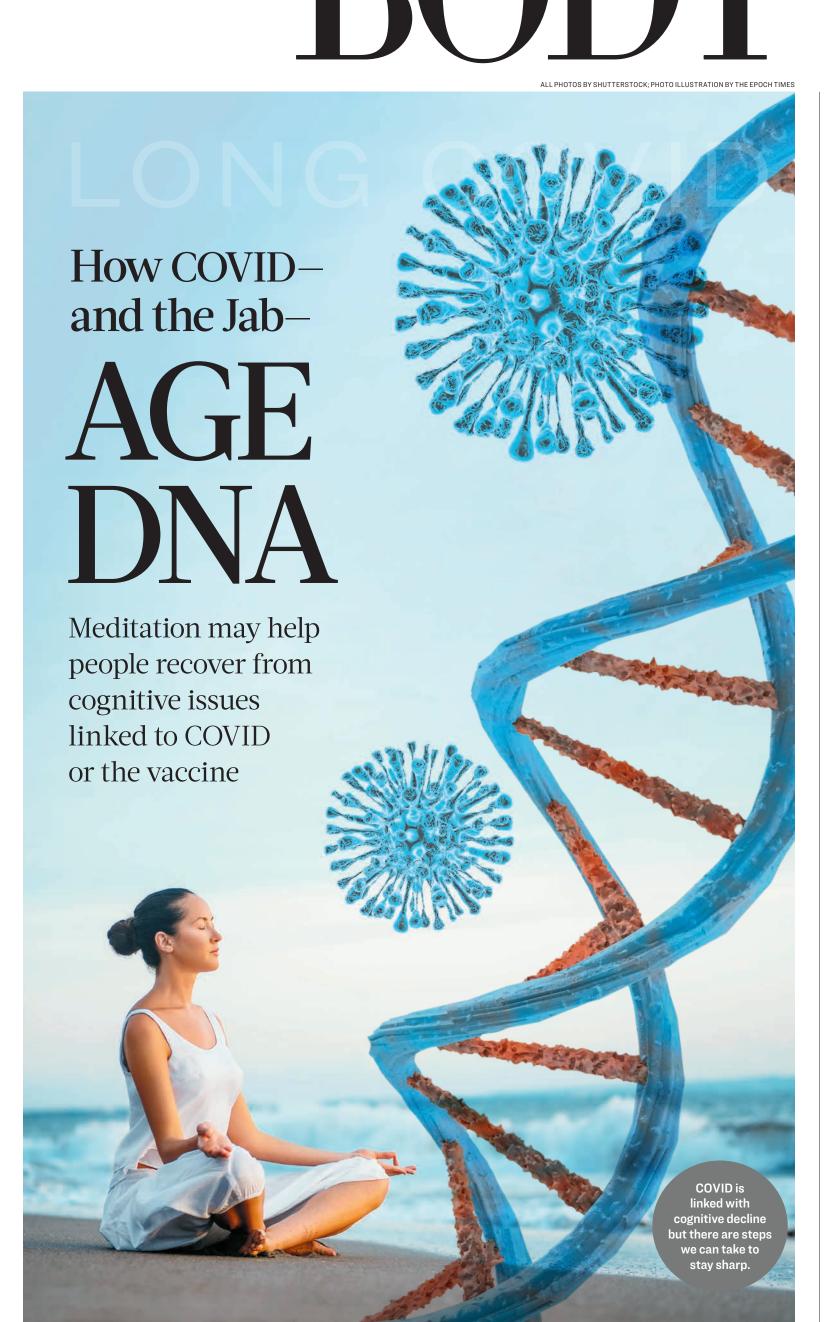
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YUHONG DONG & HEALTH 1+1

A new British study found that the original SARS-CoV-2 virus (i.e., Wuhan strain) can impair cognitive ability in a way equivalent to making the brain age by two decades. Additionally, 69 percent of the world's population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, according to government data compiled by the University of Oxford. Is it possible that the vaccines themselves can also cause aging damage?

Nevertheless, there's no need to worry; aging is proven to be a process, and there's a way to help to reverse it.

Patients' Aging Brains

In the study, published in the journal EClinical Medicine, experts from the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London Medical School evaluated the cognitive effects of the COVID-19 infection in humans.

The research subjects consisted of COVID-19 patients who were hospitalized for severe illness between March and July in 2020.

After these patients' recovery from acute infection, the researchers conducted follow-up visits for an average of six months to analyze and evaluate the patients' anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress. The researchers discovered a significant decline in the patients' attention, complex problem-solving skills, and memory, along with reduced accuracy and prolonged reaction time.

These cognitive deficits are similar to the cognitive decline a person would experience between the ages of 50 to 70, which is equivalent to aging by two decades and losing 10 IQ points.

In addition, the recovery of cognitive ability is very slow in patients with COVID-19.

Continued on Page 6

Sunlight Key to Battling MS and Flare-Ups

Researchers have long known about the link between sunlight and multiple sclerosis

AMY DENNEY

People suffering from multiple sclerosis or at risk of developing it can live more rewarding lives when they increase and monitor their vitamin D levels.

Your body makes vitamin D in skin, the largest organ, when it's exposed to sunlight. Higher vitamin D levels lower the risk of developing multiple sclerosis (MS), and boosting vitamin D also appears to be beneficial for curbing disease relapses and even putting symptoms into remission.

Vitamin D is one of several natural remedies for MS that continues to draw the intrigue of researchers. Several organizations are using vitamin D and sunlight studies to formulate guidelines so they can inform patients, motivate them to get exposure to sunlight and take supplements when needed, and offer specific dos-

Vitamin D is an essential vitamin that helps to regulate calcium and phosphorus in your body. Vitamin D is found in food such as fish, eggs, and milk.

Besides playing a role in MS, a vitamin D deficiency is thought to be associated with many other health conditions such as autoimmune conditions, allergies, asthma, COVID-19, heart disease, and others. Worldwide, a lack of vitamin D is a concern, particularly in colder climates and countries with longer winters. Experts say at least 1 billion people are deficient in vitamin D around the world.

Yale research in 2015 indicates that high levels of vitamin D in the blood act as a neuroprotector and are associated with fewer lesions in MS patients' brains. Supplementing vitamin D or increasing sunlight exposure is thought to increase gray matter in the brain, which indicates tissue regeneration.

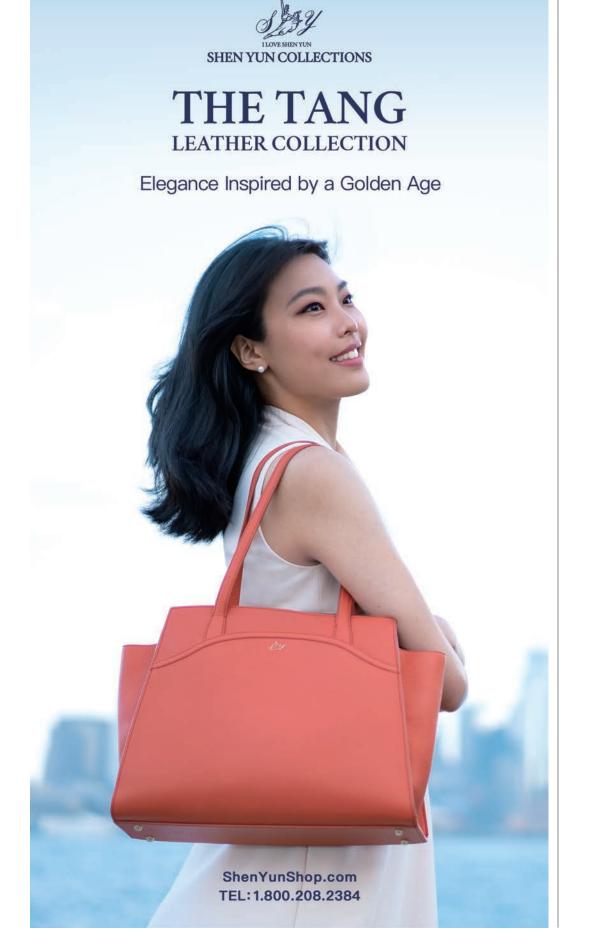
University of Cambridge researchers found a positive relationship between vitamin D and a molecule that plays a role in the repair of myelin, which insulates the nerves. MS damages myelin. In this case, increasing vitamin D would speed up the process of myelin cell production, thereby protecting nerves from damage.

While the inner workings of the relationship are still somewhat of a mystery, the positive connection between vitamin D and MS is readily accepted as fact by MS organizations worldwide.

Continued on Page 2







Sunlight Key to Battling MS and Flare-Ups

Researchers have long known about the link between sunlight and multiple sclerosis

Continued from Page 1

Kassandra Munger, a senior research scientist at Harvard University who specializes in MS, said in a March 9 interview with BioNews that studies of people with higher levels of vitamin D show a decreased risk of MS, while those who are deficient in vitamin D have an increased risk. Additionally, studies on low levels of vitamin D in pregnant women and newborns are predictors of increased risk of MS as an adult.

"There is also remarkable consistency between many studies using different measures of vitamin D—assessing amount of sun exposure, vitamin D blood levels, or eating foods high in vitamin D in different populations worldwide—with nearly all pointing to vitamin D being an important risk factor for MS," Munger said.

While there's no official tracking system, one 2019 study in the journal Neurology concluded that there are more than 900,000 adults living with MS in the United States—more than twice the number reported in a 1975 national study.

One of the complications of diagnosing MS is the long list of possible symptoms that vary from one person to another and even fluctuate within a person over time.

The more common symptoms, according to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, are dysesthesia (a squeezing sensation around the torso), fatigue, walking difficulties, numbness, tingling, stiffness or spasms in muscles of the legs, weakness, vision problems, vertigo, significant pain, itching, cognitive changes, and emotional changes. Also common are bladder, bowel, and sexual problems, as well as depression.

One criterion for diagnosing MS is excluding other potential diagnoses. Physicians must also find evidence of damage in at least two areas of the central nervous system, which is composed of the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves. Evidence must exist that the damage occurred at different times.

Are You Getting Enough Vitamin D? It's wise to test your vitamin D level as soon as you learn you have MS, either through your general practitioner or by using an online lab. Everyone aged 4 and older should have 125 micrograms of vitamin D daily, the equivalent of 5,000 international units (IU). By comparison, an egg offers about 0.9 micrograms of vitamin D—all from the yolk. This recommended daily intake is for the general population; those with MS need a higher dose to get the same benefits, according to Overcoming MS, a nonprofit based in the United Kingdom

Vitamin D is a critical part of the protocol Overcoming MS has been using across the globe to help people live symptom free. You can read about its entire program online, which also includes diet, exercise, meditation, and community support.

Overcoming MS recommends a vitamin D supplement of 5,000 IU to 10,000 IU and says the risk of overdosing on vitamin D is rare.

"The results of the first test (after MS diagnosis) often show that vitamin D levels are low, which may be what brings on the attack," the organization states on its website. "If vitamin D levels are very low, it can be brought up quickly with a one-off megadose of vitamin D3 (e.g., 600,000 IU), followed by regular capsules or sprays."

Another approach, called the Coimbra protocol, recommends dosing ranging from 40,000 IU to 300,000 IU per day that must be carried out under the supervision of a qualified physician. The protocol was developed by Dr. Cicero Coimbra, a neurologist and professor at the Federal University of São Paulo for those with autoimmune diseases. There are a handful of doctors in the United States who oversee this protocol.

Sunlight and Vitamin D

Because vitamin D primarily comes from the sun, it's essential to be outside without covering, which includes sunscreen.

"Sun exposure is the primary way most people get vitamin D. Ten to 20 minutes of skin exposure can produce the equivalent of 10,000 IU of vitamin D. Compare that to diet where a serving of salmon has about 400 IU," Munger said.

Sunscreens are used to protect the skin from ultraviolet A (UVA) and UVB waveband exposure commonly associated with skin damage and cancer. However, UVB exposure is needed for vitamin D synthesis, and the National Institutes of Health has confirmed that sunscreen will interfere with this process.

The Journal of Internal Medicine published a study in 2014 that found subjects who avoided sun exposure were twice as likely to die of any cause compared to those with the highest exposure to sun. That research also indicated women with normal sun exposure habits weren't at an increased risk of melanoma (skin cancer) or related death.

Studies have also continued to show a higher occurrence of MS among people who live the farthest from the equator.

"MS prevalence is still strongly positively associated with increasing latitude and that the gradient is increasing, suggesting that potentially modifiable environmental factors, such as sun exposure, are still strongly associated with MS risk," concluded an updated review published in 2019 in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry.

In addition to raising vitamin D levels, sunlight increases the feel-good hormones of endorphins and serotonin, said Marc Sorenson, who founded Sunlight Institute to inform the public on the benefits of sunlight.

It's fairly easy to get vitamin D from sunlight, though it must be weighed against the fact that heat can exacerbate MS symptoms.

Overcoming MS suggests going outside to expose as much skin as possible when the UV index is high, since that means spending less time in the sun. You can swim outdoors, since UV light penetrates water. To find out the UV index, use a local weather app or the Environmental Protection Agency's website. If you go outside at 10 a.m., you can spend a third longer in the sun.

What Is the Right Form of Vitamin D? Vitamin D is found in two major forms—D2 and D3. Vitamin D2 is a man-made form added to fortify foods, and vitamin D3 is the type synthesized in the skin and mostly found in animal-based foods.

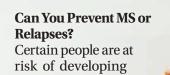
D2 is made in irradiated yeast and mushrooms, that is yeast and mushrooms exposed to UVB light. While mushrooms don't require sunlight to grow, it can affect the nutrient content of some mushrooms.

Both forms of vitamin D are used in food fortification and dietary supplements. A decade ago, the National Institutes of Health considered the two to be relatively similar in terms of benefits.

"At this time, firm conclusions about different effects of the two forms of vitamin D cannot be drawn; however, it would appear that at low doses, D2 and D3 are equivalent, but at high doses, D2 is less effective than D3," according to a 2011 Institute of Medicine Committee report reviewing intakes for vitamin D.

That same year, a study of 33 healthy adults followed for 12 weeks determined that D3 is 87 percent more potent in raising and maintaining vitamin D in the body and produces two- to three-fold greater storage of vitamin D than D2. The study was published in Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism.

"These two nutrients are not biologically equivalent or interchangeable. Any suggestion that vitamin D3 and D2 are both good options falls into the 'bad science' bucket," writes Ashley Jordan Ferira, vice president of scientific affairs at mindbodygreen, a health information website.



Boosting vitamin D appears to be beneficial for curbing disease relapses and even putting symptoms into remission.

minutes of skin

the equivalent of 10,000 IU of vitamin D according to Kassandra Munger, a senior research scientist at Harvard

Healthy sun exposure requires not getting burned, which can increase the risk

of skin cancer.

University.

A study in Medical Hypotheses from 1986 found that younger MS patients treated with vitamin D and calcium and magnesium cut the number of relapses in half. The biggest key to prevention seems to be exposure can produce sunlight exposure at a young age. Newborns with low levels of vitamin D were found to have an increased risk of MS, accord-

ing regularly.

ing to research of 521 patients published in the journal Neurology in 2017. Another study of 1,320 patients compared vitamin D levels starting before age 20 and up to age 49. Published in European Journal of Neurology, it's thought to be one of the biggest

MS and having relapses. Vitamin D plays a

If you have an identical twin with MS, you

also have a 25 percent chance of being di-

agnosed, according to Overcoming MS. An

immediate family member (parent, sibling,

or child) with MS gives you a 1 in 10 chance

But getting adequate sun exposure and

supplementing with vitamin D are strate-

gies that can improve your chances of staying

healthy. Others are quitting smoking, eating

a healthy diet, managing stress, and exercis-

"Evidence indicates that people with high

vitamin D levels have a lower risk of devel-

oping MS. The benefits of this vitamin are

also evident among MS patients—those with

higher vitamin D have less inflammation and reduced clinical activity," according to Patricia

Inacio, author of several MS research projects.

role in both circumstances.

of also developing the disease.

studies of presymptomatic MS patients. Not only do the findings support the hypothesis that high levels of vitamin D at a young age reduce the risk of developing MS, but they also suggest vitamin D deficiency may be

causal or at least a contributing factor to causing MS. Besides vitamin D, MS patients are finding additional support and symptom improvement in natural solutions such as diet, exercise, meditation, emotional regulation, and sleep support. 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* and stress.

Love Your Hair Naturally

Use these tips to give your locks their best chance to shine

ANDREA DONSKY

Nurture

treating it the

be treated.

way it wants to

Short or long, straight or curly, dry, oily, or somewhere in between, we typically care a lot about our hair. We want to manage it responsibly and naturally, while at the same time, we often don't have a lot of time. So how can you love your hair naturally in the most efficient and effec-

The biggest

prevention

be sunlight

young age.

More than

adults live with MS

in the United States.

That's more than

twice the number

reported in a 1975

national study.

exposure at a

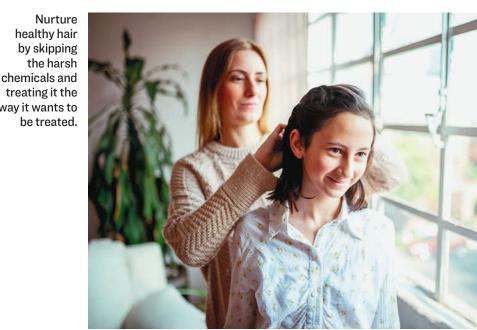
seems to

key to

Best Natural Hair Care Tips

When to Wash: Are you overwashing your hair? No more than twice a week is recommended if you have very dry hair and scalp. If you sport an oily scalp, every other day should be sufficient.

What to Use: Most traditional shampoos on the market are chemical experiments,



towel to gently rub it dry after shampooing to

and your hair is the test specimen. Use chemical-free shampoos—those without parabens, sulfates, artificial fragrances and color, and other harsh ingredients that can damage your hair, irritate your scalp, and increase your risk of hormone imbalance. Also, wash and rinse your hair with lukewarm or cool water. Hot water can remove protective oils from your hair.

Brush Your Hair: Do you believe in the old adage about brushing your hair 100 strokes daily? Well, don't. Although it's normal to lose about 50 to 100 hairs daily, you want to minimize hair loss at the same time. Brush just enough to redistribute oils, remove dirt, or style your hair. Use a boar bristle brush and brush your hair before shampooing to remove dirt and loose hair, and never brush wet hair.

Condition Properly: Choose an all-natural conditioner and apply it to the tips of your hair only—not to your scalp. Thoroughly rinse out conditioner after use.

Stay Loose: If you like to wear braids, ponytails, and buns, be sure they aren't really tight, as this can cause hair breakage and root damage. Leave your hair a bit loose at the scalp. Hair extensions can also take a toll on your hair, so take a break every few months.

Forgo the Blow: The heat from hair dryers, straighteners, and curling irons can damage your hair. Dry your hair naturally, or use a



Choose an all-natural conditioner for the best results.



Avoid blow drying your hair, but if you must, try to use a low heat.



Brush your hair just enough to redistribute oils and style.

help to preserve your hair cuticles. But don't be a wet head! Don't go to bed with wet hair; shampoo with adequate time before retiring for your hair to dry.

Sleep on a Silk Pillowcase: Sleeping on a silk pillowcase can help your hair and skin to stay healthy and smooth and can help to reduce the appearance of facial wrinkles. It creates less friction to the hair and less damage.

Use Natural Oils: If you oil and massage your hair and scalp, choose natural oils such as coconut, olive, almond, or sesame. The use of natural oils on your hair promotes hair growth, fixes split ends, and moisturizes. You can use oil before shampooing. You may want to pamper your hair by wrapping your head in a towel after applying the oil and letting the oil better work into your hair. Keep the towel on for 10 to 15 minutes.

Go Wide: After you wash your hair, use a wide-toothed comb to comb your hair. This helps to reduce hair breakage.

Get Trimmed: A great way to help to eliminate split ends is to get your hair trimmed every six to eight weeks. Trimming helps to keep your hair healthy.

Feed Your Hair: Hair is composed of amino acids and proteins, and some of the best foods to feed your hair properly include salmon and other fatty fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as tuna, mackerel, and herring. Nuts, eggs, green leafy vegetables, sweet potatoes,

and berries are also great for healthy hair. These foods provide the nutrients essential for healthy hair: protein, omega-3s, iron, zinc, biotin, and B vitamins. If you can't get these nutrients from your diet, be sure to take a high-quality supplement. And don't forget to stay well hydrated as well!

Protect Your Hair: The sun's rays can dry out and damage your hair over time. Wear a hat when outside in the sunlight and a swim cap when swimming in a pool or other outdoor

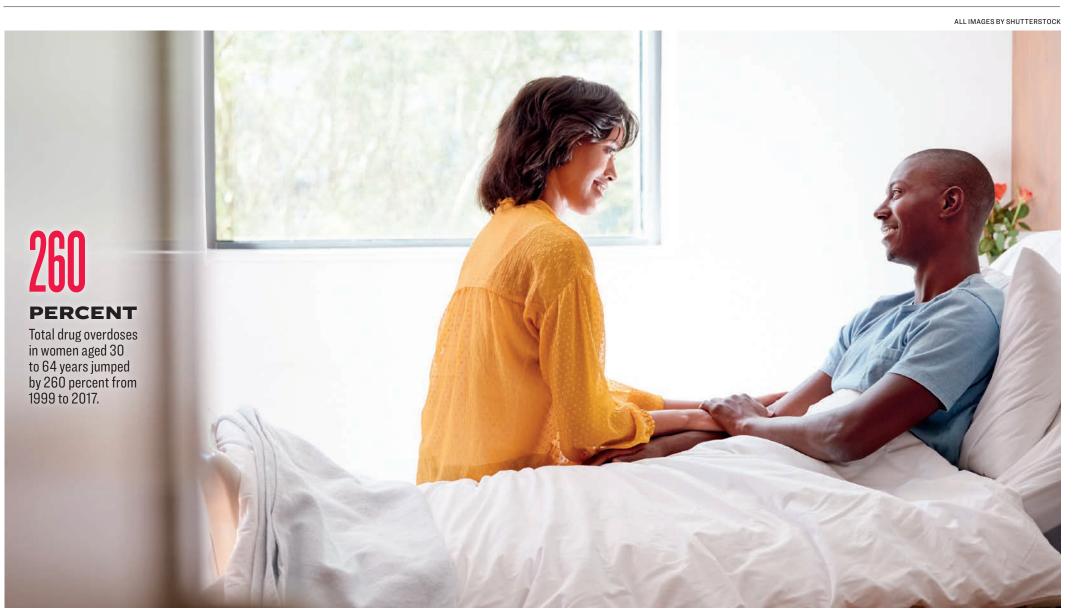
Avoid Chlorine: Before you step foot into a pool, rinse your hair with nonchlorinated water. This can help your hair to absorb less hair-drying chlorine.

Go Soft: Forget bath towels and grab an old, soft cotton T-shirt or a cotton wrap to dry your hair. Rough towels on wet hair can damage hair cuticles over time.

Bottom Line

Love your hair naturally! You can enjoy beautiful, healthy hair without spending a lot of money or time. Follow these simple, natural tips, and you'll see what we mean.

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



women experience pain differently which means their treatment should differ also in order to ease suffering and avoid opioid addiction

Males and Females React Uniquely to the Same Pain

Research involving identical pain stimulation produces unique experiences for men and women

JOSEPH MERCOLA

t's no secret that there are discernible differences in how different people respond to the same stimuli, especially between men and women.

For example, Diane Halpern, past president of the American Psychological Association, once wrote an academic text titled "Sex Differences in Cognitive Abilities." were due to socialization practices, artifacts ferent in women than in men." and mistakes in the research, and bias and prejudice. ... After reviewing a pile of jourdwarfed the stack of journal articles ... I changed my mind."

Researchers have also discovered strucwomen including a larger total brain volume on a standard scale of zero to 10. in men and higher tissue density in the left amygdala, hippocampus, and insular cortex.

Amber Ruigrok carried out a study revealing the asymmetric effect sex has on a developing brain. She said: "For the first time that finding the reason behind the differwe can look across the vast literature and ence may help provide more effective pain confirm that brain size and structure are different in males and females. We should no for highly addictive opioid drugs. longer ignore sex in neuroscience research, conditions that are more prevalent in either males or females."

As scientists gather more information about the specific differences between men and women, it's generated numerous questions. Roger Fillingim from the University of Florida has spent years researching differences in influencing perception include age, emopain perception and what implications they tions, and support systems. may have for pain management.

Women Often Perceive Pain More Intensely Than Men

Fillingim found that differences in personality and behavior associated with gender are quite real and have profound effects on many aspects of life and health. Gender differences affect the ways in which men and women use logic and solve problems. Even while the brain is at rest, neurological activities differ according to sex.

As described in a literature review, Fillingim began evaluating an area of research suggesting there are gender-based differences in responses to pain. He provided a brief overview of the sex-related differences in biological and sociological processes and the role that sex hormones play in influencing pain sensitivity.

He suggested future directions for research with an emphasis on discovering the mechanisms of difference to assist efforts in pre-

scribing specific treatments for men and women. He participated in a follow-up study with the objective of evaluating differences in peripheral and central sensitization in

those with symptomatic knee osteoarthritis. The team concluded there was evidence that women have a greater overall sensitivity to pain than men. In an interview with NPR, Fillingim explained what has driven his desire to discover gender-based differences Bruce Goldman, science writer at Stanford, in pain perception: "The burden of pain is reported in the preface to the first edition: substantially greater for women than men, "At the time, it seemed clear to me that any and that led pain researchers like myself to between-sex differences in thinking abilities wonder if the pain perception system is dif-

Fillingim is currently the director of the University of Florida's Pain Research and nal articles that stood several feet high and Intervention Center of Excellence. He and numerous books and book chapters that his team recruit healthy volunteers for experimental pain sessions during which participants are exposed to painful stimuli in the form of electrical stimulation, pressure, tural differences in the brains of men and heat, or cold. The volunteers rate their pain

> Fillingim reported his findings are consistent with those of other researchers. While the pain stimuli are the same, women on average report greater pain. Fillingim believes treatment beyond a standard prescription

by Several Factors Fillingim is investigating several factors that influence the perception of pain, including sex hormones. In discussing pain perception of those living with arthritis, scholars from the Arthritis Foundation point out factors

In the elderly, regions of the brain that process pain may undergo a structural change predisposing the individual to a reduction in pain perception. However, recent studies have shown that sen-



Those with a positive attitude often experience better clinical treatment of their pain with medication.

From

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from 2002 to 2014 the proportion of those who received opioids and benzodiazepines together rose from 6.8 percent to 9.6 percent.

Pain can be affected by several factors, including stress and

Researchers have found that those who have a negative attitude or emotional state may have an increased intensity of their pain and a poor response to pain control. By contrast, those with a positive attitude often experience better clinical treatment of their pain with medication.

In an analysis of chronic pain in individuals, researchers have found that perception is more than just sensation. It often encompasses emotional aspects, the attention of the individual, and learned responses over time. Anxiety and depression also contribute.

Scientists have found that by providing psychological support, they may reduce the use of painkillers and increase an individual's sense of control. Perceptions in those experiencing chronic pain will also be influenced by their expectation of what they will feel and how they will respond to treatment.

Based on results of a study that Fillingim conducted on those with active knee osteoarthritis, the team suggested that women have an enhanced central sensitivity to pain. Central sensitization occurs in the nervous system when an individual experiences chronic pain.

The condition has two characteristics involving heightened sensitivity, one of which occurs when the person experiences pain under conditions normally not painful. The other occurs when something that is typically painful is perceived as being more painful. In essence, the central nervous system becomes regulated to a persistent state, which lowers an individual's threshold for what causes pain.

What Fillingim found is that an identical pain stimulus can be perceived stronger by women than by men, and that women also experience an enhanced central sensitization to chronic pain.

More Women Suffer From Anxiety and Pain Than Men

According to Harvard Health Publishing, there are connections among anxiety, depression, and pain. The overlap is particularly significant in those suffering from chronic pain. Researchers are finding that the overlap has something to do with biological mechanisms in addition to psychological factors.

When anxiety and pain overlap, treatment may be challenging. Researchers have found that significant mood disorders apparent before surgical intervention can contribute to the development of chronic pain after surgery. One study found a link between anxiety and the exacerbation of pain related to the hippocampus, which plays a role in anxiety.

Anxiety disorders are some of the most prevalent mental health conditions. According to population-based surveys, nearly 33.7 percent of people may suffer from anxiety during their lifetime. It's important to note that researchers have consistently found that women suffer from anxiety disorders at twice the rate men do and that this may be related to life experiences or genetic and neurobiological factors.

Carolyn Mazure of the Yale School of Medicine notes that women are also more likely to have a chronic disability associated with pain. The combination of a higher incidence of chronic pain conditions, anxiety disorders, and deeper perceptions of pain may greatly contribute to the trend toward the combined use of opioids and benzodiazepines in women. Benzodiazepines are a class of psychoactive drugs used to treat anxiety, depression,

Although clinical guidelines caution physicians against this combination, from 2002 to 2014 the proportion of those who received opioids and benzodiazepines together rose from 6.8 percent to 9.6 percent.

Half of those received both drugs from the same physician on the same day; the writing of combined prescriptions was more common in those who were getting opioids for more than 90 days, in both women and

Does Substance Abuse Progress More Quickly?

Drug overdose deaths related to prescription and synthetic opioid use in women jumped significantly from 1999 to 2017. The percent increase of total drug overdoses in women aged 30 to 64 years jumped by 260 percent during that same time. Although the number of female deaths was lower than that of males, the number appeared to rise at the same rate until 2017.

In an analysis of a large insurance claims database, the results of which were published in 2009, researchers studied chronic opioid users and their use of medical services. They found 4.56 percent of all insurance claims were made by chronic opioid users, who made up just 0.65 percent of the total population.

Of the group, women represented more than 63 percent and filed a greater number of insurance claims representing medical services. The authors suggest that opioids were often prescribed for arthritis and headaches or at times when patients presented with concurrent physical ailments for which opioids were contraindicated, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Another study offers results that are believed to point to gender-based vulnerabilities involving the consequences of addiction in women. The objective was to evaluate the effect of gender on progression from regularly using addictive substances to entering treatment.

The researchers found that women went through fewer years of regular use before choosing to enter treatment; however, they didn't find a difference in the severity of drug dependence specific to gender. They concluded this may support the idea that women go through an accelerated progression of addiction to opioids, cannabis, and alcohol.

The study didn't address the degree of failure in the participants' life before seeking treatment. In other words, women may have exhibited a greater understanding of their need for treatment rather than a faster progression through addiction.

Seek Natural Options Before Opioids

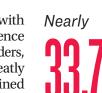
If you're struggling with an opioid addiction, please seek professional help immediately. A major step toward healing and health is to make changes to your diet and lifestyle, which may produce significant results. Four primary areas to address include:

- Eliminating or radically reducing your
- consumption of grains and sugars Increasing your intake of animal-based
- Optimizing your production of vitamin D • Radically reducing your intake of pro-

in your body. If you're fighting chronic pain, it's important to address the underlying issue in order to reduce your discomfort and improve your health. You may find it helpful to start physical therapy or visit a chiropractor to address challenges with posture, lower back pain, chronic headaches, or hip and

cravings (including sugar), and reduce pain.

scription painkillers.



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of people may suffer from anxiety during their lifetime, according to population-based



physiological differences between the brains of men



Nearly 5 percent of all insurance claims are made by the .65 percent of the population who are chronic opioid users.

- omega-3 fats

Each of these helps to reduce inflammation knee pain, among others.

In addition to these strategies, consider the use of emotional freedom technique (EFT), which involves psychological acupressure to optimize your emotional and physical health and healing. EFT is easy to learn and may help to remove negative emotions, reduce food

If you're struggling with opioid addiction, EFT may also assist you through a structured recovery program. If you're currently suffering from chronic pain, you may find comfort knowing there are many natural, safe, and effective alternatives you can consider, rather than turning to over-the-counter and pre-

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder of Mercola.com. An osteopathic physician, best-selling 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.



Despite well-established research, few people know the common neurological consequences of gluten

DATIS KHARRAZIAN

Research shows most cases of gluten sensitivity manifest in the brain—not the gut. In fact, gluten's impact on the brain is so well established that some researchers refer to gluten sensitivity as a neurological disease.

Gluten is one of the most immune-reactive foods—no other food is more of a trigger for neurological dysfunction and neurological autoimmunity than gluten, notes a research review published in the World Journal of Gastroenterology.

This stems in part from the intimate relationship between the gut and the brain. The foods we eat and our gut health have a profound impact on brain health.

For instance, studies show immune cells in the gastrointestinal tract called enteric glial cells trigger the brain's immune cells, or astroglial cells, notes another review, published in Science.

This means gut inflammation and food sensitivities can cause brain inflammation and trigger brain autoimmunity, accelerating brain degeneration and causing a wide range of symptoms, depending on the person.

Gluten Causes Brain Problems, Not Gut **Problems: Study**

Most neurological literature shows that gluten sensitivity can be primarily—and at times exclusively—a neurological disease, finds a research review published in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry.

this to be the case, as it also holds true for nonceliac gluten sensitivity. However, celiac disease can also present solely as neurological symptoms.

You don't have to have celiac disease for

people who have gluten ataxia (an inflammatory brain condition caused by gluten) have gastrointestinal symptoms. Almost 90 percent of these individu als didn't have any gastrointestinal complaints at all, found a study published in the journal Brain.

health. When either celiac disease or gluten sensitivity causes brain The part of the brain called the cerebelsymptoms, a strict gluten-free diet can bring lum is extremely sensitive to gluten. When about a profound reversal of symptoms.

your diet, as it cross-reacts with gluten, sue, signaling the immune system to attack, meaning the immune system mistakes dairy for gluten due to the similarity of amino-acid sequences, notes a study published in Food and Nutrition Sciences.

Most Doctors Overlook the Impact of Gluten on the Brain

Published research and laboratory investigations have found that gastrointestinal inflammation from gluten sensitivity can lead to white matter lesions in the brain. White MRIs in neurodegenerative conditions such as multiple sclerosis. Even inflammatory bowel disease has been shown to cause white matter lesions due to the gut-brain relationship, or gut-brain axis.

Even though research has established a link between gluten and neurological diseases, most doctors overlook this mechanism in clinical scenarios.

Neurologists typically don't look at gastrointestinal mechanisms—they don't do gastrointestinal or food protein sensitivity testing, and they don't evaluate for celiac disease. Those matters are left to the gastroenterologist.

However, because most people with The Epoch Times.com

neurological problems don't have gut complaints, they don't land in the office of a gastroenterologist.

Also, the standard health care model usually only considers celiac disease and not gluten sensitivity.

Standard Gluten Sensitivity Testing Misses Most Diagnoses

Standard testing for gluten sensitivity falls short. That's because it only tests for alpha-gliadin. In reality, people can have an immune reaction to many different compounds in wheat. To truly screen for gluten sensitivity, you need to test for immune antibodies to all of these compounds.

Wheat is made up of more than 100 different components that can cause a reaction, not just one. A person can react to one of the many proteins in wheat, or a combination of proteins, peptides, and enzymes associated

It's best to screen for other immune-reactive compounds associated with gluten besides just alpha-gliadin. These include wheat germ agglutinin, native and deamidated alpha-gliadin, gliadin toxic peptides, gamma-gliadin, omega-gliadin, glutenin, gluteomorphin, prodynorphin, and transglutaminase 2, 3, and 6.

It's also ideal to screen for other foods that cross-react with gluten, such as dairy or other grains. Knowing about cross-reactivity helps patients to eliminate foods their immune system mistakenly responds to as if they were gluten.

There are different forms of gluten intolerance that you can learn about and be tested for.

How Gluten Cross-Reactivity Can

The foods we eat

have a profound

impact on brain

Damage the Brain Research shows that only 13 percent of Cross-reactivity, also known as molecular

mimicry, is one of the scariest ways gluten impacts the brain. This occurs when the immune sysand our gut health tem mistakes brain tissue for gluten and attacks and destroys the tissue. It does this because both gluten and brain tissue have proteins made up of identical amino acid sequences.

people have antibodies to gluten, those You may also need to remove dairy from antibodies can also bind to cerebellar tis destroy, and remove the tissue.

This is called cerebellar ataxia and can lead to poor balance, increased anxiety, sound and light sensitivity, being easily overwhelmed, and other symptoms.

Could Your Neurological Symptoms Be Caused by Gluten?

If these symptoms apply to you, a strict gluten-free diet can have profound results. You may also need to eliminate foods that matter lesions are areas of damage seen on cross-react with gluten, such as dairy or

> Datis Kharrazian, Ph.D., DHSc, DC, MS, MMSc, FACN is a Harvard Medical School trained, award-winning clinical research scientist, academic professor, and worldrenowned functional medicine health care provider. He develops patient and practitioner education and resources in the areas of autoimmune, neurological, and unidentified chronic diseases using nonpharmaceutical applications.

To find the studies mentioned in this article, please see the article online at

TROYAN/SHUTTERSTOCK





can reduce

inflammation and

help ease chronic

Using an acupressure-like technique of tapping certain points on the body can help relieve

VANNETTA CHAPMAN

first novel about the Amish was published in 2010. Since then, I've published 28 additional books about the Plain people. I've also visited communities in Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Colorado, and

I began my own journey with minimalism two years ago when I took a Joshua Becker course. I've noticed many similarities between the Amish and those of us among the "Englisch" who are seeking living intentionally from the Amish: to live a more intentional life

they are a group of people whose roots **your life.** Contrary to popular belief as well stretch back to the Anabaptists. They're as their presentation in modern media, the known for living simply, dressing plainly, Amish don't shun all technology. They are I am more intentional about turning off and farming in an old-fashioned way.

In general, Amish don't have electricity in their homes, they don't own cars or go to college, and they have large families. However, any similarity to the Puritans of 17th-century America ends there.

The Amish are lifelong learners who regularly use computers at their local libraries. Many communities embrace solar power for their businesses, and they don't mind hiring a driver in order to visit neighboring towns.

So, what can we learn about the Amish that can help our quest to embrace minimalism? Here are six things I've learned about

In case you aren't familiar with the Amish,

1. Be intentional about what you let into

allow into their lives.

I've spoken with many Amish families about this, and they don't want an endless march of tech toys in their home. They believe that having a phone, computer, or television in their home will distract from their family time.

Family, neighbors, friends, faith—these are the things that are the pivot points of their lives.

I'm not ready to leave my phone in the mailbox so it doesn't interrupt dinner, but simply very intentional about what they the ringer and notifications—especially care of evening farm chores. They choose

during meals and family time. I have chosen not to have a television in every room in my house. I use my desktop computer for work, and when the workday is over I turn it off.

Hoping we will have more time to spend with our children or significant other isn't good enough. We have to make the decision to put them first and take steps that reflect their importance in our lives.

2. Choose to stay home over going to yet **another social event**. The Amish have a very tightly knit social community. Their get-togethers are large-weddings regularly include more than 500 guests, and everyone is involved in the local school.

However, they generally don't go out at night—they're home with their family, doto embrace a slowed down version of life.

At first, I felt a bit anti-social saying "no" to coffee dates, weeknight concert tickets, and committee positions. But once I allowed myself to spend the majority of my evenings at home, I quickly understood the benefits.

I'm less exhausted. My family's stress level is down. Home has become a refuge again, a place to gather, recharge, and prepare for the next day.

3. Simplify celebrations. The Amish love to party, but their celebrations look a bit different from ours. The entire extended family often shows up. Gifts tend to be are content with their lives." homemade or utilitarian. Because they don't often eat out, a trip to the local ice whether it's board games, baseball, or money isn't always the answer.

volleyball.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOC

The emphasis is more on being together and less on wrapped presents—in fact, they don't wrap presents at all. Even wedding gifts are displayed on a long table, unwrapped.

When I was a single mom, it was difficult for me to find extra money for gifts. It was a big deal when I'd saved enough to buy my son a new Lego set. Now that my children and my husband's children are adults and our income has stabilized, we understand that they don't need "things" from us. In most cases, they don't even want things.

But they love being celebrated—we go out for a special dinner, watch a movie together, or play a game of cards. The celebration is just as special without renting a bouncy house (which would be strange for 30-year-olds) or buying expensive gifts.

4. Avoid debt. It's very rare that you will find an Amish person who is in debt. Occasionally, they will take out a loan for their home, but more often, they simply live with their parents until they have enough saved up to purchase their own piece of property.

That home will often be small, which means they will add on to it as they have children. The property may also be less acreage than they want, so they'll watch for an adjacent neighbor looking to sell a few acres.

I, on the other hand, have always anticipated what I might need and overbought. Big things or small, I always bought more than what I needed. Looking for a house? Buy a big one just in case. Who knows? I might have five children. (I was only able to have one.)

If I could go back and speak to myself, if I could follow the Amish example, I would be content with what I need now and let tomorrow take care of itself.

5. Be satisfied with less. When I first

with \$6 million, but over the years, as cream shop with the whole family is a big my own life has settled into a less stressdeal. They love playing games together, ful rhythm, I've come to understand that



Probably not (though I might be tempted to give it a try if someone offered it to me). I do understand that more money doesn't fix every problem, that the job that pays more may not be the best fit for me, and that owning a bigger house or newer car isn't going to make me happier.

6. Put first things first. The Amish don't live an untroubled life in an idyllic setting with perfect people. When we look at their lives though the one thing that stands out the most—more than the horse and buggy, large families, and lack of technology—is that they seem to have

are the things that are the pivot points of their lives. They are not interested in a newer car, the latest phone,



look of perpetual frenzy on

Vannetta Chapman is the USA Today and Publishers Weekly bestselling author of 39 novels, many of them about the Amish. You can find out more about her books on her

LONG COVID

How COVID (and the Jab) Age DNA

Meditation may help people recover from cognitive issues linked to COVID or the vaccine

Continued from Page 1

COVID-19 Infection Can Accelerate the 'Epigenetic Aging Clock'

Why does COVID-19 infection cause abnormal aging? Let's first take a look at

The relationship between genes and epigenetics are like seeds and soil. Genes are like seeds, while epigenetics is like soil. Genes in the human body don't usually change after birth. They're like "seeds" that lie dormant in the soil, and some will grow, and some will not. What determines whether or not these seeds will grow are the genetic "switches," or epigenetics.

Epigenetics is the study of these factors that affect genes being turned on or off. Specifically, one common type of gene switch—DNA methylation—can change the expression of genes, shutting them down and making them nonfunctional. Methylation is a somewhat complex biochemical process in the body. The important thing to remember is that it's one of the ways epigenetic takes place and a process by which genes get turned on and off.

As a result of DNA methylation, there are variations in whether the same genes can be expressed in different organs and at different ages, and the amount of expression.

Cells become senescent as we age. This means they stop dividing and enter a kind of stasis. Instead of dying off as they normally would, they persist but change

shape and size and secrete inflammatory molecules that cause other nearby cells to become senescent.

In an article published in Nature Reviews Genetics, Steve Horvath, a professor of human genetics and biostatistician at the University of California-Los Angeles, concludes that as people age and have more senescent cells, there are characteristic changes in the methylation status of human DNA.

Human beings experience birth, aging, illness, and death, which is now discovered by our scientists to be controlled by our internal epigenetic clock. This is similar to the observations that everything in our universe has its cycle of formation, stasis, degeneration, and destruction.

Horvath summarizes the DNA methylation profiles associated with aging in an "epigenetic clock theory of aging" in a review article published in Na-Genes are like seeds, while ture Reviews Genetics. While our years on Earth determine our chronological age, how we live and inherent factors affect how long we actu-

ally live, which is our biological age, or the age of our body. Biological ages can be estimated by using the methylation profiles of aging-related genes. In other words, scientists can focus on genes linked to aging and then look at how those genes are methylating, and from

in that process of degeneration and death. These genetic focal points were carefully selected by scientists, independent of gen-

this can gauge how far along the person is

der, body part, comorbidities, and other factors. And the results have been highly accurate, with a precision of over 95 percent in gauging a person's biological age.

epigenetics is like soil.

Humans have a normal aging methylation curve. If a person's DNA methylation is above the curve, he or she will age faster than his or her peers; if it's below the curve, he or she will appear younger than his or

So, what factors can accelerate aging, i.e., the epigenetic clock of aging? A study conducted in Belgium was

> published in 2018 in the journal Aging. It found that the following factors accelerate epigenetic aging in humans:

• Diseases: viral infections (e.g., HIV and cytomegaloviruses), neurodegenerative diseases, and cancers;

• Metabolic syndrome: overly high body mass index, hyperglycemia, inflammatory factors, and hyperten-

tal stress, and violence experienced in This makes us wonder if COVID-19 in-

• Stress: post-traumatic syndrome, men-

fection can accelerate the "epigenetic

aging clock." A study published in the journal Nature Communications answers this question. The study collected blood samples from 232 healthy individuals—194 non-severe CO-VID-19 patients and 213 severe COVID-19 patients—for DNA methylation analysis

and found that the epigenetic age of COV-ID-19 patients was significantly accelerated.

In addition, the epigenetic age acceleration in COVID-19 patients is related to the stage of the disease. The age acceleration is fastest during the acute inflammatory phase, when the body and the virus are in intense combat; and it's slightly reversed during the recovery phase.

Aging Can Be 'Contagious'? Senescent **Cells Cause 12 Major Diseases**

Even after the infection is over, many people still have symptoms of "long COVID." Is this related to the aging caused by COVID-19? Epigenetic aging is seen in the graying of hair and loosening of teeth. However, on a cellular level, cells in the human body also gradually age.

Cellular senescence refers to a state of cell cycle arrest when cells are stressed, as well as the secretion of various inflammatory cytokines at the same time. In a paper published in the journal Cells, a Japanese research team stated that senescent cells don't die immediately, but instead, they spread inflammatory cytokines to nearby uninfected cells, causing more cells to senesce as well.

So, what are the effects of cellular senescence on our health?

Cellular senescence plays an important role in many age-related diseases, such as degenerative diseases of the nerves, eyes, lungs, and heart.

Do the COVID-19 Vaccines Also Cause **Cellular Senescence?**

The aforementioned study was conducted prior to the Omicron variant outbreak, and Omicron is clearly less pathogenic than the old strain. In fact, some of the mutation sites of the Omicron variant counteracted the factors that caused cellular senescence. It is estimated that Omicron causes significantly less accelerated senescence or

sequelae than the old strain.

However, the vaccines we're currently administering are still developed using the spike proteins of the old strain of early 2020. So is there a risk of accelerated aging?

The COVID-19 vaccines mainly express spike proteins in the human body. In a study published in the Journal of Virology in 2021, researchers from Saint Louis University in Missouri transfected spike proteins of the old strain into cells in vitro. It was later discovered that a large number of cellular senescence markers (including specific cytokines, interleukins, and specific enzymes) were found in the spike-transfected cells, compared to the control group.

In addition, the spike proteins increase inflammatory factors, cause mitochondrial damage, produce misfolded proteins, and cause genomic instability, all of which accelerate cellular aging.

There's a Way to Reverse Aging

Reversing aging sounds like a dream come true for everyone. We already understand many mechanisms related to aging, so is it possible to find a way to slow down or even reverse aging?

In fact, our daily diet, work habits, and lifestyle all affect the epigenetic aging clock. For instance, during high-temperature cooking, red meat produces glycosylated end products, which are associated with cellular aging; poultry and fish are relatively healthy; and the vitamins in fruits and vegetables help keep cells young, which can help slow down or reverse the aging clock.

In addition, an article published in 2017 in the journal Psychoneuroendocrinology, American and French scholars investigated whether or not the practice of meditation affects the epigenetic aging clock.

The study's subjects were 18 individuals who had been meditating for at least

10 years and who meditated for at least 30 minutes a day, and 20 individuals who were nonmeditators. They were divided into two groups: younger than age 52 and older than age 52. The researchers measured the DNA methylation in their blood cells for estima-

tion of their epigenetic aging acceleration. The results showed that the epigenetic aging acceleration increased in elderly nonmeditators, while the acceleration in elderly meditators was more similar to that of younger people and wasn't affected by the epigenetic aging effect.

Gene expression is also associated with changes in our appearance, so meditators appear younger than their actual age. Furthermore, meditators also have younger brains.

The University of California-Los Angeles and the Australian National University jointly published a study in 2016 in the journal NeuroImage. The study's subjects were 250 meditators and 50 nonmeditators, both groups with an average age of 51.4 years.

The researchers analyzed and compared the brain ages of the two groups and found that the brain age of the meditators was younger than their actual age. For instance, 50-year-old meditators had the same brain age as a 42 1/2-year-old nonmeditator, while 60-year-old meditators had the same brain age as the 51-year-old nonmeditators in the control group.

age 50, each additional year of their actual age would make their brain age one month and 22 days younger than their actual age.

Interestingly, for the meditators older than

In summary, damage caused by SARS-CoV-2 to the human body speeds up the human epigenetic clock of aging and dumbs down the brain. Vaccines based on the old strains from 2020 may also harm the human body in this regard.

ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

VID-19; will people in the future get older more quickly? No. It's too early to conclude anything based on cellular data alone, rather than human studies. However, the cellular data is a clear reminder for us to take precautions to prevent this. Meanwhile, it's quite worrisome that when we discussed this topic during a

At least 69 percent of the world's people

have now been vaccinated against CO-

Health 1+1 live broadcast on July 12, several audience members commented that they themselves or their friends or relatives had become obviously older after receiving the jabs.

The good news is that aging is a long process. During this process, for example, we can develop the habits of healthy living, including eating well, exercising, and daily meditation, which can help slow down or even reverse the aging process, and furthermore bring us various positive health benefits, which will be detailed in future articles.

Dr. Yuhong Dong, a medical doctor who also holds a doctorate in infectious diseases, is the chief scientific officer and co-founder of a Swiss biotech company and former senior medical scientific expert for antiviral drug development at Novartis Pharma in Switzerland.

Health 1+1 is the most authoritative Chinese medical and health information platform overseas. Every Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 am to 10:00 am EST on TV and online, the program covers the latest on the coronavirus, prevention, treatment, scientific research and policy, as well as cancer, chronic illness, emotional and spiritual health, immunity, health insurance, and other aspects to provide people with reliable and considerate care and help. Online: EpochTimes.com/Health *TV: NTDTV.com/live*





A rich and pleasant life doesn't require much in terms of material goods.

Would I be more happy with \$6 million?

found a way to put first things first.

Family, neighbors, friends, faith—these

visited the Amish, I had a difficult time understanding that they truly were happy with less. One of the first farms we toured in Indiana was a very pretty, 98acre place. After visiting with the owner (a friendly, personable old guy wearing suspenders and sporting a long beard), we learned that he had been offered \$6 million for his farm. Someone wanted to build a golf course there. He turned them down. That literally blew my mind. the

After all, this family was making less than \$20,000 a year. Surely, they could use that money! The person who took us to the farm explained it this way. "What would he do with \$6 million that he isn't doing now? He's content with his life, and his children are independent adults who

I could think of a lot of things to do

The Amish live a simple life, spend time with care about, and

by for an unannounced visit, I give her my time. I try to intentionally live in a way that puts first things first.

pivot points in my life should be.

Family, neighbors, friends, faith—these are the things that really matter to me.

These are the things that I will look back

So I try to do that every day. If my adult

son calls, I put aside what I'm working

on and talk with him. If my mom stops

on and wish that I'd made priorities.

So What's the Point? If you have an Amish community around you, I strongly suggest you visit.

Although you might not want to trade

in your car for a buggy, you'll no doubt take away at least one thing that you can

incorporate into your life. If you don't have any Plain folks around, pay attention to some of the other families in your neighborhood, school, or church. Who isn't stressed? Who doesn't have a

their face? Maybe start a conversation with them. It could be that something they are doing will translate well in your life and your pursuit of intentional living.

website. You



Depression Probably Isn't Caused by a Chemical Imbalance: Study

Around 1 in 6 American adults are taking ineffective drugs based on the likely false serotonin theory of depression

JOANNA MONCRIEF & MARK HOROWITZ

For three decades, people have been deluged with information suggesting that depression is caused by a "chemical imbalance" in the brain—namely an imbalance of a brain chemical called serotonin. However, our latest research review shows that the evidence doesn't support it.

Although first proposed in the 1960s, the serotonin theory of depression started to be widely promoted by the pharmaceutical industry in the 1990s in association with its efforts to market a new range of antidepressants, known as selective serotonin-reuptake inhibitors or SSRIs.

The idea was also endorsed by official institutions such as the American Psychiatric Association, which still tells the public that "differences in certain chemicals in the brain may contribute to symptoms of depression."

age all over the world, in their private practices and in the media. People accepted what they were told. And many started taking antidepressants because they believed they had something wrong with their brain that required an antidepressant to put right.

In the period of this marketing push, antidepressant use climbed dramatically, and they're now prescribed to one in six of the adult population in England and in the United States, for example.

For a long time, certain academics, including some leading psychiatrists, have suggested that there's no satisfactory evidence to support the idea that depression is a result of abnormally low or inactive serotonin. Others continue to endorse the theory. Until now, however, there has been no comprehensive review of the research on serotonin and depression that could enable firm conclusions either way.

appears to support the serotonin theory of depression. SSRIs temporarily increase the availability of serotonin in the brain, but this doesn't necessarily imply that depression is caused by the opposite of this effect.

There are other explanations for antidepressants' effects. In fact, drug trials show that antidepressants are barely distinguishable from a placebo (dummy pill) when it comes to treating depression. Also, antidepressants appear to have a generalized emotion-numbing effect that may influence people's moods, although we don't know how this effect is produced or much about it.

First Comprehensive Review

There has been extensive research on the serotonin system since the 1990s, but it hasn't been collected systematically before. We conducted an "umbrella" review that involved systematically identifying and collating existing overviews of the evidence from each of the main areas of research into serotonin and depression. Although there have been systematic reviews of individual areas in the past, none have combined the evidence from all the different areas taking this approach.

One area of research we included was research comparing levels of serotonin and its Countless doctors have repeated the mesfluid. Overall, this research didn't show a difference between people with depression and those without depression.

> Another area of research has focused on serotonin receptors, which are proteins on the ends of the nerves that serotonin links up with and which can transmit or inhibit serotonin's effects. Research on the most commonly investigated serotonin receptor suggested either no difference between people with depression and people without depression, or that serotonin activity was actually increased in people with depression—the opposite of the serotonin theory's prediction.

Research on the serotonin "transporter," that is, the protein that helps to terminate the effect of serotonin (this is the protein that SSRIs act on), also suggested that, if anything, there was increased serotonin activity in people with depression. However, At first sight, the fact that SSRI-type anthese findings may be explained by the fact tidepressants act on the serotonin system that many participants in these studies had

The serotonin theory of depression started to be

widely promoted by the pharmaceutical industry in the 1990s in association with its efforts to market a new range of anti-

depressants,

known as

selective ser-

otonin-reup-

or SSRIs.

take inhibitors



If antidepressants exert their effects as placebos, or by numbing emotions, then it is not clear that they do more good than harm. VALERIYA ZANKOVYCH/ SHUTTERSTOCK

used or were currently using antidepressants. We also looked at research that explored whether depression can be induced in volunteers by artificially lowering levels of serotonin. Two systematic reviews from 2006 and 2007 and a sample of the 10 most recent studies (at the time the current research was conducted) found that lowering serotonin didn't produce depression in hundreds of healthy volunteers. One of the reviews showed very weak evidence of an effect in a small subgroup of people with a family history of depression, but this only involved 75 participants.

Very large studies involving tens of thousands of patients looked at gene variation, including the gene that has the instructions for making the serotonin transporter. They found no difference in the frequency of varieties of this gene between people with depression and healthy controls.

Although a famous early study found a relationship between the serotonin transporter gene and stressful life events, larger, more comprehensive studies suggest no such relationship exists. Stressful life events in themselves, however, exerted a strong effect on people's subsequent risk of developing depression.

Some of the studies in our overview that included people who were taking or had previously taken antidepressants showed evidence that antidepressants may actually lower the concentration or activity of serotonin.

Not Supported By the Evidence

The serotonin theory of depression has been one of the most influential and extensively researched biological theories of the origins of depression. Our study shows that this view isn't supported by scientific evidence. It also calls into question the basis for the use of antidepressants.

Most antidepressants now in use are presumed to act via their effects on serotonin. Some also affect the brain chemical noradrenaline. But experts agree that the evidence for the involvement of noradrenaline in depression is weaker than that for serotonin.

There's no other accepted pharmacological mechanism for how antidepressants might affect depression. If antidepressants exert their effects as placebos, or by numbing emotions, then it isn't clear that they do more good than harm.

Although viewing depression as a biological disorder may seem like it would reduce stigma, in fact, research has shown the opposite, and also that people who believe their own depression is due to a chemical imbalance are more pessimistic about their chances of recovery.

It's important that people know that the idea that depression results from a "chemicalimbalance" is hypothetical. And we don't understand what temporarily elevating rotonin or other biochemical changes produced by antidepressants do to the brain. We conclude that it's impossible to say that taking SSRI antidepressants is worthwhile, or even completely safe.

If you're taking antidepressants, it's very important you don't stop doing so without speaking to your doctor first. But people need all this information to make informed decisions about whether or not to take these drugs.

Joanna Moncrieff is a senior clinical lecturer of critical and social psychiatry at University College London, and Mark Horowitz is a clinical research fellow in psychiatry at UCL. This article was originally published by The Conversation.

To find the studies mentioned in this article, please see the article online at TheEpochTimes.com

Few Americans Have Good Cardio Metabolic Health

Cardiometabolic health is a strong predictor of chronic disease and early death

JOSEPH MERCOLA

ardiometabolic health encompasses a spectrum of conditions and risk factors. Issues in cardiometabolic health are one of the biggest burdens on the health care system and modern society. The progression from a society in which most people were moving throughout the day to one where many people spend an average of 10 hours a day sitting has greatly contributed to the problem.

Each of the factors that contribute to your cardiometabolic health has an impact on your risk of heart disease, diabetes, peripheral vascular disease and early death. Not only are Americans not exercising as much as they once did, but they're also leading more sedentary lives, which has contributed to a rising rate of obesity, high blood pressure and high blood sugar.

The most important strategy for your health is to eliminate all processed foods from your diet.

Thankfully, there are simple strategies you can use to make a significant difference in your cardiometabolic health, and therefore your longevity. Although it may feel overwhelming to consider changes to your eating or exercise habits, as we have discovered in 2020 and 2021, those with good cardiometabolic health were more resilient to infectious disease and had a reduced risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Since SARS-CoV-2, the virus that trig-

gered COVID-19, is likely not the last pandemic society will face, your best strategy to improve your quality of life and reduce your risk of early death is to make the necessary changes to improve your cardiometabolic health.

Continued on Page 10

THE EPOCH

TIMES



Fermented foods provide probiotics gut health and your

How to **Naturally Increase Your Breastmilk** Supply

If you're struggling to breastfeed your newborn, here are some things you can do

ASHLEY TURNER

things

contribute more

to our health and

happiness than

moving our

bodies.

Are you a new mom working around the clock to establish a strong milk supply for your growing babe? Or perhaps you've established your breastfeeding routine but have recently returned to work, or your little one has started on solids?

It's normal to have some minor fluctuations in milk supply throughout your breastfeeding season. Try not to stress about small decreases, as breastfeeding is all about supply and demand.

Many women experience dips in their supply if they return back to work and transition to pumping during part of the day. Similarly, you might notice a decrease in supply when your baby starts eating solids more regularly.

If you're noticing your supply isn't as robust as usual, don't fret! There are many natural tools that can help boost your milk supply.

Many breastfeeding moms find a bowl of warm, comforting oatmeal to be a great way to support their milk supply for the day.

Hydration

Hydration is one of the most essential keys to increasing and maintaining a healthy breast milk supply. Your body is working nonstop to provide essential nutrients to you and your baby, so supporting it with proper hydration is vital.

As a general rule, you want to aim to consume half your body weigh in ounces or more to maintain and boost your milk supply. Adding trace minerals to your drinking water is important to ensure you don't deplete your body with the added water. The Original Quinton Hypertonic supplement is an excellent way to ensure you are supporting your body with enough electrolytes and trace minerals.

Continued on Page 12



Breastfeeding is natural, but it often isn't easy. Fortunately, there are natural ways to address issues ranging from clogged ducts to low supply

A Book That Has Inspired The World



I have indeed experienced all the miracles. No matter what your experience or what background you have or what country you are born in, you will benefit from Falun Dafa. **Martin Rubenis**

OLYMPIC ATHLETE

huan Falun is the main text of Falun Gong (also called Falun Dafa). The book expounds upon profound principles of Truthfulness, Compassion and Tolerance. It addresses the long-forgotten term "cultivation," the origins of illnesses, karma, the role of moral character on a path to spiritual perfection, and more. The book was a national bestseller in China in the

1990s, and has been translated into over 40 languages. Find out why it has captured the hearts and minds of tens

of millions of people in over 100 countries worldwide!

What made Falun Gong stand out from other qigong exercises and meditation practices was a moral system—compassion, truthfulness, and forbearance unmistakably Buddhist in origin.

Arthur Waldron LAUDER PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Falun Gong has taught me how to be considerate of others and how to improve my relationships by handling conflicts constructively. [...] It has given me incredible relaxation, mental clarity, and freedom from stress.

Shiyu Zhou

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INTERNATIONAL

CHINESE VOCAL

COMPETITION

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 32, 2022

processed foods come

fake meat products are destroying the

environment by perpetuating a harm-

ful reliance on genetically engineered

(GE) grains while accelerating soil loss

and detracting from regenerative agri-

culture, which may be why Impossible

Foods holds 14 patents, with at least 100

"It's not food; it's software, intellectual

property—14 patents, in fact, in each

bite of Impossible Burger with over 100

additional patents pending for animal

proxies from chicken to fish," he writes.

duction of fake meat are based on

sustainability claims, these should be

backed up by environmental impact

studies. According to a 2015 study, lab-

grown meat actually requires more en-

Creating patented lab-grown meat

products is not about feeding the world

or eliminating animal suffering. It's

about dominating billionaires looking

to put patents on the food system—and,

as Impossible Foods put it, "to transform

While many view lab-created meat

substitutes as the lesser of two evils com-

pared to conventional factory-farmed

meat, taking nature out of the equation

Instead, as I have promoted in the

past, regenerative agriculture is a ho-

listic herd management system that is

an integral part of the regenerative agri-

culture equation and creates a complete

ecosystem that both heals the land and

is productive for the farmer. It is not eat-

ing meat that harms the environment

but rather industrial farming practices

While this is not an inclusive list, it's an

important place to start. By making simple

changes to your eating and exercise hab-

its, you may help balance your nutritional

status and improve your cardiometabolic

health. This in turn can help you become

more resilient, which will become more

I believe one of the most important

changes you can make is to transition to

a cyclical ketogenic diet plan. For those

who may find it challenging to drasti-

cally reduce carbohydrates, you'll find

tips here to help lower your carb intake,

reduce your cravings and help lower the

Eliminate

Processed Foods

The primary rea-

son why pro-

cessed foods

are so perni-

cious is that

they are loaded with seed

oils and high amounts of

the omega-6 fat, linoleic

acid (LA). The amount of

Fewer than

impact carbs have on your health.

important in the coming years.

the global food system."

is not the answer.

that inflict damage.

6 Tips to Improve

Cardiometabolic Health

ergy than conventional agriculture.

Although the development and pro-

more pending.

Cardiometabolic health is a strong predictor of chronic disease and early death

We need a

complete

overhaul of

our health care

system, food

system, and built

environment,

because this

is a crisis for

everyone,

not just one

segment of the

population.

Meghan O'Hearn,

study lead author,

Friedman School

Continued from Page 9

Few Americans Have Good Cardiometabolic Health

The research was led by the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University and included scientists from Tufts Medical Center. The scientists looked at data from 55,081 adults who were 20 years and older from the 10 most recent cycles of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES).

Based on this nationally representative sample of U.S. adults, the researchers found that fewer than 1 in 14 adults (6.8 percent) had optimal cardiometabolic health. The researchers evaluated five components: blood pressure, blood sugar, adiposity, blood cholesterol, and the presence disease. We want to achieve optimal or absence of cardio-

vascular diseases. Those who were healthy had optimal levels in all five categories in the NHANES data collected as of 2017-2018. When the data were compared against the 1999 survey data, they found that 1 out of 3 adults had optimal levels of adiposity and that number declined to 1 out of 4 by 2018.

When the researchers evaluated the number of adults with diabetes or prediabetes, they found in 1999 that 3 out of 5 (60 percent) were free of disease but by 2018 fewer than 4 out of 10 (40 percent) were. Meghan O'Hearn, a doctoral candidate from the Friedman School and the study's

lead author, said: "These numbers are striking. It's positive health practices the easiest deeply problematic that in the United States, one of the wealthiest nations in the world, fewer than 1 in 15 adults have optimal cardiometabolic health. We need a complete overhaul of our health care system, food system, and built environment, because this is a crisis for everyone, not just one segment of the population.

Optimal Health Is More Than

Disease-Free The study also identified large disparities between education level, age, sex, race and ethnicity. For example, in the data from 1999 and 2018, they found the percentage of those with good cardiometabolic health improved among non-Hispanic white Americans but declined for Hispan-

ics, Blacks, and adults of other races. The study also looked at intermediate levels of health where individuals may have had prehypertension, were overweight, or had prediabetes. codirector of Soil4Climate, suggests

Stress Ages the

O'Hearn found there was a large portion of the population who were at a critical point where addressing lifestyle factors could reduce the growing health care burden.

O'Hearn noted, "This is a health crisis we've been facing for a while. Now there's a growing economic, social and ethical imperative to give this problem significantly more attention than it has been getting."

She added that the consequences of the state of health in adults don't only impact individuals personally. Instead, largely preventable conditions have a significant impact on national health care spending.

"We need to shift the conversation, because disease is not the only problem. We don't just want to be free of health and well-being,"

> she continued. As O'Hearn points out, health is not just the achievement of being free from disease. The U.S. Office of Population Affairs uses the definition of optimum health from the American Journal of Health Promotion, which says:

"Optimal health is a dynamic balance of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual health ... Lifestyle change can be facilitated through a combination of learning experiences that enhance awareness, increase motivation, and build skills and, most important, through the creation of opportunities that open access to envi-

ronments that make

Overhaul Food System to Get **Back to Basics**

O'Hearn mentions overhauling the food system to encourage more people to eat healthier foods. However, this does not mean eating fake meat and soy-based food products but, rather, getting back to the basics of clean living.

Although industrial agriculture has been one of the most unsustainable practices, the answer is not replacing farms with a chemistry lab. Producing meat substitutes requires water, chemicals and fossil fuel. In that respect, it differs very little from conventional agriculture. Additionally, the nutrient value of lab-grown meat and meat substitutes is highly questionable.

For example, Seth Itzkan, environmental futurist and cofounder and LA in our diet has increased more than 25 fold since 1860.

This results in a dramatic increase in oxidative stress that contributes to ruining the quadrillions of mitochondria in your body. The most important strategy for your health is to eliminate all processed foods from your diet as

they are loaded with LA. Additionally, junk food manufacturers have taken flavor science to an extraordinary level and created artificial ingredients that produce the sought-after

"bliss point" your body craves. These

foods contribute to the obesity epidemic,

which increases rates of obesity-related

cancers and chronic illnesses. It's been estimated that as much as 40 percent of American health care expenditures are for diseases directly related to the overconsumption of sugar. Research has demonstrated that 21.1 percent of calories in ultraprocessed foods

come from sugars. They increase how quickly you eat and cause delays in feelings of satiety. This contributes to obesity and metabolic dysfunction.

Ultraprocessed foods made people more vulnerable to COVID-19 during the pandemic. Improving your cardiometabolic health today can help increase your resilience against future infectious diseases.

Eat Your Carbs Cool Research studies have

demonstrated that by cooling carbohydrates before eating them, you may create more digestive-resistant starches. This

can trigger a lower insulin and glucose spike and the starches may act as prebiotics for healthy bacteria in your gut.

A study published in 2020 found that cooking pasta, cooling it, and reheating it had a significant effect on blood glucose spikes in 45 volunteers. Similar results were found in a study published in 2008 looking

Get Help

for Emotional Eating Emotional eating and food addictions are very real and can lead to obesity and related health problems. As clini-

cal psychologist Susan Albers told Huff-Post, "... [E] ating to avoid facing feelings is like putting a 'Band-Aid on a broken

Fortunately, there are solutions and the two most effective ones I know are intermittent fasting with a cyclical ketogenic diet and Emotional Freedom Techniques that help you release negative thoughts and feelings while you're taking steps

to improve your physical health. If you feel that your emotions or your own self-image are sabotaging your efforts, I recommend consider trying EFT. You can find my free EFT manual online.

at freezing and toasting white bread and the response to the glycemic index.

This is interesting insight you may con-

sider as you are reducing the number of

carbohydrates you eat each day. It's also

important to remember that most of these

products are made with wheat, which con-

tains lectins and is often contaminated

with glyphosate that impairs tight cellular

junctions in your gut. Consider transition-

ing to healthier choices, including sweet

also when you eat it. Fung believes the

answer to Type 2 diabetes is to use time-

restricted eating (TRE). In an interview in

early 2022, he discussed how metabolic

treatments such as TRE are the only way

One of the keys to lowering your carbo-

hydrate intake is to help eliminate your

carbohydrate cravings. The key to getting

rid of cravings, in my experience, is eating a diet that's high in healthy fats and low

in refined carbohydrates. I am a big advo-

cate of combining a cyclical ketogenic diet

with TRE. Eating real food and selecting

healthy fats are keys to reducing your car-

bohydrate cravings, no matter what ratio

of fat, carbs and protein you eat.

potatoes (including purple varieties).

Intermittent Fasting

Lowers Carb Cravings

As has been increasingly

shown through research,

it's not only what you eat

to resolve diabetes.

that factors into how the

food affects your health, but

Fermented Foods **Boost Mental Health** Incorporating fermented foods into your nutritional plan has many benefits, not the least of

which is improving your gut microbiome and your mental health. A review of seven clinical trials found probiotics and or prebiotics could help those struggling with depression and anxiety.

The review built on earlier studies that have shown people with depression have higher amounts of specific gut bacteria than those who are not depressed. Reducing your risk of depression and anxiety, as well as improving your overall health and resilience against infectious disease, may raise your motivation to take the steps needed to improve your cardiometabolic health.

Learn to Love Movement and

Exercise There is a long list of benefits from exercise for your physical and mental health, including improving muscle strength and flexibility and improving cognitive skills.

One study of 40 women found those who were relatively inactive viewed exercise as counterproductive to their goals, had a different view of what "exercise" entailed and how it would feel, and felt it would take too much time.

On the other hand, the highly active women believed that exercise fit their goals for relaxation, achieving success, and connecting with others. The researchers theorized that inactive women could improve their motivation by shifting the way they think about exercise and their definition of what exercise should look like.

The type of exercise you choose is a personal choice, but the objective is to do something that raises your heart and breathing rate. How you frame the idea may help change your perspective, so you enjoy the activities you've chosen.

For example, some of the top reasons that people start a workout routine are to lose weight and lower their risk of disease. However, these are extrinsic motivators and are not enough to overshadow discomfort for the benefit of a future reward.

An analysis of six studies demonstrated that people who placed a greater value on their internal feelings while exercising, rather than on the benefits they might experience later, stayed motivated to continue their activity.

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder of

cian, best-selling 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.

When we eat poorly and sit around too much, we suffer a subtle but profound downgrade of key systems essential to health and happiness.

Immune System: Study

Findings suggest ways to counter chronic stress, preserve attack-ready immune cells

ZRINKA PETERS

We've all heard that too much stress can hurt our health. Stress contributes to ailments such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes.

Now, a study published on June 13 in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), shows that

in health outcomes among people of the same chronological age, and provide insight to help those affected by

The immune system degrades with age and worn-out white blood cells proliferate while "naive" new cells that are ready to fight harmful invaders decrease. This normal process years of accumulated stress can more of immune system aging is called rapidly age the immune system. This immunosenescence. But the rate at finding could help explain disparities which this deterioration occurs var-

ies widely among people of the same chronological age.

Researchers from the University of Southern California (USC) analyzed responses from a national sample of 5,744 adults over the age of 50 who were asked about their experiences with five specific types of social stress: stressful life events, chronic stress, everyday discrimination, lifetime discrimination, and life trauma. They then tested participants' blood samples using a process called flow cytometry, in which blood cells pass single file in front of a laser that counts and classifies the cells.

The researchers found stressful life events were associated with an increase in markers of immune system aging. People who experienced more life stress had fewer attack-ready immune cells, leaving them at higher risk of developing a host of age-related illnesses, in-

cluding cancer, cardiovascular disease, and severe infections from viruses such as COVID-19.

Although this study looked at older adults, younger people may suffer the same effect. A study published in the October 2018 issue of the journal Brain, Behavior, and Immunity, found similar markers of accelerated immune system aging in high-stress mothers between the ages of 20 and 50.

Interestingly, the difference in immune system aging shrank considerably after the researchers controlled for poor diet and lack of exercise, lead study author Eric Klopack, a postdoctoral scholar at the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, noted in a statement.

"What this means is people who experience more stress tend to have poorer diet and exercise habits, partly explaining why they have more accelerated immune aging."

Everybody experiences some amount of stress, and not all stress is harmful. Some 'good' stress, which psychologists refer to as 'eustress,' may even be beneficial. But, in general, severe or chronic stress should



We lose healthy immune cells over the course of our lives, especially if we are often stressed, eat poorly, and don't exercise

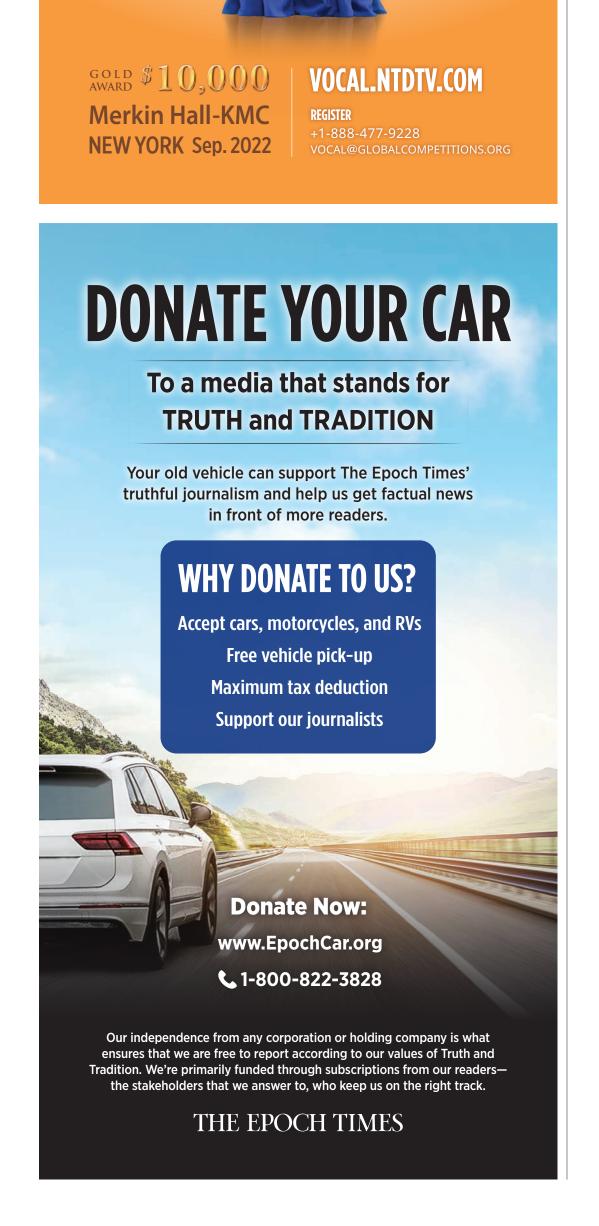
be well managed, Klopack said. "I know that can be difficult or impos-

sible, but our study suggests that one way to offset the effects of stress on immune aging is to try to avoid unhealthy behaviors like smoking and drinking and to try to get regular exercise and eat a healthy diet."

ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

These results give hope that these simple, readily accessible lifestyle changes may significantly delay or reduce the harmful effects of stress on the immune system in older adults.

Zrinka Peters has been writing professionally for over a decade. She has a BA in English Literature from Simon Fraser University 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



If you're struggling to breastfeed your newborn, here are some things you can do

Continued from Page 9

Additionally, bone broth is an incredible way to nourish your body. It's a powerhouse of beneficial nutrition, packed full of healing, hydrating nutrients. As a bonus, bone broth is not only good for you, but it's also an incredibly delicious, comforting beverage to sip on as you rock your little one.

Whether you're a new mom or have added another little one to your family, you're likely working hard to make sure every need of your sweet new babe is met right away. At times, this can cause you to forget to take care of yourself. While it's important to meet the needs of your family, you also need to ensure you're supporting your postpartum recovery and milk supply by eating nourishing meals regularly throughout the day.

Breastfeeding mothers typically need to consume about 300 to 500 additional calories to maintain pre-pregnancy weight. However, it's important to listen to your body and eat when you're hungry, rather than aiming for a specific number of calories. Your body will tell you what it needs. Focus on making sure your meals are nutrient dense in order to nourish your body most efficiently.

As mentioned earlier, in addition to hydration, bone broth is a nutrient-dense superfood that will provide



is a quick and easy way to get beneficial nutrients when you're short on time.

It's

recommended

calcium levels

to get your

tested, as

levels can

low calcium

significantly

hinder milk

production

in women,

particularly

during

and/or

ovulation

menstruation.

Oats are another way of supporting a healthy milk supply. Many breastfeeding moms find a bowl of warm, comforting oatmeal to be a great way to support their milk supply for the day. Oats are an excellent source of iron, which many moms are deficient in, especially in early postpartum. They also contain a type of fiber called beta-glucan, which is thought to have a positive effect on prolactin, the hormone released after childbirth that stimulates breast milk production.

It's best to consume oats in the form of oat groats, as they are the least processed and have the most nutrients available. However, steel cut or rolled oats are beneficial as well. Soaked or sprouted oats are the easiest for your body to digest and offer the most bioavailable nutrients.

A great way to add some extra nutrition to oatmeal in the morning is to add ground flaxseed, which is high in fiber and omega-3

Galactagogues

Now that's a fun word, isn't it? Galactagogues might sound like a race of alien beings, but according to the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, they're "medications or other substances believed to assist initiation, maintenance, or augmentation of maternal milk supply."

Another way to consume galactagogues tinctures, or supplements.

You can often find a breast milk-boosting tea blend at your local grocer or market. A popular one is Organic Mother's Milk tea, which contains a long list of galactagogue herbs, primarily fenugreek and fennel, which are both considered to be milk-making super herbs.

We do want to note that there's some anecdotal evidence that some moms experience a decrease in breast milk supply while taking fenugreek. This is likely due to the fact that fenugreek seeds have estrogenic properties. Increases in estrogen can impact a mother's milk supply, so you might want to pay extra attention to your body's response if you begin consuming fenugreek.

Sunflower Lecithin

If you've ever experienced a clogged breast duct before, you know how miserable it can be. Many breastfeeding mamas struggle with clogged ducts, especially in the early days as they and their baby are working hard to establish and maintain supply. As your body is working to adapt, and your baby is learning to drain your breasts with each feeding, sunflower lecithin can be a helpful supplement to keep your ducts clear and the milk flowing easily.

Sunflower lecithin works to decrease the viscosity (or the stickiness) of your milk, allowing the milk to flow freely. Legendary Milk has a relatively inexpensive sunflower lecithin supplement that's popular with breastfeeding moms.

Calcium

Another piece of the milk-making puzzle is calcium level. It's recommended to get your calcium level tested, as low calcium can significantly hinder milk production in women, particularly during times of ovulation and/or menstruation.

Working to incorporate calcium-rich foods can help to ensure your calcium level is where it should be.

Stress Management

If you're a breastfeeding mama, you likely have a growing list of stressors running through your mind. Those first few weeks and months postpartum are some of the sweetest yet can also be quite overwhelming. You and your family members are trying to adjust to a "new normal" with the arrival of your new baby. As happy as you are, you might also feel the pressure of the sink full of dirty dishes or the growing pile of dirty

laundry in front of the clothes washer.

It's also common to experience anxiety or worry as you're adjusting to this major life change and your hormones are working to balance out (more on that later).

The adrenaline pumping through your body when you're feeling stressed can directly affect lactation. Adrenaline impairs the release of oxytocin, the hormone that allows your milk to begin flowing. Essentially, adrenaline from stress is a roadblock that impairs the "letdown" of milk to your baby.

Accepting help from friends and family members can help to alleviate a lot of stress in the early postpartum weeks. As difficult as it is, try not to worry too much about your house.

It's also important to talk to someone about how you're feeling if experiencing feelings of stress or anxiety. Find a listening ear, whether it's your husband, your birth team, a friend, or family member. Accepting help and vocalizing your feelings and emotions can be incredibly freeing. This act can open up "brain space" and let your body release the stress so it can focus on the important job of making milk to feed that new little life.

The irony is not lost here. Telling a new mom to make sure she's getting enough sleep might seem a bit tone-deaf. You're probably saying, "Well, of course, I wish I were getting sleep!" You've heard it said before, but to sleep when the baby sleeps truly is vital.

As your body is working to heal after giving birth, as well as providing milk to keep your little one alive, it's important to sleep as often as possible. When you can, after a breastfeeding session, give the baby to your husband or a family member there at home so you can nap. They can waken you when the baby is ready for the next feeding.

Prioritizing your rest and recovery in those early days will allow your body to renew itself and have the energy to develop a robust

Pumping is a great way to increase your supply quickly. Since breast milk supply is based on supply and demand, pumping is a great short-term way to increase that demand and cue your body to provide the supply.

In the early days of breastfeeding, your infant might not be super efficient at emptying your breasts completely with each feeding session. This can cause your body to not realize you need to continue producing. Once



Mothers-to-be should know breastfeeding can be tricky and require a learning process.

each breast until you don't see milk flowing, and then continue for several more minutes. This typically takes about 10 minutes total, but it certainly varies for each mom.

Hormone Imbalances

As your hormones work to stabilize in the first few weeks and months postpartum, it's easy to see a hormone imbalance as "normal." However, if you lack an essential balance of breastfeeding hormones, including prolactin, cortisol, and insulin (the "drivers" of breast milk production), and oxytocin (the hormone that allows the milk to "letdown"), you might experience milk supply challenges.

If you have Type 2 diabetes or had gestational diabetes during your pregnancy, your body's insulin resistance can interfere with milk production. Additionally, if your thyroid isn't functioning properly, your prolactin and oxytocin levels might be imbalanced, causing issues with both supply and milk flow.

It's best to work with your health care provider to address the root cause of any hormonal imbalance. Identifying the cause and developing a treatment plan will be an improvement to your overall health and, in turn, will improve your breast milk production.

Tongue and Lip Ties

Awareness of tongue and lip ties in infants is becoming increasingly widespread, which is good news for many breastfeeding moms and babies. If you are experiencing a painful latch, chronic plugged ducts, or your baby never seems to be getting enough to eat and isn't draining your breasts, they might have a tongue and/or lip tie.

Tongue and lip ties are caused by the connective tissue between the lip and gums (lip tie) or under the tongue to bottom of the mouth being too short and/or thick. This can inhibit the baby's ability to establish a strong latch, causing them to be unable to you've finished a nursing session, pump suck properly and to efficiently empty the

Try not to stress about small decreases, as breastfeeding is all about supply and demand.



Raspberry leaf tea should not be taken until after pregnancy.

Breastfeeding mothers typically need to consume about

to

CALORIES to maintain pre-pregnancy weight

ADDITIONAL

breast. This can result in a variety of issues for the baby, such as hunger, colic, and reflux issues. At the same time, this can be extremely distressing to a mother who's likely experiencing soreness or clogged ducts, or feeling like she is failing at feeding her baby.

It's strongly recommended to reach out to a local international board-certified lactation consultant if you're experiencing these challenges. Lactation consultants can be an invaluable resource to help to fix breastfeeding issues, often through simple adjustments and movements. They also can often identify if a tongue or lip tie is the source of your struggles, or point you in the direction of a provider who can help.

If you suspect a tongue or lip tie to be the source of your milk supply issues, a reputable pediatric dentist trained in tongue and lip tie revisions can help resolve the ties with a relatively minor procedure. Your lactation consultant can likely recommend a reputable doctor in your region, or there are many tongue and lip tie support groups to access online via social media to help locate a practice.

Some Additional Thoughts

As moms, it's easy to beat ourselves up if we're having breastfeeding struggles, but often we simply need the proper tools for success.

The first few weeks of breastfeeding can be incredibly difficult. Just because it's natural doesn't always mean that it will be smooth and easy. If you're experiencing painful, raw skin in those very early days, don't lose heart—you aren't alone. Many women experience this as their body adjusts to these new demands.

Remember to be patient and kind to yourself, as your body is working overtime to recover from childbirth and simultaneously supply nourishment to that growing baby of yours.

So take a moment to pour yourself a cup of bone broth, put your feet up, and soak in those sweet baby cuddles. Breathe deep, close your eyes for a moment, and be rest assured that your body will be able to feed the little one you love so very much.

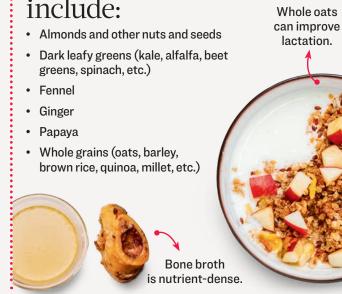
Dr. Ashley Turner is a traditionally trained naturopath and board-certified doctor of holistic health for Restorative Wellness Center. As an expert in functional medicine, Turner is the author of the gut-healing guide "Restorative Kitchen" and "Restorative Traditions," a cookbook comprised of non-inflammatory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

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Sunflower lecithin works to decrease the viscosity (or, the stickiness) of your milk, allowing the milk to flow freely.



A few common galactagogue foods include: Almonds and other nuts and seeds Dark leafy greens (kale, alfalfa, beet greens, spinach, etc.) Fennel



Galactagogue herbs include: Anise Blessed thistle

Brewer's yeast Red raspberry leaf

Blessed thistle has many look-alikes.

Fenugreek

Marshmallow root



Calcium rich foods: Some of which are also galactagogues, include:

Seeds: Sesame, celery, chia, and so on.

- Dairy: Cheese, milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, and so on. (preferably raw dairy from grass-
- Canned salmon
- Sardines
- Almonds

and tasty.

CHINESE WISDOM FOR SEASONAL LIVING

Autumn's Arrival Signals Our Time for Rebirth and Renewal

Solar Term: 'Autumn Begins' (Aug. 7–22)

MOREEN LIAO

A solar term is a period of approximately two weeks based on the sun's position in the zodiac. There are 24 solar terms in It might be hard to believe, but accorda year, which make up the traditional Chinese calendar system used to guide farming and everyday life. The calendar contributes to the ancient Chinese philosophy that living in accordance with nature will enable a harmonious life. This article series delves into each solar term and offers guidance on how to navigate the changes of season in order to live happier and healthier.

Solar Term: 'Autumn Begins'

2022 Dates: Aug. 7–22

ing to the Chinese system of solar terms, we've already entered the season of autumn. This time is aptly named Autumn Begins (Aug. 7-22).

In ancient China, a "taishi" was a ranking official in charge of recording history and astrology. It was his duty to inform the emperor to begin a customary threeday fast right before the beginning of autumn. The emperor would lead his court nine "li" (about 2 1/2 miles) out of the west components of one object and can transgate of the capital city to welcome the god

emperor would lead his court back to the center of the capital city to mark the arrival of the god of autumn on Earth. For the ancient Chinese, autumn's descent from heaven on his earthly voyage was a time of rebirth and renewal. Just as

nature ceases its abundant growth and sheds leaves down to bare branches, autumn is a good time for us to turn inward, to clear out thoughts and emotions that we don't need, and to even clean out closets and drawers.

According to the "bagua," a system of eight trigrams used in Taoist cosmology, autumn has three yang trigrams on top, and three yin trigrams on the bottom. This indicates that yang is still dominating yin in autumn, but it's also receding.

This also is a hint that yin and yang, also known as the forces of good karma and bad karma, aren't strictly opponents of the metal element, which could also manieach other. Instead, they are actually two fest itself as a lung or respiratory condition.

form into one another.

Later, during the autumn equinox, the **Living in Harmony** With 'Autumn Begins'

Autumn is harvest season, and it's rich with vivid golden colors. In the Chinese five element theory, there's a cycle of states that matter, the human body, the earth, and society go through. For example, the element wood leads to the element of fire, which then leads to earth. Our body's organs are also associated with specific elements in Chinese medicine, and both the season of autumn and our lungs are associated with metal.

When metal is unbalanced, it becomes hard to see our own value, and we tend to compensate by seeking things such as status, money, and material possessions. We may seek actual metal, in the form of gold or silver, or items that fulfill the sense of wealth we get from precious metals. Too much pursuit can reflect an imbalance in

Beware of getting bogged down by worries or negative emotions at this time, and do your best to find ways of letting go of your sadness, which is the dominant emotion of the lungs. Crying is an action of our breath and lungs.

Researchers have found depression is prevalent in patients with asthma. "All respiratory symptoms, such as wheezing, breathlessness and nightly symptoms, were more common, at a statistically significant level, in participants who had depression and anxiety, even after adjusting for confounders," a 2014 Nordic study notes.

A 2019 study published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health found depressed smokers reported greater difficulty in quitting tobacco use, and they perceived more severe respiratory symptoms compared to non-depressed smokers.

Traditional Chinese theory sees that one who gets too depressed may damage their lungs or respiratory system. They may also catch a flu or cold more easily than those who are emotionally stable.

Protecting your lungs from cold air or cold drinks can help to prevent coughing and promote smooth digestion. This can also lead to better skin.

A good massage on the body and skin, especially one that presses on acupressure points, can help to reduce cellulite and prevent toxins from accumulating.

Seasonal Foods and Scents

Emphasize cooked food and avoid consuming too much cold food, such as raw salads. This can help you to avoid skin rashes or irritation and keep your emotions stable.

Fewer stimulating flavors and mild food is what the season calls for, with the exception of sour-tasting foods, which nourish the lungs and respiratory system.

Enjoy almonds, bananas, cabbage, celery, citrus fruits, eggs, gingko berries, leeks, olive oil, pears, white rice, soy milk or grain milk, white radishes, and yams. Scents are also powerful for cleans-

ing and altering the mood in support of

health and stable emotions. Try diffus-

Autumn is on its way, and the time to prepare for the season shift is now.

melissa, or eucalyptus.

therapist, former dean of an institute in Sydney, and the founder of Heritage Formulations, a complete solution for TCM Moreen Liao is a descendant of four generations of traditional Chinese medicine



ing essential oils of basil, cypress, pine, doctors. She's also a certified aroma-

through our

disappearing

days with

the years

faster. To

live well, we

to make an

effort to slow

Eating Flowers: 9 Delicious, Healthy Blooms

Flowers offer a beautiful way to add some nutrition and unique flavors to your diet

LISA ROTH COLLINS

If you've never thought about eating flowers, then you're in for a treat! There are many edible flowers that aren't only delicious in a wide variety of dishes but are also healthy.

We aren't suggesting you run out into your garden or comb the roadsides or meadows for just any flowers. Only some flowers are edible, and there are a few guidelines you need to follow to ensure you are selecting flowers that are safe for consumption in main dishes, salads, sauces, and beverages.

First, however, let's look at nine delicious, healthy blooms suitable for your menu.

How to Choose Edible Flowers

Before you pick flowers for your menu, here are a few tips from the University of Minnesota Extension:

- When eating blossoms, remove the pistils and stamens first.
- Choose plants that are pesticide-free and certified organic. Do not consume any other type of flowers. You can purchase edible flowers at some farmers'

The starshaped blue, pink, or white flowers of borage have long been valued for their healing abilities for cough and sore throat.



markets, garden centers, selected grocery stores (look in the produce section, not the floral department), and online. Fresh flowers should be consumed within 24 hours. You also can grow your own.

 Wash fresh flowers gently and allow them to dry. Place them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until ready for use. Add the flowers to your salad or other dishes immediately before serving.

For more edible flowers, see the University

of Minnesota Extension list.

Bottom Line

Lisa Roth Collins is a registered holistic nutritionist and also the marketing manager at NaturallySavvy.com, which first published this article.

Once you start eating flowers, you may find yourself searching for new ways to enjoy them in your dishes. Brighten your meals, health, and taste buds with edible flowers today.



The star-shaped blue, pink, or white flowers of borage have long been valued for their healing abilities for coughs and sore throats. However, the leaves and flowers are also a raw nutritional treat in salads because of their cucumbery and slightly sweet flavor. You can also enjoy them cooked in sauces, stews, soups, or as a side

dish. Try a variety of borage recipes.



Some people regard dandelions as weeds, but their bright yellow blossoms, as well as their leaves, roots. and stems, are high in antioxidants and also have anti-diabetic properties. You can enjoy the flowers and leaves raw in salads, or try frying the flowers in batter. The flowers also are used to make jelly and wine. If you prefer dandelion tea, steep the roots for a beverage that can help with digestion. A 2022 study reports that dandelion roots and other parts contain substances that provide protection to the gastrointestinal tract.



Pansies come in many colors, with purple, yellow, and blue being the most common. These flowers are great as garnishes on cakes and other baked goods, but they are also delicious when the petals are added to salads. When you eat pansies, you will also benefit from their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.





One of the special features of purslane and its delicate yellow flowers and leaves is its high content of omega-3 fatty acids, along with lots of antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. Purslane flowers and leaves can be enjoyed raw in salads, sandwiches, and as a topping on vegetable dishes, as well as added to soups or steamed as a side dish.



Also known as monk cress (Tropaeolum majus), you can enjoy both the flowers and leaves of the nasturtium raw or cooked. The red, yellow, or orange flowers can be added to salads or used as a decoration on baked goods, while the leaves are perfect salad greens or a tasty ingredient in pesto. Added bonuses of nasturtium are its high antioxidant content and anti-inflammatory



The most popular edible variety of hibiscus is the Hibiscus sabdariffa (aka, roselle). These large pink, yellow, red, and white flowers can be enjoyed clipped directly from the plant in salads, or they can be made into jams and relishes. Recent research shows that healthy individuals who drank 7 ounces of a hibiscus beverage daily for six months experienced a significant decline in blood pressure, elevated antioxidant levels, and helped with skin hydration and redness.

Another study indicates that hibiscus may be helpful for managing high cholesterol, inflammatory diseases of the kidney and liver,



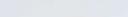
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A rose is a rose is a rose ... but they don't all taste the same. That means you have a great variety of flavors from which to choose (there are more than 150 species of roses) when bringing more zest to your table. Rose petals (please don't eat the stems or leaves) can be added raw to salads or sandwiches, used to make roseinfused drinks, or made into rose petal jams or cupcakes



One of the treats of summer squash

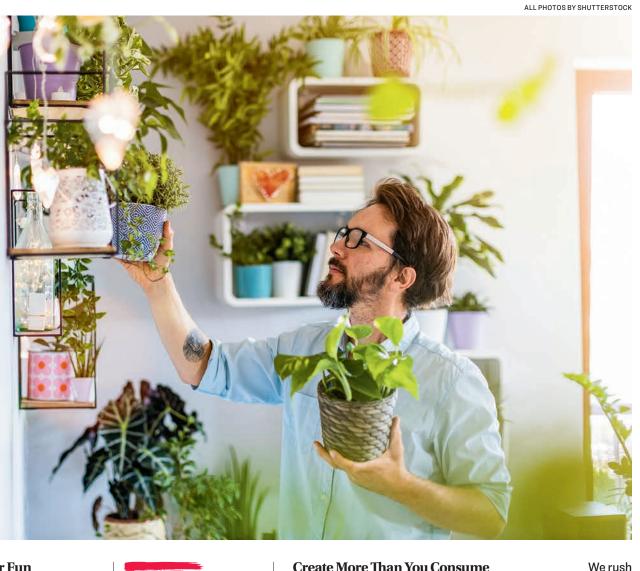
is fried or stuffed squash blossoms. Zucchini blossoms are the most commonly consumed of the squash flowers, and they can be enjoyed raw in salads as well as cooked. If you are growing your own squash, choose the male flowers only, as the female blossoms are the ones that produce the squash. Male flowers have a thin, long stem and usually are found around the outer edges of the plant, while the female flowers grow near the plant's center and have small fruit near where the blossom and stem meet.



INTENTIONAL LIVING

Living Life in the Slow Lane

You can't do everything, but you can do what matters to a life lived well



MOLLIE DONGHIA

commitments?

simple statement I've been reminded of recently is that we can't do everything and expect to do everything well. Our society prioritizes efficien-

cy and productivity. Many worklong days, fill every minute of their schedules, rush from one thing to the next, and create systems that allow for tasks to get finished faster.

I've been here as a full-time working parent, and have experienced for myself the demands of this pace of living. However, there's a paradox that comes from

this fast-paced lifestyle. This lifestyle can be inherently satisfying. Who doesn't enjoy checking every item off their to-do list and having a calendar full of social events and meaningful

But we're faced with an increased sense of time pressure and stress from the rigor created by that pace. Stress levels and antidepressant use is on

the rise; maybe part of the reason is the mad dash many of us live each day. Pushing back against this fast-paced life-

style is countercultural. When we take time to enjoy a hobby or allow our minds to relax, it can be seen as lazy or unproductive. But living a slower pace of life shouldn't carry this stigma when our intentions im- **Learn to Say 'No'**

prove our health and bring greater purpose to our days. Throughout the seasons of life, I've realized the importance of slowing down. I'm less stressed when I have fewer commitments and I can spend more time focusing

on the relationships around me. I am also

better rested when I prioritize sleep and good routines. If you're someone who feels as if life is moving at a speed that leaves you stressed and exhausted and are looking to simplify your life, I'd encourage you to consider sways to

slow your pace of living. Here are some practices that can help you enjoy life in the slow lane

Make a Daily 3-Item to-Do List

Don't try to accomplish everything that's possible in one day. When you achieve a few meaningful things, this boosts your motivation and allows you to keep the wheel turning without the risk of burnout. Prioritize by choosing the three most important tasks. Write them down as you begin your day and let the momentum of accomplishing these important items carry you through the rest of the day.

Take Up a Hobby—Just for Fun Research shows that how you spend your

leisure time matters to your health. Hobbies are beneficial in many ways—better physical health, greater longevity, increased sleep, a larger social network, and even improved performance at work. Even if you're not great at it, find something you enjoy doing and stick

Be Present With Those Around You

Having healthy relationships contributes significantly to your emotional well-being. When you choose to focus on those around you by taking a break from a device or busy schedule, you're able to listen and observe as you gain a deeper sense of connection with them. I've found that making better eye contact and asking engaging questions help me to be more present with those I'm spending

Take In Your Surroundings

Not only is it important to be present with those around you, but also with your surroundings. My husband takes our two young sons for a long walk each morning. He's also chosen to avoid playing music or podcasts and instead enjoy the sounds of nature, interactions with neighbors, and the stillness of the morning.

For a people-pleaser like myself, I enjoy being able to volunteer and serve those around me by giving my time. Saying no can be hard. But there's a limit to what I can take on without being burdened or stressed.

When we say yes to one good thing, we're simultaneously saying no to something else. Choose your priorities and commit to doing them well. Being generous is one way of living that my husband and I strive to model for our children, but if we're pushed to the brink of our limits, that's when we need to take a step back and find a balance of what we can do.

Prioritize Quality Over Quantity

As earlier said, you can't do everything and expect to do everything well. Prioritize what matters most and focus on those areas. Take on fewer commitments and leave

more margin in your week. Read just a handful of blogs or news sites

thoroughly, rather than saturating your mental capacity with an overabundance of ideas. Own fewer items but choose those that add value—rather than clutter—to your life.

Follow fewer accounts on social media and make them ones that add encouragement rather than comparison.

Create More Than You Consume It can be challenging to create and resist be-

When we

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Taking up a creative

pursuit or hobby

contributes to a

meaningful life.

minds to

ing a mere consumer, but it offers us rewards beyond our purchase power. We rob ourselves of a valuable gift when the answer to all of life's problems involves spending more. The pleasures we get from consuming can never satisfy us. There's an integral sense of competence and gratification from making, fixing, and improving things with our own skills and ingenuity.

I feel more appreciative for days when I make a home-cooked meal, light candles for the table, and invite my family to sit and linger over conversation.

I photograph my children to capture childhood memories, and then enjoy creating a gallery wall in our living room or photobook for my family to look at.

I write to express my thoughts and share with others how I believe living intentionally can be done.

Take a Day Off Each Week

Taking a day off of work and any "productive" pursuits each week allows us to reset ourselves mentally. In 2019, a study by the U.S. Travel Association found that 768 million vacation days went unused, with 55 percent of workers admitting that they didn't take their allotted vacation days.

Taking a day of rest, or sabbath as referred to in several religions, means taking a meanngful break from the regular routines that you perform the other six days of the week. Mentally disengaging allows you to have less stress, fewer sleep issues, and greater job and life satisfaction.

The Benefits of Slowing Down

Living a slower, less hectic pace of life may mean fewer external accomplishments, but I guarantee you'll go further.

If you've grown tired of the fast-paced lifestyle that our society promotes, let me encourage you to embrace life in the slow lane. Make a decision to focus on what's most important and drop the rest. Let go of the desire to do it all. We're humans with limits.

Life is about enjoying the journey, not just the destination. So make the journey one to remember, rather than busily rushing through life.

Mollie (and her husband, Mike) 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.



Early Antibiotics May Lead to Lasting Asthma, Allergies

Study has major implications that should inform antibiotic use for young children

ANDREW SMITH

Early exposure to antibiotics kills healthy bacteria in the digestive tract and can cause permanent asthma and allergies. a new study shows.

The study, published in Mucosal Immunology, provides the strongest evidence so far that the long-observed connection between antibiotic exposure in early childhood and later development of asthma

and allergies is causal.

"The practical implication is simple: Avoid antibiotic use in young children whenever you can because it may elevate the risk of significant, long-term problems with allergy and/or asthma," said senior author Martin Blaser, director of the Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine at Rutgers University.

In the study, the researchers note that antibiotics, "among the most used medications in children, affect gut microbiome communities and metabolic functions. These changes in microbiota structure can impact host immunity."

In the first part of the experiment, 5-dayold mice received water, azithromycin, or amoxicillin. After the mice matured, researchers exposed them to a common allergen derived from house dust mites.

Mice that had received either of the antibiotics, especially azithromycin, exhibited elevated rates of immune responses i.e., allergies.

The second and third parts of the experiment tested the hypothesis that early exposure to antibiotics (but not later exposure) causes allergies and asthma by killing some healthy gut bacteria that support proper immune system development.

Lead author Timothy Borbet of New York University first transferred bacteria-rich

fecal samples from the first set of mice to a second set of adult mice with no previous exposure to any bacteria or germs. Some received samples from mice given azithromycin or amoxicillin in infancy. Others received normal samples from mice that

had received water. Mice that received antibiotic-altered samples were no more likely than other mice to develop immune responses to house dust mites, just as people who receive antibiotics in adulthood are no more likely to develop asthma or allergies than those who don't.

Things were different, however, for the next generation. Offspring of mice that received antibiotic-altered samples reacted more to house dust mites than those whose parents received samples unaltered by antibiotics, just as mice that originally received antibiotics as babies reacted more to the

These **experiments** provide strong evidence that antibiotics cause unwanted immune responses ...

Martin Blaser, senior researcher allergen than those that received water. "This was a carefully controlled experi-

ment," Blaser said. "The only variable in the first part was antibiotic exposure. The only variable in the second two parts was whether the mixture of gut bacteria had been affected by antibiotics. Everything else about the mice was identical.

"These experiments provide strong evidence that antibiotics cause unwanted immune responses to develop via their effect on gut bacteria, but only if gut bacteria are altered in early childhood."

Additional coauthors are from the University of Zurich, New York University, and Rutgers.

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MIND & BODY

Week 32, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES



LEO BABAUTA

t's a simple fact: the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the amount of impulse shopping most people have been doing. There are a lot of stats proving it, but you can simply take a look at your own life and the lives of people you know to see if it's true for you.

Why have we been more compelled to shop for clothes, gadgets, workout equipment, hobby toys, and more?

At the heart of it is uncertainty. We're feeling so much more uncertainty these days, and we don't know how to handle it.

The higher the uncertainty we're feeling about ourselves and the world around us, the more we reach for comforts and things that make us feel a little more in control. And shopping is one of those things.

There's nothing inherently wrong with that. Feeling in control and feeling comfort are two very lovely things—we all need them sometimes. The more we can let go of judgment, the more open we might be to other possibilities.

Let's take a look at what we're hoping that the shopping will bring us and then at other strategies to meet those needs.

What We Hope to Get From Shopping

When you go online to buy something you're craving, are you actually craving that item or something else?

In my experience, we're craving an experience or feeling we're hoping this purchase

We might hope that the purchase will give us:

- Comfort
- Love
- Health, wellness
- Excitement, joy, fun
- Serenity
- A feeling that we're cool, strong, or sexy
- A feeling of control
- Stylishness
- Adventure
- Simplicity
- ConnectionSelf-improvement

We hope for a lot of things from our purchases beyond these few things that are some of the most common.

Underneath some of these is an even deeper desire. For example, underneath a hope for stylishness is a hope for a sense of wor-

We're feeling so much more uncertainty these days, and we don't

know how to

handle it.

JLCO JULIA AMARAL/SHUTTERSTOCK

thiness. Underneath the hope for simplicity or control is a hope for a feeling of peace.

What's underneath the things you've bought most recently? What feelings were you hoping for? What experience of life? It can be powerful to take an honest look at this.

Other Strategies to Meet Those Needs

If what we hope for is an experience of life or a feeling, you might imagine that there are other ways to get this besides buying something. Consider some of the feelings or experiences we commonly pursue.

Peace: Could you meditate, take a walk, or sit in stillness and silence for a bit? Peace is always available to us if we give ourselves some space.

Comfort: Could you give yourself love and compassion? Could you give yourself some self-care? What could you do right now that would feel like a hug from a loved one?

Adventure: Could you go outside and feel a sense of play, adventure, and wonder? Could you find the adventure in everything you're doing?

Joy: Could you find joy in daily living?

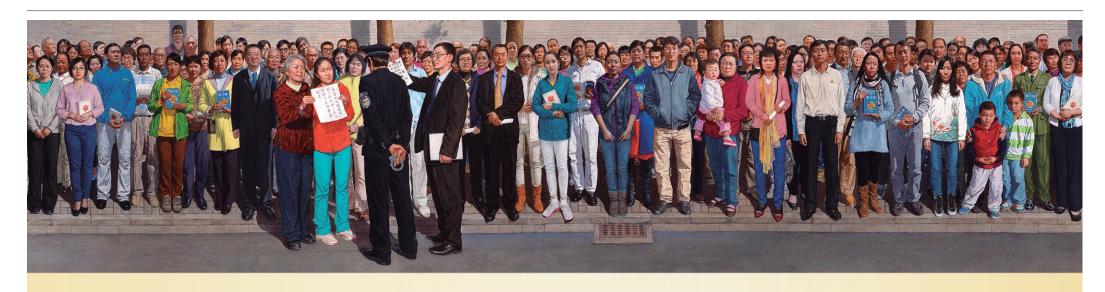
Control: This feeling could be accomplished by getting your life in order, one small thing at a time. But it can also be helpful to realize that control is an illusion, and nothing we buy will ever really give us control. The real practice is surrender and trust.

Feeling strong, cool, sexy, or stylish: What we're really hoping for is a sense of self-worth from our possessions. As we can see from past purchases, it never really gives us that. Maybe a little boost in self-worth for an hour or two, if that. Instead, we could practice valuing ourselves. And that means paying attention to how we feel, giving ourselves love, taking care of ourselves, and honoring who we are. That's all free!

The good news is that this is all available to us right now in every moment—for free. That means we don't need to order anything, it has already arrived. It can be a nice relief to the bank account as well.

 $How would you \ like to \ practice \ with this?$

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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