WEEK 49, 2022

# THE EPOCH TIMES

TWOMEOWS/GETTY IMAGES **MILLIGRAMS** The average American eats about 3,400 milligrams or 1.5 teaspoons of salt a day. The Controversy The divided findings around salt reveal an issue at the heart of medical science and clinical practice SUSAN C. OLMSTEAD to eat "too much" salt—and that too much salt is a bad thing. Doctors, dieticians, and s eating too much salt truly harmhealth associations have long cautioned ful? Mainstream medical advice that consuming excess sodium can hinder kidney function, raise blood pressure, inand routine doctor visits may have convinced you that this is a clear-cut crease the risk of cardiovascular disease, "yes," but the science is anything and even harm sleep quality. but uniform. So why isn't that reflected in Recognizing that, for most people, processed food is a major source of sodium, common clinical practice? the U.S. Food and Drug Administration The salt controversy does more than raise questions about how much salt is (FDA) announced in October 2021 a new plan to encourage manufacturers of packtoo much; it points to the very heart of a aged foods to cut down on added salt in little-discussed issue: that much of the medical information we receive isn't their products. The FDA set a new goal for average salt intake of 3,000 milligrams per based on scientific consensus, despite the tone of definitive and certainty in day, a 12 percent drop from the American statements made by key voices, includaverage of about 3,400 milligrams per day. ing our doctors. We've all gotten the message that we tend Continued on Page 4

The science around salt

intake is sharply divided

divide never shows up in

public health campaigns

or the doctor's office.

but somehow that

C.J. BURTON/GETTY IMAGES

While many people perceive dementia as inescapable once it's begun to develop, research strongly suggests otherwise.

## Escaping a Dementia Diagnosis

Factors within your control can make all the difference when it comes to cognitive decline and Alzheimer's

### AMY DENNEY

Alzheimer's disease is increasing among younger people. But while a three-fold increase in early-onset dementia and Alzheimer's disease among younger adults may seem frightening, many cases are prematurely diagnosed and reversible.

There are at least a dozen explanations for memory loss. Many people suffering from dementia have more than one contributing factor among causes that are mostly preventable, temporary, or avoidable. That's the good news.

The bad news is that your average doctor may not be fully aware of that. A study published in May in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease pointed out that no pharmaceutical options for Alzheimer's and dementia have offered improvement or even stopped cognitive decline.

Given pharmaceuticals are the default treatment for many doctors, that leads to an unsettling doctor's visit if you're experiencing memory loss or other cognitive issues.

"It's not surprising when neurologists say, 'There's nothing we can do.' Thousands of patients are told this every day," said Lisa Feiner, a board-certified health and wellness coach. "Most doctors are not trained in things like nutrition or stress reduction or toxins or treating trauma or sleep issues."

But lifestyle modifications are successfully reversing or minimizing symptoms for many patients who implement change. In a study published in August in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, 21 of 25 patients improved after physicians used each person's genetics and biomarkers to create a nine-month personalized protocol. Patients were evaluated for multiple contributing factors, including inflammation, insulin resistance, nutrient and hormonal deficiencies, toxins, and genetics.

Continued on Page 4

**SALT SCENARIOS** 

Too little salt can make

weight gain and Type 2

us crave sugar, leading to

Researchers found that a

high-salt diet increased

the levels of the stress

hormone glucocorticoid

by 75 percent.

LOW SALT

diabetes.

HIGH SALT



"Extremely well researched and true." "The Truth, as horrifying as it is, shall set us free. This should be on this country's academia's list of required reading."

## **HOW THE SPECTER OF COMMUNISM** IS RULING OUR WORLD

The specter of communism did not disappear with the disintegration of the Communist Party in Eastern Europe

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**CONAN MILNER** 

ore than 12.7 billion doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered since the treatment became available nearly two years ago. Some have received one or two doses, while others have had multiple doses. Yet many don't know what these shots actually contain

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) website provides ingredient lists for curious consumers to consider. For example, vials from Moderna and BioNTech/Pfizer famously contain messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA). This is a genetic sequence designed to program your cells to manufacture a spike protein, thereby training the immune system to guard against the signature spike of the **Presence of Metals** COVID-19 virus in the wild.

Less well-known ingredients include a different mix of lipids (fats). Pfizer's shot, for example, contains 4-hydroxybutyl, and Moderna's contains SM-102. These shots also include polyethylene glycol, cholesterol, a few salts (such as potassium chloride and sodium chloride), and su-

crose (sugar). Johnson and Johnson's (Janssen's) vaccine doesn't contain mRNA but instead features as its main mechanism of immune system training a recombinant, replication-incompetent adenovirus expressing the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein. Like its mRNA counterparts mentioned above, the J&J vaccine contains a variety of other chemicals, such as citric acid monohydrate, trisodium citrate dihydrate, ethanol, 2 hydroxypropyl-beta-cyclodextrin, polysorbate-80, and sodium chloride.

Several items on the list of these publicly

disclosed ingredients, such as mRNA and SM-102, come with controversy. Public health officials, regulators, and drug makers have been quick to defend these ingredients as safe and necessary to ensure the vaccines' effectiveness.

Experts have also been quick to quash fears that the vaccines may contain other, even more questionable components not disclosed to the public.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention addresses common vaccine-related concerns such as these on its website, stating that the "vaccines do NOT contain ingredients like preservatives, tissues (such as aborted fetal cells), antibiotics, food proteins, medicines, latex, or metals." In regard to metals, however, some research suggests otherwise.

Earlier this year, the German Work ing Group for COVID Vaccine Analysis (GWG) released a report detailing what they found when examining various vaccine vials. GWG is an international network of more than 60 scientists, medical doctors, and other experts. Their goal is an in-depth laboratory analysis of these vaccines.

A microbiologist and gain of function expert from GWG, Sabine Stebel, presented the group's findings before the World Council for Health General Assembly on Sept. 5. Researchers looked at most of the COVID-19 vaccines on the market: Johnson and Johnson, Moderna, and AstraZeneca, as well as the only shot that has received full FDA approval— Pfizer's Comirnaty (other vaccine options have merely received emergency use authorization.)

GWG examined vials using scanning

electron microscopy and energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy. What they found were relatively large metallic foreign bodies. The European Union's good manufacturing practice (GMP) standards permit particle sizes no greater than a quarter of a micrometer, but GWG's analysis discovered many metal particles from several batches that measured in the double digits. These metallic objects were found in all Pfizer and AstraZeneca vials studied, as well as some Johnson and Johnson vials, GWG said.

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"If you filter a substance that is to be injected properly, you shouldn't see anything under the microscope," Stebel said in her presentation. "These structures are definitely too big to be injected into a living person."

### Another feature of vaccinated blood samples was the degradation of the blood itself.

The types of particles found consisted of alkali metals such as cesium and potassium, alkaline earth metals such as calcium and barium, and cobalt, iron, chromium, and titanium. Researchers also found rare earth metals such as cerium and gadolinium, as well as aluminum, silicon, and sulfur.

Although some of these elements are nontoxic and even essential to human health, many can be highly toxic even at low doses.

One example is barium, which is toxic to humans and animals in soluble form. In high concentrations, barium blocks the passive potassium channels in the cell membrane. This leads to disturbed muscle cell function and potassium deficiency in the

blood, as potassium remains in cells in increased amounts. Another example of toxic potential found

in the vaccines is the heavy metal cobalt. Although minute amounts of cobalt are essential to life, in the event of an overdose, it can lead to symptoms such as nausea, visual disturbances, heart problems, and damage to the thyroid gland.

Gadolinium is a rare earth metal used as a contrast agent in magnetic resonance imaging, but the metal can be highly toxic and can accumulate in the brain and bones.

Only Moderna vials revealed a significant concentration of antimony, which was found in the greatest concentration compared to other metal elements.

### **Changes in Blood**

In addition to analyzing vaccine vials, GWG researchers analyzed the blood of vaccinated individuals and compared it to blood samples from nonvaccinated individuals. They found that the blood from all the vaccinated patients they tested (specifically those having had either the BioNTech/Pfizer or the Moderna vaccines) presented "novel structures," such as rectangular crystals and spirals.

"These kinds of structures have never been found in human blood before. These structures were most frequently found in the Comirnaty vaccine from BioNTech/Pfizer," the report reads.

Injected people have 100 percent consistently altered blood as seen with live cell dark field microscopy. This includes impeded blood flow with red blood cells sticking to each other, even to the extreme of "rouleaux formation," and profoundly decreased red blood cell stability and survival.

Another feature of vaccinated blood samples was the degradation of the blood itself. The report provides images from live blood cell analysis of the cell membranes of erythrocytes (red blood cells that look like concave discs) that have become deformed and notes an "unusually rapid disintegration of the different types of cells in the vaccinated blood." Such cell deformations are usually only seen in chronically ill people and people with severe degenerative diseases.

Researchers also observed frequent examples of blood clots and changes in blood viscosity, with vaccinated individuals demonstrating reduced blood flow capacity because of blood cells sticking to one another.

### **Contamination or Proprietary Secret?** Do these mystery metals serve some kind

of function in the vaccine formulas, or are they merely the result of unintentional contamination?

Drug makers admit contamination is possible, as the GWG wasn't the first to detect metal in the vials. The group's work was initially inspired by news of stainless steel contaminants found in Moderna vaccine vials in Japan in 2021.

The deaths of two men aged between 30 and 40 occurred within days of receiving their second Moderna dose from the contaminated batches. However, Japan's  $Health\,Ministry\,stated\,that\,it\,didn't\,believe$ the stainless steel particles posed any additional health risk. And Moderna didn't indicate that the presence of the particles was a part of their vaccine recipe. They stated that the contamination probably occurred during production.

Later that year, foreign material was found in unused Pfizer vials at vaccination sites in three Japanese cities. The vials (95 in total) all belonged to the same lot, but the cities that had the vials couldn't identify the contents. They requested that Pfizer analyze the white floating matter.

At a press conference, Pfizer's Japanese subsidiary surmised that the material was likely vaccine ingredients that hadn't been

### Listed Covid-19 Vaccine **Ingredients**

MRNA, lipids ((4hydroxybutyl)azanediyl) bis(hexane-6,1-diyl) bis(2-hexyldecanoate) 2 [(polyethylene glycol)-2000]-N,Nditetradecylacetamide 1,2-Distearoylsn-glycero-3phosphocholine and cholesterol)

120 mg/mL Suspension for Inject COVID-19 mRNA vacciful Intramuscular Use

MRNA, lipids (SM-102,

polyethylene glycol [PEG]

[DMG], cholesterol,

and 1,2-distearoyl-sn-

[DSPC]), tromethamine,

tromethamine

hydrochloride, acetic acid,

sodium acetate trihydrate,

and sucrose.

Johnson &

**Johnson** 

OVID -19

Recombinant, replication-

incompetent adenovirus

type 26 expressing

the SARS-CoV-2 spike

protein, citric acid

monohydrate, trisodium

citrate dihydrate, ethanol,

2 hydroxypropyl-beta-

cyclodextrin (HBCD),

polysorbate-80,

sodium chloride.

SOURCE: FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

tromethamine, tromethamine hvdrochloride, sucrose, and sodium chloride.

It would hardly be the first time a toxic 2000 dimyristoyl glycerol glycero-3-phosphocholine juvant in some traditional vaccines.

The question is, are the metals and nanomaterials independent researchers are finding in vaccine vials part of a proprietary se-

If it's a proprietary secret, the application is unlisted ingreinconsistent. GWG's report states that their research team found no graphene in the vac-

notes that the Pfizer doses in particular exhibit a vast number of crystalline platelets and shapes that can "hardly be interpreted

"They appear regularly and in large numbers in all samples," it reads.

Their report stresses that this summary isn't the final word, but is instead "a preliminary, continuously evolving presentation of research." Scientists call for further investigation and discussion.

"Much still remains to be analyzed, but what we have found—we are convinced is so important that the public in general and the scientific community in particular must be informed about it. There needs to be a wider understanding of the dangers that the COVID-19 vaccines pose to health and research into how the worst effects of these vaccines can be prevented, or at least mitigated," researchers wrote.



Campra employed the micro-Raman technique after screening various objects selected for their graphene-like appearance under optical microscopy and found conclusive evidence of graphene oxide structures Analyses other than Campra's have de-

sults of his findings.

tected graphene nano-structures in the COVID vaccines. Yet the drug industry and public health experts explicitly state that these vaccines contain no such thing.

fully dissolved and that they posed no safety or efficacy issues. The company said in

a statement that it was aware of the report

and was "conducting a full investigation."

What else can be found in these vaccines?

That depends on the analysis. Consider the

conclusions from a Spanish-based study

that found the presence of something called

graphene oxide, a type of nanomaterial

used in various biomedical applications.

Pablo Campra, a chemical sciences

professor and researcher at Universidad

de Almería in Spain, found evidence of

graphene-like nanoparticles in numerous

vials from four different vaccine makers.

The graphene was detected using a spec-

troscopy technique called micro-Raman, which employs laser photons to vibrate

molecules. Campra's report from Novem-

ber 2021 details his technique and the re-

However, there's evidence to suggest that vaccine makers may one day add graphene to their formula. A May 2021 study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences determined that graphene oxide nanoparticles could be effective in a flu vaccine because of the material's "high antigen-loading capacities and superior immunoenhancing properties." Researchers say this material "can be easily adapted for as rectangular constructing mucosal vaccines of different respiratory pathogens."

Another study from May 2021 suggests that graphene oxide "nanosheets" may make valuable additions to personal protective equipment and other medical applications. Researchers concluded that the only concern for adding graphene oxide was its potential for toxicity.

substance was added to medicine. Many drugs employ toxic substances in low doses to provide a medicinal effect. Antimony, for example—the metal GWG found in Moderna vials-is used as an antiprotozoal ad-

cret or unintentional contamination?

cine samples they analyzed.

However, the materials GWG found don't



from the German Working Group for COVID Vaccine Analy-

sis say blood from vaccihave revealed "novel structures," such

crystals and

Researchers have found dients in

COVID vaccines by using microscopy, energy dis-

persive X-ray

### **CHINESE WISDOM FOR SEASONAL LIVING**

## 7 Wellness Tips to Maximize Winter Health

Solar Term: 'Heavy Snow' (Dec. 7–21)

### **MOREEN LIAO**

A solar term is a period of about two weeks, based on the sun's position in the zodiac. Solar terms form the traditional Chinese calendar system. The calendar follows the ancient Chinese belief that living in accordance with nature will enable one to live a harmonious life. This article series explores each solar term, offering guidance on how to best navigate the season.

**Solar Term:** 'Heavy Snow'

**2021 Dates:** Dec. 7-21

"Heavy Snow" (Dec. 7-21) is the third solar

term of winter. Around this time, the cold yin energy reaches its peak, and the yang energy starts to evolve. The snow is getting much heavier, and the temperature is much colder in most of the northern

As the yang energy slowly starts to move and grow during this solar term, wild animals, such as tigers, which strongly reflect the yang energy of nature, start to come out of their caves and mate.

### **Impact on People**

People who are born during this solar term have plenty of water element in their constitutions. As a result, they tend to be creative and full of ideas and

are believed to be very intelligent and outgoing. They're often good in communication, with strong leadership qualities.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, these people need to pay special attention to their hearts and circulatory systems. They may experience an irregular heartbeat, strokes, or even heart attacks because of the constriction of the blood vessels from the colder weather.

### **Lung and lung-related** problems are more likely to develop or even become worse around this time.

Lung and lung-related problems are more likely to develop or even become worse around this time. To protect against this, stay away from polluted areas, stop smoking, and drink a good amount of warm water to cleanse toxins from the body.

Generally speaking, it's indeed the time

keeping warm is particularly important to maximize well-being.

when people can easily get a cold or flu, so

### 7 Tips to Maximize Wellness During 'Heavy Snow'

1. Drink plenty of hot goji berry tea; add ginger root for those who have cold hands and feet. 2. Drink chai tea or chai lattes instead of

coffee to strengthen kidney function, since coffee flushes the yang energy out from the body. 3. Reduce the consumption of sugar, as

it disrupts the body's natural energy 4. Wear a hat, scarf, and gloves. For the elderly who live in extremely cold areas,

a soft wool hat can preserve body heat during sleep. 5. Use the heel of one foot to massage the inner side of the other lower calf in circular motions to promote energy flow

6.Diffuse warm and sweet notes of essential oils (see suggestions below) to lift the energy, motivate the mind, and

for the whole body.

keep the body warm. 7. Avoid anger or sudden shocks to prevent

### damage to the heart and brain.

### **Seasonal Foods**

Cooking with quality nut oils, such as sesame, walnut, or avocado, helps your body gain good energy and prolong the

Broccoli, dill, chestnut, cashew nut, green onion, yam, and walnut are all very good sources of protein during this

For those who have concerns or who want to strengthen their heart and circulatory systems, try ingesting foods that are red in color to enhance these

cranberries, strawberries, cherries, rose hip jam, and rose tea are all good

### **Seasonal Herbs and Essential Oils**

Spicy and warm essential oils, such as geranium, rose, sandalwood, rosewood, lemongrass, wintergreen, ginger, or cinnamon, warm your heart and energize

Epoch Times contributor Moreen Liao is a descendant of four generations of traditional Chinese medicine doctors. She's also a certified aromatherapist and

the founder of Ausganica, a manufacturer of salonquality, certified organic cosmetics.

Keep your head and neck protected when you go outside during the colder months.



# Escaping a Dementia Diagnosis

Continued from Page 1

"With this precision medicine approach, I've witnessed person after person regain lost brain function, get back to their life's work, re-establish friendships, or start new creative activities," Dr. Ann Hathaway, one of the study co-authors, wrote in an Apollo Health article. "It's very gratifying to share this success publicly. Can you imagine a world where Alzheimer's is a rare disease?"

### Dementia Rises Among Younger Adults

About 131,000 commercially insured Americans between 30 and 64 years of age were diagnosed with early-onset dementia or Alwhile the numbers are relatively small, it's tion offers a great deal of success. the increase in younger age groups that's

The number diagnosed with these conditions increased by 373 percent among 30to 44-year-olds, 311 percent among 45- to 54-year-olds, and 143 percent among 55- to 64-year-olds from 2013 to 2017.

"It doesn't necessarily wait anymore until people are in old age," said Feiner, who's also the co-founder and chair of Sharp Again Naturally, a nonprofit that educates and coaches people on how to slow or reverse memory loss.

In fact, based on averages, the time Regardless of the cause of memory loss, from diagnosis to death is 11 years, during which time patients are living at 63

percent optimal health.

"We have got to stem the tide of memory loss in this country," she said. "It's more important than ever. It will bankrupt us. It will bankrupt Medicare."

In spite of the warning, she said there's also a lot of hope. Those who are committed to following programs such as those used at Sharp Again Naturally are experiencing vast improvements. Using webinars and collaborating with doctors, Sharp Again Naturally is training on affordable, easy changes people can make right away.

"There's so much more people can do preventatively. We know that it works," Feiner said. "People improve. It is within our grasp." Doctors once mistakenly believed that neu-

rons decreased and died in dementia and zheimer's disease in 2017, according to the that intervention made no difference. While Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Index. It's an there's a lot that's still unknown, caregivers increase of 200 percent over four years, and are starting to recognize that early interven-

Many factors influence the development and progression of dementia, and research indicates that patients can significantly affect the course of their prognosis through several channels. For instance, body inflammation has an immediate effect on clarity and cognition and ebbs and flows with our diet, physical fitness, and more.

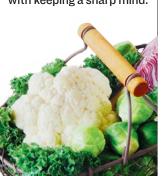
Tips for Early Intervention and Prevention

making changes in the areas of food choices, movement, sleep, and stress will

We have got to stem the tide of memory loss in this country.

Lisa Feiner, founder, Sharp Again Naturally

In 2021, a study published in the journal Neurology found that eating a diet rich in flavonoids-compounds found in fruits, vegetables, grain—was associated with keeping a sharp mind.



offer many brain and body benefits.

Sharp Again Naturally has a free e-book with specific recommendations on its website. It continually offers updates on the identified causes of memory loss. Dementia is linked with hormonal imbalance, stress, social isolation, diets high in carbohydrates and fast food, air pollution, highsugar diets, gum disease, lack of exercise, poor sleep, and more.

Dementia isn't just an "old person's" disease; poor habits over a lifetime can slowly chip away at cognition.

**Nutritional Considerations** 

Ideally, good nutrition begins in our youth with access to diverse food that we eat without bribery or coercion. Food, especially sweet treats filled with added sweeteners and artificial flavors and colors, shouldn't be offered as a reward. This can lead to emotional eating and distort our relationship with food.

A balanced diet high in protein and healthy fats with vegetables of many colors is the goal. Ideal nutrition also involves eating habits such as giving the body extended breaks from digestion with daily fasting of 12 hours or longer. We should eat to ensure nutritional needs and maintain a proper balance of gut bacteria. A healthy microbiome protects us from disease, regulates our immune system, and aids in proper food digestion and nutrient absorption.

A 2021 study in Neurology reported that eating a diet rich in flavonoids was associated with keeping a sharp mind. High-flavonoid foods include berries, red cabbage,

grams of sodium per day in order to remain in

homeostasis, "an optimal state in which you

A few prolific researchers

put the least amount of stress on the body."

kale, citrus fruits, apples, celery, cherries, of the National Academy of Sciences.

Obesity is a major risk factor for dementia and  $Alzheimer's.\,A\,study\,published\,in\,the\,Interna$ tional Journal of Epidemiology in 2020 found people with excess weight in midlife had a 34 percent higher chance of developing dementia based on data from the long-running

"Women who carried extra weight around their waistline were particularly vulnerable," notes an article on the study from the United Kingdom's National Institute for Health and Care Research.

English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA).

The 2018 U.S. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System marked a shift because midlife obesity overtook physical inactivity as the top modifiable risk factor associated with

Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The analysis of 378,615 respondents examined physical inactivity, current smoking, depression, low education, diabetes, midlife obesity, midlife hypertension, and

Physical inactivity and low educational attainment were the others in the top three. In 2011, the most common factors were physical inactivity, depression, and smoking.

### **Exercise and Physical Fitness**

Exercise is one of the best ways to reduce dementia risk. Regular exercise will help improve oxygen flow, support new brain cell formation, and improve memory. Moving your body every day can help control blood sugar, improve your sleep, and provide the chance for socializing—all factors that can reduce dementia risk.

Exercise is important to relieve stress, a risk factor for cognitive decline.

Strengthening the core muscles and building confidence with movement can also improve balance and prevent falls. Older adults are especially at risk of falls that can cause brain damage.

A research review published in Frontiers in Neuroscience in 2020 pointed to the importance of physical activity:

"Most prospective studies have proven that physical inactivity is one of the most common preventable risk factors for developing AD [Alzheimer's disease] and that higher physical activity levels are associated with a reduced risk of AD development. Physical exercise seems to be effective in improving several neuropsychiatric symptoms of AD, notably cognitive function."

A Swedish study published in Neurology in 2018 found strong links between stamina and the risk for dementia

"We found that high cardiovascular fitness in midlife was associated with decreased risk of dementia in a population of women followed up for up to 44 years. High compared to medium fitness decreased the risk of dementia by 88 percent," the authors of the study said.

While sedentary behavior can generally increase the risk of dementia, what you do while sitting can make a difference.

A new study examining adults aged 60 and older found that those who spend long periods sitting while engaged in passive activities such as watching television were more at risk of dementia than those who sat doing more stimulating activities, such as reading, doing puzzles, playing cards, or using the computer. The research was published in August in the journal Proceedings

Chemicals in the air, processed foods, and beauty and cleaning products create a burden on the body that must be filtered out through detoxification.

amyloid-beta plaques in it, creating inflammation or oxidative damage or inducing apoptosis (cell death).

Chronic exposure can increase the risk of

### Heavy Metals

Metals such as mercury and lead are neurotoxic, and the detoxification pathways in some people might not be able to adequately rid the body of them. These pollutants can be found in the air, drinking water, fish such as tuna, and some dental fillings. A 2022 review of previous studies found that "the toxic effects of mercury and arsenic in neurodegenerative diseases ... can be characterized as the influence of the most significant risk factors."

### The endocrine system, responsible for making

hormones that regulate many bodily functions, plays an important role in cognition. This system regulates metabolism and

"Insulin insensitivity has been linked to

roid and estrogen imbalances, can also play a role in memory. A 2010 article in Current Neurology and Neuroscience Reports states that estrogen's role in cognitive decline puts both women and men at risk of dementia.

### **Prescription Medications**

All drugs with anticholinergic properties are among those that can cause the most harm to the brain. These medications block the effect of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that naturally declines with age. It can be found in drugs to treat urinary incontinence, some antidepressants, antipsychotics, heart medications, antispasmodics, and drugs for

can be found on the BrightFocus website.

### **Low-Level Infections**

There's evidence suggesting that infections stemming from viruses, bacteria, and fungi could either cause memory loss or exacerbate cognition decline in those who have dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Research does show that Alzheimer's is more common in people who have infections, according to Alzheimer's Society in London, but older people

Toxins may harm the brain by depositing

developing neurodegenerative diseases. Cognitive decline has also been linked to biotoxins produced by bacteria, molds, and viruses.

### **Hormonal Imbalances**

blood sugar levels. Disturbances in insulin, a major symptom of diabetes, can impact the brain and other bodily functions. In fact, Alzheimer's disease is often referred to as Type 3 diabetes because of its correlation to blood sugar irregularities.

memory deficits, cognitive decline, and many of the characteristic symptoms that have been displayed in [Alzheimer's]. At the same time, Type 2 diabetes has remained one of the most adjustable risk factors for the development" of Alzheimer's, according to a research review published in the International Journal of Molecular Sciences in 2020.

Other hormonal imbalances, such as thy-

At least a dozen different types of drugs cause side effects that manifest as memory loss or cognitive decline.

Steroids, anxiety medications, sleeping pills, chemotherapy, and statins have all been implicated for cognitive side effects that could be confused with dementia. A complete chart



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Sleep is vital for detoxifying the brain and clearing out cellular debris.

are also more susceptible to infections.

### **Sleeping and Breathing Problems**

Sleep apnea, associated with mouth breathing, puts you at a significant risk for dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. An April article in the Journal of Sleep Research examined 11 different studies showing that this is a modifiable risk.

Sleep is vital for detoxifying the brain, a function that clears out debris to keep neuropathways clear. Building an environment for getting a good night's sleep involves the temperature of the room, bedding, design of the room, and habits before bed.

"All of these things impact how well you sleep. I think people tend to toss off things like, 'I'm stressed out' or 'I didn't sleep well,' and they don't realize it's impacting long-term brain health. It's no longer a badge of honor to get four or five hours of sleep," Feiner said.

### Trauma and Stress

A perhaps less expected factor in dementia is trauma. A review of 25 studies on the relationship between trauma and dementia found that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) increases the risk for dementia in older adults and dementia raises the risk for delayed-onset PTSD in those who have had a significant trauma earlier in life. This finding was published in The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry in 2019.

Trauma and chronic stress can also elevate cortisol levels and cause inflammation, which can cause memory lapses, confusion, and depression. Stress is also associated with a myriad of health problems, such as weight gain, headaches, digestive issues, and insomnia, that can all play a part in brain function.

### **Prolonged Stress**

The more stress you have, the more your risk of dementia rises later in life. A study pubdementia 10 years after an initial assessment of 17 different symptoms of psychological distress. For each additional symptom, the

lished in 2019 in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease examined 6,807 people for risk of

dementia incidence increased by 2 percent. Cortisol, the hormone released when you're stressed, is linked to memory dysfunction. Stress is also associated with depression, anxiety, and lowered immunity. All three of those are factors that have been linked to dementia.

### Conclusion

Brain health depends on many factors that you can exercise significant control over. Besides those listed above, community connections and activities that keep the brain active can also be an important way to stay mentally healthy and stave off dementia risk.

It's empowering for people to discover that their brain health is something they can tend to. Karel Karpe, executive director of Sharp Again Naturally, said that for the first time in two decades, a diagnosis doesn't have to mean you're heading to a nursing home.

"There are times in our lives when we do go through some problem. It's not that uncommon. But the mind is very powerful," Feiner said.

The key is to bring the nervous system back into balance from whatever insults knocked it from normal function.

Dr. Dale Bredesen, a pioneer in the field of dementia whose ReCODE protocol has been successfully studied for its effect on Alzheimer's, leverages the internet to reach greater numbers of patients. He's also written a book called "The End of Alzheimer's Program."

ReCODE is an intensive lifestyle-based program that provides nutritional, lifestyle, hormone, and supplement recommendations. It requires the active participation of patients.

The key takeaway from mounting research is that cognitive decline is like any form of early physical deterioration. If you take care of your mind and body, you'll age better, live longer, and enjoy better health. A dementia diagnosis isn't an inescapable decline, but it should be a prompt for meaningful action.

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

sardines, herring), and spirulina.

sufficient water, at least half your

weight in ounces. If you weigh 150

pounds, for example, drink at least 75

### Diet Tips for Dementia

For daily eating, Stay Sharp Naturally

- vegetables, especially leafy greens and crucifers such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts.
- berries, especially blueberries. generous servings of pesticide-free, organic vegetables and fruit.
  - omega-3 fats such as avocados, flaxseed, hemp seeds, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, walnuts, SMASH fish (salmon, mackerel, anchovies,
- are unique to your deficiencies.

ounces of water.

What you should avoid:

fruit juice concentrate.

- processed foods.
- · baked goods, rice and pasta, or anything made with white, refined flour. refined sugars, such as corn syrup and
- high-fructose corn syrup, sucrose, and

grains (or at least minimize them).

## The Salt Controversy

to consume about

Our bodies drive us



Salt is an essential nutrient that your body requires for good health.

### Continued from Page 1

However, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, recommend that adults limit sodium intake even further, to less than 2,300 milligrams per day, or about 1 teaspoon of table salt.

Newer research in animals reveals that excess salt may affect the mind as well as the body. Too much salt may raise stress levels, in turn affecting behavior (at least in mice), according to some studies.

### New Research

One such recent study, performed at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and published this month in the journal Cardiovascular Research, found that, in mice, a diet with too much salt raised stress hormones

The researchers found that a high-salt diet increased the levels of the stress hormone glucocorticoid by 75 percent. In addition, not only did resting stress hormone levels increase in the mice, but their

"We know that eating too much salt damages our heart, blood vessels and kidneys. James DiNicolantonio, a doctor of phar-

hormone response to environmental stress

was also double that of mice that followed

and spatial behavior.

implications."

This study now tells us that high salt in our macy, objects to what he calls the "low-salt dogma" and believes that salt has been unfood also changes the way our brain handles stress," study co-author Matthew A. Bailey, fairly demonized. professor of renal physiology at the University He claims that our bodies drive us to conof Edinburgh's Centre for Cardiovascular Scisume about 3,000 milligrams to 4,000 milli-

Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews examined a number of studies to quantify what's known about the effects of salt on behavior The review authors, of Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, wrote that although excess

A paper published this year in the journal

ence, said in a statement.

in modern diets." The research tested for behavioral changes such as anxiety and aggression in mice with high-salt diets. It was found that excess salt intake in the animals' adulthood affected their spatial memory and "fear expression." Early-life high salt intake was shown to increase their locomotion and impede social

The study authors wrote that these findings show that an "expanded study of salt's effects will likely uncover broader behavioral

### Is Salt Really So Bad?

produced most of the salt intake is a well-known risk factor for work in the field and cardiovascular diseases, until now "relatively little has been explored about how it impacts behavior, despite the ubiquity of salt

seemed to be unaffected by the work of researchers who came to different conclusions. DiNicolantonio told The Epoch Times that

among salt intake studies performed on humans, every one "has an inherent flaw." "Almost every study does not give the exact same diet with the only difference being the

level of salt intake," he said. "Typically, what [researchers] do is they give more fruits and vegetables, [a diet] which just so happens to be lower in salt, and then they sort of extrapolate the benefits ... and you can't necessarily extrapolate that."

In South Korea and other parts of the world, people routinely consume more than 4,000 milligrams of salt each day and yet have very low rates of heart disease and hypertension.

In his book "The Salt Fix: Why Experts Got It All Wrong and How Eating More Might Save Your Life," DiNicolantonio, who's a cardiovascular research scientist at St. Luke's Mid America Heart Institute in Kansas City, Missouri, argued that the vast majority of us don't need to monitor our salt intake. He believes that salt restriction is harmful and that too little salt can make us crave sugar, leading to weight gain and Type 2 diabetes.

In fact, low-salt diets may have created the American epidemic of high blood pressure, DiNicolantonio wrote. In South Korea and other parts of the world, people routinely consume more than 4,000 milligrams of salt each day and yet have very low rates of heart disease and hypertension.

For most people, DiNicolantonio claims,

eating more salt can improve energy, sleep, fitness, and even fertility and sexual function. He argued that "until the low-salt dogma is successfully challenged, we'll be stuck in this same perpetual loop that keeps our bodies salt-deprived, sugar-addicted, and ultimately deficient in many critical nutrients."

For animals, he pointed out, "there are no dietary guidelines, of course-no medical directives to create a conscious effort to restrict salt intake." Except for those with certain medical conditions, DiNicolantonio stated that we don't need to worry about "hitting salt overload," since our bodies take care of any excess. A low-salt diet "indicates a crisis for the body, not a recipe for optimal health," he wrote.

An Ongoing Controversy Researchers at Columbia University and Boston University in 2016 conducted a "metaknowledge analysis" of what they called "the salt controversy." The analysis, published in the International Journal of Epidemiology, looked at 269 reports published between 1978 and 2014 that examined the effects of sodium intake on cerebro-cardiovascular disease or mortality.

The researchers found that 54 percent of the reports supported the hypothesis that reducing dietary salt leads to population health benefits. One-third (33 percent) didn't support this hypothesis, and 13 percent were inconclusive.

So although scientists have long disagreed about the benefits of lowering salt intake, public health messages regarding salt seem to not reflect this uncertainty, the researchers noted. "The divide between the uncertainty in

the scientific literature about the potential

benefits of salt reduction in populations and

the certitude expressed by decision makers involved in developing public health policies in this arena is jarring," they wrote. "Assuming that all parties involved have the best interests of science and public health in mind, this controversy raises questions about the production of knowledge in population

health science and how that production influ-

ences public health practice." The researchers found that report authors were 50 percent more likely to cite papers that reflected their point of view, whether they believed that salt reduction was beneficial or not. Moreover, just a few prolific researchers produced most of the work in the field and seemed to be unaffected by the work of re-

searchers who came to different conclusions. "We found that the published literature bears little imprint of an ongoing controversy but rather contains two almost distinct and disparate lines of scholarship, one supporting and one contradicting the hypothesis that salt reduction in populations will improve clinical

outcomes," the authors wrote. Public health officials, it seems, may have chosen to amplify the findings of only one

part of the body of research produced on this topic, rather than acknowledge that there have long been two "sides" to the salt controversy.

### Practical Advice DiNicolantonio offered practical advice for

those concerned about salt intake.

"If you're someone who's consuming a whole food diet mainly made up of whole, nutritious foods—meat, vegetables, fruits—you're going to be getting a very low amount of salt and you're probably going to need to add some back to get you to a normal intake," he said.

"Whereas if you're someone who's eating mostly processed foods ... you're probably already getting enough salt," he said.

"Salt is an essential mineral. There's going to be an amount that will be not enough, just like any mineral. There will be an amount that's too much, just like any mineral, and there's an optimal intake. Optimal intake seems to be a normal intake of salt. So not high, not low, but allowing your body to consume the salt that it inherently seeks out, which is basically how we treat thirst for water."

Susan C. Olmstead writes about health and medicine, food, social issues, culture, and children's literature. Her work has appeared in The Epoch Times, The Defender, Salvo Magazine, and many other publications. She lives in northern Ohio on the

disintegrating with each breath you ex-

Next, move your focus to your face and

jaw (an area where people often hold

tension) and repeat. Move to the neck

and shoulders (also an area of high ten-

sion), and continue downward until you

reach your toes. Eliminate any drifting thoughts that arise, and bring your focus

back to your body. You can even repeat

the process if you feel any remaining ten-

If you need a little assistance with your

practice, there are some great online meditation options, including Diabe-

tes Sangha (a meditation community), Online Meditation Events, and Mindful Leader. There are also some helpful

apps, with some of the most-often recommended ones being Healthy Minds Program, Waking Up, Headspace, and

Calm (which includes "sleep stories,"

something great for those with insom-

Some other great ways to incorporate

mindfulness into your day include tak-

ing a walk in nature or around your

neighborhood, gardening, taking an art

class or working on an art project, jour-

naling, or even the simple act of cook-

ing. During these times, we can focus on

clearing out our minds and breathing

deeply into our bellies. Actually, I often

find that my mind naturally clears itself

in these situations, and my stress levels

Another idea is to get involved with

some type of volunteer work or simply

do something kind for another person.

This also helps to clear our minds and

acts as a type of mindfulness. By tak-

ing the focus off our own situations, we

decrease our stress levels while also con-

tributing something positive to the world

sion in your body or mind.



is more than pleasant, it's an essential way to reset your physiology

Unwinding

The complexities of our biochemistry can be profoundly influenced by our state of mind

### **TATIANA DENNING**

iabetes is a prevalent chronic disease in the United States that carries significant rates of morbidity and mortality. The disease is associated with a number of serious complications, including kidney disease, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and blindness. Diabetes not only impacts a person's quality of life but can also shorten their lifespan; it has been ranked as the eighth leading cause of death in the United States.

### A Look at the Numbers

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, diabetes affects 28.7 million people in the United States. It's estimated that another 8.5 million have diabetes but don't know it, meaning that 1 in 5 diabetics haven't yet been diagnosed. This brings the true number of diabetics to 37.3 million, or about 1 in 10 Americans, with the majority (90 to 95 percent) having Type 2 diabetes. This is It's believed that there's a relationship between stress hormones, such as cortisol and and hormones, such as insulin. which

help regulate

blood sugar.

what we'll focus on here.

Diabetes is diagnosed through either a fasting blood glucose level of 126 or greater, a HgB A1C level of 6.5 percent or greater, or a random glucose level (nonfasting) or glucose tolerance test of 200 or greater.

In addition, another 96 million U.S. adults have prediabetes, a condition that appears before the diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes is made and is indicated by a glucose level between 100 and 125 and a HgB A1C level between 5.7 percent and 6.4 percent. A person can have prediabetes for years and not even be aware of it. According to the CDC, risk factors for becoming prediabetic include being overweight, exercising less than three times per week, Diabetes brings a burden being older than 45, having a of health risks that are parent or sibling with diabeentirely avoidable. tes, or having a personal his-

tory of gestational diabetes or polycystic ovarian syndrome.

As of 2017, it was estimated that nearly \$10,000 per year is spent per diabetic patient—and health care costs have only gone up since then. In that same year, the total estimated cost of diabetes in the United States was \$327 billion dollars (ves, that's billion), with \$237 billion be-

ing spent on direct medical care and another \$90 billion due to lost productivity. To put things in context, America's total national deficit in 2015 was \$439 billion.

Week 49, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

**Traditional Diabetes Management** Depending on glucose numbers at the

time of diagnosis, Type 2 diabetes is typically first treated with diet and exercise. While this approach is key to the disease, not enough importance is given to it.

Physicians often don't have the time or broader knowledge to teach patients how to eat healthier and get in the needed exercise. And even if they're not resistant, some patients may not even realize how poor their diet is thanks to the successful im-

aging created by marketers. The unfortunate result is that the majority of patients

ultimately end up on medications. Metformin has long been a firstline mainstay, with a variety of other medications being added over time, including injectable insulin. In recent years, a number of newer therapies have been brought to the market, both oral and injectable, including GLP-1 agonists and SGLT-2 inhibitors. Of course, as one of my attendings drilled into our heads

Creative pursuits engage the mind and leave us relaxed and fulfilled.

during residency, no medications, not even over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, are without possible side effects. And some can even add to the issue being treated.

For example, while insulin helps control blood sugar, it can also cause weight gain—and excess weight is implicated in diabetes. And despite medication therapy, it's estimated that less than half of diabetics are able to keep their blood sugar levels within the goal of 80 to 130 before a meal and less than 180 in the two hours after starting a meal, or a Hgb A1C of 7 percent or less.

While medications certainly have their role and have done much to control diabetes and even extend patients' lives, a focus on complementary options deserves more attention.

### **Mindfulness and Diabetes**

In addition to a healthy diet and increased activity, mindfulness practices have been shown to play an important role in managing diabetes.

A recent meta-analysis published in September in the Journal of Integrative and Complementary Medicine looks at 28 studies involving diabetic patients who incorporated some form of mindbody practice into their routine.

The analysis found that these adult diabetic patients had a statistically and clinically significant improvement in their blood glucose levels.

Researchers found that mind-body practices conferred a 0.84 percent reduction in HgB A1C numbers, with yoga decreasing A1C by an average of 1 percent. And for every additional day of yoga practice per week, Hgb A1C decreased by an average of 0.22 percent. The review concluded that "mind and body practices may be an effective, complemen-

help improve diabetes? It's believed that there's a relationship between stress hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline, and hormones, such as insulin, which help regulate blood sugar. Studies such as a 2018 review published in European Endocrinology have shown that mindbody practices, such as meditation, have a positive influence on hormones, and lead to "modest improvements in body weight, glycaemic control,



and blood pressure." Mindfulness practices have even been shown to confer enough benefit that they "lead to improvements across all domains of holistic care—biological, psychological and social," the researchers reported.

Mindfulness practices also lead to an increase in self-awareness and an improvement in self-care. This, in turn, leads to healthier habits, including paying more attention to eating diabeticfriendly foods, getting enough sleep (which also impacts hormones), and increasing activity levels—all of which lead to an overall improvement in quality of life.

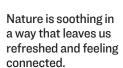
### **Incorporating Mindfulness Into Your Day**

There are a number of ways to incorporate meditation or other types of mindbody practice into your day. Whether it's joining a class (be it in-person or online), using an app, or doing something on your own, there's something for everyone.

One easy and simple option is taking 15 minutes in the morning for some intentional quiet time. It's a great way to get your day started on a positive, peaceful, and focused note.

First, find a quiet place where you can sit or lie down without distraction. Next, gently close your eyes and focus on breathing in and out through your nose, making sure to breathe down into your belly. Try to eliminate any distracting thoughts that come your way, and keep your muscles relaxed and free of tension. Just like a muscle, the more you do it, the stronger your ability to clear your mind and release stress and tension will Another option is to focus on the sensa-

tions in our body, a mindfulness exercise tary nonpharmacological intervention called a body scan. First, find a quiet spot So just how do mind-body practices of your head, spend 30 to 60 seconds focusing on how the area feels. Note any tension, pain, or discomfort, and then release it, imagining the discomfort



Mindfulness practices also lead to an increase in self-awareness and an improvement

in self–care.

Mindful forms of

exercise offer the

benefits of physical

exertion and deeper

relaxation.

### In Conclusion

around us.

naturally decrease.

While some people may be reluctant to try meditation, thinking that it won't really do anything, that it's religious or perhaps of a different religion, or that it takes too much time, meditation can be done no matter how busy your day may be and no matter what your spiritual or religious beliefs (some who are religious even say they feel it brings them closer to God)—and it works!

Through this simple and convenient method, you can clear your mind, relax your body, and decrease your stress levels—ultimately leading to enhanced physical and mental well-being and an overall improvement in your quality of life. In fact, both the CDC and the American Diabetes Association, in its publication Diabetes Spectrum, tout the benefits of mind-body practice for im-

So whether you're diabetic or not, give mind-body practice a try. You might just discover benefits you never imagined possible!

Tatiana Denning, D.O. is a preventive family medicine physician. She believes in empowering patients with the tools, knowledge and skills needed to improve

their health by focusing on mindfulness, healthy habits, and weight management.

## How the Vagus Nerve Changes You

This critical nerve plays diverse roles and you probably need to tend to it

### **MARTHA ROSENBERG**

When it comes to major nerves in the human body, most people have heard of the optic and olfactory nerves, the facial and trigeminal nerves, and certainly—if they have been in pain—the sciatic nerve. Yet one of the body's most consequential nerves that affects everything from mood, the immune system, heart rate and digestion to depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and inflammatory bowel disease has somehow not become a household word: the vagus nerve.

The vagus nerves—there are actually two of them on each side of the body—are the longest nerves in the human body, originating in the brain and ending at the abdomen. The vagus nerve, part of the parasympathetic nervous system, unites the autonomic nervous system and sympathetic nervous system, which creates homeostasis or balance in the body.

Few anatomical structures perform so many functions and yet so seldom ap-

pear in medical articles. According to a recent article in The Epoch Times, the vagus nerve is quite the workhorse, regulating circulation, breathing, heart rate, digestion, and body temperature and even exerting anti-inflammatory actions! An article in the journal Frontiers of Immunology elaborates on these actions.

"Because of its anti-inflammatory ef-

fect, the VN [vagus nerve] is a therapeutic target in the treatment of chronic inflammatory disorders where TNFalpha [tumor necrosis factor alpha, an inflammation protein] is a key component," the researchers wrote.

They advocated exploring ways to stimulate the vagus nerve as a treatment for a wide range of conditions.

"VNS [vagus nerve stimulation] could be used as a non-drug therapy to treat inflammatory disorders of the GI tract, such as IBD, irritable bowel syndrome, and postoperative ileus, which are all characterized by a blunted autonomic balance with a decreased vagal tone."

According to Physiopedia, a nonprofit that educates physiotherapists, the vagus

 innervates the skin around the external ear and the internal surfaces of the

- laryngopharynx and larynx. provides taste sensation to the tongue. • innervates the muscles of the pharynx,
- soft palate, and larynx. innervates the trachea and bronchi and
- regulates heart rhythm. • stimulates peristalsis and gastrointestinal secretions.

### **Additional Vagus Nerve Functions**

As more is learned about the microbiome and bidirectional communication between the brain and the gastrointestinal tract, sometimes called the "brain-gut axis," our understanding of the importance of the vagus nerve grows. The vagus nerve is now seen as part of the sympathetic, endocrine, immune, and humoral systems that all "connect emotional and cognitive areas of the brain with gut functions," accord-

ing to a research review in Frontiers in Psychiatry. It's even likely that the activity of gut bacteria affects the behavior of the vagus nerve, according to the study.

Elaborating on the interaction between gut bacteria and the vagus nerve, a study published in the journal Nutrients states, "The microbiota-gut-brain axis is a bidirectional link involving the central nervous system, the enteric nervous system, and the gut microbiota. ... The effect of microbiota on the brain occurs through three main pathways of the microbiota-gut-brain axis: hormones and neurotransmitters, the immune system, and the vagus nerve."

A type of probiotics known as "psychobiotics" regulates the microbiota-gutbrain axis and confers health benefits

> If you work-fromhome, it may be harder to escape work stress and shift into the vagus digest state.

to patients with mental illness and insomnia, the authors wrote.

Better sleep is another vagus-nerverelated effect, according to a study published in the journal Frontiers of Neuroscience. Stimulation of the vagus nerve "modulates brain function, and it is an effective treatment for primary insomnia," the researchers reported. Modulating spontaneous neuronal activity through "transcutaneous auricular vagus nerve stimulation" resulted in improved sleep in test subjects.

The vagus nerve's effect on digestion is also impressive. "When it comes to digestion, the vagus

nerve controls many aspects of the process, including assisting the pancreas in releasing digestive enzymes, helping the gallbladder nudge out the correct amount of bile, and controlling the valve at the base of the stomach, as well as the one in between the small and large intestines," Epoch Times contributor Amy Denney wrote.

And the vagus nerve is known to do more than the activities just listed. According to Stephen Porges, writing in a National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine (NICABM) publication, even our facial expressions are governed by the vagus nerve.

"Thanks to the vagus nerve, the emotions we feel are displayed on our faces and in the sound of our voices," he wrote. Without the vagus nerve, we couldn't

convey empathy Porges wrote, and we "wouldn't be able to tell how anyone else was feeling." He's widely credited with developing the Polyvagal Theory based on the vagus nerve, which has been instrumental in understanding the nervous system and how it retains traumatic experiences.

He also said our bodies can respond to situations in fear, even if we don't consciously register that we're afraid or perceive a threat.

"Because of our heritage as a species, neuroception [how our neural circuits distinguish if stimuli are safe or dangerous] takes place in the primitive parts of the brain, without our conscious awareness," he said.

**How Can You Quiet Your Vagus Nerve?** A 2017 book called "Accessing the Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve: Self-Help Exercises for Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, and Autism" by Stanley Rosenberg with a foreword by Porges offers several natural techniques for healing and strengthening your vagus nerve. Scientific studies in medical literature point to other useful techniques. As the vagus nerve is so responsive to stress, these exercises often rest on relaxation techniques that quiet the nerve and the conditions associated with it.

A study in the journal Psychology & Health found that patients with vagusnerve-related Inflammatory Bowel Dis-

vagus nerve, we couldn't convey empathy and we 'wouldn't be able to tell how anyone else was feeling.

Without the



Our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors give us three avenues to shape our mental well-being and physical health.

ease who received three relaxation training sessions and a relaxing audio disc to take home showed improvements in anxiety, pain, and stress. A study in the Journal of Crohn's and Colitis found that "Multi-convergent therapy," a type of psychotherapy that combines mindfulness meditation with cognitive behavioral therapy, was also successful in reducing symptoms of inflammatory bowel disease.

Hypnosis has also been effective in quieting the vagus nerve, according to a study published in the International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis. According to the authors, "shifting the balance of the sympathovagal interaction toward an enhanced parasympathetic activity, concomitant with a reduction of the sympathetic tone," produced improvement in subjects who responded to hypnotism (which not everyone does).

Finally, research published in the Journal of Investigative Medicine found that many well-established mind/body modalities, such as yoga, tai chi, qigong, mindfulness-based stress reduction, meditation, and deep breathing, were effective in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, which is highly correlated with vagus nerve hyperarousal.

Clearly, exercises that can calm and strengthen this miraculous nerve can be of great benefit to our health—and they can often be practiced at home after a little guidance.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

How to

Reduce Risk of

Blood Clots After COVID-19

Problems may

be brewing in

many people's veins

but lifestyle factors

can greatly reduce

**WISE HABITS** 

# How the Feeling of Pointlessness Can Derail Us

This common emotional hurdle doesn't have to turn into an impossible barrier to growth

**LEO BABAUTA** 

omething I've noticed that derails a lot of people's goals or attempts to form habits is the feeling that it's pointless to even try. If it feels like it won't matter if you do anything, why would you try? So when people feel this, they'll usually give up, understandably.

But if we want to break through this barrier, then the opportunity is to learn how to work with this feeling of pointlessness. If we can find a way to feel empowered when things feel pointless, a whole new range of possibilities opens up for us—including the possibility of moving through the most difficult parts of a project or habit change

What would it be like if you worked with your desire to give up when things felt hard and pointless?

Let's look at how to recognize the feeling of pointlessness and how you might work with it to create something new.

### **How to Recognize** the Feeling of Pointlessness

It can be difficult to recognize this stumbling block, so let's look at some common ways that it appears:

- You missed a few days of a new habit (workout, meditation, journaling, and so forth) and you feel discouraged and want to give it up. The reason is the feeling of pointlessness: "Argh, I'll never get this, I suck, I can't do it.
- You think no one is going to care—you want to write a book or blog, for example, but you have the feeling that you're writing it and no one will read it. That feels pointless, so you might not even try.
- You want to sign up for something that could change your life—a new course, coaching, or something else but you think that you won't actually pour yourself into it, so you won't get value out of it. "What's the point, if I'm not even going to show up for it?" • You feel overwhelmed by the huge pile
- of tasks, clutter, or emails in front of you and feel like you can't tackle all of it, so you don't even start.
- Every time you give your best effort, things return back to where they were. It feels Sisyphean. So you just give up.

• You keep having the same conversation with someone, and it's not getting you anywhere. It's frustrating because you're going around in

If we can find a way to feel empowered when things feel pointless, a whole new range of possibilities opens up for us.

When we learn to put aside our feeling of hopelessness, we can more easily pick up where we left off and keep making progress.



circles, so you decide to fire them, quit, break up, or ghost them.

• You were giving your best effort and then got derailed by something out of your control—injury, sickness, someone else's mistake or crisis, world events, and so forth. Why even try?

• You feel lost in the unknown. Best to stick to what you know!

• You're so far behind with bills that it feels impossible to catch up. So you ignore them.

You can see that this applies to everything in our lives—wanting to meditate, date, declutter, exercise, get out of debt, create something meaningful, build an amazing team, and so on.

This feeling of pointlessness stops us on all fronts. Time to take it on.

### **How to Work With the Struggle**

There's nothing wrong with the feeling of pointlessness—it's such a human feeling. The difficulty comes when we believe it and make it mean something.

So my encouragement is to make it mean nothing other than this is just how it feels right now. That feeling of pointlessness is only meaningful to the extent that we care about how we feel—I feel sad, lonely, uplifted, curious, playful, angry, or crestfallen. They matter, but they're not the entire world.

Feel the feeling. Give it some compas-Then find a way to feel more empowered:

• Missing one or two days is just an expected part of the process of learning and growth.

• Messiness is a part of life, something beautiful to love and embrace.

- · If no one read a single word of my writing, would there still be something powerful for me in the writing process?
- If I keep ending up in the same place, is there something for me to look at here. something I could learn from it? Would that make these repeated attempts valuable to me if I learned something?
- If I keep failing to finish a course or program, is there an opportunity to shift something that would be powerful for me? What would it be like if I changed this pattern forever?
- Could I let myself be curious when I'm lost in the unknown?
- If I'm far behind, could I focus just on
- the next step? If I have a mountain of tasks, could I love the activity of climbing the mountain?

Could I find joy in each step? What would it be like to find meaning in

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

the place that feels pointless?

tasks seem endless, but no hill lasts



### **JONATHAN LIU & SINDY LAM**

can reduce risk Thrombosis, or blood clots that block veins or arteries, is one of the complications of COVID-19. Research has found that the  $incidence \, rates \, of \, both \, arterial \, thrombosis \,$ and venous thrombosis increase significantly in COVID patients.

In addition, some people have rare side effects such as thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome after they get vaccinated. This is when antibodies produced by the vaccine activate platelets, resulting Continued on Page 12

in low platelet count and blood clots. Western medicine usually adopts antico-

agulant (blood thinners) and thrombolytic therapy (drugs to break up blood clots) to tackle thrombosis. However, this also carries the risk of side effects such as bleeding and allergies.

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has a long history of curing thrombosis effectively, even in cases of thrombosis that are difficult to treat with anticoagulants.

You can think of gi as the substance that fills the total energy requirement of the body. It comes mainly from the air we breathe and the food we eat.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

### 4 Habits for Preventing Thrombosis

There are best practices that we can incorporate into our daily life to prevent thrombosis, and many of them are not so difficult.



SITTING

If you are sitting too much at work and home, it is critically important you get up and move.



Many foods can help prevent blood clots, while smoking can



**AVOID SMOKING** 

encourage them



WATER

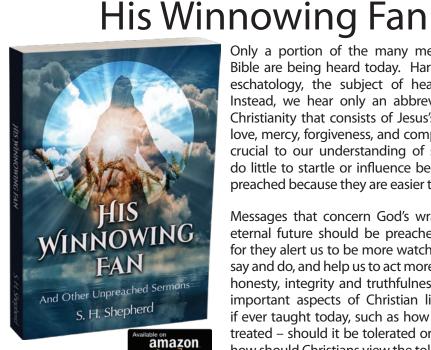
Water can help dilute the blood and reduce the risk of forming



**CONTROL UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS** 

It is important to actively prevent and treat obesity, diabetes, and high blood

### This feeling of pointlessness stops us on all fronts.



Only a portion of the many messages of the Bible are being heard today. Hardly any are on eschatology, the subject of heaven and hell. Instead, we hear only an abbreviated form of Christianity that consists of Jesus's teachings on love, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion. While crucial to our understanding of salvation, they do little to startle or influence behavior, but are preached because they are easier to hear.

Messages that concern God's wrath and man's eternal future should be preached more often, for they alert us to be more watchful of what we say and do, and help us to act more naturally with honesty, integrity and truthfulness. In addition, important aspects of Christian life are seldom if ever taught today, such as how should evil be treated - should it be tolerated or opposed, and how should Christians view the tolerant world?

Each chapter of this book discusses an important sermon topic that is seldom if ever elucidated. They tell us that the purposes of God are not the purposes of man, that God's purposes transcend man's, and also man, himself. Were the full teachings of the Bible faithfully given to the world, the problems of the church would be solved and attendance would take care of itself.



### **MARTHA ROSENBERG**

## Strange Side Effects From Statins

**OVERTREATMENT** 

Statins have been linked to everything from diabetes to suicide, but alternativaes do exist

When it comes to pretty much any chronic condition, lifestyle factors are front and center.

Few drug classes have been as popular as statins, which were introduced in 1987. Statins block the enzyme in liver cells (called HMG-CoA) that produces cholesterol, lowering the risk of cardiac death, myocardial infarction, and other atherosclerotic events.

The medications were considered such wonder drugs when they first appeared that U.S. health officials recommended adding them to the public water supply. Pfizer's statin Lipitor was the best-selling drug in the history of the world.

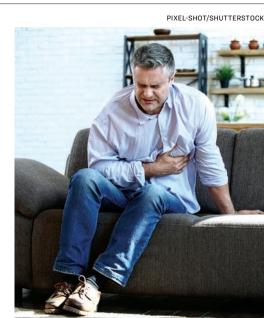
Yet soon after Lipitor went off patent in 2011, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) added warnings to the drug about the risk of liver damage, memory loss, confusion, Type 2 diabetes, and muscle weakness. The FDA also recommended that patients should receive liver enzyme Continued on Page 12

tests before taking the drugs, not just while they're taking them.

### **Does Cholesterol Really Cause Atherosclerotic Events?**

While the contribution of cholesterol to heart events is backed by the Mayo and Cleveland Clinics and the American Heart Association, cholesterol "skeptics" call the connections merely a hypothesis. A 2018 article in the journal Nutrients, "Inflammation, not Cholesterol, Is a Cause of Chronic Disease," expounds on the theory.

"The reduction of dietary or serum cholesterol" isn't behind heart events but, rather, they're caused by "inflammation induced by several factors, such as platelet-activating factor (PAF), that leads to the onset of cardiovascular diseases (CVD)."



Statins are supposed to prevent deaths from cardiovascular disease but the drugs come with side effects that other treatments don't have.



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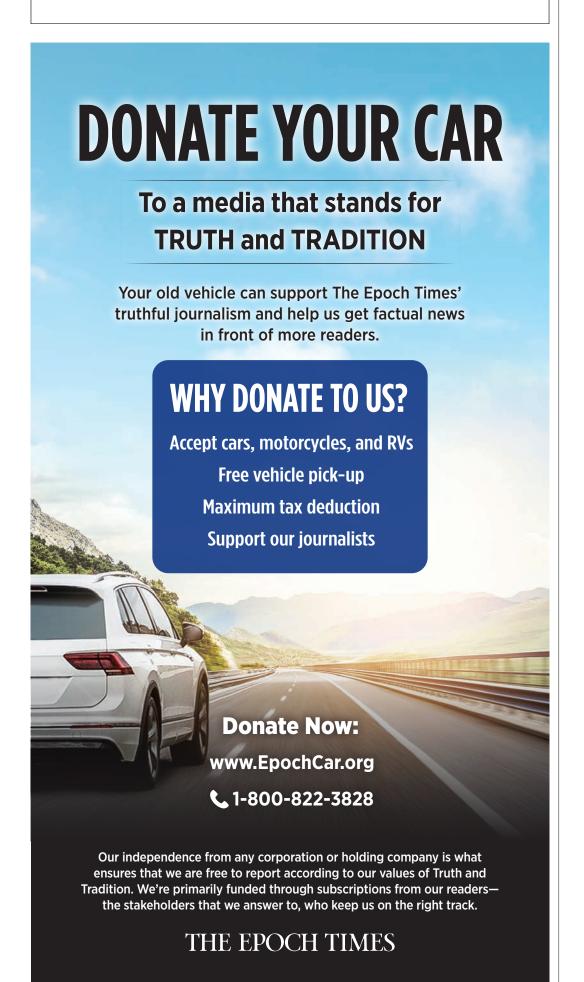
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## Why Good Digestion Is Important in Ayurveda

Your very body begins with digestion, so if you have problems here, they must be resolved

### **JOHN IMMEL**

Many doctors agree: Better health starts in the digestive tract. But why? Just what role does digestion play, and why is it the cornerstone to better health?

Simply put, when you eat good food and digest it well, you build good blood. As if by magic, digestive enzymes inside your belly break down the food you eat into nutrients your body can utilize. Once these nutrients are broken down and absorbed into your blood, they are fed to your vital organs.

Therefore, the better your digestion, the better your blood, the better your organs, and the better your health. Digestion isn't easy.

In fact, digestion is a metabolic monster consuming up to 60 percent of your daily metabolism. Since it's such an energy hog, you have to pay close

Ayurvedic medicine is one of the great ancient medical systems still thriving in the world today. Ancient ayurvedic practitioners knew how important and difficult digestion really was, so they approached their digestion with awe, wonder, and a sense of the sacred. The Hindu god of fire, lightning, and the sun, Agni, was also the god of digestion. While we don't suggest you worship Agni in order to heal your feel emotionally disturbed from the digestion, we do recommend a healthy buildup of ama. A mild buildup of ama

when you eat an apple, it becomes a part dium buildup causes general discomof your body. And whether the apple is fort and malaise as well. In advanced hot or cold, acidic or basic, sugary or conditions, like mine was, you may get bitter, your digestion neutralizes these qualities and transforms them into the building blocks of living human flesh. **Digestion Is an Opportunity to Heal** That's pretty amazing, right? But that's not all, good digestion brings you clarity, lightness, energy, vitality, and resilience to disease. Good digestion brings joy and enthusiasm. Finally, good digestion confers beauty and a fragrant aroma.

### **Indigestion Causes Disease**

The opposite is also true. Without good food and digestion, you can't build good blood. If you make poor food choices, can't produce the right enzymes, or can't absorb nutrients properly, you will not be able to build good blood.

Some argue that good digestion is even more important than good nutrition. That's because when you can't digest your food, you can't extract the nutrients from it. Either way, when you're not digesting your food correctly, you simply can't build the best blood, and your health suffers.

More insidiously, when your digestion is weak, bacteria proliferate in the unabsorbed food. They multiply rapidly in your intestines, leading to a process of fermentation, gas, and bloating.

Ever wonder why flatulence smells? It smells because of the waste products of these bacteria literally bacterial feces and urine. These waste products are highly toxic and smelly, turning your digestive tract into a veritable sewer. Those who are mindful of health will take precautions to prevent indigestion not only because it leads to nutrient deficiency, but because it cascades into this rapid buildup of poisons. Undigested food tends to sit, stagnant in the intestines.

As bacteria turn the food in your gut rotten, your immune system has to fight these bacteria to prevent them from infesting your body. Your immune system must also break down the poisons in your gut. This both exhausts and overstimulates your immune system, leaving you prone to disease, food allergies, and autoimmune disorders.

Bacteria aren't the only organisms that thrive when digestion is weak. Parasites love indigestion. When your digestion is strong, your enzymes, especially the acids in your stomach, naturally kill ingested parasites. But if your digestion is weak, these parasites survive and infest the small intestine.

Ayurveda has a special name called ama for the poisons produced by critters in your gut. Whether you are suffering from chronic skin issues, mood disorders, or even aches and pains, poisonous ama is often the silent cause. Muscle tissue and nerve tissue are among the most sensitive tissues to ama.

When I had poor digestion from years of traveling overseas, I developed heart palpitations due to ama. Once I healed my digestion with ayurveda, the heart palpitations went away.

When you have indigestion, you also causes simple dissatisfaction with your By the incredible feat of digestion, life, as well as anger and anxiety. A meheart palpitations as well.

As awe inspiring as digestion is, it isn't beyond your influence. In fact, your influence over your own food choices and digestive capacity is one of the greatest opportunities you have to influence your blood chemistry, and therefore your health.

Anytime you take medicine, the first interaction of your body with the medicine happens in the digestive tract. The most profound way your body interacts with your environment is by eating it.

Food and digestion are where your body meets nature in the most profound way, a fact you can harness to your advantage.

In short, your influence over your digestion can be a determining factor in your state of health and wellness. The benefits of good digestion and the evils of indigestion make digestion relevant to everyone. That's why, for more than 5,000 years, ayurveda has believed that diet and digestion is the first step to health.

Visit John Immel's website, JoyfulBelly. com, for Ayurvedic nutrition one tasty recipe at a time, and professional, clinically focused, Ayurveda training courses. Immel also founded the National Asso-

ciation of Ayurveda Schools and Colleges, and the American Association of Biocharacteristics Clinicians.

> Good digestion is the foundation to good health because it substances your body needs to sustain

# Toe Spacers Play a Role in Correcting Foot Problems

Surgery can often be avoided with a holistic approach to realigning toes

### **AMY DENNEY**

oe spacers are a useful tool for anyone whose feet spend a great deal of time scrunched inside shoes. While they aren't a miracle cure for major foot problems, toe space ers can help stretch out and realign toes that are beginning an inward compression. They can prevent toes from drifting out of order and offer recovery after wearing constricting shoes. And they can hold toes in the correct position for patients doing rehabilitation to prevent or recover after surgery.

Toes that are straight, spread, and flat are normal for foot physiology but those traits often vanish in feet constantly in shoes that are narrow, rigid, overly structured, or have an incline. Toes may not seem like that big of a deal, but they're connected to the body's muscular, nervous, and circulatory systems. They constantly read and respond to sensory information that is foundational to the body's operation.

"Separation of toes can help if used in the right way," Dr. Paul Thompson said. "A big part of my practice is exercises based around stability and strength."

To speed up healing, he often recommends toe spacers for patients to hold their feet and toes in the correct position while doing prescribed exercises. Toe spacers are usually made of silicon or gel and slide between the toes, stretching out not just muscles in the toes but the connective tissue holding together the entire foot.

Some podiatrists are recognizing the value of approaching toe deficiencies in a more holistic, gentler way using exercises and tools in place of the more traditional, invasive model of orthotic inserts and surgeries.

"The industry has gone down a path that's more monetary based rather than looking at the whole person and how you can get them better," Thompson said.

But he's quick to point out that while some patients will still need surgery, a are actually very different in mechanics." functional approach can make operations a last resort. Plus, learning foot exercises **Exercise Is Everything** helps people recover from surgery and Rehabilitation, though not easy, has more prevent further problems.

### Who Needs Toe Spacers?

Podiatrist Dr. Emily Spilchal recommends toe spacers to about 95 percent of her patients.

Because toe spacers are good for preventing foot problems, just about anyone could experience benefits from using them. Both Spilchal and Thompson regard foot education as an important part of their responsibilities.

Here are seven situations in which Spilchal says toe spacers can help:

**1.** They naturally align the toes, which is helpful for bunions. Bunions are bony lumps on the outside of a big toe joint caused by compression of the toes. When the big toe starts to gravitate toward and sometimes overlap the second toe, the bottom joint juts outward to compensate for the pressure. Bunions can be caused by narrow shoes, arthritis, and foot deformities.

2. They straighten and lengthen toes, which helps correct and prevent hammertoes. This is a condition where a toe bends downward and the middle joint sticks up, creating deformities in tendons and joints. The most common cause of hammertoes is wearing shoes that are too tight.

(Spilchal doesn't recommend a popular exercise of gripping and scrunching a towel with the toes. Even though it seems like it would strengthen smaller muscles, it actually trains the toes to curl under rather than to straighten into the preferred position that's necessary for gait.)

**3.** They spread and splay the toes, relieving pressure on nerves. This is especially helpful for neuromas, nerve "tumors" that are caused by trauma from high-arched feet, flat feet, and high heels that squeeze and

**4.** They allow toes and feet to reset, "breathe," **An Individual Approach** and open up. Recovery for feet that have been in shoes all day is something every- that influence foot development and one can do to prevent deformities. Spilchal functionality, how we spend our time, our

recommends her patients wear toe spacers while cooking dinner or eating, because it's a simple, passive way to create a habit.

"I try to create easy foot recovery techniques for patients that they can actually implement successfully," she said.

**5.** They stretch out and release pressure and tightness caused by plantar fasciitis and arch pain. The plantar fascia is connective tissue that runs from the heel and inserts into the base of the toes, supporting the arch and playing a mechanical role in walking. Toe spacers can improve circulation and restore function to this vital, sensitive tissue. Plantar fasciitis, an inflammation of the tissue, is common in people with flat feet, high arches, and those who put a lot of stress on their feet. Insufficient foot strength and excessive foot stress are risk factors for inflammation.

"You always have to make sure you're balancing stress with recovery," Spilchal said.

**6.** They create stronger toe flexion, which improves balance for anyone with equilibrium problems. Toe flexion, the ability of toes to bend at the joints, improves balance, leg stability, athleticism, and peak vertical jump. Besides athletes, those with neuropathy or recovering from a stroke may also need to improve toe flexion.

"Balance exercises are really good for your feet because it requires them to contract and engage," Spilchal said. "I want them to be done barefoot."

7. They optimize the lever mechanism of the foot by lengthening toes. Longer toes create more torque and power.

"I want athletes, as an example, to have long, flat, straight digits so they can really catapult and push off of the foot," Spilchal said. "Strong toes do not grip like the hand does. The foot is very different from the hand. People will make analogies but they

sticking power. When Thompson explains the benefits, he said most patients actually prefer it to surgery.

"You have more control over your treatment rather than putting all your treatment in my hands," he said. "I find if you take accountability and you understand what we're trying to achieve, you get a better result, and it will last you longer."

He recently saw a patient who previously had surgery to correct a bunion. Though his toes looked perfectly straight because of four screws, his foot was unable to move correctly and had functional problems.

"It might fix that particular issue, but if you aren't looking at function ... it can lead to a lot of other problems as well," Thompson said. Exercises are designed uniquely for patients, he said, depending on the diagnosis. But there are three basic ones anyone can do:

- Vertical "toe yoga": Lift the big toe up while the other toes stay down and then lift the smaller toes while the big toe stays down. This engages toe and arch muscles.
- Horizontal "toe yoga": Move the big toe out away from the other four toes.
- Short foot: Put equal weight on a triangle of points on the heel, the big toe pad and pinky toe pad. Then create an arch by gently pulling (but not curling) the toes toward the heel.

"Sometimes those three can be just enough to wake things up for people, giving them feedback and feeling when they're using their feet," Thompson said.

Spilchal said basic, easy exercises work best, done with bare feet.

She also said people should walk barefoot at least 30 minutes daily. "There's more and more validation, more

and more barefoot training research," Spilchal said. "Research has shown minimal shoes actually strengthen the foot muscles."

In addition to unlimited styles of shoes



Toe spacers can help stretch out and realign toes that are beginning an inward compression.



Walking barefoot is a great way to relax and has additional benefits on foot

Practicing spreading your

toes, a kind of "toe yoga"

is a great way to support

your feet.

run on can impact foot health. Movement done on hard tile and concrete

is less forgiving than walking on surfaces that are more natural, like wood and dirt.

Also, feet can become passive over time and degrade structures like tendons, nerves, and bones. The degree of insult can also influence the approach podiatrists take with rehabilitation. Even though barefoot therapy is critical, it can be too abrupt for someone with severe bunions and hammertoes. Better footwear and toe spacers may need to be introduced gradually.

Spilchal said variability of surfaces, in addition to foot posture, should all be taken into account in recovery.

"It's an overly rigid foot that cannot withstand the pressure," she said. "An otherwise neutral or sufficient foot should be able to meet the demands of movement without too much structure or support."

Thompson, whose podiatry practice has evolved to offer workshops and preventative care products, changed his own views when the orthodox approach wasn't working for

"I couldn't figure out why I couldn't get my own feet better," he said. "I tried lots of different pairs of orthotics, different shoes, and materials of orthotics."

The relief was temporary until Thompson began to study the biomechanical issues of feet that weren't taught in medical school. He realized he needed to stop wearing traditional shoes, even athletic sneakers because the heel is slightly raised and the toe box often curls up.

"They have features that are detrimental to how the foot functions," he said. "That changes everything, how your muscles in your glute work. It changes the position of your calves, your ankles, and puts more pressure on your knees."

Now you can find him hiking with his young children barefoot—unless the location might be dangerous. When they wear shoes, they are flat, flexible, and have a wide toe box.



Many people are suffering foot problems because they're cramming their toes into narrow shoes for most of each day.

We aim to introduce an additional resource so you have more information at your disposal.

First, let's delve into what these blood

### **Incidence Rate of Thrombosis Increased Significantly**

According to a research report released on the website of the American Heart Association, COVID increases a patient's risk for thrombosis.

The health records of 48 million adults in England and Wales were investigated by medical experts. They found out that among nearly 1.44 million infected patients, the incidence rates of fatal arterial thrombosis and fatal venous thrombosis were 5.3 percent and 4.7 percent, respectively, and the non-fatal incidence rates of these were 2.5 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively.

During the entire course of infection, the incidence rate of the formation of arterial thrombosis was significantly higher in the first few weeks of the diagnosis of CO-VID-19 and decreased rapidly over time, while the incidence rate of venous thrombosis decreased relatively more slowly.

In other words, venous thrombosis is a significant complication in long COVID

The research team recommended early detection and early treatment, encouraging patients to take lipid-lowering and antihypertensive drugs regularly to reduce the risk of thrombosis. These were patients who did not have hyperlipidemia, hypertension, or other chronic diseases clinically before. This indicates the causes of thrombosis are complicated.

### **Causes of Formation of Thrombosis**

Vascular thrombosis is common clinically and the incidence rate is higher in men than in women.

In modern Western medicine, the formation of thrombosis is believed to be an unstructured mass formed by insoluble fibrin, deposited platelets, accumulated white blood cells, and trapped red blood cells. The main conditions that contribute to the formation of thrombosis are damage to cardiovascular endothelium (the layer of cells that line the interior of blood vessels), changes in blood flow velocity and direction, and an increase in blood coagulation. Among them, damage to the endothelium and increased blood coagulation are critical factors.

The mechanisms of the formation of arterial thrombosis and venous thrombosis are different because the physiological environments of arteries and veins are different. Arteries are the blood vessels that carry oxygenated blood away from the heart with the pulse of a heartbeat. Veins carry deoxygenated blood back to

Arterial thrombosis is usually formed on the basis of atherosclerotic plaque rupture. After these plaques on the artery walls rupture, their lipid-rich core and collagen are exposed and platelets in the blood

flowing past start to adhere, activate, and aggregate, forming white thrombosis, which is rich in platelets.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

# How to Reduce Risk of Blood Clots After COVID-19

Venous thrombosis, when not formed because of surgery or injury, is mainly related to slow blood flow, poor drainage, and a hypercoagulable state.

### **COVID Vaccine Induces Thrombosis,** Thrombocytopenia Syndrome

After severe pneumonia induced by CO-VID, arterial thrombosis risk is elevated because the acute inflammatory response caused by severe infection or sepsis can affect the coagulation and fibrinolytic system that forms and prevents blood clots.

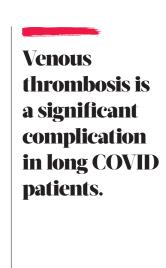
This happens through various channels, such as a decrease of circulating C-reactive protein and antithrombinlevels, the increase of plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 levels, which eventually leads to the activation of the coagulation cascade mechanism and the inhibition of the fibrinolytic process (which breaks down and prevents clots), thereby pro-

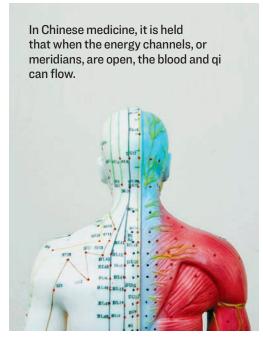
Physical activity

profound effect

on the risk of

thrombosis.





moting the formation of thrombosis. An investigation of large-scale surveys in England and Ireland found that many patients did not develop venous thrombosis during the acute infection, but during long COVID. There were also cases of rare side effects of thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome after being vaccinated with AstraZeneca Vaxzevria vaccines and Johnson & Johnson vaccines in Europe and the United States.

From the research on patients with venous thrombosis, high levels of PF4 antibodies were detected in the serum of nearly all patients. This antibody is highly related to the formation of thrombosis.

### **Modern Antithrombotic** Therapy Is Limited

Treatments available include anticoagulant therapy, antiplatelet therapy, thrombolytic therapy, and

fibrinogen-lowering therapy. However, these therapies have side effects such as bleeding and allergies, while some cases have contraindications.

For some complex cases, modern medical therapy is not ideal. For example, powerful anticoagulants may still carry risks of bleeding. To prevent this, patients usually undergo regular blood tests. And if one has local skin

ulcers, the drug may not have an effect. Modern medicine also proposes that if thrombosis is detected at an early stage, thrombolytic therapy can be used, but it must be implemented within 48 hours. After 48 hours, scarring begins to form inside the thrombosis, making the blood clot difficult to dissolve. Thrombolytic drugs also carry a high risk of bleeding complications.

8-Month Vein **Thrombosis Case Treated in** 

20 Days I treated a "typical" case of deep vein thrombosis



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTO

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 49, 2022

on a patient's lower left extremity. The 26-year-old said this area had been swollen and in pain for eight months; his skin was covered in purplish-black ulcers.

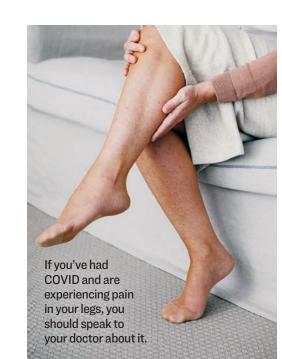
He had been diagnosed by his family doctor eight months prior and was prescribed medication which he took for six months without effect. Over that period of time, the ulcers—a sign of aggravated ischemia (restricted blood flow)—appeared.

This was an active young man who loved sports and playing basketball, who hadn't been able to play for more than a year because of his illness. At the prompting of others, he came to consult me, (Dr. Jonathan Liu), a traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioner.

I asked about his diet, quality of sleep, urine, and stool, and all were basically normal. Therefore, according to TCM theory, this was a typical case of qi deficiency and blood stasis.

The concept of "qi" in TCM can be understood as the "energy" or "vitality" that constitutes life in the body. This energy flows throughout the body to maintain life activities. TCM theory holds that qi is the most basic and important substance that constitutes the human body and life

Various phenomena in the human body are representations of energy, such as the heartbeat, lungs assisting breathing, muscle contraction, blood circulation, the conduction of nerve signals, and so on. The different forms of energy are summarized in



TCM as qi. The general operation of every organ, such as the heart, liver, spleen, lung, and kidney, is driven by energy. Without energy, the organs fail.

You can think of qi as the substance that fills the total energy requirement of the body. It comes mainly from the air we breathe and the food we eat.

Qi (energy) in TCM involves blood circulation, heart function, blood coagulation mechanism, the balance of the anti-coagulation mechanism, and so on.

The expression of gi deficiency and blood stasis is that blood flows slowly, blood easily coagulates and forms thrombosis, and so on. Western medicine also has similar findings.

However, in TCM, this condition can be detected before thrombosis symptoms actually occur. One can experience stagnated qi and blood stasis for quite some time before thrombosis forms and causes symptoms and complications, and the TCM system recognizes many signs of the underlying stagnated qi and blood stasis problem, meaning it can be treated early.

I adopt the treatment of invigorating qi and activating blood. That is, curing gi deficiency and blood stasis with TCM prescriptions that can supplement the energy constituting life, improving blood circulation, and other functions.

For instance, the treatment of rejuvenation soup from Dr. Men Chunde, a famous TCM practitioner from Hebei Province, China, is very effective in curing this disease.

This prescription includes Astragalus, a genus of herb used in Chinese medicine which invigorates gi and has curing effects, as well as Angelica, Caulis spatholobus, and Salvia siltiorrhiza, and insect medicines such as earthworm, ground beetle, leech herbs, and so on, which are effective in promoting blood circulation and expanding vessels. These are materials that should be prescribed by an experienced and trusted TCM doctor.

I prescribed medicine for the young man who came to see me, and he took 20 doses of TCM in 20 days. By the end of it, all the symptoms disappeared, the skin ulcers on his lower limbs healed, his skin color returned to normal, and he could run on the basketball court again.

"When the meridians are open, the blood and gi can flow," is a quote found in the Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon, a seminal TCM classic written 2,500 years ago.

It means that blood circulation will be normal when the blood vessels are healthy.

The two main strategies of TCM treatment of thrombotic vascular diseases are: 1) the method of clearing heat, detoxifying, and activating blood in the acute phase, and 2) the method of nourishing qi and activating blood in the chronic phase.

### Danshen Tea Can Reduce the Risk of Thrombosis

Modern pharmacology has discovered that many TCM blood-activating and stasis-removing herbal drugs have antithrombotic functions, but this effect is different from that in chemical drugs.

This medicine works not by targeting a certain session where blood agglutinates, but through anti-inflammation and expanding blood vessels, reducing blood pressure, reducing blood viscosity and blood lipids, inhibiting platelet aggregation, and improving blood micro-

investigation of large-scale surveys in **England and Ireland found** that many patients did not develop venous thrombosis during the acute infection, but during long

COVID.

circulation, and other composite microscopic functions to prevent and eliminate

The preferred TCM treatment for promoting blood circulation and removing blood stasis is danshen, also known as Salvia miltiorrhiza, or red sage. It can sometimes be obtained in health food stores. Better yet, ask for recommendations on where to find it from a trusted TCM practitioner. This is an herb used in TCM by professional practitioners, but you can use it at home as well if done the right way.

People with high-risk factors for thrombosis can brew tea from 10 grams of danshen every day to prevent the occurrence of thrombosis.

Research experiments have confirmed that danshen and its extracts have multiple cardiovascular protective effects. It also has functions such as anti-oxidation, antiinflammation, reducing blood viscosity, improving microcirculation, and so on.

For sure, it is equally important to change yourself, get rid of bad habits, and maintain a healthy life. Because at the end of the day, health depends on ourselves!

Dr. Jonathan Liu is a professor of Chinese Medicine at Georgian College in Canada.



There are best practices that we can incorporate into our daily life to prevent thrombosis, and many of them are not so difficult.

### 1. Avoid Lengthy Sitting

An important strategy to

prevent thrombosis is to adopt a less sedentary lifestyle. Many jobs require long hours of sitting but you can implement small fixes. After using the computer for an hour, stand up, stretch your arms and legs, and take a quick walk down the hall if you can. If you can't leave your desk, move your ankle joints, turning your toes inwards and then outwards. Stretch your calf muscles and hold for a few seconds.

Just by doing this, you promote blood circulation effectively, and reduce the chance of blood coagulation and blockage formation.

People who are bedridden for a long time are at high risk of lower extremity venous thrombosis. Bedridden patients should be encouraged to actively or passively move their lower extremities.

Patients who need long-term intravenous infusion should avoid repeated punctures at the same place. Once the venous endothelium is damaged. thrombosis will easily form.

### 2. Eat Well and **Avoid Smoking**

Try to arrange your meals such that they are balanced and well-timed. Foods that prevent thrombosis include sardines, onions, garlic, celery, and black fungus, in appropriate amounts. These foods do not increase blood viscosity, and prevent blood clotting.

Smoking damages blood vessels. Many patients with thromboangiitis have been smokers for a long time. Therefore, quitting smoking is an important way to prevent thrombotic diseases.

### 3. Drink Enough Water

Drink plenty of water. The average person should drink 50 to 70 ounces of water per day, while the elderly need to drink more water because the blood of the elderly is relatively thick, sticky, coagulated, and aggregated.

Drinking more water can help dilute the blood. Drinking water when you get up and before going to bed can reduce blood viscosity and the formation of thrombosis.

### 4. Control Underlying Health Conditions

Obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure are all risk factors for thrombosis, and it is very important to actively treat, prevent, or control the development of these diseases.

**OVERTREATMENT** 

## Strange Side Effects From Statins

Continued from Page 9

PAF can be reduced by mediating diet, exercise, and healthy lifestyle choices, according to the authors.

And research in the journal Expert Review of Clinical Pharmacology states that "the epidemic of heart failure and atherosclerosis that plagues the modern world may paradoxically be aggravated by the pervasive use of statin drugs." Cynics might say this isn't the first time that a drug has been overhyped as safe until its patent ran out whereupon more skeptical scientific reports surfaced.

### **Diabetes and Cholesterol**

An Ohio State University study that looked at the health records of 4,683 men and women found that those who were prescribed cholesterol-lowering statins had at least double the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. Patients that took the drugs for more than two years had more

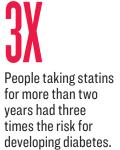
than three times the risk. "The fact that increased duration of

statin use was associated with an increased risk of diabetes—something we call a dose-dependent relationship makes us think that this is likely a causal relationship," lead researcher Victoria Zigmont said in a statement released by the university.

In an interview with The Epoch Times, Irene Campbell-Taylor, a clinical neuroscientist said, "There are scores of articles citing various levels of elevation of blood glucose in persons using statins," yet the rises in blood glucose and risk of developing Type 2 diabetes are downplayed.

In fact, the American Diabetes Association includes the use of statins in the treatment of both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, Campbell-Taylor noted.

"In the few studies of use of statins by persons with type 1 diabetes, it has been found that statins are independently associated with impaired glycemic control although a causal relationship cannot be absolutely determined. It is suggested that this apparent relationship may indicate a need to revisit the dose of insulin





Memory, Mood, and Mental Wellness It's documented in the scientific literature that statins can cause severe memory loss in users, as well as depression. The pills are also linked to suicide, according to a study published in Crisis, the journal of the International Association for Suicide Prevention. According to a Psychology Today article by psychiatrist Emily Deans, "many studies over decades have (for the most part) consistently linked low total serum cholesterol with suicide, violence, and depression." Cholesterol clearly affects

factual information one has to wonder how the average patient is to adjust insulin dosage as well," she wrote, pointing to the additional complexities of Type 1 diabetes in relation to diet, exercise, and weight. "The question remains: With such lack

when starting statin treatment. Lacking

of detailed information but acknowledgement of increase in blood glucose, why would a competent patient choose to take medications, control weight and diet, manage insulin therapy, etc., yet still consent to using a drug admitted to be likely to undo all of the complex measures taken to reduce the amount of glucose in the bloodstream?"

mental health, and it may have risks, the

research and experts caution. "Total cholesterol levels below 160, and especially below 130, correlate with a higher risk of mental problems," Deans

In a separate article, she lists several studies linking low serum to mental conditions ranging from violence to antisocial behavior to suicide, suicidal tendencies, parasuicide, and other mood, behavior, and personality changes.

### Plant sterols such as fortified sunflower spreads and yogurt drinks may lower cholesterol (although not the risk of heart attack or stroke).

"And despite the blood-brain barrier and the little movement of cholesterol from the blood into the brain, brain and serum cholesterol do tend to go up and down at the same time. ... Cholesterol has been found to be lower during a manic episode in bipolar disorder, and tends to pop up again when the episode gets better," Deans wrote.

The race to the cholesterol "bottom" is concerning, she wrote.

"The human brain needs a lot of cholesterol to wrap around nerves, to serve as components of cell membranes, and to aid in the communication between neurons. While cardiologists have been racing to lower serum cholesterol more and more (and drug companies keep coming up with fancy new cholesterol-

ignored." Studies consistently link low total serum cholesterol with suicide.

lowering drugs), the importance of cho-

lesterol in the brain relative to choles-

terol and heart health has been mostly

Deans's advice? "Don't take cholesterol levels into the basement without a good reason, and not without thinking about some possible consequences for our cholesterolloving brains."

### **Natural Statin Alternatives**

According to the British Heart Foundation, natural alternatives to statins exist and can be pursued.

A fiber found in oats called betaglucan can help lower cholesterol

Fermented red rice yeast can operate similarly to a statin but may be safer. Plant sterols such as fortified sunDiabetics are often prescribed statins as a precaution, but statins may also increase your risk of getting diabetes.

of heart attack or stroke). Niacin, the B vitamin, can lower "bad" LDL cholesterol and raise "good" highdensity lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, although not necessarily the risk of heart attack or stroke.

Cholestyramine and other bile acidbinding resins—relatively old drugs that were used before statins—may still be useful. They're still used with the warning that they may cause gastrointestinal side effects or vitamin deficiencies if used long term.

flower spreads and vogurt drinks may

lower cholesterol (although not the risk

Policosanol, extracted from sugar cane wax, has been reported to lower cholesterol and improve various medical conditions.

Fibrates, a class of amphipathic carboxylic acids and esters derived from fibric acid, can reduce cholesterol.

Of course, when it comes to pretty much any chronic condition, lifestyle factors are front and center. Things such as sleeping well, eating well, and staying physically active provide essential "remedies" to most conditions, as well as managing stress and maintaining meaningful social connections.

### **JOE D. HAINES JR.**

Most people wouldn't have any difficulty recognizing heart disease and cancer as the top causes of death in the United States. However, most folks are shocked to learn that the No. 3 cause of death in America is medical mistakes.

In a famous paper published by the Institute of Medicine in 1999 titled "To Err Is Human," it was estimated that 98,000 people per year died due to medical errors. The concluding recommendation was that we should work more on making safer systems and less on individual blame.

According to a 2016 Johns Hopkins University study, approximately 250,000 people die per year due to errors committed by our health care system. The metaphor often used is that of two fully loaded 747 jets crashing with no survivors every day

Such a catastrophe would result in enormore of medical mistake casualty victims.

Incredibly, the 250,000 figure is very likely conservative. When causes of death, such as outpatient fatal drug reactions (198,000), deaths due to misdiagnosis (132,000), hospital-acquired infections (100,000), and deep venous thrombosis/pulmonary embolism (119,000) to name some of the worst offenders, the overall number approaches 800,000 deaths per year.

There are many causes for these prevent-

While some efforts have been made in an attempt to change the systemic causes that's having of these problems, Americans receiving the surgery health care today would be well-advised so there's no to take some basic precautions.

Patients literally trust their doctors with confusion. their lives. And there is much in our health care system to be proud of, including the best medical schools, the finest hospitals, superior technology, and everything that makes us believe what we've been told that we have the finest, most advanced health care system in the world.

> But there are also major shortcomings, including doctors that are too busy to really diagnose patients and an inclination by both patients and doctors to treat chronic conditions with drugs instead of lifestyle changes that can truly cure them.

> Misdiagnosis is also common, and a good place to start when it comes to avoiding medical errors.

> With the possible exception of spinal epidural abscess, most of the other conditions

listed above are straightforward problems that most experienced providers should be able to easily diagnose.

The question, then, is what can the average patient do to avoid becoming another

Perhaps the most important thing is to choose your provider wisely. Settling for whoever is on duty at the local "doc in a box" down the street may not be the best choice. A little research, including searching a prospective provider on the state medical association website, can be

Disciplinary actions, malpractice lawsuits, and license suspensions are some of the pertinent details that should be available. Also, while simply checking out providers with friends and neighbors is far from foolproof, some worthwhile opinions may be of interest.

A growing option, especially in primary care and urgent care settings, are so-called mous public outcry, yet most Americans mid-level providers. Many of these midseemingly accept the same number or levels are competent in caring for 90 percent of patients who walk through the door It's the other 10 percent that can challenge even the most highly trained and experienced physicians.

Graedon and Graedon list some of the most common errors. I'll discuss a few of them and some examples I have witnessed. Not listening to patients is a big one, and there's blame enough to go around for both the provider and the system.

Health care providers are sometimes simply in too big of a hurry, interrupting patients, peppering them with a narrow list

of questions, and just not listening. Patients can contribute to this with unreasonable expectations of the provider to solve a dozen different complaints in a 15-minute appointment. Over the years, I have found that if you give the patient an adequate amount of time to explain their problem, they will often make their own

Providing an adequate amount of listening can ultimately save a great deal of time. The provider must also focus completely on the patient at hand and avoid distractions such as typing on a keyboard and thinking about his schedule.

Misdiagnosis, usually due to failure to perform a proper differential diagnosis, is another major source of error.

Over my 25 years as a medical expert witness, I have seen hundreds of cases of misdiagnosis resulting in death or serious injury. Since heart disease is our No. 1 killer, I have seen many missed heart attacks Approximately

# **PEOPLE**

die per year due to medical errors. That's about two fully loaded

747 DETS crashing with no survivors every day of the year.

SOURCE: JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Americans receiving health care today would be welladvised to take some basic precautions.

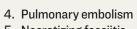
**MILLION** Americans are the victims of misdiagnosis

each year SOURCE: BMJ QUALITY AND SAFETY 2014; 23:727-731

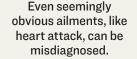
## Conditions Most Often Misdiagnosed

A study published in BMJ Quality and Safety in 2014 estimated that approximately 12 million Americans are the victims of misdiagnosis each year. The following conditions are most often misdiagnosed:

- Stroke
- 2. Heart attack
- 3. Spinal epidural abscess



- 5. Necrotizing fasciitis 6. Meningitis
- 7. Testicular torsion
- 8. Subarachnoid hemorrhage
- 9. Septicemia 10. Lung cancer
- 11. Fracture
- 12. Appendicitis





Lung cancer is one of the most misdiagnosed forms of cancer.

because basic protocols were not followed.

Week 49, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

For example, a case I just reviewed involved a 45-year-old man with high blood pressure, mild obesity, and a family history of heart disease. He was awakened at night with central chest pain that spread to his neck and lasted approximately 10 minutes. He had also recently worked out on his home treadmill and was forced to stop due to chest pain. The patient's wife became concerned and took him to a nearby emergency room, where the patient tried to minimize his symptoms by presuming he had gastrointestinal reflux from eating some jalapeno peppers the night before.

The electrocardiogram and preliminary blood work didn't confirm a cardiac problem, so the physician assistant seeing the patient accepted the patient's wishful thinking of reflux. He reassured the patient and sent him home. Three days later, the patient died of a cardiac arrest. The autopsy showed a more than 95 percent blockage in the left anterior descending artery, commonly known as the "widow maker."

One pearl of wisdom I have learned over the years with male patients is to always listen to the wife. Women seem to have an innate sense of when something bad is going on. While I can't quantify this input, I certainly don't deny its significance. This man should of course have been admitted to the hospital and had a consultation with a cardiologist, who would have recommended cardiac catheterization and likely the placement of a lifesaving stent

## Suggested Strategies for Safer Health Care

Once you have hopefully selected a competent practitioner, you must become your own advocate. A great resource is the book "Top Screwups Doctors Make and How to Avoid Them" by Graedon and Graedon.

Their suggested strategies for safer health care are as follows:

- 1. Take a prioritized list of top health concerns/symptoms to
- 2. Take notes during your visit.
- Take a friend or family member with you (especially if you are
- 4. Bring a list of medications and supplements so drug interactions can be detected.
- 5. Know the side effects of medications that you are prescribed 6. Ask if the provider formulated
- a differential diagnosis and considered all likely possibilities.
- 7. Consider a second opinion if doubtful of the provider's 8. Keep a copy of your medical
- records. 9. Maintain a diary of vital signs, symptoms, blood sugar, etc.
- 10. Find out the provider's afterhours routine.

in the blocked artery. He likely would be alive today if that had happened.

A similar case involved a 57-year-old man with two weeks of suspicious chest pain. He had a physical scheduled with his family doctor and decided to wait and discuss his problem at the next scheduled appointment. When the appointment came, the patient tried to bring up his symptom of chest pain with his doctor, who responded several times that the patient was at the office that day for a physical, not any new complaints. New complaints, the doctor repeated, would have to be addressed at a future appointment, which was made for several weeks down the road. Unfortunately, the patient followed his doctor's instructions and died of a heart attack before his appointment occurred.

Close behind cardiovascular causes of death is cancer. Medical students are taught that cancer encompasses some 100 different diseases. And while some impressive gains have been made in the treatment of some cancers, other cancers, such as pancreatic cancer, are difficult to treat.

The rule has always been in general that the earlier the diagnosis, the better the outcome. A delay in diagnosis allows the cancer to progress from an early stage to a late stage with a uniformly poor outcome. Many malpractice claims result from delays in the diagnosis of cancer.

Pat was a 42-year-old mother of two children under the age of 10. She had a persistent cough complicated by worsening wheezing. Her family doctor assumed she had bronchitis, which was causing the wheezing. He prescribed antibiotics and bronchodilators for her symptoms. He evidently discounted her history of smoking three to four packs of cigarettes a day for the prior 20 years.

She returned several times to her pro- Dr. Joe D. Haines Jr. is a board-certified vider, who never considered a chest Xray. Seven months into her problem, she sought a second opinion. When the doctor walked into the exam room, he heard a "wheeze" that was characteristic of an airway obstruction. A quick chest X-ray confirmed his suspicion of a lung mass, which was encroaching on the right main stem bronchus. Unfortunately, Pat died a few months later of stage IV bronchogenic

A "pearl" of wisdom that young doctors should learn is that when a patient returns with the same symptoms or no improvement, this is a golden opportunity to step back and reassess the patient. No one is perfect, and mistakes will occur, but sometimes the correct diagnosis can be rescued before a disaster ensues.

Another classic mistake is accepting someone else's diagnosis. This is actually a type of intellectual laziness and can result in catastrophe. Overlooking lab results can

Ed was a 54-year-old man with several weeks of abdominal discomfort whose physician decided to evaluate him with a CT scan of his abdomen and pelvis.

The scan was reported back as normal by the radiologist with one exception. There was a suspicious small mass in the left kidney. The radiologist recommended further studies to help determine the cause of the mass. Unfortunately, Ed's physician overlooked the CT scan results and almost 18 months passed.

Ed returned to his doctor with urinary tract symptoms (blood in the urine) and additional studies showed that his kidney had been replaced with a tumor, which had already spread to surrounding tissues. Ed died a few months later from what could have been a curable cancer when the initial abnormality was detected. The old adage, "No news is good news," definitely does not apply in the case of test results.

The Graedons also mention the following screw-ups doctors make: providing too little information to patients, not dealing with side effects of treatment, under-treating or ignoring evidence, overreacting or being seduced by numbers (treating the lab report instead of the patient), overlooking drug interactions, failing to revise the plan, overlooking lab or X-ray results, and not addressing lifestyle issues, such as smoking. Drug or medication mistakes are a spe-

cial category. Many people are unaware that Pen VK, amoxicillin, and Augmentin are all forms of penicillin. And if you're allergic to penicillin, you should not take any of

the above.

Drug interactions are a real problem, particularly in the elderly. Elderly patients can be prescribed 20 to 30 different medications. Geriatric patients should consult the Beers List, which lists drugs that older people should avoid. Few, if any, providers are smart enough to determine all the potential drug interactions with this many medications on board. Thank God for computers to help us keep track

But computers can be ignored, especially

of the estimated 100,000 potential drug

**FOOD AS MEDICINE** when prescribers routinely override redflag warnings of drug interactions. A good rule of thumb is to eliminate as many drugs

as possible. If an elderly patient is com-

plaining of unusual symptoms, it's usually

prudent to discontinue all nonessential

Most of our medications used to be made

domestically, making it easy for the FDA to

ensure that standards were maintained.

Today, approximately half of all drugs

Americans take are manufactured in for-

eign countries. And up to 80 percent of

pharmaceutical ingredients come from

Fentanyl, a potent opioid pain reliever,

foreign sources, especially China.

medications as a start.

## Why You Should Eat 2 Apples a Day



some scientific basis after all, as scientific literature is packed with findings that vouch for this fruit's healthful benefits.

is a good example, since the ingredients are often made in communist China and Showing that the saying above goes shipped to Mexico, where the tablets are beyond folk medicine fantasy, a study produced. The fentanyl is then smuggled found that eating one apple a day for across our porous southern border and four weeks translated to lower blood levdistributed to unsuspecting Americans, els of oxidized low-density lipoprotein/ resulting in more than 100,000 deaths beta2-glycoprotein I complex, which each year in America due to fentanyl may contribute to atherosclerosis, by 40 percent among healthy, middle-aged Another reference that provides excelindividuals.

take (BFIs) have recently been

suggested as a good tool for

assessing adherence to

dietary guidelines. New

biomarkers have sur-

faced in recent decades

from metabolic profiling

studies for different foods,

yet the number of compre-

remains limited.

hensively validated BFIs

BFIs offer an accurate

measure of intake, inde-

pendent of the memory

and sincerity of the subjects

as well as of their knowl-

edge about the consumed

ent limitations, such as self-reported

dietary intake questionnaires, as they

objectively assess food intake without

Apples are a frequently

polyphenols and fiber,

an important mediator

The researchers sought to identify bio-

markers of long-term apple consump-

tion, exploring how the fruit affects

human plasma and urine metabolite

profiles. In their randomized, con-

trolled, crossover intervention study,

they recruited 40 mildly hypercholes-

terolemia patients and had them con-

sume two whole apples or a sugar- and

energy-matched beverage daily for

At the end of the trial, they found 61

urine and nine plasma metabolites that

were statistically significant after the

whole apple intake compared to the

control beverage. The metabolites in-

cluded several polyphenols that could

Interestingly, the study allowed the

group to explore correlations between

biased self-reported assessment.

consumed fruit and

a reliable source of

for their health-

eight weeks.

serve as BFIs.

protective effects.

lent advice on confronting medical error is Apple consumption has also been the "When We Do Harm," by Dr. Danielle Ofri. subject of a few studies on reducing cancer risk, including liver cancer, breast Even though we live in a country with the cancer, and esophageal cancer. A study greatest health care system in history, Ofri published in February 2020 points to explains how the system is not immune to human error and probably never will be. apples' ability to mediate significant To best deal with human error—it must gut microbial metabolic activity. All it be anticipated and expected. Losing the takes is two apples a day.

equivalent of two jumbo jets per day due to medical mistakes isn't acceptable. While **Study Findings** Apples are a frequently consumed some improvements have been made, American medicine is still falling woefully fruit and a reliable source of polyphenols and fiber, an important mediator short. In the meantime, the patient must for their health-protective effects. assume more responsibility to prevent er-Validated biomarkers of food inrors and ensure that they don't become

family practitioner. In addition to family medicine, he also completed an aerospace medicine residency and received a Master of Public Health degree while serving in the U.S. Navy. Haines has practiced medicine for 40 years and remains active with medical expert witness work and writing. He's a veteran of the Afghanistan War, serving as the wing surgeon for the Marine Corps in 2011. He has more than 200 publications in a wide variety of journals.

another statistic.

### Tips to Help You Avoid Medical Errors

What can a patient do to prevent themselves from becoming a victim of medical errors? Robert Fox (a lawyer) and Chris Landon (a doctor) have written an entire book, "Avoiding Medical Errors: One Hundred Rules to Help You Survive Mistakes by Doctors and Hospitals," to help.

- Here are a few highlights:
- Use your state medical boards' website to research your provider.
- Obtain an independent second opinion if your provider seems unsure of your diagnosis.
- Consider stopping medications if there is no improvement over time or your condition worsens.
- Do not go home if you don't feel OK (there's always the emergency room available for a second opinion.
- Before seeing a provider, prepare a short list of questions
- Create and maintain your own
- Avoid traveling far away from home for surgery
- Do not have surgery on a holiday or weekend. Use a black felt tip marker to
- indicate which body part is to have surgery ("surgery here") so the proper limb is operated on. Before taking any medications,
- either you or your advocate should verify that the medications were prescribed for you and not another patient.
- Verify the meds from your pharmacy were prescribed by your provider.
- When tests are ordered, always follow up until you receive the results and understand what the results mean
- Consult an attorney if you believe that you were the victim of a medical or hospital error (only if you received care that was below the standard of care and the substandard care resulted in injury).

The old saying that eating an apple a metabolites significantly modulated day will keep the doctor away may have by the dietary intervention and fecal microbiota species at genus level—specifically, interactions shared by Granulicatella genus and phenyl-acetic acid

"The identification of polyphenol microbial metabolites suggests that apple consumption mediates significant gut microbial metabolic activity which should be further explored," they wrote.

**Gut Health Affects Your Whole Body** The link between the gut microbiota and human wellness is being increasingly recognized, and it's now well established that healthy gut flora is a key part of your overall health.

Previous studies corroborate that the richness of the human gut microbiome correlates with metabolic markers. In a study on 123 non-obese and 169 obese Danish individuals, a group of scientists found two distinct groups displaying a difference in the number of gut microbial genes and thus the richness of gut bacteria in the two groups.

Individuals with a low bacterial richness had more marked overall adiposity and insulin resistance, for

instance, compared with high bacterial richness subjects. The obese subjects among the lower bacterial richness group also tended to gain more weight over time.

A series of largely preclinical observations showed, too, that changes in brain-gut-microbiome communication may be involved in the pathogenesis and pathophysiology of irritable bowel syndrome, obesity, and several psychiatric and neurologic disorders.

### foods. They overcome food intake **Additional Apple Benefits** measurement processes with inher-

Apples contribute to a

healthy gut flora that

is a key part of your

overall health.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

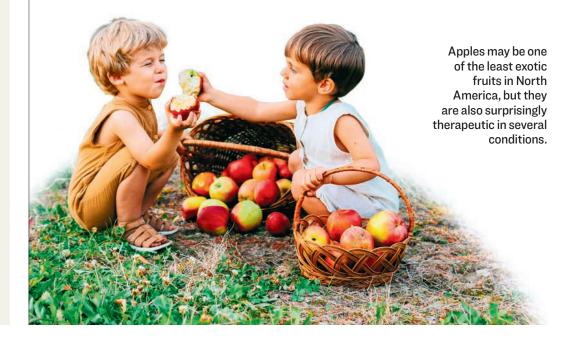
More benefits of apple intake are coming out of the medical literature, confirming its status as a healing food that

shouldn't be missed out on. These benefits include addressing common issues such as aging (reduced rate), allergies, alopecia or hair loss, diarrhea, insulin resistance, radiation induced illness, and staphylococcal infection. In the area of cancer treatment, apples have been found to both prevent and suppress mammary cancers in animal studies, while carotenoids extracted from the fruit have been found to inhibit drug-resistant cancer prolif-

eration in cell lines. The GreenMedInfo.com database contains 156 abstracts with apple research, scrutinizing the health benefits of apples and their related compounds.

The GMI Research Group is dedicated to investigating the most important health and environmental issues of the day. Special emphasis will be placed on environmental health. Our focused and deep research will explore the many ways in which the present condition of the human body directly reflects the true state of the ambient environment. This work is reproduced and distributed with the permission of GreenMedInfo LLC. Sign up for their newsletter at www.GreenmedInfo.health

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





surgery, it is

a good idea

to write on

the body part

## 6 Books That Will Rewire Your Brain (in a Good Way)

Books have the power to lead us to truth or conceal it from us

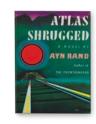
### **JON MILTIMORE**

The novelist Alice Hoffman once observed that books "may well be the only true magic." Hoffman isn't the only person to recognize

the power of the written word. C.S. Lewis observed that books reveal to us that we're not alone, while Frederick Douglass saw their liberating power.

I've long observed that you can learn a lot about people by looking at their bookshelves. Some might say this is because books are a reflection of us, and this is partly true; but books also shape who we are. They have the power to lead us to truth or conceal it from us.

Here are six books that can change how you see the world and reality—in a good way.

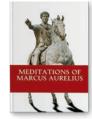


### 1. Atlas Shrugged, by **Ayn Rand (1957)**

"Atlas Shrugged" is one of the most influential books ever written—it has sold more than 10 million copies worldwide—and for good reason.

Rand's magnum opus is a visionary work of art that details the struggle of the individual against collectivist forces seeking to control and rob him—all in the name of a greater good. Part mystery, part romance, and part polemic, "Atlas Shrugged" tears down the curtain hiding the wizards who control society in the name

When I first read "Atlas Shrugged," I was stunned by how clearly Rand "saw the future," until I realized she lived through the New Deal. That's when I realized Rand wasn't a prophet as much as a shrewd author who  $had\, ascertained\, how \, the\, collectivist\, machine$ (and grift) works.



### 2. Meditations (A.D. 161– 180), by Marcus Aurelius

A friend bought me a copy of "Meditations" when I was in college, and it's been one of the books that has remained near my bedside over the years. Written by one of the few great Emperors of Rome—

Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-180)—"Meditations" is more like a series of philosophical reflections than an organized book. But its insights are beautiful and powerful, and it's perhaps the single greatest work of Stoic philosophy ever written.

"Meditations" is a fountain of reason that will teach you how to control your mind, and through that your habits and actions. Written at a time when the greatest civilization of antiquity was collapsing, it's essentially a road map for self-control and self-improvement that will teach you individual progress is still achievable in a crumbling world.

### I've long observed that you can learn a lot about people by looking at their bookshelves.

Life is a precious gift, but Aurelius understood it's also filled with challenges: pain, suffering, and injustice. Few books can better prepare you and your mind to meet these challenges than "Meditations."

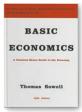


### 3. 1984 (1948) by **George Orwell**

"Nineteen Eighty-Four" is perhaps the most terrifying book on this list—largely because George Orwell saw the future so well. Dubbed

"the definitive book of the 20th century," his masterpiece depicts a totalitarian future where people are constantly surveilled, manipulated, lied to, and sometimes tortured. While Big Brother's totalitarian tendencies and surveillance techniques speak a clear warning and remain highly relevant today, Orwell's most impressive literary insight was how postmodern philosophy combined with state power and mass propaganda would torture not just people, but truth itself.

After reading "Nineteen Eighty-Four," the more subtle psychological terror of our own time becomes more acute, and the book is sure to change how you see the world today.



### 4. Basic Economics (2000), by Thomas Sowell

Thomas Sowell's bestselling work "Basic Economics" is arguably the best introductory economics book ever written. It's packed with history that shows the power of

incentives—good and bad—and the danger of focusing on the intention of public policies rather than their results.

Sowell, unlike most professional economists, is a talented writer and storyteller. His historical anecdotes and punchy prose will be an eye-opener for new readers trying to understand why so many problems exist in the world today despite our prosperity.



### 5. Brave New World (1932), by Aldous Huxley

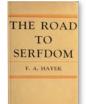
Aldous Huxley's terrifying work "Brave New World" is one of the few books that some argue is more prophetic than Orwell's masterpiece. Imagine a world where a

small group of central planners engineer a drugged-out society and use education as a means of conditioning pupils with class consciousness to control everyone.

That's basically the setting of "Brave New World." Huxley's dystopia is more seductive than Orwell's, which is what makes it more real in some ways. The English writer understood that humanity would come to love the chains it wore, especially in the presence of opulence, sex, and drugs.

Huxley believed the world's governments would slowly but surely grow more totalitarian, and the only thing that could prevent this was a "large-scale popular movement toward decentralization."

After reading "Brave New World," you'll likely agree with him.



### 6. The Road to Serfdom, by F.A. Hayek (1944)

Nobel Prize-winning economist F.A. Hayek's most popular and influential book, "The Road to Serfdom" was written and published during the height of World War II, in

response to the global rise of fascism and socialism. Hayek saw that most Western governments in the world, including the United States, were making a grave error as they sought to control ever more private activity.

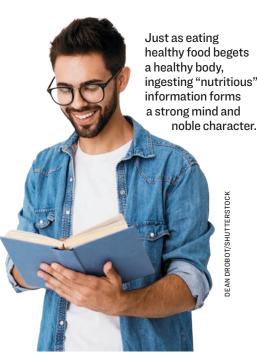
"We have progressively abandoned that freedom in economic affairs without which personal and political freedom has never existed in the past," he wrote.

An honest, meticulous, and unapologetic defense of laissez-faire capitalism and classical liberalism, Hayek pulled no punches, pointing out that the "increasing veneration for the state, the admiration of power, and of bigness for bigness' sake" was scarcely different in countries such as England than it was in Nazi Germany.

Few books will help readers better understand that fascism wasn't actually defeated in 1945, but lives on today in various incarnations.

This article was originally published on

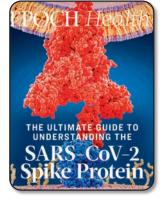
Jonathan Miltimore is the managing editor of the Foundation for Economic Education. His writing/reporting has been the subject of articles in TIME magazine, The Wall Street Journal, CNN, Forbes, Fox News, and the Star Tribune.



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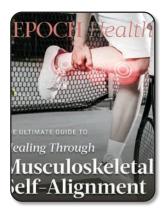
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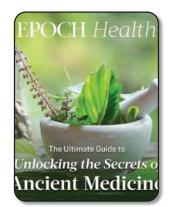


### The Ultimate Guide to Healing Through Musculoskeletal Self-Alignment

Discover simple ways to address



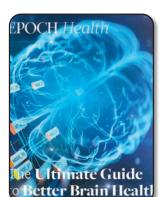
muscle and bone pains that you can incorporate into your daily life.



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