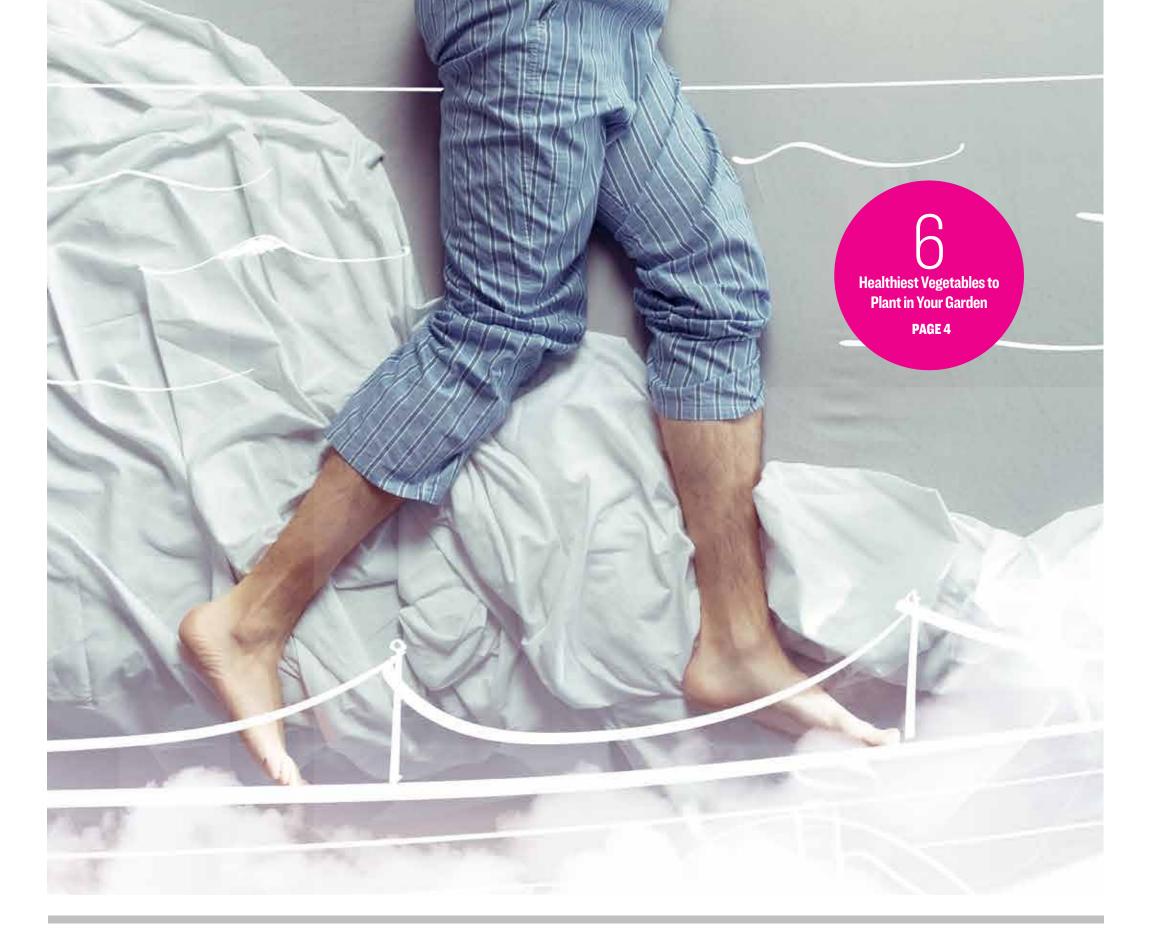
WEEK 29, 2020 THE EPOCH TIMES **P**

Dimensions

of Sleep Sleep restores us in stages and cycles, but some struggle to slumber **3**



TRUTH and **TRADITION**: In Our Own Words

WE ARE HOLDING THE LINE

In America, publishing news is easy. But publishing the truth ... that's very difficult.



You might've seen some of the videos we've produced over the last year. But you likely

don't know the difficulty of creating this type of honest news content to be published on the big tech platforms.

Because The Epoch Times has the courage and fortitude to both investigate and report stories that most media don't as well as to call into question the "established" narratives when the facts don't seem to line up, we have



providers.

been attacked, demonetized, and de-platformed by the giant tech conglomerates, the legacy media

outlets, and even certain service That's not to even mention

how over the last 20 years, there were dozens (maybe even hundreds, but we never thought to count) of times when the Chinese **Communist Party's consulates** around the world have used threats to force businesses and ad agencies to

pull their advertising from our publication.

I believe that open public discourse is vitally essential to our nation. It is paramount to a free republic.

Working here over the last eight years, at a truly independent news organization, has opened my eyes to the many forces attempting to restrict your access to truthful information. And contrary to what it seems like on the surface, these forces are not censoring our mouths. They are actually censoring your ears and your eyes.

They are engaged in an act of theft: robbing you of the truth.



For instance, when we examined claims about the CCP virus's origins that didn't line up with the established narrative or when we looked beneath the surface of FISA abuse that

> took place during the 2016 election and reported inconsistencies with the mainstream narrative, we were further attacked, censored, and de-platformed—directly limiting your access to a treasure trove of our investigative findings. So what we are doing here at The Epoch Times is not simply reporting stories or conducting investigations.

We are holding the line.

We are taking the attacks so that you may be informed of the truth, and so our future generations may know what truth is.

We seek to be a stalwart bastion of objective reality which can stop the descent of



our society into a place where our grandkids and great grandkids have internalized everencroaching politically correct thought confines to the point where even forming an independent idea is a crime.

To me, that might've seemed like hyperbole 10 years ago, but having seen this encroachment first-hand, I believe it is a grim possibility that we might just "naturally" slide into if we don't take a strong stand against it right now.

I hope you are enjoying this paper. I hope you share it with your friends, your family, and your entire community so that we can restore decency in this country's public discourse.

And I hope when that happens, you'll be there with us to see it.

In Truth and Tradition

Roman Balmakov The Epoch Times



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Roman Balmakov Video Producer



TRUTH and **TRADITION**

Practicing good sleep hygiene means adopting habits that help ensure a good night's sleep.

VGSTOCKSTUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Dimensions of

Sleep restores us in stages and cycles, but some struggle to slumber

CONAN MILNER

hate relationship with sleep. It can be delicious when we're exhausted. But having to sacrifice so much time just to lie there with the worries of the day circling your head until you finally, hopefully drift off can make

any of us have a love-

sleep seem more like a burden. If we manage to get the recommended eight hours a night, we devote a third of our lives to sleep. But this precious time also competes with endless temptations beckoning us to leave the lights on and stay up late.

Sleep-skimping habits start early. According to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), more than two-thirds of U.S. high school students (a population that may need as much as 10 hours of sleep a night) report getting less than eight hours on school nights.

Some get much less. Copywriter Snezhina Piskova recalls that when she was a student she managed to get by on only three hours a night. A constant flow of coffee and energy drinks helped push her through the day, but her evenings were usually filled with insomnia-induced anxiety. Eventually, she suffered a terrible burnout.

"It was truly horrific," Piskova said. "Thanks to this, however, I have learned quite a bit about maintaining proper sleep hygiene."

Part of Piskova's appreciation for sleep came from learning about what it does for her body. She discovered that, despite being such a sedentary activity, sleep takes care of a lot of important business.

"The body undergoes deep maintenance work, rebuilding muscles, and sorting through experiences," she said. "These processes can only occur in such depth while we are asleep."

Sleep is particularly beneficial to the brain. According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke Health with the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), sleep helps you form and maintain the pathways in your brain that let you learn and create new memories. That's why a lack of sleep makes it harder to concentrate and respond to the world around us. Sleep also prevents disease. Research has

shown that chronic sleep loss can lead to high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, and weight gain, as well as increase our risk for certain forms of cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

But even if you manage to devote more time to sleep, getting enough can still be elusive. According to the latest Sleep in America Poll by the National Sleep Foundation, Americans feel sleepy on average three days a week and say their mood, mental acuity, and productivity all suffer as a result. The majority (55 percent) blame the problem on poor quality sleep.

One obvious factor in keeping us awake is caffeine. According to Dr. Ivy Branin, a New York City-based naturopathic doctor who specializes in treating insomnia, caffeine blocks the release of a brain chemical called adenosine. Adenosine levels rise by the end of the day, making us feel tired. But too much caffeine too late can inhibit this response.

How much is too much, and how late is too late? That depends on you. "The half-life of caffeine (the time it takes for half of this substance to be eliminated from the body) is typically between five and six hours, but for some people it can be as long as nine hours," Branin said. "Levels of 100mg and above of caffeine prevent the action of adenosine to produce tiredness. So if you are someone who metabolizes caffeine slowly, the cut-off time should be in the morning, and the caffeine content should be low."

Another factor that often interferes with sleep quality is the drugs we take to fall asleep. Branin says that alcohol and benzodiazepines (medications often prescribed for insomnia) can interfere with a deep stage of the sleep cycle called REM sleep. The acronym stands for rapid eye movement-one of the physical characteristics of this special sleep stage.

"Plus alcohol can increase cortisol release," Branin said. "Spikes in cortisol due to alcohol will make us feel more alert, making sleep difficult."

Rest and Regeneration

One contributing aspect to sleep loss is that we like to brag about being busy. In most social circles, there is more cultural currency in talking about how much we are doing than how much we are sleeping. Hearing talk about how little sleep others get might make you feel lazy in comparison. But Piksova says it's not a competition. It's about regeneration.

"Every person is different," Piskova said. "I myself can function at full capacity with exactly eight hours, but my friend Anna is a hyperactive ball of energy with only six hours of sleep."

For optimal health, adults typically need between seven and nine hours of sleep per night (infants and toddlers may need as much 16 hours a night, plus naps). Only about 1 percent of the population (known as short sleepers) do well on six hours or less—a sleep schedule that would cause the rest of us problems with our mood and cognitive performance during the day. Depression, anxiety, bad judgment, not to mention feeling tired the next day, are common symptoms of sleep loss.

The reason we need to sleep as long as we do is that our brains and bodies need to cycle through three distinct sleep stages a few times per night to get fully recharged. Before we reach REM sleep, we first have to go through light and deep non-REM sleep stages, and we need to have enough of each to be rejuvenated for the next day. The duration of each stage can vary by age and individual. But according to Jason Piper, certified sleep coach and founder of Build Better Sleep, the body generally likes to prioritize deep sleep in the first half of the night, and REM in the second half.

"During deep sleep, all the good stuff of body restoration occurs. It does most of its repairs and growth during this stage also," Piper said. "Have you ever known someone that routinely goes to bed really late, how tired and aged their face looks? That is because the repair that normally happens is shortened."

It was once thought that dreaming only occurred in REM sleep, but recent research finds that we may dream at any stage of sleep. However, REM is when we have our most intense and vivid dreams. It may seem like we're just lying there, but during REM, the brain is just as active as someone who is awake. Piper describes it as a firmware update for a computer.

"During this time, memories are consolidated. Short-term memories move to long term, and more abstract thinking and connections happen," he said. "You know the saying, before making a decision, to sleep on it? That's why. Your brain processes and analyzes it even while you are sleeping.

In general, deep sleep benefits the body, and REM the mind. But there is evidence of crossover. One 2008 study found that short sleep time is associated with overweight children and adolescents, which may be attributed to reduced REM sleep.

And it isn't just the duration and type of sleep that matters, but also the time.

Our mind and body prefer to cycle through the deeper stages of sleep in the dark of night. Piper says those who try to accomplish this cycle during the day are forced to work against the body's natural biological clock.

"This is not normal, nor recommended," he said. "Those who sleep during the day do not produce the same amount of melatonin or get as much deep and REM sleep as night sleepers. This is why you will see shift workers being diagnosed with higher incidences of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease."

In 2007, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) with the World Health Organization (WHO) published a decision based on experimental and epidemiological data stating that working the late shift is "probably carcinogenic to humans."

Overcoming Sleep Obstacles

Once we realize the importance of getting enough sleep, how can we ensure our sleep hours are truly rejuvenating? Since alcohol and benzodiazepines are

problematic, naturopath Dr. Christian Gonzalez recommends gentle, yet effective chamomile tea as a nightcap. "Chamomile is generally used for its

calmative and sleep inducing properties," Gonzalez said. "Its compound apigenin exerts these benefits by traveling to the brain and stimulating GABA receptors for a nervous system calming effect. This is the same target as popular benzodiazepines like Xanax, Ativan, and Valium."

Light is another factor that can influence our sleep quality. Gonzalez says natural light and dark cycles are imperative for the balance of our biological clock.

"This helps coordinate body physiology and immune function. Unfortunately, these delicate mechanisms are easily disrupted by artificial light," he said.

For this reason, Gonzalez recommends sleeping in the pitch black. He points to one study that shows that women who have artificial street light coming into the room were at significantly higher risk for breast cancer than those sleeping in total darkness.

"The reason for this is the disruption of the hormone melatonin, a potent antioxidant and immune stimulator against cancer cells," Gonzalez said. "Artificial light at night disrupts normal melatoni secretion.'

Ideally, we should also distance ourselves from any light emitting devices, like cellphones and laptops, as we wind down before bed. This cuts our exposure to both light and electromagnetic frequencies-another factor that messes with our melatonin. A study conducted by The Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the University of Melbourne found that EMFs may influence the pineal gland, where melatonin is produced.

"How man-made EMFs may influence the pineal gland is still unsolved. The pineal gland is likely to sense EMFs as light but, as a consequence, may decrease the melatonin production," researchers state.

To avoid this unseen source of pineal stimulation, Gonzalez recommends sleeping with your phone in airplane mode, and kept at a distance from your body. Plus, turn the Wi-Fi off. You don't need it when you're sleeping anyway.

Practicing good sleep hygiene means adopting habits that help ensure a good night's sleep. But don't beat yourself up if it doesn't work right away. If you've tried everything and still can't sleep, clinical psychologist Jodi J DeLuca says don't force it. Instead, find some lowlight activity to occupy your mind for a little while.

"Get up, leave the bedroom, and do something that doesn't require too much physical or mental energy, such as reading, listening to an audio book, working on a puzzle, writing in a journal, or working on a hobby," DeLuca said.

Like eating healthy and getting enough exercise, sleep hygiene works best with consistency. The more you can make your bedroom environment and nighttime routine conducive to sleep, the more truly rejuvenative hours you'll have each night.

"A critical component to a better night's sleep is to make sure that your brain is conditioned to associate your bed as a place for rest and sleep," DeLuca said. "When getting into bed, make a conscious effort to remind yourself that it's time to power down from the mental and physical activity of the day."

Garden therapy, or spending time planting, watering, digging, and pruning, is linked with cognitive and mental health improvements.

6 Healthiest Vegetables to Plant in Your Garden

estern culture is now almost completely removed from the process of food production, vet research studies point to the value of raising nutritious, organic foods for ourselves, even in small urban settings.

Garden therapy, or spending time planting, watering, digging, and pruning, is linked with cognitive and mental health improvements. Learning to grow your own vegetables is also reward ing and fun.If you'd like to experience these benefits or are looking for a new, therapeutic hobby, here are six of the healthiest vegetables that even a

new gardener can grow in containers on a porch or in a backyard garden.

1. Kale

Kale, a member of the cabbage family, is a well-known superfood that has received a lot of attention from researchers and health publications in recent years. Kale's nutritional lineup includes vitamins A, K, and C, and essential minerals like potassium, calcium, and magnesium. Kale is also a rich source of dietary fiber, which acts like a prebiotic and increases nutrient absorption in the gut.

Kale juice is high in antioxidants and protects your body against oxidative damage and chronic disease. Kale ranks much higher in nutrient density when compared with vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes, and most alliums.

Learning to grow your own vegetables is rewarding and fun, and research studies also point to the value of raising nutritious, organic foods for ourselves.

Because it's a fairly hardy plant and can be used in a variety of dishes, kale is a wonderful addition to any vegetable garden and can easily be grown in containers on a porch or in a sunroom.

2. Onion Onion has been used for its healing properties for centuries

in traditional medicine, but , recent research has demonstrated that onions contain compounds useful in the treatment and prevention of cardio-

vascular disease, obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, and inflammatory diseases. Onion oil has also been studied for its topical benefits, including hair regrowth for alopecia areata patients (onion oil significantly improved hair regrowth in alopecia areata patients and was ruled an effective topical therapy) and the healing of

dermal scar tissue. One study compared wound healing results after the daily application of onion gel and found that scars were significantly softer and

less noticeable after just four and eight weeks of use. Most of these health benefits can be traced to onion's high concentration of sulfur amino acids, flavonoids, phytosterols, and saponins-compounds that have anticancer, antibiotic, and antithrombotic activity. If you don't have a backyard plot, ask your local greenhouse what type of containers they recommend for growing onions-their recommendations will vary depending on the type of onion you want to grow and the climate you're in.

3. Potatoes

White potatoes are a rich source of potassium, fiber, vitamin C, and resistant starch, but they have received little attention in the popular health world over the past decade due to recent diet trends that discourage carbohydrate intake and mis-

information that incorrectly links all potato consumption with obesity and diabetes. Potatoes, when consumed in wh form and not as French fries or potato chips, can be healthy. In fact, researchers have demonstrated that

white potatoes contain more potassium per serving than any other vegetable, and removing white potatoes from your diet may severely impact your potassium levels, especially in children, particularly if you don't consume other potassiumrich foods. Yet despite these findings, U.S. consumption of whole potatoes continues to drop.

> By adding these nutritious powerhouses to your garden, you can easily improve your health and benefit from the wide variety of nutrients and satiating carbohydrates con-

tained in these humble tubers. Plus, by growing them yourself, you can avoid some of the pitfalls of conventionally grown potatoes, like exposure to pesticides and heavy metals in soil. Like onions, you'll need to research proper containers for growing potatoes if you don't have access to a garden plot.

4. Tomatoes Regular consumption of tomatoes is linked with decreased risk of chronic



illnesses like cancer and cardiovascular disease

Lycopene, the carotenoid responsible for the pink and red colors in tomato fruit, is a potent antioxidant that has been extensively studied for its ability to prevent carcinogenesis and atherogen-

> esis. Scientists have estimated that lycopene may be up to 10 times more potent than other antioxidants like -tocopherol.An increased intake of tomat

> > has been associated with a decreased risk of prostate and breast cancers. Tomatoes are some of the easi-

est plants to grow in either a container or in a garden plot, making them a prime vegetable for first-time gardeners.

5. Cauliflower

Both white and purple cauliflower species are high in phenolic compounds, which directly contribute to antioxidant action in the body.Purple cauliflower

is especially high in anthocyanins, a type of phenolic compound that gives purple cauliflower its rich color. This potent antioxidant offers anti-inflammatory and antiviral protection in the

Research indicates that cauliflower leaves may have potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Scientists are eagerly testing the various health benefits that cauliflower leaves may offer.

body.

While cauliflower can grow quite large and needs plenty of space to grow, it has a shallow root system, making it ideal for growing in raised garden beds or containers.

6. Bell Peppers

The potent antioxidant and bioactive compounds found in bell peppers (also known as sweet peppers) may protect against Alzheimer's disease. Green, yellow, and red bell peppers are all high in phenolic compounds and ascorbic acid, which protect the body's cells via free radical scavenging activity.

Interestingly, organic growing methods seem to increase the antioxidant potential of bell peppers, while conventional growing methods may decrease the amount of helpful compounds like carotenoids and vitamin C—another reason to grow these antioxidant powerhouses in your own garden.

This list only scratches the surface of the numerous vegetables and fruits you can begin growing in your own garden or in containers around your home.



Green, yellow, and red bell peppers are all high in phenolic compounds and ascorbic acid, which protect the body's cells via free radical scavenging activity.

For more information on the research surrounding the benefits of vegetable intake, please visit the GreenMedInfo. com vegetable research database.

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'More Than Physical Health': Gym Helps 91-Year-Old Battle Isolation

HEIDI DE MARCO

Most mornings, like clockwork, you could find Art Ballard pumping iron.

At least five days a week, he drove to Foothill Gym, where he beat on the punching bag, rode a stationary bike, and worked his abs. After he joined the gym five years ago, he dropped 20 pounds, improved his balance, and made friends.

At 91, he's still spry and doesn't take any medication other than an occasional Tylenol for aches and pains.

"Doctors love me," he said

But when California enacted a statewide stay-at-home order in mid-March, his near-daily physical exercise and social interactions abruptly ended.

Ballard's health started to deteriorate: His back hurt, his legs cramped and he started becoming short of breath. As happens too often with older people, he also started to feel isolated and depressed.

"I was deeply concerned for myself because I didn't have an exercise routine at home," he said.

The University of Southern California's Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research conducted an analysis in late March, as COVID-19 established a foothold in the U.S., that found that older adults over 60 who lived alone were more likely to report feeling anxious or depressed than those living with companions.

The combination of the pandemic and nationwide lockdown orders put this already vulnerable population at greater risk, said Julie Zissimopoulos, codirector of the aging and cognition program at USC's Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics. Social distancing measures have weakened the support systems that older people who live alone depend on for basic activities, such as help with grocery shopping and transportation to doctor appointments.

"There's a huge, disproportionate impact on older adults with this virus and the health outcomes," said Lisa Marsh Ryerson, president of AARP Foundation. "During this shutdown, we've had growing public health and community acknowledgement of how serious it can be to sever the ties with our network."

Ballard, a retired jeweler, lives alone in a one-bedroom condo in Monrovia, a city of about 36,000 people about 20 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles. He lost his wife of more than 50 years, Dorothy, to Alzheimer's disease in 2015. Since then, he has em-



When California enacted a statewide stay-at-home order in mid-March, Art Ballard's near-daily physical exercise and social interactions abruptly ended

braced his solitude and reveled in his newfound bachelorhood. He enjoys cooking and trying out recipes, listening to 1950s music and watching YouTube videos about World War II.

He has a girlfriend he met online—a retired greyhound trainer who lives in Arkansas. They haven't yet met in person.

Ballard felt he could handle the isolation of the lockdown order. He didn't have visitors during

After a couple of months of not visiting the gym, Ballard began feeling sad and frustrated, and his health started to slide.

quarantine, but his son, Dan Ballard, checked on him by phone weekly.

In the beginning, Ballard tried to keep busy. He did his shopping early in the morning and took strolls around his neighborhood. But after a couple of months of not visiting the gym, Ballard began feeling sad and frustrated, and his health started to slide. He relied more on his walker and sometimes struggled to breathe. "My girlfriend was concerned

with how I was thinking," said Ballard, who speaks to her on the phone several times a day. For Ballard, a self-proclaimed

gym addict, Foothill Gym was a second home. Just as in the 1980s sitcom "Cheers," it's a place where everybody knows his name. Not going to the "club," as he calls it, was taking a toll on his mental and physical health, so he decided to visit Brian Whelan, the owner of the small, familyrun gym, in late May.

"He comes in, out of breath, with a walker," Whelan recalled. "He couldn't hold his head up

straight and it took him five minutes to catch his breath."

Whelan felt sad and angry. "Evervone here was almost in tears because this vibrant man was gone," he said. So Whelan broke the rules. He invited Ballard to visit the gym even before it officially reopened to the public. "The gym business is more than

physical health," said Whelan. "It's mental health." Ballard resumed his beloved

routine the last week of May, with the gym mostly to himself.

"Every day for the past two months, I've been sad," Ballard said on the first day back. "Today, I woke up and I was happy."

Day after day, Ballard improved. "Now he comes in without a walker, head up straight, and the spark in his eyes is getting brighter," Whelan said.

The gym reopened June 15. Despite the threat of COVID-19, Ballard is back to working out six days a week. Masks are required to enter the gym but can be removed when exercising.

Ballard isn't worried. "I'm 100 percent comfortable," he said. "I'll wear a mask if they ask me to."

Son Dan said he's worried about his dad being around people, but realizes the benefits.

"It's a scary balance. If he stops going to the gym and can't see anybody, I know he's going to deteriorate," he said. "At the end of the day, it's a quality-of-life decision that's his to make."

Ballard believes not being able to socialize was a bigger threat to his health than the risk of contracting the coronavirus.

"I found out how important my routine and exercise is," said Ballard. "It's given me back my life. And it's only going to get better."

Heidi de Marco is a reporter and producer for California Healthline. This story was produced by Kaiser Health News, which publishes California Healthline, a service of the California Health Care Foundation.

Researchers Identify Life-Shortening Behaviors

DEVON ANDRE

Are there certain behaviors that can shorten your life? Of course there are. But what are they? Activity levels and diet are often discussed, but they aren't the only things that can influence mortality risk.

New research points to a major factor that contributes to the likelihood of an early death: stress.

New research points to a major factor that contributes to the likelihood of an early death: stress. Although it isn't necessarily iden- • Alcohol abuse tified as the cause, the research • Recent financial difficulties

highlighted a number of activities that lead to a shorter life.

Many of them appear to be either high-stress situations or coping mechanisms.

The team, made up of researchers from the University of British Columbia, John Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania, The University of California, and Stanford University, looked at 57 social and behavioral factors that were linked to early death.

They collected data on over 13,600 U.S. adults between 1992 and 2008. They then looked at behavioral factors among those that died between 2008 and 2014. The top 10 lifestyle factors associated with early death

- Being a current smoker
- History of divorce

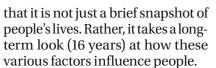


Divorce, loneliness. financial difficulties, and unemployment are all high-stress situations.

- History of unemployment Past smoking
- Low level of life satisfaction
- Never being married Negative outlook

The top-10 have a clear association with stress. Stress can manifest in a number of ways, including increased inflammation, poor sleep, high blood pressure, and compromised immunity.

What makes this study unique is



Divorce, loneliness, financial difficulties, and unemployment are all high-stress situations. In response, they could lead to increased drinking as a coping mechanism, as well as leading to negative outlooks and low levels of life satisfaction.

Stress relief is multifaceted and often much easier said than done. Some practices that have been associated with stress relief and other health benefits include tai chi, yoga, mindfulness, exercise, positive social interactions, hobbies, and acknowledgment/presence.

A healthy diet, less caffeine, and lower levels of alcohol are also helpful in reducing stress and its effect on the body.

Devon Andre holds a bachelor's degree in forensic science from the University of Windsor in Canada and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Andre is a journalist for BelMarraHealth, which first published this article.

Do the Right hing Even If No One Is Watching

Teaching our children the importance of integrity sets them up for success in life

TATIANA DENNING

"The shortest and surest way to live with honor in the world, is to be in reality what we would appear to be; and if we observe, we shall find, that all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves by the *practice of them.*"—Socrates

hen my son Jacob was little, he used to tell on himself.

No matter what little thing he'd done, he would always seek me out to confess. "Momma, I knocked the picture over," or "Momma, I broke my train." He seemed to have a need to let me know what he'd done, so he could correct his wrongdoing and make things right. I always found his innocence and honesty refreshing.

These confessions continued until around the fourth or fifth grade, and then I started to notice a change. He'd quit telling on himself, and at times would even not want to tell me if he had done something he shouldn't have, and sometimes he'd even try to cover it up. Of course, by that time, he'd had many new, outside influences, along with an increased desire to not get in trouble.

As an osteopathic physician, I've been trained to look at the whole person-mind, body, and spirit—with the understanding that these each influence our health and well-being. If we ignore one part, the whole cannot be well. Our moral character and values have a vital role to play here. To quote Socrates again, "There are two kinds of disease of the soul, vice and ignorance." It was with this knowledge that I sought to help my son understand why, and how, he should do the right thing.

It makes up the very core of who we are.

Life Lessons

From the time he was little, on weekend mornings, Jacob would climb into my bed and we'd have our "life lessons" talks, as I dubbed them. We'd discuss everything, from what happened at school with his friends and teachers, to why something bad had happened in the world, to why we were created. He often asked questions beyond his years, and I tried to answer as best I could, while asking for his thoughts as well. Lessons in honesty, kindness, and thinking of others first were just a few of the themes woven throughout our talks, and he seemed to readily grasp them.

I decided to use some of this precious time to discuss an important life lesson, especially given the change I began to notice—the subject of doing the right thing, even if no one is watching.

We had touched upon this topic before, but I wanted my son to understand that just because no one else knew that he'd done something wrong, that didn't make it OK. We are all ultimately responsible for our decisions, and those decisions have consequences. It was important for him to understand this.

As we were talking about doing the right thing, it dawned on me that, at first glance anyway, there can sometimes be some tough choices to make. I have certainly made my share of mistakes.

Susan Alexander Yates, in the online parenting site Focus on the Family, makes some very valid observations regarding the importance of integrity above all else. We must be careful not to bend our prin-

We are all ultimately responsible for our decisions, and those decisions have consequences.

With all these messages, we might start to **believe** that doing the right thing isn't really all that important after all.

Unless we live on a private island, who we are, and how we behave ultimately impacts others. There is no avoiding it.



ciples, no matter how small the issue, how wronged we may feel, how justified we feel in our actions, or how advantageous it may be for us.

She notes: "As parents, do we value integrity more than success? If I value integrity, I will insist that my son make honest line calls in his tennis match, even if it causes him to lose. I will not write my daughter's college essay for her, even if I think it might increase her chance of acceptance. Be- no matter how we try to justify it. cause of our culture's warped values, we have to be vigilant: The desire for success can subtly influence our decisions and ultimately erode our character."

Pointing out to our children the times we choose to do the right thing, rather than doing what is most beneficial to us, can teach our children how to start thinking along these lines. And the more we practice this way of thinking and behaving, the more proficient we become at doing the right thing.

Making Good Choices

We have daily opportunities that test us on whether we will choose to do the right thing, or the easy, convenient, and ultimately self-serving thing.

Sometimes these choices aren't easy, and we can find ourselves in the midst of a real internal conflict. But which voice will we ultimately choose to listen to?

As children, we are more pure, but as we get older, we are exposed to examples of others not doing the right thing. These examples come from our parents, other children at school, television, social media, and so on. With all these messages, we might start to believe that doing the right thing isn't really all that important after all.

But doing the right thing, also known as integrity, is important. It is vital to who we are today—and who we will become. Our integrity will shape our children and thus, future generations, and society at large. It impacts the decisions we make day-today, our relationships, how we respond to life's challenges, how we elect our leaders, and nearly every aspect of our life in some fashion.

Susan Alexandra Yates goes on to say this about integrity: "To be a person of integrity means to be someone who is completely honest, trustworthy, reliable and dependable, whether others are watching or not. Unfortunately, today's culture doesn't value integrity. This often leads to an attitude that says it's OK to do whatever we want as long as no one gets hurt and we don't get caught."

There's a lot of talk in society today about doing whatever one wants. There are also plenty of examples of exhibiting bad behavior because one feels wronged, or upset

over some issue. In my view, this is incorrect thinking. For the sake of our moral character, as well as the sake of those around us and society at large, we should make good choices and act with kindness and integrity, no matter what the situation. After all, unless we live on a private island, who we are, and how we behave ultimately impacts others. There is no avoiding it. And at the end of the day, bad behavior is still bad behavior,

Know Where You Stand

It's important to give serious thought to what our morals and values are, and then to pass these on to our children. We do this by modeling these principles and having discussions with our children every chance we get, even if it's while taking a walk or driving to school. It's a sad fact that discussions around morals and values aren't taking place often enough with our children today. With the state of the world being what it is, these discussions are needed now more than ever.

Merriam-Webster defines integrity as a "firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values."

This adherence to a code of moral values stands in contrast to conforming to popular opinion, especially when what is popular strays from what is right.

This is important for us all to remember, but especially so for our children. Peer pressure can lead our kids down a devastating path with just one bad choice.

It was for this reason that the talks with my son always involved role-playing. For example, I would ask him things such as, "What would you do if some kids in your class asked you to steal something from a store? And what if they started calling you names if you didn't join in?" After he responded with "I would just say no and walk away," I would up the ante a little. "What if A.S. (his best friend) asked you to steal the new Mario Bros video game that you really wanted, and you knew no one would see you take it?"

I've posed different scenarios to him over the years, involving everything from smoking, to cheating, to taking responsibility for his actions, to putting others first. My hope is, if he thinks about some of these things in advance, he'll know where he stands and it will be easier to do the right thing when the time comes.

Instilling Integrity

Laura Markham provides some insight into how we can help our kids learn to do the right thing in an article in Psychology Today. She lists four things to focus on when teaching our kids about integrity.

First, kids always pay attention to our be-

And I think every parent knows that even though they may think their child isn't always paying attention—they are.

Let's say, for example, we leave the grocery store and notice the clerk forgot to ring up our water. If we say, "Forget it, I don't have time to go back in," or worse yet, "Awesome, free water," what lesson do we teach our child? Going back and paying for the water is the right thing to do, and our child then go on to instill these in our children. then learns how to handle similar situa- I would include paying attention to what tions with integrity. As we go about our we think as well, as it's the foundation for day, it's crucial that we do the right thing so our children know how they are expected to behave.

Next, pointing out to our child how his actions affect others goes a long way in having him pause to consider whether he's acting in a kind and considerate manner. It's the "do unto others as you would have done unto you" principle at work. When your child lets another play with his favorite truck, point out to him how happy it made that child, and how your child would feel if someone shared their favorite toy with him. Then ask your child how he feels after sharing his truck. Doing the right thing feels just as good for the giver as it does for the receiver, so make sure your child recognizes this.

We also have an opportunity to use doing the wrong thing as a teaching moment, and offer alternative choices for our child's behavior.

For example, say our child chooses to play instead of do his homework, and then gets a poor grade on his assignment. It's a chance for him to experience repercussions and think about what he could do differently. As an alternative, he could sit down every day after school to do his homework, and then play afterward. Does he think that would feel better than playing while knowing his homework is waiting and then having to rush to get his homework done after he's tired from playing?

Lastly, Markham recommends asking our children questions that allow them to reflect back on their behavior and actions. Using role play is very effective here, as in "What would you do if this situation happened." Asking your child what he learned from a situation, and if some part of him knew that what occurred wasn't right, also helps him to look inside and see where he can improve. Some of life's most valuable lessons come in this way.

Mark Merrill, father of five and champion of integrity says: "What if I told you it was not a single action, but a mind-set you needed to develop? Integrity is born in the mind and heart of a person. It comes from who you really are as a man or woman, and what you really believe about right and their own health.

havior, meaning we model and they learn. wrong, good and evil. And integrity is exhibited not in just one act of goodness, but in your whole character."

Merrill suggests focusing on some basics in developing integrity, such as what we say, how we say it, what we do, and how we do it. Using these as a guide, we can evaluate how we conduct ourselves to ensure we are in alignment with the values and principles we want to live by, and we can what we say and do.

On the website All Pro Dad, which is focused on guiding men to behave as role models for their children, Merrill has this to say about choosing the wrong thing: "When we benefit from questionable actions and non-ethical practices, we are also leaving behind a trail of pain caused to others. It is the law of nature that something else is going to suffer when another takes what doesn't belong to them. Someone will [have a] price to pay for these actions. What happens in the dark will eventually be brought to the light. That's guaranteed."

Looking Ahead

Several authors have attributed a quote to one of the most successful businessmen of all time, Warren Buffett, speaking to the importance of integrity.

"In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don't have the first one, the other two will kill you."

As parents, we strive to get our children into the best schools in order to ensure they get the best education so they are set for success in life. We value intelligence. But are we missing something here? As Buffett points out, intelligence without integrity will kill you, or at the very least, your business. While education is important, our character is even more important to a successful life, and that's something that's not getting the attention it deserves.

Today, my son is 14. And while he no longer cuddles up in my bed, I manage to sneak in some life lessons as he goes about his day. Grounding him in strong morals, values, and principles provides the basis for who he is becoming, and helps determine his path in life. It's my responsibility, both as a parent and a member of society, to make sure he grows up to be a man of integrity.

Tatiana Denning, D.O., is a family medicine physician who focuses on wellness and prevention. She believes in empowering her patients with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain and improve

Can Simple be Enough?

The ability to devote ourselves to what matters and get rid of distractions is a profound freedom

ANGELA LEE



know we need something. When we need more. We may not know exactly what it is that we desire, but the longing is there. A soul level longing that isn't easily shaken or ignored.

here are times when we

For years I struggled with this feeling. I wanted more of something, but couldn't quite understand what it was. It couldn't have been things, because the more I acquired, the deeper this void felt. It couldn't have been success, because the more I achieved, the less interested I became.

This is when the hard questions become necessary.

I sat down one day with an unrelenting need to write. At the time, writing for pleasure wasn't something that I did. So when this feeling came over me, I had to oblige. I started to write about what I want-

ed for my life. At the very top of my unexpectedly short list I wrote the words "to be happy." That seemed so simple.

Could simple be enough? I had to start somewhere. I had read

once that the clutter in our homes operated as a silent stressor. I had such a longstanding relationship with overwhelm that I wasn't convinced that making space in my home could make a difference. And so I started small.

I cleared out some unused clothes and donated them. I was surprised at how much lighter my closet—and my spirit—felt from this simple act. Little by little, we went through our home and gave away so many things that we had never used before, some of which we never even remembered that we had.

The more we gave away, the more we realized how little we actually needed. But that longing was still there. I

now knew that what I wanted with every fiber of my being was to be happy, and I suspected that simplifying some of our possessions was just the beginning. I wanted to simplify my life.

But what did that mean, exactly? I dreamt of moving slowly and steadily through my days. Of saying 'no' with ease. Of being truly present with those that I love. Of being truly honest with myself.

I no longer wanted to live in a constant whirlwind. I no longer wanted to chase accolades. I no longer wanted to give the best of me to things that didn't really matter. I wanted life to be simple.

Could simple be enough? I started with the word 'no.' It was

terrifying at first, but I quickly real-

ized that saying 'no' to the things that I no longer wanted for myself brought much peace. Soul level peace that far outweighed the discomfort of saying 'no.

The more I said 'no' to things that no longer served me, the more I was able to say 'yes' to the things that I thought were important.

A new appreciation for intention was born, one which has brought with it the gift of presence. Soul level presence that has made me realize just how much we miss when we are distracted by things that don't matter.

The more I practiced intention in my work, in my relationships, and in my schedule, the more freedom I felt. Soul level freedom. Freedom from guilt. Freedom from expectations. Freedom to slow my pace and quicken my heart.

Years later, I look around and see a life that I had never expected for myself. A life that seems... simpler. And I ask, can simple be enough? Now I know the answer.

We may not know exactly what it is that we desire, but the longing is there.

Simple isn't just enough. It's abundant.

It has brought an abundance of joy. An abundance of happiness. An abundance of space, both in my home and in my calendar. Simple isn't just enough. It's deeper

than enough. It's soul level. It has taken me from soul level

longing to soul level peace. Soul level presence. Soul level freedom. Simple isn't just enough. It is bountiful.

It breeds contentment. It yields gratitude. It nurtures passio Simple isn't just enough. It is less

and it is more. Less expectations and more authenticity.

Less distraction and more connection.

Less doing and more being.

I searched for simplicity, wondering if it could ever be enough, and what I found was a life of abundance.

Angelina Lee is a wife, mother of three, and an Attorney-at-Law in the Caribbean who seeks to delve deeper into the art of being with her blog "Exploring Plan Be." This article was originally published on Becoming-Minimalist.com

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I no longer wanted to give the best of me to things that didn't really matter.

Drinking Surged During the Pandemic. Do You Know the Signs of Addiction?

Problem drinking may be one of the side effects of the social isolation and extended downtime from the COVID-19 lockdown

ALEX SMITH

espite the lack of dine-in customers at Waldo Thai for nearly 2 1/2 long months during the COVID-19 shutdown, Darrell Loo stayed busy. Loo is the bar manager for the popular restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri, and he credits increased drinking and looser liquor laws during the pandemic for his brisk business. Alcohol also seemed to help his customers deal with all the uncertainty and fear.

"Drinking definitely was a way of coping with it," said Loo. "People did drink a lot more when it happened. I, myself, did drink a lot more."

Many state laws seemed to be waived overnight as stay-at-home orders were put into place, and drinkers embraced trends such as liquor delivery, virtual happy hours and online wine tasting. Curbside cocktails in 12- and 16-ounce bottles particularly helped Waldo Thai make up for its lost revenue from dine-in customers.

Retail alcohol sales jumped by 55 percent nationally during the third week of March, when many stay-at-home orders were put in place, according to Nielsen data. Online sales skyrocketed.

Many of these trends remained for weeks. Nielsen also notes that the selling of to-go alcohol has helped sustain businesses.

But the consumption of all this alcohol can be problematic for individuals, even those who haven't had trouble with drinking in the past.

Dr. Sarah Johnson, medical director of Landmark Recovery, an addiction treatment program based in Louisville, Kentucky, with locations in the Midwest, said that, virtual events aside, the pandemic has nearly put an end to social drinking.

"It's not as much going out and incorporating alcohol into a dinner or time spent with family or friends," Johnson said. "Lots of people are sitting home drinking alone now and, historically, that's been viewed as more of a high-risk drinking behavior."

There are some objective measures of problematic drinking. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines heavy drinking as 15 or more drinks a week for a man or eight or more for a woman.

But Johnson said that more important clues come from changes in behavior. She says that, for some people, a bit of extra drinking now and then isn't a big deal.

"If they are still meeting all of their life obligations, like they are still getting up and making their Zoom meetings on time, and they're not feeling so bad from drinking that they can't do things, and taking care of their children and not having life problems, then it's not a problem," Johnson said. "It's when people start to have problems in other areas of their life, then it would be a signal that they are drinking too much and that it's a problem."

But there are signs to watch out for, she says. They include:

• Big increases in the amount of alcohol consumed

• Concern expressed by family or

Routine and structure are important to overall mental health because they reduce stress and elements of unknown or unexpected events in daily life.

Dr. Sarah Johnson, medical director of Landmark Recovery



friends • Changes in sleep patterns, either more or less sleep than usual

• Any time that drinking interferes with everyday life

Johnson noted that for many people, living under stay-at-home orders without the demands of a daily commute or lunch break could be problematic.

"Routine and structure are important to overall mental health because they reduce stress and elements of unknown or unexpected events in daily life," Johnson said. "These can trigger individuals in recovery to revert to unhealthy coping skills, such as drinking."

Johnson said that while some people may be predisposed to problematic drinking or alcohol-use disorder, these can also result from someone's environment.

Johnson said that people who are unable to stop problematic drinking on their own should seek help. The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration runs a 24/7 helpline (800-662-HELP) and website, www.FindTreatment.gov, offering referrals for addiction treatment.

Peer support is also available online. Many Alcoholics Anonymous groups have started to offer virtual meetings, as does the secular recovery group LifeRing. And for people who are looking for more informal peer support, apps such as Loosid help connect communities of sober people.

Darrell Loo at Waldo Thai said that he has been concerned at times about people's drinking but that he generally has seen customers back off from the heavy drinking they were doing early in the pandemic.

Loo and others in the Kansas City restaurant business are pushing for the carryout cocktails and other looser laws to stay in place even as restaurants slowly start to reopen.

"This will go on for a while. It's going to change people's habit," Loo said. "People's spending habit. People's dining out habit. So there's definitely a need to keep doing it."

Alex Smith is a health care reporter for KCUR 89.3 FM. This story is part of a partnership that includes KCUR, NPR, and Kaiser Health News.

Bring Home the Magic of Shen Yun!

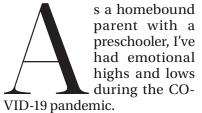




How the Pandemic Can Teach Kids About

What if this crisis became an opportunity for children to deepen their sense of care?

MARYAM ABDULLAH



had emotional highs and lows during the CO-I've felt sad and worried about

how many people are becoming ill, and confounded as I've tried to juggle homeschooling and my work responsibilities.

But I've also felt gratitude for kindnesses that have punctu- munity in crisis," explains Ste-

ated so many of my days, like ven Taylor, professor and clinical when a neighbor left herbs from her garden at my gate or when a faraway friend I hadn't heard from in years sent text messages of love.

These experiences have affirmed for me that when times are tough, our common human response is to show compassion. We often assume that emergencies lead to panic, but research consistently shows that people tend to act in solidarity with a sense of togetherness. They volunteer, donate supplies, and spread goodwill, strengthening social bonds and helping everyone be resilient together.

"Affiliative, supportive, prosocial behaviors are more common, where widespread sickness and debility evoke acts of mutual aid among members of a com-

psychologist at the University of British Columbia, in his book The Psychology of Pandemics.

Compassion—noticing others suffering and being motivated to provide relief to them—grows early in life. Five-month-old babies prefer helpers over hinderers. When babies between eight and 10 months old see people bump their knees or hurt their fingers, they already show the seeds of empathy with facial expressions, vocalizations, and gestures that reflect concern and a desire to understand others' distress. By 14 months old, toddlers help others by handing them objects out of reach.

How can parents help their children realize their instinctual capacity for compassion during the COVID-19 pandemic?

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Parents can nurture the motivation of young children by inviting them to 'be a helper,' which can instill in them a compassionate self-identity.



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How the Pandemic Can Teach Kids About . OMDASSION

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Scientists have suggested three ways children develop compassion that are relevant to these times.

1. Show Compassion

to Kids so They Experience It During the pandemic, many of our children feel uncertain amid the upheaval, just like us parents. They miss school, their friends, and playing sports. For young children who don't have the breadth of words to express their worries and fears, or older children who don't have the emotional agility to get through tough moments, it can be overwhelming.

Our kids may be irritable or have more meltdowns and tantrums than usual. But rather than seeing children as uncooperative, parents can consider whether their children's behavior is simply a sign of suffering.

If we offer children warmth and tenderness when their routines are gone, we can help soothe them. Parents can extend compassion by making space to help their children become better aware of and process their feelings. Acknowledging and being sensitive to our children's emotions can act as a salve and help them to see that this moment of hardship will eventually pass.

Parents can extend compassion by making space to help their children become better aware of and process their feelings.

Parents can also frequently talk to their children about all the members of their extended family and broader community who have cared for them both recently and in the past. For example, parents can tell and retell their children stories of neighbors who brought gift baskets after their pet died or dropped off dinners when a grandparent was in the hospital. These conversations serve to remind children that they are connected to a network of people who are a generous source of compassion from which they can draw strength during times of suffering.

When children receive compassion, the have a first-hand experience of what it feels like.

2. Teach Kids to Practice Self-Compassion

In turn, just as children receive compassion from parents, they can also learn to offer it to themselves.

When children are having a hard time during the pandemic, parents can encourage them to listen and respond to their bodies and minds with greater awareness, acceptance, and kindness. For example, parents of older children can teach them to take self-compassion breaks to pause and notice their suffering amid stressful

For younger children, this might mean guiding them to first pause and notice their tense muscles, rapid heartbeats, and racing thoughts. Ask them to recognize that they're having a moment of hardship and children all over the world are having **3. Encourage Kids to Extend** these kinds of moments, too. Teach them to breathe deeply from their bellies and offer themselves words of tenderness such as "May I feel calm."

Parents can also encourage their younger children to cultivate self-compassion by

helping them plan enjoyable activities to look forward to after a hard day of home a catch: When tasks are too difficult and schooling or after realizing summer vacation plans are canceled.

Self-compassion allows children to process and cope with difficult emotions. Eventually, it can help them see their common humanity—that everyone suffers sometimes—and know that it's all right to feel bad.

Tending to their intense emotions helps children feel restored and renewed, which in turn prepares them to serve others. Overwhelming personal distress can make children singularly self-focused and less able to attend to others' suffering. Selfcompassion practices can help them think of others and extend compassion to them.

Compassion to Others

During the coronavirus pandemic, even though children are inclined to help, it can be hard for them to know exactly what they can do.

Children can start with small acts of Magazine online.

compassion with the family—sending kind thoughts to essential workers, regularly FaceTiming with isolated, older, or immunocompromised family members, or helping gather canned goods for the local food bank. Parents can also review ideas suggested on the website of Youth Service America to help inspire children toward compassionate acts.

Research suggests that small differences in language matter when we're encouraging our kids to help. Parents can nurture the motivation of young children by inviting them to "be a helper," which can instill in them a compassionate self-identity. But there's children experience a setback, those who were asked to "be a helper" are less likely to try to help again compared to children who were simply asked "to help." So, in circumstances when children might not succeed at helping with something, it's better to just ask them "to help."

Even young children have undoubtedly picked up on their radar that life right now is quite a bit different than it used to be. What if this pandemic became an opportunity for them to learn that being human during hard times involves transformation and resilience, and that compassion helps us all to thrive?

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Practicing Mindfulness Can Help Us Through COVID-19 Pandemic

Tuning into the present reality, gaining a broader sense of connection can help us elevate as a society

KIRA JADE COOPER

e seem to have mastered the perfect recipe for chaos: a global ecological emergency, humanitarian crises, and to top it off, a pandemic of epic proportions. Where do we begin to make sense of the current times?

Or more importantly, how can we move towards a positive systemic shift that leaves no one behind?

How about taking a breath? Mindfulness, a once-traditional Buddhist practice has become a normalized part of secular society and is lauded by many health and wellness authorities. It is now found in many public spaces such as schools, politics, military units, and hospitals.

Increasingly, researchers are finding new applications and interventions for mindfulness practices to enhance individual well-being, including the reduction of stress, anxiety, and depression. While these have demonstrated promise for improving numerous aspects of human health, little research has explored the potential benefits for mindfulness to contribute to collective wellbeing, especially during times of widespread crisis.

My research has found that, depending on the practice and its application, mindfulness can be used to advance a broader sustainability agendaas well as individual wellness. The relatively unexplored impacts of mindfulness on supporting sustainability has immense value to offer in times of crisis, particularly COVID-19.

Mindfulness and COVID-19 Researchers have found that mindfulness practice can increase compassion and empathy, which are essential traits for supporting both individual and collective resilience.

And as social distancing and quarantine measures keep us physically separate and yearn-

Mindfulness practices that reinforce a notion of self as separate from the rest of nature and society can risk missing many benefits of traditional mindfulness practice.

Meditation can help us develop the ability to still our minds and better tune in to the present moment.

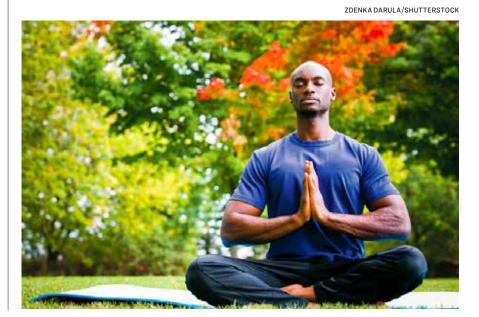
ing for connection, the role of mindfulness in nurturing feelings of interconnectedness and reducing risk factors for loneliness and isolation has become increasingly important. Mindfulness has also been

found to deepen the connection to nature. Together, this understanding

and commitment to well-being

for all are critical processes to mitigate our current unsustain able ways of being and doing. Since mindfulness has been found to reduce consumerism and promote more sustainable consumption habits, it supports a path for tackling large sustainability challenges.

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Among Those Disrupted By COVID-19 The Nation's Newest Doctors

Almost from the start of the outbreak, third- and fourth-year students who would typically spend much or all of their time in the hospital were shut out to avoid being exposed to COVID-19.

Quarantine requirements, restricted interview opportunities, and other restrictions upend the path to residency

JULIE ROVNER

uly 1 is traditionally the day newly minted doctors start their first year of residency. But this year is different. Getting from here to there from medical school to residency training sites—has been complicated by the COVID-19.

"We were all really freaking out," said Dr. Christine Petrin, who just graduated from medical school at Tulane University in New Orleans and is starting a combined residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C. Students "matched"—the term for finding out where they will spend their next several years training—in March, just as everything was shutting down because of the pandemic.

After getting the news of their placements, Petrin said, some of her friends were worried about being able to enter states that were closing their borders. They "just rapidly picked up and moved. Found an apartment, packed up the car, and went."

Petrin said she was lucky. Although she shopped apartments online, her sister, who lives in Washington, could check them out in person. Dr. Erin Fredrickson was not as fortunate. She graduated in May from Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine near Raleigh, North Carolina, and matched in a family practice residency at the University of Washington in Seattle.

She and her partner were already planning to drive across the country with their dog, but the trip turned out to be much different than the leisurely journey they had envisioned. "We were going to visit friends in different places along the way," she said. "We were going to camp, but a lot of places to camp were closed.

In an effort to minimize contact with anyone else, the couple ended up staying in Airbnb guest houses.

Meanwhile, she was forced to pick out housing in Seattle remotely. "I did a lot of FaceTime tours of apartments," she said.

Dr. Janis Orlowski, chief health care officer for the Association of American Medical Colleges, agreed this has been a year like no other. "It's been really messy," she said. "But it looks like it's coming together."



66

If you have a COVID patient, you don't need 14 people marching into the room, we wanted to decrease the team size.

Dr. Janis Orlowski, chief health care officer for the Association of American Medical Colleges

Among other things, graduates traveling from states that are or have been hot spots are being asked to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. That has required more flexibility than usual from administrators used to starting programs at an exact time. "Everyone is pretty much going to start

July 1—or a little after," she said. In some instances, the medical students graduating this year-some of whom graduated early to help in the hospitals attached to their medical schools—have it easier than students directly behind them.

Almost from the start of the outbreak, third- and fourth-year students who would typically spend much or all of their time in the hospital were shut out to avoid being exposed to COVID-19. Even the newly graduated doctors were generally kept away from COVID-19 patients.

The restrictions were intended not only for their own safety, said Orlowski, but also to help protect patients. "If you have a COVID patient, you don't need 14 people marching into the room," she said. "We wanted to decrease the team size." And shortages of personal protective equipment made smaller care teams necessary.

For most of the graduating seniors, required rotations were generally finished by the time the virus had upset their plans. Those that were not could be made up. But for third-year students, the time out of the hospital will be more difficult to recoup as the pandemic drags on—and continues

to spread. For the moment, most students are also barred from rotations at hospitals other than their own. (Students frequently work at hospitals that have programs their home hospital does not offer.)

At the same time, those soon-to-be fourth-year students who normally would be traveling around the country to interview for residencies will be limited to online visits only. That's a real shame, said Petrin, because being on-site in some cases "changed my perception for better or worse."

But right now it's about safety, Orlowski said. "We're trying to cut down on any travel," she said. "But we're also trying to make it fair. We don't want some students to have in-person interviews and others not."

For those starting residency this week, one of the hardest things, said Fredrickson, is getting through all the errands she won't have time for later. "I moved to a new state and I need a new driver's license and license plates," she said. "And the DMV is still closed "

Julie Rovner is Kaiser Health News' chief Washington correspondent. She has covered health care for more than 30 years and offers insight and analysis of policies and politics in her regular HealthBent columns. Kaiser Health News is a national health policy news service. It is an editorially independent program of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

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Tuning into the present reality, gaining a broader sense of connection can help us elevate as a society

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First Responders and Frontline Workers Additionally, for first responders who are facing likely unprecedented high levels of chronic stress as a result of COVID-19, mindfulness can also help reduce compassion fatigue and workplace burnout.

Furthermore, in light of the current tension between police and civilians, mindfulness may also offer benefits as it has been found to reduce aggression in law enforcement officers.

Despite the numerous potential benefits of mindfulness, finding effective ways to leverage these practices, while also recognizing some of their drawbacks and limitations, remains an ongoing challenge.

Drawbacks of Mindfulness To increase marketability, mindfulness has been largely separated from its Buddhist roots. In the process, many of the traditional moral and ethical elements of the practice have been replaced with a more individualized and often self-serving agenda.

Business ventures that target high-spending and elite consumers, including Google, Apple, and Nike, have capitalized on this niche in the wellness market. Mindfulness is a profitable and growing multibilliondollar industry.

Mindfulness practices that reinforce a notion of self as separate from the rest of nature and society can risk missing many benefits of traditional mindfulness practice. Similarly, by focusing exclusively on developing a heightened awareness of self, mindfulness practitioners can fail to see the consequences of their behaviors.

Individualized mindfulness practices that are preoccupied with enhancing pleasure and enjoyment, as opposed to ending suffering, can inadvertently encourage materialism



and selfishness.

A Mindful Future Rather than leveraging mindfulness as a productivity hack, product, or service, mindful practice could enhance both individual and collective wellbeing while supporting broader sustainability progress. For this to be conceived and pursued, the ways by which we define, practice, and apply mindfulness need to be reexamined, and in some cases, transformed. One such transformation is the integration of mindfulness practices into peace-building initia tives in conflict areas. In places such as refugee camps, mindfulness is used to support resilience building, while simultaneously fostering both individual and collective well-being.

As our new reality unfolds under the circumstances imposed by COVID-19, it continues to reveal further socio-ecological challenges. We will need to learn how to practice mindfulness wisely, in a manner that reduces suffering for all beings, in both the present moment and the post-pandemic future.

Mindfulness has become a multibilliondollar industry.

The role of mind fulness in nurtur ing feelings of inter connectedness and reducing risk factors for loneliness and isolation has become increas ingly important.

Kira Jade Cooper is a doctoral candidate at the school of environment, resources, and sustainability at the University of Waterloo in Canada. This article was first published on The Conversation.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE What Affects Your Weight

According to Chinese Medicine

As you age, these 7 factors can cause you to gain weight or struggle to lose it

LYNN JAFFEE

here has my waist gone? I zip up my jeans and where I used to have nice curves, I now have something akin to a small souffle above my waistband. I won't say muffin top, because the term conjures up something a little racy and carefree. I just have a little something extra where my waistline once resided.

It's the rare person who doesn't think about his or her weight, even in the small decisions like hesitating over that second margarita or whether to have brownies or fruit for dessert. Many people make conscious decisions that are weight-based, from choosing salad instead of pasta to spending an hour on the treadmill when they would rather be napping.

As a practitioner of Chinese medicine, I see a fair number of patients who are concerned about their weight. Some want to know if a few carefully placed needles will take care of their extra 15 pounds, others mention in passing how nice it would be if acupuncture could also help their crazy, out-of-control cravings for baked goods.

As in most health-related issues, we want a magic bullet. People with migraines want to understand what one thing is triggering their headaches. People with anxiety want a quick fix.

And people who want to lose weight want the miracle food that will melt away their fat forever.

The bad news is that there is rarely a single factor causing your migraines, anxiety, or extra weight: it's a mash-up of many factors incubating over time.

The good news is that once you understand that there is no single reason you are tipping the scale to new heights, it becomes easier to take baby steps that compound over time and will vield results. Here then are seven factors that affect your weight:

1. Calories Aren't Everything

Well, not necessarily. It turns out that the stated caloric value on food labels is merely an estimate. How you cook a particular food, how much fiber it contains, how nutritionally dense it is, and what your body does to digest it all have an impact on how much energy you'll get from it. So while counting calories seems to be cut and dried, it's anything but.



If your waistline doesn't leave you smiling, consider how you cook your food and how well you digest it as possible factors.

2. How Well You Digest How well you break down the food you eat and convert it into energy and nu-

trients has an effect on your weight. If you're not metabolizing food and fluids well, your body will get boggy and damp in the parlance of Chinese medicine. This creates pockets of moisture, which are the definition of fat tissue. You can tell if your digestion needs some help if you have digestive symptoms: gas, bloating, stomachaches, heartburn, nausea, constipation, or

loose stools. In addition, strong cravings for sweets and carbs

are also a digestive red flag. **3.** Antibiotics that it becomes more

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Antibiotic use may also be a factor impacting your digestion. In the news recently, scientists have found frequent antibiotic use. or the use of these

medications at a very young age, may harm the good bacteria in your gut, affecting not only your digestion, but your overall health. They have even suggested that obesity and diabetes may be a result of antibiotic use

4. Stress and Strong Emotions

When you are upset or stressed out, the balance of your stress hormones also becomes upset.

Cortisol, adrenaline, and insulin ramp up (or down) in a way that enables you to sustain the fight-or-flight response. A body system that ramps down when you're stressed is your digestion, because you don't need it for either fight or flight-at least not in the moment.

The bottom line is that chronic stress or emotional upheavals alter your digestive process in a way that causes you to gain weight. And thanks to elevated cortisol, it accumulates around your middle.

5. Exercise

You've always heard that exercise is a good way to lose weight because it burns calories. While this is true, in Chinese medicine exercise, or movement, is good for another reason. Good health is all about having adequate reserves of vital substances, such as gi and blood.

But the second part of the equation is that those substances need to flow smoothly for optimal vitality. Excess weight is considered to be a kind of blockage or stagnation-stuff that's just sitting there and not moving. So, through exercise, the adage "movement creates movement" comes into play. By moving your body you are creating flow and helping to move some of that accumulation of damp tissue sitting on your hips.

As you get older, you will notice that it becomes more difficult to drop a couple of pounds than it was 10 years ago. Your metabolism is slowing and it becomes a little more difficult to build calorieburning muscle mass with the same amount of effort you put in 10 years ago. And ladies, throw in menopause, a hormonal game-changer, that only makes weight control tougher.

7. You're Unique While we'd like to have a silver bullet or a one-size-fits-all diet plan, the reality is that we're all unique. In Chinese medicine, it would be impossible to come up with a plan that would suit everybody, simply because what you need for nutritional health and balance is entirely different from what your boss, kid, partner, neighbor, or anybody else needs for their optimal health. Each of us needs something different based on a variety of factors.

Based on the above factors, here are a few steps that might tilt the scale in your favor.

Pay attention to your digestion. If you're having symptoms, eat most of your food cooked and avoid cold drinks.

Probiotics. While you can't go back and not take antibiotics, you can add probiotics into your diet with yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, and other fermented foods that can help rebuild the microflora in your gut.

Don't depend on counting calories. At least not as your only weight-control strategy. Choose foods that are digestible, have fewer simple sugars and carbs, and are not processed.

Get your stress under control. Seriously. Your weight and overall health depend on it.

Move your body. You don't have to attend boot camp, but try to do some kind of (enjoyable) movement daily.

Food therapy. Seek out the help of a practitioner who is well-versed in Chinese food therapy. You won't regret it.

Make friends with your body. Your body is not an enemy to be starved and pummeled into shape. Accept that it changes over time, and treat it with love. It's the only one you have.

While I wince for a second when I put on my jeans, I also acknowledge that my body is different than it was 10, or even 20 years ago-for a number of reasons. Not only am I older, but my exercise regimen has evolved and my nutritional needs have also changed. I weigh what I did 20 years ago, it just looks different, but I'm okay with itmostly.

Lynn Jaffee is a licensed acupunctur*ist and the author of "Simple Steps:* The Chinese Way to Better Health." This article was originally published on AcupunctureTwinCities.com



Vegetarian burgers are growing in popularityand flavor—as conscious consumers try to eat less meat.

KARLY GOMEZ/UNSPLASH



"These intensive methods come with a host of environmental and public health impacts that are borne by consumers and communities," states the report.

Unlike the natural waste recycling system of pasture-raised animals, modern meat production just creates filth. Sewage runoff from factory farms is the leading source of pollution in our rivers and lakes. In 2012, factory-farmed livestock produced 369 million tons of manure, about 13 times as much as the sewage produced by the entire U.S. population, according to the Food and Water Watch report. Yet unlike the sewage produced in cities, the manure on factory farms does not undergo any wastewater treatment.

Dr. Joel Kahn, a Detroit-based cardiologist and author of the upcoming book "The Plant-Based Solution: America's Healthy Heart Doc's Plan to Power Your Health," says factory farming gets its inspiration from the same mass-production strategy that manufactures the automobile.

"If you could do it for a Model T, why not a T-bone?" Kahn said in an email. Mass production drives costs down,

allowing more people affordable access to a particular product. However, applying this manufacturing method to living beings can get ugly. Kahn explains that animals in factory farms are squeezed into tight enclosures and denied normal social interaction. This often leads to aggression, so farmers routinely administer drugs to sedate the animals. These drugs eventually end up in the bodies of meat-eating consumers.

But Kahn, who has eaten an exclusively plant-based diet for more than 30 years, doesn't believe that grass-fed and freerange options are a sustainable answer. "These buzzwords do not account for

the environmental burden of an expanding population eating more and more animal-derived foods," Kahn said.

One of the things blamed on meat production is the amount of land it takes to raise livestock. The rationale for a future with far less meat is that if more of this land could be devoted to crops rather than animals, we could feed more people.

But Rodgers says much of the land around the world where animals currently graze is not cropable. Most of Africa, Iceland, Norway, and other places are completely inhospitable to the monocrop model of modern agriculture. "Think of the Mongolians," she

said. "They have grazing animals, not greenhouse tomatoes. They're living on animals because that's what does well on their land. And they're pretty healthy, too."

Dr. Hyman

recommends building meals in which the meat portion is more like a condiment than a main course.

Meat and Health

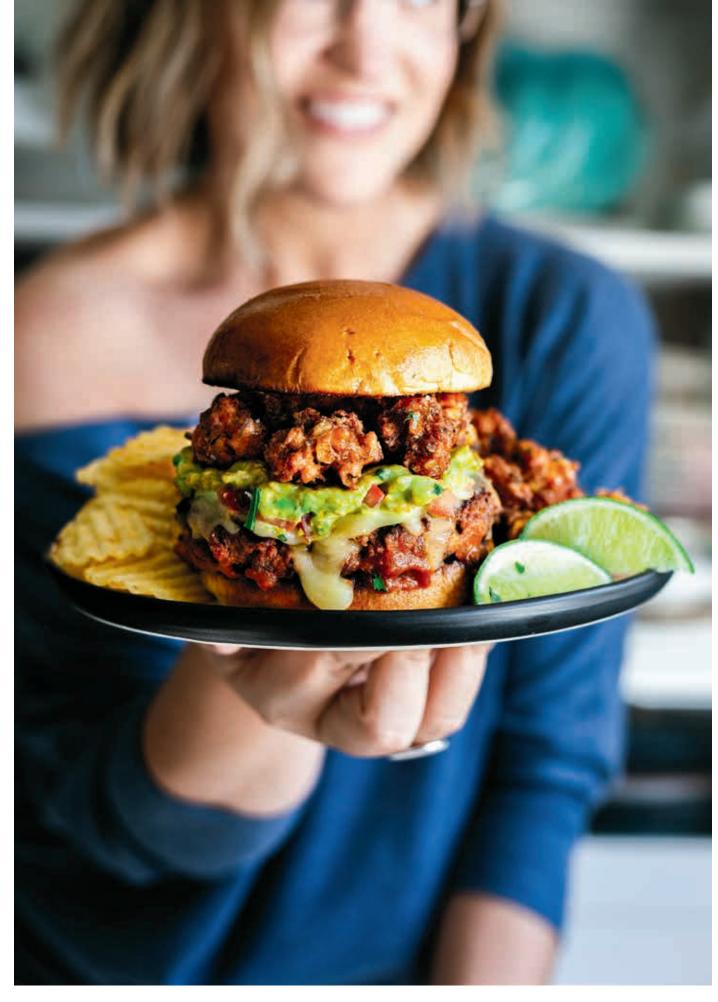
Another reason people are pushed to adopt a vegetarian diet is that it's associated with better health.

Studies find that people who eat a more plant-based diet are less likely to suffer from heart disease, diabetes, cancer, strokes, and other health problems. As a result, health insurance companies in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands offer discounted rates for vegetarians.

But not everyone believes that the story of meat as a source for disease is so solid. In the article "Is Meat Good or Bad for You?", Dr. Mark Hyman, director of the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Functional Medicine, points out that many studies associated with meat and disease outcomes are inherently unfair. They compare health-conscious vegetarians with individuals on a standard Ameri-

can diet. Researchers conclude that meat is the bad guy, but they fail to control for a myriad of unmistakably unhealthy factors such as excess sugar, smoking, and a sedentary lifestyle, making a single cause for disease hard to identify.

Another consideration Hyman sees missing from most studies is meat qual-



The Pros and Cons of Eating Meat

Chewing over the impact on our health and environment

CONAN MILNER

umans have always eaten meat, but does meat now threaten our survival? Many governments and institutions believe so. Reports from the United Nations, Oxford University, and others claim our appetite for flesh food could soon ruin the planet. By 2050, the world's population is projected to surpass 9 billion people. Anticipating the near future with the meat-eating habits of today, experts fear food shortages and environmental devastation.

In light of this threat, there is a big push among policymakers to get us to back off from burgers, bacon, and barbeque. As a 2010 report from the United Nations says, the solution lies with a "substantial worldwide diet change, away from animal products."

But according to Diana Rodgers, an author and registered dietitian nutritionist, meat is being unfairly demonized. She says our appetite for animals isn't the problem; it's the way the animals are raised.

Rodgers, who lives on an organic farm west of Boston, is also working on a documentary exploring the ways in which raising meat may actually be good for the environment.

"Animal poop is not waste, it's actually fertilizer, and it can be quite valuable to the ecosystem," she said. "We don't see it that way today because we store it in manure lagoons and we're overcrowd-

The most common concern with an all-plant diet is a lack of protein, which can result in a loss of muscle mass. But vegan athletes such as tennis star Venus Williams, 2016 U.S. **Olympics weightlifter Kendrick Farris, and** Mr. Universe 2014 and bodybuilder **Barny du Plessis all** prove that awardwinning strength can come from plant[.] only meals.

ing animals in factory farm settings." Since meat production has shown to be a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, livestock is often blamed for warming the planet. In "Comfortably Unaware," a 2011 book that examines global depletion in relation to food choice, Richard Oppenlander writes that even if we were able to break our reliance on fossil fuels, it still wouldn't be as impactful as if everyone adopted a plant-based diet.

"The single most devastating factor that affects global warming and our environment is caused by what you eat," writes Oppenlander.

But Rodgers points to historically large herds that have lived in harmony with the environment. Consider the 30 million to 60 million bison that once roamed North America 200 years ago.

Ruminants—a fancy word for large grazing animals that include cattle, bison, and wildebeest—are born to roam. Movement is essential to their survival because they must avoid predators and constantly seek a fresh food source. The fertilized ground they leave behind replenishes itself. The new grass pulls carbon down through its roots and feeds it back to bacteria in the soil, which in turn provides nutrients to plant life.

"It's a really beautiful system. The problem is, we've really gotten pretty far away from what nature is," Rodgers said.

Factory Farming's Filth

In the not-too-distant past, animals

ity. Grain-fed factory farmed meat, for example, is full of hormones, antibiotics, and pesticides, with more inflammatory omega-6 fats from corn and fewer anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats. Population studies don't identify people who eat only grass-fed meat without hormones, pesticides, or antibiotics.

Given the tricky circumstances of evaluating the impact of one type of food, Hyman admits it's almost impossible to perform an accurate study of meat. However, he suggests some guidelines that would level the playing field: Randomize people into two groups. One group would exclusively eat vegetables and high-quality protein (grass fed or organic meat). The other group would consume a high-quality vegan diet.

"Anyone have \$100 million?" asks Hyman. "We need to do that study."

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It's a really beautiful system. The problem is, we've really gotten pretty far away from what nature is.

Diana Rodgers, author and registered dietitian nutritionist

Portion and Perspective

While we wait for the results of Hyman's dream study to roll in, we can look to populations with diets that are already linked to longevity. These groups of people don't shun meat; they just eat less of it.

The "Blue Zones" are five regions around the world where researchers have identified the highest concentrations of centenarians: Ikaria, Greece; Okinawa, Japan; Loma Linda, California; the Nicoya Peninsula in Costa Rica; and the Ogliastra Region of the Italian island of Sardinia. These communities all enjoy regular exercise (it's built into their routines), an active social life, and time to de-stress. They also consume a traditional diet of predominantly plantbased foods.

Blue Zoners all eat some animal products, but their consumption is minimalthey just have a few small portions a month, on average. They also demonstrate relatively low rates of chronic disease.

The Meatless Monday campaign is a gentle effort to get our diet moving in a Blue Zone direction, away from our meatcentric mentality and toward a more modest approach of animal protein.

The campaign, the brainchild of a former ad man and the founder of the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, was started in 2003 and has since been adopted by many around the globe. As the name implies, Meatless Mon-

day is about abstaining from meat one day per week. It gets its inspiration from a time when we needed to budget our resources. In both world wars, a meatless day of the week was introduced in the United States to ration meat for the troops overseas.

Jennifer Mimkha, a registered dietitian with Prana Nutrition in Florida. encourages her clients to eat a more plant-based diet. She says Meatless Mondays are a great way to start.

"It's a nice way to get your toes wet without committing to a whole lifestyle change," she said.

Mimkha stands behind the research revealing health problems associated with meat, but she has also seen first hand that people who eat more plant foods feel better. The reason is that grains, beans, and vegetables contain something you won't find in meat: fiber.

"My clients report how much more energy they feel," Mimkha said. "People who had gastrointestinal problems and were lifelong constipation sufferers, it just doesn't exist anymore. That's because of all the fiber in the plant-based diet that they are lacking in the animal products."

But Rodgers points out that meat also has nutritional attributes not found in plants. For example, plants only provide the precursor to vitamin A, beta-carotene. About half of the population cannot convert beta-carotene into vitamin A efficiently.

The key to any sustainable diet is balance. Hyman recommends building meals in which the meat portion is more like a condiment than a main course. He also asks us to consider the source of our meat and to choose quality over quantity. Grass-fed and organic animal products may cost more, but it balances out overall, he insists: "Ideally, you will eat less of the meat and more plant-based foods," he said.



While many people think of dairy milk when they think of calcium, milks made from soy or nuts are also full of calcium

Non-Dairy Sources of Calcium

Get your daily dose of this critical mineral with a mix of healthy foods

DEBORAH MITCHELL

According to TV commercials and ads from the dairy industry, you would think milk, cheese, and other dairy products are the only ways you can get enough calcium. This simply isn't true. There are dozens of other foods that provide this much-needed mineral that is important for the health of our bones, teeth, nerves, heart, and muscles. Calcium may even help to protect us against diabetes and high blood pressure. First, let's start by talking

about how much calcium we actually need in a day. According to Dr. Walter Willett, chair of the Department of Nutrition at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, he believes we need anywhere from 500-700 mg of calcium a day. This is about half the amount that was previously recommended (1.000 mg for women under 50, and 1,200 mg for women 50+).

Since milk is often used as the benchmark when talking about calcium content, let's use it: 8 ounces of skim, low-fat, or whole milk contain 300 mg calcium. Here are 11 non-dairy sources of calcium that you can try if you don't want to or can't snack food. get it from dairy:

Amaranth, 1 cup cooked: 116 **mg**. This ancient grain also delivers a powerful level of protein, as well as manganese, magnesium, iron, and phosphorus. Amaranth is a perfect rice substitute and a super stuffing for baked squash. Add some high-calcium seeds to boost the mineral content of your dish.

Beans, levels vary. Beans are high in protein, fiber, calcium, and other nutrients while low in fat. If you want the most calcium

punch from your bean choices, select the following (cooked, 1/2cup serving) varieties: black eyes peas (185 mg), white (95 mg 1/2 cup), pinto (87 mg), and kidney (75 mg).

Blackstrap molasses: 172 mg in 1 tablespoon. One of the best ways to reap the calcium (and other) benefits of blackstrap molasses is to toss 1-2 tablespoons into a smoothie. If you also put chia or other seeds in the same smoothie, along with a calciumfortified non-dairy beverage, you will have a powerful calcium drink.

Collard greens, cooked, 1 cup: 357 mg. These greens are delicious when steamed or stir-fried with olive oil, herbs, and garlic, but they may be a hard sell for youngsters (at least they are for mine). Instead, add them to soups, stews, casseroles, or make collard green chips. Spinach comes in a close second with 240 mg per cup, cooked.

Figs, 8 whole dried: 107 mg. I love figs—dried or fresh. In addition to their high calcium content, dried figs also are a nutritious natural sweetener and

Fortified cereals, levels vary. Many kinds of cereal are fortified with calcium, providing as much as 100 percent of your RDA for the mineral. Read labels carefully before making your purchase and make sure to avoid cereals with food coloring or BHT, a preservative that can be harmful to our liver and kidneys.

Non-dairy beverages, levels vary. The non-dairy beverage market has exploded, so you have plenty of options. Look for products that have been forti-

There are dozens of other foods that provide this muchneeded mineral that is important for the health of our bones, teeth, nerves, heart, and muscles.



fied with calcium. A quick survey of such products revealed the following amount of calcium in fortified and some just naturally high in calcium beverages (1 cup): almond milk, 451 mg; cashew, 450 mg; hemp, 428 mg; organic soy milk, 299 mg; rice milk, 283 mg.

Rhubarb, cooked stalks, 1 cup: **266 mg**. Although rhubarb isn't one of the more popular veggies, its high calcium content is at least one good reason to give it a try (it's great for dessert).

Sardines, 3 oz, 325 mg. Be sure to eat the soft bones in these small fish to get all the calcium benefits.

Seeds—poppy, sesame, chia, celery: levels vary. Just one tablespoon of poppy seeds delivers 126 mg of calcium, while celery seeds provide 115 mg, whole roasted sesame seeds have 88 mg, and chia seeds come in around 80 mg. Sprinkle them on salads, stir into soups, toss into smoothies, or grind and add them to dips and sauces.

Tofu, fortified with calcium, 1/2cup: 253 mg or more. When tofu is prepared with calcium, it can be a super source of this mineral. The amount of calcium in fortified to fu can be nearly three times this amount. Check out the label when making your purchase and always buy organic tofu.

Deborah Mitchell is a freelance health writer who is passionate about animals and the environment. She has authored, co-authored, and written more than 50 books and thousands of articles on a wide range of topics. This article was originally published on NaturallySavvy.com

MADE TO MOVE Activity May Play a Role in Sleep Apnea Risk

Sleep apnea causes poor sleep, leading to fatigue and a host of health risks

DEVON ANDRE

re you groggy and tired even though you \perp **L** think you've had a good sleep? If that's the case, you may have sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea is a common sleep-related breathing problem. It leaves sufferers unconsciously gasping for air during sleep, making it nearly impossible to achieve quality sleep. The condition is associated with high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke risk.

New research is showing that activity might reduce the risk.

Activity is associated with several positive health outcomes, and previous research has uncovered that there is a link between more activity and a lower risk for sleep ap-

nea. This new study, however, shows just how much exercise might help.

Walking at a moderate pace for as little as **20-minutes per** day could cut the risk of developing sleep apnea by **10 percent**.

Looking at 150,000 participants in the Ontario Health Study, researchers found that walking at a moderate pace for as little as 20-minutes per day could cut the risk of developing sleep apnea by 10 percent. Eight minutes of intense exercise had the same result. Seven percent of the participants were diagnosed with sleep apnea. They were also found to live a more sedentary life than those without it, sitting for an average of 4.4 more

hours per day. Because the study is observational, it does not prove that activity influences sleep apnea risk. It's possible, for example, that people with sleep apnea are walking less because they are fatigued from poor sleep. In any event, this news does bode well for activity. It's pretty difficult to separate activity from positive health outcomes, particularly those that are associated with heart health and weight. Sleep apnea is not entirely determined by lifestyle factors, but they do play a role. Body fat is a known risk factor for sleep apnea, and activity is a component of weight management. Although activity will not necessarily lead to weight loss without proper nutrition, it can be used to create a caloric deficit. This may influence sleep apnea risk.

If you're not feeling focused, energized, and refreshed when you wake up, you might want to talk to a sleep specialist. But boosting activity and adopting a healthy diet could help too.

Devon Andre holds a bachelor's degree in forensic science from the University of Windsor in Canada and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Andre is a journalist for Bel Marra Health, which first published this article.

Health Benefits of **Ginsenosides**

Research is revealing multiple therapeutic benefits of ginseng compounds

anax ginseng, often referred to as Asian or Korean ginseng, is a well-known and traditionally used herbal medicine touted for its numerous therapeutic benefits.

The main pharmacological compounds in Panax ginseng, called ginsenosides, have been studied for their anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties, but researchers have uncovered additional health benefits and believe that ginsenosides may be a safe alternate treatment for a variety of medical conditions.

1. Reduced Chronic Inflammation

Chronic inflammation, characterized as acute inflammation that lasts more than four weeks, can contribute to a variety of diseases like cancer and diabetes. Prolonged inflammation is caused by persistent injury, toxic exposure, infection, or autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, as well as many other factors, including obesity and stress. It can be deadly when not corrected.

Researchers have demonstrated that various ginsenosides can reduce chronic inflammation by suppressing the expression of proinflammatory cytokines in the body, effectively moderating the inflammatory response.

While inflammation is an important way the body responds to injury or infection, chronic inflammation can lead to inflammatory diseases. Ginsenosides can help prevent inflammatory diseases early on and they also exhibit protective and anti-cancer effects.

2. Enhanced Brain Function and Potential Neuroprotective Effects

Researchers discovered that ginsenosides may have a protective effect against neurological disorders and nervous system diseases such as Alzheimer's, epilepsy, depression, and Parkinson's disease. Conventional treatment of these disorders includes surgery or medication, but long-term use of medication is often not sustainable and can lead to drug poisoning, while surgery introduces the risk of infection and is not always successful.

In various studies, the administration of ginsenosides improved spatial memory, promoted nerve growth and health, improved mental work capacity and longterm memory, and regulated multiple signaling pathways in the brain associated with neurological disorders, reducing the risk of disease and improving symptoms in subjects.

While still in the early stages of study, researchers are eager to determine the exact mechanisms behind ginsenosides' strong neurological benefits.

3. Reduced Fatigue

Ginseng supplements, long believed to improve energy and physical health, are a promising treatment for fatigue, especially for those suffering from chronic illnesses or postoperative fatigue. In a randomized, placebo-controlled trial, researchers demonstrated that ginsenosides greatly improved fatigue levels in 174 participants after just four weeks of treatment, without any significant adverse effects.

These results could be due to improved energy metabolism, enhancement of mental clarity, and suppression of oxidative stress. Researchers are still unsure as to the exact nature of ginseng's antifatigue properties.

4. Improved Erectile Dysfunction and Sexual Health

One of the claimed health benefits of ginseng is improved sexual performance. In multiple studies, ginsenosides played a therapeutic role in the treatment of erectile dysfunction by increasing endothelial nitric oxide synthase expression, an enzyme important for vascular health in corpus cavernosum tissue.

Ginsenosides also increase secretions of luteinizing hormone, a hormone that signals the production of testosterone, and researchers have demonstrated that ginsenosides extracted from Asian Panax ginseng can increase testosterone levels.

Similar studies also showed improved levels of sperm count and sperm motility, suggesting that ginsenosides may be a useful TARAPONG SRICHAIYOS/SHUTTERSTOCK

Week 29, 2020 THE EPOCH TIMES



Ginseng is a root with compounds called ginsenosides that have multiple therapeutic benefits.

therapeutic tool for the treatment and prevention of male reproductive diseases or disorders.

5.Reduced Risk of Diabetes

and Improved Hyperglycemia Researchers have found that ginsenosides found in the extract of Panax ginseng have anti-diabetic effects, thanks to improved lipid and insulin sensitivity and regulated glycolipid metabolism.

In a report studying the root extracts of ginseng, researchers discovered that ginsenosides actually increase insulin production while decreasing cell apoptosis in pancreatic. The GMI Research Group is *dedicated to investigating the* most important health and environmental issues of the day. Special emphasis will be placed on environmental health. Our focused and deep research will explore the many ways in which the present condition of the human body directly reflects the true state of the ambient environment. This work is reproduced and distributed with the permission of Green-*MedInfo LLC. Sign up for the* newsletter at www.GreenmedInfo.health



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