoxification, and supplements. I took pancreatic enzymes for digestion; CoQ10, green tea capsules, resveratrol, and vitamin E for antioxidant benefits; vitamin D for overall health; milk thistle for liver detoxification; curcumin phytosome (the bio-active form of curcumin) for its anticancer properties; and Asea for cellular healing (<http://www.asea.net>). All of this was easier because I knew it worked so well and I would be able to ease off the treatments in the future.

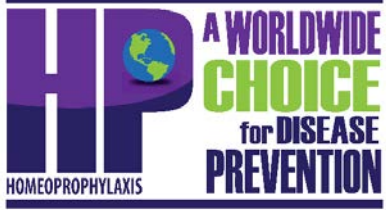
Now, four years after the healing began, my lifestyle is much more manageable, and I am able to live a normal life. I have been through several health scares (none of which were another cancer), and my confidence in my treatments and in the unseen spiritual assistance available to us all has enabled me to live a much more peaceful, enjoyable, fulfilling life. I hope and believe I will be around for a while longer to enjoy the beautiful gift of life on this earth while spreading awareness about my treatments and faith so that others may be healed physically, mentally, and spiritually, as I have.

I was frequently exposed to chlorine as a diver in high school and college, which surely contributed to my toxic load. Had I been better able to handle stress, my life as a college diver would have been more positive, but the pressure of performing well as a diver and as a student, on top of my homesickness, added up to challenge my health. Stress had always been an issue for me, and I remember feeling stressed even as early as elementary school. For most of my life I tended to rely on others too much for emotional support instead of seeking spiritual fulfillment and peace on my own for everyday issues.

*“After another three weeks... a PET scan revealed that all seven tumors had gone away.”*


*Something about the measles vaccine that I found really startling in my recent research is that the vaccine failures that we're seeing today were actually all predicted in our medical literature.... Those of us who do understand the science understand that it is, indeed, a problem of vaccine failure and not just a problem of failure to vaccinate.*

—Suzanne Humphries, MD, in “Paul Offit’s vaccine lies deconstructed” at [http://naturalnews.com/049320\\_Suzanne\\_Humphries\\_Paul\\_Offit\\_vaccine\\_lies.htm](http://naturalnews.com/049320_Suzanne_Humphries_Paul_Offit_vaccine_lies.htm)




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## Mercury-Free Canned Tuna

Mercury pollution has led to increased mercury in the oceans, ultimately causing a wider variance of mercury levels in fish. Seafood has many health benefits, but consumers need to know if the fish they are eating is as nutritious and as pure as possible. Safe Catch is establishing a brand to stand for purity in seafood and is starting with the first 100 percent mercury-tested canned tuna.

Until now, the seafood industry has not had a viable way to identify purity levels in every tuna. Safe Catch has solved that problem by developing the first technological solution to screen every single fish for purity. It is the only brand to establish purity levels that are stricter than Consumer Reports' "Low Mercury" criteria, set in 2014, for pregnant women and children.

Most conventional tuna brands precook tuna on racks, allowing nutrients and up to 80 percent of the tuna's omega-3s to drain away. They then rehydrate the tuna with pyrophosphates, GMO vegetable broth, soy, water, or other fillers. Safe Catch raw-packs its tuna, sealing in all of the nutrients, and then cooks it in a proprietary process. Safe Catch tuna is free of additives and is non-GMO, BPA-free, and sustainably caught.

—For more information, visit: <http://safecatch.com>.

I have fair skin, but I never had any severe burns; however, I would get sunburned too often in the summer and sometimes get a rash from sun poisoning on my chest after spending a week at the beach on vacation. Melanoma is definitely related to sunburns, and the chemical sunscreens that I used in the past are toxic and may have had a negative impact on my health. I have since learned there are nontoxic sun blockers such as those with non-nano titanium dioxide or zinc, which don't get absorbed into the skin.

There are hundreds of chemicals and toxins that Americans are exposed to every day, and many of them are unavoidable, such as those in the air we breathe. However, many come from sources that we can control by carefully choosing the things we eat and drink, as well as the toiletries, beauty products, fragrances, cleaning supplies, plastics, clothes, furniture, and so on that we use and touch. The Environmental Working Group (<http://ewg.org>) and Ava Anderson Nontoxic (<http://avaandersonnontoxic.com>) are great resources for finding nontoxic toiletries and cleaning supplies. I believe that, in addition to these toxins, radiation from diagnostic and treatment procedures had a negative impact on my health.

Radiological tests are known to cause cancer, and I believe that the radiation to my head and neck, from both my treatments and the diagnostic procedures, contributed to my cancer diagnoses in 2010 and 2011 and the Hashimoto's thyroiditis I developed in 2013.

I want to reiterate how I think the things I ate and drank impacted my health. Our bodies are made up of molecules that are affected by stress as well as by the foods and drinks we ingest. I wasn't getting enough vegetables and nutrients from my diet. I had poor nutrition combined with stress, and I was ingesting toxins from the typical American diet of conventional and non-organic foods, with too many processed, salty, sugary foods containing artificial colors and flavors. In addition, I was consuming too much alcohol every weekend during college. I'm not surprised that my body was unable to fight off cancer until I turned to alternative medicine, which helped me to eliminate those disease-causing factors and incorporate healthy nutrition and attitudes.

So I think the main things that may cause cancer are stress, which suppresses the immune system; toxins in our food, water, and environment;

---

*No one wants to go someplace other than where they're going.... See through your own eyes, not through the lens of others. Make your life as interesting as you can. Take chances. Go after your dreams.*

—Billy Cohen, in *The Afterlife of Billy Fingers*, by Annie Kagan, page 107, Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc., 2013

and negative lifestyle factors, such as poor attitude, poor diet, lack of nutrients, and too much sun exposure.

Luckily, I was able to restore my health, thanks to people like Gar and other professionals, as well as family and loved ones, and a huge change in lifestyle and spiritual belief. It would have been wonderful to have understood all of this before I got sick. If you would like to know more about what I eat now, how to live a healthy lifestyle, and where to go if you or someone you know is diagnosed with a chronic disease, please visit my website, <http://baileyobrien.com>. Δ

BAILEY O'BRIEN is a motivational speaker, blogger, and former student-athlete whose vision is to see a world of healthy people living out their life's purpose.

## Parkinson's Patients Improve with Belief

A small, randomized, double-blind study conducted with a dozen Parkinson's disease patients demonstrated that simply believing one is taking an effective, expensive drug caused positive effects, including beneficial biological outcomes. Researchers noted, "On average, patients had bigger short-term improvements in symptoms like tremor and muscle stiffness when they were told they were getting the costlier of two drugs. In reality, both 'drugs' were nothing more than saline, given by injection. But the study patients were told that one drug was a new medication priced at \$1,500 a dose, while the other cost just \$100—though, the researchers assured them, the medications were expected to have similar effects."

The Parkinson's patients exhibited greater improvements in movement after receiving the pricier of the two placebos, and MRI scans also revealed differences in brain activity between the two groups. The brain activity in those who thought they were receiving the more expensive new drug showed positive results similar to those found in people receiving an actual drug for Parkinson's.

—Adapted from "How the Power of Your Mind Can Influence Your Healing and Recovery," by Joseph Mercola, DO, at <http://mercola.com>.

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Lemongrass stalks

# Natural

By Sophie Uliano

**I**N THE GREEN COSMETICS WORLD, there has recently been a debate about the pros and cons of standard store-bought deodorant. Two terms have been linked to ostensibly toxic antiperspirants: breast cancer and Alzheimer's.

However, we must filter out the Internet rumors and get to the bottom of the matter. In short, there is currently a need for reliable evidence that supports a connection between deodorant and cancer or Alzheimer's. There are a lot of suspect ingredients lurking in drugstore deodorants. Many underarm products contain aluminum salts, propylene glycol, synthetic fragrance, and parabens—none of which I want in that delicate area extremely close to my lymph nodes.

But finding a natural deodorant that really works is difficult because the natural formulas don't contain the substance that blocks sweat glands: aluminum salts. These salts react with the water in sweat to create plugs that block sweat ducts, and sweat is one of the important ways in which the body excretes waste and toxins.

## Antiperspirant vs. Non-antiperspirant Deodorant

As their name implies, antiperspirant deodorants aim to prevent the body from sweating. They typically contain aluminum compounds, which are among the few substances that plug the ducts. Remember, the sweat itself is not what causes odor; the bacteria that breeds when sweat has been sitting in your armpits for a while is what stinks. If you absolutely don't want to sweat at all or if you have a nerve-wracking meeting or want to wear a silk blouse to a special event, you might want to use an antiperspirant to keep you as dry as possible.

Non-antiperspirant deodorant only deals with the odor and won't stop the sweating, which, in my opinion, is much

# Deodorants

healthier. Most truly natural deodorants fall into this category. I look for deodorants formulated with pure essential oils, aloe, and zinc oxide.

## Deodorant Paste

Underarm pastes are a type of deodorant that have become really popular. They come in a jar, so you scoop out the paste and rub it into your armpits. Most pastes are formulated with baking soda or arrowroot powder, which helps to minimize wetness, and a blend of essential oils that combat bacteria and provide a pleasant aroma. There are only a handful of companies that currently sell underarm deodorant paste, but it is relatively easy to make; the following recipe will help you get started.

## Lemongrass Antibacterial Deodorant

This outstanding deodorant paste is my daily go-to:

- 2 oz. glass jar with airtight lid
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 2 tbsp shea butter
- 1/3 cup baking soda
- 1/4 cup arrowroot powder
- 6 drops lemongrass pure essential oil

Place the coconut oil and the shea butter in a double boiler over low heat and stir until it has all melted. Remove from heat and whisk in the baking soda and the arrowroot powder. Stir in the essential oil, then pour into the jar.

At room temperature, the deodorant will be soft; if

you want it to be more solid, keep it in the refrigerator. Store in a cool, dark place and use within six months. Δ

This article, originally titled “Deodorant: The Great Debate,” is adapted for *Well Being Journal* from the book *Gorgeous for Good: A Simple 30-Day Program for Lasting Beauty—Inside and Out*, by Sophie Uliano, published by Hay House (2015) and available at all major bookstores.

Sophie Uliano is the author of *Gorgeously Green*, *Do It Gorgeously*, and *The Gorgeously Green Diet*. Her website, <http://sophieuliano.com>, brings together a community of like-minded women and provides in-depth articles, reviews, beauty picks, recipes, and more covering the latest beauty trends. More at <http://facebook.com/gorgeouslygreen> and <http://twitter.com/sophieuliano>.



Shea Butter

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# Obsessive Thoughts and Self-Love

By Shannon McRae, PhD

**E**ARLY IN MY LIFE, I was surprised to learn that others did not see clearly, or clairvoyantly, as I did. As a child, when I spoke of the things I intuitively knew about people or the colors I saw around their bodies, I was criticized. Adults told me I was a liar or said I had a vivid imagination. I was often punished or made to stay in my room, isolated from my friends. It was painful, but because of the emotional pain, I found an inner strength that most people do not take the time to discover. Inside our minds and hearts, there is a kingdom of a depth and profundity beyond our wildest imaginings. As I matured, I found I could use my intuitive abilities for good. I also found a great love within.

It's been said that love is what the world needs most. The challenge is that our frame of reference for the feeling of love must come from inside us. You must fully experience the love you already are, beyond any judgments or criticisms; while the latter are on your mind, they will keep you from feeling love of self. Cultivating the practice of simply *being* can help with this. Our culture does not yet value *being*, but many around the world do. It is important to take time to just *be* throughout your day—to meditate, to contemplate,

to assess your life, to see the beauty in the small things in life, because the divine presence is everywhere at all times.

When you find the love within yourself, you will gain the perspective necessary to have compassion for others. When you love yourself, you won't feel a need to constantly explain yourself. Being understood is a prime desire of most people. Many spend a lot of time obsessively explaining their actions to others in the hope of feeling understood. In truth, it's a waste of your time to be concerned about what others think, because you can't control their thoughts—about you or anything else. It's more efficient and fun to live, let live, and just love yourself so deeply that you find no fault with yourself or others. That is what prevents illness.

When you are diagnosed with an illness, you don't need to consider it something set in stone. Dwelling upon a diagnosis can be another form of obsession. Instead, you can use your focus and attention to go beyond the diagnosis and heal yourself. Why expect the worst? When you do, you visualize and energize an outcome you don't want to happen. Your body believes the negative message you are sending it through



your thoughts and visualizations, and will manifest it. However, the body is changeable, and you can often alter the predicted outcome. It is important to decide if you want to do so. Do you believe you can't? There are thousands of stories of people who did change their health and their lives for the better, despite dire diagnoses. When working with clients, I frequently relate a story from my healing work to show them that this can be done.

### Continually Thinking Something Is Wrong

One of my clients calls often with an obsession that she has yet to acknowledge consciously. She always asks me to intuitively scan her body for a small lesion in one of her organs. She thinks the lesion is there because her doctor diagnosed it some time ago—although she no longer has her presenting symptoms. Despite the fact that she never has been medically treated for the condition, I do not see any energetic imprint of this lesion in her body, and I tell her so. During our healing sessions, she releases her fears and lets go of her concern.

However, after a few days, she resumes worrying that she still has the problem, and calls me again with the same fears. She focuses only on the doctor's long-ago diagnosis after our sessions are over, obsessively bringing up the thought that something is wrong. Even though her symptoms are gone, she asks me to look again and again, and constantly questions me as to my accuracy when I tell her I do not see any lesion or difficulty where one supposedly once was. All I can do is relate to her my knowledge and experience and deep desire for her to accept her health.

This woman, like many people, has not yet accepted that she exists in a state of basic well-being. Each of us has a constant, underlying universal potential for health, because there's healing taking place in us at all times. Even if there is some temporary illness, the body can heal almost any condition, if our thoughts and feelings are predominantly aligned with the flow of well-being. The cells are very intelligent and are guided by a powerful life energy that surpasses our understanding.

By choosing to energize her negative thinking, my client draws the collective belief in illness into her mind, and this belief keeps her in a limited existence. She is afraid to travel or do various other things because she thinks she will be too sick. Her thoughts thus change her reality. Although I do not see any problem in her, she is, in a way, creating a reality of future illness based on the diagnosis she had so many months ago.

However, I am able to help her, and we are making progress. I clearly see her being well, and when I tell her so, it helps her move out of the cycle of negative, obsessive thinking, and she carries that positive energy with her for a few days. It's as if she is using my positive focus, my power of mind over matter, as a way to train her own mind to think well and be healthy. If that is how she will realize she is a well person, so be it. Our bodies follow our thoughts. I am happy that I have the understanding to guide people to peace and comfort, with the hope they will remember how the healing energies

felt when I worked with them.

### Another Case of Obsessive Thinking

When you think you need the attention of others to affirm that you are loved, you can create negative situations in which you get that attention. Many people do this through illness. In fact, repeated negative thinking and the ensuing emotions will themselves lead to illness. Often, people will make an appointment with a doctor rather than going to a counselor or friend to work through their emotions. They get a physical diagnosis from the doctor, and then fixate on the thought that something is wrong with their body. Most often, it's the emotional illness that leads to physical ills. Also, it's important to remember that the body is always changing; it's not solid. The diagnosis one receives from a physician might differ from one day to another, affected in part by one's thoughts and emotions. Going to see a doctor when one is focusing on fears, thinking the doctor is going to find something wrong, can negatively influence the outcome.

*“When you find the love within yourself, you will gain the perspective necessary to have compassion for others. When you love yourself, you won't feel a need to constantly explain yourself. Being understood is a prime desire of most people.”*



Here is another case in which obsessive thoughts of illness caused difficulties. I have a male client who initially called asking for an intuitive scan. He'd already had a cancerous tumor removed. He was afraid the cancer was coming back and metastasizing to other areas. This client had a lot of stress in his life, and was afraid the stress was causing a recurrence of the cancer, as it is a known risk factor for the disease. I said that I did not see this new spot at all and didn't think he had anything to worry about.

After I told him I did not see any other cancer growths, he disclosed that he knew that our bodies can change very quickly. What is there one day can be gone the next. This man does have a family relationship difficulty, and I am fairly certain that the unresolved energy in this relationship contributes to his stress, which in turn keeps him from being completely healthy. I think he knows that this challenge exists, but he doesn't want to confront the situation.

We meet frequently for healing sessions and scanning, and I continue to see no problem spots in his body. He

has been able to overcome his fear that the cancer was returning. He has also taken charge of his health program, not relying upon just one diagnosis to determine his outcome. He has assembled a team of health professionals to be on the alert for trouble spots in various areas of his life, and to help him work through the issues that led to the cancer in the first place.

It is always my goal to help my clients attain a state of peace and vibrant health, and to offer whatever I can to enhance their well-being. At times, it is also my role to confront a client, and, in this man's case, I needed to ask him if he was allowing this unresolved issue to keep him from feeling complete health. When I notice a client is relying solely upon me to help with their healing, I know I need to ask in a caring way if they are totally committed to their

healing and doing all they can to change whatever situation exists that might have contributed to their illness in the first place. This case is ongoing, but I see progress in that this man is gaining more strength of mind to hold positive expectations. Δ

SHANNON McRAE, PhD, works with medical intuition and energy healing as well as counseling, and is available by telephone appointment only at 775-315-7232. Her new book, *The Healing Effects of Energy Medicine: Memoirs of a Medical Intuitive*, to be published by Quest Books, will be available this fall.

*"It is always my goal to help my clients attain a state of peace and vibrant health, and to offer whatever I can to enhance their well-being."*

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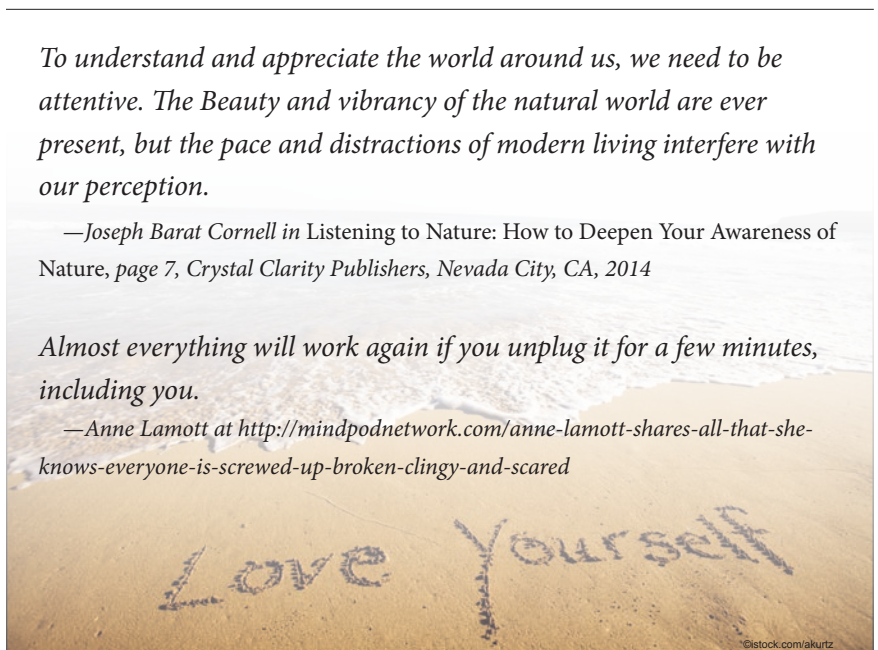
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*To understand and appreciate the world around us, we need to be attentive. The Beauty and vibrancy of the natural world are ever present, but the pace and distractions of modern living interfere with our perception.*

—Joseph Barat Cornell in *Listening to Nature: How to Deepen Your Awareness of Nature*, page 7, Crystal Clarity Publishers, Nevada City, CA, 2014

*Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.*

—Anne Lamott at <http://mindpodnetwork.com/anne-lamott-shares-all-that-she-knows-everyone-is-screwed-up-broken-clingy-and-scared>



# Random Acts of Kindness

*Small acts of kindness make the world a better place. We found a list of suggested good deeds and random acts of kindness that can help anyone feel good. Here are some of our favorites.*

—Ed., *Well Being Journal*.

- Take five seconds to support a young person's dream.
- Create a holiday to celebrate someone you love.
- Find opportunities to give compliments.
- Put a surprise note or sketch in with your spouse's or child's lunch.
- After a wedding or party, donate the flowers to a nursing home. If you want to see the impact of these acts of kindness, personally deliver a flower to each resident. You could also bring the flowers to a hospital and ask the receptionist to distribute them to patients who could use them.
- Speaking of flowers, consider taking flowers to the nursing station at a hospital—for the nurses
- Text someone just to tell them something you appreciate about them. I received a random text like this from a relative. It made me feel awesome.
- Listen. People don't always want us to suggest a solution. They just want us to listen. We underestimate how important and comforting it is to be listened to.
- When you see something good, share it.
- Encourage someone to pursue their dreams, and help them achieve their goals.
- Instead of saving something in case you will need it in ten years, consider giving it to someone who needs it now.
- Give someone the benefit of the doubt.
- Loan money to a third world entrepreneur through Kiva. These tiny investments change the lives of the families who receive them, and 99 percent of the loans are paid back.
- Post positive notes.
- Buy a small gift for someone, just because.
- Share a great book you've read.
- Let another car merge in front of you, or stop to let a pedestrian cross the street.
- Spend a few minutes on Free Rice, a United Nations Food Program that will donate rice to hungry people when you interact with the website.
- Write a love note and hide it in a magazine your partner is reading or somewhere else he or she will find it.
- Carry around a \$5 gift card so you can give it to someone who does something awesome.

**Source:** "Random Acts of Kindness: 76 Not So Random Acts of Kindness that Will Make You an Everyday Hero" at <http://bradaronson.com>.

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WORRY  
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# A Look at Books

## A Step Toward Safe Foods

Steven M. Druker's new book *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth* shines a spotlight on a vital topic that is getting increasing attention in the media. Physicians and health professionals in Argentina, thirty thousand strong, have recently joined together to demand rejection of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup, and call for a restructuring of agriculture around safe production methods.<sup>1</sup>

The International Agency for Research on Cancer said glyphosate is a probable carcinogen, and the trade union of Argentinian health professionals then issued the following statement: "Glyphosate not only causes cancer. It is associated with increased spontaneous abortions, birth defects, skin diseases, and respiratory and neurological disease."<sup>1</sup>

They added, "In [Argentina], glyphosate is applied on more than 28 million hectares. Each year, the soil is sprayed with more than 320 million liters.... Where glyphosate falls, only GMOs can grow. Everything else dies."<sup>2</sup>

Roundup is also widely used to kill weeds all over the US. The American Cancer Society lists numerous chemicals, including glyphosate, as carcinogenic.<sup>3</sup>

California mother Tracy Madlener had glyphosate banned in her community by the homeowners' association (HOA). She wrote letters, distributed flyers, and

talked with neighbors. She states, "I want to inspire others [to know] that they can do this, too."<sup>4</sup>

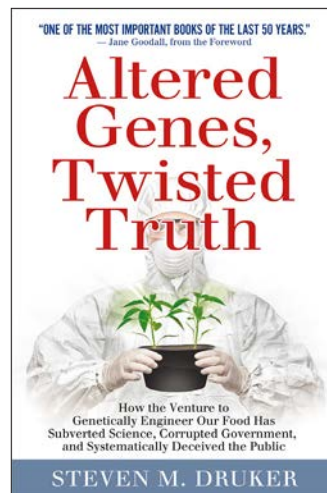
The Parks Department in Lawrence, Kansas has created pesticide-free areas in the city. They mark these regions as "green areas." The department also explores alternative ideas for replacing herbicide use in flowerbeds.<sup>5</sup>

Diane Carpinone of New Hampshire, creator of the Non-Toxic Dover blog, became concerned about chemicals used on the public library lawn, and decided to ask local officials to look into awarding bids to companies that use organic methods in treating public grounds.<sup>6</sup>

The Feed the World Organization suggest that people test for glyphosate levels in their bodies and drinking water. Organic Consumers Association states, "The US Department of Agriculture and the US Food & Drug Administration

won't test your food for it. The US Environmental Protection Agency won't test your water for it."<sup>7</sup> Now you can take matters into your own hands. The test is available at <http://feedtheworld.info/glyphosate-testing-test-yourself>.

All this leads us back to Steven Druker's *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth*. Jane Goodall writes in the foreword, "This book will go a long way toward dispelling the confusion and delusion that has been created regarding the genetic engineering process and the foods it produces."



Steven Druker is a public interest attorney and, as executive director of the Alliance for Bio-Integrity, he brought a lawsuit that forced the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to divulge some of its files on genetically engineered (GE) foods. Those files revealed that GE foods first entered the marketplace in 1992 only because the FDA covered up extensive warnings by its own scientists about the dangers of GE foods, lied about the facts, and then violated federal food safety law by permitting the foods to be marketed without having been proven safe through standard testing.

Druker reveals that many well-placed scientists have routinely issued misleading statements about GE foods, as have eminent scientific institutions such as the US National Academy of Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the UK's Royal Society. He asserts that there will be a new wave of awareness about the unacceptable risks of GE foods, and he predicts the death of the massive enterprise that's producing these foods. Druker: "The mammoth venture to reconfigure the genetic core of the world's food supply is not based on sound science but on the systematic subversion of science—and not on the facts but on the comprehensive distortion of the facts. Consequently, it will collapse when subjected to an open airing of the truth."

Why do the large food corporations involved with GE foods oppose labeling foods as such if GE foods are safe? Why do GE crops require chemicals that are carcinogenic? Druker's claim that the GE food industry cover-ups will lead to its demise may indeed be prophetic. Δ

—S.M.

*Altered Genes, Twisted Truth: How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted Government, and Systematically Deceived the Public*, by Steven M. Druker, Clear River Press, 2015.

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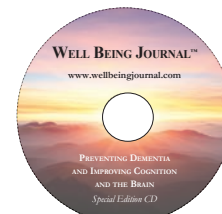
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# Five Steps to Encourage an Attitude of Appreciation in Children

By Monisha Vasa, MD



**M**Y BRAIN KNOWS that appreciation is important. I know when I am in a state of appreciation—aware of my blessings, small and big, I feel happier and less alone. I feel more connected to the people around me and to my life experiences. I feel in my body a life force greater than myself.

But my heart can find it difficult to stay in a sustained place of appreciation. Rather, I make a practice of reminding myself over and over to start. Sometimes that means making lists of things I am appreciative of at the end of each day, or at least at the end of the week. Sometimes it means taking a deep, conscious breath before I get out of bed and put my feet on the floor.

I am learning to practice appreciation as an adult. But what would it be like if we could introduce the concept of appreciation to our children when they are young? If it just became a part of their vocabulary, a daily habit like brushing their teeth or eating dinner? If they could experience the magic of appreciation while they were young, perhaps the practice wouldn't feel so challenging or foreign to them. Here are five steps to encourage an attitude of appreciation in our children:

Start with cultivating your own appreciation practice. If we believe in the value of being thankful for all we are blessed with, our vision starts to shift. We begin to see the potential value or gift, even in difficult life experiences. Children tend to follow what we do even more than what we say. If our children see us feeling connected and thankful, that energy will flow downstream toward them.

Vocalize appreciation as part of an everyday conversation; say it out loud. "I really appreciate being able to watch you play in your soccer game." Or, "We are so fortunate to have and share this meal together." Making a point of expressing our thankfulness out loud can increase our joint awareness. The more we say it aloud, the more we feel it in our bones.

Discover appreciation for even the small things. Children are inherently excited about both little and big things in life. Encourage appreciation for the small, mundane parts of life, not just the exciting Disney World moments. As we adults know, much of life is a day in, day out routine. The trick is to see the beauty and wonder even in another day at work or another morning of dropping the kids off at school. Sometimes, on difficult days, all we might appreciate is another day on this earth or the beating of our heart. That is more than enough.

Encourage downtime for reflection. If we are moving at breakneck speed, it is hard to slow down enough to notice what there is to appreciate. Noticing is the first step toward counting our blessings. Encourage lots of time for quiet, rest, and reflection. A good time is at the end of the day, perhaps before or after a nighttime story. Ask your children questions about the enjoyable and difficult parts of their day, the highs and the lows. This can encourage a dialogue about appreciation as well as the struggles they are currently experiencing.

Acknowledge the reality of their emotional experience. Children, just like adults, won't feel appreciation

for everything, all the time. It is a practice for all of us. Sometimes we need to feel through the anger and sorrow of an experience before we can come to a place of appreciation. Otherwise, our thankfulness becomes hollow, artificial. Allow adequate time and space for your children to feel what they feel. When the time feels right, see if there is an opportunity to include appreciation in the conversation.

Perhaps our practice of appreciation is one of the greatest gifts we can give to ourselves. We start to see all that is alive and breathing in our world, all of the collective energy and wisdom we are a part of. Whether we are appreciative for our breath or another day, a vacation or a yoga class, it is all important. We notice our life and all of the details, and we allow that noticing to sink into our lived experience.

If we start this practice and conversation early with our children, we take advantage of their young, resilient minds. Appreciation becomes something we share with them and deepens our understanding and our connection to them. More than that, we can encourage skills that will last them a lifetime, enhancing their own sense of wellness in this world. Δ

MONISHA VASA is a board-certified general and addiction psychiatrist in private practice. She resides in Orange County, California, with her husband, two beloved children, and two English bulldogs. She is the author of a new nonfiction children's book, *My Dearest One*. For more information, please visit <http://mindful-healing.com>.



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## New Organic Garden and Farm Center

The Center for a Healthy Lifestyle Farm, a new facility for children, will feature an interactive, half-acre organic garden and commercial-like teaching kitchen. The farm-to-table culinary curriculum is designed by graduates of Alice Water's Edible Academy in Berkeley, California. Teachers will teach students practical skills and give them vocational training as they grow and prepare healthy foods. The kitchen and the food grown in the garden will be available for healthy cooking and education classes for the entire community to enjoy. Currently, boys and girls ages five to eighteen benefit from the Center for a Healthy Lifestyle in Solana Beach at both the Harper Branch and the La Colonia Branch. After-school

programs and summer camps will include organic gardening, nutrition, assemblies, field trips, and hands-on healthy cooking classes.

The new facility will also offer middle school students, elementary school students, and adults the following opportunities:

- Nutrition classes
- Culinary academy
- Arts and crafts
- Gardening classes
- Vocational classes for youth

The Center is located in Encinitas, CA, at the Griset Branch of the Boys and Girls Clubs of San Dieguito. For more information, see <http://centerforahealthylifestyle.org>.



# Communicating to Relate vs. Communicating to Control

By Susan Campbell and John Grey



**W**E ALL SAY WE WANT TO BE LOVED for who we are. But if you want your partner to love you for who you are, you must reveal yourself. This takes intention and practice. We all have automatic communication habits we need to unlearn. Learning to relate more and control less is vital to keeping your love life fresh and alive.

Here we emphasize the important distinction between communicating to control and communicating to relate.

Reactive, unproductive communication cycles are set in motion by control-oriented communication—attempts to be right or stay comfortable instead of expressing deeper feelings and needs. Communicating to control places a high value on getting a predictable outcome that does not challenge the ego's defense structure. The aim is to look good, act more in control than we feel, and generally avoid emotional discomfort. Controlling communication is pretty automatic. It's what we do most of the time.

When we communicate to relate, we place a high value on sharing authentic feelings in the interest of transparency. We let go of the need to control the outcome. This type of communication fosters knowing and being known.

Here are some differences between controlling and relating:

## Relating


- Seeks to know the other person and to be known
- Values being real, unique, and open to surprise
- Uses “I” messages and self-disclosure
- Listens openly, with curiosity and empathy, showing an ability to hold and wait
- Is responsive to the other person's pain or fear—with empathy and reassurance
- Collaborates to find an outcome that takes both partners' needs into account

## Controlling

- Seeks comfort, looking good, and appearing in control
- Values being right, knowing what will happen, having things all figured out
- Uses “you” messages, sales pitches, power tactics, and manipulation
- Makes assumptions and generalizations about the other and believes these are right
- Ignores the other person's feelings and focuses on own needs
- Assumes that being open to a partner's needs means giving up one's own

Most people are uncomfortable facing their own





attachment needs. We try to avoid feeling dependent on our partners, as this exposes us to being disappointed or frustrated. In a relationship, we impact one another in ways that can stir up attachment insecurities, so a partner's actions can affect us in ways that are not predictable or controllable. We try to stay in control and act big by suppressing or denying our vulnerable feelings and core fears, when in reality we feel vulnerable and small.

As a result, we all fall into various control patterns and reactive behaviors—pretending to feel fine when we're really upset, pulling out a mighty sword when we're actually feeling weak or scared. It is no wonder we have trouble getting our true needs met. We have been trained to not reveal them!

When we communicate with the intent to relate, we reveal what we are experiencing in our bodies, hearts, and minds. We report our body sensations, feelings, thoughts, and wants as these arise. The goal is to know and be known by our partner at the deepest level—not to win, be right, or stay out of trouble. We communicate our real feelings and needs with an open heart and spacious mind. We are open to hearing the other person's response, whatever it may be—pleasing or displeasing. We ask for what we want without any guarantee that we'll get it. We accept that we will not always get the desired response. But we trust that we can survive the normal emotional discomforts of an intimate relationship.

If we do feel hurt or upset, we know we can express this and ask for reassurance. Relating involves two-way communication. There are two of us in this relationship, and our needs may be different. Yet there is an overall sense that we understand and care about each other—and that we can collaborate and find win-win solutions. Δ

This article is an excerpt adapted from the book *Five-Minute Relationship Repair*. Copyright © 2015 by Susan Campbell and John Grey. Reprinted with permission from New World Library, <http://newworldlibrary.com>.

SUSAN CAMPBELL trains coaches and therapists throughout the United States and Europe to integrate the tools in *Five-Minute Relationship Repair* into their professional practices. In her own practice, she works with singles, couples, and work teams to help them communicate respectfully and responsibly. She is the author of *Getting Real*, and *Saying What's Real*, she lives in Sonoma County, California. More at <http://susancampbell.com>.

JOHN GREY is a relationship coach specializing in intensive couples retreats. He also trains couples therapists with a state-of-the-art approach that integrates the latest neuroscience and attachment research. He has taught communication workshops at Esalen Institute, University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, and Scripps Institute. He lives in Sonoma County, California. More at <http://soulmateoracle.com>.

*“The goal is to know and be known by our partner at the deepest level—not to win, be right, or stay out of trouble.”*

## Tech Support Actual Transcripts

Customer: “I was printing something.”

Tech Support: “From before you called?”

Customer: “No, from Word.”

Tech Support: “Where in the building is your printer located?”

Customer: “Middle of my desk.”

Tech Support: “If I have to give someone directions, where do I tell them to go?”

Customer: “In the middle of my desk where I work.”

Tech Support: “Well, sir, in that case I have to cancel the test and try again. So please leave your cable modem on this time.”

Customer (in a thick Russian accent); “What? You have cancer?”

Tech Support: “Tell me, is the cursor still there?”

Customer: “No, I'm alone right now.”

Tech Support: “Are you reading an error message to me?”

Customer: “No, I'm reading an error message to you.”

Tech Support: “I need you to right click on the desktop.”

Customer: “Ok.”

Tech Support: “Did you get a pop-up menu?”

Customer: “No.”

Tech Support: “Ok. Right click again. Do you see a pop-up menu?”

Customer: “No.”

Tech Support: “Ok, sir. Can you tell me what you have done up until this point?”

Customer: “Sure, you told me to write 'click' and I wrote 'click.'”

Source: <http://rinkworks.com/stupid>.

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