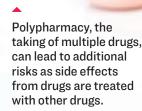
THE EPOCH TIMES

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FIXING HEALTH CARE

PER PERSON

In 2019, the United States spent more than \$1,000 per person on prescription medicines, spending about double what peer countries pay. Could Natural Medicine Save the Health Care System?



The kind of medicine that conventional medicine relies on is too expensive because of its dependence

Dr. Andrew Weil, director of the Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona

on expensive

technology.

The United States suffers from the highest health care costs in the world—with little to show for it

CONAN MILNER

ooking for a bargain? You won't find it in health care. Particularly in the United States, where Americans spend more each year, but somehow have less to show for it.

According to a report from the Commonwealth Fund in early 2020, the United States spent nearly twice as much on health care as other wealthy nations (Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Canada). Despite this high price tag, the United States saw the lowest life expectancy and highest suicide rates among these countries.

The United States also suffers the highest chronic disease burden, with an obesity rate two times higher than the average in other peer countries. This may explain why Americans saw the highest number of hospitalizations from preventable causes, and the highest rate of avoidable deaths.

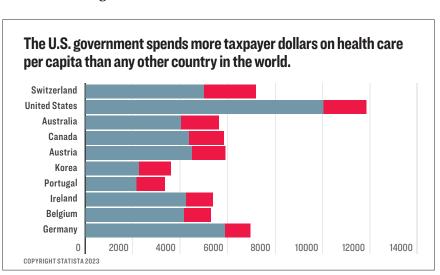
Dollar for dollar, the United States has the worst health care system in the world. The government spends more taxpayer dollars per capita than any other country in the world, including countries with entirely public health care systems known for exceptional quality of care. On top of those taxpayer dollars, American's

also spend more per capita of their own money than the citizens of any other country in the world except for Sweden, according to the latest analysis from Statistica.

So where's all the money going to support these lousy outcomes? A lot is spent on drugs. A 2022 poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation found 6 in 10 U.S. adults were taking at least one prescription medication and 25 percent were taking four or more. That rate rises as people age. One CDC report found that more than 40 percent Americans 65 or older had taken five or more prescriptions in the last 30 days (a threefold increase from 20 years ago.)

Patients
have become
conditioned
toward
pill-based
solutions.

Continued on Page 4



Predictive Prescription Diets Could Be Closer Than We Think

Massive 5-year study underway to discover the elusive gut-health blueprint

AMY DENNEY

Imagine an algorithm that would tell you exactly what to eat for your ailments and even prevent you from suffering from genetic disease.

No longer would the conundrum of choosing between keto, Mediterranean, paleo, or other trending, slick-sounding diets exist. Your algorithm would be form-fitting—not just to your medical diagnosis but also to your unique medical history, genetics, living environment, race, age, sex, medications, stress level, and microbiome.

Because people are more than just their illnesses, the multitude of factors in choosing a personal diet is important. An eating plan that works well for tackling heart disease might contain foods that don't metabolize well for a particular individual, based on their constitution, or may not identify an ongoing environmental

factor, etc. More insight is needed to provide a comprehensive, individualized plan.

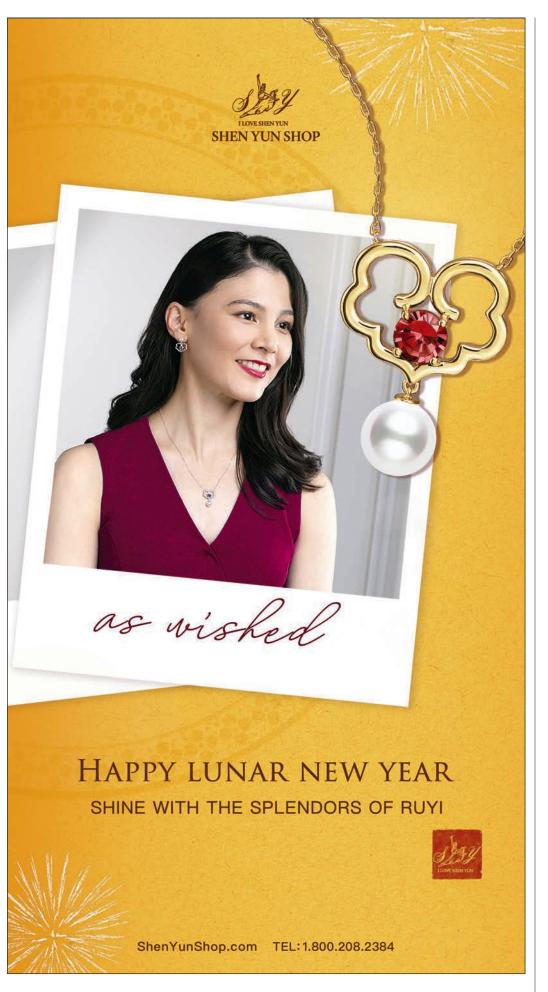
In the current model of health care, issues like heart disease risk and metabolic syndrome are likely to be addressed with prescriptions than a prescribed diet, adding an expensive and sometimes unnecessary burden on the health care system and patients alike. Precision medicine, however, is now examining the efficacy of these current medical practices.

Continued on Page 4

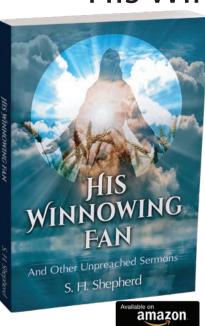


Knowing our real nutritional needs may motivate us to eat better and enjoy the rewards of better health.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED



His Winnowing Fan



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.





Eating healthy fats is essential for our well-being, but don't use that as an excuse to go

Eat Fat to Protect Your Brain and Boost Its Function

Fat is essential to a healthy brain but not all fats are created equal

DUSTIN LUCHMEE

The brain is the fattiest organ in the human body, consisting of 60 percent fat. Fat is an essential part of our diet, as it supports cell function, insulates organs, and is used for hormone production.

There are three types of fats that we consume in our diet—some are good, and some are bad. Consuming healthy fats can help protect and preserve brain structure and function.



Why Is Fat Needed for Brain Health? Neurons are the main

cells found in the brain. Neurons use electrical and chemical signals to process and respond to information from the en-

For example, when you're eating, the taste receptors on your tongue send signals to your brain, where a network of neurons processes them into the sensations of texture and taste.

Neurons, like all cells in the body, have a membrane that coats the cell and protects it from the external environment. The membrane contains proteins, carbohydrates—and most importantly fats. Without fats, there would be no structure in the cells in your body.

Another role of fat within the brain and walnuts, to name a few. of this is myelin, a fat and protein-rich sheath that coats the long trunks of neurons known as axons. Myelin helps with cellular communication by allowing electrical signals to pass efficiently from one neuron to another.

Without fat to support cell membranes and myelin, brain cells wouldn't be able to function.

Some fats are neuroprotective. They can protect the brain by reducing brain inflammation, regulating cell survival and death, and helping with the generation of new brain cells. While the specific mechanisms of how fat acts as a neuroprotective agent aren't clearly understood, many studies have demonstrated the benefits and necessity of consuming healthy fats for brain health.



Fats That May Be **Protective for Your**

In particular, unsaturated fats have been found to

have neuroprotective properties. The three kinds of fats that we consume in our diet are saturated fats, trans fats, and unsaturated fats. Each type of fat has a different chemical composition, which causes a different response within our body once it's consumed.

One review of the effects of consuming different unsaturated fats found that this type of fat plays a critical role in the membrane of brain cells, may have antiinflammatory properties, and may help ward off neurodegenerative diseases. Other studies have found that consuming unsaturated fats may increase total brain volume and support complex cognitive functioning. This includes longchain omega-3 fatty acids.

Consumption of a diet high in saturated fats has been long studied and determined to be detrimental to brain health. However, new research suggests that long-chain saturated fats may have a positive impact on cognitive function. This kind of saturated fat is found in dairy products and nuts, which offer many health benefits.

Medium-chain fatty acids are either

saturated or unsaturated fats. They also benefit the brain and can improve cognitive functioning. These fatty acids differ from long-chain fatty acids in their chemical composition: Medium-chain fatty acids have six to 12 carbons, while long-chain fatty acids have 13 or more carbons in their chain.

Not all fats are equal. Trans fats, regular-chain saturated fats, and large amounts of omega-6 fatty acids may negatively impact the brain. For example, research has shown that trans fatty acids cause an increase in body weight and predisposes individuals to heart disease. In turn, increased body weight and heart disease are leading contributors to stroke, Alzheimer's disease, and mild cognitive impairment.



How to Nurture Your Brain With Fats

A well-studied approach to eating well and supporting brain health is the Medi-

terranean diet. The shining stars of the Mediterranean diet are omega-3 fatty acids. These fatty acids make up 10 to 20 percent of the fatty acids in the brain and are important for brain cell development, connectivity, and cellular communication. These fatty acids are found in foods such as mackerel, salmon, oysters, sardines,

is signal transduction. One example Medium-chain fatty acids can be found in coconut oil, MCT oil, and

One should aim to avoid foods high in trans fats.

The amount of fat you should consume varies based on your age, sex, weight, fitness, activity level, nutrition needs, and other health factors. For example, one following a Mediterranean diet may consume 83 to 125 grams of fat per day for a 1,500-calorie diet, 111 to 167 grams for a 2,000-calorie diet, or 139 to 208 grams for a 2,500-calorie diet.

Regardless of one's caloric intake levels, one should aim to avoid foods high in trans fats and moderate the consumption of regular-chain saturated and omega-6 fatty acids. These fats are found in products such as fried foods, commercial baked goods, and margarine. Essentially, highly processed foods contain high levels of these types of fats.

On the other hand, natural foods such as salmon, oysters, coconuts, and olives contain beneficial fats. By eliminating and reducing one's intake of processed foods and opting for more nutrient-dense natural options, one can support their brain health by eat-



Low-Cost Remedies for Common Long **COVID Symptoms**

Researchers and doctors continue to explore treatments for those suffering the pandemic's long-COVID echo

GEORGE CITRONER

Nearly three years into the COVID-19 pandemic, experts are trying to understand the lingering symptoms of what's commonly called long COVID, who's most at risk, and how the symptoms can best be treated.

A cross-sectional study of more than 16, 000 individuals found 15 percent of U.S. adults with a prior positive COVID-19 infection reported current symptoms of long COVID.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 1 in 13 U.S. adults experiences symptoms lasting three or more months after first contract-

ing COVID-19. These symptoms, also called post-COVID conditions (PCCs), are most often seen in patients over 65 years old with preexisting medical conditions.

"This may be the result of worsening of one or more known conditions, but also may stem from altered immune responses," Dr. Richard Becker, of the Division of Cardiovascular Health and Disease at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, told The Epoch Times.

Research from last year confirmed that even after a mild infection people can experience significant disturbances in their immune responses lasting months.

Becker emphasized that PCCs are equally likely to occur in patients with CO-VID-19 whether they were hospitalized or stayed

"In our experience treat ing over 500 patients with PCC," Becker said, who also runs the UC-Davis Health Post-COVID-19 Clinic, "the most common symptoms [of PCC] are fatigue, post-exercise exhaustion, shortness of breath, and chest pain."

Studies also show that brain fog and loss of taste or smell are also commonly seen among these patients.

Becker's initial treatment approach includes carefully selected tests to evaluate the heart, lungs, muscles, and joints. A diagnosis pertaining to one or more of these is followed by targeted treatment based on teaching patients physical and mental ways to ease symptoms.

"We have found that a COVID-recovery rehabilitation program with a focus on the mechanics of breathing, paced activity, and guidance to avoid excess physical mental, or emotional stress can be beneficial," said Becker.

Post-Viral Chronic Fatigue Syndrome A review of COVID-19 cohort studies finds persistent fatigue was reported by up to 33 percent of patients from 16 to 20 weeks post-symptom onset.

"Although deaths, heart damage, and strokes can be the most devastating persistent sequelae of COVID, the major issue is the post-viral chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia," said Jacob Teitelbaum, a board-certified internist and nationally known expert in the fields of chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, sleep, and pain.

Signs of post-viral chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) include fatigue, combined with brain fog or pain that lasts more than three months after the initial infection.

"It is suspected that a significant portion of people who dropped out of the workforce in the 'Great Resignation' had milder cases of post-COVID CFS," Teitelbaum said.

Chronic fatigue syndrome can severely affect a person's quality of life. "In the 10 percent of COVID cases that have more severe post-viral fatigue, it can be totally crippling," he said. "Even leav-

> ing people bed and housebound." There are currently no well-established treatment options for post-COVID chronic fatigue syndrome,

> > fective methods is ongoing. However, Teitelbaum believes chronic fatigue syndrome after COVID is treatable, and research he coauthored found that a commonly available root extract could help.

although research to find ef-

Previous studies have found that a unique extract of Panax ginseng root, also called Korean red ginseng, often resulted in improvement for people living with chronic fatigue syndrome.

Teitelbaum's research showed that 60 percent of people with post-viral chronic fatigue syndrome or fibromyalgia improved by simply taking Korean red ginseng.

were a 67 percent average increase in energy, a 44 percent average increase in overall well-being, a 48 percent average improvement in mental clarity, a 46 percent average improvement in sleep, a 33 percent average decrease in pain, and a 72 percent average increase in stamina.

"master antioxidant" because of its importance to fungi, plants, animals, and humans.

Ginseng can be taken as a tea, supplement, or used in

various recipes including

soups and smoothies.

Curcumin is the well-

researched bioactive

compound that gives

turmeric (and by extension

curry powder) its bright

Glutathione is often called the

Ginseng is considered safe to use for most people but is contraindicated for pregnant women because of a lack of information about its effect on the fetus.

"Our research has shown that post-viral chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia are very treatable," he said. "The problem is that there is no expensive medication needed, so no one pays for the doctors to get the information."

Shortness of Breath

Up to 12 percent of people will experience shortness of breath (dyspnea) after COVID.

called "brain fog," which can seriously "Shortness of breath is very common post-COVID, but usually not dangerous,"

to tell whether it's a lung or heart problem (due to low oxygen levels)—or just a sensation of breathlessness. An article in Harvard Health found

Teitelbaum said. "Mostly it's simply scary."

you're experiencing shortness of breath

You can use a pulse oximeter when

strong, scientific evidence that there are many supplements that can help us heal after COVID. According to Teitelbaum, if it's a heart problem, there's a mix of nutrients that

increase cardiac efficiency and can markedly improve cardiac function and stamina. These nutrients include a high-dose B-complex with magnesium, D-Ribose, coenzyme Q10, and other herbs and nutrients, as he recommends on his website.

Even after a mild infection people can experience significant disturbances in their immune

responses.

Lung and other inflammation resulting from COVID may be helped with curcumin, Boswellia (frankincense), and glutathione.

"All of these supplements are relatively low-cost," Teitelbaum said. "And therefore doctors don't hear about them."

As with any supplement, some people may not react well when using these remedies and may experience stomach discomfort using Boswellia and high doses of curcumin. Long-term use of glutathione has been linked to lower zinc levels.

Brain Fog

will experience cognitive impairment

impair memory and executive functioning. However, there are currently no FDAapproved treatments for this condition. Researchers from Yale Medical School

published a case study showing guanfacine (used for treating high blood pressure and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and the antioxidant N-acetylcysteine (NAC) reduced the cognitive deficits (brain fog) associated with long COVID in eight out of 12 patients. According to the study authors, both substances may work together to reduce inflammation in the brain and spinal cord.

They noted one patient who stopped taking guanfacine due to an episode of low blood pressure and reported their brain fog returned. The condition was resolved when they resumed taking the drug.

"The finding that one patient's cognitive abilities worsened when guanfacine treatment was suspended, and improved with guanfacine reinstatement, supports a therapeutic role for this compound," the authors wrote.

"These drugs are affordable and widely available," said Arman Fesharaki-Zadeh, M.D., a behavioral neurologist and neuropsychiatrist at Yale Medicine, in an article on the school's website. "You don't need to wait to be part of a research trial. You can ask your physician."

Researchers emphasized that placebocontrolled trials are needed to better understand how these drugs work to treat brain fog.

Based on the studies of these low-cost, doctor-recommended remedies, there's help at hand—and hope for those suffering the long-term, sometimes debilitating effects of long COVID. Remember to consult your doctor for possible contraindications to any medications you may be taking before trying any new remedies.

To find the studies mentioned in this Nearly one-third of post-COVID patients article, please see the article online at TheEpochTimes.com

CHING HONG

Diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death in the United States in 2019, based on 87,647 death certificates in which diabetes was listed as the underlying cause of death, according to the American Diabetes Association. In 2019, 37.3 million Americans, or 11.3 percent of the population,

The latest survey by the International Diabetes Federation found that 1 in 4 diabetic patients interviewed reported that they didn't receive adequate information on the disease. As a result, many patients failed to care for complications properly, which seriously hindered their daily lives.

relationship between peripheral neuropathy and diabetes. Hence, they may misinterpret sensations of physical paralysis as part of aging. Since symptoms of diabetes are not always apparent in the early phases, by the time some patients seek medical treatment, the disease may have progressed substantially.

Endocrine and diabetes specialist practitioner Dr. Tsang Man-wo at United Christian Hospital points out that diabetes is the most common cause of peripheral neuropathy. The nerve fibers in the surrounding nervous system are damaged, causing peripheral nerve injuries or microvascular dysfunction due to elevated blood sugar levels.

Peripheral neuropathy can lead to multiple health risks, including sensory loss, muscle atrophy, and shakiness, increasing the risk of injury and making everyday activities a challenge. Diabetic patients are prone to other severe health conditions, such as skin ulcers and diabetes mellitus-induced foot amputation.

How to Prevent Peripheral Neuropathy?

Tsang suggests that the best way to prevent lesions or further deterioration by diabetes is to control blood sugar levels. In addition to blood sugar control, patients should maintain normal blood pressure and cholesterol levels, avoid smoking and consuming alcohol, and exercise regularly.

Moreover, patients should take sufficient vitamins B1, B6, and B12 to more effectively maintain the health of blood vessels and nervous systems.

Vitamin B1 deficiency affects the heart and feet, damages nerves, and likely causes beriberi, also known as thiamine deficiency. The lack of vitamin B6 affects the blood, brain, and signaling transduction of the nervous system. Vitamin B12 deficiency impacts the blood and nervous system regeneration, or worse, causes scurvy, malignant anemia, sensory loss, and dementia.

Metformin is a common drug for treating diabetes. However, high dosage and prolonged use, especially for three years or more, may affect vitamin B12 absorption in the intestines, resulting in peripheral neuralgia.

Tsang says that by increasing the intake of B vitamins, such as B1, B6, and B12, specifically for the nervous system, the symptoms of peripheral neuropathy can be relieved and prevented.

The doctor suggests that whenever patients encounter numbness in the limbs, particularly diabetics, they shouldn't overlook the possibility of peripheral neuropathy and mistake it for arthritis or sciatica.



had diabetes.

Diabetes Causes Peripheral Neuropathy Diabetic patients are often unaware of the

INHERITED

INSIGHT

Many medical advances began

with studying

natural medicines

people used for

generations.

Could Natural Medicine Save the Health Care System?

Continued from Page 1



Dr. Andrew Weil, a professor of medicine and public health, is the director of the Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona.



Many common plants have medicinal properties affirmed by traditional use.





most profitable

diseases.

person on prescription medicines, spending about double what peer countries pay. Despite spending more, Americans make fewer physician visits. And very few of these visits are spent talking to a doctor face to face. Instead, patients are more likely to utilize ex-

We pay more for those drugs, too. In 2019,

the United States spent more than \$1,000 per

pensive, high-tech scans and specialized procedures compared to their other counterparts in other wealthy nations. The trend is nothing new. The Commonwealth Fund regularly does an analysis com-

paring the health care systems of various nations, and America's appalling record has held strong for the past 20 years. The pandemic only highlighted America's flailing health care record. The United States saw one of the worst COVID outbreaks in the

fighting the disease. In 2021, COVID pushed U.S. health spending past \$4 trillion.

world despite outspending other countries in

Of course, from the average consumer's point of view, it might not seem so bad. Because insurance typically covers the cost for most of us, we don't see the bill—directly.

However, many Americans either pay out of pocket for health care or go without. While other nations have universal health insurance, more than 31 million Americans (nearly 10 percent of the entire population) have no health insurance, according to a February 2022 report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lawmakers recently managed to drop the

number of American uninsured

to 8 percent, but doing so will

add a lot more to the na-

tional health care tab.

In August 2022, the

Biden administra-

tion passed a bill

extending feder-

al subsidies as

an incentive

for people to

private

health in-

In the 1960s, Weil earned two degrees from Harvard University, one in medicine and another in botany. Throughout the 1970s and '80s, he was on the research staff of the Harvard Botanical Museum, conducting investigations into the medicinal and psychoactive properties of plants.

Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona, where he's also a clinical professor of medicine and professor of public

information has steadily grown," he said.

of conventional care. In 2016, a Johns Hopkins University study estimated that approximately 250,000 people die per year due to errors committed by our health care system. That amounts to approximately two fully loaded 747 jets crashing with no survivors every day

A study published in BMJ estimated that outpatient diagnostic errors affect about 5.08 percent, or approximately 12 million, of U.S. adults every year.



So is it just a frustrating fact of life that we continue to spend more for less care? Or is there something the experts have overlooked?

Another Approach

According to Dr. Andrew Weil, our money could go a lot further if we just gave natural medicine a chance.

"I think this is the future. Things have to move in this direction," Weil said.

Weil is best known for his many books and articles discussing subjects such as meditation, an anti-inflammatory diet, and physical exercise as viable paths to optimal health. But he has been an advocate for natural remedies since the very beginning of his long career in

Today, he's the director of the Andrew Weil

"The demand for this kind of training and

That may in part be due to the consequences

Health care has become dominated by protocols based on costly drugs and

Getting people

to understand

the high cost

outcomes of

conventional

medicine is a

huge factor in

the strengths

showcasing

of a more

integrative

approach.

and poor

surgeries.

"Based upon previous work, we estimate that about half of these errors could potentially be harmful," wrote the researchers.

Natural Approach

Natural medicine has been around forever, and interest in these methods among the public has increased significantly since the 1970s. Since more and more doctors are now gravitating toward this approach, why hasn't the health care system followed along?

Weil mentions several reasons, but he says the biggest obstacle is the powerful vested interests that control the system.

"It's generating rivers of money that are flowing into very few pockets—the pockets of the insurers, the big pharmaceutical companies, the manufacturers of medical devices, and the for-profit health care systems," he said. "Those vested interests don't want anything to change, and they have total control of our elected representatives."

is built to incentivize drugs and procedures over holistic strategies, such as counseling paand physicians alike.

For a doctor concerned with making a living, the message is clear: It takes a lot less time to prescribe a pill that insurance will cover than it does to discuss health-promoting changes that a patient will have to pay for out

toward pill-based solutions. In a world of instant gratification, diet and lifestyle can take weeks or even months to show results. Drugs, meanwhile, often work quickly and demand nothing but that you take it.

As it now stands, the health care system

tients to eat better and adopt healthier habits. This dynamic has a huge influence over how we address health concerns, for both patients

of pocket—and may not follow through on. Patients have also become conditioned

"I think most physicians wouldn't know what to do if you told them that they couldn't use drugs in treating patients, and most patients who didn't get a prescription at the end of a medical interaction would feel cheated and go to another doctor until they got one. So that is a mindset problem," Weil said.

An Integrative Approach

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 3, 2023

Some may hear of a proposal to steer health care toward natural medicine and picture an extreme situation in which people foolishly try to solve serious medical problems with kale and crystals. However, the integrative approach Weil advocates emphasizes something much more balanced.

This approach takes from the best features natural and conventional medicine have to offer and wisely applies each one.

For example, it's clear that modern medical advances excel in acute care and a few key areas, such as managing trauma and tackling severe illness that develops quickly. Modern medicine also has incredible drugs for treating bacterial infections (although over-reliance on them has resulted in bacterial resistance) and effective treatments for controlling high blood pressure.

"These are all examples of where conventional medicine shines," Weil said. "I often give this example: If I were in a serious car accident, I would not want to first go to a chiropractor or an herbalist. I want to go to a trauma center and get put back together. But then, as soon as I could, I might use other methods I know about to speed the healing process."

While modern

medicine excels at

treating people on

approaches are

death's door, holistic

better at preserving

AMERICANS

65 or older had taken five

the last 30 days, according

or more prescriptions in

to a 2016 CDC study.

As the rates of

complications.

prescriptions rise, so

do health care costs

and the number of drug

However, the vast majority of diseases doctors see today don't involve trauma or infection but are instead rooted in poor lifestyle choices. And the results of applying modern medical techniques to these sorts of diseases speak for themselves. Consider the epidemics of obesity, diabetes, chronic disease, hypertension, and mental illness, which have risen sharply in the past few decades.

Modern medicine offers tools to manage these conditions but gives little, if any, diet or lifestyle instruction that could actually turn these diseases around.

"The kind of medicine that conventional medicine relies on is too expensive because of its dependence on expensive technology. That's sinking us economically, and we have these terrible health outcomes. So something has to change," Weil said.

The Value of a Therapeutic Relationship

Today, patients can see integrative doctors, but chances are slim that insurance will cover them. Instead, they pay for the service out of pocket. But what if this integrative approach was applied to the entire American health care system? This strategy would involve shifting the focus of medicine away from pharmaceuticals to manage symptoms (and more drugs to manage side effects) toward prevention and health promotion. It would also bring into the mainstream effective treatments that aren't dependent on expensive drugs and technology

However, doing so would mean that doctors would have to spend more time, and patients would have to accept more responsibility, in making appropriate changes.

"When I see a patient, I often take an hour. I spend the first half of that taking a history, and then I give recommendations. I could probably do that in 30 minutes if I had to, but it has to

be enough of a chunk of time that I can get a sense of that person and establish a therapeutic relationship with them," Weil said.

of healthy living since ancient times. This sort of expert advice is hardly the standard of care today, but perhaps it's even more important than ever because we live in a world with an abundance of unhealthy pitfalls.

healthy lifestyle on their own, the system works against them. In the United States, in particular, the unhealthiest foods are typically the cheapest and most available. Federal government subsidies of commodity crops have given rise to pathetically cheap ingredients that food manufacturers have come to favor—things such as high fructose corn syrup and refined soybean oil. Another way in which the system is slant-

ed is that doctors, hospitals, and insurance companies are conditioned to base treatment plans on drug trials, not on lifestyle instruction. These studies may provide evidence for proposes enlisting the private sector. It might a drug, but they don't show the whole picture.

"When we study drugs, we test them against placebos, we don't test them against lifestyle change, which would be much more useful data to have," Weil said.

Getting people to understand the high cost and poor outcomes of conventional medicine is a huge factor in showcasing the strengths of a more integrative approach. But how do you

show consumers what they actually get for their health care dollars and how this money might be better spent?

Weil proposes a study idea to make the mes-Doctors have instructed patients in the art sage clear. It would involve collecting data on outcomes and effectiveness of integrative treatment versus conventional treatment for various chronic diseases. You would follow two large groups of people, match them for Even for those simply trying to lead a age and medical diagnosis, and compare them for the outcome, cost, and patient sat-

> isfaction over time. "That kind of data is what we really need today in order to show the payers that integrative medicine is in their interest. I'm quite sure we can do that," Weil said. "The problem is that the National Institutes of Health doesn't see this within its mission. So who's going to

> It takes big bucks to get quality data, and since the architects of the current health care system have no interest in funding a trial that explores the virtues of natural medicine, Weil start with a few pilot studies initially, but he says the information that these trials would produce would be invaluable to corporations currently hobbled by health care costs.

> "They're only interested in what works. And they're not bound by ideology. So this is an initiative that I and people at my center are working on—to try to get at least some of these beginning studies going," Weil said.

Predictive Prescription Diets Could Be Closer Than We Think

have vastly

different lifestyle

and subsequent

outritional needs

Continued from Page 1

Reducing the burden of health care costs is but one goal of a five-year, \$156 million National Institutes of Health (NIH) study on nutrition that begins this year.

Diving deep into the health and habits of 10,000 diverse Americans over five years, researchers are hoping to discover the connections between dietary guidance and optimal health to transform our approach to disease. The study began with planning in 2022 and is projected to begin en-



rolling participants this year.

Nutrition for Precision Health

Called the Nutrition for Precision Health the study's goal is to establish predictive algorithms to inform targeted eating approaches, expanding on what's currently standard dietary advice for specific groups, such as pregnant and lactating women and

adding hundreds if not

microbiome signatures,

In an NIH news release video, Dr. Holly Nicastro, coordinator for the Nutrition for

diet rarely makes its way into doctorpatient conversations. A common com-

diabetics. The aim is to develop more

as stress, career, and other complexities

Precision Health program, said, "We know nutrition, like medicine, shouldn't be onesize-fits-all or one-size-fits-most, so we are looking to move away from that."

precise factors for each group,

thousands of additional factors, such as metabolic fluctuations over time,

home environment, and subjective measures of a person's experience, such

As promising as it sounds, we are nowhere near this new model now. For one,

plaint is how little nutrition training is offered in medical curriculums.

There also exists a gap between what's currently known about diet and how, or even if, it's implemented in family medicine. For example, though studies have connected cognitive decline with diet, most patients are given prescription medicines that often come with a multitude of side effects that may lead to yet another prescription. Being on the prescription merry-go-round can leave people feeling hopeless.

Could the Answer Be in Our Guts?

Frustration isn't limited to doctors' office practices. Even with promising studies, there are many dots that haven't been affirmatively connected by researchers. But the microbiome—the millions of microscopic creatures called "microbes" cohabiting with humans—offers incredible promise in providing a better understanding how each of us is unique.

The term "microbiome" was coined in 2001 and established a new frontier in health involving bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms that inhabit the body, including the gut. Its connection to immune health offers more credibility to the notion that nutrition can cure disease and illness. A deeper understanding of the microbi-

ome could hold the answer to the age-old diet dilemma: Why do some people seem to lose weight effortlessly while others feel miserable following the same diet? An increasing number of Americans suffering from food allergies, intolerances, and sensitivities makes universal diet plans even less appealing.

Increased knowledge of microbiology has also opened up more questions, said Dr. Christopher Gardner, Stanford University professor of medicine and nutrition scientist. For instance, scientists know digestion's main role is to release molecules into the bloodstream, but they haven't named each molecule or realized their precise functions. Nor has research developed an explanatory list of inflammation biomarkers or a comprehensive directory of flora.

"It's all in the works, so, at the end of the day, I really think we're going to have this fabulous trifecta of dietary manipulation of the microbiome to improve immune function," Gardner said. "That would be the ultimate."

Knowing more about this microscopic world is one way in which Nutrition for Precision Health could equip researchers and eventually doctors and patients—to offer specific dietary recommendations. The study's goal is to create directories with data from 10,000 diverse participants, including 500 who'll be locked together for controlled diet and lifestyle studies for three two-week periods.

The NIH All of Us Research Program is inviting 1 million Americans to join a database that represents the diversity of our culture so researchers can learn more

about how biology, lifestyle, and environment impact health. The subjects for Nutrition for Precision Health will come from this database.

The smaller group of 500 who'll be studied for two weeks will help researchers overcome a major hurdle in human nutrition research: full control of subjects' diets so there can be no "cheating." Subjects will live in a metabolic chamber, a research lab where fecal and blood samples can be obtained, while they follow three different diets so that the physiological and metabolical effects can be measured in real time.

Why Nutrition Studies Are Complicated Complexities in nutrition research don't revolve only around unknowns in microbiology but also around the weaknesses of major players—research subjects, the government, and the diet industry.

First, results aren't always duplicated, as a 2019 Advances in Nutrition article demonstrated. It highlighted at least three microbiome-related studies' variable outcomes despite nearly identical interventions, noting that dietary factors can't always predict metabolic outcomes, in part due to our diverse microbiomes.

"The field of precision nutrition is still in its infancy, although the rate at which it is developing resembles more the growth spurt of a gangly teenager. Growing pains are to be expected and an abundance of frustration is unavoidable, as with any typical teenager," the article stated.

Second, most nutrition studies aren't funded beyond a year, Gardner said. "Let's say we change the microbiome. It is malleable. It absolutely is malleable, but can you maintain the changes you achieve is

a question we really don't know," he said. Third, many research subjects aren't interested in sustaining new diets. Gardner pointed to an NIH-funded study he did years ago in which the participants were fed a specialized diet for a month and their LDL cholesterol was lowered. Such studies are expensive, due to the cost of meal preparation, but most didn't continue the diet because they didn't want to change their shopping, cooking, and eating habits—even with a recipe book.

Researchers are hoping to discover the connections between dietary guidance and optimal health to transform our approach to disease.

Fourth, a great deal of research is industry funded, which can lead to products that haven't been extensively vetted. On the other hand, layers of bureaucracy in government-funded studies slow down the pace of research and product development. A 2022 Frontiers in Nutrition article drew these distinctions as it urged those involved in the Nutrition for Precision Health study to maintain scientific integrity while bearing fruit for consumers to be able to integrate new

knowledge easily and practically.

One recent study seemed to have that kind of impact, albeit in a very organic way. The American Gut Project, a crowdsourced study launched in 2012 that garnered more than 11,000 participants who paid their way into research, led to countless podcasts, articles, and challenges on increasing plant consumption.

Published in 2018 in mSystems, the project's big takeaway was that regardless of what diet participants followed, those who ate more than 30 different plant types per week had more diverse gut microbiomes than those who ate 10 or fewer types of plants.

Achieve Better Gut Health Now

That study was good news for those who want to experiment with their diets because the research teases out more specifics. There are a few other tactics for diet and other lifestyle choices that experts agree

make a difference in microbiome health. Dr. William Li, president and medical director of The Angiogenesis Foundation, suggested in an email interview with The Epoch Times that people eat mostly plantbased foods, especially those with dietary fiber such as kiwi, broccoli, bok choy, carrots, and apples. Probiotic foods that naturally contain healthy bacteria should also be eaten, including yogurt, pao chai,

kimchi, sauerkraut, and pickles. "Just as importantly, a microbiomefriendly diet should avoid ... too much ultra-processed foods that contain artificial preservatives, colorants, flavorings, sweeteners," wrote Li, who authored the

book "Eat to Beat Your Diet." "These chemicals have been shown by researchers to disrupt the healthy gut bacteria (less beneficial bacteria), allowing harmful bacteria

Antibiotics will wipe out both bad and good bacteria in the gut, and their overuse is problematic for immune health, Gardner said. A 2021 study in the journal Cell Research pointed out that the most studied sources of microbiome variation are

antibiotic treatment and diet. While probiotic supplements may seem like a great idea to rebuild missing microbes, Gardner said it's a "buyer beware" market since it's barely regulated. Inconsistencies in bacteria levels in supplements, toxicities, and contaminants are all concerns in this growing market.

Li said marketing claims are mostly ahead of the science and warned consumers that if something "sounds too good to be true, it probably is."

Finally, Li said being more mindful about eating will aid in digestion. He recommends adopting traditional values surrounding food, such as preparing fresh, locally grown, and in-season food, and sitting down with people rather than eating

while watching TV or scrolling your phone. "Most people are conditioned by lifelong eating patterns that have been shaped by marketing of ultra-processed foods, the appeal for quick and convenient foods (usually not fresh and highly processed), and inexpensive foods that are mass-produced," he wrote. "These forces make it difficult to quickly change behavior toward healthier eating patterns."

them met, without hurting others. Being

assertive doesn't mean being pushy or de-

manding—it means being respectful of your-

self and others." the National Mental Health

Suppressing and redirecting anger, and

calming oneself down, controls outward be-

havior as well as internal responses, helping

Meditation has been scientifically proven to

help reduce depression and addiction, en-

hance concentration and immune function,

lower blood pressure, and suppress anxiety

Scholars from the University of Minnesota

and the University of Toronto in Canada pub-

lished a study in the journal Motivation and

The subjects were divided into three

groups: meditation with positive thoughts,

meditation with relaxation, and no medita-

After seven weeks, it was found that both

groups of meditators experienced a signifi-

cant decrease in emotional fluctuations, with

those who meditated with positive thoughts

experiencing even greater emotional control.

ing that participants who added compassion

to meditation had significantly lower depres-

sion scores and increased positive activation

of the amygdala, a cluster of neurons that

Emory University conducted a study show-

to lower heart rate and regain calmness.

Meditation and Self Regulation

Association states.

and insomnia.

tion at all.

Feeling Irritated?

Try These Strategies and Practices to Gain Calmness



YUHONG DONG

t the office, your co-worker is always mumbling at their computer screen. At home, your • Increased breathing rate partner left his socks on the • Rapid heartbeat floor—again. And now, one of • Oversensitivity your children has decided to take up singing off-key renditions of songs from "Frozen" as their new favorite activity.

These kinds of situations happen every day, and if you're feeling irritated by them, you're not alone.

Irritability is a state that involves feelings of anger or frustration, of being impatient and quickly annoyed, especially over small

With the ongoing global health crisis, many of us have been left feeling frustrated, overwhelmed, and irritated due to the absence of clear information and to doubts concerning vaccine requirements. The ongoing experience of these feelings can wreak havoc on our well-being.

Irritability and Its Common Signs People might feel fine in one moment, but a Are Irritability and Anger Bad?

more sensitive response to stress.

Some common signs of irritability include:

• Agitation, frustration, and annovance Confusion and difficulty concentrating · Difficulty making accommodations or

- changing plans Excessive sweating
- Fatigue

Irritability is often described as a trait. That differs from anger, which is an affective state, and from reactive aggression, which is a behavior.

Irritability is defined as being prone to anger. A series of recent studies explored the relationship between irritability and depression.

In 1917, Sigmund Freud, in one of his most important clinical works, "Mourning and Melancholia," described melancholia as involving "self-directed hostility originally directed toward others," underlying what he described as "the undoubtedly pleasurable self-torture of melancholy."

small annoyance might set their feelings off Many may ask, "Are irritability or anger bad emotions?" Modern psychologists would say "not necessarily." Why? Scientists would say that anger is a natural, adaptive response

> It inspires powerful aggressive feelings and behaviors to fight and defend oneself

The extent to which physi cal things can cause psychological issues is often under estimated.



Issues with blood sugar, like hunger or diabetes, can contribute to irritability.

a certain amount of anger is essential to

Diseases Can Cause Irritability

Most people feel irritable from time to time. Some people feel irritable on a more regular basis.

when one is attacked. One could say that

It's important to identify the source of irritability.

The extent to which physical things can cause psychological issues is often underestimated. In some cases, physical disease can cause irritability or anger as a side effect. Below is a list of potential causes of irritability:

- Common physical causes include sleep deprivation, low blood sugar, ear infections, toothaches, some diabetes-related symptoms, certain respiratory disorders,
- Several common psychological causes of irritability include stress, anxiety, and autism. Some mental health disorders have been associated with irritability, including, but not limited to, depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.
- Some medical conditions that cause hormonal changes can also affect your mood. Examples include menopause, premenstrual syndrome, polycystic ovary syndrome, hyperthyroidism, and

Irritability or Anger Can Also **Cause Diseases**

Not only can physical and psychological discomfort cause irritability or anger, but the constant flood of stress chemicals and associated metabolic changes that go with ongoing unmanaged anger can eventually cause harm to health, too.

Some short- and long-term health problems that have been linked to unmanaged anger include headache, insomnia, increased anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, skin problems such as eczema, heart attack, stroke, and digestion problems such as abdominal pain.

Factors of Irritability: Why Are Some **More Easily Irritated Than Others?**

According to Dr. Jerry Deffenbacher, a psychologist who specializes in anger management, people who are easily irritated may have a lower tolerance for frustration, inconvenience, or annovance.

Recent studies suggest that both genetic and environmental factors play a significant role in determining a person's trait level of irritability.

People who are easily angered often come from families that are not skilled at emotional communication and who may live in a chaotic environment.

The association between irritability and depression is somewhat explained by shared risk factors such as genetics, family history of depression, shared temperamental and personality characteristics, negative parenting styles, and socioeconomic factors.

Why Is Emotional Regulation So Important?

Knowing the cause, however, doesn't mean that it's OK to lash out at every person or obiect that's irritating or annoying. In an article in Psychology Today, Dr. Gregg Henriques,

Emotional regulation is one of the

early skills learned as children, often

from one's family. And if those skills

weren't learned in youth, it's never

Try these techniques when feelings

Take a break. If you find yourself

frustrated at work, or in a stressful

Practice relaxation techniques.

over time. When you recognize the

try some relaxation techniques

to help improve your mood. Some

techniques include breathing deeply

from your diaphragm or repeating

environment, try taking a timeout or

simply walk away from the situation

Relaxation is a skill that you can learn

too late to start.

of anger arise:

for a few minutes.

a professor of psychology at James Madison University, describes all basic emotions as being adaptive or maladaptive.

Henriques made his viewpoint clear by quoting from Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics": "Anybody can become angry, that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power; that is not easy."

"Negative emotions," according to Henrigues, "are maladaptive if they are underregulated, chronically accessible, have low thresholds, and lead to problematic behaviors that increase suffering and impairment." We can't avoid being irritated, nor can we

change others, but we can always learn to regulate or control our reactions. It's a skill to be able to regulate emotions, which takes time to learn and improves with practice.

The benefits of emotional regulation come through acting assertively without being aggressive and can help one maintain healthy. peaceful relationships.

Emotions can be regulated through problem-solving, asserting oneself, and reappraisal of a situation, leading to mood improvement and better health, and, in the long run, can increase compassion and empathy for others.

Can Emotional Regulation Be Learned? There are several good methods to learn how to regulate emotion.

The National Mental Health Association suggests that the three main approaches to regulating emotions are through expressing feelings, suppressing anger, and calming oneself. The healthiest way to express angry feelings is in an assertive, nonaggressive manner.

"To do this, you have to learn how to make clear what your needs are, and how to get

Tips for Practicing Emotional Regulation

a calming word or phrase such as

practices can help you maintain

calmness throughout your day.

of daily meditation or learn some

breathing techniques and self-

Reframe your thoughts. When

you catch yourself dwelling on

the unfairness of a situation or

thinking about how much you dislike

something, try to reframe it. Shifting

negative thoughts to positive ones

and your perception of a situation

Share your thoughts and

feelings. Talking with your

awareness strategies.

You might try the ancient technique

"relax" or "take it easy."

Meditation or mindfulness

Participants who added compassion to meditation had significantly lower depression scores and increased positive activation

dala.

Emotional regulation can help us become more



of the amyg

mentally balanced.



The Effects of Gratitude, Positive Thinking, and Communication

generates and regulates emotions.

According to Dr. Adam Borland, a psychologist practicing at the Center for Adult Behavioral Health at Cleveland Clinic, when it comes to emotional health, "it really comes down to gratitude."

"It's so easy to overlook the good things and focus on the bad things. Instead, take a step back and think, 'What do I appreciate in this moment?" he said.

Positive thinking and effective communication skills can also have a significant effect. Beyond easing irritation and improving emotional regulation, these abilities can improve overall work performance. And in learning to make intentional, sound decisions, our overall experience of life can improve as well.

Life will continue to have its hardships, disappointments, and losses, and the behaviors of others may still be unpredictable, but we can alter our thought processes and reactions to create a more mindful life. Our mind and body are connected, and through these practices, we can enhance our immunity to viruses and develop a better capacity to remain healthy during this pandemic.

Dr. Yuhong Dong, a medical doctor who aiso noias a aoctorate in intectious aiseases in China, is the chief scientific officer and co-founder of a Swiss biotech company and former senior medical scientific expert for antiviral drug development at Novartis Pharma in Switzerland.

FOOD AS MEDICINE

How Nutrients Affect Mental Health

Nutritional therapy has the potential to provide personalized treatment with a significantly lower risk of side-effects

JINGDUAN YANG

Though medical science has made significant advances in researching and treating mental health diseases and developed new drugs each year to control the conditions and symptoms, mental illness remains one of the most persistent issues in current society.

"Mental health problems are the single largest cause of disabilities in the world," the Pan American Health Organization reported in 2019, before the ravages of COVID-19. The organization writes that depression, dementia, anxiety, and alcohol abuse are some of the major disabilities caused by mental health

Research into the root causes of mental health issues has provided promising solutions. The Walsh Research Institute, for instance, has made significant breakthroughs in research to unravel the biochemistry behind mental disorders, including anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

The successful application of research into nutrient-based therapy protocols and other alternative solutions isn't only bringing hope to patients but is revolutionizing mental health care.

Advanced Nutrient Therapy

The Walsh Research Institute reported that

with the chemical balance of neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine. Patients with ADHD, depression, schizophrenia, and various behavior disorders have an obvious chemical imbalance.

signed to increase serotonin levels in the brain have been based on an assumption that this imbalance is the root of depression, an assumption that has driven one of the most significant drug interventions in the world with limited success and an ongoing list of poten-

tial side effects. But while pharmaceutical interventions such as antidepres-

most mental health diseases are associated

While these chemical imbalances may not cause the illness and may be a concurrent result of other factors or even arise as a consequence of mental distress, they may offer an avenue for treatment. That said, some of these imbalances have proven controversial, as in the case of the ongoing debate over the theory that depression is caused by a lack of serotonin.

In this modern era, drugs de-

sants present the risk of side effects, nutritional interventions are generally much safer. Another important point is that the body has specific nutrient needs and deficiencies can cause systemic issues. The nutritional basis for treatment is very different from many current pharmaceutical interventions.

Dr. William Walsh of the Walsh Research Institute, is based on the research data of more than 20,000 patients with various mental health issues, all of whom have undergone biochemical mapping. Nutrient therapy provides nutrition-based therapy and gives people a deeper understanding

> of their struggles. Perhaps most exciting is that such research is already resulting in protocols and other alternabeyond the realm of medication and psychotherapy.

The successful application of research into nutrient-based therapy protocols and other alternative solutions is revolutionizing mental health care. solutions for mental

IFONG/SHUTTERSTOCK

Advanced Nutrient Therapy, founded by

new, nutrient-based therapy tive solutions that expand far body could be more damaging and cause se-

And this is just the start. As the science behind biochemical mapping continues to improve, we may gain the ability to dial poor concentration, and learning difficulty, in specific nutritive

problems on a per-per-

cost-effective alternative, but it's potentially 100 percent natural or bio-identical as well. Of course, many mental health issues aren't solely based on nutrient deficiencies or biochemical issues. People also develop depression and anxiety due to changes in their social environment and daily lives. Treating all conditions as if they're simply biochemical imbalances is a disservice to those who need meaningful support or effective ways to resolve real-world challenges, whether it be the loss of a loved one, financial stress, or general anxiety about a world that offers far too many reasons to be fearful of what the future holds.

son basis. Not only does this present a more

The body has specific nutrient needs and deficiencies can cause systemic issues.

Excessive Storage of Certain Nutrients Does More Harm Than Good While nutritional interventions offer a rela-

tively safe treatment, they're not without potential side effects. Excessive storage of certain nutrients in the

rious health, especially mental health issues. Take copper, for example. According to research, elevated copper levels can drastically affect dopamine and norepinephrine production, leading to hormone imbalance. Various mental and behavioral conditions, such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, autism,

may be associated with copper overload. When prescribing nutrient-based treatment, we tend to avoid "enriched" foods that might contain copper, such as spirulina and those that possess it naturally, such as organ meats. Since our daily nutrient consumption ensures biochemical needs and function. many experts pave a direct path between what we eat and how we act.

Personalized Nutrient Therapy Is the Key In recent decades, scientists began to realize that earlier research had led to over-generalizations in medicine, diet, nutrition, and medication recommendations.

Through our growing understanding of epigenetics and biochemistry, we have learned that each person—identical twins notwithstanding—has a unique biochemical makeup and highly personalized nutritional needs. When those needs aren't met, it can impact our physical and mental health in various

Due to the stark genetic differences in how our bodies process foods, following the traditional "food pyramid" or embracing any other "generalized" diet may cause a deficiency in much-needed nutrients in some people and an overflow in others.

Dr. Jingduan Yang is a faculty member at the University of Arizona's Center for Integrative Medicine, former assistant professor of psychiatry and director of the Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture Program at the Jefferson-Myrna Brind Center for Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University. He completed a research fellowship in clinical psychopharmacology at Oxford University, residency training in psychiatry at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, and a Bravewell Fellowship in integrative medicine at the University of Arizona. You can find out more about Dr. Yang at his website www. YangInstitute.com

Recovering From Touch Deprivation Amid the Pandemic

family or other support systems

may help you clarify problems, gain

good advice, help provide different

perspectives, and strengthen your

relationships by building more

effective communication skills.

Meditation

can make us

more aware

of our inner

world-and

manage it.

better able to

Human beings need physical contact for health and well-being, an experience many have been lacking

CHRISTY PRAIS

Of our five senses, our ability to sense touch (haptic sense) is the first one to develop as a growing fetus. In fact, touch is the one sense that we can't live without. While we can adapt to losing our sense of smell, sight, taste, or hearing—when the sense of touch is lost—we lose the ability to effectively sit up, walk, or feel pain.

Research shows that humans don't simply desire touch—they need it. Without enough positive human touch, it's possible to develop a condition called touch deprivation.

Touch deprivation can increase stress, anxiety, and depression and lead to numerous additional negative physiological effects. For example, as a response to stress, the body makes a hormone called cortisol. This stress response can cause the heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, and breathing rates to increase, which in turn negatively affects the immune and digestive systems. Individuals who go without positive physical touch for long periods of time can even suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Research shows that a growing number of people have experienced touch deprivation due to the social distancing requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of physical contact from social distancing

has been a major factor in many people experiencing profound sadness, depression, and anxiety. Human touch has measurable impacts on a person's physical and

How to Counter the Effects of Touch Deprivation

Self-massage. Practicing self-massage helps to reduce touch deprivation. Massaging the neck and stimulating the vagus nerve helps to reduce stress.

Staying in touch with loved ones. Research shows a link between video calls and reduced feelings of loneliness and

Interacting with pets. Research shows

that oxytocin levels peak in dog owners

when they caress their pets. Playing with your pet can help you relax and ease some touch deprivation symptoms.

Using body pillows. Body pillows can mimic the sensation of cuddling. Research suggests that hugging an inanimate object, such as a pillow, can help reduce stress.

Exercising. Research shows that physical activity may help bump up the production of your brain's feel-good

ERESHSTOCKPLACE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Positive Moments of Human Touch Can Do the Following

Boost the immune system Activate oxytocin, critical for bonding Reduce stress Decrease depression and anxiety Lower pain levels Improve healing Lower blood and heart rate Improve mood Eliminate sleep disturbances

Calm the nervous system

neurotransmitters, called endorphins. Exercise can enhance your mood and overall well-being and reduce feelings of stress and depression.

Christy A. Prais received her business degree from Florida International University. She is the founder and host of Discovering True Health, a YouTube Channel and podcast dedicated to health and wellness, and contributing journalist for The Epoch Times.

Life doesn't gives us everything we want, but that is part of what we need

LEO BABAUTA

There are a number of common deterrents to creating powerful change in your life:

- Feeling that the effort is pointless
- Resisting the effort • Frustration with yourself or others
- Disliking the activity • Feeling an urge or compulsion to do the

Each of these can derail your efforts to create something new. And to be clear, there's nothing wrong with any of these—they're wonderfully human traits. But to create powerful change, we have to learn to work

I'd like to introduce a magical tool that I call "seeing the gift."

with any of the above deterrents. Let's take

What's 'Seeing the Gift'?

In any activity, in any person, you can find a gift. Sometimes it's obvious—the person in front of you is kind and generous, and you feel them very easily as a gift. When you're watching a sunset out in nature, you can feel the wonder and joy of the gift of that

But other times it's more challenging—the person in front of you is being annoying, or you're going through illness or injury, or the project in front of you is boring and hard. In some situations, or with some people, we resist seeing the gift. We want to just complain. And that's OK! Let yourself complain, and see the gift in expressing the frustration or despair in your heart.

How can that emotion be a gift to you?

Sometimes, to accomplish a goal, we have to do something we don't like.

Some of life's gifts are

effort to recognize.

If you're taking on an overwhelming or boring project, it can be hard to see the gift—but if you sit with it for a little longer, you'll find it in the silence. You'll start to realize what the project has to teach you. It will start to change you. The gift is what it has to teach you; how it changes you; and how it connects you to the divine, to yourself, and to everything

If you continue to sit with that emotion,

you'll relax a bit. Then you can look deeper.

While the person in front of you is causing

you frustration, there's something they're

offering you. There's a gift in them, if you

around you. The gift is the sacredness of the moment and of you. The gift is a profound realization of the wonder of life. It's always there, if we're willing to look.

How to Use 'Seeing the Gift'

for Powerful Change The Rescue

are willing to look.

Are you willing?

Let's take each of the deterrents to change that I mentioned above.

The effort is pointless. It feels like you'll never accomplish what you want to achieve, so it feels pointless to even try. This feeling ointlessness stops every one of us. Could you see the gift in trying even if you don't get to the goal? Could the effort be a gift no matter the outcome?

Resisting the effort. You have the project sitting over there waiting for you to start it, or you planned to do a workout today, but you're resisting it. Everything else seems



When old urges beckon, The gift found in hardship may be a more profound connection to the divine, to yourself, sit with the feeling and to everything around you. instead of indulging.

more urgent, so you put it off. What if you paused for a minute to sit still and see the gift in the project or the workout? What if you let that gift call you to the change you want to make in your life and the world?

Frustration with yourself or others. The person in front of you is obnoxious. Or you aren't living up to your expectations. These kinds of frustrations with yourself or others can be a huge deterrent to creating something new in your life. What if you paused for a few minutes, took some breaths, slowed down, and looked for the gift in this person, or in yourself? Could this frustrating person be teaching you something unintentionally? Could there be something beautiful in them for you to find? Could you find the gift in the sacredness of your frustration?

Disliking the activity. Sometimes, to accomplish a goal, we have to do something we don't like. This will often cause us to decide that the goal isn't worthwhile. But what if there could be a gift in this dreadful activity? Could we find it, and allow ourselves to claim the gift? This gives us access to more possibility than if we shut out every activity we don't like.

The urge to do an old habit. Let's say you're trying to change your diet or go on social media less. The best of intentions can be derailed by an urge to do what you normally do. But an urge is just a momentary sensation in the body, nothing that has to dictate our lives. What if you could just sit with the urge for a moment, and see the gift in that sensation? What if the moment of the urge is simply what change feels like, and the gift is learning to be with the sensation of change? As you can see, seeing the gift can unlock powerful possibility. All it takes is a willingness to sit for a few moments, and a willingness to see.

May the gift unlock new possibility 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





Purposeful People Live Longer-and Better, According to Research



benefits of intermittent fasting? How do we

know if we are suitable for doing intermit-

tent fasting?

Sometimes we have to change our circumstances in order to pursue a more meaningful life.

YUHONG DONG

Scientists have discovered that finding positive meaning in life is closely related to one's health. The more purposeful one's life is, the stronger

ing helped him feel more focused and able

to devote more attention to everyday life.

Skipping breakfast and lunch, Dorsey

the immune system. In 2003, Dr. Julienne Bower led a team of researchers in the UCLA Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences to conduct a bereavement-related disclosure intervention study on 43 females who recently lost close relatives, mostly mothers, to breast cancer. Their findings were published in the

Annals of Behavioral Medicine. The to a decreased risk of breast cancer. participants averaged 42 years old. The study lasted for four weeks.

We know that the grief from losing a loved one can cause the release of stress hormones and decrease immune function and the body's ability to fight viruses and cancer. Thus, these participants were at an

elevated risk of breast cancer. The study found that the probability of one getting breast cancer is related to one's thoughts. Those who started to actively search for the purposes of life had stronger natural killer (NK) cell functions, leading Continued on Page 12

That is to say, the philosophical topic of life's purpose has a direct relationship with the function of our immune system.

Natural Killer Cells and Cancer

in his movies.

Continued on Page 12

First, let's take a look at NK cells. These are a type of immune cell, which makes up about 5 to 10 percent of peripheral blood lymphocytes. An array of inhibitory (red) and activating (green) surface receptors enable the functions of NK cells.



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Ying and Yang by Sandra Kuck

Incontinence Isn't 'Normal Aging'

Women with low back pain and urinary incontinence may find weak pelvic floor muscles are the root cause of both

AMY DENNEY

The relationship between The Role of Hormones low back pain and urinary incontinence has been observed by physiotherapists for some time and confirmed by many studies. A deeply personal and relentlessly taboo issue, incontinence is rarely divulged—in doctors' offices or with friends—leaving many women to believe the misconception that leaking urine is part of normal aging.

In fact, regardless of age, there are strategies that can help with urinary incontinence, which affects more than half of U.S. women—a statistic that is growing due to an aging population and the obesity epidemic. It's such an important conversation that shouldn't be avoided, experts said, because incontinence is often the "last straw" for caregivers before they relinquish care of a loved one to a facility.

Kim Vopni, a pelvic health coach known online as "The Vagina Coach," said women sometimes wait six to seven years before seeking help because they're ashamed.

"They're told by the media and friends that's what happens when you get older. It's embarrassing. They don't want to embarrass themselves or their care increased urge, but also results in painproviders," she said. "They're not told this is a very treatable set of conditions, a very treatable problem."

Incontinence has several forms, but all are related to an unwanted loss of any amount of urine. Stress urinary incontinence is when a little urine leaks out with exertion such as sneezing, coughing, squatting, and jumping. It's the most common type, but almost every type of continence is treated the to that area to keep that tissue healthy

nary incontinence should talk to their we can reverse it, let alone prevent it, gynecologist. There's a good chance the that's so much better." two are really symptoms of a weak core, which includes not only the abdomen and Lifestyle rectum, uterus, vagina, and urethra.

A 2017 study in Musculoskeletal Science and Practice followed 85 women whose chief complaint was lumbopelvic (low back and hip region) pain and 95.3 percent were found to have to Harvard Health. some form of pelvic floor dysfunction. A study published a decade earlier cent of women with low-back pain also reported having urinary incontinence.

Dr. Anna Cabeca, an OB-GYN and best-selling author, said it's important to arm yourself with questions when you see your doctor. Surgery should never be ly in the perimenopausal and menothe first consideration, because lifestyle changes, exercises, and even hormone support are proven remedies.

Her medical training didn't teach many symptoms." her about these options but rather pointed to surgery. The most common surgery for urinary incontinence is a sling procedure in which a synthetic mesh or human tissue is used to support and compress the urethra. More der, rather than using the bathroom at than 104,000 lawsuits have been filed against manufacturers of mesh due to malfunctions causing pain, urination us understand our bodies. problems, and organ perforation, according to ConsumerSafety.org.

Cabeca, who no longer sees patients but consults and trains physicians, said there's a better way for both groups. She used to prescribe vaginal hormones to prepare her patients for surgery, but they often didn't end up needing procedures because symptoms would disappear.

"That blew my mind because we weren't taught that. Using vaginal hormones can completely reverse symptoms," she said. "Don't go for a surgical procedure if you haven't had a full, good assessment of what's the cause of the incontinence."

Hormones play a key role in muscle strength, and that's true even for muscles deep within the pelvis. In seasons of life when hormone levels are shifting, muscles—especially those untrained—are susceptible to failure due to collagen loss but mostly hormone depletion.

This is why menopausal women can suddenly have urinary incontinence issues for the first time when estrogen levels drop, though past experiences with incontinence make it more likely. Unlike hot flashes and mood swings, which can improve over time, urinary problems will only get worse if they aren't addressed.

"We have a lot of estrogen receptors in our vagina. Estrogen keeps things supple and juicy and moist," Vopni said. In menopause, "those tissues will become drier. The walls of the vagina will start to lose their folds."

Called rugae, the vaginal folds straighten out—more like a pencil skirt versus a pleated skirt when estrogen declines, she said. The result is vaginal atrophy, which not only causes sensations of burning when urinating and ful intercourse.

These tissues and supporting muscles can rejuvenate with topical estrogen and/or progesterone creams, but because testosterone plays a part in muscle strength, Cabeca also endorses DHEA, a hormone synthesized in the adrenal glands that helps make both estrogen and testosterone.

"You need to give (hormone support) as we get older," she said. "Age-trophic Anyone with low back pain and uri-changes cause significant problems. If

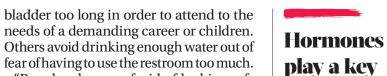
backmuscles but also those at the bottom The modern lifestyle and diet, in adof the pelvis that wraps underneath the dition to habits, are part of the reason so many women are struggling with

> About 70 percent of urinary incontinence can be significantly improved strictly by changing habits, according

is why Vopni has her clients keep bladin Manual Therapy comparing two der diaries to find out what triggers groups of women discovered 78 per- might be. Dietary triggers associated with incontinence include artificial sweeteners, alcohol, caffeine, chocolate, acidic foods, spicy foods, dairy,

> "Alcohol is a really big one, especialpausal age," she said. "It really doesn't serve women during that transition. Removing it can make a difference to

> correcting unhelpful bathroom habits that can be rooted in childhood. Cognitive behavior modification can retrain the body to recognize cues for a full bladcertain times of the day or before leaving the house—habits formed that don't help



true even for

muscles deep

Normal pelvic floor muscles

Loose pelvic floor muscles

within the

pelvis.

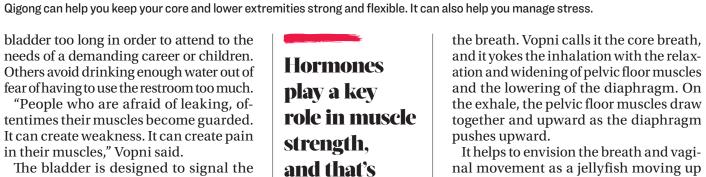
"People who are afraid of leaking, oftentimes their muscles become guarded. It can create weakness. It can create pain in their muscles," Vopni said.

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 3, 2023

The bladder is designed to signal the brain as it nears fullness and the signals get stronger the more it fills. When you urinate, a steady stream for at least 10 seconds and more like 15 seconds indicates you had a full bladder. Anything less than that can be a sign that you are emptying your bladder too soon.

Intermittent fasting might be another behavior modification that helps, Cabeca

That's problematic since most women don't know how to do them correctly or have incorrect posture, fear, trauma, or scar tissue. Women might also have hy-



and down. Vopni also cues the movement to her clients this way: inhale and blossom the vulva or buttcheeks; exhale and imagine picking up a blueberry with the vagina or anus. "Once they can do Kegels correctly, we

need to layer it into movement," she said. "We need to train the pelvic floor to respond in a movement that mimics standing up from a chair or while lifting weights."

how to Kegel while doing the types of movements that normally involve leakage—lifting weights, running, jumping, and squatting. She said it's more fun but also more effective. Because women are exercising their bodies, too, they are more likely to do the Kegels. And those other exercises are strengthening the rest of the core in movements such as planks and bridge poses.

"The pelvic floor is a key part of the

Focusing on keeping the core and lower extremities strong and flexible is even more important as we age, Cabeca said.

"Don't limit yourself because you're too old. Keep challenging yourself. Keep taking care of yourself," Cabeca said. "There's no shame around it. We have to do more than wearing continence pads and laughing it off as a passage of time. We have to aggressively reverse this."

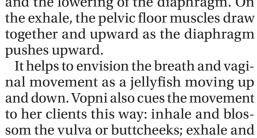
PERCENT

of those whose chief complaint was lumbopelvic pain were found to have some form of pelvic floor dysfunction in a 2017 study.

bridge poses wil

elp strengthen cor

muscles and the



In other words, Vopni teaches women

core and is never talked about," she said. "When we optimize its function, that in and of itself can strengthen our core, can flatten our midsections, and help with back pain."

Our bodies aren't designed to be in pain, she said, and anyone is capable of slowing down to listen to messages it might be sending. While many conditions can be reversed, it's easier to deal with situations before they impact our quality of life. Speaking up is vital.

Complementary and Alternative **Treatments**

Foods and Beverages to Eliminate or Reduce

- · Coffee, caffeinated and decaffeinated
- · Tea, caffeinated
- Carbonated beverages
- · Alcoholic drinks · Citrus juice
- Tomatoes and tomato products
- · Spicy foods
- **Mind-Body Interventions**
- · Pelvic floor training
- Bladder training Biofeedback
- Yoga
- Massage Energy therapies such as qigong

Other Modalities

From "Synopsis in the Management of Urinary Incontinence," IntechOpen, 2017.

Ancient Herbal Decoction Can Improve Cognitive Function, Study Shows

LISA BIAN

Liu Jun Zi Tang, also known as the Six Major Herb Combo Decoction, is an enduring herbal prescription used in China and South Korea for more than 500 years.

Historically, the decoction's primary use has been to treat functional dyspepsia and depression, although a recent study of Korean medicine, published in the international academic journal Frontiers in Pharmacology on Oct. 26, 2022, found it also to be effective in improving cognitive function.

The research team of Dr. Ko Young from the Korean Medical Technology Application Center of the Korea Institute of Oriental Medicine found that the decoction improvescognitive function and can be applied in dementia treatment.

Liu Jun Zi Tang is composed of ginseng, Atractylodes macrocephala, Poria cocos, licorice, tangerine peel, pinellia, ginger,

Mild in nature and with no side effects, it can enhance digestion, absorption, and immune function. It also can promote expectoration, relieve cough, and is applicable in treating stomach, duodenal ulcers, gastritis, emphysema, asthma, and chronic bronchitis.

Liu Jun Zi Tang is composed of ginseng, Atractylodes macrocephala, Poria cocos, licorice, tangerine peel, pinellia, ginger, and jujube.

In modern pharmacology, ginseng, the



Atracty-

roceph-

are used

in Chinese

medicine

because of

their phar-

macologi-

cally active

pounds.

lodes mac-



strengthen system,

main ingredient in the decoction, can improve immunity and protect the cardiovascular system. It can effectively strengthen the central nervous system, stabilize one's spirit, eliminate fatigue, enhance memory, and improve insomnia and memory loss symptoms such as dementia.

The second ingredient, Atractylodes macrocephala, in addition to its efficacy as antitumor, anti-inflammation, and in reg nervous the gastrointestinal tract, is also effective in anti-aging and anti-senile dementia effects.

Poria cocos regulates the urinary system, is anti-tumor, is anti-inflammation, improves memory, and is good for sedation.

The research team conducted experiments on cells and animals using the decoction and found that it exhibits new positive results for cognitive behavior, inhibition of nerve cell damage, and activating the factors in new nerve cell growth.

The research team induced neurotoxicity in rat hippocampal cells and then confirmed that the decoction could protect those cells, thus preventing damage to mitochondrial function and reducing oxidative stress. In another animal model with natural cognitive decline, it was confirmed that the decoction has the effect of improving cognitive behavior, protecting nerve cells in hippocampal tissue, and improving the effect of acetylcholine signaling.

The research team concluded that the decoction could increase the secretive signal of neurotrophic brain derivated neurotrophic factor from the brain, which helps nerve cells grow and survive, thereby protecting nerve cells.

The team believes that using the decoction, which has been proven safe, can greatly reduce the cost of clinical trials. As a followup, there's a distinct possibility of developing a therapeutic agent for dementia based on Korean medicine.

"I plan to continue to find new effects of improving cognitive function from herbal medicine in the future and conduct research that can be used to prevent and treat dementia," Ko said.









In the era of overeating,

have become key ways

to regain health and

maintain well-being.

fasting and eating lighter

glucose transformed from the consumption of carbohydrates, fruits, and vegetables. In

overeating, the liver will transform excess

glucose into fat and store it up. Overeating,

inadequate exercise, and too much sitting

causes fat to be stored in our bodies. Fasting

for 10 to 14 hours or more causes the body

to consume stored glycogen first, then burn

fat. The dissolution of fat will produce ketone

bodies, which offer energy to our brain and

play the important role of transmitting sig-

nals between organs and participating in the

Igniting Autophagy
During fasting, a series of biochemi-

cal reactions occur in the body, including

promoting antioxidant mechanisms, re-

covering the material of inheritance DNA,

increasing protein quality, increasing ATP

synthase in the mitochondria, self-renewal

function of cells, as well as reducing inflam-

mation. The self-renewal function of cells is

done by a mechanism called autophagy. It's

very important to our body's recovery and

Improving Chronic Disease
Intermittent fasting not only assists

weight loss, but can also increase the body's

sensitivity to insulin to reduce blood lip-

ids, blood sugar, and blood pressure thus

improving chronic inflammatory diseases.

In one study included in the review, re-

searchers divided 100 obese women into

two groups—one group reduced 25 percent

consumption of food, and the other group

underwent the 5:2 diet. After six months,

both groups lost similar weight, but the 5:2

diet group had a much higher sensitivity to

Researchers compared the physical activ-

ity level of mice undergoing alternate-day

fasting (ADF) and having regular meals. The

ADF mice had far better running endurance

than the regularly fed mice and showed bet-

ter balance and coordination ability. An-

other study found young men who fasted for

Cancer Prevention

Most animal research found that

restriction of calorie intake and ADF can

reduce the risk of tumors, inhibit tumor

growth, and increase sensitivity of tumors

to chemotherapy and radiotherapy. The

curative effect is shown to be noticeably

Decreasing Progression of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's Disease

Through animal research, it was found that

both occurrence and progression of Al-

zheimer's and Parkinson's can be postponed

through ADF. Intermittent fasting brings

many benefits to our brain, including pro-

moting neuronal remodeling to counteract

nutritional stress, strengthening the func-

tion of brain mitochondrion, stimulating cell

renewal, spurring the generation of nerve

protection factors, increasing antioxidant

magnified.

16 hours lost fat without muscle loss.

insulin and obvious loss of belly fat.

Increased Exercise Endurance, Performance

function of cells and organs.

fasting can increase it.

Week 3, 2023 THE EPOCH TIMES

Fasting for

HOURS

or more causes the

body to consume

stored glycogen first,

then burn fat.

ods were studied, including alternate-day

Benefits of Intermittent Fasting

What are the benefits of intermittent fasting,

Anti-Aging
Eating less can help our body produce

fewer harmful metabolites, including free

radicals. More importantly, it can improve

the reactivity of cells and organs, promote

the regulation of blood sugar and pressure

resistance, and simultaneously suppress

A free radical is a type of unstable molecule

that is made during normal cell metabolism

as chemical changes that take place in a cell.

Free radicals can build up in cells and cause

damage to other molecules, such as DNA,

lipids, and proteins. This damage may in-

crease the risk of cancer and other diseases.

fasting protects and heals our bodies.

The lifestyle of having three meals a day,

Normally, the body gets energy through

inflammatory responses.

Recently, the New England Journal of occasional snacks in between, and mostly

Medicine released a collaborative review sitting is harmful to our bodies, while more

titled "Effects of Intermittent Fasting on exercise and taking in sufficient or limited

Health, Aging, and Disease." The comprecalories is beneficial to health. Intermittent

fasting, the 5:2 diet, and OMAD.

according to this in-depth review?

Therefore, intermittent fasting should also benefit rheumatoid arthritis and other immune diseases. MS is a potentially disabling disease of the brain and spinal cord. In MS, the immune system attacks the protective sheath (myelin) that covers nerve fibers and causes communication problems between your brain and the rest of your body.

3 Notes to Consider

Which kind of intermittent fasting is suitable for you? In learning about the multiple benefits of intermittent fasting, many people are willing to give it a try. Here are some things to consider.

absolute determination is required.

Second of all, many people feel misad-

Fasting through breakfast may be an easier choice than fasting through dinner—however, as dinner tends to be a larger meal, letting it be the meal skipped may provide better results. As well, skipping dinner doesn't tend to affect sleeping quality as much as skipping breakfast may. It isn't recommended to fast every day in the beginning. You can gradually increase fasting time day by day starting from 12 hours and gradually increasing to 18 and then 20 hours.

And finally, if you have any current medical conditions such as diabetes, don't attempt to fast without first consulting your physician. Only regulate your eating habits under the monitoring of a doctor. You may like to try a few weeks on the Mediterranean Diet before easing into fasting.

According to the Taiwanese Society for Nutritional Psychiatry Research, the Mediter-

sic, interrelated beliefs:

nuts, whole grains, fish, and healthy oil.

choose natural food rather than processed food to lower inflammation.

How to Practice Intermittent Fasting

For ADF, one takes regular, wholesome meals one day, then consumes less than

For 5:2 fasting, one takes regular meals tween meals. Alternately, you can choose

Westerners sometimes promote skipping breakfast and finishing their meals between noon and 8 p.m. but having meals between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. is more compatible with our biological clock. When you have a late dinner, the body will emit melatonin, affecting sleep quality. Also, the digestive system

Take caution to not overeat during nonfasting times. Continue to enjoy regularsized meals and a balanced diet with two portions of fruits and vegetables, one portion of animal or plant-based protein, one portion of carbohydrates, and some healthy fats. In addition, slow down your time eating time to allow a greater sense of satiation and healthy

In accordance with your own situation, you can begin intermittent fasting with one day a weekend, gradually increasing to insure your goals are accomplished.

Dr. Jingduan Yang is a faculty member at the University of Arizona's Center for Integrative Medicine, former assistant professor of psychiatry, and director of the Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture Program at the Jefferson-Myrna Brind Center for Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University. He residency training in psychiatry at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, and a Bravewell Fellowship in integrative medicine at the University of Arizona. You can find out more about Dr. Yang at his website www.YangInstitute.com



ranean Diet is a comprehensive eating habit. It promotes the intake of fruits, vegetables,

you may feel prepared for fasting. There is a recommended proper approach to safe and effective fasting.

500 calories the next.

doesn't function well while sleeping so it is better to eat earlier than later.



As a base approach to better eating,

If you've read the article up to this point,

on weekdays and then consumes less than 500 calories on each weekend day. On both weekend days, one waits 16 hours a day betwo separated days for reduced eating, like Monday and Thursday.

digestion.



Reduction of Damage Caused by Concussion

This may come as a surprise, but intermittent fasting was found to repair damage such as memory loss, lack of concentration, increased temper tantrums, and hypersomnia due to concussion. This is an unexpected boon for people with brain injuries.

One significant benefit of intermittent fasting is that it can directly activate the antiaging tunnel in our body and thus reduce the aging process.

in Intermittent Fasting

Firstly, even though there are many benefits of fasting, it can be challenging. Many people are accustomed to eating three meals a day and also having snacks. The influence of advertisements plying consumers with an endless array of tempting foods makes abstaining difficult. To fast,

justed while beginning to fast. During the initial days of intermittent fasting, one may feel hungry, have a short temper, and experience a lack of concentration, but these symptoms will gradually disappear within a month. One needs to be mentally prepared for a fast.

Alternate-day Fasting (ADF). Eat normally one day, eat only 500 calories the next day.

Intermittent

fasting not

only assists

weight loss,

but can also

increase

the body's

sensitivity

to insulin

to reduce

blood lipids,

blood sugar,

and blood

pressure.

Fasting Methods There are many approaches to

> fasting, including the following: The 16/8 Method.

One Meal a Day (OMAD). Eat only one meal

5:2 Fasting. Eat normally for five days, eat only

500 calories on two days.

intermittent

Eat only during an 8-hour window.

a day.

intermittent fasting can work in many different ways, better to have your eating window earlier in the day and sleep on an emptier

stomach.

Purposeful People Live Longer-and Better,

Continued from Page 9

He said he usually drinks coffee and exer-

cises before noon and doesn't eat anything

after 8 p.m. His intermittent fasting method

is called 16/8 intermittent fasting or "time-

restricted eating." This method involves

limiting the intake of foods and beverages

to a set window of eight hours per day. Some

suggest that 18 hours of fasting, rather than

Late-night talk show host Jimmy Kim-

mel lost excess body weight by fasting for

two days each week. Though he did consume

some food and drink during the two days

(Mondays and Thursdays), Kimmel kept his

Kimmel said he got the idea from a BBC

documentary about a 138-year-old In-

dian man whose secret to longevity was

restricting calorie intake through fast-

ing. He introduced the fasting method

16 hours, produces a better result.

intake to within 500 calories.

The inhibitory receptors recognize healthy

Activating receptors recognize tumors and viral infections. Then, the NK cells are activated and come into direct contact with the diseased cells, releasing perforin and punching holes directly into the diseased cells. Granulocyte enzymes, which break down cellular components, secrete tumor necrosis factor and induce apoptosis of tumor cells, thus destroying virus-infected cells and tumor cells.

Cardiovascular Events

Searching and thinking about the purpose of life can not only strengthen the immune cells

A strong sense of life purpose is defined as having a purpose in life and being responsible for one's own actions. Experts in psychosomatic medicine recommend it as an important factor in promoting mental health and increasing one's resilience.

a meta-study investigating the relationship between purpose in life, mortality, and cardiovascular events. Ten prospective studies with a total of 136,265 participants were inPeople with a sense of purpose in life tend to be

9 Researched Benefits

of Intermittent Fasting

'Fasting'

means not

eating or

drinking

anything

that contains

calories for a

period of time.

perfecting one's sense of responsibility can improve cardiovascular health and save lives. goal-oriented in their daily activities.

A study published in the American Medical Association's Archives of General Psychiatry in 2010 examined 951 seniors with an average age of 80 over seven years, during which time 155 persons, or 16.6 percent, contracted Alzheimer's disease.

as the 5:2 diet: having five-day regular

meals and eating fewer than 500 calories

There are many celebrities, bodybuilders,

and online influencers sharing and promot-

ing their experience of intermittent fasting.

Although they may not be experts in medi-

cal or health fields, they do have great influ-

ence on the public by sharing their personal

Does celebrity endorsement make inter-

mittent fasting just a healthy trend? Or is it

scientifically supported? How are real ex-

hensive review took a close look at research

results looking at intermittent fasting across

Three kinds of intermittent fasting meth-

67 and the study lasted for 7.3 years. During

this time frame, there were 14.518 deaths and

The meta-study showed 17 percent lowered

risks of cardiovascular events and various

cause deaths in people who led a more pur-

poseful life. The results varied with factors,

such as age and baseline cardiovascular

The first author of the study, Randy Cohen

diovascular events," and that nurturing and

4,316 cardiovascular events.

perts on the topic weighing in?

for two days.

several studies.

sense of purpose in life have a 51 percent lower risk of Alzheimer's disease compared to those with a lower purpose in life. The relationship is drawn after adjustment for age, gender, and education level.

ment of a correct life goal.

piness includes the pursuit of life goals, autonomous living, and positive thinking (living in the present moment), kindness, and altruism. Secondly, as mentioned in the opening of this article, NK cells' functions are stronger in

social size, and chronic illness. Also, people with high life goals have a 29

Establishing a life goal can benefit other asthe whole body. pects of health as well. In a 2009 paper pub-

high on the purpose in life assessment had a 43 percent lower risk of death at five years than those who scored low. This result was independent of factors such as age, gender, education, or race.

Why is having a positive purpose in life good

First, an overall increase in immunity has a positive impact on the prevention of chronic inflammatory states, cancer, and autoimmune diseases.

We have already described how a purposeful mindset helps to maintain good antiviral, anti-cancer, and anti-inflammatory functions in the body.

The concept of an eudaimonic view of hap-

women with a stronger purpose in life.

NK cells are distributed in the peripheral blood, spleen, lymphatic system, lungs, skin, subcutaneous adipose tissue, kidneys, liver, and other organs to monitor and remove diseased cells. They are the guardians of the body's health and act as special patrols for

Thirdly, 2014 research in drug abusers and a 2018 study in low back pain patients found that with clear life goals, a person is less likely to develop depression.

People with a sense of purpose in life tend to be goal-oriented in their daily activities, and this mindset contributes to longevity.

People who have a higher purpose in life use preventive health care services more often and are hospitalized less often. People who value life pay more attention to the prevention of disease triggers, care more about health care, and are less likely to do things or act in ways that harm their health. Naturally, this worldview leads to healthy outcomes.

For example, smoking is known to cause lung cancer. But why do some people still smoke? It may be a lack of purpose in life, or the inability to control themselves.

Existential Psychoanalysis

Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist Viktor Emil Frankl (March 26, 1905-Sept. 2, 1997) was an advocate of existential psychoanalysis. He was born into a Jewish family in Austria and was a survivor of the Holocaust.

Frankl has received honorary doctorates from 29 universities around the world and has published 39 books. His book, "Man's Search for Meaning," has sold 9 million copies.

Frankl was imprisoned four times in Nazi concentration camps, but survived. During his experience, he discovered that some of his

fellow prisoners were more likely to survive

He believes that "people who feel that life is meaningless and that there is no purpose in life are usually pessimistic and disappointed. Without the belief that life has a purpose to support him, he will soon lose the confidence

to help patients understand the meaning of life, change their outlook on life, face reality, and live a positive and optimistic life. In Greek, "logos" means "meaning." Logo-

py) based on his own experience, which is

tence" and the "pursuit of such meaning."

proach that focuses on guiding people to find and discover the meaning of life, establish clear goals in life, and face or master life with a positive attitude. It is different from psychoanalysis in that it takes a broader perspective and explores life in-depth, and through the diagnosis of life problems, it



enables the client to gain meaning in life. Logotherapy considers the human being to be a three-dimensional being, a physical, mental, and spiritual entity, and is in fact a holistic approach to healing. It has three ba-

1. The freedom of will—this is on the spiritual level. Some people's will is not free, such as that of psychosis patients.

2. The will to seek for life meaning—this is the foundation of responsibility in life, it is active and original. 3. The meaning of life—which is different from person to person and from time to

When we face hardships, it is usually our strong will that originates from the purpose of life that supports us and motivates us.

time. One needs to think in order to find it.

I was once seriously ill and was told I had a critical condition, but at that time I had a firm belief that I had to live and that there were many important things for me to fulfill. With such a simple belief, I survived.

Frankl described his "miserable life" in the concentration camps and how he once forced himself to turn to another topic. Suddenly, he had a vision of giving a speech about the psychology of concentration camps. He used this method to overcome the harsh

experienced as history, as if he was examining history. This way, all the suffering became the subject of his psychological research. Therefore, if one can set a more ambitious goal in life, the hardships one suffers and the suffering one endures may become one's

unique life experience and lead to greater

environment. He regarded all the suffering he

Just now we looked at some positive exam-

ples, but of course, there are also negative

During the pandemic, many people were forced to take vaccines or risk the loss of their job, education, or freedom of movement. This coercion deprived many people of their free will. From the perspective of meaningful treatment, it is harmful to people's health, for example suppressing immunity and NK

cell function. In addition, people who live in authoritarian regimes have no freedom of thought, low freedom of will, so their will to pursue meaningful goals is weak. This may have a negative impact on their health.

Thoughts and Destiny

We have just shared that setting positive life goals is associated with better health, lower rates of Alzheimer's disease, longer life, and lower rates of cardiovascular disease.

Thought determines behavior, behavior determines character, and character determines destiny. Frankl's favorite quote from German philosopher Nietzsche is "Those who know the 'why' of life can endure almost 'any' pain." Let's find the meaning of life with our hearts and minds, and gain the true meaning of

Spirituality or mentality is not far away from us, but rather has a practical implication in our health, well-being, and quality of our

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

According to Research Continued from Page 9

cells and don't activate the NK cells.

Reducing Mortality, Lessening

but also influence other bodily functions.

In 2015, Psychosomatic Medicine published Thought determines behavior, behavior determines character, and character determines destiny.

from Mount Sinai St Luke's and Roosevelt hospitals and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, concluded that "possessing a high sense of purpose in life is associated with a reduced risk for all-cause mortality and car-

> All of us should ask ourselves if we have a purpose in life. If not, we might want to seek an important purpose in life in order to obtain holistic health benefits, including an improved sense of overall well-being. **Reducing Dementia in the Elderly**

> > The study showed people with a higher

This association is independent of risk factors and isn't influenced by other confounding factors such as depression, neuroticism,

cluded in the analysis. Their average age was

percent reduced risk of developing mild cognitive impairment (MCI), which is a precursor to Alzheimer's disease. Reducing Mortality in the Elderly

lished in Psychosomatic Medicine, data from two longitudinal follow-up studies were used to evaluate 1,238 older adults without dementia over a five-year follow-up period. The analysis showed that those who scored

Why Positive Purpose Is Good for Health

for health? Let's look at three aspects.

Research found that this eudaimonic (altruistic, self-actualization) mindset contains an important element, which is the establish-

He founded logotherapy (meaning thera-

therapy emphasizes "the meaning of exis-

Logotherapy is a psychotherapeutic ap-

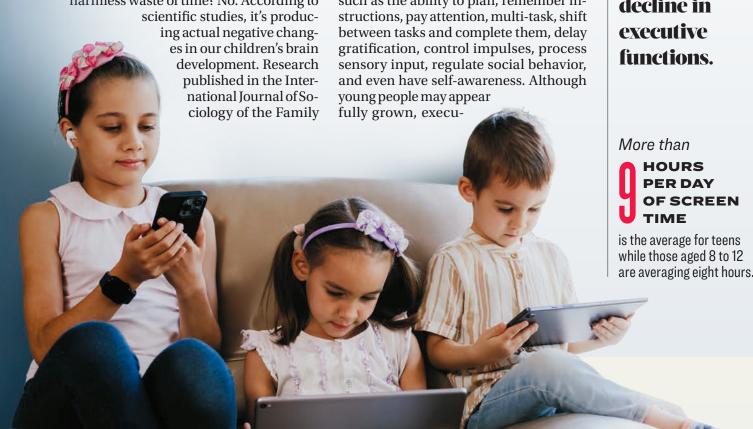


Those who live with more meaning in their lives are more likely to overcome hardship and take

More screen learning in schools and COVID-19 shutdowns have increased risks

MARTHA ROSENBERG

orty years ago when television was king, women used to joke remote control placed next to the fork, so addicted were people to TV. Flash forward to today's screen culture, memory and can increase the incidence and you find many children spend more time on screens than they do sleeping or with a full- or part-time job. Increased screen learning in schools and COVID-19 shutdowns have added to the mix of video games, smartphones, laptops, and tablets that have all but captured today's children. But is all that screen-watching just a harmless waste of time? No. According to



in 2021, for example, states that excessive screen time is linked to "atrophy in the frontal, striatal, and insula cortex regions of the brain" and specifically reduction in about setting the table with the thickness of the orbitofrontal cortex.

"Thinning of the orbitofrontal cortex has also been shown to significantly impact of obsessive-compulsive disorder," the paper reads.

Excessive screen use is also linked to a decline in "crystallized intelligence and fluid intelligence," as well as a decline in executive functions, the paper's author wrote. What are executive functions? Brain activities that are crucial to adulthood, such as the ability to plan, remember in-

Excessive screen use is linked to a decline in 'crystallized intelligence and fluid intelligence,

as well as a decline in executive functions.

More than HOURS PER DAY **OF SCREEN** TIME is the average for teens while those aged 8 to 12

> improve academic performance is that they're a source of distraction rather than

Special Concerns About Generation Z

and the Selfie Era

Jonathan Haidt, a professor at New York

University's Stern School of Business and

Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas

Are Setting Up a Generation for Failure,"

is especially concerned about the effect

vival than those without depression.

biological factors.

cancer's severity.

Lifestyle and Mindset:

Foundational Factors

breast cancer survivors.

That fact presents doctors with more

treatment options because a patient can

change their mental state, environment, and social factors much easier than their

The study also found that the amount of

depression one lives with has more influence

on cancer development than does the age of a

patient. Furthermore, the amount of anxiety

a person feels is second only to the location

of the cancer in the body, in regard to the

A report published in the Journal of Clini-

cal Oncology summarized the lifestyle

choices and survival rates among 2,230

This study found four main domains

author of "The Coddling of the American

tive functions don't fully develop until the mid-to-late 20s, which is why excessive screen usage can be so dangerous.

A recent study in The Journal of Pediatrics found that just one hour of screen time per day was linked to diminished executive functions in children as young as 2 years old. Research published in Preventive Medicine Reports found that just one hour per day of screen time in children and adolescents between the ages of 2 and 17 was linked to less curiosity, less self-control, and greater distractibility. Sadly, teens are now averaging more than nine hours per day of screen time while those aged 8 to 12 are averaging eight hours, according to research by Common Sense Media.

Research in the journal Environmental Research echoes that brain structural changes and cognitive and emotional regulation are associated with excess screen time. It even offers a case study in which screen time may have added to the ADHD diagnosis of a 9-year-old boy.

Screens in Schools

Clearly, executive functions are basic to academic achievement, but what does the screen-based learning that has overtaken so many education settings mean for children? A study conducted at the U.S. Military Academy, better known as West Point, found that "unrestricted laptop use reduces students' exam scores by 0.18 standard deviations" and that "tablets reduce scores by 0.17 standard deviations," amounting to a difference between a B+ and A- in students' grade point averages (GPAs) when generalized, the researchers reported in the journal Education Next.

"We also looked separately at subgroups of students defined based on gender, race, scores on college-entrance exams, and entering GPA. In no group did students appear to significantly benefit from access to computers in the classroom. We did find some suggestive evidence that permitting computers is more detrimental to male students than to female students and to students with relatively high entrance-exam scores," the researchers said.

One of the reasons computers may not

Melanie Hempe, founder of ScreenStrong, an organization that empowers parents to limit their children's screen time, and an Epoch Times contributor, sees other impediments to academic learning caused by screens, such as relying on the easy retrieval of computers to "remember" facts rather than us-

ing one's own memory, a practice sometimes called "cognitive offloading." Taking notes by hand rather than on a computer also better employs our memory, according to Hempe.

"Like any muscle, the brain needs to 'work out' by thinking deeply and critically and not just practicing data entry skills or surfing for quick answers to get a task done," Even a sick or injured child she said. can find better

Writing doesn't seem to ways to entertain benefit from screen time eithemselves than ther. A screen-based child excess screen may have myriad "websites at her fingertips" but "can't seem to complete a research

paper in any reasonable amount of time," or may take "twice as long to write a paragraph" as those working without screens, Hempe said.

Even early research into screen-based learning in schools raised concerns. Researchers writing in the journal Pediatrics in 2006 linked television and video game screen time with poorer school performance, and research published in the journal South African Family Practice in 2004 linked "sedentary, screen-based behavior in children" to mental health effects, less physical activity, and digital eye strain.

Possible Emotional and Physical Effects of Screens

those born between 1997 and

he told The Wall Street Journal.

Generation Z babies were in their

mid-teens, creating a childhood

that is "largely just through the

Facebook, Instagram, and

the "selfie era" began when

Few parents will be surprised that excessive screen use is associated with emotional problems such as depression and

of screen time on Generation Zphone," according to Haidt.

"It seems social because you're communicating with people. But it's "There has never been a generation performative," he said. "You don't this depressed, fragile and anxious," actually get social relationships. You get weak, fake social links."

hour

per

day

of screen time in children

and adolescents between

the ages of 2 and 17 was

linked to less curiosity,

less self-control, and

greater distractibility.

Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-Wis.) took the dangers a step further and characterized the popular app TikTok as "digital fentanyl" on Meet The Press.

anxiety. Research published in Preventive Medicine Reports found that moderate use of screens was linked to lower psychological well-being and high screen use more than doubled the likelihood of a diagnosis of depression or anxiety, treatment by a mental health professional, and a child being on medication for a psychological or behavioral issue. A study published in the journal Preven-

tative Medicine echoes that high screen time along with its accompanying insufficient physical activity "interact to increase depressive, anxiety symptoms and school life dissatisfaction among Chinese

adolescents."

Physical changes that can result from excessive screen time include sleep deprivation. Screen light suppresses melatonin, and researchers in the journal Pediatrics wrote

that unrestricted screen access in children's bedrooms causes "insufficient rest or sleep." Sadly, insufficient sleep is also linked to physical issues and "risk factors for cardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure, obesity, low HDL cholesterol, poor stress regulation (high sympathetic arousal and cortisol dysregulation) and insulin resistance," according to research in the journal Environmental Research.

"Other physical health consequences include impaired vision and reduced bone density," the research reads.

Socializing and More Emotional Effects Clearly screen behavior is usually solitary, and even video calls are no substitute for face-to-face interaction in social places. We now know that excessive screen time damages children's healthy socialization. Researchers have linked excessive screen use among children to difficulty making friends, decreased prosocial behavior, and a greater risk for antisocial behavior.

Excessive screen time can also lead to outbursts and anger, according to screen use experts. That fact is also attested to by countless parents who have worked to set screen time limits for their children.

A juvenile probation officer told Hempe: "I've had many parents calling me in tears because their child erupted in violence against them. One mom bought shouldn't back down. her son a phone as a reward because he "If your children tell you they need their was doing so well in school. When his use got out of control, she tried to take the up with their friends, don't buy it," Hempe phone away, and he hit her. A lot of kids find their way into the juvenile justice to eat ice cream sandwiches all day and system this way."

For more guidance on how you can protect children from the deleterious effects of excess screen time while not losing the many positive effects of technology, parents can visit ScreenStrong.org

Lack of Outdoor Play and Sunshine

Obviously, children engaging in screen time, especially video games, aren't outside playing with other children as their parents likely did. Lack of outdoor play denies children exercise, companionship, Vitamin D, and the healing powers of nature. For example, immersing oneself in a forest or woods, often called forest bathing, is "hypothesized to be directly related to the release of phytoncides from various tree species," according to research in the International Journal of Sociology of Family Studies. Phytoncides are antimicrobial allelochemical organic compounds found in essential tree oils.

"Phytoncides have a significant effect on GABA receptors which enhance immune and endocrine systems thus leading to better overall physiological and psychological health outcomes," the researchers wrote.

Other benefits of forest bathing include a decrease in anxiety, stress hormones, tension, anger, and fatigue and an improvement in immunological functioning and glucose levels. It has even been used as a modality in treating Type 2 diabetes, which is on the rise as children embrace screen entertainment.

What Can Parents Do?

Since screen time is a habit, Hempe suggests that parents break the cues that lead children to screens. Hempe gives an example of a little boy who had the habit of heading right to his room to play a video game after school. One day, the boy's mother decided to announce that she would jump on the trampoline after school with her children, immediately interrupting the screen habit and introducing them to fun, non-screen-based entertainment.

In addition to breaking habits and cues, parents should encourage outdoor activities whenever possible. If the weather doesn't cooperate, games, crafts, and rewarding and creative indoor play should be emphasized.

Yes, children will get angry when denied what has become such a habit to them, according to many parents, but parents

smartphone for distance learning, to keep wrote in The Epoch Times. "They also want have popcorn for dinner."

Cancer-Catastrophe or Opportunity? Changing Your Mindset Helps You Fight It

Your mindset can have a significant impact on cancer prevention and recovery

MERCURA WANG

In her book "Radical Remission: Surviving Cancer Against All Odds," Kelly Turner, a researcher and lecturer in the field of integrative oncology and the founder of the Radical Remission Project, tells the story of Saranne Rothberg and several other cancer survivors.

In 1993, new mother Rothberg was facing a strained marriage and dealing with the **comedy and laughter**, illnesses of several close family members while maintaining a busy work schedule as a TV consultant. She was also suffering from a breast infection, which she would later learn was a malignant breast tumor. When it was finally diagnosed in 1999, her cancer had progressed to stage 4.

By the time of the diagnosis, Rothberg was divorced and single, raising her 5-year-old daughter, a situation which led to a deep conviction to continue living. Inspired by Norman Cousins, who used laughter as therapy, she decided to watch Eddie Murphy's videos. She noticed that the laughter could dispel her trauma and fear, so she and her daughter made a commitment to do fun things and laugh every day.

Amid surgeries, radiation treatments, and The ComedyCures Foundation, to bring "joy, humor, a comedic perspective, and hope" to cancer-free to this day.

other patients to help them recover. She also realized that her cancer was a wake-up call and decided to rebuild her life with only positive values, such as happiness and fairness. She also became more spiritual.

In addition to using you can try meditation to ease stress and develop a peaceful mind.

She later started herbal therapy with a renowned Tibetan healer Yeshi Dhonden, who told her that she was "very well" during a face-to-face meeting. Rothberg attributed this to her optimism and laughter. Fortunately, she felt that the Tibetan herbs "woke up" her immune system, and her tumors started to shrink. In 2001, after taking the herbs for 18 months, her cancer was gone.

Some people might think that the Tibetan herbs alone caused her cancer remission, but Rothberg doesn't. She believes that the chemotherapy sessions, Rothberg found her comedy cured her and gave her the strength mission in life and envisaged and established to undergo cancer treatments. She later remarried, had two more children, and lives

Cancer Survival

els, but fail to address psychological or socioeconomic factors, which are important variables that can't be over-

looked when designing personalized health care plans, the study points out. According to

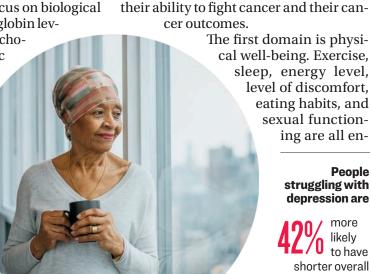
the study, people struggling with depression were,



A study published in 2022 in the journal Cancer Medicine analyzed 2,263 patients with cancer and found that a person's stress level and anxiety or depression symptoms—in other words, mental state—have more influence on cancer growth, treatment, and overall survival, than many social factors such as household income, number of children, employment, level of education, and living

influencing a person's well-being, hence Existing diagnosis and treatment indexes seem to heavily focus on biological indicators such as hemoglobin lev-

on average, 42 percent more likely to have shorter overall sur-



struggling with depression are

shorter overall survival than those without depression.

compassed in physical health.

The second is psychological well-being. That is, cancer patients should avoid negative feelings, psychological distress, or negative selfimages and instead create habits that improve their cognitive functions.

Increased psychological well-being would have decreased the risk of cancer recurrence. Specifically, six months after diagnosis, having a total quality-of-life score in the highest tertile was associated with a 27 percent reduction in risk of recurrence, in comparison with having a quality-of-life score in the lowest tertile.

The third domain is social well-being. Social support from family and friends can change a person's mental state, and one of the most important social factors is interpersonal relationships. This includes having recreational and leisure time with family and friends.

The fourth domain is material well-being, including housing and financial situation, both of which can affect a person's stress level. In another study published in the Journal

of Clinical Oncology, data were collected over a seven-year period from 660 women diagnosed with breast cancer who were 65 years of age or older. According to its findings, when the patients' mental health inventory-5 (MHI-5) score was lower than 80, their risk of poor treatment tolerance increased by 136 percent, and their mortality rate increased by 34 percent.

The MHI-5 score is a reliable international instrument to assess mental health in adults and can be used to detect depression symptoms. A score of 80 or higher is considered as having good mental health.

A systematic review analyzed 198 studies, with a total of more than 22,000 patients. They discovered that psycho-oncologic interventions could have significant effects on patients' emotional distress and quality of life.

In turn, emotional distress, such as depres-

sion, anxiety, and even somatic symptoms, can also affect patients' quality of life. According to a study published in 2012, psychosocial care can further help cancer

survivors after their conventional treatment is concluded. Trials have found that stress management,

such as relaxation exercises, meditation, educating patients on psychological principles, and sharing feelings, showed positive results in reducing depression, fatigue, and fear of recurrence.

'Target Mindsets, **Not Just Tumors'**

New treatment programs have started targeting patient mindsets in addition to targeting tumors. Surprisingly, zero stress isn't the answer.

to health or illness. Stress is inevitable when it comes to dealing with cancer. It can be used to benefit cancer recovery if a patient handles it well, but it's still helpful to reduce stress to improve a cancer patient's chances for recovery.

There are many different ways to reduce stress, including removing the stressors, practicing meditation or yoga, getting enough quality sleep, and exercising.

In terms of adequate sleep, according to Lorenzo Cohen, a professor of general oncology and behavioral science and director of the Integrative Medicine Program at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, eight hours of sleep is "a great defense against stress."

The mind can set

the body on a path

Watching interesting and funny videos to uplift your mood and drive depression and anxiety away as Rothenberg did might be a good place to start in reducing your stress. For Rothberg, comedy helped ease her worry and fear, which greatly reduced her stress. As a result, her spirits were uplifted, she had more strength to focus on her recovery, and had more energy for others with her comedy foundation—which in

> turn gave her a mission in life and her overall quality of life was significantly improved.

> In addition to using comedy and laughter, you can try meditation to ease stress and develop a peaceful mind.

There's also another way to face mental stress.

In 2019, the journal Trends in Cancer published a paper titled "Targeting Mindsets, Not Just Tumors." Research was done on how stress could be useful (as opposed to being detrimental) to people who had a "stress-is-

enhancing" mindset. Such a mindset could lead to positive changes in motivation, mood, and physiology.

A mindset starts with core associations with the outside world. Mindsets are essentially beliefs about the world, and they can be right or wrong. Every day, people receive large amounts of external information and stimuli, and their mindsets help make sense of the information, including

uncertain events and situations. For instance, a mindset of "cancer is a catastrophe" would very likely plunge the patient into fear, worry, and depression. As

a result, they may lose hope in their own treatment, become reclusive, and withdraw from their social life.

Therefore, mindsets influence attention, retention, motivation, and emotions during these processes.

Changing one's outlook from perceiving

cancer as a catastrophe to seeing it as an

opportunity can have a profound influence on cancer treatment and remission. You can better equip the body to fight cancer, and allow a person to have more confi-

dence in doing so, by adopting a "stress-isenhancing" mindset. The "cancer-as-an-opportunity" mindset can help you focus on your body fighting cancer well, rather than on the symptoms, treatment side effects, or other negative as-

pects of cancer. It can also potentially moti-

vate you to engage in activities that promote physical health and effective treatment. Current existing psychosocial interventions for cancer treatment include mindfulness-based stress reduction, cognitive behavioral therapy, and psychoeducation.

However, these interventions can be costly and time-consuming. The study's authors recommended welltimed and relatively short mindset interventions, which are more cost-effective and timesaving. The ways to help patients develop a "stress-is-enhancing" mindset include the use of digital toolkits and online modules that contain such interventions, and sessions with cancer survivor role mod-

own cancer-fighting experience. Furthermore, the authors recommended that patient care teams be trained to identify mindsets that are negative or maladaptive to cancer treatment.

els to help shift the mindset by sharing their

MIND & BODY Week 3, 2023 THE EPOCH TIMES

Study: Acupuncture Helps Relieve Insomnia Safely and Effectively

LISA BIAN & NATHAN AMERY

Insomnia is a common ailment and can be a sequela (a condition that arises following another condition) of COVID-19.

Many medications for treating insomnia have side effects with the potential to cause drug dependence. According to an article published by Mayo Clinic, prescription sleeping pills may include side effects such as dizziness, lightheadedness, headache, changes in thinking and behavior, diarrhea, nausea, and the like.

HT7 Stimulation Can Relieve Caffeine-**Dependent Sleep Deprivation**

Two recent studies in South Korea have shown that acupuncture is a safe and effective way to treat insomnia.

The Korea Institute of Oriental Medicine research team led by Dr. Ryu Yeon-hee confirmed that acupuncture can improve insomnia in treating endoplasmic reticulum stress (ER stress). ER can result in cells not folding proteins properly, a biochemical misstep that can lead to insulin resistance and other disorders.

In the animal experiments conducted by the research team, mice were injected with high doses of caffeine and induced to high alert status. The researchers used electric acupuncture to stimulate an acupoint corresponding to the human acupoint spirit gate (HT7).

In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), the spirit gate is on the wrist at the base of the palm on the pinky finger side. To be precise and technical, it's on the ulnar end of the transverse crease of the wrist, in the depression of the radial side of the tendon of the flexor carpi ulnaris muscle. It can regulate brain function, sports senses, and emotions.

The study results show that electroacupuncture can relieve ER stress to affect the brain while sleeping. The endoplasmic reticulum is, in essence, the transportation system of the eukaryotic cell. If pressure is overexerted on the ER, the

intake of caffeine and similar environmental factors will induce the problem of immune reaction, inequivalent neurotransmission, and cause insomnia.

The results of the study confirmed changes in the patterns of sleeping and wakefulness after acupuncture stimulation. HT7 stimulation can relieve caffeinedependent sleep deprivation by modulating the ER stress response. The results also confirmed the curative effect of electroacupuncture on exercise recovery.

The study results show that electroacupuncture can relieve endoplasmic reticulum stress to affect the brain while sleeping.

The research team believes that acupuncture therapy produces little adverse effect and can be used as a continuous treatment for nonmedicinal sleeping management. The research team hopes that this method will become the foundation of curing insomnia instead of machines and medications.

"Although the focus of this research is on the effect of acupuncture upon the ER stress, the curative effect is far more than that," corresponding study author Dr. Seo Soo-yeon told South Korean media outlets. "[They] will continue to do similar research on controlled and stabilized acupuncture therapy with more scientific evidence provided."

The research results were published in the international journal Biomedicine & Pharmacotherapy on Sept. 23, 2022.

Study Confirmed the Safety of Acupuncture Therapy

Moreover, the Korea Institute of Oriental Medicine recently confirmed the safety

of acupuncture therapy through a largescale study.

Acupuncture can be used ongoing for sleep management with few, if any, adverse effects.

The Department of Science in Korean Medicine, College of Korean Medicine, Graduate School, Kyung Hee University and the institute released research on Dec. 12, 2022, on the safety of acupuncture therapy conducted by Korean medicine doctors and published the results in BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies.

The research team revealed that although previous large-scale studies from the UK, Germany, and Japan reported an acceptable safety profile for acupuncture treatment, outcomes may differ according to the clinical and cultural context in which it's performed. Therefore, it's necessary to do a massive and prospective study on the safety of acupuncture treatment by Korean medicine doctors.

From July 2016 to October 2017, the research team compared and analyzed the data provided by 222 Korean medicine doctors on 37,490 acupuncture treatments. The result showed that at least one adverse event was reported in 4,518 out of 37,490 acupuncture treatments, including bleeding, needle site pain, and bruising. Most of the adverse events were consid $ered\,mild\,in\,severity\,with\,no\,sequelae\,and$ quick recovery time.

PEAKSTOCK/SHUTTERSTOCK

What Is Acupuncture in TCM?

TCM has discovered that there's a "meridian" system in the human body that's responsible for transporting "qi" and "blood" throughout the body. The two substances of qi and blood circulate to maintain balance and stability in various tissues and organs. When the meridian system is blocked, it will affect the transportation of substances and allow abnormalities to appear in the human body.

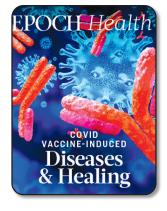
Acupoints are a unique term in Chinese culture and TCM, and they're places with many nerve endings and blood vessels. They're specific locations where qi and blood gather, transfer, and enter and exit and are also regarded as energy-gathering points of the human body.

According to TCM theory, the flow of qi in the meridians can be improved by stimulating acupoints through acupuncture. When needles are inserted into the acupoints of the human body, they strengthen the circulation of qi and blood, help overcome the blockage of the meridians, restore the meridian system to normalcy, and thus help cure disease.



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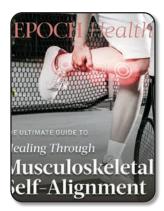
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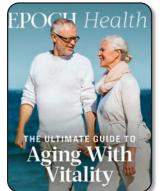


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Discover simple ways to address



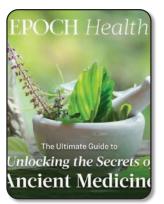
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