

THE EPOCH TIMES

MIND &

BODY

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The Avoidable Pandemic of Parkinson's Disease

Paraquat has been linked to Parkinson's disease and banned in 30 countries—but not the U.S.

Americans exposed to common and dangerous chemicals face a rising risk of Parkinson's



By George Citroner

Parkinson's disease has been a rare disorder for most of human history. Yet a combination of aging demographics and by-products of industrialization may have created a Parkinson's pandemic, according to a 2018 review of studies in the *Journal of Parkinson's Disease*.

In 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that disability and death due to the disease were increasing faster than for any other neurological disorder, including Alzheimer's.

Parkinson's Has Become a 'Pandemic'
In 1817, Dr. James Parkinson first described the condition in London. It was rare, and he only found six individuals with the disease.

However, 200 years later, in 2015,

more than 6 million individuals lived with it, according to the 2018 review. Furthermore, findings indicate that the number of people with Parkinson's disease is predicted to double from 6 million in 2015 to more than 12 million by 2040, primarily due to aging.

According to the Global Burden of Disease study, neurological disorders are currently the leading source of disability worldwide. The fastest growing of these in age-standardized rates of prevalence, disability, and deaths, is Parkinson's.

The 2018 review of studies finds that Parkinson's, while noninfectious, exhibits traits that identify it as a "pandemic" disease.

In the United States, it was previously

Continued on Page 3

◀ Death and disability due to Parkinson's disease are increasing faster than any other neurological disorder, including Alzheimer's.

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Navigating Menopause Holistically

Foods, herbs, supplements, and habits to support well-being during this transformative season in life

By Ashley Turner

Menopause can be an intense experience for women as they navigate hormonal changes and fluctuations and the various symptoms that come with it. Here are some ways to manage menopausal symptoms.

Diet

A holistic, sustaining approach to menopause begins with choosing a diet of nutrient-rich whole foods.

Eating a diet abundant in quality meats, fruits, and vegetables can set a

foundation to deeply nourish the body, reduce inflammation, prevent bone loss, and avoid excess weight gain.

Vital Nutrients and Where to Find Them:

- Omega-3s: wild-caught salmon, grass-fed meats, chia seed oil, and flaxseed oil.
- B vitamins: root vegetables such as carrots, beets, and radishes; leafy greens such as kale, spinach, and

Continued on Page 10



◀ Supporting your body's transition through menopause can ease difficult symptoms without the complications of drugs.

Cultivating Our GUT MICROBIOME to Stifle Disease

PART VIII STRATEGIES TO RESTORE A DAMAGED MICROBIOME

Home-based approaches can often heal the gut but extra tests and doctor care may speed up recovery

Food journaling lets us look back over time and see clearly what we've been eating.

In this series, we'll share how the latest developments on this medical frontier are transforming our approaches to illness and offering new strategies to heal and prevent disease.

Previously: Toxins, obesity, and poor sleep put your gut microbiome at risk.

By Amy Donney

Certain gut-healing strategies have proven their worth. That's good, since problems in the microbiome can affect everything from our risk of cancer and depression...

Chief among these strategies are the various elimination diets that operate like the name sounds—ridding food from the diet to determine what might be causing health symptoms.

There simply is not one cure-all diet because our microbial makeup—the trillions of bacteria, viruses, and fungi living in our digestive tract—is as individual as our fingerprint.

Learning to tune into cues, or symptoms, can help us develop eating habits that foster a healthy, supportive microbial community.

Detective work is required to figure out the offending food, thus making elimination diets and food sensitivity testing the only options for resolving the root issue and healing gut issues naturally.

It's a difficult thing to remove favorite foods. It takes work and dedication," Amy Pieczarka, director of PreviMed Nutrition Services, told The Epoch Times. "It's a lot easier to take a pill."

While drugs might be easier in the short term, Pieczarka—an integrative and functional nutrition expert—and others attest to the cost of pharmaceutical solutions. One example is proton pump inhibitors (PPI) commonly prescribed for acid reflux and stomach ulcers.

Patients with gut dysbiosis rarely complain of a single symptom. Usually, they suffer a collection of problems involving digestion, pain, the nervous system, weight, skin problems, mental health, and sleep.

"I never see it as one thing. Our bodies are so interconnected with multiple



PROFILE OF A TOP BUG

Just as some bugs, like C. diff, are problematic, there are others that are essential.

Lactobacillus may be one of the more familiar gut bacteria, as they are commonly found in probiotics, despite comprising no more than 1 percent of the gut microbiota.

Able to ferment carbohydrates into lactic acid, lactobacilli are easy to grow and vulture. They have many health benefits, including protecting the microbiome against pathogens, promoting the development of regulatory T cells...

Lactobacillus also plays a role in gut barrier integrity.

Type 1 diabetes in children is associated with significantly lower levels of Lactobacillus. Studies in patients with rheumatoid arthritis show taking various Lactobacillus species can reduce inflammation and pain.

Lactobacilli are the most dominant species in the vaginal microbiome, where less diversity—the opposite of the gut—is a signal of health.

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systems talking to each other," said Wilson, author of "Master Your Stress Reset Your Health." "But what we want to do is use that interconnectedness to our advantage.

The Power of Food Journaling It may be enough to begin noticing food reactions. This bit of self-awareness can have cascading benefits.

Most people are surprised when they do this because they learn how much they've been eating and then the quality of the foods they have been eating," he said. It helps to remember that the microbiome isn't a root cause of disease, Wilson said, but a reflection of health status.

"Think of the microbiome like a garden," she said. "If you've been overfertilizing it and not taking care of it, not only are the plants you want going to be overgrowing, but you're also fertilizing a bunch of weeds."

Elimination diets are a lot like tilling the soil and planting seeds. Journaling, then, is a tool to observe the garden that's growing in your gut and determine what you need to plant more or

less of and what practices help nurture the microbial community you want.

Elimination Aids Detective Work Elimination diets come in many different forms, often named by the functional doctor that developed any given protocol.

Pieczarka teaches the 5R framework taught by the Institute for Functional Medicine:

- Remove unhealthy, inflammation-provoking foods, as well as sugar, packaged, and processed foods.
Replace those foods with non-reactive protein and whole foods such as fruit, vegetables, and whole grains, as well as foods that are naturally antimicrobial and anti-fungal.
Reinoculate, which means to rebuild gut flora by introducing and feeding microorganisms.
Repair the intestinal mucosal lining with micronutrients to protect the body from inflammation.
Rebalance the body with better lifestyle choices and anti-stress activities.

Ultimately, the goal is to reintroduce—a sixth R—foods that were previously reactive, Pieczarka said.

"We never want them to go back to sugar and packaged and processed foods and the junk, but let's say they're reacted to chia seeds, which are normally

health-promoting. Let's put that back in," she said. "We reintroduce systematically one at a time. If symptoms do not reappear within a four-day period, you are good to go."

When and Why to Test

Testing is available for food sensitivities, chronic infections, and micronutrient status. Many tests have been clinically validated, such as the Alcat Test, which can examine more than 450 substances at the cellular level for evidence of chronic immune system activation.

Pieczarka said incorporating food sensitivity testing makes elimination diets more practical for patients who often find it difficult to eat only a few foods in the beginning phases. It also helps them know whether fungal overgrowth could be affecting the gut lining and how to support that along the way.

Wilson uses information from tests to personalize not only her patients' diets but also herbal supplements.

In keeping with her garden analogy, she prefers to avoid having to "rototill the whole garden."

"That's not going to be the best strategy. We want to prune the plants we want and pull out the ones we don't want."

Small tweaks often allow the body to heal itself, integrative physician Dr. Akil Palanisamy told The Epoch Times. He uses the T.I.G.E.R. Protocol, which is the five-step program detailed in his new book by the same name.

Sometimes, gut problems are linked to a problematic infection, such as the Epstein-Barr virus even childhood illnesses like enterovirus, which can cause gastrointestinal symptoms.

These pathogen invaders are often opportunists, however. That means they are not the root cause of the problem, but rather that they proliferate because the microbial environment suits them or has left us deficient in the health-supporting microbes that naturally hold off these viruses.

But testing for these invaders isn't easy, Palanisamy notes. The problem, he said, is there isn't one blood test that detects the long list of problem-causing microbes.

"I don't like to do [infection testing] at the beginning," he said. "I always like to do other things first. Our focus is to make the body inhospitable to infections and allow the body to take care of infections on its own."

Bugs as Drugs

Of course, if you are desperate enough, there's another treatment option that's been in the headlines a lot recently: fecal microbiota transplantation (FMT). This procedure involves taking the stool of a healthy donor and putting it into the gut of a sick patient either rectally or orally.

Currently, approval is for treating the most severe gut infection, Clostridium difficile (C. diff), and is likely to be covered by insurance. But there are studies for more than 200 other conditions and plenty of experts who believe bugs as drugs are the future of medicine.

FMT is now the gold standard treatment for recurrent C. diff overgrowth that leads to persistent diarrhea. C. diff can be deadly in the elderly, and infections often return after antibiotic treatment. Patients getting fecal transplants appear to retain diverse colonization in their guts, potentially for years.

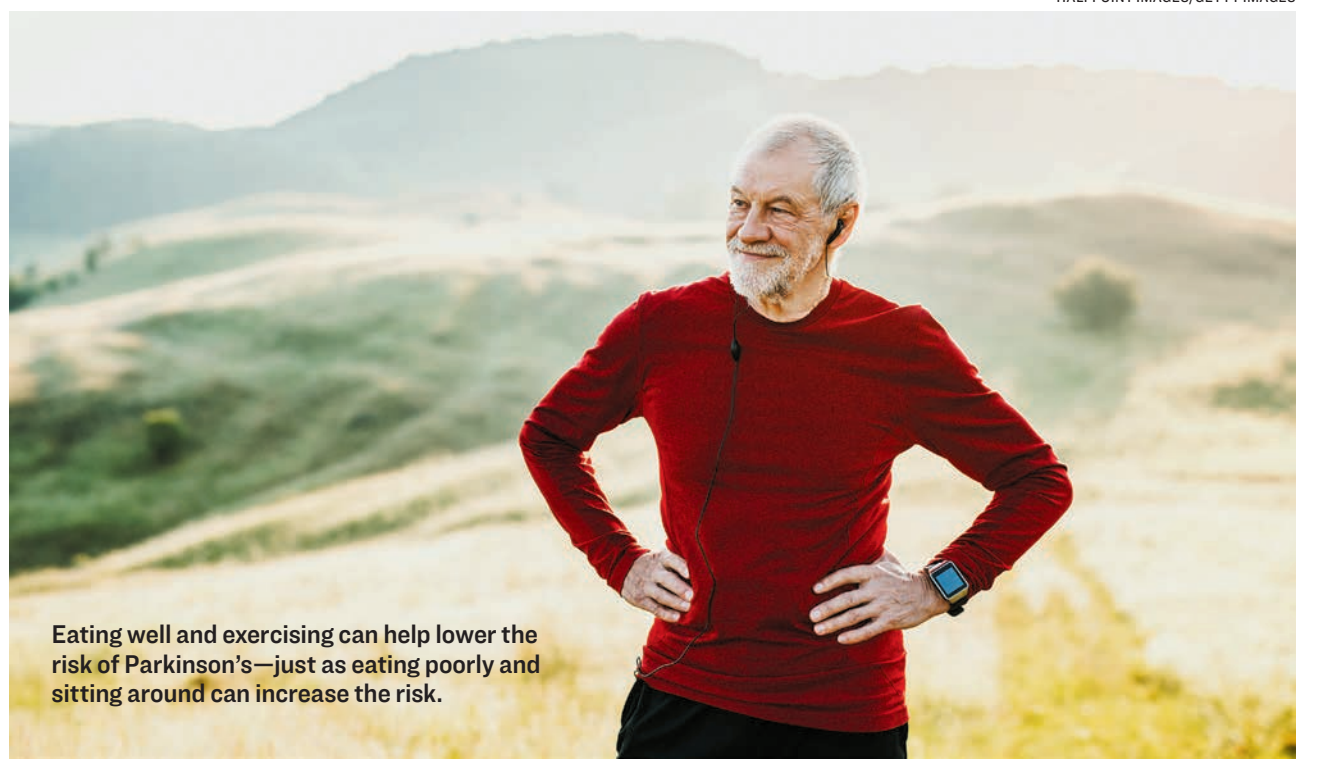
"Really C. diff is our proof of concept of [dysbiosis]. We have an illness caused by dysbiosis that we can reliably cure by transplanting healthy stool, and I think that's absolutely extraordinary," Dr. Neil Stollman, chairman of gastroenterology at Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, said at the Malibu Microbiome Meeting.

"There's extraordinary data now on FMTs. Overall, 85 to 95 percent of people are better."

Next Week: Stress can single-handedly take out the gut microbiome, but leveraging the gut-brain axis can also facilitate healing.



High fiber foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains play a critical role feeding the microbes our health depends on.



Eating well and exercising can help lower the risk of Parkinson's—just as eating poorly and sitting around can increase the risk.

The Avoidable Pandemic of Parkinson's Disease

Continued from Page 1

thought that there were about 60,000 diagnoses of Parkinson's annually, but a new study in the journal NPJ Parkinson's Disease revealed that the incidence is actually 50 percent higher than former estimates.

Besides steeply increasing prevalence and diagnosis rates, Parkinson's has other similarities to a pandemic disease.

Like a pandemic illness, it extends over large geographic areas. Parkinson's is increasing everywhere but appears to be shifting in response to population aging and industrialization changes.

In 2017, Parkinson's cost the United States about \$52 billion per year, and that figure was projected to increase to nearly \$80 billion annually by 2037.

"By 2040, we can truly talk about a pandemic that will result in increased human suffering, as well as rocketing societal and medical costs," Dr. Patrik Brundin, editor-in-chief of the Journal of Parkinson's Disease, said in a statement.

While the reasons for the steep rise in Parkinson's rates aren't entirely clear, three main factors have contributed to this trend.

Aging Population

The No. 1 risk factor for Parkinson's disease is age. Longevity is a prerequisite for many diseases, including Parkinson's.

"Outside of rare genetic forms, the disease is rare at a very young age," said Dr. Ray Dorsey, professor of neurology at the University of Rochester and author of "Ending Parkinson's Disease."

The percentage of Americans aged 65 and older nearly quadrupled from 4.1 percent in 1900 to 16 percent in 2019.

Parkinson's is believed to be caused by the loss of neurons that produce dopamine—a neurotransmitter that plays a critical role in controlling movement. As we get older, our brains become less efficient at repairing damage and fighting off oxidative stress.

Both can lead to decreased dopamine levels that contribute to motor symptoms of Parkinson's, such as tremors, rigidity, and slow movement.

Environmental Toxins

However, aging and even genetics "don't get you from six to 6 million," Dorsey said. "Environmental factors must be to blame."

Most cases of Parkinson's disease are due to environmental factors tied to the Industrial Revolution, Dorsey said. Among the products and byproducts of concern are air pollution, certain herbicides and pesticides, and even a chemical used in dry cleaning.

Paraquat

For example, Dorsey said exposure to a paraquat herbicide has been associated with a "150 percent increased risk" of Parkinson's, likely due to its ability to generate reactive oxygen species and cause oxidative stress in the brain.

"Paraquat, created in the 1950s, is considered one of the most toxic weed killers ever created," he said. "It kills the weeds that Roundup cannot, [and has] been used to commit homicide and suicide." The EPA's website says, "One sip can kill."

"The pesticide's own manufacturer has apparently known about its toxic effects related to Parkinson's for over 50 years," Dorsey said, referring to internal documents from the company that manufactures it.

More than 30 countries have banned it, but the United States hasn't.

"Instead, the weed killer is sprayed almost all over the country," Dorsey said. Its use in recent years has doubled.

Trichloroethylene

The same holds for the widely used dry-cleaning chemical trichloroethylene (TCE). It's associated with a 500 percent increased risk of Parkinson's disease, reproduces features of the disease in laboratory animals, and damages the parts of cells that are impaired in Parkinson's.

remove grease from metal parts. It evaporates quickly and can contaminate the air, water, and soil in areas where it's produced or used.

In January, the Environmental Protection Agency said TCE "poses an unreasonable risk to human health." "Yet it still remains on the market," Dorsey said. "And global use is waxing, not waning. Thousands of sites around the country have been contaminated by the chemical, including the Marine base Camp Lejeune."

"Many of us live near a contaminated site and do not even know it." Exposure to pesticides can increase the risk of Parkinson's by 70 percent.

Pesticides such as rotenone and organophosphates can damage mitochondria, the energy-producing structures in cells, leading to oxidative stress and neuron death.

According to the NPJ Parkinson's Disease study, these could partly explain why Parkinson's incidence rates are higher in the northeastern and midwestern United States, called the "Rust Belt," where industrial manufacturing has been common.

This increase was also observed in Southern California, southeastern Texas, central Pennsylvania, and Florida.

"Understanding the source of these variations will be important for health care policy, research, and care planning," Dr. Allison Willis, associate professor of neurology at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, said in a statement.

Viral Infection Evidence suggests that infection with certain viruses can increase the risk of developing Parkinson's disease. One such virus is the herpes simplex virus (HSV).

HSV is a common virus that causes cold sores and genital herpes. While most people infected with HSV experience mild or no symptoms, some individuals may develop more severe neurological complications.

Recent research suggests that HSV may also contribute to the development of Parkinson's. HSV has been found in the brains of individuals with Parkinson's, and research shows that exposure to the virus can induce inflammation and neuron death in the brain.

A systematic review of studies found that there may be a link between COVID-19 infection and developing Parkinson's, since the virus can cross the blood-brain barrier, and a mouse study finds the SARS-CoV-2 virus could increase the risk of brain degeneration seen in Parkinson's.

Other viruses that have been linked to an increased risk of Parkinson's include the influenza virus and the coxsackievirus.

Addressing the Crisis

The most effective drug therapy for Parkinson's disease, levodopa, is decades old, and there's no known cure for the disease, but there are ways we might address the growing crisis.

"The solution to addressing Parkinson's is prevention," Dorsey said.

While the exact mechanisms by which viral infections contribute to the development of Parkinson's aren't fully understood, people can implement strategies to decrease their risk of contracting viruses associated with Parkinson's.

For example, HSV can be prevented by avoiding certain sexual behaviors and avoiding oral contact with infected people.

Also, an increasingly older population should be encouraged to get regular physical activity, which has been shown to improve motor function and reduce the risk of developing Parkinson's.

"[Those] who exercise and control diabetes and hypertension have a lower risk of being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease," said Dr. Bibhuti Mishra, chief of neurology at Long Island Jewish Forest Hills, part of Northwell Health in New York.

Importantly, reduce the intake of foods grown using pesticides and herbicides, and try to decrease exposure to toxins in daily life.

"If we ban paraquat, TCE, and the closely related dry-cleaning chemical perchloroethylene, and clean up our air, we can all live in a world where Parkinson's is increasingly rare, not common," Dorsey said.

AMERICA The FLUORIDATED

PART VIII GROUNDBREAKING FLUORIDE LAWSUIT COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING

Government sources testify that they are aware of the neurotoxic effects of fluoride

By Christy Prais

In this series, we explore the contentious findings surrounding fluoridation of the U.S. public water supply and answer the question of whether water fluoridation poses a risk and what we should do about it.

Previously: A confounding factor in the fluoride debate is the arsenic that contaminates the industrial sources of fluoride added to public water systems.

70

YEARS
Opposition to fluoridation is now at least 70 years old.



**PURELY A
POISON?**

Once thought to be a “conspiracy theory,” fluoride’s intelligence-lowering effects are now well established—especially for developing children.

VITAL FADUNTES/
SHUTTERSTOCK

A groundbreaking federal lawsuit could ban fluoride from drinking water, overturning a decades-long program aimed at preventing cavities that has been challenged by mounting evidence of harm.

The Fluoride Action Network (FAN) sued the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Toxic Substances Control Act in 2017, and it appears to be nearing its conclusion. Under the act, citizens can challenge the EPA in court when the agency rejects a petition to ban or regulate a toxic substance. The FAN’s suit is the first in the 44-year history of the act to actually get to trial.

The lawsuit has included pointed testimony from leading experts on environmental toxins and admissions from both EPA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials that fluoride could be linked to specific harms. The lawsuit has also revealed government interference in crucial scientific findings.

In From the Fringes

The lawsuit has brought attention to new research that links fluoride exposure to damaging neurodevelopment effects, concerns that have sometimes been deemed conspiracy theories.

“Opposition to fluoridation is now at least 70 years old, but for most of that time has been wrongly dismissed as a fringe and unscientific position,” FAN’s executive director, Paul Connert, said in a statement.

“The rapidly emerging science on developmental neurotoxicity, especially loss of IQ from early life exposure to fluoride, is a game-changer.”

Many of the most important science on fluoride has come via research funded with millions of dollars by the National Institutes of Health.

Some of that research has concluded that “the risk to children is too great to consider water fluoridation safe,” Connert said.

The Background

The lawsuit began after the EPA rejected a petition filed in November 2016 that called on the agency to “protect the public and susceptible subpopulations from the neurotoxic risks of fluoride by banning the addition of fluoridation chemicals to water.”

The petition referenced more than 2,500 pages of scientific documentation detailing the risks of water fluoridation to human health, including more than 180 published studies showing fluoride is linked to reduced IQ and neurotoxic harm.

In its Feb. 27, 2017 response, the EPA rejected the petition, claiming it failed to “set forth a scientifically defensible basis to conclude that any persons

have suffered neurotoxic harm as a result of exposure to fluoride.”

In response to the denial, FAN and Food & Water Watch filed the federal lawsuit against the EPA.

The Toxic Substances Control Act is aimed at preventing harm from environmental chemical hazards before they occur and gives the EPA authority to regulate or ban the “particular use” of chemicals that pose an “unreasonable risk” to human health, including susceptible subpopulations.

The EPA made several attempts to have the case dismissed, each of which was denied by the court. After each side made its closing remarks in the two-week trial in 2020, the court made a surprise decision to delay judgment.

With a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, I therefore consider the elevated levels of fluoride exposure in the U.S. population as a serious public health concern.

Dr. Philippe Grandjean, adjunct professor, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

A 2nd Phase

Rather than issue a judgment, in August 2020, the court paused all proceedings and instructed the plaintiffs to file a new petition with the EPA including the new scientific studies.

They did so in November 2020, but the EPA denied it, citing insufficient scientific evidence, stating, “Without the final [National Toxicology Program] monograph, reconsidering the petition denial at this time would not be prudent use of EPA’s resources.”

That monograph is the National Toxicology Program’s report on fluoride toxicity, a document the government has been reluctant to release.

The EPA’s rejection of the petition means a second phase of the trial will take place. In explaining his decision to extend the trial, the judge noted the issue of ongoing science on the topic.

“So much has changed since the petition was filed ... two significant series of studies—respective cohort studies—which everybody agrees is the best methodology. Everybody agrees that these were rigorous studies and everybody agrees that these studies would be part of the best available scientific evidence,” said Judge Edward M. Chen of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Chen wants two documents in the next phase of trial.

The systematic review of fluoride’s neurotoxicity from the National Toxicology Program. The program’s report, which isn’t yet finalized, has been a source of controversy in the ongoing lawsuit. The report draft was made public on March 15, 2022, as part of an agreement in the lawsuit, but internal CDC emails obtained through the Freedom of Information Act revealed government interference with its release.

A Benchmark Dose analysis of fluoride’s neurotoxicity. The analysis titled “A Benchmark Dose Analysis for Maternal Pregnancy Urine-Fluoride and IQ in Children” by Dr. Philippe Grandjean et al. was published on June 8, 2021, in the journal Risk Analysis.

The court also expressed a concern that the EPA didn’t apply the proper standard of causation under the requirements of the Toxic Substances Control Act in its assessment of the health hazards of fluoride.

According to FAN, the court has set aside two weeks to hear testimony and cross-examination of expert witnesses based on new published research and evidence that has come to light since the last trial dates in 2020.

Revelations at Trial

In the initial trial, Grandjean, Dr. Howard Hu, and Dr. Bruce Lanphear were among noteworthy expert plaintiff witnesses.

Grandjean has published around 500 scientific papers, and his study on the neurodevelopmental effects of prenatal mercury exposure was used by the EPA to derive a reference dose for methylmercury.

Hu and Lanphear are known for their seminal research on the impact and neurotoxicity of lead exposure, and both have worked with the EPA in expert advisory roles. Lanphear’s past studies were used by the EPA to set the standards on and regulations of lead.

Both testified on the results of their recent multiyear NIH-funded studies on fluoride and neurodevelopment.

In his testimony, Hu said his findings were comparable in magnitude to the impact of lead exposure, and in his closing statement said, “It is my opinion to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, that the results of the element studies support the conclusion that fluoride is a developmental neurotoxicant at levels of internalized exposure seen in water fluoridated communities.”

Similarly, Lanphear closed his testimony by stating, “The collective evidence from prospective cohort studies supports the conclusion that fluoride exposure during early brain development diminishes the intellectual abilities in young children, including at the purportedly ‘optimal’ levels of exposure for caries prevention.”

Grandjean, a physician, environmental epidemiologist, and adjunct professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, testified on a weight of evidence analysis he did of all best-available research on fluoride and neurotoxicity.

“With a reasonable degree of scientific certainty, I therefore consider the elevated levels of fluoride exposure in the U.S. population as a serious public health concern,” he said.

Science for Hire?

According to court documents, instead of the EPA calling in their own agency’s experts on fluoride, they hired the outside consultancy firm Exponent, bringing in their employees, principal scientists Ellen Chang and Joyce Tsuji, as expert witnesses.

Exponent says on its website that one of the many areas it specializes in is toxic tort and supporting its clients



Studies have found childhood exposure to fluoride is linked to a lower IQ.

on regulatory frameworks such as the Toxic Substances Control Act. They also note they have testified in quite a few state and federal courts.

In the past, Chang has produced systematic reviews for both Dow’s chemical Agent Orange, a herbicide used by the military during the Vietnam War to kill enemy crops, and Monsanto’s pesticide glyphosate.

Both reviews concluded that there was no consistent or convincing evidence of a “causal relationship” between exposure to the products and health risks, although not all scientists and studies agree with these conclusions.

Chang was also a key expert witness for 3M in the 2017 lawsuit filed by the state of Minnesota against the company for dumping PFC-containing waste into the Minnesota environment.

In her expert report, she argued that “no major health or regulatory agency has concluded that a causal effect has been established between exposure to PFOA, PFOS, or other and any adverse human health outcome.”

Currently, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organization (WHO), classifies PFOA as “possibly carcinogenic to humans.”

Per trial documents, Chang criticized the quality of the peer-reviewed NIH-funded studies linking fluoride to lowered IQ. She concluded that “the

strength of the observed associations does not provide persuasive evidence.”

According to court documents, Chang and Tsuji testified that they weren’t experts on fluoride prior to their retention for the lawsuit, and Chang had billed the EPA around \$150,000 for her work.

In a September 2022 court document, defense attorney Brandon N. Adkins notified the court that on July 2022, Chang, the defense’s expert epidemiologist, was no longer available as an expert witness in the case.

Many of the most important science on fluoride has come via research funded with millions of dollars by the National Institutes of Health.

Federal Depositions

FAN presented several sworn statements from leaders within the CDC, the EPA, the FDA, and others from prior depositions.

The Epoch Times acquired video clips of several depositions and the petitioners’ summary of the trial record, but hasn’t obtained the complete transcript of the trial.

Based on these documents, Joyce Donahue, chief scientist on fluoride at the EPA’s Office of Water, admitted un-

der oath that the most recent studies on fluoride neurotoxicity, including the NIH-funded studies, are “well conducted” and warrant a reassessment of all existing safety standards on fluoride.

During his testimony, Casey Hannon, director of the Oral Health Division at the CDC, stated that the agency, in connection with the intergovernmental work group, agreed with the National Research Council (NRC) that it’s apparent that fluorides have the ability to interfere with the functions of the brain and the body by direct and indirect means.

When asked if the CDC accepts that fluoride is an endocrine disruptor, Hannon replied, “We accept the [2006] NRC report as a summary of the hazard, yes.”

Additionally, when asked, Hannon said that the CDC considers the American Dental Association an outside partner that the CDC partners with to promote community water fluoridation.

Alleged Fraud and Corruption

FAN has used the lawsuit to also draw attention to what may be systemic issues within the EPA.

Court documents included a Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey conducted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

In the survey, 60.4 percent of em-

ployees in the EPA’s Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT), responsible for enforcing the Toxic Substances Control Act, gave a “negative” assessment regarding the honesty and integrity of senior leaders.

The documents also noted that four EPA scientists in the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (which includes the OPPT) have filed complaints alleging “fraud and corruption” related to chemical risk assessments conducted under the act, including the removal of potential health effects without the knowledge or consent of human health assessors.

The survey and documents weren’t specific to the fluoride issue.

Next Week: At the heart of the ongoing trial over water fluoridation is the NTP’s 6-year systematic review of fluoride’s neurotoxicity. CDC emails obtained through the Freedom of Information Act reveal government efforts to stop the release of the review.

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. Prais also serves on the advisory board at the *Fostering Care Healing School*. She is a contributing journalist for *The Epoch Times*.

Magnesium-Rich Foods Linked to Larger Brains

New research finds magnesium likely to help prevent cognitive decline and dementia

By Jessie Zhang

Eating more magnesium-rich foods, such as kale, dark chocolate, nuts, and avocados, on a daily basis may lead to better brain health and reduce the risk of dementia—the second-leading cause of death in Australia and the seventh-biggest killer in the world.

More than 6,000 participants in the UK aged 40 to 73 participated in a study conducted by scientists from the Australian National University (ANU).

They found that people who consumed more than 550 milligrams of magnesium each day have a brain age that’s about one year younger by the time they reach 55 compared with someone with a regular magnesium intake of about 350 milligrams per day.

“Our study shows a 41 percent increase in magnesium intake could lead to less age-related brain shrinkage, which is associated with better cognitive function and lower risk or delayed onset of dementia in later life,” lead author and doctoral-degree researcher Khawlah Alateeq, from the Neuroimaging and



Paying attention to the food you consume and choosing healthier, more nutrient-dense options can help make a noticeable difference in your cognitive health.

Brain Lab at ANU, said in a statement.

“This research highlights the potential benefits of a diet high in magnesium and the role it plays in promoting good brain health.”

In the study, the researchers asked participants to complete an online questionnaire five times over a period of 16 months to get a picture of their average intake of magnesium.

The team focused on magnesium-rich foods such as:

- Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, and mackerel
- Leafy greens such as turnip and mustard greens
- Seeds such as cocoa, pumpkin, sunflower, and chia seeds
- Nuts such as Brazil nuts, cashews, and peanuts
- Beans such as lentils, chickpeas, and black beans
- Whole grains

“On average, higher baseline dietary Mg intake was associated with larger brain volumes,” the study reads.

Leading Causes of Death

Death from dementia is on the rise and is the leading cause of death for women in Australia and the fourth-leading cause of death for women in the United States.

Since there’s no cure for dementia and the development of pharmacological treatments has been unsuccessful for the past 30 years, the team sought to direct greater attention toward prevention.

The researchers recommended increasing magnesium intake from a young age to protect the brain from cognitive decline and diseases by the time one reaches their 40s.

“The study shows higher dietary magnesium intake may contribute to neuroprotection earlier in the aging process, and preventative effects may begin in our 40s or even earlier,” Alateeq said in an ANU statement.

“We also found the neuroprotective effects of more dietary magnesium appears to benefit women more than men and more so in post-menopausal than pre-menopausal women, although this may be due to the anti-inflammatory effect of magnesium.”

The study was published in the *European Journal of Nutrition* on March 10.

TAPHOTOGRAPH/GETTY IMAGES

PEOPLE IMAGE STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK



The Environmental Protection Agency has tried repeatedly to have a groundbreaking federal lawsuit by the Fluoride Action Network thrown out of court, but has failed each time.

The Miraculous IMMUNE SYSTEM

PART VIII THE ESSENTIAL ROLES OF OUR SHRINKING THYMUS

This unusual immune system organ does vital work protecting our health and wellness

The thymus is responsible for training and developing T cells—key soldiers in our immune defense against pathogens and viruses.



OLIVER ROSSI/GETTY IMAGES

In this series, we explore the true power of the body's immunity and the organs that work tirelessly to achieve it.

Previously: The spleen protects the body in remarkable ways, so it's essential to learn how to keep it healthy.

By Yuhong Dong

The thymus is an organ that has puzzled scientists and scholars for centuries. It's an essential lymphatic organ and an endocrine gland that plays a significant role. Its dysfunction can drastically affect quality of life.

By adulthood, the thymus has significantly decreased in size, so many people think of it as a "shrunk" and "useless" organ. Yet is this really true?

More and more research has discovered that the thymus continues, even into adulthood, to have essential functions across many systems of the body.

Originally Linked With the Soul

The origin of its name is shrouded in mystery. It may come from the plant *Thymus vulgaris*, better known as thyme, while some research attributes

it to the Greek word "thumos," which can mean "soul," "courage," or "will." In fact, the ancient Greeks believed that the thymus housed the soul because it was located in the upper part of the chest, just behind the sternum and between the lungs, adjacent to the heart.

The pinkish-gray thymus is well known for its responsibility of directing the development of T cells, which get their name from the thymus, since that's where they mature—B cells mature in the bone marrow.

The thymus is essential to the immune system, which provides surveillance and protection against pathogens, antigens, and tumors.

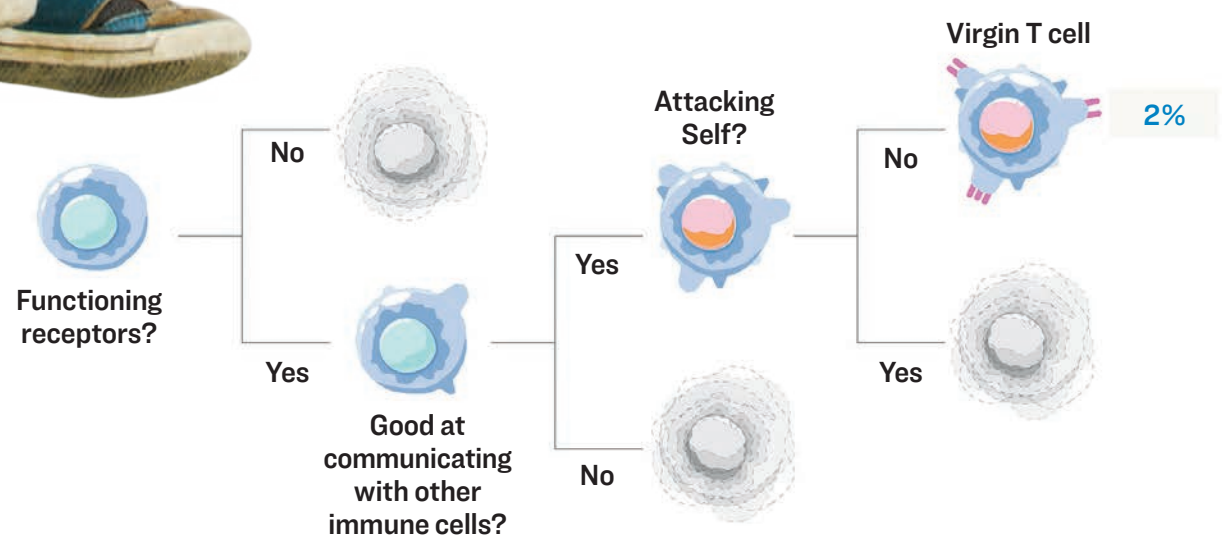
T Cell Development and Training

T cells are the most powerful adaptive immune cells in the human body and are essential for survival. To destroy T cells is to destroy adaptive immunity, just like the cunning human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) does by hijacking an important subset of T cells first.

Before T cells mature and become full-on specialists capable of fighting the most grueling battles of immunity, they must pass through a life-or-death trial by the thymus.

The thymus is essential for so much in youth, but it still protects the body as it ages, even as it's shrinking.

The Thymus: A Boot Camp for Combat Training of T cells



THE EPOCH TIMES

Smartphones Before Bed May Increase Diabetes Risk

New research finds that women who avoid smartphones and computers before bed have a lower risk of gestational diabetes

By Jessie Zhang

Women who avoid exposure to computer and phone screens before bedtime may have a lower risk of gestational diabetes, according to a study by Northwestern University published

in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology Maternal Fetal Medicine in 2023.

Dr. Minjee Kim, an assistant professor of neurology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, said that the risks of light exposure from such

devices were under-recognized.

"Our study suggests that light exposure before bedtime may be an easily modifiable risk factor of gestational diabetes," Kim, the lead study author, said in a Northwestern article.

"Gestational diabetes is known to increase obstetric complications and the mother's risk of diabetes, heart disease, and dementia. The offspring also are more likely to have obesity and hypertension as they grow up."

Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy and is a complication that usually goes away after the baby is born but carries significant risks for both mother and offspring.

Researchers found that women with gestational diabetes are almost 10 times more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes than those who don't have glucose issues during pregnancy.

The global incidence of gestational diabetes is rising fast, and it now occurs in nearly 8 percent of all preg-

nancies in the United States.

Overstimulated Nervous System

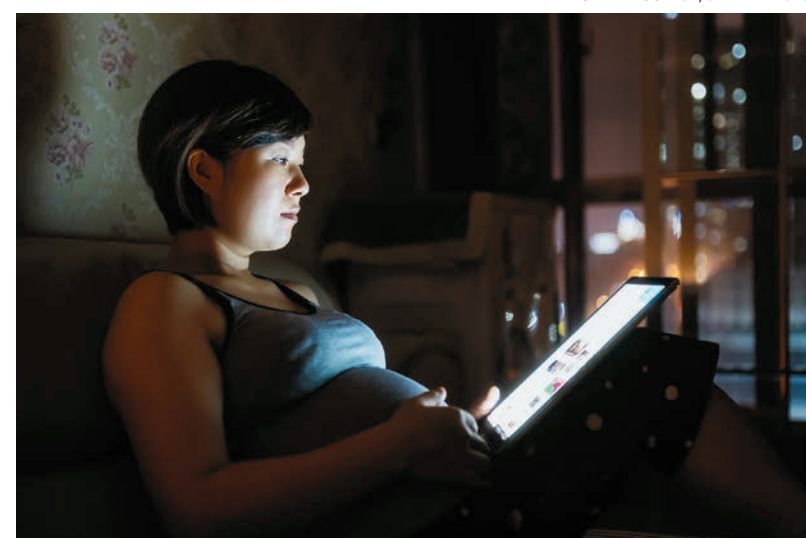
Kim and colleagues gave 741 women wrist-worn devices to measure their light exposure during their second trimester of pregnancy, the time when they receive routine screening for gestational diabetes.

They discovered that light exposure before bedtime caused overactivity of the sympathetic nervous system, meaning the heart rate goes up before bed, when it should go down.

Anxiety, nervousness, insomnia, inability to relax, and poor digestion are just a few signs of an overstimulated nervous system.

"It seems there is inappropriate activation of the fight or flight response when it is time to rest," Kim said.

Sympathetic overactivity can contribute to obesity, insulin resistance, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol, all leading to cardiovascular diseases.



ORIENTFOOTAGE/GETTY IMAGES

Bright light exposure from phones, televisions, and computers before bedtime may overstimulate the nervous system and increase the risk of gestational diabetes in pregnant women.

Overexposure

Bright lights in the home and from devices such as televisions, computers, alarm clocks, and smartphones should be avoided for the three hours before going to bed, Kim said.

"We don't think about the potential harm of keeping the environment bright from the moment we wake up until we go to bed," Kim said.

"But it should be pretty dim for several hours before we go to bed. We probably don't need that much light for whatever we do routinely in the evening."

"But if you have to use them, keep the screens as dim as possible," Kim said, suggesting that people use the night light option and turn off the blue light.

Optimizing the Circadian Rhythm

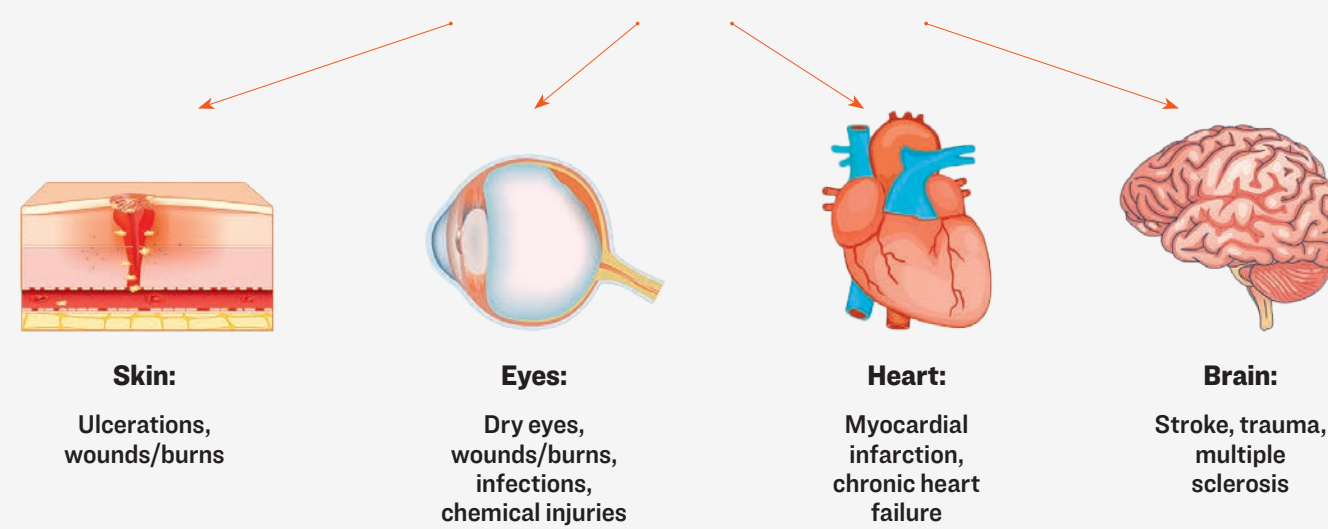
According to modern research and traditional Chinese medicine, synchronizing one's daily activities with the day's cycles of light and dark can regulate one's circadian rhythm, influencing important functions in the body such as digestion and body temperature.

However, unnatural signals from the environment also affect circadian rhythms.

This may explain why many studies have revealed that nighttime exposure to light causes the loss of the sleep hormone melatonin and over time, weakens the immune system.

Potential Clinical Applications of Thymosin Beta-4

Thymosin beta-4 has inflammation-reducing, wound-healing effects that can help treat several ailments:



The thymus is specially designed to train T cells in different "chambers," where 98 percent of developing T cells will fail and be eliminated. Nevertheless, the thymus still produces enough T cells to protect against every pathogen known to man.

The 2 percent of T cells that successfully pass thymus boot camp are highly trained with specialized roles related to peripheral lymph nodes or other assignments. Careful killers, T cells can effectively distinguish harmful external invaders from healthy human cells.

Dysfunction of the thymus, however, increases vulnerability to infection. Poorly trained T cells also increase the risk of autoimmunity, when the immune system attacks the body.

Lifelong Functions of the Thymus

At birth, the thymus is at its most active, but its workload starts to fall as early as the second year of life. This is because every time the body encounters a pathogen, the thymus trains T cells to deal with it. Once that T cell is matured, it won't need to be trained again; it simply needs to clone itself.

After the thymus works its way through all the pathogens, it has little left to do. After puberty, it appears to shrink—a process coined "age-related involution or atrophy," describing how it turns into "useless" fatty tissue.

Despite being shrunken, the thymus is far from useless and plays an important role throughout adulthood.

Producing Important Hormones

The thymus is also an endocrine gland that makes active "messenger-like"

substances called hormones, which help regulate the immune system and play other functions.

These hormones include thymosin and thymulin, which help make specialized types of T cells; thymopoietin, which fuels T cell production and instructs the pituitary gland to release hormones; and thymic humoral factor, which keeps the immune system functioning well. These systemic functions reflect the varied and vital roles of the thymus.

Beyond stimulating the production of T cells, the different types of thymosin have many other roles.

So far, only two forms of thymosin have been synthesized: thymosin alpha-1 and thymosin beta-4.

Thymosin Alpha-1: Clinical Applications for Immune Health

Thymosin alpha-1 acts as a multitasking protein and can restore immune system homeostasis in a tailored way based on different health conditions.

The body naturally produces alpha-1, and the synthetic version has been used to modulate the immune system and treat a number of specific conditions, including acute and chronic viral infections such as hepatitis B and C and HIV.

It's also used to enhance immune function and has been tested against diseases that weaken or dysregulate the immune system, such as cancer and autoimmune diseases.

A distinctive feature of thymosin treatment is that it repairs defective immunity in a balanced way without overstimulating cytokine production, resulting in fewer adverse events.

Thymosin Beta-4: From Healing Wounds to Muscle Repair

Thymosin beta-4 is an incredible peptide with the ability to develop new blood vessels and help with tissue repair and regeneration.

It also has anti-inflammatory properties, making it an ideal treatment for skin injuries such as burns or cuts.

It can also stimulate the migration and differentiation of cells involved in tissue repair and has even been studied for its potential to promote muscle growth and repair, including in the treatment of cardiac disease.

Recent research suggests that thymosin beta-4 makes some bone marrow cells more sensitive to a growth hormone, which enhances their growth and development into blood cells.

The more we learn about this amazing thymus-originated peptide and related hormones, the more potential benefits are uncovered. As we learn more of the short- and long-term effects of the thymus, we discover how profoundly connected the human body is, hinting at a complicated interplay of hormones, nervous impulses, and immune health.

Links to the Immune and Endocrine Systems

Exciting research has revealed that the thymus produces various hormones that affect growth, metabolism, and brain chemicals. These hormones include insulin, cortisol, and melatonin.

The thymus can also secrete hormones such as T3 under the influence of thyroid-stimulating hormones. Interestingly, studies show that differ-



ent hormones can regulate each other within the immune system, forming a hormonal network. Some of its hormones even have anti-inflammatory properties and may help protect against certain cancers. The thymus can affect the immune, endocrine, nervous, and digestive systems, as well as emotional control. It acts as a vital communication hub, connecting the immune, endocrine, and neurological systems to regulate the body's functions.

Slows Down Aging

The thymus gland is a remarkable organ that produces hormones that can slow down the aging process. The process is influenced by the pineal gland, which is a tiny endocrinological gland in the brain that secretes melatonin to control the sleep and wake cycles, among other things.

Scientists have discovered a close connection between the thymus gland and the pineal gland, with the potential to unlock more secrets.

The thymus hormones fight aging and help preserve the ability to learn and remember with age.

Protective Role in Diabetes and Miscarriage

A recent study published in the journal *Nature* showed that in pregnant mice,

the thymus produces immune cells that are essential for preventing gestational diabetes and miscarriages.

Studies have also shown that defects in the thymus can lead to Type 1 diabetes in animal models.

The thymus is essential for so much in youth, but it still protects the body as it ages, even as it's shrinking. It still produces T cells important for pregnancy health and immunity and secretes hormones that help to regulate the function of the whole body, including aging and growth. Many of these other roles are only partially understood, and there are certainly other functions that science hasn't even begun to unravel.

Next: Understanding how to keep the thymus healthy can be a game changer for long-term health.

Next Week: Understanding how to keep the thymus healthy can be a game changer for long-term health.

'Diabetes a Sign of Nutritional Inadequacy'

Diabetes can also be prevented with a nutrient-rich diet, according to Dr. Joel Fuhrman, a physician and internationally recognized expert specializing in preventing and reversing disease through nutritional methods.

"If women eat [in] the high-nutrient dietary style, they will be protected from developing gestational diabetes and type 2 diabetes later in life," Fuhrman wrote in an article.

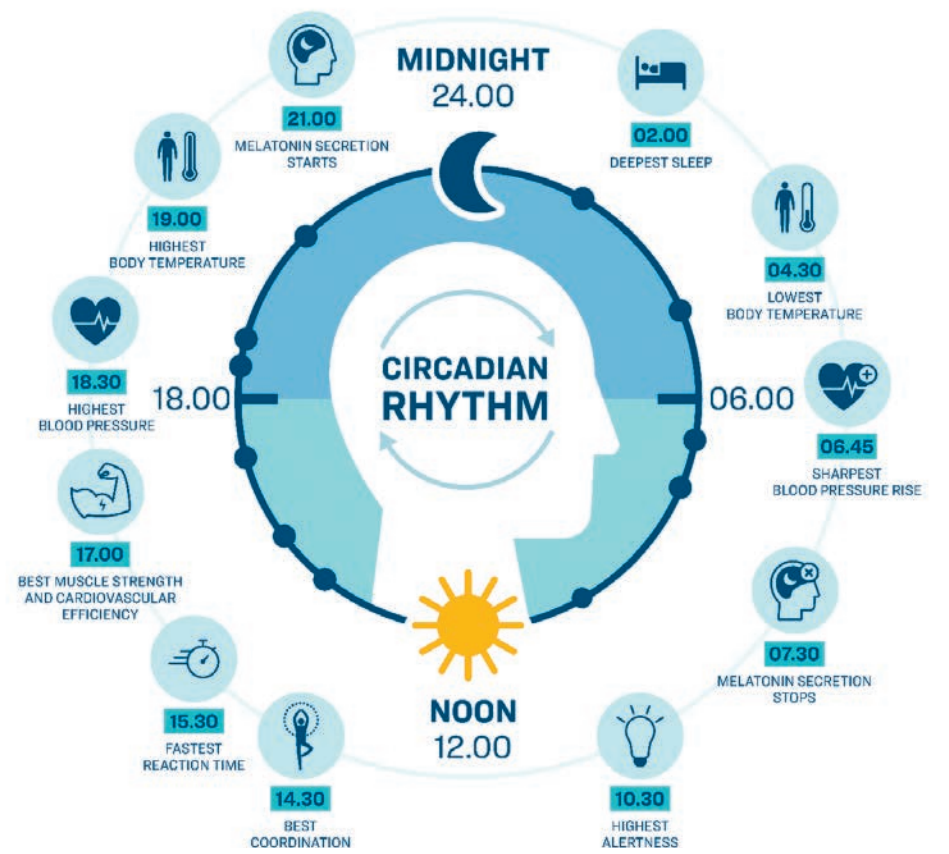
"Gestational diabetes is a sign of nutritional inadequacy. If you have gestational diabetes, the best medicine is no medicine.

"Who knows what subtle, long-term effects diabetes medications may have on an unborn child? Superior nutrition is the safest and most effective choice."

While eating healthy, losing weight, and exercising can be effective, turning down the lights may be a quicker and easier way to lower the risk of developing diabetes.

"Now I'm the light police at home. I see all this light I never thought about before. I try to dim the light as much as possible," Kim said.

Synchronizing our daily activities with the natural cycle of the day can help regulate our body's circadian rhythm and prevent disease.



ELENABSL/SHUTTERSTOCK

UNEXPLORED COVID-19 VACCINES ADVERSE EVENTS

PART VIII PREVENTING COVID-19 VACCINE ADVERSE EVENTS: DOCTORS' ADVICE

Support the body's detox efforts with foods, fasting, supplements, and more

In this series, we evaluate some of the lesser-known yet common adverse events that are appearing in the research literature as well as in doctors' clinics and, more importantly, how to deal with them and reduce the risks.

Previously: Jeff Jackson was self-sufficient until he took the second dose of his COVID-19 vaccine and dark red shapes started appearing on the back of his head.

Keeping calm and reducing mental stress will help in boosting your immune function.

By Marina Zhang

Due to mandated vaccinations in his workplace, Mitchell McConachy, 25, reluctantly took the COVID-19 vaccine in 2021—and soon began worrying about adverse events.

In 2022, McConachy learned about COVID-19 vaccine adverse events from doctors online and realized that his chest pain and the throbbing in his head and wrists might be linked to the mRNA vaccines. He fears that the worst is yet to come.

McConachy's experience echoes that of many vaccinated people now concerned about potential vaccine risks. Some didn't experience any symptoms but worry that misfortune awaits.

The Rasmussen Reports poll of 1,000 people in December 2022 shows that 57 percent of Americans are somewhat or very concerned about major vaccine adverse effects.

But concern and worry aren't the only options. Doctors treating vaccine side effects say there are ways to help people avoid possible adverse events.

Not Everyone Will Experience Vaccine Adverse Events

Not everyone vaccinated will experience an adverse event. Experiencing such an event depends on many factors, including the person's health, dosage, number of doses, and time since the last dose.

Concerning vaccine quality, studies have shown that vaccine batches aren't made equal, with varying quality across batches, a

fact further evidenced by the website HowBadIsMyBatch.com.

The amount of time since the last dose may also be a good assessment of the risk of adverse events, as these events seem to occur within a few days or weeks after inoculation. The longer a person is asymptomatic, the lower his likelihood of experiencing an adverse event.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) data indicate that more than 50 percent of adverse events occur within two days of vaccination, and 46 percent of the deaths occur within the first two months. Although there appears to be a small increase in events reported after four months, the chance of adverse events decreases as time goes on, although that may also reflect that people are less likely to associate various health outcomes with the vaccine and trigger a VAERS report.

Board-certified internist Dr. Syed Haider, who has treated more than 50,000 people since the COVID-19 pandemic, said his patients tend to report post-vaccine symptoms several weeks after vaccination.

Naturopath Dr. Jana Schmidt, who has been contacted by about 2,000 vaccine-injured people, said the symptoms generally emerge within the first few weeks to a month.

"If you are well after five months out, or a year out, with no symptoms, no problems, I really do want to reassure you that I think you're okay," critical care expert and co-founder of the Front Line COVID-19 Critical Care (FLCCC) Alliance Dr. Pierre Kory said in a report to the FLCCC, noting that many people have had no reactions to the vaccines.

It should be noted that Kory's comments were made about

cardiac events, which tend to occur quickly and suddenly. There are other neural disease and cancer concerns in which safety signals may be present but data are sparse.

Cancer, which can be present for months to years before it's detected, has been extensively related to COVID-19 vaccine adverse events; 60 percent of cancer VAERS reports are related to COVID-19 vaccines.

Rapid worsening of cancer after vaccination has been reported in the research literature, although one study from the BMJ reported a person whose tumor regressed after getting vaccinated.

How to Reduce Risk of Vaccine Injuries

Some treatments that boost the body's immunity and overall health should reduce people's risks of developing vaccine injuries, but doctors don't know for sure. They're uncertain how much risk

is reduced when people take certain treatments and how long they should take these medications.

The following suggestions are some options that doctors believe may be helpful for people who are worried about potential vaccine adverse events.

Reduce Spike Protein Exposure

The first way to prevent injury is to reduce further exposure to spike protein. Research has shown that the spike protein is inflammatory, may elicit autoimmune antibodies, and activates carcinogenic pathways.

Both the COVID-19 virus and its vaccines can expose the body to spike proteins. Therefore, people should avoid both the COVID-19 vaccines and contracting SARS-CoV-2 to prevent further spike protein injuries, Haider recommended.

Board-certified internist and cardiologist Dr. Peter McCullough observed that his vaccinated patients who contract COVID-19 tend to do worse than uninfected but vaccinated individuals.

Repeat spike protein exposure, regardless of its form, may be harmful, with studies showing that individuals who contract COVID-19 are at a greater risk of adverse events when they take a second or third dose.

Reciprocally, repeat vaccinations are also linked with increased risks of COVID-19 infections, a study shows.

Haider, therefore, suggested that individuals improve their diet and overall health to become more resilient against infections.

Remove Spike Protein and Prevent Further Damage

Residual spike proteins remaining in the body are believed to contribute to vaccine adverse events, which may cause inflammation, autoimmunity, and damage to cells and tissues and may even trigger pathways that boost cancer.

To clear out spike proteins, individuals can take up fasting by abstaining from food and sugary drinks for prolonged periods to induce autophagy, suggested Dr. Paul Marik, a critical care specialist and co-founder of the FLCCC.

Autophagy triggers cells to break down and reuse proteins, which may cause the destruction and removal of spike proteins inside cells.

Nurse practitioner Scott Marsland told The Epoch Times that some people may not necessarily feel

that they have any problems. However, once they start intermittent fasting and prolonged fasting for three days, they notice that their mind is clearer and that symptoms they once attributed to aging are gone or alleviated.

Nattokinase, an enzyme derived from natto, a Japanese cuisine made from fermented soybeans, can break down spike proteins on cell surface levels, a laboratory study shows. It also has anti-clotting effects and may prevent the formation of blood clots, although people who are already taking anti-clotting medication may be ill-advised to take nattokinase.

N-acetyl cysteine (NAC) supplements may also help. Studies have shown that the amino acid can reduce inflammation and disturb bonds inside spike proteins. Augmented NAC supplements have enhanced antioxidantizing and protein denaturation properties.

A cell culture experiment run by ZeroSpike, a project aimed at clearing the spike protein from COVID-19 and the vaccines from people's bodies, showed that within 24 hours, augmented NAC denatured 99 percent of all spike proteins on cell surfaces. No tests have been done to show if the same effect occurs in humans.

The anti-cancer supplement berberine may be another treatment candidate. Research has shown that spike protein levels decrease in COVID-19 patients treated with the drug.

Berberine also has anti-diabetes and antioxidantizing properties. However, it may not be suitable for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or at child-rearing age. Its potential side effects include diarrhea, constipation, flatulence, and stomach pain.

Healthy Lifestyle

Just as COVID-19 revealed the unaddressed problems of chronic disease and unhealthy immunity, the current concern over vaccine adverse events may also demonstrate the importance of having a healthy body that can efficiently clear toxins.

Haider highlighted that human bodies are well-equipped and quite powerful. "They can essentially handle anything, even things that they've never seen before," he said.

Therefore, instead of focusing on the COVID-19 vaccine, which is a single potential harm out of many, Schmidt encourages people to focus on improving their body's overall health. This can include switching to a healthier and anti-inflammatory diet by reducing processed food, increasing intake of organic, wholesome foods, drinking filtered water, and exposing their bodies to the sun so that they can produce vitamin D.

Vitamin D is very important in maintaining a robust immune system. A 2017 meta-analysis shows that people who took 800 international units of vitamin D or more were more associated with a lower risk of influenza and other respiratory viruses than those who didn't.

People should also check and correct underlying nutritional deficiencies, Schmidt said.

She recommended organic bee pollen as a multivitamin. Bee pollen contains about 250 active substances, including amino acids, lipids, flavonoids, and vitamins and minerals the body needs.

Haider noted that drinking water encourages the elimination of toxins through urination. Regular and consistent bowel movements prevent excessive storage of toxins. People can also consider going to saunas to remove impurities through sweating.

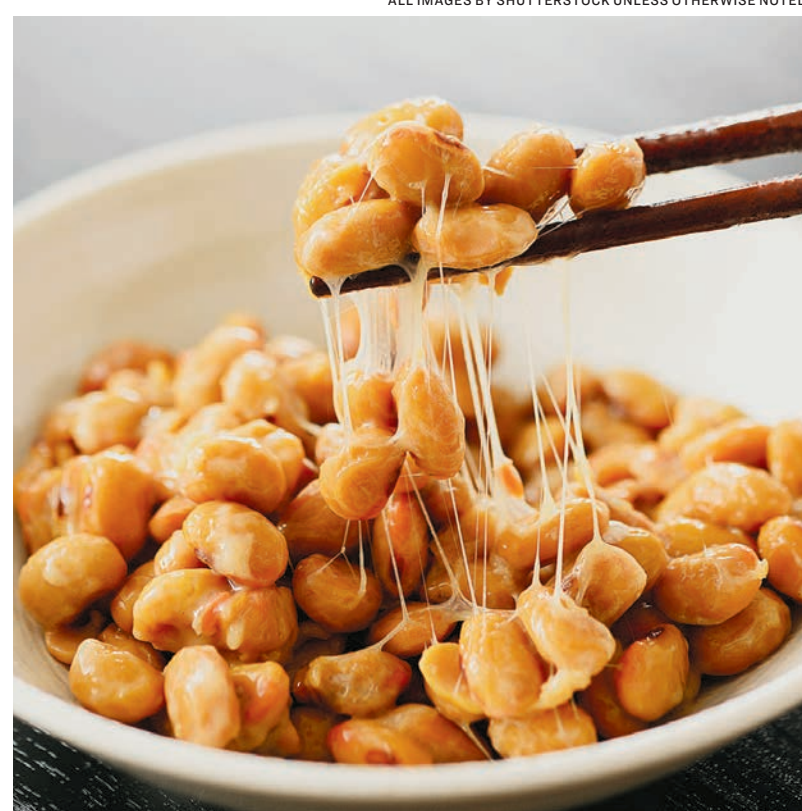
Hydration can also help with blood sugar regulation. Board-certified internist Dr. Keith Berkowitz found that hydrating patients who developed unusual blood sugar irregularities after vaccination helped restore normal blood sugar levels.

Healthy Mind

A healthy mind works in concert with the body for vitality and recovery. Researchers have found that fears, when chronic, can worsen physical symptoms.

Professor and advanced registered nurse Mary D. Moller from Pacific Lutheran University School of Nursing and director of psychiatric services for Northwest Center for Integrated Health said at a conference in 2017 that chronic fear can potentially lead to headaches turning into migraines, muscle aches turning into fibromyalgia, body aches turning into chronic pain, and difficulty breathing turning into asthma.

Mind and body health may be linked, psychiatrist Dr. Adonis Sfera suggested. Research has argued that the mind



A Japanese breakfast food, natto, contains nattokinase that can break down spike proteins and may prevent blood clots.



Bee pollen is considered to be a good multivitamin as it contains many of the beneficial vitamins and minerals required by the body to maintain a strong immune system.

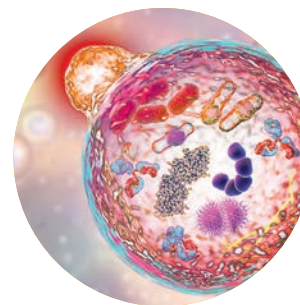
ANNALEYSH/GETTY IMAGES



With its anti-inflammatory properties, N-acetyl cysteine may be effective as part of a regimen to combat spike proteins.



Getting vitamin D, preferably from the sun but supplements can help also, is an important way to increase immune function.



Autophagy, a natural function of the body to heal itself, may aid in the removal of spike proteins from the cells.

since the immune system can't mount an attack against spike proteins inside fat stores.

For this reason, overweight people may experience a sudden flare-up of symptoms once they start fasting, as the stored spike proteins are released back into circulation.

Haider said people who are concerned and want reassurance can test whether they have microclotting. According to an article in Cardiovascular Diabetology, microclots that form in the capillaries have been reported to be adverse events of long COVID and vaccine adverse events and are associated with myocarditis, chronic fatigue syndrome, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, cognitive dysfunction, deaths, and many more problems.

He runs an extensive test on patients' nutritional levels and common biomarkers and also evaluates their alpha 2 antipainin and von Willebrand levels, both of which tend to increase with microclotting.

Other potential tests include a blood analysis put forward by renowned researcher and professor Resia Pretorius from Stellenbosch University in South Africa, who uses a fluorescence microscope to detect microclots.

None of these tests are available commercially; only research laboratories have the microscopes used for this blood analysis test. Therefore, some doctors have learned the techniques themselves.

Other common tests include C-reactive protein tests, which may reveal inflammation, D-dimer tests that help detect blood clots, and tests that indicate troponin levels, as elevated levels can be a sign of cardiac injury or stress. Antinuclear antibody tests may indicate autoimmunity.

A doctor can usually diagnose myocarditis based on clinical symptoms, electrocardiogram (ECG), and MRI readings, according to McCullough.

However, Marik said many vaccine patients with adverse events who report cardiac problems may actually have normal MRI and ECG readings. He pointed to the PULS test, which predicts a person's risk of acute coronary syndrome by measuring nine biomarkers. Acute coronary syndrome is often associated with heart attacks.

However, the test can cost several hundred to a thousand dollars, depending on the provider.

Therefore, McCullough recommended that testing should be symptom-based.

The Silver Lining

Although he was virtually forced to get vaccinated, McConachy said his newfound understanding of the COVID-19 vaccines has made him a changed man. "I now take my health more seriously,"

McConachy wrote to The Epoch Times in a text, saying that he has since made a "180" change.

"I'm now very conscious about what I eat. I stopped vaping, stopped using drugs, and was sober from alcohol for six months. Now, I just drink in moderation."

He has also started taking vitamins and exercising every day.

On social media, McConachy has made videos about adverse events associated with the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, advising his followers to do their own research. He said many people have told him that they've experienced chest pain and other symptoms.

Several months ago, McConachy was prescribed an ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine treatment to remove vaccine spike proteins and residual vaccine ingredients. He has since been supplementing with ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine weekly.

"It definitely gave me peace of mind, and I can't say I've had any chest pains since," he said.

This concludes our series: Unexplored COVID-19 Vaccines Adverse Events.





PETE BARRETT/GETTY IMAGES

A regular sleep schedule or routine can help women support a balanced mood, a healthy weight, and low stress levels.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Navigating Menopause Holistically

Continued from Page 1

- chard; fresh or dried fruits, avocados, and seafood.
- Vitamin D: grass-fed or pasture-raised meat, organ meats, egg yolks, cod liver oil, wild mushrooms, fatty fish, spirulina, and bee pollen.
- Amino acids: collagen from grass-fed cows, sardines, and pastured eggs.
- Magnesium: seaweed, figs, bananas, avocado, and dark leafy greens.
- Selenium: turkey, liver, red meat, garlic, and spinach.
- Iron: organ meats, dark leafy greens, shellfish, and red meat.

- Zinc: grass-fed beef, lamb, and oysters.
 - Healthy fats: avocados, butter, or ghee from grass-fed cows, coconut oil, coconut butter, and quality olive oil.
 - Quality proteins: grass-fed or pasture-raised meats and wild-caught fish.
 - Fiber: vegetables such as carrots, broccoli, beets, and cauliflower.
- Consume Hormone-Balancing Foods**
A diet that includes hormone-balancing foods such as the following is crucial to keeping menopausal symptoms, such as hot flashes, night sweats, and fatigue, at bay.

- Cranberries: help combat urinary tract infections that can occur because of decreased estrogen levels.
 - Cherries: help increase melatonin levels, resulting in higher quality sleep.
 - Maca root: contains glucosinolates, which signal the body to produce balanced levels of hormones and help regulate estrogen levels, potentially minimizing hot flashes.
 - Passionflower: can soothe hot flashes and night sweats, insomnia, depression, mood swings, and headaches.
 - Leafy greens: can ease insomnia and improve overall symptoms.
 - Motherwort: can ease hot flashes and anxiety, is a tonic for the heart, and can help prevent menopausal weight gain.
 - Shatavari: known in Ayurveda as the “female rejuvenator,” contains phytoestrogens, a plant-based form of estrogen that can alleviate the hot, dry aspects of menopause.
- Repair the Gut**
An imbalance in the gut flora, known as dysbiosis, can exacerbate hormonal imbalances during menopause and may be accompanied by infections such as candida, which is an overgrowth of yeast, and small intestinal bacterial overgrowth. These gut conditions can lead to increased inflammation, which blocks the body’s ability to absorb nutrients and balance hormones efficiently. They can also be exacerbated by hormonal fluctuations, causing a chain reaction resulting in increased negative symptoms. Reducing inflammation and ensuring that the body can properly absorb nutrients will improve overall health and help manage menopause symptoms.
- Remove Inflammatory Foods**
One of the first and most effective steps toward a cleaner, more nutrient-dense diet is removing processed foods and refined sugars, which are often to blame for fluctuating blood sugar levels. Keeping blood sugar stable is crucial for navigating menopause. Blood sugar
- Avoiding spicy foods, alcohol, sugary foods, and caffeine may keep hot flashes, night sweats, and mood swings in check.**

INTENTIONAL LIVING

A Beginner’s Guide to Maintaining Focus

Focus is the key to making any progress on important goals, and these tips can help

By Mike Donghia

There’s a simple formula to predict how much progress you’ll make in achieving your objectives. Simply take the amount of time you dedicate to your goals, divide it by the number of goals you’re pursuing, and multiply by the length of time you stay focused. Progress = (Time Available ÷ Number of Goals) × Length of Focus

In the short term, a lot of other factors matter, too. But in the long run, it really does boil down to focus.

The fewer your goals and the longer your commitment to them, the more

powerful your focus will be and the more progress you’ll make. It’s that simple.

The Challenge of Putting Theory Into Practice

While this formula seems obvious in theory, it’s harder than it looks in practice. Looking back over the past five years of my life, I have to admit that there are some important areas where I’ve made very little progress. And it wasn’t always from a lack of effort. I felt like I was spinning my wheels—in constant motion, but going nowhere. It’s only recently that I was able to see the situation more clearly. I’d been



Dreams can inspire us to new adventures, but some dreams need to be let go so we can actually focus on other dreams.

ANTON PETRUS/GETTY IMAGES

spreading myself too thin, jumping from one idea to the next without really committing to anything.

Part of this was because I’m a naturally curious person and have a hard time saying no to a new idea that excites me. But unfortunately, a big part of the problem is that I get bored and frustrated easily. Once the novelty of an idea wears off, I jump quickly to a new one.

Struggling Against Human Nature

The idea of focus is simple and attractive on the surface. Who wouldn’t want less stress and fewer things to juggle in their life? The reason it’s hard has to do with our human nature. There are two aspects of focus that will always challenge us: letting go of a dream and resisting the pull of novelty.

Letting Go of a Dream

Every dream or goal you have is attached to a desire you want to fulfill, and if there’s anything I’ve learned, it’s that our desires are bottomless. Letting go of a particular dream, even for a season,

feels like a loss. And to lose anything you care about is a sad and painful experience. So instead of letting go, we try to hold onto all of our dreams and never have the bandwidth to really focus on any of them.

Not Chasing Novelty

Pursue any great idea or adventure far enough, and the excitement will begin to fade and progress will slow. The fuel of passion will need to be replaced by old-fashioned hard work and commitment. If you can’t acknowledge and accept this reality, you will resent it. And you will be tempted to keep looking for newer and better ideas—but you’ll never make the kind of progress you desire because you can’t stay focused long enough.

Practical Tools for Staying Focused

In my lifelong search for focus, I’ve only ever found one thing that works: You must become obsessed with the quest to keep things as simple as possible. Because of the temptations mentioned in the previous section—to hold onto old dreams and chase novelty—clutter naturally builds in our lives, just as it does in our homes. Only constant vigilance and a system for keeping focused can keep it at bay. Here are three practical tools that have been a help to me in this area.

spikes can affect mood and cause irritability and are associated with depression. Similarly, consuming a diet high in processed foods has been correlated with poor bone health in women ages 50 to 59. Avoiding spicy foods, alcohol, sugary foods, and caffeine may keep hot flashes, night sweats, and mood swings in check. Any food to which one is sensitive should be avoided; if multiple food sensitivities are identified, an elimination diet is worth considering to help reduce inflammation and identify what’s triggering symptoms.

Consider Bone Health

The drastic hormonal changes and fluctuations a woman’s body goes through during menopause can negatively affect bone health. This leads to weaker bones and an increased risk of osteoporosis. Food and supplements to boost bone health:

- Vitamin D: Get out in the sunlight daily for as much time as possible. Supplementation under the guidance of a health care provider may be necessary. If you choose to supplement, make sure you have adequate magnesium and vitamin K2 for proper calcium absorption.
- Cod liver oil: This supplement contains a good balance of vitamins D, A, and K2.
- Calcium: Grass-fed dairy is one of the best sources of calcium. Make sure that no hormones were involved in the production of the dairy, as that will negatively affect female hormones.



A health care professional can help you use St. John’s wort to improve mood swings and hot flashes.

Improve Mood

Mood changes are a common experience during menopause. Practicing stress-reduction and relaxation techniques such as deep-breathing exercises, full-body stretching, massage, and cranial-sacral facial work can encourage peace and calm when experiencing mood fluctuations. Consider working with a health care practitioner to supplement with St. John’s wort, passionflower, or vitamin B6, and always discuss any mood concerns to help identify the root cause.

Menopause is a normal, natural stage of a woman’s life, and although it comes with many hormonal changes, women can go through it with strength and ease.

Following these holistic diet and lifestyle methods can significantly improve menopausal symptoms. As with any health issue, working with a trained practitioner to assess body chemistry, test hormone levels, and consider any other underlying factors can be a valuable step in navigating menopause.

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

Sleep

A regular sleep schedule or routine can support a balanced mood, a healthy weight, and low stress levels. Seven to eight hours of sleep at night will support overall health and reduce the symptoms of menopause.

Tips to establish life-enhancing sleep rhythms:

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- Drink a cup of chamomile or another soothing herbal tea before bed.
- Don’t use a phone or watch TV for at least an hour before bed—read a book, meditate, or listen to music instead.
- Try adding a few drops of lavender essential oil to a warm bath before bed.
- Keep lights dim in the hours before bed.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol later in the day.

Exercise

Staying active is one of the best ways to support the body and manage symptoms during menopause. Walking 20 minutes per day can be extremely beneficial physically and encourage relaxation. Strength training and yoga are enormously helpful for bone health during menopause and beyond.

Regular exercise a few times per week can promote many health benefits, such as healthier bones and joints, improved sleep quality, lower stress levels, and decreased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, osteoporosis, diabetes, and stroke.



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SUPPLEMENTS FOR MENOPAUSAL SYMPTOMS

At times, supplementing with additional herbs and vitamins can fill the gaps that diet and other efforts have left. As always, consult with a health care provider before supplementing.

A cup of herbal tea before bed can help with sleep.

BLACK COHOSH: may help reduce the frequency of hot flashes, specifically when combined with St. John’s wort.



DONG QUAI: has been shown to reduce the frequency and intensity of hot flashes and night sweats and increase sleep quality.



EVENING PRIMROSE OIL: may assist in increasing bone mineral density.



TURMERIC: is an anti-inflammatory that modulates the immune system and may help with managing hot flashes and reducing joint pain.



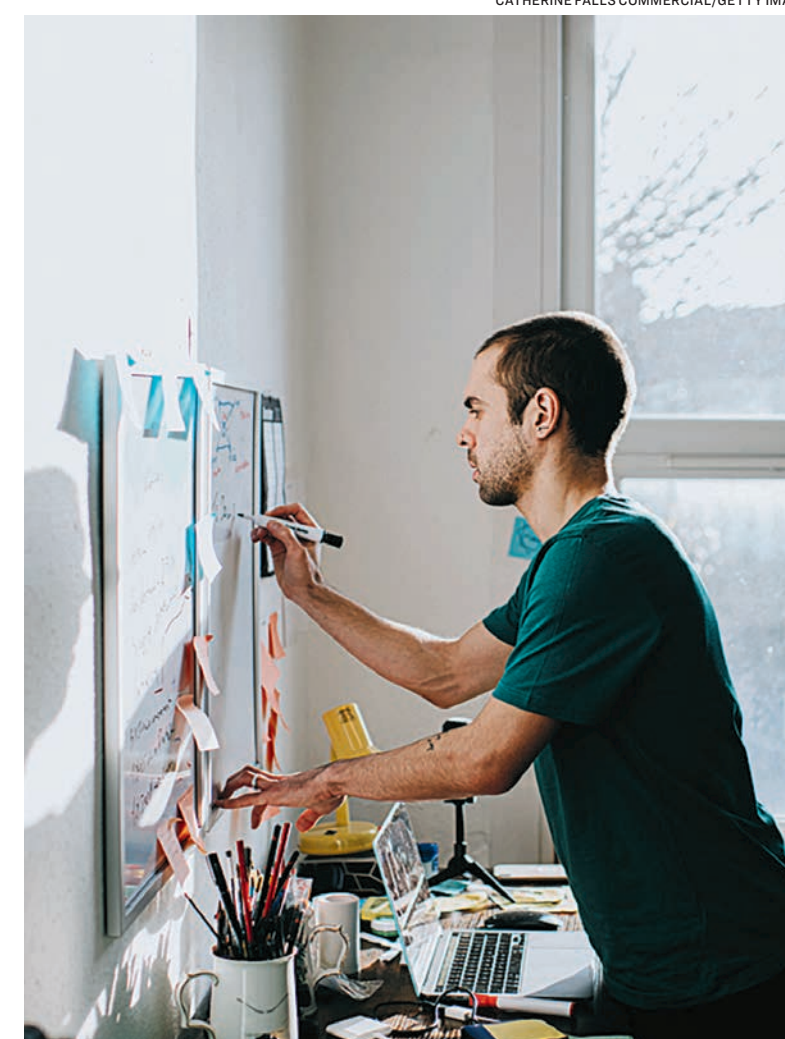
RESVERATROL: may help boost blood flow in the brain, improve cognitive function, and reduce brain fog.



GLUTATHIONE OR N-ACETYL CYSTEINE: can provide antioxidant support, alleviating oxidative stress.



CATHERINE FALLS COMMERCIAL/GETTY IMAGES



A well-honed list lets us focus on our top priorities, which is key to obtaining our most desired goals in life.

Create an ‘Avoid at All Costs’ List

I’ve heard variations of this practice, but it goes something like this: Create a list of 25 ways you want to improve your life. Then, choose your five highest priorities from among those. The remaining 20 don’t just become your “secondary” goals list, they become your “avoid at all costs” list, because the biggest obstacle to success isn’t failure, it’s distraction. Of course, in reality, the remaining 20 items probably include some aspects of your life that you can’t just ignore. But the point of the practice remains—the most likely reason for you to get “stuck” in life is that you’re trying to do too much at once, not because you truly lack the skills. Ask the question, “What are the few things that really matter?”

I’ve learned to ask myself this question reflexively at many points throughout the day, even when I’m in meetings and conversations with other people.

The question challenges me to distill any goal down to the few inputs that really matter, the few actions that can move the needle most. By focusing my efforts on just these few areas, I ensure that I’m doing the real thing and not merely chasing busyness for its own sake.

Use a Visual Aid to Highlight Priorities

Instead of relying on my memory or instincts to decide what’s important

throughout the day, I surround myself with visual reminders of the prior decisions I’ve made.

- I use a habit tracker to track the five daily habits that matter most to me.
- I “close the rings” on my Apple Watch to keep exercise top of mind.
- I leave a Bible next to the place I eat breakfast to encourage reflection each morning.

Each of these tools on its own isn’t the secret key to focus. There are no secret keys—only sincere effort. As humans, we generally tend to be pretty good at whatever has our attention.

The way to increase focus is to make focusing a bigger, more vivid part of your day using the tools above. Only then will focus become a habit that guides your day and keeps you on track toward the few things in your life that really matter.

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

TRUTH *and* TRADITION*In Our Own Words*

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The United States is the world's last bastion for freedom.

John Tang
CEO

A Letter From the CEO Protecting Our Home

I was scrolling down the front page of The Epoch Times one morning when a certain article caught my eye. I clicked on one of Roger L. Simon's columns, in which he wrote, "When I saw a video online of Antifa attacking demonstrators in front of the Wi Spa in Los Angeles' Koreatown, I realized why, in the immortal words of Thomas Wolfe, 'You Can't Go Home Again.'"

Mr. Simon's words gave me a feeling I couldn't describe. I suppose I never thought I'd see the day when even an American in America wouldn't be able to go home.

As a Chinese expatriate, I have been unable to go home for 20 plus years. With the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) oppressing members of the Falun Gong faith like me, going home would put my life and my family in great danger.

But now, my home away from home is every day starting to look more and more like the home I left. The media is starting to tell me what I should think and do. The government seems to more stringently regulate law-abiding citizens with each passing day, while turning a blind eye to certain destructive members or groups. Political correctness is taking precedence over actual correctness. This is not the America I chose to stay in, and for Mr. Simon, it's not the home he knows.

Back in China, the prevailing attitude I saw growing up was to not pay attention. Nothing mattered—not the government, not the economy, not the corruption, not the killing—as long as your family was okay and you had enough to eat. If times were hard, well, you'd just have to live through it somehow.

Decades later, even though China's now more open to the world and Chinese people have more money in their pockets, this habit of not questioning, not thinking, and not even wanting to know remains. It's a large part of why many Chinese people still support the CCP, since it gives the people bread and circuses—and to these people, that's enough.

What's frightening to me is that I see many Americans thinking the same way. The people who used to impress me with their generosity and patriotism are now ostriches with their heads in the sand, reluctant to think about anything that might disturb their happiness. If even the citizens grow numb to losing their freedoms, what reason does the government have to care?

We publish The Epoch Times for people of the world who still revere Truth and Tradition, because we know only too well what life is like without both of those things. And we will continue to, because the way we see it, the United States is the world's last bastion for freedom. Many of us have already escaped a communist dictatorship once. This time, we will stand our ground.

Our comfort rests in the fact that we have men and women like you who are standing with us. Many of you write and tell us about amazing things you're doing to help protect our freedoms—they're truly exceptional stories, but we also understand that not everybody has the time and money to do these monumental things.

Our only ask is that at the very least, you keep yourself informed, engaged, and tuned in, even if it might be difficult. The apathy of decent people is the fuel that feeds authoritarian flames. At a time when the country we call home is at stake, it's not a mistake anyone can afford to make.

Thank you kindly for being a subscriber of The Epoch Times, and we hope that we can continue to provide the information you need to make the right decisions.

In Truth and Tradition,

John Tang
The Epoch Times

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A Life-Changing Bestseller



Zhuang Falun expounds on the profound principles of Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance. It focuses on a long-forgotten term called "cultivation" and the importance of moral character on one's path to spiritual perfection.

The book is the main text of the spiritual practice Falun Dafa. It was a national bestseller in China in the 1990s, and has since been translated into more than 40 languages. Find out why it has captured the hearts and minds of tens of millions of people in more than 100 countries worldwide.

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

Arthur Waldron
LAUDER PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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