

THE EPOCH TIMES

MIND &

BODY

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Preventing Cancer and Chronic Diseases With the Nutritarian Diet

Eating
a diet dense
in nutrients and
low in calories
is a simple way
to keep your
body well.

*The standard American diet and lifestyle are killing people,
but the cure is deliciously simple*

JEFF PERKIN

"When you flood your body with the nutrients it needs, it doesn't just make you healthy, live long, and prevent disease; it stops food addictions and cravings, normalizes your appetite, and makes your body gravitate toward your ideal weight effortlessly," Dr. Joel Fuhrman told the audience at his TEDx talk in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2013.

Nutrient density is the logical key to a transformative diet. If our body doesn't get the nutrients it needs, it's

not going to function at its best. We have been living with the wide-scale persistence of chronic diseases resulting from society's poor nutrition, chronic stress, sedentary lifestyle, and overexposure to environmental toxins—what Fuhrman calls "the toxic American lifestyle."

One thing is abundantly clear: With all the factors impacting health today, our bodies need all the help they can get from protective micro-nutrients.

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One great thing about eating fruits and vegetables is you can eat as much as you want.



ME IMAGE/SHUTTERSTOCK



Acupuncture has been surprisingly effective for pain relief, leading the U.S. military to explore ways to use this ancient modality instead of narcotics.

Battlefield Acupuncture

The US military is now using a unique formulation of acupuncture to relieve pain and avoid opioids

EMMA SUTTIE

The ancient art of acupuncture and the U.S. military aren't two things that you think would go together, but they've developed a surprising partnership over the past 20-plus years.

The United States is presently in the grip of an opioid epidemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), since 1999, 841,000 people have died of drug overdoses. In 2019, 70 percent of overdose deaths involved an opioid. And the problem seems to be getting worse.

The opioid crisis extends to the U.S. military as well. Combat puts U.S. troops and veterans at substantial risk of injury and exposure to prescription (and non-prescription) opioids. It seems that soldiers who see combat are even more susceptible to opioid addiction than service members who deployed, but never see battle, according to a National Bureau of Economic Research study, "Did The War on Terror Ignite an Opioid Epidemic?"

Resul Cesur, associate professor of health care economics at the University of Connecticut and one of the study's authors, wanted to understand if the opioid epidemic in the military was because of combat or if other factors were involved.

"Our evidence shows that the reason why so many military people are using opiates is because they are exposed to combat," he said.

To illustrate how big the problem is, between 2010 and 2016, 6,485 veterans in the Veteran Affairs (VA) health care system died of opioid-related causes.

An article in the Military Times states that in 2015, VA officials reported that they had seen a 55 percent increase in opioid use disorders among veterans following combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In fiscal year 2016, the VA treated roughly 68,000 veterans for opioid addiction.

It seems logical that military personnel in combat situations are dealing with sometimes catastrophic injuries. Beyond combat, they're carrying heavy equipment through rugged terrain and living in less than ideal conditions. The sheer number of military personnel who experience mental and physical injury because of military activities is significant.

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Gardening is great physical exercise with several unexpected benefits, including reduced anxiety and an improved microbiome.

Gardening Is Good for Your Microbes, Muscles, and Mood

Research keeps affirming all the diverse ways digging in the dirt and nurturing growth can support our well-being

ZRINKA PETERS

There are few activities more nourishing for both body and soul than planting and tending a garden.

Gardeners have long known that the physical process of working with soil, water, and sunlight to coax a tiny seed through the miracle of growth and maturity has effects that go well beyond the pleasure of eating a strawberry or smelling a rose. A growing body of research shows that gardening is good for our physical and mental health.

First of all, as anyone who has hauled bags of mulch or dug up tough perennials knows, gardening can be strenuous exercise.

Even "light" gardening, which could include activities such as weeding and watering, burns approximately 330 calories per hour for a 154-pound person, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). If done regularly, gardening can definitely contribute toward physical fitness goals.

Interestingly, a study done by researchers from the University of Arkansas and published in the Journal of Women and Aging, found that yard work can increase bone density and significantly decrease the risk of osteoporosis in women older than 50.

Yard work was even more effective in strengthening bone density than other forms of exercise, such as swimming and jogging, and it appears that the weight-bearing activities normally done during yard work, such as shoveling dirt and carrying watering cans, made all the difference.

Lori Turner, assistant professor of health sciences and lead researcher for the study, told the University of Arkansas News: "We hadn't expected yard work to be significant. It's taken for such a dainty activity. But there's a lot of weight-bearing motion going on in the garden—digging holes, pulling weeds, pushing a mower."

The health benefits of gardening go well beyond physical fitness. Exposure to diverse soil microbes—the microscopic bacteria, fungi, and viruses that live underground—is beneficial to our own bodies' microbiomes.

COVID-19 notwithstanding, we've come a long way from the notion that all germs are generally bad and need to be attacked with disinfecting cleaners. The

vast majority of the trillions of bacteria that are on, in, and around us at all times are either benign or beneficial.

The "hygiene hypothesis," which suggests that exposure to germs early in life is helpful for strengthening a child's developing immune system, continues to be supported with ongoing research. This hypothesis also posits that a lack of microbial exposure is a contributing factor to allergies.

When epidemiologists from The University of Melbourne discovered that farm kids are far less likely to develop allergies and asthma than city kids, they theorized that it was because of the greater microbial diversity found on farms, where kids not only have more contact with dirt, but also farm animals, pets, and siblings, according to results published in the journal *Thorax*.

Could it be that the dramatic rise in childhood asthma and allergies in the past few decades could have been exacerbated by living lifestyles that are "too clean"?

Jack Gilbert and Rob Knight, in their book *"Dirt is Good,"* wrote: "Let your kids play in (and even eat) dirt. Soil is a microbial heaven, with more than a billion bacterial cells per gram, and many fungi and viruses as well. Unless there's lots of animal poop around the soil (which would be a bit gross), you can relax in knowing the soil contains very few organisms that could make your child sick. It is a great source and a great opportunity to expose children to a complex microbial community that will help train their immune system."

Bodily benefits aside, gardening is also great for mental health. The psychological benefits of being outdoors and interacting with nature are so widely accepted that many doctors are prescribing "nature therapy"—a prescription that includes spending time outdoors in green spaces—to help alleviate mental illnesses, especially anxiety and depression.

A large survey conducted in Wisconsin and published in 2014 in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health found that the availability of green spaces in neighborhoods had a significant effect on lowering levels of anxiety, depression, and stress.

There's even a bacteria found in soil, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, that has been shown to have an effect on mental health similar to an antidepressant—without any negative side effects, according to a study published in *Neuroscience* on May 11, 2007. Is it any wonder that gardening lifts our moods and leaves us feeling better?

Planting and tending a garden can be an enjoyable, rewarding way to boost both our physical and mental health, not to mention a way to add delicious and low-cost produce to our tables. We just need to get out and dig in.

Zrinka Peters has been writing professionally for more than a decade. She holds a degree in English literature from Simon Fraser University in Canada and has been published in a wide variety of print and online publications, including Health Digest, Parent.com, Today's Catholic Teacher, and Education.com.

◀ The psychological benefits of being outdoors and interacting with nature are so widely accepted that many doctors are prescribing "nature therapy."



MEDICALLY CORRECT

The Growing Possibility of a Real 6 Million Dollar Man

Prosthetics have made dramatic improvements, even as they raise some strange possibilities

PETER WEISS

Steve Austin was a U.S. astronaut who was gravely injured when his spacecraft crashed back to earth. He was rebuilt, almost from the ground up by government-approved experimental surgeries, giving him powerful prosthetics.

The "Six Million Dollar Man" first aired in 1973, starring Lee Majors, and it ran for five seasons. I remember that show, and I was amazed, as were millions of others, with what he could do with his prosthetic limbs and eyes.

Today's prosthetics are getting closer and closer to that reality.

Companies have made enormous progress in both the aesthetics and functionality of prosthetics, which can be passive (more cosmetic than functional) or more involved. More real-looking artificial limbs can now be made using 3D printers. They're a tremendous improvement from what was available only a few years back. There are also body-powered prosthetics, where the movements of the upper body, shoulder, and chest are captured and used to open or close an artificial hand.

Companies have made enormous progress in both the aesthetics and functionality of prosthetics.

My old roommate from medical school, Lt. Col. Don Reed Jr. (retired) saved many lives while serving in Iraq as a battlefield trauma surgeon, but many of those brave men and women would come home missing limbs. This is a problem war-faring humans have faced for millennia.

Prosthetics have been used for thousands of years, with evidence of use in the times of the ancient Egyptians, according to a 2007 article in *ANZ Journal of Surgery*.

The first known true prosthesis used as a rehabilitative tool was that of the ancient

Next Generation Prosthetics

The technological advance of prosthetic limbs is leading to new possibilities for amputees



State-of-the-art techniques such as targeted muscle reinnervation, rewires nerves that were used in the hand or fingers to adjacent muscles to allow the user to have a degree of "thought control" over their prosthesis.



Real-looking artificial limbs can now be made using 3D printers.

ALL IMAGES BY GETTY IMAGES



A new glove goes over prosthetic hands to help the wearer learn how much pressure they are using by making sounds.



Osseointegration, is a recently developed surgical technique that allows the amputee to attach the prosthesis directly to the bone of the missing limb.

Greeks. In 484 B.C., a soldier cut off his leg to escape imprisonment and replaced it with a wooden prosthesis. He traveled 30 miles on his wooden leg before being captured and quickly decapitated.

Today's prosthetics are taking on a whole new meaning. The older prosthetics were simple tools to help a person cope with the horrible loss of a particular function. With a prosthetic leg, one was able to stand. Later, with advances, one could walk. The current generation lets an amputee run. Just think of the former South African runner, Oscar Pistorius, and the use of the "blade" prosthesis. Those blades were developed by medical engineer Van Phillips. The blades store kinetic energy like a spring.

There's now even a technique of using sensors capable of detecting nerve

impulses so the amputee can activate the movement of the artificial limb using the same neural pathways they once used for their original limb. This is moving much closer to the kind of increased functionality proposed by science fiction, such as Geordi La Forge's neural vision glasses in *Star Trek the Next Generation*. We're still far away from the true implementation of the six million dollar man, but we get closer every year.

One of the great limitations of artificial hands is the inability to have tactile sensation, such as in grasping an egg. There are experiments now being done whereby electrodes are implanted into the amputees individual peripheral nerve endings and attached to the prosthetic digits, which "can produce graded, discrete sensations of touch or

movement," according to an article in *IEEE Transactions on Neural Systems and Rehabilitation Engineering*. This article describes the first evidence for direct neural feedback and direct neural control of a prosthetic arm.

These kinds of prosthetic arms are still experimental, extremely expensive, and not ready for common use.

Just recently, a device was developed that's actually a tactile sensory "glove" that can be placed onto existing artificial limbs. This glove uses sound to let the wearer learn through what's called sensory substitution. This device was presented at the Annual International Conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society (EMBC) in 2021.

Another improvement in prosthetics is more superficial, but also important. More real-looking artificial limbs can now be made using 3D printers. They're a tremendous improvement from what was available only a few years ago.

There's also osseointegration, which is a surgical technique that allows the amputee to attach the prosthesis directly to the bone of the missing limb. Osseointegration has been approved and used in Europe for several years and only recently here in the United States.

Myoelectric prosthetics use electrical stimulations from the residual limb to control movement of the new artificial limb by contracting that muscle, which sends the electric impulse to a controller that then triggers tiny battery-powered motors to move digits or the wrist, for example.

TMR, or targeted muscle reinnervation, is a very complicated surgical procedure for high amputees. This surgery rewires the nerves that were used in the hand or fingers to adjacent muscles with the goal of allowing the user to have some "thought control" over their prosthesis. The true functionality of this surgery is still limited, but promising.

Mobius Bionics has gone one step further and developed the LUKE Arm for shoulder-level amputees. This device allows the user to reach above his or her head (which was unheard of before with prosthetics) and even use a power drill. This arm uses a foot control placed on the shoe and intuitively reads the tilt of the shoe to interpret each movement and control the arm functions.

The future for artificial limbs is mind-boggling. I haven't even touched on the ability of a quadriplegic (paralyzed from the neck down) to move a computer cursor with just thought or the "glasses" that will help a blind person "see." Advanced technology, when used right, is amazing to witness, but we always have to be vigilant. The sad reality is that with every advance comes tremendous risk. The ability to better meld man and machine raises the possibility of far darker visions than the hopeful sights of the six million dollar man.

As Albert Einstein observed, "It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity."

Dr. Peter Weiss is a nationally known physician and health care thought leader who has advised CEOs, and political leaders on current and future health care trends affecting our country. He was a national health care advisor for senator John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign and was an assistant clinical professor of OB/GYN at David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA for 30 years. Weiss is the co-founder of the Rodeo Drive Women's Health Center in Beverly Hills, Calif., and remains in private practice. He also spends part of his time writing and lecturing on health care in America.

Will Your Liver Repair Itself After Years of Drinking?

MAT LECOMPTÉ

One of the most interesting and well-known facts about one of your body's most vital organs, the liver, is that it can repair itself. But just how much can it do?

If you've been drinking for years, let's say, can your liver just fix itself, so it's like you never touched the stuff?

It really depends on the level of damage that's done.

There are various stages of alcohol-related liver disease. But the first two, alcoholic fatty liver disease and alcoholic hepatitis, don't produce many symptoms. Alcoholic fatty liver disease may produce no symptoms at all, meaning it can progress easily without notice.

If you stop drinking during the first two stages, your liver will likely repair itself. The length of time, however, will depend on the severity of the condition. Healing can begin within days and take a few

weeks to a year for the liver to completely recover to its original function. You'll want to eliminate alcohol intake during this time and try to eat as healthily as possible.

Because you may not notice any symptoms until the second stage of a liver problem, it's a good idea to take inventory of how much you drink.

On the other hand, if your liver disease has progressed to the point of cirrhosis, which is marked by scarring on the liver, your organ will not be able to repair itself. The scars are permanent, and continuing

to drink may lead to liver failure and a host of other deadly risks.

Because you may not notice any symptoms until the second stage of a liver problem, it's a good idea to take inventory of how much you drink. If you're exceeding one standard size drink per day as a woman, or two as a man, your liver is unlikely to be in top form.

If you begin to notice discomfort in the abdomen, fatigue, unexplained weight loss, loss of appetite, or nausea, it may indicate early-stage liver problems. A blood test and ultrasound can help determine the overall health of your liver.

So, in short, your liver can repair itself up to a point. To maintain liver health, consume a low to moderate amount of alcohol and keep up with doctor's appointments.

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



If you're exceeding one standard size drink per day as a woman, or two as a man, your liver is unlikely to be in top form.

Preventing Cancer and Chronic Diseases With the Nutritarian Diet

The standard American diet and lifestyle are killing people, but the cure is deliciously simple

Continued from Page 1

While macronutrients are those big categories of food types—carbohydrates, proteins, and fats—micronutrients are all the vitamins and minerals we absorb from our food or produce in our bodies with the help of our food and healthy exposure to sunlight.

Ideologies behind diets can be complex, but, in general, health-minded people seek to eat foods that promote health and wellness, and provide an enjoyable experience. That being said, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Individuals must closely examine their decisions around food to resolve particular issues they may be dealing with.

The Equation for Nutritional Health

For Fuhrman, a seven-time New York Times bestselling author, a healthful diet can generally be simplified to the equation: "H = N/C," or "health = nutrients per calorie." In a 2016 blog post, Fuhrman asserts that "a high ratio of micronutrients to calories is the basis of a healthful diet." This logical idea is foundational to what he calls the "nutritarian diet."

As a medical doctor, he has seen firsthand how the U.S. health care system and pharmaceutical industry truly operate. A large population of chronically sick people is immensely profitable—but catastrophic for the country. For too many people, the vicious cycle of malnutrition and disease plays on repeat, with tragic results.

The great news is that a growing number of doctors and health-minded individuals have been finding moral, personal, and economic incentives to move away from this illness-based system. The "health and wellness" industry floods us with offers for products, programs, and services. Nevertheless, a healthy and accessible diet for our own unique, biological makeup and geographical location can still easily elude us.

A Problem of Lifestyle

We all have friends or family members who have struggled, or are struggling, with diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and various forms of cancer. While immense lip service and charitable donations are being paid to "fight" these diseases, vastly less attention is given to educating people about the lifestyle behaviors that can create them in the first place.

Many of us have lost loved ones too early to these lifestyle-related diseases. Nevertheless, there is no mandate or widespread initiative to educate Americans about, or improve access to, nutrient-dense foods and exercise programs. There is no coordinated, COVID-like response to these epidemics. This is despite the fact that many Americans face a much higher risk of death from these diseases—and are at a significantly higher risk of death from COVID-19—because they already suffer from these comorbidities. In fact, for many Americans, the only reason their immune system could not contend with COVID-19 was because they were in chronically ill health due to a poor diet, high stress levels, and lack of exercise.

The Vast Majority of Americans Are at Risk

In a 2018 article published in the American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine, Fuhrman explains that, "the fundamental concern as we look to reform health in America is the known reality that most chronic diseases that afflict Americans are predominantly lifestyle induced; and the belief is that the vast majority of heart attacks and strokes could be prevented if people were willing to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors."

Fuhrman goes on to explain that "only about 5 percent of the American population is at a normal weight as a result of

eating healthy and living a healthy life." He reached this conclusion by comparing the body mass index (BMI) of Americans to those of people who live in "blue zones," which are statistically anomalous areas around the world in which people generally live longer, with fewer chronic health problems, as a result of healthier lifestyle behaviors.

In addition to a general lack of sufficient exercise and too many maladaptive behaviors like smoking and alcoholism, Fuhrman concludes that in regard to food, "the standard American diet is clearly not a healthy diet," even for people who manage to maintain a normal BMI.

"You can exercise off those extra calories, but they will still negatively affect your health. It is not enough to be at a healthy weight—you must actually eat healthfully to age more slowly, prevent cancer, and live a long, healthy life," Fuhrman wrote in a blog post about junk food.

Fast Food Genocide?

According to Fuhrman, the detrimental impact of processed, industrial foods known as "fast food" on the American population is nothing short of a "genocide."

In an interview about his book "Fast Food Genocide," Fuhrman explained: "Genocide—the deliberate destruction of a population—is the most accurate way to describe fast food's devastating effects on our society. Processed, nutrient-barren products are designed by the food industry to be highly addictive, cheap to pro-

A large population of chronically sick people is immensely profitable but catastrophic for the country.

5 PERCENT

Dr. Fuhrman: "Only about 5 percent of the American population is at a normal weight as a result of eating healthy and living a healthy life."

duce, and highly profitable. These products do not contain the nutrients humans need to thrive, and, in those using them as a primary food source, it has created an explosion of disease and led to much suffering and death.

"Fast food and processed foods also damage our genes, which we pass on to our children and grandchildren, and we are seeing dangerous increases in autism, learning disabilities, allergies, autoimmune disease, and childhood cancer. This must be stopped."

Fuhrman defines "fast food" as "any commercially made convenience food that includes artificial ingredients, processed grains, sweeteners, salt, and oil—all with high-caloric concentration and minimal nutrient content."

Alarmingly, these types of foods are the main caloric input of the vast majority of Americans. Why do we pretend that a virus with a very low mortality risk is a greater threat than what we put into our bodies on a daily basis?

Fast Food and Mental Illness

With genetics as a convenient scapegoat, it's all too easy to overlook our dietary choices and how they impact our genetic expression. "Many don't realize the strong causative role an unhealthy diet may have in mental illness. Currently, one in five Americans suffers from a psychiatric disorder," Fuhrman wrote in his article "The Hidden Dangers of Fast and Processed Food," published in the American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine.

As a person formally diagnosed with severe depression in my early 20s, I know how quickly medication can be prescribed without any discussion about habits surrounding the consumption of fast food, soda, alcohol, and so on. Poor dietary choices such as these are highly correlated to mood swings and depressive episodes. Medications didn't work for me, but ceasing to put toxic substances into my body on a daily basis did.

Too many people are given a label and a prescription without first considering the consequences of their dietary and lifestyle choices. While the battle against major depression may not be that simple for everyone, these are important considerations to make if we are serious about empowering ourselves with regard to our mental health.

Giving Your Body What It Needs

If you want to be healthy, you have to slow down your relationship to food. You have to find the time to make better eating decisions. Unless you're wealthy, you likely can't hire someone to do these things for you. By experimenting with foods, you'll be surprised by the delicious and nourishing meals you can create yourself.

Changing your diet doesn't have to be a punishment. While food addiction is definitely real, it can be overcome with a dedication to shifting lifestyle behaviors. Eating nutrient-dense foods not only increases your likelihood of living a longer life, it also improves your quality of life in the present. Instead of riding the roller coaster of highs and lows that come from eating a processed diet, we can mindfully select foods that keep us stable.

Slow Down to Eat Right
Moving too fast has serious drawbacks. Convenience can literally be deadly. The proof is all around us. Mass production and overconsumption of processed, fast foods isn't progress; it's insanity.

Good nutrition requires a commitment to self-education and taking the time to find the real foods your body wants and needs. This includes knowing that not all foods are grown in a way that allows for nutrient density. Produce should be grown organically and eaten as close to the time of being picked as possible to preserve maximum nutrient density. Learn more about the life-changing potential of the nutritarian diet and G-BOMBS (greens, beans/legumes, onions, mushrooms, berries, and seeds/nuts) through the many books and programs found on Fuhrman's website, DrFuhrman.com.

Jeff Perkin is a graphic artist and integrative nutrition health coach. He can be reached WholySelf.com.

G



Greens Help Your Body Fight Cancer

Most people don't consume nearly enough greens. Leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables, and sprouts are the "most nutrient-dense of all foods," according to Fuhrman's guide. Greens are an excellent source of plant protein and are packed with phytochemicals, which are chemicals that may prevent carcinogens from forming. They are also rich in folate, calcium, and antioxidants.

Cruciferous vegetables such as kale and broccoli are cancer-fighting powerhouses. There is a long list of cruciferous vegetables that contain glucosinolates, which are converted into isothiocyanates (ITCs) as a result of the chemical reaction brought on by chopping or chewing. This mastication causes the cell walls in green vegetables to break, which allows myrosinase enzymes to react to the glucosinolates and produce ITCs.

Sulforaphane, found in broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables, is an ITC that has been found to have an "integrative role in preventing fatigue, inflammation, and oxidative stress," according to a study by researchers at Waseda University in Japan. However, cooking broccoli for too long can destroy the myrosinase enzymes needed to create sulforaphane. "Steaming broccoli for only two to four minutes" or consuming broccoli in sprout form is recommended to protect its essential nutrients.

According to a meta-analysis conducted by Zhejiang University in China, "cruciferous vegetable intake is related to the decreased risk of prostate cancer." Similar meta-analyses have found a decreased risk of ovarian cancer, colorectal cancer, gastric cancer, and breast cancer. Increased consumption of leafy greens is also linked to a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease.

Greens are an essential component to a healthy diet whether you want to eat them raw, cooked, steamed as sprouts, or some combination thereof. To the degree that your digestive system can handle them, eat raw greens for maximum ITC production. Chew them well!

B

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Beans, Beans, the Magical Legumes

Eating beans and legumes help to keep blood pressure and blood glucose down, because they are digested slowly. The nutritarian diet is about slowing things down and stabilizing blood sugar levels. Slowing down metabolism also helps to slow down the wear and tear on the digestive system and body.

Beans have good amounts of soluble fiber and resistant starches, which are carbohydrates that digestive enzymes don't break down. As a result, even a small serving of beans can go a long way toward weight loss and the reduction of cravings.

According to a multisite, case-control study in Uruguay, a "higher intake of legumes was associated with a decreased risk of several cancers including those of the upper aerodigestive tract, stomach, colorectum, and kidney."



Remind yourself to eat G-BOMBS with a note on the fridge.

What Is the Nutritarian Diet?

DS STORIES/PEKELS

The nutritarian diet is a mostly plant-based diet that focuses on eating nutrient-dense foods. While it is not an exclusively vegan diet, it does recommend reducing the consumption of animal products as much as possible. Most Americans eat a lot of animal products, many of which are processed and filled with toxic by-products, and which come from animals raised in very poor conditions. Avoiding processed, packaged foods and opting for natural, unprocessed, whole vegetables and fruits is a core component of the diet.

"No S.O.S." is short for "no added salt, oil, or sugar," Fuhrman's recommendation for beginners to the diet. While at first it may seem like an extreme suggestion, what is actually extreme is the overuse of these additives throughout most processed, packaged, or restaurant-prepared foods. We may have heard how detrimental "vegetable oils" (such as soy, canola, and corn oils) can be to our health. Nevertheless, they run rampant in packaged foods, as do high levels of salt and sugar.

Rather than being a diet of avoidance, the nutritarian diet is focused on packing anti-cancer and disease-preventing micronutrients, phytochemicals, and antioxidants into our meals.

G-BOMBS to Defeat Disease

Fuhrman's beginner's guide on his website recommends eating a diet that includes "G-BOMBS" everyday. G-BOMBS is an easy-to-remember acronym for greens, beans, onions, mushrooms, berries, and seeds. "These are the most health-promoting, anti-cancer superfoods on the planet," Fuhrman writes. They are our "immune system's special forces," as he stated during his TED talk, because they "inhibit fat storage on the body, prevent cancer, and prolong our life span."

O



Onions: The Pungent Smell of Anti-Cancer

You can taste the anti-cancer power when you chew onions and other vegetables in the Allium vegetable family such as garlic, chives, leeks, and shallots. These sharp-tasting veggies have been shown to have anti-cancer phytochemicals called "organosulfur compounds, which are released from the vegetables upon their processing (mincing, chewing, etc.)," according to an article by researchers from the Pittsburgh Cancer Institute.

Published in Cancer Letters, the article states that "the known health benefits of Allium vegetable constituents include cardiovascular effects, improvement of the immune function, lowering of blood glucose level, radioprotection, protection against microbial infections, and anti-cancer effects"—all of which show that there are much bigger things to worry about than your breath.

M



The Might of Mushrooms

Regularly eating mushrooms has been associated with a decreased risk in certain cancers. Compounds contained in mushrooms called aromatase inhibitors are already used in drugs to treat breast cancer. For this reason, commonly eaten mushrooms such as white, cremini, and portobello are thought to help prevent breast cancer.

A 2006 research article published in the journal Cancer Research stated that "clinical trials have shown aromatase inhibitors to be effective in the treatment of hormone-responsive breast cancer and to significantly prevent contralateral cancers."

In a blog about G-BOMBS, Fuhrman recommends eating all mushrooms cooked due to "a potentially carcinogenic substance called agaritine" found in mushrooms which "significantly reduces when cooked."

B



Getting Berry Healthy

"Laboratory and clinical studies provide strong evidence of the cancer-preventive potential of berries," according to a 2008 research article published in Carcinogenesis. Due to the fact that they are packed with nutrients, phytochemicals, and polyphenols, "berries and their components reduce oxidant and carcinogen-induced genetic damage and enhance DNA repair." As Fuhrman is fond of saying, "Why don't more people know this?"

Berries are a juicy and delicious natural dessert that are also low in sugar. They are regularly described as "superfoods" because of their cancer-preventive, heart-protective, and brain-boosting impact. "Blueberry supplementation improves memory in older adults," according to a 2010 study published in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry. The study found that three months of consuming wild blueberry juice daily "can confer neurocognitive benefit."

S



Nuts About Seeds

A variety of seeds and nuts are proven to be heart-healthy snacks. They contain healthy fats, which aid in the absorption of micronutrients. In an article from the Department of Medicine at SUNY Upstate Medical University in New York, researchers concluded that "nuts, a rich source of monounsaturated fatty acids and fiber, have been shown to decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease and the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes mellitus."

The researchers also highlighted that nuts exhibit a number of benefits, "including improved weight management, greater insulin sensitivity, and favorable endothelial effects, as well as having anti-inflammatory properties."

Regularly substituting a handful of raw, unsalted nuts or seeds instead of a bag of chips can go a long way toward improving one's health. Try exploring the many different varieties of nuts and seeds to find out which ones work for your diet.



You can eat your way out of many diseases with a helpful reminder to regularly consume "G-Bombs."

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What to Do When Entering the Hospital

Entering the hospital is like going on a terrible trip full of unfamiliar sights and confusing customs

PAMELA PRINCE PYLE

As I walk the halls of my hospital, I pass many who wear the confused look of travelers in a strange land. They are like refugees or tourists on a terrible trip, shuffling papers as they walk along sterile corridors, reading each sign as they pass. They are lost, overwhelmed, and scared. They don't know where things are or how they work. I try to make eye contact. I smile and send up silent prayers for comfort. I point and say, "Turn left, then left again, then right, and you'll see the elevators." If I have time, I walk them to their destination. I understand. I've been on that same awful journey.

These shipwrecked souls have recently seen a family member's health passport get stamped "Disease A" and have been directed into the bowels of the hospital for admission. They are ill prepared to navigate this unfamiliar world and their minds are racing with a thousand questions: What now? Who should we call? What did that nurse say? Who will be the doctor? When will I see my loved one? How are we going to pay for this? Where is that elevator?

The patient fares worse. As they are shunted from one strange place to another, watching ceiling tiles fly by and nurses talk about their day, they too have questions: When will I see my family again? Was that a doctor or a nurse? When can I get something for my pain? Have these nurses forgotten that I can hear them?

A New Kind of Doctor

If you haven't been hospitalized recently or haven't had reason to visit someone in the hospital, you might not know that your primary care physician will not be seeing you once you cross the hospital threshold. In the hospital world, there are hospitalists.

I have worked as an internal medicine doctor in hospital-based settings for much of my career. I was recruited during my residency in 1992 to help pilot a new way of delivering medical care to hospitalized patients. This was staffing hospitals with full-time physicians.

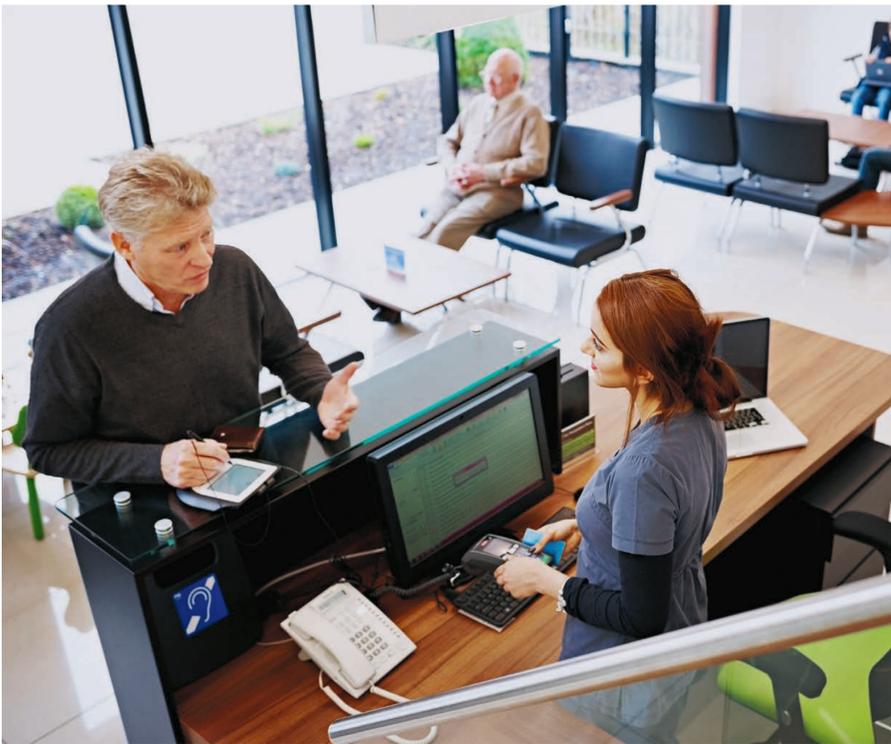
This plan proved to be a success. Suddenly doctors were available around the clock to see patients. The length of patient stays in hospital ICUs dropped. Medicine's knowledge base regarding hospital care grew exponentially. In 1996, the term "hospitalist" was coined. This new breed of doctors allowed primary care physicians to see more patients in their practices.

It seemed to be a win-win—unless you were used to your family doctor visiting you in the hospital before and after their office hours. In that case, the new arrangement proved to be confusing, frustrating, and scary. Each uneasy patient would wonder if doctors like myself, whom they had never met before, were capable and qualified.

Of course, for the hospitalist model to work most effectively, health care providers, both in and out of the hospital setting, must communicate effectively. Electronic medical records (EMR) has improved this significantly, but there are still times when systems don't "talk properly to each other." Just because records can now be sent instantly doesn't mean they actually do get sent instantly. Thus, I always encourage patients, particularly those with chronic illness, to keep a recent copy of their primary care physician's notes and a current list of medications.

In the event of hospitalization, primary care physicians are now able to provide a patient's EMR, including ongoing lists of medical diagnoses, surgical histories, medications lists, personal notes, and more.

This information gives a hospitalist information they need at a time when patients and families are inclined to forget important details. This sharing of information is equally important when the hospitalist hands the care of the patient back to his or her primary care physician. Patients should always request that a copy of their medical discharge summary be sent to their primary care physician and request a copy of their



Ask questions and get yourself oriented when you first arrive at the hospital.

medical records for their files.

Entering Hospital Land

When going to the hospital, it's helpful to bring medical bottles with medicine and dosing on them. This is for two reasons.

The first is because it gives the most accurate picture of what you are taking versus what the record may state.

The second reason is that some emergency department times can last several hours.

To ensure you are taking medications on time, notify the nurse of what times you are meant to take your medicine. In a busy emergency department, the nurse might not make it back to your room precisely when you should take your medications and therefore, either you or your advocating visitor will need to notify the nurse. It's important to not take any medication without alerting the nurse.

That's because it's possible your presenting symptoms are related to one of your medications and therefore would be changed.

Always ask someone once you enter a health care facility. The nurse will first check for any drug interactions, and then note in the record that the medicine has been taken to prevent a second dose from being administered later.

If an emergency room doctor determines that you need to be admitted, they will then call the admitting physician. This may be a hospitalist, a surgeon, or other specialty physicians. Often, these medical services use mid-level clinicians. Examples would be a nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant.

Be prepared to have to tell your medical history and presenting symptoms multiple times in most settings. When you do speak to your admitting physician, be prepared with a list of questions and take note of the answers. This will help make your medical stay more tolerable.

Clarity is kindness and understanding the process of your hospital care will help overcome unnecessary anxiety and stress for you and your family members.

Requiring hospital care can provoke emotions of fear, anxiety, depression, and stress. Patients and family members can avert or lessen these emotions by coming prepared with the right expectations, right questions, and right self-care.

Questions for New Patients

It's important you be proactive about getting the information you need to make good decisions about your medical treatment. The hospital experience can be disorienting, so the following list can help you get what you need. Ask your doctor:

- Will you please give me in writing the name of my diagnosis?
- Am I the normal age and gender for this diagnosis?
- Are there any genetic tendencies for this disease and, if so, do I need to have my children tested?
- Can you give me descriptions of each treatment path and the associated risk/benefit ratio?
- Are there any places in the country that specialize in this disease and treatment?

- Do you have a holistic approach to treating this disease? (See resources at end of chapter)
- What can I do to help my outcome?
- What is my prognosis?
- I would like to seek a second opinion. Is this OK with you? (I encourage posing this as a question because the correct answer is always, "Absolutely!" If the doctor becomes defensive, he or she isn't the best doctor for you, perhaps not even for your first opinion.)
- If this were your spouse, child, etc., what would you do? (The importance of this question can't be stressed enough. It will not only give you valuable information, but it will also develop empathy as he or she ponders the reality of the recommendation they are making.)

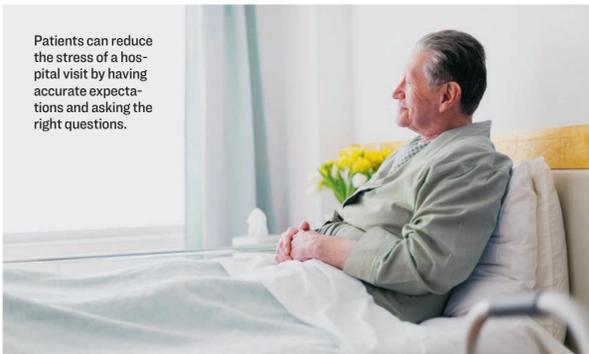
Questions for Patient Advocates

If you're loved one is entering the hospital, they will appreciate having someone there to help them navigate the sanitized terrain.

If that person is you, this list of questions can help you help them. Ask your loved one's doctor: Will you be the only doctor on my loved one's case, or will there be others?

- What time do you make rounds and what time would I be best to receive an update on our family member?
 - If visiting hours do not happen to coincide with the time you are making rounds, how can we get a few minutes with you to discuss our loved one's situation?
- If there are any significant changes, will you give us a prompt update? Does your nurse have our cellphone numbers?
- If we have questions between visiting hours or rounds, what number can we call to speak to you or your nurse?
- Are there any questions that we have not asked that we should ask?

Dr. Pamela Prince Pyle is a board-certified internal medicine physician. In 2009, Dr. Pyle began traveling to Rwanda for medical work with Africa New Life Ministries and was instrumental in the founding and growth of the Dream Medical Center in Kigali. She is the author of "A Good Death: Learning to Live Like You Were Dying," coming in 2022. To learn more, visit her website, PamelaPrincePyle.com, and subscribe for more inspiring posts from a Doctor on Mission.



Patients can reduce the stress of a hospital visit by having accurate expectations and asking the right questions.

Navigating a Hospital Stay

While hospitalized, patients or their advocates can help promote a safe outcome. These guidelines will help ensure your stay in the hospital, and what comes next, can best support your healing and ongoing health.

- Keep moving as physically able. Small walks, moving from bed to chair, and even calf pumps (flexing and extending the ankles) promote muscle movement and reduce the risk of blood clots and debility.

- If you are given an opportunity for post-hospitalization rehabilitation, take it. Being inactive leads to a rapid loss of muscle mass. Rehabilitation is especially essential for those who are frail because they are prone to falls at home without adequate strength training.

- Watch for infections: Wash your hands and have visitors do the same. Most hospitals have hand sanitizers readily available. Observe IV lines for signs of redness, wounds, or surgical dressings. Your nurse and doctor should be doing this; however, the patient and advocate can participate for best safety outcomes.
- Ask to discuss an advanced care plan if you don't already have one.
- At the time of discharge, make sure that you understand all discharge instructions. Ask your hospital-based doctor if they would call your outpatient physician for transitions of care.

Battlefield Acupuncture

The US military is now using a unique formulation of acupuncture to relieve pain and avoid opioids

Continued from Page 1

Many get prescriptions for opioids to help them deal with pain, but opioids are incredibly addictive and have serious side effects. Because of the problems associated with opioid addiction, the military began looking for alternatives.

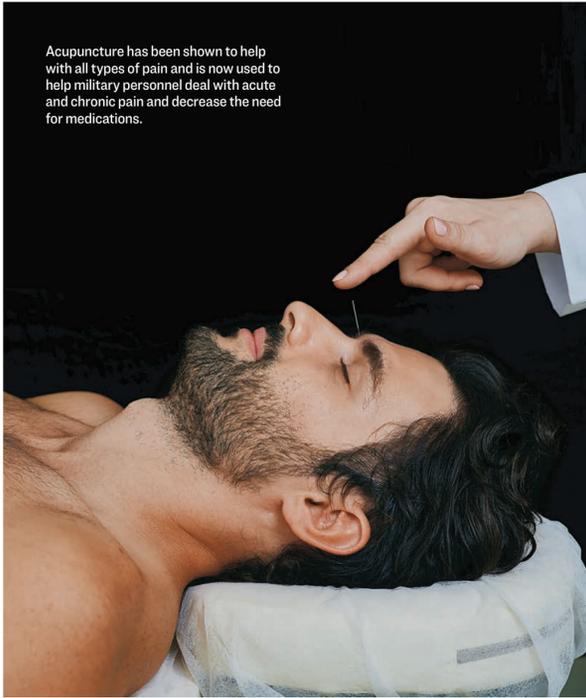
Battlefield Acupuncture

Overmedication is a problem facing society at large, and the military is no exception. The military has recognized that service members returning from combat sustaining injuries and suffering from the devastating psychological effects of their experiences needed an alternative to drugs, including narcotics.

In August 2009, the Army surgeon general directed that a pain management task force be created to make recommendations for a comprehensive pain management strategy. The resulting report, completed in 2010, makes several recommendations, and acupuncture is in the first tier of treatments. Acupuncture has been shown to help with all types of pain, and it would now be introduced to help military personnel deal with acute and chronic pain to help decrease the need for medications.

In 2001, Dr. Richard Niemtzwow, while on active duty with the U.S. Air Force, developed a specific protocol of auricular (ear) acupuncture points. With needles inserted into the ears, these points provide "rapid and highly effective relief of all types of pain." The protocol is known as "battlefield acupuncture" and was conceived as a technique to deliver pain relief through acupuncture as quickly and effectively as possible in combat and other military situations.

The military began testing battlefield acupuncture during air evacuations of wounded soldiers, when, until then, the approach to pain had been medication. Designers of the program thought that if they could offer service members a more natural approach for their pain, they could avoid prescribing powerful pain medication and help avoid the dangers of the adverse effects and risk



Acupuncture has been shown to help with all types of pain and is now used to help military personnel deal with acute and chronic pain and decrease the need for medications.

of addiction later on.

In Eastern medical theory, the ear is a microcosm of the entire body, meaning that every part of the body is represented and can be treated through the ear. Niemtzwow said he chose points specifically that were known to influence the processing of pain in the central nervous system.

Battlefield acupuncture protocol consists of five acupuncture points in the ear. There are several ways in which the points in the ears can be stimulated. Very small needles can be inserted, tiny metal balls can be stuck to the points and left until they come off on their own (one day to a few days later), or the needles that Niemtzwow prefers to use, which look like tiny conical darts, are placed in the ears and can stay in for several days, falling out naturally. This allows the points to be stimulated on an ongoing basis, helping to deliver pain

Between 2010 and 2016,

6,485 veterans in the VA health care system died of opioid-related causes.



Overmedication is a problem facing society at large and the military is no exception.

relief beyond the patient's appointment.

Below is a chart that illustrates the points used in the battlefield acupuncture protocol.

Niemtzow said relief occurs in 80 to 90 percent of cases, is typically immediate, and can last anywhere from minutes to months, depending on the length of time the points are stimulated and the patient's own unique pathology. He also said he has seen battlefield acupuncture work for all types of pain and in many patients who didn't respond to Western pain medication.

He established a medical acupuncture clinic at Andrews Air Force Base and was the first full-time physician acupuncturist in the Armed Forces. He has given acupuncture to service members at Andrews, the Pentagon, the White House, and the National Naval Medical Center.

A Commitment to Pain Management

An article in the Journal of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation states that the Defense & Veterans Center for Integrative Pain Management and the Veterans Health Administration National Pain Management Program Office had completed in 2019 a three-year and \$5.4 million acupuncture education training program. The program trained more than 2,800 providers of battlefield acupuncture. One of the authors of the paper said that in his VA facility, approximately 60 practitioners had been trained, and they've treated approximately 2,500 patients with battlefield acupuncture in the past two years. Another of the paper's authors said that in his experience, battlefield acupuncture has reduced pain for those suffering from headaches, acute and chronic back pain, and musculoskeletal pain, as well as neuropathic pain.

As an acupuncturist, I'm well aware of acupuncture's beneficial effects on a wide variety of conditions. Decades of scientific studies have validated acupuncture's effectiveness, and it's now offered at renowned facilities such as the Cleveland Clinic, the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and even at The Pentagon.

Emma Suttie is an acupuncture physician and founder of Chinese Medicine Living—a website dedicated to sharing how to use traditional wisdom to live a healthy lifestyle in the modern world. She's a lover of the natural world, martial arts, and a good cup of tea.

The Greatest Conversation Advice I Ever Received

Great conversations begin with great questions that reward us in important ways

JOSHUA BECKER

In college, I had dinner with a friend named Donnie. He wasn't much older than me but was certainly more mature—although that wasn't particularly difficult to be at the time.

I looked up to him in quite a few ways. But one thing that impressed me, maybe above everything else, was his ability to engage in conversation wherever we were. It didn't matter what room we walked into, or the people in the room, Donnie was always quick to make new friends and start new relationships.

People just seemed to like him immediately after meeting him.

So, at dinner, I asked him how he was able to do that so effortlessly.

His answer to my question changed the way I engage in conversation ever since. And even to this day, I consider it the greatest conversation advice I've ever received.

When I asked him how he was so good at talking to people, he said: "Oh, it's easy. Just ask a lot of questions. Ask about their family, their job, their hobbies, their past ... anything really. People love talking about themselves."

I immediately put this idea into practice.

And found it works incredibly well—in every circumstance and interaction. Simply ask questions.

Years later, when reading the incredibly popular book by Dale Carnegie, "How to Win Friends and Influence People," I found the advice repeated: "So if you aspire to be a good conversa-

tionist, be an attentive listener. To be interesting, be interested. Ask questions that other persons will enjoy answering. Encourage them to talk about themselves and their accomplishments. Remember that the people you are talking to are a hundred times more interested in themselves and their wants and problems than they are in you and your problems."

I still apply his advice today whenever I meet someone new or am catching up with a friend.

And I have found there is a dual benefit to the approach. Not only does asking questions result in great conversation, it benefits me as well.

First, it results in a selfless attitude. To begin the practice of asking questions, you need to make the conversation not

about you. Every time you ask a question, by definition, you are shifting the attention away from you and toward the other person.

Asking questions forces selflessness onto us.

You can't hold a desire to draw attention to your own accomplishments or stories while genuinely inquiring about the other person's. Rather than looking for opportunities to proclaim our own interests, the attention is focused on theirs.

Second, it helps us become better listeners. Asking good questions requires good ears and focused attention.

Anyone can ask questions (and that's always a good place to start). But asking great questions will require you to be a good listener.

The more you practice this approach to conversation, the more you learn this skill.

Focused attention can lead to follow-up questions. It can help you remember important details about the other person. And may even help you understand their emotions or passion related to the topic they're discussing.

Third, it results in better learning. Everyone we meet has a backstory of experience. And the more questions we ask, the more we learn about the world. Because we learn about more than just the person, we learn about humanity.

Everyone wants a friend who cares about them (selfless), who pays attention to them (good listener), and can understand the world and their point of view (learner).

Asking questions provides that opportunity. Even all these years later, it's still the greatest conversation advice I've ever received.

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



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The Healing Potential of Poetry

Poetry offers a unique and natural path to joy and connection

AMY DENNEY

Poetry offers a unique outlet for our creativity. It can let us bring expression to beautiful memories, or share something on a more essential level.

Magdalena Montagne knows the value of poetry through her own experience as a frequent writer and published author with a degree in literature. Now she's trying to help the elderly, in particular, discover what poetry has to offer.

Years ago, she held poetry circles for children in California Central Coast schools. After stepping away from that, she pivoted to libraries and assisted living facilities.

"I started thinking about other populations that might benefit from poetry. I don't think I realized what I was getting into," Montagne said.

Those with Alzheimer's disease, memory impairment, and other cognitive issues gravitated to her offerings. And what she witnessed was "magical."

"The thing is, it's not really about poetry at all," she said. "The main thing is they feel so grateful that someone was taking the time with them and cared what they had to say."

Montagne, author of "Earth, My Witness," launched WisdomVerse in 2011 with the simple idea that everyone has a story to tell and deserves to be acknowledged and heard, regardless of their age or ability.

WisdomVerse is getting more notice since receiving a grant from the Institute for Poetic Medicine. Founded by John Fox, the institute offers tools and support to heal body, mind, and spirit through the creative and therapeutic processes of hearing, speaking, and writing poetry.

The institute's support has allowed Montagne to begin offering an online course for facilitators—training teachers to go into elderly communities and hold poetry writing circles as she's done.

As she describes it, the facilitator course allows her to reach the people on the frontlines of the population she serves.

"There are so many facilities and I'm only one person," Montagne said. "I wondered if this is going to work because a lot of people are intimidated by poetry."

In her gentle style, she emphasizes it's not so much about the poetry but the

process, and she empowers facilitators to think on their feet and collaborate on the spot to write group poetry.

"It's more about the connections," Montagne said.

"Poetry connects people at a level that is far deeper than linear thinking," she wrote in her proposal to the institute.

"An integral component of the program is my belief in the sacred quality of words and the profound truth that each individual holds and the understanding that these can be experienced through writing poetry together."

Montagne likens WisdomVerse to Music & Memory, a program that creates individual playlists for those suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia with familiar songs and beloved pieces. This non-pharmacological approach to dementia is evidence-based and improves the quality of life across the country in certified organizations in the United States and other countries.

In fact, there's evidence that both music and poetry can awaken the brain, bringing with them experiential joy.

"Using psychophysiology, neuroimaging, and behavioral responses, we show that recited poetry can act as a powerful stimulus for eliciting peak emotional responses, including chills and objectively measurable goosebumps that engage the primary reward circuitry," report the authors of a study published in *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* in 2017.

"Importantly, while these responses to poetry are largely analogous to those found for music, their neural underpinnings show important differences, specifically with regard to the crucial role of the nucleus accumbens.

Poetry, much like music and movies, can be easily remembered and has a potent emotional component. According to the study, poetry-elicited chills differed from those evoked by music based on neural points that responded uniquely to poetic language but not music and singing. This suggests that both music and poetry have a place in therapeutic approaches.

The results might seem surprising, in part because few of us experience the joy poetry can offer during our formative years. This may be due to too analytical an approach to poems in early learning and widespread skepticism that poetry is ca-

There's evidence both music and poetry can awaken the brain, bringing with them experiential joy.

An Exercise in Poetry

To try out a WisdomVerse exercise with an elderly loved one, or even just by yourself, you can do one, or all, of the following:

1. Read a poem aloud, perhaps several times. Even reading or hearing poetry can be therapeutic.
2. Create a theme for your own poem. Suggestions include a holiday or a single word like "love" or "bird."
3. Make a word box with a lot of random words in it. Draw a word from the box and make that word fit with your theme to write a line or stanza. Repeat as desired.

pable of eliciting an emotional response.

But poetry's power is garnering attention more broadly. Dr. Norman Rosenthal, the renowned researcher who coined the term Seasonal Affective Disorder and pioneered the use of light therapy for its treatment, recently published "Poetry Rx: How 50 Inspiring Poems Can Heal and Bring Joy to Your Life."

In response to the acclaimed book, he's formed a Facebook support group community for sharing stories and encouragement about the role of poetry in healing.

For Montagne, poetry offers her benefits similar to those her husband gets from meditation. She can't sit still long enough to meditate, but sitting to write poetry is very calming for her brain.

"When it's not about the final product, you come up with really good stuff. There's freedom," she said.

And when poetry is done as a group, another form of magic unfolds.

"We're connected in this heart-centered activity, and I think that's what makes it so powerful," she said.

WisdomVerse

The specific goals of a WisdomVerse poetry writing workshops are to:

- Set participants up for success
- Foster connections—between pathways in the brain, between facilitator and participants, and also among participants in the workshop
- Stimulate the language part of the brain
- Call up memories
- Acknowledge thoughts and feelings
- Entertain and enliven residents with the playfulness and musicality of words

Amy Denney is an award-winning journalist, certified Holy Yoga instructor and light therapy specialist. She works with clients looking for natural, side-effect free solutions to pain and stress.

The Beauty of Love

A group poem written by the VNA Adult Day Facility in Monterey, California, in February 2016

Home is beauty.
Imperfect, yes!
Like water in the desert
that turns to wine.
The mystery of the night.
Charming and lovely
as a wedding in February.
With loud drumming and dancing
the magician performs the wedding
ceremony.
The bride, a slim queen for the day in
her autumn wheat gown
No longer available for her sad
suits, waves goodbye...
Now dedicated to the groom,
handsome and pleasing.
The progress of marriage is
magnificent!
A journey of twenty five years...
When we get to know our best
friend better.
and love is no longer elusive.
Every day we see the unfolding of
our crazy life together.
Like gypsies on the road to
adventure.
We stumble on the essential
fragrance of beauty.
Like inhaling the aroma of a bouquet
of red roses.

Poetry is one of humanities most treasured art forms. Writing poetry can offer us a unique way to access and express our thoughts, feelings, and memories.



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