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THE EPOCH TIMES

ELIZAVETA GALITCKAIA/SHUTTERSTOCI



JENNIFER MARGULIS

e's got a pass!" said the dad sitting across from me at the airport in Bismarck, North Dakota, where we were both stranded due to flight delays. He gestured to his 5-year-old son.

"Had a slight fever and tested positive for COVID. We had to keep him home from school for a couple weeks. Then, he tested negative and was good to go. I got the vaccine. My wife did, too. But he can Given the natural protection provided to people who recover from COVID, why is the CDC so eager to get every eligible American vaccinated?

travel anywhere without any testing, and there's no vaccine for his age anyway."

In Germany Natural Immunity Counts Since the beginning of July in Germany, where that family lives, if you can demonstrate proof of being COVID-recovered and then have a subsequent negative COVID test, you are considered immune. For six months anyway, according to the German government.

But in the United States, where my family lives, even those who are COVID-

recovered (and show high protection via either antibody or T-cell testing) are being told they also must get vaccinated. Indeed, the CDC has been actively urging Americans who have already had COVID to get the vaccine.

America's federal and state health officials, via the mainstream media and social media, as well as on their official channels, insist that COVID vaccines offer better protection than natural immunity alone.

Continued on Page 4

AGE WELL

Top 5 Longevity Foods to Postpone Aging

These foods pack a long list of incredible health benefits

ANN LOUISE GITTLEMAN

As I was researching my newest book "Radical Longevity," I took a good hard look at the longest living populations from Okinawa, Japan, and Sardinia, Italy, to Costa Rica, Greece, Loma Linda, California, and the Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern Europe.

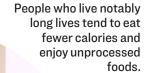
What were they doing differently? Was it just good genes? Apparently not, because, according to a Danish population-based Twin Study on health, genetics only accounts for about 20 percent to 30 percent of longevity factors.

So, as I like to say, "your DNA is simply not your destiny!"

What could be easier than eating your way to a longer, more vibrant life? Long life is all about diet and lifestyle. Superagers, people who live notably long lives, tend to eat fewer calories but enjoy nutrient-dense, wholesome, unprocessed foods. They stop eating when they feel about 80 percent full, eat more slowly, and enjoy meals as a time to pause and relax during the day. So, what could be easier than eating your way to a longer, more vibrant life?

Here are my top five longevity foods that super-agers enjoy on a daily or weekly basis. You should be incorporating them as much as possible, which isn't hard because they're also delicious.

Continued on Page 2





BIGGER SIZE,

EASIER TO READ

"The Truth, as horrifying as it is,

shall set us free. This should be

on this country's academia's

list of required reading."

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Top 5 Longevity Foods to Postpone Aging

These foods pack a long list of incredible health benefits

Continued from Page 1



Blueberries are my favorite fruit for living ong and strong. These iny berries are bursting with vitality—just

like you will be when you add them to your daily diet. Blueberries are low in calories but higher in cell-protecting antioxidants—including the powerful cholesterol fighter resveratrol—than any other common fruit or vegetable.

Just one cup of blueberries contains more than 25 percent of your recommended daily amount of vitamin C and 4 grams of fiber as well as vitamin K and manganese to help prevent osteoporosis and joint inflammation. They contain significant amounts of both antibacterial and antiviral compounds and may even help protect you from heart disease and cancer.

The tannins in blueberries serve to cleanse the digestive system and promote a healthy urinary tract by preventing bacterial growth. They contain insoluble fiber, which prevents their total calories from being absorbed. And they're naturally sweet, but their low amount of fructose makes them a perfect, guilt-free snack for satisfying a sweet tooth.



2. Broccoli

Broccoli needs to be nigh on your list of healthy veggies if you care to have better eyesight, lower your risk of heart disease and cancer, and renew the

youthful glow of your skin. High in antioxidants, sulfur, and vitamin C, broccoli is an excellent detoxifier. It also contains omega 3s, amino acids, and folate to keep your skin radiant. Rich in beta-carotene, phosphorus, zeaxanthin, and B vitamins, broccoli is excellent for protecting your eyes from age-related diseases such as macular degeneration and cataracts.

If that's not enough to send you into the kitchen to steam some broccoli for dinner, how about its ability to help regulate blood pressure? It's high in chromium, which helps insulin to function properly by regulating blood sugar and helping to keep blood pressure in check. Broccoli also can't be beat for its immune system-strengthening minerals such as selenium, zinc, phosphorus, and copper. And did you know that broccoli is an excellent source of calcium? It provides 47 milligrams of calcium per 100 grams to help prevent osteoporosis or other weakening of the bones and teeth.

Don't forget fresh broccoli sprouts! They contain the highest known source of vital phytonutrients, indole-3-carbinol and sulforaphane, which aid the liver in its ability to process and neutralize toxins. Our body's detoxification system is broken down into two phases. In phase one, detoxifying enzymes begin to process the metabolites. In phase two, the enzymes process metabolites, which are broken down so they can easily be excreted out of your body.

Sulforaphane increases the production of phase two enzymes, protecting DNA from free radicals and promoting immune system health. With the ability to affect more than 2,000 genes, activating numerous defense mechanisms, and neutralizing free radicals, sulforaphane is an extremely potent toxicity zapper. You can also find sulforaphane in products such as CS Health, which is 1,000 times more concentrated than broccoli extract.



Beets

Beets are one of the most regenerative foods or your body, making them longevity rock stars well worth adding



Malpractice Versus

times they just get blamed

PETER WEISS

Thirty years ago, I had a newly pregnant patient come into my office. She was only a week late on her period. We did the routine prenatal labs and all was normal. The following week, the patient moved to Seattle, and I didn't hear back from her until I got a notice 10 months later that I was being sued. Apparently, her baby had some unusual anomalies.

that I didn't tell her that her baby could have such unusual anomalies, and if she would have been forewarned, she would have had an abortion. This was the first time I was ever named in a lawsuit. Needless to say, the lawsuit was thrown out, but from that point forward, I was on full guard.

medical misconduct by a physician or surgeon that's either injurious to the patient or unprofessional.

and do a fair share of expert evaluations for medical-legal cases. The vast majority are for the defense, but I do take serious malpractice cases for plaintiffs. I'm also an expert examiner for the Medical Board of California. It's our obligation to protect patients from physicians and nurses who don't take their oath of doing no harm seriously.

Malpractice suits, deserved or otherwise, can take a severe toll on a doctor, but perhaps not as serious as the toll they took a few thousand years ago. An

Related Research in 2009 recounts the Code of Hammurabi from 2030 BC. It tice law. It decreed:

"If the doctor has treated a gentleman with a lancet of bronze and has caused the gentleman to die, or has opened an abscess of the eye for a gentleman with a bronze lancet, and has caused the loss of the gentleman's eye, one shall cut off

Fortunately for modern physicians and their careers.

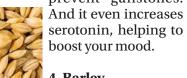
Such a high percentage of physicians agnosis, that might just mean the per-



zapper.

to your daily diet. Beets aid in digestion, thin the bile, cleanse the liver, alkalize the blood, and even improve cognitive function and sports performance. They are rich in potassium, manganese, copper, magnesium, phosphorus, vitamin C, iron, folate, vitamin B6, nitrates, fiberand more. The betalains in beets partner with glutathione to help your body

If you're concerned about weight loss, beets are your best friend because of their benefits for your liver and gallbladder. They contain betaine, which thins the bile that your liver uses to excrete toxins and helps to break down fats so they can be used for fuel, instead of padding your hips and thighs. Bile deficiency is very common for those of us over 60 and especially more so for those without a gallbladder. For those with their gallbladder intact, betaine also helps prevent gallstones.



The most interesting

With the ability to affect more than 2,000 genes, sulforaphane is an extremely potent toxicity

finding of all was regarding barley. It was the most common grain eaten by the super-agers and I wondered why. I knew it was rich in soluble fiber and it was also a great source of magnesium, but what I discovered is that it is also one of the highest known food sources of silica (a major antagonist to aluminum).

Hulled barley is considered a whole grain, as only the outer shell has been removed during processing, whereas the more commonly available pearled barley isn't a whole grain because the longevity, optimize health, and live your fiber-containing bran has been removed. Keep that in mind as you consider adding this lovely grain to your cereal, soups, and stews, and even as a base for hummus.

The benefits of whole-grain barley stem from not only its fiber content, but also its phytonutrients, which are plant compounds with significant health benefits, like being antioxidants. In barley, these phytonutrients support immunity and are neuro-protective, anti-inflammatory, anti-aging, and hormone I like barley grass even better because

its unique phytonutrients help repair published on AnnLouise.com

DNA. It's also rich in chlorophyll. Barley grass also contains anti-inflammatory enzymes and antioxidants that protect against radiation.



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOC

eaten by super-agers is none other than

huge surprise that beans are one of the highest fiber-containing foods on earth. Several studies have shown that fiber-rich foods regulate blood-sugar levels, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, help control obesity, breast, and colon cancer, and gastrointestinal

And it's critically important to note that without adequate soluble fiber, bile is recirculated in our body rather than being ushered out of the body. When this happens, it becomes toxic and often leads to intestinal inflammation, gallbladder, and liver disease, and skin conditions such as eczema, psoriasis, and acne.

Adding beans to your diet can be one of the most important health habits you can incorporate because of their nutrient and fiber content. However, as super-agers know, it's important to reduce the lectin content to reduce damaging the lining of your digestive tract and prevent gas or bloating. To do this, I recommend soaking your beans through a "presoak cycle."

Soak for at least 12 hours before cooking and add apple cider vinegar to the water. The addition of baking soda is said to boost lectin neutralization. And cooking beans for at least 15 minutes on high heat is said to reduce lectin toxicity by 500 percent.

May you live to 110 and enjoy these five "B-foods" listed above to boost your best life! For more radical tips on longevity, be sure to check out my book, "Radical Longevity."

Ann Louise Gittleman holds a master's in nutrition education from Columbia University, and is certified as a nutrition specialist by the American College of Nutrition. She also has a doctorate in holistic nutrition and has served as the chief nutritionist of the Pediatric Clinic at Bellevue Hospital and is the former director of nutrition at the Pritikin Longevity Center in Santa Monica, Calif. This article was originally

MEDICALLY CORRECT

Common Misfortune

Sometimes doctors make mistakes, and some-

I was being sued because she claimed

Malpractice is generally defined as

I've now been in practice for 35 years

introduction to medical malpractice published in Clinical Orthopaedics and was the first known medical malprac-

surgeons, the penalties today are largely monetary. And some specialists are much more likely than others to face these penalties. In 2021, obstetrics and gynecology had the highest percentage of malpractice cases, with 83 percent of obstetricians having been sued during

being sued raises the question of what really constitutes malpractice. The current legal standard is that a physician, nurse, or hospital provides substandard care and harm is caused. Notice how I said substandard, not sub-excellent. Not all physicians, nurses, and hospitals are excellent. Missing a diagnosis such as misreading a mammogram can be malpractice, or it might not if a reasonably capable technician should have been able to read it. If it was a tricky dison reading the mammogram wasn't quite capable enough.

I recently reviewed a case where a woman had bladder surgery for "leaking urine while she was walking." Her physician told her that she needed surgery, and was the doctor to perform it. This was in a smaller town, where there were really limited options. Instead of referring her to a specialist who does these bladder surgeries all the time, this doctor, who was a general surgeon, felt it was within her wheelhouse of qualifications.

Needless to say, the surgery didn't go well, and to make matters worse, the doctor didn't recognize the complications and the patient got sepsis (a serious infection). She was finally transferred to a regional center where a qualified urologist was able to help the patient and repair the damage from the first surgery. This is an obvious example of malpractice. The first surgeon had no business providing a service that she wasn't qualified to perform. The physician and hospital settled, and this woman, thankfully, is doing well. There are many other cases where the outcome wasn't as fortunate.

In 2020, the Journal of General Internal Medicine published a review of one else pay for your pain and suffering. deaths due to medical error. It found that the number of preventable deaths for hospitalized patients is slightly more than 22,000 per year, as opposed to the previous claims of 44,000 to 98,000 deaths per year.

"The number of deaths due to medical error is lower than previously reported and the majority occur in patients with less than 3-month life expectancy," the review reads. "The vast majority of hospital deaths are due to underlying disease."

This brings us back to what malpractice really is. No one wants bad outcomes, but sometimes, bad things happen. This same type of skewing of VID-19 deaths. There are mounting questions about how many people died

from COVID-19 versus those that died from other causes, but also had COVID

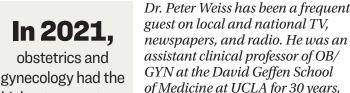
Roughly 20 years ago, a patient of mine had a difficult delivery. She also had a difficult marriage. Eight months after delivery, I received a subpoena of records because I was being sued by this man and woman. They, really the husband, had claimed that they weren't able to have intimate relations with each other after delivery, and somehow, I was at fault.

I reviewed the records and found no problem. Her post-delivery visit was normal as well. The most rewarding aspect of this lawsuit was that six weeks later, I received a notice that the suit was being dropped. I found out that this woman was pregnant, and they were now getting a divorce. A difficult marriage isn't grounds for medical malpractice.

Malpractice is a difficult problem, because there are doctors that make errors and there are just terrible things that happen to people. Sometimes, it's difficult to tell one from the other, especially in a litigious culture with billboards and TV commercials promising to make some-

Fear of being sued can affect patient care for the worse, with some doctors practicing defensive medicine, basically overtreating patients as the safer course should something go wrong. This in itself can lead to problems. The threat of lawsuits can also make it harder for physicians to deal with actual problems in the course of treatment. Everyone makes mistakes, but if you're afraid of being sued, it can make it harder to own up to them.

Dr. Atul Gawande of Harvard said it best: "I think we are faced in medicine with the reality that we have to be willing to talk about our failures and think hard about them, even despite statistics is used when quoting CO- the malpractice system. I mean, there are things that we can do to make that



nighest percentage of malpractice cases with

83% of obstetricians having been

sued during their career.

stepping down so he could provide We live in a time his clinical services to those in need when lawsuits when the COVID pandemic hit. can target the He was also a national health care best of doctors adviser for Sen. John McCain's 2008 as easily as the presidential campaign.

Naturally Acquired Immunity Versus Vaccine Acquired Immunity

Science and public policy seem to disagree over which one is better

Continued from Page 1

CDC Urges Vaccination for COVID-Recovered

A CDC statement from August sums up the official position nicely: "New CDC Study: Vaccination Offers Higher Protection Than Previous COVID-19 Infection."

"If you have had COVID-19 before please still get vaccinated," CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky urged the public in that release. "Getting the vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others around you, especially as the more contagious Delta variant spreads around the country."

Natural Immunity

But is it really?

Versus Vaccine Immunity

Despite sensationalist headlines, reinfection with COVID-19 appears to be exceedingly rare. If you are unvaccinated and have had COVID, the chances of you getting it again are slim. A preliminary report from Israeli scientists shows that out of 149,735 people in Israel with confirmed COVID-19 cases (documented via positive PCR tests) only 154 people had evidence of reinfection, which is about 1

It's really

arrogant to

think that we

can re-design

our immune

Lentz-Marino, former

professor of chemistry

and biology, Mount

Much of the

established

supports the

superiority

science

Holyoke College

systems.

Another study, however, suggests that the chances of reinfection are even lower than 1 in 1,000. Cleveland Clinic scientists who examined a cohort of 52,238 employees found no cases of reinfection among unvaccinated people with evidence of prior SARS-Co-V-2

The same study showed that vaccinated people who hadn't had COVID-19 had a lower risk of infection than unvaccinated people. Still, the researchers concluded that "individuals who have had SARS-CoV-2 are unlikely to benefit from COVID-19 vaccination, and vaccines can be safely prioritized to those who have not been infected before."

Sarbecovirus Infections Protect Against

The benefits of naturally acquired immunity may go beyond protection against COVID. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is part of a family of viruses known as sarbecoviruses. Symptoms vary widely in different people, but these viruses can create severe acute respiratory syndromes that usually begin with a fever and body aches, according to the CDC.

There have been two previous SARS outbreaks. A 2003 outbreak thought to have originated in China in 2002 infected about 8,098 people and led to about 774 deaths, according to the World Health Organization. Another

Both of these outbreaks were self-limiting: humans managed to overcome the illnesses naturally without mass vaccination campaigns. Research on these other sarbecovirus infections is limited, but it seems that when we acquire natural immunity to these viruses, it helps protect us against future disease.

took blood from people who had had previous COVID infections (SARS-CoV-2 and SARS-Co-V) and assessed 12 antibodies in the blood. As reported in Nature, the California researchers found that one antibody in par-



A statement put forth by the CDC in August titled New CDC Study: Vaccination Offers Higher Protection than Previous COVID-19 Infection urged, "If you have had COVID-19 before please still get vaccinated." The release included two studies: a smaller Kentucky study of 246 participants and 492 controls, and a larger study of seniors that sheds no light on whether vaccine immunity is more long lasting than immunity from infection and offers no evidence to justify the idea that COVID-recovered patients should get



America's federal and state health officials insist that COVID vaccines offer better protection than natural immunity

ticular (S2H97) was able to bind to a range of sarbecovirus infections and keep the viruses from spreading in lab experiments. When

they tested the antibody in hamsters, it kept the rodents from getting sick. This "super antibody," which was acquired

naturally, essentially blocked SARS viruses from spreading to other cells. While the research is being used to promote the idea of developing a broad-ranging vaccine, it also shows that there may be long-lasting benefits to natural infection.

Viral Illness: Natural Immunity **Provides Long-Lasting Protection**

With other infectious diseases caused by viruses, we have seen that natural infection provides longer-lasting protection than vaccine immunity. For example, a 2017 study of adults in the Czech Republic published in the scientific journal PLOS One showed that the highest protection against the measles, as measured by antibody levels in people's blood, was in people over 50 years of age who were naturally infected before the implementation of a measles vaccine.

Other research on swine flu (H1N1) published in the Journal of Experimental Medicine in 2011, found "extraordinarily" powerful antibodies in the blood of nine people who caught the swine flu naturally and recovered

Though, again, this research was showcased by news reports as evidence that it may be possible to develop a one-size-fits-all vaccine against different strains of flu viruses, what it actually demonstrates is that recovering from naturally acquired viral infections not only gives people short-term immunity against other viruses but may also be of lasting benefit in fighting off other viral infections as well.

Because SARS-CoV-2 is a novel virus and the vaccines to protect against it only became available in January, it isn't scientifically possible to know the long-term protection offered by either the infection or the vaccines.

As more data comes in, however, it appears that even mild infection can provide robust protection from COVID-19 infection. A study from July evaluated 254 COVID-19 patients for up to eight months and found "durable broad-based immune responses," even among COVID-recovered patients who had only mild symptoms.

Other recent data also suggests that natural immunity is long-lasting. A study from Finland published in September in the European Journal of Immunology found that in COVID-recovered patients protection against reinfection persisted for over a year.

Immunologist: Natural Immunity Better Than Vaccination

Yet another large study from August looked at a database of 2.5 million Israelis and found that "natural immunity confers longer-lasting and stronger protection against infection, symptomatic disease and hospitalization caused by the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2, compared to the BNT162b2 two-dose vaccine-induced immunity."

This Israeli study found that people who were vaccinated who hadn't been previously infected were 6 to 13 times more likely to get infected with COVID-19 than unvaccinated people who had already had the illness.

"It's a textbook example of how natural immunity is really better than vaccination," Charlotte Thalin, an immunology researcher and specialistin internal medicine who is based in Stockholm, Sweden, told Science.org.

Where Is The Science **Behind The CDC's Vaccine Push?**

Given the natural protection provided to people who recover from COVID, why is the CDC so eager to get every eligible American vaccinated, even those who have recovered and have naturally acquired immunity?

The CDC press release references only two reports. The first report showed that unvaccinated people in Kentucky were nearly 2 1/2 times more likely to get re-infected with COVID compared to fully vaccinated indi-

The second CDC report, co-authored by more than 40 medical doctors and public health officials (several of whom disclose direct ties to the pharmaceutical companies manufacturing and profiting from these vaccines), looked at hospitalization rates of adults aged 65 and older. It concluded that "among adults aged 65-74 years, effectiveness of full vaccination for preventing hospitalization was 96 percent for Pfizer-BioNTech, 96 per-

The second report cited by the CDC excluded hospitalized patients who had only one dose of any COVID vaccine less than 14 days prior. It also didn't specify if those who were vaccinated or those who were unvaccinated had a history of prior infection.

So that report sheds no light on whether vaccine immunity is more long-lasting than immunity from infection and offers no evidence to justify the idea that COVID-recovered patients should get vaccinated.

The CDC didn't mention other studies that showed findings contrary to the Kentucky study. It's unclear whether the agency reviewed those studies and found the Kentucky study to be stronger or only considered the Kentucky study in making their policy to recommend and require that the previously infected get the vaccine.

Meanwhile, much of the established science supports the superiority of acquired immunity. That fact has put some people, such as Laurie Lentz-Marino, in a difficult position as they try to balance the consequences of not complying with vaccine mandates against their understanding of what's in the best interest of their health.

"Vaccine-induced immunity can never be as long-lasting and robust as naturally acquired immunity," said Lentz-Marino, who taught chemistry and biology classes at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, for more than 20 years. "The human immune system knows what it's doing. We are an incredibly successful species. There would not be close to 8 billion people on the planet otherwise."

Lentz-Marino, 61, recently resigned from her teaching position over vaccine and mask mandates at the college.

"It's a sad joke to think that we know better than Mother Nature. We're going in the wrong direction. It's really arrogant to think that we can re-design our immune systems."

Jennifer Margulis, Ph.D., is an awardwinning science writer and book author. A Fulbright grantee, she is also a frequent contributor to The Epoch Times. Learn more and subscribe to her free weekly newsletter at her website JenniferMargulis.net.

PART 3

How to Prevent Lyme Disease

Become tick aware and use these tips to ward off Lyme disease

ASHLEY TURNER

This is the conclusion of a three-part series exploring Lyme disease: how to test for it, treat it, and prevent it.

Like any disease, Lyme disease is best avoided. While many of the most common diseases today can be held at bay with proper diet and exercise, Lyme disease requires special precautions to avoid the ticks that spread it.

Awareness in Nature

Ticks usually hang out in wooded areas with lots of shrubs, tall grasses and weeds, and leaf litter. Ticks will attach themselves to whoever brushes by. When hiking or walking in nature, stay in the middle of the path and avoid contact with low-lying brush. Wearing light-colored clothing and long pants provides a protective barrier for the skin against ticks. Tuck pant legs into the socks to safeguard this barrier.

Use Tick Repellant

Conventional recommendations to use DEET to deter ticks may prove helpful to avoid tick bites, but will leave individuals exposed to heavy toxins. From my perspective, using essential oils in insect repellent sprays and embedded into flea and tick collars on pets is effective and safe. In fact, research indicates that lemon eucalyptus is also a strong tick deterrent and can be as effective as DEET.

This recipe has been a tried-and-true alternative to conventional bug spray for people and pets. Made with essential oils, there are no harmful chemicals or ingredients.

- 5 drops peppermint essential oil
- 5 drops cedarwood essential oil • 7 drops lavender essential oil
- 10 drops geranium essential oil
- 10 drops lemongrass essential oil • 15 drops lemon eucalyptus essential oil

Place the essential oils in a four-ounce glass spray bottle. Fill to the shoulders of the bottle with clean, filtered water. Tightly secure the spray lid. When enjoying the outdoors, mist yourself, loved ones, or your dog with several sprays of this concoction.

Reapply as needed. There are also services that spray your yard with garlic oil, which is a natural tick the longer ticks are attached, the greater their deterrent. Many who live in Lyme endemic propensity to transmit pathogens. To remove portant in preventing tick-borne pathogens tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin from infecting their loved ones and pets.

Perform Daily Tick Checks

An obvious, but sometimes overlooked step in avoiding tick-borne illness is conducting proper tick checks when coming inside after time in nature. This should be done very thoroughly, looking in all areas of the body, especially creases, including:

 under the arms around the ears





These habits can help you limit your exposure to ticks.

Testing a tick

can provide

insight on

infections

you may have

been exposed

- belly button
- scalp
- · throughout the hair

It is helpful to use a magnifier and a flashlight to be able to spot a tick since many are the size of a poppyseed. If a tick is found, wrap it up in a piece of tape and throw it in the outside trash.

Properly Remove a Tick

Removing an attached tick as soon as you find it is imperative to preventing illness because as possible. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Twisting or jerking can cause mouthparts to remain embedded in the skin.

There are various tick removing instruments on the market as well, follow the instructions for the specific instrument when removing a tick with it. Once the tick has detached, examine the bite site to ensure the mouthparts were completely removed. Wash your hands with soap and water.

Lavender essential oil has powerful antimicrobial properties and may help kill

Avoid tick-borne illness by conducting proper tick checks when coming inside after time in nature.



Research indicates that lemon eucalyptus is also a strong

pathogens. You can apply it (diluted in a carrier oil or neat, depending on the sensitivity of the skin) every five minutes for the first 30 to 40 minutes after removing the tick.

After removing the tick, it should be placed in a sealed plastic bag with a moist paper towel or cotton ball for proper pathogen testing. Testing a tick can provide insight into infections you may have been exposed to. Any tick-borne pathogen is important to treat as soon as possible so that chronic infection doesn't set in, regardless of how the tick tests. TickReport and IGeneX offer reliable tick testing. Keep in mind that a tick-testing positive is not a guarantee of infection. If you don't wish to test the tick, place it in a piece of tape and throw it away—preferably outside of the home.

The Tick-Borne Pathogen and Mold Connection

Many patients who struggle with Lyme disease have also been exposed to mold that hinders their immune function. Many clinicians recognize Lyme disease and mold illness as significant pieces in biotoxinrelated illness. These biotoxins, along with many others, have the ability to trip the switch for chronic inflammation and immune suppression. When mold and other biotoxins are not swiftly and efficiently removed from the body, they have the potential to instigate a progressive, multisymptom illness that impacts numerous systems within the body.

When this happens, the body is in a chronic inflammatory state that Dr. Richie Shoemaker calls chronic inflammatory response syndrome, or CIRS. Many practitioners within the functional medicine world refer to it as mold and biotoxin illness because deeper testing reveals exposure to at least one biotoxin. Tick-borne pathogens and mold exposure are both biotoxins that

This is the conclusion of a three-part series exploring Lyme disease: how to test for it, treat it, and prevent it.

Dr. Ashley Turner is a traditionally trained naturopath and board-certified doctor of holistic health for Restorative Wellness Center. As an expert in functional medicine, Dr. Ashley is the author of the gut-healing guide "Restorative Kitchen and Restorative Traditions," a cookbook comprised of noninflammatory holiday recipes.

Are Carbohydrates Inherently Bad?

Carbs have gotten a bad reputation despite being the backbone of the human diet

MAT LECOMPTE

Nutritionally speaking, carbohydrates usually amount to little more than sugar, and in the current dietary vernacular, sugar means bad. But is this fair?

Not really. Although carbohydrates are sugars, starches, and fiber, (but mostly sugar), they aren't inherently bad. Not all sugar is bad, believe it or not. In fact, your body needs sugar to run. Glucose (stored sugar) is your body's preferred source of energy. Sugar allows your muscles and organs to do their work.

Like other things, carbohydrates can be a force for both good and evil. It usually comes down to dose and source. If you're eating too many carbohydrates and getting them from the wrong places, they can cause devastating effects like weight gain, heart troubles, Type 2 diabetes, liver disease, and more.

So, how do you distinguish between good and bad?

It's quite easy. If it comes naturally in a food such as a fruit, vegetable, grain, or



be confusing. They are made from fruit, but they have very high sugar concentrations without fiber to act as a buffer.

dairy—it's a high-quality carbohydrate. If it comes in a box or plastic package—especially in the form of an added sugar or hyper-processed grain—it can be dangerous. That includes most snacks, soft drinks, fast foods, and other processed foods such as white bread.

Fruit, vegetables, dairy, and grains all feature natural sugars. But the sugar is in low doses and comes along with a host of other nutrients. Fruits, vegetables, and most grains contain fiber, as well, which helps with sugar absorption. This means blood sugar levels are highly unlikely to spike.

Dairy can be tricky. Dairy contains lactose, a naturally occurring sugar, in generally low amounts. But flavored yogurts have sugar added, making them more like junk food than a healthy snack. So, when it comes to yogurt, go plain and add fruit for some sweetness and highquality carbohydrates.

Fruit juices can be confusing, too. They are made from fruit, but they can have very high sugar concentrations without fiber to act as a buffer.



You can find carbohydrates in any number of foods, but you'll want to stick to fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes.

Instead of drinking your fruit in the form of juice, eat it whole. That can include mashed up in a smoothie.

Take a look at the ingredients of packaged food. When you see terms ending in "ose," including highfructose corn syrup, you can almost guarantee it's a bad carbohydrate.

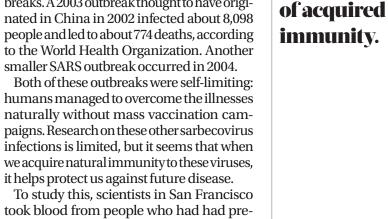
On the other hand, it's a good carbohydrate when food comes from the produce section and is unpack-

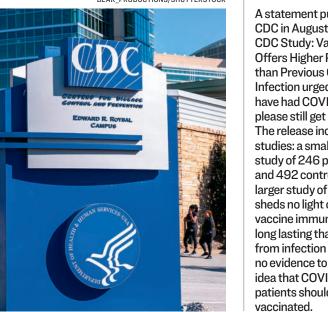
aged. Further, if it's a brown grain, it's likely a good carbohydrate.

TATJANA BAIBAKOVA/SHUTTERSTOC

Use good carbs to make up roughly half your daily caloric intake, and there's a great chance you'll have a low risk of illness and a highly functional body.

Mat Lecompte is a health and wellness journalist. This article was first published on Bel Marra Health.





(MAIN PHOTO) HALFPOINT/SHUTTERSTOCK; (INSET) CANDE WESTH/UNSPLASH; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES

Living well for decades to come is simple-and often delightful

MIKE DONGHIA

Minimalism is intentional living. It's stripping away what isn't needed, in order to focus on what matters most. It's a framework that can be applied to just about any area of life, including your own personal health. I approached writing this article with two questions in mind:

1. What are the essential factors in promoting a long, healthy life?

2. What is the value of good health and how much time and energy should I invest in pursuing it?

I am by no means a medical professional, but I've done my best to stick to the essentials without being overly prescriptive. The truth is, living well isn't all that complicated and despite the never-ending saga on whether eggs are good or bad for you, living a healthy life is a pretty well-understood formula. That being said, be smart and talk to your doctor before making drastic changes.

Minimalist Diet

- Eat more whole grains, fruits, veggies, nuts, and legumes.
- Eat less "junk" food ... i.e. food with very little nutritional value.

I think a lot of people get hung up on what exactly is a good diet. They're overwhelmed by the endless theories and fad diets. My approach has always been to keep things simple and focus on what is almost certain to still hold true 100 years from now.

There's an overwhelming consensus that foods such as whole grains, fruits, veggies, nuts, and legumes are good for our bodies in many ways. Eat more of these nutritious foods by finding simple and tasty recipes that incorporate them into meals your family already enjoys.

Foods such as meat and dairy bring out a wider range of opinions, but most agree that they can be part of a healthy diet when enjoyed in moderation. No need to overthink this one—there's no bonus points in life for the "perfect" diet.

Now, when it comes to "junk" food, I don't think we need a very sophisticated definition. I think most of us know intuitively that some foods are tasty, but don't necessarlly make our bodies stronger. No need to deprive yourself of your favorite foods and treats. Instead, adopt your own reasonable limits and boundaries. Over time, you'll likely find that you need less and less to deliver the same enjoyment.

Minimalist Exercise

- Get more gentle movement like long walks, gardening, playing with young
- With some occasional vigor such as sprinting, lifting weights, or hard physi-

We all know that moving our bodies more often is good for us. We wonder what exercises we should be doing or how many minutes we ought to be moving. Far better to direct that curiosity toward finding new ways to move your body that you enjoy. Movement can be a gift and a reward to yourself, not just something to be endured for the sake of better health.

The more you move, the better—but that's no reason to start off with an audacious goal. That's a recipe for burnout and disappointment. Instead, start incredibly small and build a daily habit. You'll find, over time, that you'll want to move more and more. You won't have to force yourself at all.

movement with





Focus on the big picture of diet, exercise, and a good life to take the simplest approach to

Movement can be a gift and a reward to yourself, not just something to be endured

for the sake of

better health.

Research suggests those who practice a faith, maintain close friendships, find meaningful work, and cope with stress in a healthy way age far better than their peers. my kids. I sprinkle in a sprint workout once or twice a week. I go to the park or track and warm up and then I run as fast as I can for about 20 seconds. After four or five sprints, I am feeling both physically tired and mentally invigorated. There are lots of fun ways that I mix up this routine: uphill, downhill, length of time, or even with a friend.

long, daily walk and evening playtime with

Important Lifestyle Factors

When it comes to health outcomes, there's an enormous range of possibilities, and that range is largely correlated to just a few factors. Consider the following stats, based on

- 10 percent will have a drug-use disorder at some point in their lives
- 13 percent are currently abusing alcohol • 15 percent currently smoke cigarettes
- 34 percent have uncontrolled high blood
- 42 percent are considered obese

One of the most powerful steps you take for your health is to avoid falling into one of those categories, or to get out as soon as you can. That can be very difficult. Whatever it takes in terms of time, effort, and money is almost guaranteed to be worth the investment if a healthier life is your aim. In all the cases listed above, I recommend that you get the support of someone you love, and reach out to a medical professional who can provide help and guidance.

Add Life to Your Years

After tending to the above, your investments of time and energy into healthier living may reach a point of diminishing returns. Once you are eating well, exercising regularly, not smoking, at a healthy weight, and have a good blood pressure level, you are likely already among the healthiest 10 percent of

The average American has a life expectancy in the high-70s. But if you are still in good health and following these health principles, there's a good chance your life expectancy is into the mid- to upper-80s

At some point, you have to stop and ask yourself—how much greater of a reward is it to extend your life from 88 to 91? Are those three extra years so valuable that you would devote even more time, energy, and money to the pursuit? In my opinion, there is far greater joy to be had in determining how to best add life to your remaining years, rather than a few extra years to your life.

I know, we're only dealing with statistics, not guarantees. But I think the logic is sound. At the age of 32, I may have another fiveplus decades on this earth. I think that my own personal sense of the good life would be much better served by thinking about how to best "spend' those years, rather than trying to tack five more years on to the end. Here are some ways that I'm deliberately

trying to add "life to my years": **Close relationships.** I try to make as much

space in my life for unrushed time with the people I love most. I doubt very much else matters more in your old age than if your life has been filled with warm, intimate

Personal faith. For me, the practice of my faith gives meaning and purpose to the ordinary days of my life. It also motivates and enables me to love others better.

Meaningful work. It's not enough to just pay the bills, I want to fill my days with work that is good and useful. A huge bonus if my work is interesting and stimulating.

Well-rested. I have grown to place a huge value on the simple power of a good night's rest. Without it, I feel like I'm playing the game of life in "hard" mode.

Avoid chronic stress. This one is a little vague, but for me, it means developing the right routines and habits of mind that allow me to operate mostly from a place of ease

Perhaps ironically, research in recent

years suggests that the very kinds of activities that I included on my "add life to my years" list, are also likely to add even more years to my life. Those who practice a faith, maintain close friendships, find meaningful work, and cope with stress in a healthy way tend to age far better than their peers. For me, that is all just icing on the cake. The real goal behind my minimalist health philosophy has always been to take care of my body so that I can live out my days in

as good of health as possible, while filling

my days and years with all types of beauty.

Mike (and his wife, Mollie) blog at This Evergreen Home where they share their experience with living simply, intentionally, and relationally in this modern world. You can follow along by subscribing to their twice-weekly newsletter. This article was originally published on This



When an Old Friendship Needs to Change or End

The role you're playing in the friendship is no longer who you are. Now what?

NANCY COLIER

othing stays the same, including us. We change and grow over our lifetimes—thankfully. And often, our longest and dearest friendships need to change as well, in order to keep up with who we are. However, the process of changing a long-term friendship isn't usually an easy one, and sometimes, the friendship doesn't survive. Sometimes the friendship can only be what it was when we were—or were willing to be—someone else.

Liza met Callie when they were college freshmen, and they quickly became best friends. After graduation, they both got jobs in New York and lived as roommates for the majority of their 20s. Eventually, they both married and built families, and they ended up living in different cities. But the friendship remained strong. After 38 years, they had a lifetime of shared history, and Liza had considered Callie to be one of her most important and dearest friends.

But then, something changed. An incident occurred that made Liza aware of an unspoken dynamic in the friendship that she had been participating in for decades. What also became clear was that Liza wasn't willing to engage in this pattern and to play this role any longer.

The incident was triggered because, in a rare moment, Liza was honest with Callie—about her experience with her. She told her dear friend that something Callie was doing in the relationship was painful for her. She asked Callie if she would consider a different way of doing things.

But what Liza's honesty instigated in her oldest friend was exactly what Liza now understood had always been underlying and, to some degree, controlling the friendship, or at least her role in it. Callie's response to hearing Liza's experience was to go silent: She pulled away from the friendship without explanation. As Liza put it, it was "radio silence, with a distinct aroma of punishment."

When Liza then requested that they talk about what had happened, she was pummeled with a litany of things she had done to Callie over the years that Callie hadn't been OK with, but never said anything about. Liza's inbox was soon filled with long, well-documented lists of her aggressions and issues, evidence for why she was a bad friend, guilty and deserving of Callie's rage.

In fact, there had been numerous episodes in the friendship when Callie had unexplainably disappeared and stopped responding—once for several years. There had been a number of times when Liza had said something minor or misunderstood something Callie had said, with no ill in-

tent, and had later come to find out that Callie had been enraged about the comment, stewing in it and building a case against Liza in her head.

But in this most recent episode, Liza became acutely aware of the rules of the bond with Callie and the role that she had been playing to keep the friendship intact. Simultaneously, she became aware of her own truth: She had always walked on eggshells and had always had to work hard to get it right with Callie and not misstep. She realized that she had been living in fear for decades of Callie's anger and of her friend disappearing because of something "bad" that she had done. The unspoken rules were that Liza behaved as Callie wanted her to behave. So, too, Liza knew at a visceral level that she wasn't allowed to say anything about how Callie's behavior affected her and how she felt about Callie.

What the two old friends shared was a belief that Liza was guilty, responsible for whatever had ever gone wrong in the friendship. She needed to be what Callie had deemed to be OK, so as to keep the friendship and not reaffirm her own guilt. Ultimately, Liza became aware of the role she had unconsciously agreed to play in the friendship. But Liza also recognized how her friend-

ship with Callie, which formed when they were just 18 years old and fresh out of their childhood homes, was a carbon copy of the relationship she had with her own mother. Like Callie, her mother had been emotionally erratic and would periodically withdraw her love because of something Liza had said or done.

The narrative on Liza in her relationship with her mother was similarly that she was guilty, a selfish daughter who deprived her mother of the kind of love that she deserved. At the same time, there was an understanding that she was never to bring up her mother's behavior or call her mother out on how she was affecting Liza. And most certainly, Liza must not discuss what she herself might need from her mother as a daughter. Not surprisingly, the role she played in her longest friendship was precisely as it was in her childhood home, where the nature of love and attachment is born.

In this relationship with her best friend, Liza had been playing the same role as the guilty one—the one who wasn't allowed to have her own experience. Now aware of it, she knew this dynamic was over. The friendship couldn't exist as it had existed. She wasn't willing to walk on eggshells anymore, to behave so as not to be judged. Ultimately, she wasn't willing to abandon herself to maintain the bond.

We all do this: We form relationships that mirror our early experience and keep us in the same roles that we played with our We are not who we were when some of our oldest friendships began, and yet we behave as if we still are, often at our

own expense.

early caretakers or other important people. Until we become aware of it, we're acting from underlying assumptions about what an intimate relationship demands and who we have to be to feel loved. As a result, we end up in long-term friendships that are often unsatisfying at the deepest level and keep us stuck in old patterns, not getting what we really need.

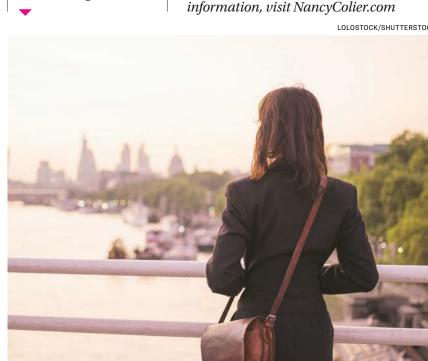
Start paying attention to the roles you play in your long-term friendships and who you have to be to maintain them, to keep being loved. Consider if this version of you is an outdated or limited one. Then, with compassion for yourself, consider who you are now, who you want to be in relationships at this point in your life, who you are willing to be, and who you aren't willing to be.

The truth is, we aren't who we were when some of our oldest friendships began, and yet we behave as if we still are, often at our own expense. Some friendships can survive our authenticity and evolution and others can't. But if not, it makes one wonder if they're worth saving.

It takes courage to unpack the rules of the bond, the unspoken agreements about who we are and who we're supposed to be in our longest friendships. But ultimately, this process sets us free from our old patterns and allows us to experience new and more real and satisfying friendships. Bringing light to a relationship always includes risk. But in this case, it's worth it.

With compassion for yourself, consider who you are now, who you want to be in relationships at this point in your life, and who you are not willing to be.

Nancy Colier is a psychotherapist, interfaith minister, public speaker, workshop leader, and author of "Can't Stop Thinking: How to Let Go of Anxiety and Free Yourself from Obsessive Rumination" and "The Power of Off: The Mindful Way to Stay Sane in a Virtual World." For more



The Importance of Finding Beauty in Ordinary Things

Life offers mundane experiences that have something to appreciate -if you're willing

JOSHUA BECKER

Last week, I attended an event at my daughter's high school. She was receiving an award for academic success.

The awards ceremony took place in the school gymnasium. There were two folding tables on one end of the gym for the principal and guidance counselors who read off the names and explained the significance of the award.

In the middle of the gym floor were two simple folding chairs set up to mark where the students were to walk. The parents sat on bleachers on one side of the gym.

Before the ceremony, we ate a dinner of ground turkey tacos. On our way home, we got some ice cream. Nothing fancy, just a small treat to celebrate. After returning home, I watched a few innings of the World Series before going to bed at 10 p.m. (which is about as late as I can seem to stay up these days).

In almost every imaginable way, there was nothing extravagant about the night. It seems to me there are three approaches I could have taken during the evening: begrudging, appreciating, imagining.

I could have entirely unappreciated the night, begrudgingly attending the school event and complaining about the whole thing.

I could have been upset that I had to go out another night of the week.

I could have thought about how tired I was from work, how many things needed to be completed around the house, or how I just didn't want to attend another

Rare is the parent who would choose this option and begrudgingly complain about attending the night (although they do exist).

It's a gift to yourself to see the beauty of ordinary things rather than dwell on all the ways your life would improve if it were upgraded.

Appreciating

A better option would have been to have appreciated the beauty and meaning of the night for what it was. I could have taken a moment to mark the success of my daughter, the efforts of everyone that worked to acknowledge something good in our

The night was simple, but there is a

lot of beauty to be found in ordinary

I could have daydreamed about how much better the night could have been with a few upgrades.

We could have gone out for a steak dinner before the ceremony; that would have made the night even better.

They could have hired a professional speaker, local media personality, or special music for the event. They could have had a fancier queue line for the students. That would have been better.

We could have sat on more comfortable chairs than bleachers. That would have

driven a newer car, or returned home to a bigger screen television. Certainly, any of those upgrades would have made the evening even more luxurious and enjoyable, right?

I could have spent the entire night looking for all the ways it could be better. But what benefit does it give my life to

How does it increase my happiness or joy in life to constantly think my life would be better if I just had x?

None, whatsoever. Nor would more comfortable chairs, a newer car, or a fancier meal have changed the accomplishment and meaning of the evening.

Too often, we miss the beauty of ordinary things by wishing for something

It's a gift to yourself to see the beauty of ordinary things rather than dwell on how to seek contentment. Then we were taught to constantly

As children, we naturally knew

Week 46, 2021 THE EPOCH TIMES

all the ways your life would improve if it were upgraded.

Our world encourages discontent at every turn and our minds too often embrace it. We are compelled to want what is new, resent what could be better, and expect perfect convenience and comfort at every turn.

Even though it seems unwise to discount the beauty right in front of us, we do it all the time. We turn what's good into not good enough. We wish the house was bigger, the restaurant was fancier, the vacation was more exotic, or the television was larger.

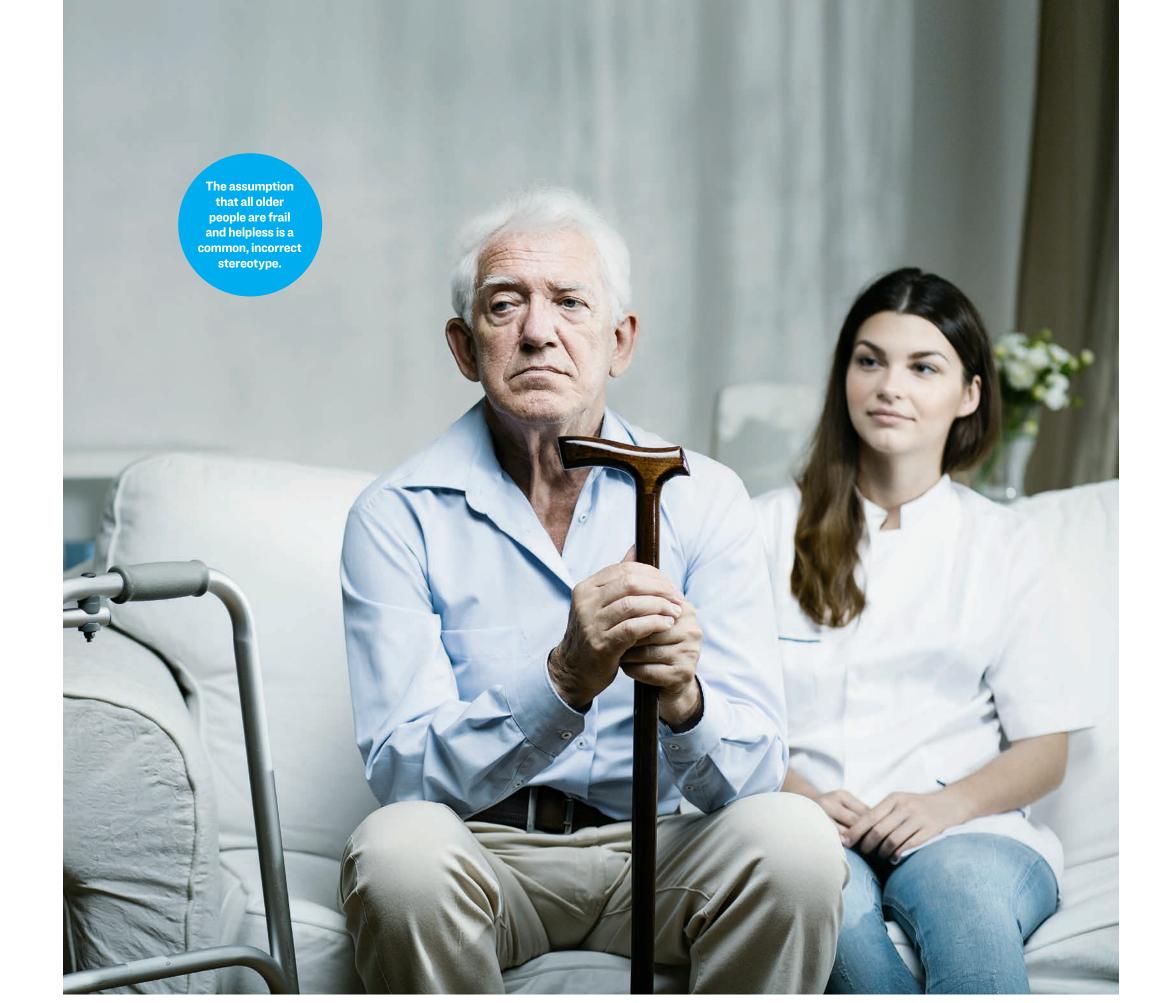
We wish the furniture was fancier, the clothes were more fashionable, the phone was upgraded, or the mode of transportation was more luvurious

We wish the boss was more understanding, the weather was warmer, the stomach was flatter, or the bank account had more zeroes.

But when we live life constantly desiring more and better, we miss the beauty of the ordinary right in front of us. We miss out on the contentment that comes with appreciating.

It's one thing to work to improve your lot in life. It's something completely different to miss the beauty and blessings of the life you are currently experiencing. Wise is the man or woman who chooses to see them.

Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker, and the founder and editor of Becoming Minimalist, where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit BecomingMinimalist.com



Seniors Decry Health Providers' Age Bias

'They treat me like I'm old and stupid' recounts one senior sharing a common experience

JUDITH GRAHAM

oanne Whitney, 84, a retired associate clinical professor of pharmacy at the University of California-San Francisco, often feels devalued when interacting with health care

There was a time several years ago when she told an emergency room doctor that the antibiotic he wanted to prescribe wouldn't counteract the kind of urinary tract infection she had.

He wouldn't listen, even when she mentioned her professional credentials. She asked to see someone else, to no avail. "I

was ignored and finally I gave up," said Whitney, who has survived lung cancer and cancer of the urethra and depends on a special catheter to drain urine from her bladder. (An outpatient renal service later changed the prescription.)

Then, earlier this year, Whitney landed in the same emergency room, screaming in pain, with another urinary tract infection and a severe anal fissure. When she asked for Dilaudid, a powerful narcotic that had helped her before, a young physician told her, "We don't give out opioids to people who seek them. Let's just see what Tylenol does."

Whitney said her pain continued un- Continued on Page 15

abated for eight hours.

"I think the fact I was a woman of 84, alone, was important," she told me. "When older people come in like that, they don't get the same level of commitment to do something to rectify the situation. It's like 'Oh, here's an old person with pain. Well, that happens a lot to older people."

Whitney's experiences speak to ageism in health care settings, a long-standing problem that's getting new attention during the COVID pandemic, which has reportedly killed more than half a million Americans age 65 and older.

of Americans age 50 and older say they have experienced discrimination in health care settings. which can result in inappropriate or

inadequate care.

A significant proportion

gastrointestinal tract

so optimizing your gut

of your immune system resides in your

reaching effects.

Nearly



A recent scientific review states all inflammatory disease begins here-including ADHD, autism, learning disabilities, diabetes, and Parkinson's disease

Some

researchers

microbiome

may actually

for cancer

treatment.

prevention and

JOSEPH MERCOLA

More attention than ever is being put on your gut health, and understandably so, considering a significant proportion of your immune system resides in your gastrointestinal tract. As such, optimizing your gut microbiome is a worthwhile pursuit that will have far-reaching effects on your physical health and emotional well-being

Mounting scientific evidence also contin ues to suggest a large component of nutrition centers on nourishing health-promoting bacteria in your gut (and elsewhere in and on your body). In doing so, you keep harmful microbes in check and shore up your protection against chronic disease.

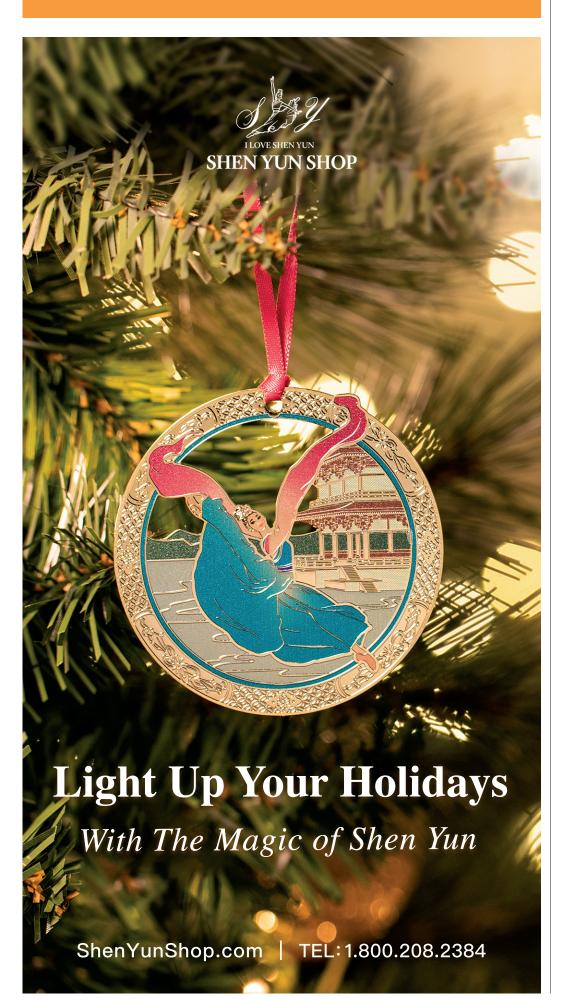
ADHD, autism, learning disabilities, obesity, diabetes, and Parkinson's disease are but a few of the conditions found to be influenced by your gut microbiome. One 2020 scientific review published in F1000 believe the gut Research goes so far as to say that all inflammatory disease begins in the gut. Part of the blame is laid on excessive hygiene. In other words, we're "too clean" for our own good. end up being a game-changer

But your diet also plays a crucial role. The paper specifically addresses the role of zonulin-mediated gut permeability in the pathogenesis of chronic inflammatory diseases (CIDs).

Continued on Page 12

microbiome will have far-







Probiotics can boost immune function if you find quality sources and don't let them spoil.

Maximize Your Probiotics for Immune Health

ANDREA DONSKY

Recent concerns about immune health have prompted many people to want to know how to boost their immune system in the best ways possible. One of those ways is with good bacteria, or probiotics—but not just any probiotics. The big questions are: How effective are probiotics are effective for acute infecprobiotics for immune health, and how can you be sure to get the most bang arrhea, Clostridium difficile-associated for your buck when taking beneficial bacteria supplements?

Taking the wrong probiotic is like flour through a sieve: it's going to pass on through and leave little to nothing behind.

What Are Probiotics?

to as good or beneficial bacteria, but organisms and moisture can activate the term also includes some beneficial yeasts as well. These substances are of nutrients and a proper environment." called "good" and "beneficial" because they play a vital role in keeping your gut and entire body healthy. That's because you are a vessel of both good and not-sogood bacteria that are associated with disease and other health hazards. Taking probiotic supplements and eating foods rich in beneficial bacteria can help you keep the balance of bacteria in the healthy zone.

Probiotics fall into two general categories:

- Lactobacillus, which is found in some yogurts, kefir, and other fermented foods. Dozens of strains of this bacteria can assist with digestion, diarrhea, and immune health.
- Bifidobacterium, which is common in and cheese. This genus of bacteria can help with irritable bowel syndrome and other conditions, as well as help with immune system function.

In the yeast category, we have Saccharomyces cerevisiae var. boulardii, which may help with diarrhea and other issues associated with digestion.

What Are Probiotics Good For?

Probiotics have a number of health advantages. For example, you might try probiotics for problems affecting your digestive tract, such as irritable bowel syndrome, diarrhea, urinary tract infections, and inflammatory bowel disease.

Numerous studies have also found probiotics can be helpful in supporting immune health function and issues.

Probiotics and Immune System

Dozens of studies have demonstrated that various probiotics have the ability to boost immune function and/ or reduce symptoms associated with immune-related conditions. Here are a few highlighted examples.

A 2019 article review published in the Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism looked at several previous studies and reported that probiotics "improve the behavior of the immune system and the host's health."

In a 2017 study, investigators reported that "there is high-quality evidence the tious diarrhea, antibiotic-associated didiarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome, functional gastrointestinal disorders."

Which Probiotics Are the **Most Effective?**

If you want to get the most from your probiotic supplement, then you need to choose ones that meet certain criteria. Taking the wrong probiotic is like flour through a sieve: it's going to pass on through and leave little to nothing

Your probiotic should be refrigerated. All probiotic strains are susceptible to heat, especially those in the genus Bifidobacterium. According to Consumer Labs, and independent test lab, "Many probiotic bacteria are naturally sensirobiotics are also commonly referred tive to heat and moisture. Heat can kill them within pills, only to die due to lack Therefore, be sure to put your probiotic supplement in your fridge.

An enemy of all probiotics is stomach acid (aka, gastric acid). The job of this acid is to break down food, but it also destroys bacteria, both good and bad. To protect against the destruction of your supplement, be sure to buy those that have an enteric coating. The probiotic supplement should have been tested to guarantee the beneficial bacteria capsules will survive and make their way to your intestinal tract, where they can release their contents and aid the healing process.

Bottom Line

Probiotics can be a potent management and treatment tool when you want to dairy products such as milk, yogurt, support and enhance your immune system function. Be sure to choose a probiotic supplement that will provide the most benefit for the buck.

> Andrea Donsky, who holds a bachelor of commerce, is an international TV health expert, best selling author, and founder of NaturallySavvy. com—a recipient of Healthline's Best Healthy Living Blogs for 2019. This article was originally published on NaturallySavvy.com



Eating beneficial bacteria through probiotic supplements and fermented foods can help you maintain a healthy balance of bacteria in your body.

Reversing Death: The Weird History of Resuscitation

Before CPR and defibrillators, people did some pretty strange things to the apparently dead

CAITJAN GAINTY

ost of us probably know more or less—how to resuscitate one of our fellow human beings. Even if you haven't taken a course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), you've probably seen the technique many times on television or in the movies.

The early history of resuscitation was in many ways also the stuff of drama. On June 1, 1782, for example, a Philadelphia newspaper carried news of the latest resuscitative miracle: A 5-year-old child had been restored to life after drowning in the Delaware River.

Little Rowland Oliver was playing on one of the busy wharves that industrialization had brought to Delaware's banks when he tumbled into the water. He struggled for 10 minutes, then went limp. Finally, a worker fished him out and carried him home.

Although Rowland was delivered lifeless to his family, the paper reported that his parents recognized he was only "apparently dead." This energized them into action. They "stripped off all his clothes immediately, slapped him with their hands" and "rubbed him with woollen cloths dipped in spirits."

The doctor who arrived shortly afterward did more of the same. They also immersed Rowland's feet in hot water and thrust an emetic agent down his throat. After about 20 minutes, life returned to the little boy. A little blood-letting eased any after-effects, and Rowland was soon his usual playful self.

Humane Societies

This account was but one of many stories of resuscitative success seeded into the newspapers by the period's newly minted humane societies. These societies had originated in mid-18th-century Amsterdam, where an increasing number of people were drowning in the city's canals. The societies sought to educate the public that death—at least by drowning—wasn't the heart. This might involve manipulating absolute and that passers by had the power an apparently dead body into a variety of to keep the apparently dead from joining the actually dead.

In Philadelphia, Rowland's resurrection gave credence to these ideas, inspiring the local humane society to install along the city's rivers kits containing medicines, tools, and instructions to revive the drowned.

Methods changed over time, but well into the 19th century, resuscitative efforts were understood to require the stimulation of the body back into mechanical action. Humane societies often recommended warming up the drowning victim and attempting artificial breathing. Whatever the method, most important was jump starting the bodymachine back to function. External stimulation—the rubbing and

massaging practiced by little Rowland's parents—was essential. So was internal stimulation, typically via the introduction of rum or some rousing concoction into the stomach. Probably most exciting—for the body's interior—was the "fumigation with tobacco smoke" of a drowning victim's colon that humane societies also proposed. Yes: good resuscitative efforts demanded the blowing of smoke up an apparently recalled, if a patient's heart stopped on

dead person's bum.

The 20th century brought its own potentially fatal hazards. Just as drownings multiplied in the 18th century because of the increased industrial use of waterways, the advent of widespread electricity, power lines, and personal-use machinery, such as automobiles, added electrocution and gas poisoning to the causes of apparent death.

A New Locus of Stimulation

Methods also changed. Resuscitative efforts now focused increasingly on stimulating positions. Chest compressions and artificial respiration techniques became increasingly common, too.

But even as techniques shifted, resuscitation retained its democratic bent-almost anyone could undertake it. Its applications, however, remained specific to certain circumstances. After all, only a limited number of situations could render someone apparently dead.

In the mid-20th century, these two consistent themes began to give way. Resuscitation increasingly gained a reputation as a miraculous and widespread treatment for all kinds of death. And the people who could perform these treatments narrowed to medical or emergency practitioners only. There were many reasons for this shift, but a critical precipitating event was the recognition of a new set of causes of apparent death: accidents of surgery.

In his explanation of his own attempts to remake resuscitation over the mid-20th century, American surgeon Claude Beck frequently invoked a story from his training in the late 1910s. Back then, he

Modern resuscitation techniques have come a long way from the time doctors prescribed literally blowing smoke up someone's rectum.

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nothing but call the fire brigade and wait for them to deliver a "pulmotor," the precursor to the artificial respirators familiar today. Suddenly, it seemed that everyone except medical practitioners could perform resuscitation. Finding this unacceptable, Beck joined the hunt to find a resuscitative method suitable for the particular hazards of surgery. The new techniques that Beck and other

the operating table, surgeons could do

surgeons experimented with still rested on stimulation. But they relied on access to the body's interior, which the surgeon more or less exclusively enjoyed. Applying electricity directly to the heart (defibrillation) was one method. Reaching into the chest and massaging the heart manually was another.

Beck viewed his early successes in the operating theatre as an indication of the more widespread promise of his techniques. Accordingly, he expanded his definition of who could be resuscitated. He added to the relatively limited category of the "apparently dead," all who weren't "absolutely and unquestionably dead."

Beck made films that testified to his successes. One, the Choir of the Dead, featured the first 11 people he had resuscitated standing awkwardly together, while a jarringly jovial Beck asked each in turn: "What did you die of?"

Though initially contextualized as merely the extension of resuscitation into medical spaces, it soon became clear that methods that privileged access to the body's interior weren't easily democratized. That's not to say that Beck didn't try. He imagined a world where those trained in his methods would carry the surgeon's tool—the scalpel—with them, always ready to whip open a chest to massage a heart back into action.

Concerned by the specter of civilian-surgeons and keen to maintain their professional monopoly over the body's interior, the medical community revolted. It was only with the advent of the less unseemly closed-chest compression method several years later that resuscitation's democratic imprimatur was restored.

But Beck's view of death as generally reversible stuck, reaching its zenith in 1960, when a landmark medical study declared resuscitation's "over-all permanent survival rate" as 70 percent. Subsequent studies corrected this overly optimistic finding, but resuscitation's reputation as both widely applicable and wildly successful had already been secured. Recent reports suggest that this is a reputation it retains to this day.

Caitjan Gainty is a senior lecturer in the history of science, technology, and medicine at King's College London. This article was first published on The Conversation.



Before CPR, the apparently dead would be massaged in an attempt to revive them.

Regularly eating traditionally fermented and cultured foods is the easiest, most effective and least expensive way to make a significant impact on your gut microbiome. Lassi, kefir, plain yogurt, natto, and fermented vegetables of all kinds are among the many fermented traditional foods of the world.

How Your Gut Health Impacts Your Disease Risk

A recent scientific review states all inflammatory disease begins here-including ADHD, autism, learning disabilities, diabetes, and Parkinson's disease

as individuals

environment

we live that

our clinical

Dr. Alessio Fasano,

for Celiac Research

Massive dietary and

microbial antigen influx

Break of Tolerance

Tissue damage

Apoptosis resistant T cells

researcher and

director, Center

and Treatment

and the

dictates

destiny.

Continued from Page 9

According to the author, Dr. Alessio Fasano, a pediatric gastroenterologist, researcher, and director of the Center for Celiac Research and Treatment:

"Pre-clinical and clinical studies have shown that the zonulin family, a group of proteins modulating gut permeability, is implicated in a variety of CIDs, including autoimmune, infective, metabolic, and tumoral diseases. These data offer novel therapeutic targets for a variety of CIDs in which the zonulin pathway is implicated in their pathogenesis."

Bacteria, Not Genes, **Rule Your Health Destiny**

Fasano points out that we simply don't have enough genes to account for the myriad chronic diseases that can beset us. Genes also can't explain the timing of disease onset. To solve these mysteries, we must look to the microbiome, he says, as "it is the interplay between us as individuals and the environment in which we live that dictates our clinical destiny."

Aside from the microbes themselves, the condition of your intestinal mucosa also plays a significant role. "Although this enormous mucosal interface (200 m2) is not apparently visible, it plays a pivotal role through its dynamic interactions with a variety of factors coming from our surrounding environment, including microorganisms, nutrients, pollutants, and other materials," Fasano explains.

While intracellular tight junctions used to be thought of as static and impermeable, we now know this isn't the case. These junctions, or the spaces between cells, can become wider. When they do, the walls of the

Minor barrier defect

dietary/microbial Ag influx

Normal/physiologically

Mucosal Tolerance

Regulatory DC's Macrophages

Tregs L-10/TGF-β

Anergy

Loss of Mucosal Immune Homeostasis

Increased

It is the interplay between us eases, not all CIDs are caused by leaky gut.

Proposed Chain of

view but originating from an earlier paper virtually all cancers, whereas other bac-Involvement in Chronic Inflammatory Diseases," co-written by Fasano and Craig Sturgeon, details the "proposed chain of events leading to chronic inflammatory disease."

homeostasis is maintained in your gut lining Under No. 2 in the graph, gut dysbiosis is setting in (i.e., an imbalance in the number and diversity of your gut microflora), causing excess production of zonulin, which in

spond to gluten? 10 times more potent than gluten!

The subsequent permeability allows microbiota-derived antigen and endotoxin to migrate from the lumen to the lamina propria (the connective tissue that is part of the mucous membrane lining your in-

testine), thereby triggering inflammation. As the process continues to worsen (No. 3 in the graph), your adaptive immune response kicks in, triggering the production of proinflammatory cytokines, including interferon gamma and tumor necrosis factor alpha. These cytokines further worsen the permeability, thus creating a vicious cycle. Eventually (No. 4), mucosal tolerance is completely broken, resulting in the onset of a chronic inflammatory disease.

The specific chronic inflammatory disease that ultimately emerges at the end of all this depends in part on your genetic makeup, in

intestine can leak, or become permeable. As explained by Fasano, zonulin is a powerful modulator of intestinal permeability. However, while zonulin is a biomarker of gut permeability and plays a pathogenic role in many chronic inflammatory dis-

Events Leading to CID The graphic below, included in Fasano's retitled "Zonulin, a Regulator of Epithelial teria quell it. The presence of certain gut and Endothelial Barrier Functions, and Its bacteria has even been shown to boost the

Under normal circumstances, a healthy such that when an antigen is encountered, no excess immune reaction occurs (anergy).

turn makes the gut lining more permeable. According to Fasano, the two most powerful triggers of zonulin release are bacteria overgrowth and gluten. Zonulin is produced in response to bad bacteria—it helps flush the bacteria out by opening up the tight junctions—so bacteria overgrowth makes sense. But why does it re-

Interestingly enough, the zonulin pathway misinterprets gluten as a potential harmful component of a microorganism. That's why gluten triggers zonulin release. While not mentioned by Fasano, the herbicide glyphosate also triggers zonulin, and according to the Marion Institute is

Chronic Inflammatory Diseases Linked to Leaky Gut

microbiome. As explained by Fasano: "Besides genetic predisposition and exposure to environmental triggers, the pathogenesis of a variety of CIDs seems to involve mutually influenced changes in

part on the types of exposures you've had,

and in part on the composition of your gut

gut permeability/Ag trafficking, immune activation, and changes in composition/ function of the gut microbiome. "Zonulin is a modulator of both epithelial and endothelial barrier functions ... Gut

dysbiosis may cause the release of zonulin leading to the passage of luminal contents across the epithelial barrier causing the release of pro-inflammatory cytokines that themselves cause increased permeability establishing a vicious loop leading to massive influx of dietary and microbial Ags triggering the activation of T cells.

"Depending on the host genetic makeup, activated T cells may remain within the GI tract, causing CID of the gut ... or migrate to several different organs to cause systemic CID."

Chronic inflammatory diseases associated with dysregulation of the zonulin oathway include:

- Autoimmune disorders such as Celiac disease, Type 1 diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease, multiple sclerosis, and ankylosing spondylitis
- **2. Metabolic disorders** such as obesity, insulin resistance, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, gestational diabetes, hyperlipidemia, and Type 2 diabetes
- **3. Intestinal diseases** such as irritable bowel syndrome, non-celiac gluten sensitivity, and environmental enteric dysfunction (a chronic disease affecting the proximal intestine)
- 4. Neuroinflammatory diseases such as autism spectrum disorder, schizophrenia, major depressive disorder, and chronic fatigue/myalgic encephalomyelitis
- 5. Brain and liver cancers

Gut Microbes Influence Genes and Can Influence Cancer Risk

While the inclusion of cancer on that list may seem odd at first glance, some researchers believe the gut microbiome may actually end up being a game-changer for cancer prevention and treatment.

Not only have gut bacteria been shown to influence gene expression, turning some genes on and others off, research published in 2018 found gut microbes actually control antitumor immune responses in your liver, and that antibiotics can alter the composition of immune cells in your liver, triggering tumor growth.

Certain gut bacteria also promote inflammation, which is an underlying factor in patient's response to anticancer drugs.

One way in which gut bacteria improve the effectiveness of cancer treatment is by activating your immune system and allowing it to function more efficiently. Researchers have actually found that when these specific microbes are absent, certain anticancer drugs may not work at all.

Gut Bacteria Are Part of Your Antiviral Defense

Gut bacteria are also involved in your antiviral defense, research shows. As reported by Harvard Medical School on Nov. 18, 2020:

"For the first time, Harvard Medical School researchers have ... identified the specific population of gut microbes that modulates both localized and systemic immune response to ward off viral invaders. The work ... pinpoints a group of gut microbes, and a specific species within it, that causes immune cells to release virus-repelling chemicals known as type 1 interferons.

"The researchers further identified the precise molecule—shared by many gut bacteria within that group—that unlocks the immune-protective cascade. That molecule, the researchers noted, is not difficult to isolate and could become the basis for drugs that boost antiviral immunity in humans."

While the findings still need to be replicated and confirmed, they point to the possibility that you might be able to enhance your antiviral immunity by reseeding your gut with Bacteroides fragilis and other bacteria in the Bacteroides family.

These bacteria initiate a signaling cascade that induces the release of interferon-beta that protect against viral invasion by stimulating immune cells to attack the virus and causing virus-infected cells to self-destruct.

"Specifically, ... a molecule that resides on the bacterium's surface triggers the release of interferon-beta by activating the so-called TLR4-TRIF signaling pathway," Harvard explains."This bac-

terial molecule stimulates an immunesignaling pathway initiated by one of the nine toll-like receptors (TLR) that are part of the innate immune system."

The Role of Vitamin D

Recent research also highlights the role of vitamin D in gut health and systemic autoimmunity. The review article, published on Jan. 21, 2020, in Frontiers in Immunol

"Autoimmune diseases tend to share a predisposition for vitamin D deficiency, which alters the microbiome and integrity of the gut epithelial barrier.

"In this review, we summarize the influence of intestinal bacteria on the immune system, explore the microbial patterns that have emerged from studies on autoimmune diseases, and discuss how vitamin D deficiency may contribute to autoimmunity via its effects on the intestinal barrier function, microbiome composition, and/or direct effects on immune responses."

Gut bacteria have been shown to influence gene expression, turning some genes on and others off.

As noted in this review, written by researchers at Cleveland Clinic, vitamin D has several direct and indirect regulatory effects on your immune system, including promoting regulatory T cells (Tregs), inhibiting differentiation of Th1 and Th17 cells, impairing the development and function of B cells, reducing monocyte activation, and stimulating antimicrobial peptides

That said, the relationship between vitamin D and autoimmunity is complicated. Aside from immunosuppression, vitamin D also appears to improve autoimmune disorders by the way it affects your microbiota composition and gut barrier.

from immune cells.

The review cites research showing that your vitamin D status alters the composition of your gut microbiome. Generally speaking, vitamin D deficiency tends to increase Bacteriodetes and Proteobacteria while higher vitamin D intake tends to increase prevalence of Prevotella and reduce certain types of Proteobacteria and

While research is still slim when it comes to vitamin D's impact on gut bacteria, especially in patients with autoimmune disease, vitamin D deficiency and autoimmune diseases are known comorbidities and vitamin D supplementation is often recommended for these patients.

Vitamin D Required for **Tight Junction Maintenance**

Better known is how vitamin D supports intestinal and immune cell defenses in the gut. In fact, vitamin D is one of the crucial components required for maintaining tight junctions. As explained in this review:

"The intestinal epithelium [tissue] is in constant interaction with the external environment [in the form of food]. Adequate barrier integrity and antimicrobial function at epithelial surfaces are critical in maintaining homeostasis and preventing invasion or overcolonization of particular microbial species.

"A healthy intestinal epithelium and intact mucus layer are critical to protect against invasion by pathogenic organisms, and vitamin D helps to maintain this barrier function."

How Vitamin D May Contribute to Autoimmune Disease

According to the authors, vitamin D deficiency may contribute to autoimmune disease by affecting the microbiome and the immune system in the following manner:

- Vitamin D deficiency or supplementation changes the microbiome, and manipulation of bacterial abundance or composition impacts disease manifestation.
- Lack of vitamin D signaling due to dietary deficiency can impair physical and functional barrier integrity of the gut, thereby allowing bacterial interactions to either stimulate or inhibit immune responses.
- 3. Your innate immunologic defenses may be compromised if you are deficient in vitamin D.

How to Optimize Your Gut Microbiome All of this information should really drive home the point that optimizing your gut flora and vitamin D level is of crucial importance for good health. By reseeding your gut with beneficial bacteria, you can keep pathogenic microbes and fungi in check and prevent them from taking over, and optimizing your vitamin D will help avoid leaky gut.

Regularly eating traditionally fermented and cultured foods is the easiest, most effective, and least expensive way to make a significant impact on your gut microbiome. Healthy choices include lassi (an Indian yogurt drink), cultured grass-fed organic milk products such as kefir and yogurt, natto (fermented soy), and ferment-

> ed vegetables of all kinds. Although I'm not a major proponent of taking many supplements (as I believe the majority of your nutrients need to come from food), probiotics are an

> > exception if you don't

eat fermented foods on a regular basis. Spore-based probiotics, or sporebiotics, can be particularly helpful when you're taking antibiotics. They're also an excellent complement to regular probiotics.

Sporebiotics, which consist of vitamin D level the cell wall of bacillus spores, will is fundamental help boost your immune tolerance, for good health. and because they do not contain

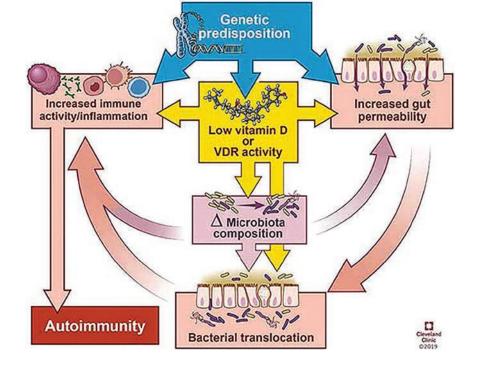
Optimizing your

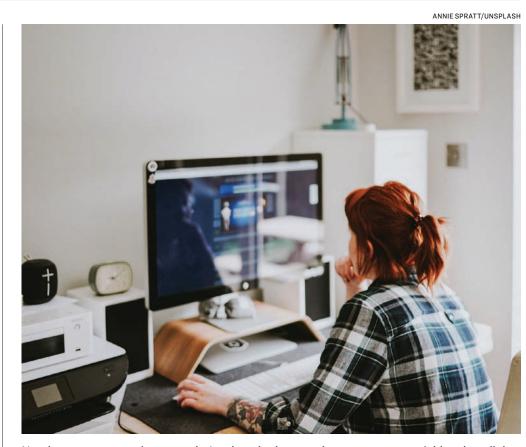
any live bacillus strains, only its spores—the protective shell around the DNA and the working mechanism of that DNA—they are unaffected by antibiotics.

Antibiotics, as you may know, indiscriminately kill your gut bacteria, both good and bad. This is why secondary infections and lowered immune function are common low-dose exposure to antibiotics through your food also takes a toll on your gut microbiome, which can result in chronic ill health and increased risk of drug resistance. Last but not least, you also need to avoid things that disrupt or kill your microbiome, and this includes:

- Antibiotics, unless absolutely necessary
- Conventionally raised meats and other animal products, as these animals are routinely fed low-dose antibiotics, plus genetically engineered and/or glyphosate-treated grains
- Processed foods (as the excessive sug-
- ars feed pathogenic bacteria) Chlorinated and/or fluoridated water
- · Antibacterial soap and products con-

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder of Mercola. com. An osteopathic physician, bestselling author, and recipient of multiple awards in the field of natural health, his primary vision is to change the modern health paradigm by providing people with a valuable resource to help them take control of their health. This article was originally published on Mercola.com





Nearly everyone spends too much time hunched over a phone or computer. Add to that all the stress that comes with a global pandemic and you have a recipe for pain.

Neck Pain—Causes and Treatment Options

IAN KANE

Just about everyone experiences some form of neck pain throughout their lives after all, people are living longer overall lifespans. While most neck issues are temporary occurrences, sometimes they can develop into chronic problems. This article focuses on what causes neck pain and both what you can do at home for it and when you should contact a physician.

What Causes Neck Pain?

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic that began in early 2020, many people have shifted to working from home on their computers and phones. These activities can cause people to hold their bodies at unusual angles, with their necks hunched over for long periods of time. Dubbed "tech neck," this posture can result in neck spasms, creaky neck and shoulder joints, and bad headaches, according to K. Daniel Riew, director of cervical spine surgery and co-director of spine surgery in the department of orthopedic surgery at the New York-Presbyterian Och Spine

When people look down at their devices, such as smartphones and computers, Water-based pillows can also be adjustespecially at more extreme angles, "the ed to affect the sleeper's preferred level muscles in the back of the neck have to of firmness—filling it with more water contract to hold your head up," accord-

"The more you look down, the more the muscles have to work to keep your head up. These muscles can get overly tired and sore from looking down at our smartphones, working on computers, or looking down at our tablets all day. That's what we call 'tech neck," he told the hospital's online magazine.

The oft-recommended advice of sitting up with your backs straight while at your work desk is actually incorrect, according to Riew. Instead, leaning back into one's chair (from 25 to 30 degrees back) allows for additional lumbar support, as well as less pressure on the spine's disks.

There can also be one of many underlying health conditions that can cause neck pain, such as:

- A herniated disk in the spine or degenerative disk disease
- Neck sprains or strains
- Direct injury or trauma to the neck

Neck pain can also be the result of Tension Myositis Syndrome—a state where repressed emotions or psychological distress can lead to mild oxygen deprivation, muscle tension, and pain.

Ways to Deal With Neck Pain

Take Breaks

If your work involves sitting at a computer desk, take a few breaks throughout the day and stretch your neck and back muscles. Also, try incorporating a standing desk to provide some posture variation and some neck and back relief throughout your workdays.

Mindful Meditation

Find a quiet location and go relax. Mindful meditation and deep breathing activities can help to refocus your mind, ease the day's stresses away, and provide you with a different (and more positive) perspective. Focused, deep breathing exercises; rotat-

ing the neck and shoulders; and mindful visualization can all relieve tension.

Mindful meditation may also involve guided imagery, such as envisioning your neck pain dissolving and fading away from your spinal column. These exercises don't necessarily work for everyone, but many people have reported that they've helped to alleviate (and even eliminate) their nagging neck pain problems.

Invest in a Water-Based Pillow

Neck pain can be not only annoying to deal with, but many people also report that it interferes with a good night's sleep. That can make their pain worse when they get up in the morning. When it comes to your choice of pillows to rest your head and neck on, choosing a water-based pillow can be particularly helpful in that regard.

According to a clinical trial conducted by researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, sleeping on a water-based pillow resulted in "reduced morning pain intensity, increased pain relief, and improved quality of sleep,' when compared to both a standard pillow and roll pillow. Sleep duration was also increased with a water-based pillow. makes it firmer and filling it with less

Consider a Neck-Supporting Chair

If you're like many people, you may tend to hunch forward while sitting—this sort of posture can place additional stress on your spine. On the other hand, if you maintain a good posture throughout your day, it stabilizes your head and keeps it in a neutral position on your cervical vertebrae (the vertebrae of your neck).

Certain types of chairs, such as ergonomic swivel chairs (or office chairs) are highly conducive to back and neck support. These types of chairs not only come with a high back design to support your back, but also multi-dimensional, adjustable headrests that you can set up in the way that you feel the most comfortable. These types of headrests can help you to keep your cervical vertebrae properly balanced on your spine without you having to even think about it, just as long as you keep your ears above your shoulders instead of all hunched up.

If you're one of the many people who work in front of a computer all day, make sure to center your computer's screen so that it directly faces you. According to Doctor Alan Hedge, you don't want to have your screen skewed off to one side, since that can cause your spine to twist unnaturally.

Also, be sure to have your monitor at a proper height, so that you're not looking down at it—your eyes should be 2 to 3 inches down from the top of your monitor's frame or somewhere within the top one-third of its entire screen space. This will prevent your head from tilting down and putting additional pressure on the back of your neck.

Ian Kane is an U.S. Army veteran, author, filmmaker, and actor. He is dedicated to the development and production of innovative, thought-provoking, character-driven films and books of the highest quality. You can check out his health blog at IanKaneHealthNut.com

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK; ALL ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE EPOCH TIMES

Turn Your Anxiety Into Something Useful

Here are 5 ways you can create positive outcomes from that unpleasant feeling



Everyday anxiety doesn't need to work against you—it can be a force harnessed for good, for yourself and from yourself.

EILEEN REYNOLDS

euroscientist Wendy Suzuki has some research-backed tips for turning anxiety an all-too-familiar and unpleasant emotion for many people—into a "superpower."

In an effort to neutralize some of the shame and stigma associated with the condition, Suzuki, a professor of neural science at New York University, likes to begin her talks by citing that as much as 90 percent of the world's population suffers from what she calls "everyday" anxiety—as distinct from clinical disorders, for which 28 percent of Americans have received a diagnosis at some point

With the pandemic still dragging on well into its second year, she's begun to amend her estimate, suggesting that the proportion of those of us who fall into the first category is now likely about 100 percent.

So we've all got it—whether it comes in the form of difficulty focusing, clamming up in meetings or in social situations, or tossing and turning with nighttime worries about family, finances, or the future. And, of course, we'd all be better off and happier without it, right?

Not quite, Suzuki said. Sure, it isn't pleasant, but it isn't meant to be. Suzuki points to its purpose: to alert us to potential threats and help us come up with a plan to make sure we stay safe. Through her research on the brain which includes work on the formation of short- and long-term memory, as well as how aerobic exercise improves memory, learning, and higher cognition—Suzuki has come to respect and even appreciate anxiety. While it can grow out of proportion and become destructive in our modern lives, Suzuki argues that the solution isn't trying to avoid or get rid of anxiety (likely impossible anyway), but rather

into something we can use. "Like a sailboat needs wind in order to move, the brainbody needs an outside force to urge it to grow, adapt, and not die," she writes in a new book, "Good Anxiety: Harnessing the Power of the Most Misunderstood Emotion" (Atria, 2021). In it, she draws on neuroscience and psychology research as well as her own personal experiences with anxiety—including an especially difficult period following the sudden death of her brother a few years ago. Suzuki explores how, with reflection and reframing,

consciously transforming it

The next time you're especially nervous about something—a meeting at work, say Suzuki suggests reflecting on

Try replacing

with friends.

spend scrolling online

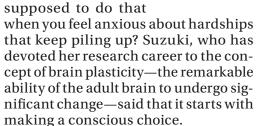
with time connecting

real-life situations, Suzuki also includes questionnaires, reflection prompts, and planning exercises that readers own needs. Here, Suzuki explains how to take the nerves can tell family, finances, public health, or politics and put it to work for you using a few you. science-backed tips that are applicable

1. Try the 'Activist

You've heard it over and over lately: Resilience is the ability to adapt and recover from hardship in our lives. But how are you supposed to do that

and academic scenarios:



anxiety can grant you six superpowers:

Stronger overall physical and emo-

Increased focus and productivity

Using case studies to show how the

dozens of strategies she outlines can

be used to cultivate those strengths in

in all kinds of personal, professional,

Enhanced social intelligence

tional resilience

Optimized mindset

Better task performance

Improved creative skills

When you develop what she calls an "activist mindset" toward reframing your anxiety, she writes "you become able to assert more top-down control of your attitude and orientation toward the bad, uncomfortable feelings associated with anxiety, shifting both your experi- **3. Turn Your Worries** ence of the bad feelings and your belief that you can channel them in positive ways."

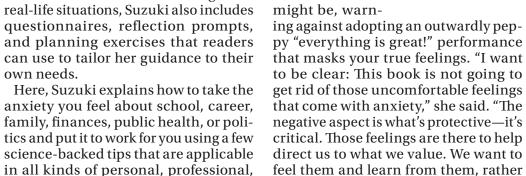
In order to change how you think about the future, it might help to start day scenarios that with the past. Suzuki suggests that when you're struggling with a current issue, thinking back on other emo-

tional trials might actually give you the insights, confidence, or creativity you need to address your next hurdle. In the book, she cites the example of how a student dealing with anxiety about public speaking found comfort in reflecting on how he had previously learned to live with worries about his

> "Because mindset plays such of going through an anxious and eating healthier foods.

situation," she said. "You can go from 'You know, I don't know if I can do it again,' to 'Look, that was hard—I had all the anxiety symptoms, and I didn't feel good, but I got through it.' That can be a really powerful moment.

2. Don't Ignore **Negative Feelings** Is there such a thing as too much reframing? Suzuki thinks there



than being beaten down by them." In "Good Anxiety," Suzuki writes about an unhappy time in her life when the pressure to be seen as "energetic, happy, and active" ended up making her feel "even more anxious and lonely. The breakthrough came when she realized that her anxiety was a warning sign showing her what was missing from her life—friendship and social connections. Once she had that information, she could make a plan for how to prioritize

The next time you're especially nervous about something—a meeting at work, say—Suzuki suggests reflecting on what those nerves can tell you, rather than beating yourself up for feeling them. It might be that the upcoming opportunity represents something really important to you, so you want to make sure to put extra effort into your

Into To-Do Lists

Suzuki suggests channeling "what-if lists"—those doomstend to pop into your head just before you



fall asleep—into action items. It's an exercise that can help convert the energy that anxiety brings into something productive, whether the worry is about something small and hyperspecific, like "What if I offended a colleague with that curt email I sent today?" or related to a much more complex and seemingly intractable problem such as a pandemic. In the first case, the action item might be as simple as sending a follow-up the next day. For the second, individual acan important role, one can reconceptualize the aftermath better care of existing health conditions



Suzuki

explains how

to take the

anxiety you

feel about

school,

career.

family,

finances

health, or

for you.

politics and put it to work

4. Spend Less Time **Looking at Your Phone** "Does the nonceasing overstimulation create the anxiety, or does anxiety simply become more noticeable

and intense because of the overstimulation?" Suzuki writes of our relationship with our devices. "It's a bit of a chicken and egg problem and both

Bottom line: If you suspect that being online all the time makes you feel keyed up and yet unable to focus on anything in particular, you're right. Receiving notifications from an array of apps or having dozens of tabs open encourages you to attempt constant multitasking, which can "put too much of a cognitive load on our executive functions," Suzuki writes, triggering—you guessed it—more anxiety. To get back your working memory, concentration, and deep thinking capabilities, Suzuki suggests changing your settings to limit screen time or even just putting your phone in another room when you need to concentrate on work or school

Recent revelations about how social media platforms are designed to be addictive and have been shown to negatively affect self-esteem, especially in adolescents, only underscore the urgent need to unplug.

"There are a bunch of smart people preying on us by analyzing what we click on and what will make us keep clicking, whether that's Instagram clothes or Instagram bodies or Instagram items that you don't have but want to have," Suzuki said

She recommends replacing the time you would spend scrolling with time connecting with friends or, if you must be on social media, only engaging with content that genuinely makes you feel good. A tea drinker, she saves her Instagram "likes" for pottery studio accounts that post artistic photos of beautiful teacups and teapots, for example.

5. Let Anxiety Teach **You to Show Empathy** and Compassion

Suzuki said that when she's only given a few minutes to talk about what she calls the "gifts" of anxiety, this is the one she highlights.

"Pay attention to where your anxiety is drawing your attention," she writes. "Use those moments in your life as a starting point for reaching out to others. If you have anxiety as the new person at work, take the time to talk to the other new hires to make them feel at ease. If you struggle with balancing kids and work, take the time to give a word of encouragement to the other new mothers and fathers in your circle."

This can be an especially useful technique for addressing social anxiety, Suzuki said, noting that she now makes a point to linger after her lectures to give students who are too nervous to speak up during class a chance to ask her questions one on one. "Before I was a professor," she said, "I had many, many years as a student being afraid of asking a question because I didn't want to look stupid in front of everybody. Now I realize that experience has given me the superpower of empathy in the classroom."

Why does that kind of gesture make you feel better? Suzuki points to studies that show that when you do something kind for someone else, that action releases dopamine, one of the neurotransmitters that plays a big role in your brain's reward system. In noticing where your own anxiety is drawing your attention, Suzuki writes, you may find "clues to what icebreakers and lifelines other people might be grateful for you to extend," which both makes you feel better and spreads compassion as you help others who are in the same boat.

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Seniors Decry Health Providers' Age Bias

'They treat me like I'm old and stupid' recounts one senior sharing a common experience

Continued from Page 9

Ageism occurs when people face stereotypes, prejudice, or discrimination because of their age. The assumption that all older people are frail and helpless is a common, incorrect stereotype. Prejudice can consist of feelings such as "older people are unpleasant and difficult to deal with." Discrimination is evident when older adults' needs aren't recognized and respected or when they're treated less favorably than younger people.

In health care settings, ageism can be explicit. An example: Plans for rationing medical care ("crisis standards of care") can specify younger adults should be treated before older adults. Embedded in these standards, now being implemented by hospitals in Idaho and parts of Alaska and Montana, is a value judgment: Young peoples' lives are worth more because they presumably have more years left to live.

Justice in Aging, a legal advocacy group, filed a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in September, charging that Idaho's crisis standards of care are ageist and asking for an investigation.

In other instances, ageism is implicit. Dr. Julie Silverstein, president of the Atlantic division of Oak Street Health, gives an example of that: doctors assuming older patients who talk slowly are cognitively compromised and unable to relate their medical concerns. If that happens, a physician may fail to involve a patient in medical decision-making, potentially compromising care, Silverstein said. Oak Street Health operates more than 100 primary care centers for low-income seniors in 18 states.

Emogene Stamper, 91, of the Bronx in New York City, was sent to an under-resourced nursing home after becoming ill with CO-VID-19 in March. "It was like a dungeon," she said, "and they didn't lift a finger to do a thing for me." The assumption that older people aren't resilient and can't recover from illness is implicitly ageist.

Stamper's son fought to have his mother admitted to an inpatient rehabilitation hospital where she could receive intensive therapy. "When I got there, the doctor said to my son, 'Oh, your mother is 90,' like he was kind of surprised, and my son said, "You don't know my mother. You don't know this 90-year-old," Stamper told me. "That lets you know how disposable they feel you are once you become a certain age."

At the end of the summer, when Stamper was hospitalized for an abdominal problem, a nurse and nursing assistant came to her room with papers for her to sign. "Oh, you can write!" Stamper said the nurse exclaimed loudly when she penned her signature. "They were so shocked that I was alert, it was insulting. They don't respect you."

Nearly 20 percent of Americans age 50 and older say they have experienced discrimination in health care settings, which can result in inappropriate or inadequate care, according to a 2015 report. One study estimates that the annual health cost of ageism in America, including over- and under-treatment of common medical conditions, totals \$63 billion.

Nubia Escobar, 75, who emigrated from Colombia nearly 50 years ago, wishes doctors would spend more time listening to older patients' concerns. This became an urgent issue two years ago when her longtime cardiologist in New York City retired to Florida and a new physician had trouble controlling her hypertension. Alarmed that she might faint or fall be-

cause her blood pressure was so low, Escobar sought a second opinion. That cardiologist "rushed me—he didn't ask many questions and he didn't listen. He was sitting there talking to and looking at my daughter,' she said. It was Veronica Escobar, an elder

law attorney, who accompanied her mother to that appointment. She remembers the doctor being abrupt and constantly interrupting her mother. "I didn't like how he treated her, and I could see the anger on my mother's face," she told me. Nubia Escobar has since seen a geriatrician who concluded she was overmedicated.

The geriatrician "was patient," Nubia Escobar told me. "How can I put it? She gave me the feeling she was thinking all the time what could be better for me."

Pat Bailey, 63, gets little of that kind of consideration in the Los Angeles County, California, nursing home where she's lived for five years since having a massive stroke and several subsequent heart attacks. "When I ask questions, they treat me like I'm old and stupid, and they don't answer," she told me by phone.

One nursing home resident in every five has persistent pain, studies have found, and a significant number don't get adequate treatment. Bailey, whose left side is paralyzed, said she's among them. "When I tell them what hurts, they just ignore it or tell me it's not time for a pain pill," she said.

Most of the time, Bailey feels like she's invisible, she said, and like she's seen as "a slug in a bed, not a real person." Only one nurse regularly talks to her and makes her feel she cares about Bailey's well-being.

"Just because I'm not walking and doing anything for myself doesn't mean I'm not alive. I'm dying inside, but I'm still alive," she told me.

Ed Palent, 88, and his wife, Sandy, 89, of Denver, similarly felt discouraged when they saw a new doctor after their long-standing physician retired. "They went for an annual checkup, and all this doctor wanted to do was ask about how they wanted to die and get them to sign all kinds of forms," said their daughter Shelli Bischoff, who discussed her parents' experiences with their permission.

In health care settings, ageism can be explicit.

"They were very upset and told him, 'We don't want to talk about this,' but he wouldn't let up. They wanted a doctor who would help them live, not figure out how they're going to die."

The Palents didn't return and instead joined another medical practice, where a young doctor barely looked at them after conducting cursory examinations, they said. That physician failed to identify a dangerous staphylococcus bacterial infection on Ed's arm, which was later diagnosed by a dermatologist. Again, the couple felt overlooked, and they left.

Now they're with a concierge physician's practice that has made a sustained effort to get to know them. "It's the opposite of ageism: It's 'We care about you and our job is to help you be as healthy as possible for as long as possible," Bischoff said. "It's a shame this is so hard to find."

We're eager to hear from readers about questions you'd like answered, problems you've been having with your care, and advice you need in dealing with the health care system. Visit khn.org/columnists to submit your requests or tips.

Judith Graham is a contributing columnist for Kaiser Health News, which originally published this article. KHN's coverage of these topics is supported by The John A. Hartford Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and The SCAN Foundation.

Discrimination is evident when older adults' needs aren't recognized and respected or when they're treated less favorably than younger people.





LEO BABAUTA

have a client who has completely changed his life—it's been a complete transformation, and it's breath-

One of the most powerful things he's brought into his life is the practice of self-compassion. It changed everything.

But one of the next most powerful things he created for himself is the view that everything is a practice.

Man, what a ridiculously valuable way to frame our lives!

Every difficulty that comes up is simply something to practice with.

Every frustration with another person is a practice ground, and the other person becomes your teacher. Bow to them with gratitude!

Normally, we think of these difficulties and frustrations as something wrong with us, the other person, or the world. With this kind of view, every failure is another

Every frustration with another person is a practice ground, and the other person becomes your

teacher.

reason to feel bad about ourselves. Every frustration with someone else is a reason to shut down to them or lash out at them. Everything wrong with the world is another reason to feel discouraged.

But what if, instead, we just took it as something to practice with?

Some examples:

My work is overwhelming. OK great, let's bring awareness to the feeling of overwhelm, be with it mindfully, and examine the view that has you creating this feeling of overwhelm. Can we practice shifting the view? Getting in touch with our inner peace? With this kind of practice, every time we feel overwhelmed is an opportunity to get in touch with our inner peace.

Other people can be so frustrating! Absolutely ... and also, can we practice being with this feeling of frustration (even expressing it fully as an emotion), noticing what view we have of others that creates

our frustration, and maybe finding a more expansive view that lets us feel compassion for the other people? Maybe even seeing them with love and wonder? Then every frustration with others becomes a way to practice compassion and wonder and ex-

This task is too hard, I don't want to do it. Yep, I have that too! So can we practice being with our resistance, noticing the view that has us thinking of it as a burden, and instead finding a more open and joyful view of the task? Can it become a place of play and curiosity and adventure?

Every challenge, problem, frustration, failure becomes a place of beautiful practice. Life becomes a playground and place of

What a magical place this world is!

Leo Babauta is the author of six books and the writer of Zen Habits, a blog with over 2 million subscribers. Visit ZenHabits.net



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