# THE EPOCH TIMES



# How to Keep Your Organs Younger Than Your Age

Healthy habits, certain foods, and specific products can help you stay younger than your years

ALFPOINT IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

### By Mercura Wang

ave you ever wondered how some people defy their chronological ages, appearing remarkably youthful? The body's biological age, a measurement of health and vitality based on the body's condition, can often differ from one's chronological age, the number of years lived. This distinction holds true for organs as well.

In a study published in Nature Medi-

cine in April 2023, researchers discovered that our organs and tissues can age at varying rates, giving further evidence that our biological age does not align precisely with our chronological age. The researchers observed a connection between the aging of different organ systems. For instance, if someone's heart seems younger than his or her actual age, his or her other organs likely share this youthful vitality. Conversely, advanced organ age significantly heightens the risk of chronic illnesses. To delve deeper into this intriguing

Stem cells throughout the body play a crucial role in maintaining and repairing tissues and organs. phenomenon, researchers used a tool called the "organ age clock" to evaluate the health and functionality of essential organs such as the brain and heart. This opens the door to uncovering the secrets of organ aging and this kind of aging's effect on overall well-being.

### Why Younger Organs Are Less Prone to Diseases

Aging is commonly associated with declining cellular, tissue, and organ function, leading to old age, diseases, *Continued on Page 6* 

AXEL\_KOCK/SHUTTERSTOCK

# Infrared Therapy Shows Promise for Tinnitus: Study

### By Megan Redshaw

Researchers found that 15 minutes of infrared therapy was more effective than drugs and herbs in treating tinnitus Tinnitus, or ringing in the ears, is an often debilitating condition with no approved treatment or cure. However, some sufferers may find relief from lowlevel infrared light therapy, according to a new peer-reviewed, first-of-its-kind study published in the Journal of Personalized Medicine.

Over four weeks, researchers evaluated treatment for tinnitus in more than 100 men and women aged 18 to 65 whose condition either had an unknown cause or had been unresponsive to treatment and divided them randomly into 10 groups. Researchers investigated personalized treatment options involving low-level laser therapy (LLLT) using red and infrared light in the inner ear or cochlea, where tinnitus often occurs, and LLLT combined with other treatments, such as vacuum therapy and drug therapy.

LLLT uses a narrow spectral width of light close to infrared to promote tissue regeneration, reduce inflammation, and *Continued on Page 6* 



▲ Damage to the inner ear affecting how signals are carried from the brain may cause tinnitus.

# Debunking THE DOGMA ABOUT FAT

### PART 4 DIFFERENT FATS, DIFFERENT DISEASES

Saturated fat's controversial link to heart disease isn't as clear cut as nutrition guidelines suggest

*In this series,* we will break down the actual health effects of vegetable oils and whether they're a better alternative to saturated fats. Follow this series to find out whether what you're using to cook with is really the best option.

> Previous Parts: TheEpochtim.es/Fat

**By Marina Zhang** 

or more than half a century, central health authorities told the public to limit saturated fat **Fat and Heart Disease Link** prevent heart disease.

researchers have come to prominence with unsaturated fat decreases the risk challenging this narrative, arguing that of cardiovascular events. But usually, saturated fat may not be that harmful and that limits on its intake shouldn't cantly improve. be so stringent.

A Matter of Scientific Interpretation Scientists from the two sides are looking at different studies on saturated fat and coming to different conclusions on its health effects.

The current dietary guidelines are based on the "diet-heart hypothesis," which postulates that saturated fats are the leading culprits of cardiovascular disease.

The theory posits that when someone consumes food containing saturated fat, this fat increases LDL cholesterol (so- fat intake.

### **SATURATED FAT IN PROCESSED FOODS**

**Contrary to popular** belief, the primary source of saturated fat may not be animal-based food but processed food.

### called bad cholesterol). This cholesterol accumulates in the blood vessels, forming atherosclerotic plaques that restrict Los Angeles and ultimately block blood flow, causing Veterans coronary heart disease. However, this link between LDL cho-

lesterol and heart disease has been challenged and so has the role of saturated ducted in fat in causing heart disease.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans More than recommend limiting saturated fat to 10 800 men aged percent or less of one's daily calories, 55 or older parwhile the American Heart Association ticipated in the advises keeping saturated fat intake at 5 trial. Half the parto 6 percent of one's daily calories.

### **Evidence Supporting the Saturated**

intake as much as possible to The argument in favor of limiting saturated fat intake is based on evidence But a growing number of scientists and that shows that replacing saturated fat overall mortality rates don't signifi-

> The Dietary Guidelines for **Americans recommend** limiting saturated fat to 10 percent or less of one's daily calories.

The core studies showing this link were carried out in the 1960s and '70s, forming the foundations against saturated



These studies include the Administration diet study conthe 1960s. ticipants replaced two-thirds of the animal fat in their diets with vegetable oil, while the other half continued to consume animal fat. After six years, the first group saw a 13 percent drop in cholesterol levels, and only 48 men died from heart disease during the study compared with 70 in the group that consumed animal fat.

The caveat to this finding is that the overall mortality between the two groups was about the same, but more cancer cases were reported in the group that consumed vegetable oils.

Another highly cited study is the Anti-Coronary Club study conducted in the 1950s. The researchers didn't intervene in the control group members' diets, but the experimental group was told to reduce their animal fat intake, consume as much fish and poultry as they liked, consume one ounce of corn and whole grains had fewer cardiooil per day, and cook with polyunsaturated fat. As a result of the intervention, participants' cholesterol levels lowed more than 2,700 people and dropped and hypertension improved. found that high levels of linoleic acid, However, more deaths were reported an omega-6 fatty acid, in the blood among this experimental group.

"The intervention studies were done" in the '60s and '70s ... and certainly the intervention studies suggested that there was a small benefit, but it wasn't trials, they can't prove causality. statistically very strong," nutrition researcher Peter Clifton, who's a profes- factors in participants' lives, insor at the University of South Australia, told The Epoch Times.

Mr. Clifton, who recommends replacing polyunsaturated fats with sat- time, so participants may be lost urated fats, said more robust evidence during follow-up, which can introsupporting the diet-heart hypothesis duce bias into the findings.

hort studies that follow large populations. One such cohort study pub-

comes from co-

lished in 2015 examined more than 120,000 men and women. The researchers found that those who replaced 5 percent of their saturated fat intake with polyunsaturated fat vascular events. Another 2014 cohort study published in Circulation folwere associated with fewer cardiovascular events.

A problem with cohort studies is that, unlike randomized controlled Since researchers can't control cluding dietary choices, any rela-

tionship is linked only by association. Cohort studies also take a long

# Research Finds Safer Way to Detect Colon Polyps

Microbiota signatures unique to specific precancerous colon polyps may lead to better tests with less risk

### By Amy Denney

A new study conducted by researchers from the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, Harvard Medical School, and Massachusetts General Hospital linked precancerous colon polyps to specific gut bacteria.

Published in Cell Host & Microbe, the study compared the stool samples and colonoscopies of 971 participants. Stool Dr. Daniel C. Chung, medical co-director samples were used to get a snapshot of of the Center for Cancer Risk Assessment the gut microbiome—the community of at the Mass General Cancer Center, told bacteria, viruses, and fungi that live pri- The Epoch Times. "The other potential marily in the colon.

The study revealed a distinct microbial fingerprint among those who were found to have tubular adenomas and sessile serrated adenomas—two types of colon lesions that are considered prema- cancers, which is the third most common lignant. One of the largest studies of its cancer and is on the rise in developing Nearly 18,000 people under 50 were kind, it detected 19 significantly different countries and, more recently, among

tubular adenomas and eight significantly different species in those with sessile serrated adenomas.

The finding suggests that a simple stool test may be able to reduce the number of more invasive and dangerous colonoscopies performed.

The research also raises the question of whether bacteria—in the form of a probiotic supplement or pill—could become a third way, with diet and medication, to reduce risk of colon cancer.

"The goal is ultimately to determine if there are species of bacteria we want to use to influence our patients' outcomes. Getting to this point is still a ways away," way this can be applied is to study whether we can use this as a diagnostic or risk-assessment measurement."

That could drastically change the approach to early detection of colorectal bacterial species in those patients with young adults. About 18,000 people young-

er than 50 were diagnosed with colorectal cancer in the United States in 2020, according to the National Cancer Institute. Similar trends have been documented in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and some parts of Europe and Asia.

Colonoscopy—an invasive procedure requiring sedation recommended for adults as young as 45—is the gold standard test for detecting colorectal cancers. It has side effects and risks that make a more simple test an appealing alternative. Dr. Chung said the study makes a case for a stool analysis as a tool that could determine which patients might be in need of a colonoscopy.

### Why Polyps Matter

Polyps—growths from clumps of abnormal cells—are still a bit of a mystery in the medical world. Without a known cause, colon polyps are more common in people 45 and older and in those who are overweight, have diabetes, have a family history of polyps, use tobacco, or have certain gastrointestinal conditions such



as Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. It may take years for a polyp to turn into cancer, if it ever does, which is why colonoscopies are believed to be the best option for early detection.

"Understanding polyps is an important way to influence the rise of colon cancer," Dr. Chung said. "Not every polyp becomes cancer. Most adults will get polyps, but most will not get colon cancer."

Medical researchers are still trying to determine whether there is a way to tell which polyps will develop into cancer and which ones will not.

Colon polyps are currently detected and usually also removed via colonoscopy, which was scrutinized for not significantly reducing mortality in a study published last year in the New England Journal of Medicine. The study had more than 84,585 randomized participants from Poland, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

A Johns Hopkins study in 2018 also found that some outpatient centers have infection risks 100 times higher than expected for patients undergoing colonoscopies and upper gastrointestinal endoscopies.

### Other Ways to Test

There are three tests currently used to help physicians determine whether someone should have a colonoscopy. Because colonoscopies are usually only recommended every 10 years, these other tests can help screen more frequently. In some instances, they are the only screening tests

### **A DIET FOR HEART HEALTH?**

Researchers found people that replaced 5 percent of their saturated fat intake with polyunsaturated fat and whole grains had fewer cardiovascular events, but there are contradictions in related research.



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conducted between 1966 and 1973. It put attack on a diet that replaced their saturated fat with soy oil. While the men's LDL 70 percent.

The Minnesota Coronary Survey, conducted at about the same time, followed 9,000 people and reported similar findings: LDL cholesterol levels fell while risks of death and cardiac events increased.

In 2020, 12 researchers came together to publish a state-of-the-art review in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC).

"Whole-fat dairy, unprocessed meat, and dark chocolate are SFA-rich [saturated fatty acid-rich] foods with a complex matrix that are not associated with increased risk of CVD [cardiovascular disease]. The totality of available evidence does not support further limiting the intake of such foods," the authors wrote.

cludes the Sydney Diet Heart Study, effect of polyunsaturated fatty acids sumption of saturated fat. and not necessarily to an adverse ef-

> ing LDL cholesterol is pretty small. So it's not a really powerful fat," Mr. Clifton said. There are also large meta-analyses

> with findings that support both sides of the argument, such as the 2020 Cochrane Review.

the women's authors examined 15 randomized, to have a cardioprotective effect. heart disease controlled trial findings on replacing or weight loss. saturated fat with polyunsaturated fat, yet studies have shown that high The Sydney and monounsaturated fat. The study dairy consumption is heart-protec-Diet Heart concluded that this replacement re- tive. Milk has short-chain saturated Study was duced the risk of a cardiovascular fat, which is linked to cardioprotecevent by 17 percent but didn't affect tive effects. overall mortality.

had had a heart etary recommendation.

However, the same study was also fat, monounsaturated and polyuncited in a 2021 commentary that called saturated fats make up about 50 to for more evidence.

The authors of this commentary cholesterol dropped, emphasized findings that show that mary source of saturated fat may not their risk of death in- reducing saturated fats didn't reduce be animal-based food but processed creased by more than 60 total mortality, cardiovascular mortal- food, as argued by obesity researcher percent, and their risk of ity, coronary heart disease mortality, Zoe Harcombe, who holds a doctorate heart disease increased by fatal and nonfatal heart attacks, and coronary heart disease events.

> The current dietary guidelines are based on the 'diet-heart hypothesis,' which postulates that saturated fats are the leading culprits of cardiovascular disease.

### Not All Saturated Fats Are Created Equal

Another argument put forward by the lesterol. This forms small, dense LDL Regarding cohort studies, the per- authors of the JACC report is that not cholesterol more prone to atheroscleceived benefits of replacing saturated all saturated fatty acids are equal, so rosis. Sugar also increases triglyceride Opposition to the link between fats with polyunsaturated fats "could health professionals should look at the levels in the blood vessels. Oxidized saturated fat and heart disease in- be attributed to a possible beneficial sources rather than the overall con- LDL cholesterol and raised blood

> Lauric acid, a type of medium-length heart disease. fect of SFAs," according to the authors. saturated fat commonly found in coco-"The effect of saturated fat and rais- nuts, strongly raises LDL cholesterol; research has shown that LDL cholestherefore, some studies suggest that it terol may not be the best predictor for elevates cardiovascular risk. However, cardiovascular risk. studies on unrefined coconut oil suggest that it has an overall cardioprotective effect.

Butter is high in palmitic acid, another saturated fat with a potent LDL Cochrane Reviews are recognized cholesterol-raising effect. However, a

fat didn't affect as the gold standard in research. The meta-analysis on butter has shown it

About 70 percent of dairy is saturated

Beef has also been shown to have In his meta-analysis, Mr. Clifton used a relatively neutral effect on heart 458 men who the study findings to support the di- disease. Although beef is often associated with having high saturated 60 percent of beef fat.

Contrary to popular belief, the priin public health nutrition.

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans shows that processed food accounts for 42 percent of saturated fat consumed by Americans aged 1 year and older. On the other hand, animalbased food, including milk, meat, and poultry, makes up 27 percent.

Saturated fats are often added to processed food to prolong their shelf life and improve their texture.

Processed foods are also high in sugar, and professor Benjamin Bikman, a cell biology expert at Brigham Young University with a doctorate in bioenergetics, told The Epoch Times that the combination of saturated fat and refined carbohydrates is the most toxic.

Sugar in the blood oxidizes LDL chotriglyceride levels are risk factors for

To make things more complicated,

### Next week: Part 5

Research suggests LDL cholesterol was vilified too quickly.

### recommended for healthy adults.

The fecal immunochemical test and fecal occult blood tests both detect blood in the stool. Medicaid will pay for one of these tests annually. Usually, people with blood in their stool are referred for colonoscopies.

Evidence

Against the

Saturated Fat and

Scientists who challenge the cur-

rent dietary recommendations to

reduce saturated fat intake empha-

size the limited evidence supporting

They often cite the large random-

ized controlled trials that show that

lowering saturated fat or replacing

it with polyunsaturated fat had no

the Minnesota Coronary Survey,

and the Women's Health Initiative

In the 1990s, the Women's

Health Initiative Dietary Modi-

fication Trial involved nearly

49,000 postmenopausal women

who had to reduce either their

saturated fat intake to less than 10

percent or make no change in their

diet. The study found that reducing

Dietary Modification Trial.

effect or even caused harm.

such interventions.

Heart Disease Link

A stool DNA test, also called a Cologuard test, is able to detect changes in the cells of the colon by looking at DNA in the stool and blood. It's recommended every three years for adults 45 to 85 who don't have a high risk of or symptoms of colorectal cancer.

### **Rising Rates of Colon Cancer**

While colorectal cancer rates are decreasing in older adults, they've been steadily increasing in adults 50 and younger. Colorectal cancer causes more deaths in the United States than all but two other types of cancer.

Nearly all colorectal cancers arise from a precancerous polyp, and one of the best ways to reduce the incidence of colorectal cancer is to stop growth at the polyp stage. Risk factors for colorectal cancer and polyps include being overweight, having low physical activity levels, eating a diet high in red and processed meats, smoking, and using alcohol.

These risk factors also influence intestinal bacteria. It's unknown whether the bacteria are initiating polyps or the polyps are progressing because of the microbial makeup, Dr. Chung said.

ing the bacteria," he said.

### Lowering Risk

While there's some genetic connection, polyps and colorectal cancer are largely preventable by avoiding risk factors. But in terms of actual therapies, studies haven't found specific doses or duration of a given food, drug, or supplement that helps prevent problems.

"Yet some of the reviewed studies did lon cancer and use of nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)—such as aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), and naproxen (Aleve)—and a higher intake of fruits, vegetables, and fiber. But other studies did not," a Harvard Medical School article reads.

The article advised against taking NSAIDs without consulting a doctor. NSAIDs have been linked to a wide range of side effects, including gastrointestinal bleeding.

There are countless anecdotes of people resolving polyps or possible cancer, but these haven't yielded a specific treatment or protocol that is widely accepted and used.

For example, Jillian Burne recently helped a client whose colonoscopy showed a possible cancerous lesion.

"There are these changes in the bacte- Doctors wanted to operate, but Ms. before they leave the office and they ria, but they aren't necessarily because Burne, a certified health coach and nuthese bacteria have just changed. There tritional therapist, talked her client into are changes in our lifestyle that are chang- giving her 30 days to try to reverse his gastrointestinal damage.

After analyzing his diet, which con- Preventing Cancer sisted of sushi eaten all over the world, she put him on a parasite protocol. He returned to the doctor for a sigmoidoscopy, a scope that examines the descending colon, and a second biopsy, and the too fast, too much, and too frequently. precancerous cells were downgraded to inflammation.

"This client was very lucky that he was able to turn it around as fast as he show a link between a lower risk of co- did. He could have very well ended up in a diaper and a colostomy bag," Ms. Burne told The Epoch Times. "The real problem I see is the fear tactics doctors use to drive people into procedures and medications.

"People are signing on the dotted lines



▲ Detecting polyps is thought to be key to preventing colon cancer, but current tests can't tell which polyps could become cancerous.

don't go home and research and find out that a lot of these are conditions that can be healed."

Normally, stomach acid will help kill parasites, but Ms. Burne said Americans largely suffer from low stomach acid due to diet and habits such as eating Additionally, she said many people are eating when they are in a state of stress, and digestion requires relaxation. Processed and fast food made with cheap seed oils also cause inflammation that can aggravate the colon.

The body has the capacity to heal when it's given the right environment. But Ms. Burne said it does take discipline to turn things around, and most people aren't motivated to make meaningful changes in diet or exercise until faced with a drastic situation such as the potential loss of part of one's colon.

"People get better when they tend to stick to the basics, just real food without the food colorings, without the dyes, without the toxic oils," Ms. Burne said. "There's no biological purpose for a polyp. The body finds ways to store [excess] if it can't get rid of it in the normal elimination pathways. We're putting too much stress on the system. People need to demand better care ... other than just cutting things out or getting a pill."



# Easy Exercises to Combat Chronic Pain

### PART 7 ALLEVIATE CHRONIC ELBOW PAIN

6 easy exercises to relieve pain often caused by repetitive movements





### **By Kevin Shelley**

the elbow allows for a wide range of more prone to injury. movement. Repetitive movements of problems with the elbow's bones, mus- events, but rather from the frequent of the joint. cles, joints, tendons, and ligaments, repetition of relatively low-stress resulting in pain and tenderness.

"Once elbow pain sets in, it can be highly persistent and often grows tors to elbow pain are unhealthy func- ity. The walls of the joint cavity are worse over time," Phil John, an occupational therapist specializing in injury management and functional **Functional Patterns** rehabilitation, told The Epoch Times. These problems can eventually progress into deeper pathology.

Chronic elbow pain isn't something you should have to live with. Specific exercises can stretch and strengthen the soft tissues of the elbow to expedite the healing process.

### **Causes of Chronic Pain**

in Healthy Elbows Your elbow joint is one of the most

As one of the largest joints in the body, active joints in your body, making it "Many of the pain syndromes of

movements," Mr. John said.

tional patterns and muscle weakness.

increase the likelihood of an elbow contribute to the development of problem:

- repetitive motions (e.g., painting, using a computer, and chopping food)
- leaning on elbows for an extended period
- sports such as tennis, golf, and any involving throwing a ball

### Muscle Weakness

The muscles of the elbow need to be the hand, wrist, and arm can lead to the elbow don't originate from single strong to ensure proper functioning

> The elbow is a synovial joint—the bones do not directly connect, instead

The two primary contributing fac- coming together within a joint cavformed by a fibrous capsule, and the entire structure depends on balanced muscle strength to function correctly. The following types of activities can Muscle weakness in the elbow can chronic pain.

Fortunately, there are safe and effective exercises that can help maintain the flexibility of the elbow joint, strengthen the muscles, and help decrease or eliminate chronic pain.

Kevin Shelley is a licensed occupational therapist with over 30 years of experience in major health care settings. He is a health columnist for The Epoch Times.

### Next week: Part 8

Simple exercises to strengthen foot muscles and relieve pain

THE BONES AND MUSCLES OF THE ELBOW

your hand palm up and palm down).

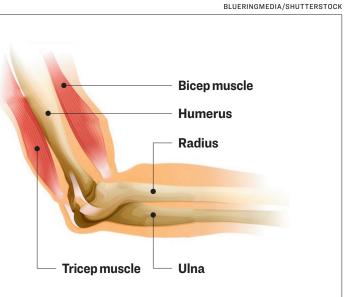
including the humerus of the upper arm and the radius and ulna of the forearm. These bones join together with three joints and supporting ligaments.

The elbow is composed of three bones,

Synovial joints are highly mobile joints that allow for a wide range of movement, and the elbow allows four distinct movements: flexion and extension (bending and straightening), and supination and pronation (turning

The largest muscles of the elbow are the biceps brachii and the triceps brachii. The biceps facilitate elbow flexion and contribute to wrist supination.

The pronator teres and pronator quadratus muscles contribute to pronation. Many smaller muscles also contribute to elbow movement



# **EXERCISES FOR CHRONIC ELBOW PAIN**

Effective stretches and resistance exercises can strengthen the elbows and alleviate pain when performed properly

### I FLEXED-ELBOW SUPINATION AND PRONATION

This exercise allows you to stretch the elbow joint via supination and pronation movements to ensure that your joints and ligaments are kept limber.

### **Step 1:** While sitting or standing, bend one of your elbows 90 degrees out in front of you and rotate your palm away from you.

Step 2: Grasp your wrist with your other hand and use it to rotate the palm even farther, as far as you comfortably can. Hold the position for three seconds

Step 3: Slowly turn your palm to face you, rotating it as far as you can. Use your other hand to help turn it even farther and hold for three seconds. Perform these movements 10 times for each arm.

Pay attention to your elbow during these movements and don't provoke pain. It's better to rotate your hand by holding onto your wrist instead of holding directly onto your other hand.

### 2 ACTIVE TABLETOP SUPINATION AND PRONATION

**Combining supination** and pronation exercises allows you to work muscles above and below the elbow joint, ensuring flexibility of the joint while keeping elbow muscles strengthened and trained.

**Step 1:** While sitting or standing, bend your elbow 90 degrees with your palm facing up. You can use a tabletop, chair armrest, or desktop. **Step 2:** Holding your arm still, slowly turn your hand until your palm is flat on the table, or rotated as far as you can. Hold for one second, then rotate your hand back to the original position. Move slowly and control the movement, taking one second to move in either direction.

Perform three sets of 12 repetitions.

You can intensify this exercise by holding the base of a hammer or the end of a stick as you move your hand in both directions, touching the end of the object to the table as you complete the movements. Pay attention to your elbow during these movements and avoid pushing into pain

### **3** TRICEPS STRETCH

This stretch is a great way to elongate the triceps to keep them from becoming tight. It provides maximum stretch without stressing the shoulders.

Step 1: While standing or sitting, reach over your shoulder and slide your hand down your back as far as possible while pointing your fingers toward the floor.

Step 2: Cup your elbow with your free hand and gently push your elbow down to slide your hand farther down your back. Step 3: Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.

Perform 10 total stretches per side.

Move slowly in both directions and don't push into pain. Don't jut your chin, and keep your back and shoulders as upright as possible



strong and can exert a great deal of stress across your shoulder and elbow joints when tight. This exercise is a safe and simple way to stretch your biceps.

**The biceps muscles are** : **Step 1:** Bring your arms straight out to your sides while standing as upright as possible. Keep your shoulders and back straight, and don't jut your chin.

> **Step 2:** Point your thumbs down and sweep your arms straight back while rotating your thumbs as far to the rear as possible, keeping your elbows straight.

Step 3: Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.

Perform 10 total stretches.

Pay attention to your body and don't push into pain. Be sure to concentrate on the proper posture during this activity.

### **6** ELBOW FLEXION

This exercise is one of the classic elbow exercises and allows strengthening of the biceps muscles while also being easy to control.

Step 1: While standing or sitting, hold onto a dumbbell, can, or kettlebell. Step 2: Keeping your shoulders tall and upright, slowly bend your elbows and lift the weights up as far toward your shoulders as you can. Don't move your upper arm, and keep your palms facing each other or facing up as you perform the exercise.

**Step 3:** Slowly move in either direction, and don't rush.

Try to perform three sets of 10 repetitions, and adjust the amount of weight to challenge yourself.

"It's easy to get sloppy with this exercise, so pay careful attention to movements in order to maximize the efficacy of the exercise," Mr. John said.

### **6** SUPINE ELBOW EXTENSION

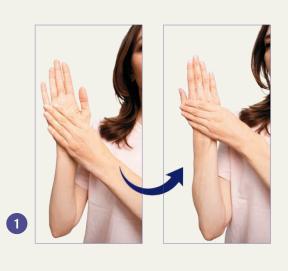
This exercise allows you to strengthen your triceps muscles in a well-controlled movement pattern. Even beginners will find it easy to perform. **Step 1:** Lie flat on your back, holding a can, dumbbell, or kettlebell in each hand.

Step 2: Push your arms straight up with your arms shoulder-width apart and your palms facing each other. Slowly lower the weights down to the side of your head, then push them straight back up. Don't rush the movements-take approximately two seconds to move in either direction. Try to perform three sets of 10 repetitions.

Be sure to keep the weights to the side of your head during movements for safety. Focus on moving smoothly-don't "bounce" the movements.

### Consult a Professional if the Pain Won't Go Away

While exercises can often decrease pain, persistent chronic pain may indicate a problem requiring medical attention. Mr. John recommends consulting with your family physician for an initial evaluation and possible referral.



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\*If you have health or mobility issues that may present problems, consult with your physician *before commencing exercise activity.* 

### AGE WELL

# How to Keep Your Organs Younger Than Your Age

### **Continued from Page 1**

and mortality. Younger organs are better able to heal and recover, making them more resistant to diseases and damage, because of their stem cells. Stem cells throughout the body play a crucial role in maintaining and repairing tissues and organs.

As we age, stem cells also age, leading to a deterioration in their functions. This age-related decline is a major cause of organ function loss and disease onset. Additionally, the number of stem cells tends to decline with age, according to the stem cell theory of aging, contributing to diminished regenerative capacity and impaired tissue maintenance in older people.

Furthermore, younger people have less wear and tear and less accumulated exposure to toxins and pollutants, Dr. Kezia Joy from the UK-based online health care platform Welzo told The Epoch Times. As a result, younger organs usually exhibit enhanced cellular functions, such as better metabolism, energy production, and waste removal, contributing to decreased susceptibility to diseases, and younger people have more robust immune systems.

### Worn Out Hearts

About 75 percent of American adults have a heart age surpassing their actual ages, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The average New York City adult's heart is six years older than his or her actual age. If you're between 35 and 75, you can determine your heart age using a online heart age calculator that uses your age, weight, height, and blood pressure to calculate your heart age.

"Heart age" refers to the estimated age of your cardiovascular system based on risk factors such as high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, and body mass index. Those with a heart age exceeding their chronological age face a higher risk of heart attacks and strokes.

same goes for your liver.

### **Enhance Your Liver**

**Continued from Page 1** 

lowing:

relieve pain. Whereas a high-powered la-

ser is used to cut and destroy tissue, low-

level near-infrared light penetrates more

deeply than ultraviolet or visible light and

doesn't harm living tissue, according to a

The study assessed both red light and

ible and uses wavelengths of 630 to 700

nanometers (nm). Infrared light, at wave-

lengths from 800 to 1,000 nm, is invisible

Treatments evaluated included the fol-

and penetrates deeper into the body.

• LLLT modalities using only light.

therapy, ultrasound, Ginkgo biloba

tablets—an herb commonly used

for vertigo and tinnitus caused by

circulatory disorders and lack of

used to treat dizziness, vertigo,

dihydrochloride.

blood flow to the brain—or a drug

and migraines called flunarizine

LLLT combined with vacuum

study published in Medical Lasers.

The liver is responsible for metabolism, detoxification, and bile secretion. It has the unique ability to regenerate itself even after significant surgical removal, returning to its original size.

One German study found that, regardless of a person's age, the liver usually remains less than three years old because of its constant self-regeneration.

Promise for Tinnitus: Study

infrared light laser therapy. Red light is vis- LLLT using infrared wavelengths was su-

points.

to 15 minutes.

temic side effects.

dihydrochloride.

Yet there appears to be a way to make the organ even younger. Research involving the use of the "Yamanaka fac-To keep their hearts young, people tors," a group of proteins that deliver should follow a heart-healthy lifestyle. The instructions to specific regions of DNA highly active in embryonic stem cells, can effectively make liver cells younger through in vivo cellular reprogramming. This process facilitates faster healing of damaged liver tissues, enhancing the organ's overall rejuvenation.

To maintain a healthy liver, there are simple steps you can take without using advanced technologies:

 Avoid alcohol, smoking, and exposure to toxins.

and the first to investigate the effects of

 $\square$ 

BILLION

The global skin care

market is valued at

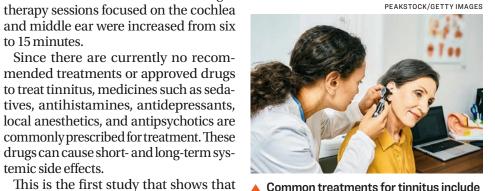
about \$130 billion

a vear.

### What Causes Tinnitus?

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders estimates that 10 to 25 percent of U.S. adults experience some form of tinnitus-making it one of the country's most common health conditions.

ringing, roaring, whooshing, hissing, humming, or buzzing in one ear or both, and the noise can be soft or loud, low- or high-pitched, and sporadic or constantly present. Symptoms can resolve spontaneously or become chronic, resulting in sleep deprivation, loss of concentration,



Common treatments for tinnitus include sedatives, antihistamines, antidepressants,

THOMAS BARWICK/ GETTY IMAGES

· Maintain a healthy weight to prevent fatty liver and liver diseases

 Steer clear of substances such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and certain painkillers that can contribute to various liver disorders.

Recognizing the varying rates at which our organs age emphasizes the significance of preserving their vitality to improve our well-being. By adopting healthy habits and reversing the aging process in our organs, we can diminish the risk of chronic diseases and extend our lifespans.

psychological distress, and depression. Scientists theorize that tinnitus results from damage to the inner ear that changes the signals carried by the nerves to the parts of the brain that process sound. Other evidence suggests that abnormal interactions between the auditory cortex and neural circuits could contribute to the condition.

Tinnitus can also be caused by underlying conditions, such as circulatory problems, hearing loss, infection, tumors, diabetes, autoimmune conditions, Ménière's disease, heavy metal toxicity, and medications. More than 25,000 people have reported developing tinnitus after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine—an adverse event that U.S. regulatory agencies have seemingly ignored but is commonly associated with other vaccines.

Because it's hard to determine the underlying cause of tinnitus, it's challenging to treat and determine whether or when it might resolve.

### Using Infrared Light Therapy to Treat Tinnitus

Scientists discovered in the 1960s that LLLT could enhance tissue repair, but it has only been used during the past two decades to reduce tinnitus severity. Previous studies have yielded inconsistent results, but the authors of the recently published study say this could be attributed to not using the appropriate power

# Exercise

improves blood circulation, enhances blood vessel elasticity and density. and regulates blood pressure.

### • Laser acupuncture (LA)—a specific and cochlear area is superior to placebos local anesthetics, and antipsychotics.

Infrared Therapy Shows

type of LLLT that uses nonthermal,

stimulate traditional acupuncture

low-intensity laser irradiation to

• Treatment with only flunarizine

Treatment with only ginkgo biloba

perior to the placebo, and lasting thera-

peutic effectiveness was also observed 15

days post-treatment with LLLT, LA, and

light therapy combined with other treat-

ments. Researchers also observed that the

most effective treatment was when light

Since there are currently no recom-

treatment with LLLT to the middle ear

LLLT combined with other therapies to monitor short-term effects of nine treatment modalities during and 15 days after treatment and to suggest protocols for tinnitus patients.

People experiencing tinnitus often hear

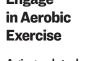
### MAINTAIN **YOUR BRAIN**

New treatments have shown promise in reversing age-related cognitive decline.

For instance, researchers at the University of California-San Francisco discovered that a drug-like small-molecule integrated stress response inhibitor can restore cognitive abilities and rejuvenate brain cells in aged mice.

Methods to help reverse brain aging include the following.

### Engage in Aerobic

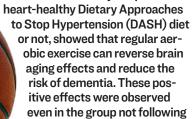


Aging-related changes in the hippocampus can cause cognitive decline

in older adults due to reduced generation of new neurons.

A study at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies showed that aged mice that exercised grew more new neurons than sedentary mice. After one month of running, older mice generated up to 50 percent as many new neurons as young mice, effectively reversing age-related mental decline.

Additionally, a study involving more than 160 people aged 55 and above, who were divided into exercise and non-exercise groups and into groups based on whether they adopted the



**Eat Foods Rich** in Omega-3s, Antioxidants, and

health.

the DASH diet.

Magnesium Eating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon, tuna, and shellfish, can enhance learning, memory, cognitive well-being, and cerebral blood flow. Including antioxidant-rich foods such as blueberries, spinach, and strawberries in your diet can improve cognitive function and brain

Foods rich in magnesium, such as green leafy vegetables, legumes. nuts, seeds, and whole grains, can help regulate metabolism and support the integrity of the bloodbrain barrier. In a randomized trial, older participants with early cognitive impairment took a magnesium salt supplement daily for 12 weeks, which had promising results in reducing brain age.

for wavelengths, not having the proper sessions over a long enough duration of treatment, or not focusing the light on the correct part of the ear.

To perform LLLT, a device is used to apply red or infrared laser wavelengths at a particular setting to various parts of the ear for a set duration. The therapy isn't painful or associated with adverse events. A Norwegian study published in the British Medical Journal describes LLLT as "harmless."

According to the Medical Lasers paper, the exact mechanisms of LLLT aren't fully understood. Still, it's believed that once the light is absorbed, it can "modulate cell biochemical reactions and stimulate mitochondrial respiration, enhancing the production of molecular oxygen, ATP synthesis, and collagen deposition."

### Natural Treatments for Tinnitus

With no approved medical treatments in the United States or Europe, many turn to alternative and complementary medicine to address tinnitus's underlying causes and alleviate their symptoms. In addition to infrared light therapy, the following natural remedies have been shown to be effective for some people.

### **Gushen Pian**

In a randomized controlled trial published in Cell Biochemistry and Biophysics, Gushen Pian, a traditional Chinese herbal remedy, showed significant therapeutic results for tinnitus compared with

### **RENEW YOUR SKIN**

Skin, the body's largest organ, is vital to maintaining our health and wellbeing. Significant research has been dedicated to combating skin aging, with the global skin care industry valued at about \$130 billion.

Approaches to slowing down and potentially reversing skin aging include the following.



vitamin A derivative commonly used for acne treatment, has proven efficacy in promoting cell growth,

clearing clogged pores, and normalizing sebum production Whether used alone or in combina-

tion with antibacterial agents, it has shown promising results in reducing signs of premature skin aging caused by UV exposure, such as wrinkles. loss of elasticity, and pigmentation.

### Consume **Specific Foods**

To slow skin aging, you can consume certain foods rich in essential vitamins and nutrients:

- Retinol, or vitamin A, can be found in meat, dairy products, and fish.
- Carotenoids are abundant in carrots, bell peppers, leafy green vegetables, eggs, broccoli, and tomatoes.
- · Flavonoids are present in fruits, vegetables, and tea.
- Peptides can be obtained from milk, soy, oats, and eggs.
- Omega-3 fats are found in sardines, salmon, nuts, and seeds.

### **Use Certain Skin Care Products**

Skin care products with retinol. carotenoids, flavonoids, or peptides may help combat skin aging.

Vitamin A and its derivatives are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as anti-wrinkle agents that improve skin texture and have anti-aging effects.

Carotenoids provide photoprotection, improve skin elasticity, hydration, and texture, and reduce wrinkles and age spots.

Flavonoids have excellent antioxidant properties that can prolong the skin's youthful appearance.

Peptides support collagen production, improve skin texture, and diminish wrinkles.

a placebo after four weeks of treatment, with an overall effective rate of 89.2 percent versus 30.8 percent for the placebo and a symptom relief rate of 59.5 percent versus 5.1 percent for the placebo.

### Ginkgo Biloba

Ginkgo biloba, a tree native to China, has been used as a medicinal herb for more than 2,000 years. Ginkgo biloba extract, EGb 761, is the most widely tested drug in nonclinical tinnitus models and clinical trials, according to a review published in Frontiers in Pharmacology. Bioflavonoids and flavonoids in Ginkgo biloba, terpene Zinc trilactones, such as ginkgolides and bilobalide, polyprenols, and organic acids are thought to have a vasodilatory effect and help alleviate tinnitus symptoms.

Although the treatment may not work for everyone, preclinical and clinical studies have shown that apart from its antioxidant and vasodilatory effects, Ginkgo biloba extract may improve cochlear microcirculation, protect against ototoxicity damage to the ear caused by medicine, resulting in hearing loss, ringing in the ear, or balance disorders—and alleviate aging-associated degeneration.

The study in the Journal of Personalized Medicine didn't show significant results when Ginkgo biloba was used on its own.

### Korean Red Ginseng

Studies mentioned in the Frontiers in Pharmacology review show that Korean red ginseng can protect against

### **STAY YOUNG AT HEART**

To keep your heart young, it's critical to eat well and avoid activities that hurt your heart. When it comes to keeping your heart healthy, exercise is key.

### Manage Stress



crucial for keeping organs young because when we experience stress, our bodies release stress hormones such as cortisol, which can damage various organ systems when elevated over a prolonged period.

Excessive stress can impair the body's immune system and ability to repair and regenerate cells, leading to accelerated aging and organ deterioration. Moreover, psychological stress can indirectly influence the repair process by encouraging the adoption of unhealthy behaviors.

### **Consume Whey** Protein

A comprehen-

eficial effects.



PubMed, a vast biomedical literature database with more than 35 million citations and abstracts, found that consuming whey protein may have several ben-

These include potential antiobesity properties, improvements in glucose levels and insulin response, reductions in blood pressure and arterial stiffness, and enhancements in lipid profile. These positive outcomes collectively contribute to a lowered risk of cardiovascular disease

Those with a heart age exceeding their chronological age face a higher risk of heart attacks and strokes.



ototoxic medications, attenuate noiseinduced hearing loss, and improve cochlear damage.

In a study published in the Journal of Audiology & Otology, patients with chronic and those with a history of noise exposure. tinnitus received 1,500 milligrams per day (mg/day) or 3,000 mg/day of Korean red ginseng or 160 mg/day of Ginkgo biloba extract over four weeks. The authors found that the patients receiving 3,000 mg/day of Korean ginseng showed significant improvement in their scores and improved emotional and mental health.

Research suggests that as many as 31 percent of patients with tinnitus are deficient in zinc.

In a study published in the Journal of Otology and Neurotology, 46.4 percent of patients given zinc reported clinically favorable progress, and 82 percent of patients experiencing subjective tinnitus experienced an improvement in symptoms; patients who received a placebo experienced no significant decrease.

Supplementing with melatonin—a hormone that the brain produces in response to darkness and that helps regulate your circadian rhythm—at three milligrams per day for 30 days was associated with a "statistically significant decrease in tinnitus intensity and improved sleep quality in patients with chronic tinnitus," according to a study published in the Annals of *exercise science*.

### **Exercise Regularly**

**Regular exercise** aids in removing harmful LDL cholesterol, preventing its buildup in blood vessels.



Engaging in aerobic exercises of low to moderate intensity can significantly reduce total cholesterol levels

Furthermore, exercise improves blood circulation, enhances blood vessel elasticity and density, and regulates blood pressure, all contributing to lowering the risk of cardiovascular disease.

A study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology discovered that just six months of training and running one marathon, even at low intensity, could reduce vascular age by four years. Vascular age is measured by assessing arterial stiffness and is a predictive indicator of potential heart, brain. and kidney damage. The study also found that older, slower participants exhibited greater rejuvenation after completing a marathon.

As we age, the production of new heart muscle cells, known as cardiomyocytes, diminishes. This loss is a leading cause of heart failure. However, a study of mice that was published in Nature Communications revealed that adult mice could generate new heart cells and rejuvenate their hearts after eight weeks of running exercise.

### Avoid Cigarettes and Sugar



Smoking and obesity are both risk factors for cardiovascular diseases. In addition to avoiding smoking, it's crucial to monitor sugar consumption.

A model based on data from U.S. National Health Surveys and scientific literature indicates that reducing added sugar intake by 20 percent over 20 years could decrease incidence of Type 2 diabetes by 19.9 cases per 100,000 people and of coronary heart disease by 9.4 per 100,000 people.

> vitamin A, carotenoids, flavonoids. and omega 3 fatty acids can feed your body, brain, and skin.

A diet rich in

nutrients like

Otology, Rhinology, and Laryngology. Melatonin therapy is most effective in men without a history of depression, those with severe and bilateral tinnitus,

### **Dietary Therapy**

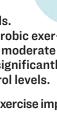
Diet may play a role in the susceptibility of the inner ear to noise- and age-related tinnitus and hearing loss.

A 2020 study found associations between single nutrients and dietary patterns in those with tinnitus and hearing difficulties. A higher intake of vitamin B12 was associated with a reduced chance of developing tinnitus, while calcium and iron increased the chances of developing tinnitus. Vitamin Dintake was associated with a reduced risk of hearing difficulties, as was a diet higher in protein, vegetables, and fruit and lower in fat.

### **Other Therapies**

Other natural therapies that may prove helpful for people experiencing tinnitus include biofeedback, heavy metal chelation, acupuncture, stress management, and, if tinnitus is related to dental grinding or temporomandibular joint dysfunction, wearing a mouth guard.

Megan Redshaw is an attorney and investigative journalist with a background in political science. She is also a traditional naturopath with additional certifications in nutrition and





### Aloe vera can stimulate skin regeneration and wound healing by changing collagen composition.

# HERBAL FIRST AID Treat Acute Injuries With Natural Medicine

### ALOE VERA: FIRST AID FOR BURNS, WOUNDS, AND MORE PART 6

This well-studied plant is long revered, easy to grow, and ready to use

In this series, "Herbal First Aid Kit," we look at natural alternatives to mod*ern first aid kits, which usually consist* of medications made from synthetic chemicals. If you are looking for natural solutions for acute conditions, these herbs are safe, effective, and easily obtainable.

### By Sina McCullough

hefirsttime I used aloe vera was to treat a bad sunburn that left my skin red, hot, and in pain. I collected aloe vera gel from the leaf of an aloe plant and applied it liberally to the affected area several times throughout the day.

Upon waking the next morning, I was amazed to discover the heat and pain had disappeared and the redness was replaced with tan-colored skin.

The results seemed unbelievable, so I repeated the experiment with a subsequent sunburn and with a thermal burn I got by accidentally grabbing a hot pan. In both situations, the aloe vera gel quickly healed the wound and remedied the pain. Since then, I have always kept an Aloe plant in my home.

Aloe vera (aloe barbadensis miller) is a perennial succulent with thick, fleshy, long, pea-green leaves.

It has been used medicinally for millennia. Clay tablets dated 1750 B.C. reveal pared to those dressed with SSD [silver hydrofluorocarbon 152a, and butane. that aloe vera was used as medicine in sulfadiazine cream]," according to the Mesopotamia.

The Egyptians referred to aloe vera as "the plant of immortality." The Egyptian queens Nefertiti and Cleopatra used aloe as part of their daily beauty routines. Egyptian books from 550 B.C. recorded that skin infections were cured using aloe.

Greek scientists hailed Aloe vera as the "universal panacea." In A.D. 74, a Greek physician, Discordes, wrote a book titled *De Materia Medica*, which listed aloe vera as a treatment for wounds, infections, chapping, hair loss, and hemorrhoids.

Around the year 1200, aloe vera was used for eczema. Both Alexander the Great and Christopher Columbus used aloe vera to treat the wounds of soldiers. By the early 1800s, aloe vera was used

in the United States as a laxative. In the mid-1930s, it was successfully used to treat severe radiation dermatitis. Today, scientific studies have dem-

onstrated that aloe vera has numerous healing properties, including being antitumor, anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, Make sure the leaf is free of anti-aging, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, antiseptic, and skin protective.

> Aloe vera also helps treat a variety of wounds, including post-operative wounds, psoriasis, skin ulcers, genital herpes, bedsores, and burns.

> Because of its ability to heal wounds, aloe vera gel can replace some manmade medications commonly found in a modern first aid kit.

### **Thermal Burns**

When experiencing a thermal burn, I reach for aloe vera gel instead of petroleum jelly or a topical antibiotic.

While aloe vera was used in traditional medicine to heal burns from fire, today, the go-to remedy is petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline), which is derived from crude oil.

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, the standard treatment for first-degree burns includes applying petroleum jelly and covering it with a sterile bandage. However, aloe vera gel **Previous Parts:** may be a better choice, according to **TheEpochtim.es/Herbal** modern science.

Aloe vera contains glucomannan and gibberellin, which increase the production of collagen by stimulating the activity and proliferation of fibroblast growth factor receptors, helping skin heal.

Aloe vera also accelerates wound healing and improves the strength of the resulting scar tissue by changing the collagen composition and increasing the amount of collagen cross-linking.

A 1995 study compared aloe vera with Vaseline on 27 patients with burn wounds. The researchers wrote, "Aloe two days of treatment with aloe vera vera gel treated lesion[s] healed faster gel, the researchers concluded that aloe than the Vaseline gauze area." Aloe vera vera gel "displayed some anti-inflamhealed the wounds in 11.89 days, and matory effects" and "might be useful in Vaseline gauze treated wounds healed the topical treatment of inflammatory in 18.19 days.

Aloe vera gel stimulated the "rapid growth" of skin cells, as well as collagen tissue. According to the researchers, "These findings were not seen in the Vaseline gauze treated area."

A second commonly recommended treatment for thermal burns is a topical antibiotic. However, according to a comparative study published in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine in 1996, Aloe vera is more effective at wound healing. The authors concluded that aloe "significantly accelerated wound contraction." In contrast, mafenide acetate, a topical antibiotic, "retarded wound healing."

A 2013 study concurred that aloe vera gel was more effective at treating thermal burns than an antibiotic.

"Thermal burn patients dressed with aloe vera gel showed advantage com-

researchers. Wounds healed faster and pain relief was felt sooner using aloe vera gel than when using the antibiotic.

### Sunburn

You can avoid man-

made chemicals and still

receive relief from sun

and thermal burns by

choosing Aloe vera gel.

When I have a sunburn, I reach for aloe vera gel instead of an over-the-counter first-aid remedy such as hydrocortisone cream, Dermoplast, or Solarcaine.

A 2008 study published in Skin Pharmacology and Physiology exposed 40 volunteers to UVB radiation. Following skin conditions such as UV-induced erythema [redness]."

Treatment with aloe vera gel also bettermitigated effects of UV radiation than treatment with hydrocortisone in placebo gel.

A 1996 study concluded that a compound in aloe vera contains anti-inflammatory activity that is "equivalent" to hydrocortisone when topically treating wounds on mice.

Hydrocortisone treatment "resulted in a 50 percent decrease in thymus weight," while treatment with the aloe compound showed no negative effect on the thymus. Modern drug companies recognize the effectiveness of aloe vera; it's an ingredient in two of the leading first-aid remedies for sunburn: Dermoplast and Solarcaine.

However, Dermoplast also contains several synthetic ingredients, such as polysorbate 85, PEG-400 monolaurate, Solarcaine also contains several syn-



### WHEN TO USE **ALOE VERA GEL** Aloe vera gel can be

used for the following acute skin conditions:

- Sunburn
- Thermal burn • Dryness
- Cracking
- Hemorrhoid
- Bedsores
- Post-operative wounds

How to Harvest

The aloe vera plant needs

to be mature-at least a

few years old-to ensure

the active ingredients.

higher concentrations of

To harvest aloe directly from

1.Choose a thick leaf from the

outer section of the plant.

mold and damage.

2.Cut the leaf close to the

3. Slit the leaf lengthwise

to expose the gel.

stem, avoiding the roots.

using a knife or your fingers

1.Using your finger, apply the

skin. Aloe can be applied

the day. Don't apply to

open skin.

several times throughout

aloe vera gel liberally to the

From an Aloe

Vera Plant

the plant:

- Skin ulcers
- Skin itching







thetic ingredients, including propane, propylene glycol, isobutane, methylparaben, carbomer, and propylparaben.

You can avoid man-made chemicals and still receive relief from sun and thermal burns by choosing aloe vera gel.

### Aloe Vera Gel Quality

The best options for a first aid kit are aloe vera plant, which is easy to grow at home, and aloe vera gel.

When it comes to gel, you do need to be mindful of quality, as adulteration of aloe vera gel has been reported. Aloe vera gel is rich in polysaccharides, including pectins and acemannan. These polysaccharides have been substituted or diluted with lower-cost carbohydrates, such as maltodextrin or sucrose.

"Many experts in the herb industry have known for a long time that some aloe materials are adulterated. Because many aloe materials are in liquid or gel form, it is relatively easy for unethical aloe producers to 'stretch' the aloe material by adding low-cost liquids and various types of sugars to the ingredients to increase profits," Mark Blumenthal, founder of the American Botanical Council, warned in a bulletin in the council's journal.

Synthetic preservatives and fillers are also commonly added to aloe vera gel, even if the label claims that the product is "100% Pure Aloe."

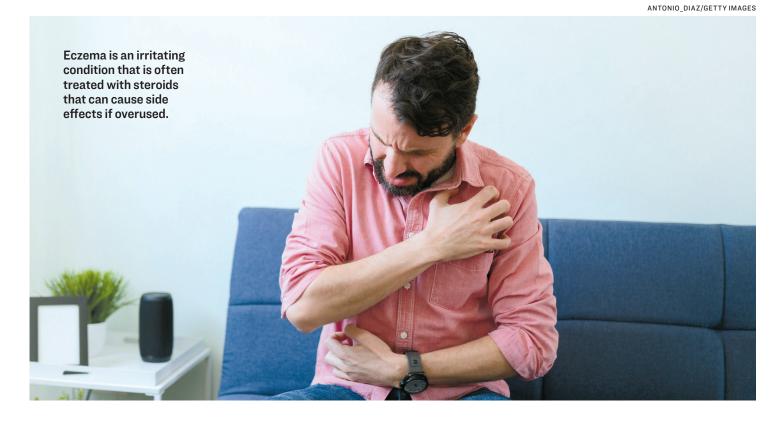
If purchasing aloe gel, choose organic and read the ingredient label to make sure it doesn't contain synthetic chemicals.

### **Precautions and Possible** Interactions

Although cautions exist for oral use, topical application rarely results in complications. Although rare, aloe vera gel can lead to burning and itching of the skin. Consult a health care provider before use if pregnant or lactating or if suffering from an inflammatory skin condition.

Dr. Sina McCullough is the creator of the online program "Go Wild: How I Reverse Chronic & Autoimmune Disease," and author of "Hands Off My Food" and "Beyond Labels." She has a doctorate in nutrition from the University of CaliforniaDavis. She is a master herbalist, Gluten Free Society certified practitioner, and a homeschool mom of three.

Next week: Part 7 This concludes our Herbal First Aid Kit Series—for now.



**TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE** 

# A TCM Story of Remarkable Recovery from Eczema

Traditional Chinese medicine doctor uses anti-inflammatory herbs and acupuncture to get a man off steroids and clear his eczema

By Jennifer Bateman & May Cheng

Eczema is a common skin disease, and while it can't kill you, the itching, redness, and swelling it causes can be unbearable. The condition can even lead to comorbidities such as depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders, severely compromising quality of life.

Yuen Oi-lin, a registered traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioner in Hong Kong, shared one successful case of TCM treatment of eczema on the program "100 Diseases and 100 Cures."

A 22-year-old college student had been suffering from eczema since childhood. He didn't believe TCM could cure his eczema. When Ms. Yuen suggested that he give TCM a try, he said he would discredit her if it didn't work. He then underwent TCM treatment, and after receiving acupuncture and taking Chinese medicine for three months, his skin became smooth, and he lost 30 pounds simultaneously.

Eczema is a general term for a variety of tions is atopic dermatitis. Atopic derma- I started to sweat," he said. titis affects about 13 percent of children and 7 percent of adults in the United States. Western medicine often uses steroid ointment to treat eczema. However, long-term use of steroid drugs has many side effects, including acne, weight gain, and insomnia.

### In TCM theory, abnormalities in the six factors of 'wind, cold, heat, dampness, dryness, and fire (heat)'

## can lead to disease.

### Young Man Challenges TCM **Eczema Treatment**

TCM eczema treatment avoids the side effects brought on by steroids. It also may be effective for people who find conventional steroid treatments ineffective.

The young man had severe eczema all over his face and body. He explained that he had suffered from eczema since he was a baby. Over the years, whenever he had mild symptoms, he always went to a specialist, and each visit cost several thousand Hong Kong dollars (a few hundred U.S. dollars). Initially, the treatment was no longer worked.

The young man was skeptical that TCM could cure his eczema.

"You can try TCM treatment once, and you don't have to believe in it if it doesn't work," Ms. Yuen told him.

"He said, 'Then, let's bet: If you can't cure me, and if it doesn't work, I will take down your signboard [discredit your name].""

### Acupuncture and TCM **Prescription Work Wonders**

The following day, he arrived at the clinic before the doctor. The first round of acupuncture proved effective, and he slept



▲ Many of the foods traditional Chinese medicine recommends to treat eczema have anti-inflammatory effects.

student and had to go to class, he was the first in line every morning.

At first, the man received only acupuncture but soon began taking Chinese medicine, which also worked immediately. "I didn't sweat before, but after receiv-

skin diseases. One of the common condi- ing acupuncture and Chinese medicine, Why is sweating a good sign? Ms. Yuen

explained that sweating can help the body detoxify. If eczema patients fail to sweat, toxins will accumulate inside the body and worsen eczema.

"It's as if the whole person is isolated and cannot exchange air with nature. The pores of the human body are meant to communicate with nature and serve the function of breathing, too," she said.

The man received TCM treatment for more than three months. During this period, he received acupuncture daily, with 10 days constituting one cycle and a short hiatus between cycles. Three months later, his skin was smooth, and he seemed to have no more worries.

He also lost 30 pounds in one month, likely in relation to the withdrawal of steroids. Studies have also found that acupuncture and moxibustion can regulate endocrine and energy metabolism, thereby treating obesity.

### **TCM Restrictions: Avoid**

**Raw and Cold Food** Ms. Yuen said there are only a few restric tions when treating eczema with TCM You can shower normally, except when you've gotten needling done in certain areas. As for diet, you should only avoid eating raw or cold food.

The young man once asked, "Dr. Yuen, quite effective but became less effective why didn't you ask me to stop eating lobover time. Eventually, the steroid drugs sters?" Other physicians had told him to avoid seafood. Ms. Yuen replied, "except for cold and iced drinks, you can eat whatever you like."

Ms. Yuen also said that only when doctors and patients work together can they achieve twice the result with half the effort. Success or not, the patient must first have confidence in the doctor; the effect will be better once that trust is established

### TCM Diet Therapy, Daily Wellness **Routine Equally Important**

If even modern medicine is unsure about the cause of eczema, how can TCM treat it? In TCM theory, abnorverywell. After that, he came for acupunc- malities in the six factors of "wind, ture every day; because he was a college cold, heat, dampness, dryness, and

fire (heat)" can lead to disease. These factors can be interpreted using modern methods, although the meanings don't exactly line up. For example, water retention is an excess of dampness, and fever and inflammation are

excesses of heat. Ms. Yuen said TCM believes that skin diseases are mainly caused by excessive dampness and heat, and the lungs and skin are closely related in energy terms. Therefore, in this case, TCM treatment focuses on clearing heat and dampness and employs Chinese medicinal herbs such as Corvdalis bungeana, Lemna minor. and Cimicifugae rhizome, which can disperse moisture accumulated in the body through the pores.

Modern medicine has learned that many Chinese herbs have the properties they're described to have. For instance, Corydalis bungeana is a known antiinflammatory.

Others, such as dried Rehmannia rhizome, Scrophulariae radix, Ecliptae herba, and the like, invigorate yin and dispel heat. In terms of Western medicine. they're anti-inflammatory.

TCM divides the energy inside the human body into yin and yang. When yin is deficient, too much heat is generated. Therefore, Chinese medicine that nourishes yin can also help clear heat, thereby improving eczema.

Ms. Yuen emphasized that there's a saying: "If you don't take care of your health today, you take care of the doctors tomorrow." People with eczema should maintain good life habits, avoid staying up late, and not put too much pressure on themselves so they can allow the body to heal their eczema.

### Job's Tears Water Improves Eczema. Effective for Those

Who Must Stay Up Late

If staving up late is unavoidable, diet therapy can help. The simplest method is to boil water with Semen coicis (coix seed), also known as Job's tears, which is known to have antioxidative and antiinflammatory effects. Drinking this will clear away heat and dampness.

### A Trick to Sleep

Ms. Yuen suggests that if you want to sleep well, you can put your legs up on the wall and lie on the bed in an "L" shape for 15 minutes before bedtime. After standing all day, doing this will help regulate blood circulation.

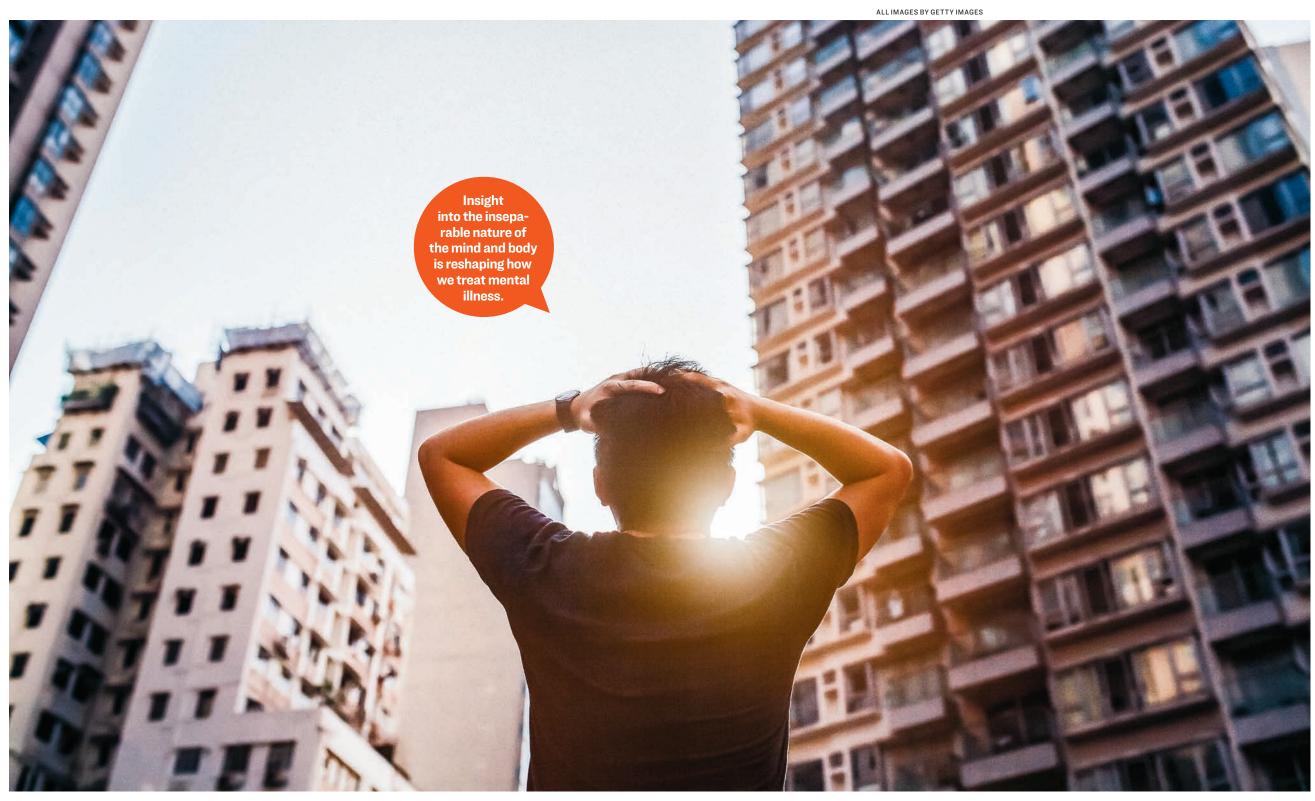




50 grams (1.8 ounces) raw Semen coicis (for one person)

### PREPARATION

Add about 1 to 1.5 liters (2.1 to 3.2 pints) of water to raw Semen coicis, bring to a boil, then let it simmer on low heat for about one hour before serving. You can add a little lemon and honey according to your taste preference.

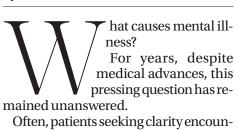


MENTAL HEALTH

# A Root Cause of Mental Illness: Harvard Professor

The ketogenic diet is curing mental illness for many, and the science suggests that it's because of how it shifts our metabolism

**By Michelle Standlee** 



ter explanations such as "it's genetic" or "depression is a lack of serotonin." Of course, there are countless experiences that can contribute to mental illness, including social isolation, addiction, and trauma. But researchers have also long known that there's a biochemical aspect to depression.

Dr. Christopher Palmer, a Harvard pro-

fessor of psychiatry, has been connecting the dots of thousands of research articles regarding the relationship between mental illness and mitochondrial dysfunction. According to Dr. Palmer, this collective research raises concerns about the current treatments used for mental disorders.

### A Chance Discovery

Dr. Palmer started his investigation in 2016, when he helped a patient with schizoaffective disorder lose weight. The patient suffered not only from severe mental illness, but also from low self-esteem due to the weight gain he experienced while on psychotropic medication. Weight loss brought a dramatic drop in

symptoms. Dr. Palmer said he initially couldn't believe that switching to a low-carbohydrate, ketogenic diet could have stopped the patient's chronic auditory hallucinations and paranoid delusions. He quickly started using this intervention in other patients and saw similar—sometimes even more dramatic-results.

This experience encouraged him to learn how a change in diet could help with severe mental illness. He found decades of studies revealing the connection between

# Nightmares and Night Terrors May Predict Parkinson's

Research finds that certain dreams may indicate neurodegeneration years before other symptoms show up

### By Vance Voetberg

Dreams can—and often do—feature the most random assortment of people doing the most random things: You, a childhood friend, and a celebrity you've never met are all fighting an enemy in a parallel universe or playing hide-and-seek in Paris. You wake up confused, happy, or scared,

knowing that the adventure you just experienced was only an illogical journey kinson's disease five years after the initial that didn't represent anything significant. assessment. However, this association Or did it?

What if our dreams do mean something? Not in a lucid, transcendental manner, but in a real, scientifically proven way? What if dreams are mirrors that re- rather than life-long distressing dreams, flect the state of a person's physical and mental well-being?

This concept seems far-fetched to many, but according to recent science and leadto understand what dreams may indicate about our health and how our health might affect our dreams.

### **Are Bad Dreams Warning Signs**

of Parkinson's Disease? Recent research suggests that nightmares and bad dreams may be early warning signs of neurodegenerative diseases, including Parkinson's. A 2022 longitudinal study spanning 12 years and involving 3,818 men aged 67 or older discovered a significant association between frequent distressing dreams and developing Parnoticeably diminished during the subsequent seven years of the study.

"This suggests," the study's author noted, "that late-onset distressing dreams, may be linked with increased [Parkinson's disease] risk."

REM sleep behavior disorder—a sleep condition characterized by night tering dream experts, we're just beginning rors-can act as an early indicator of neurodegenerative disorders such as Parkinson's, sometimes decades before their onset, according to Patrick McNa- BOMG/SHUTTERSTOCK

mara, who holds a doctorate in behavioral sciences and is an associate professor of neurology at Boston University School of Medicine.

Mitochondria

power our cells.

When they

malfunction,

our brains and

psychological

function suffer.

"In REM sleep behavior disorder, people tend to act out their dreams during sleep," Mr. McNamara told The Epoch Times. "They jump out of bed or flail about as they typically dream of being attacked by an intruder."

Although nightmares can be associated with neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's, experiencing a single bad dream doesn't automatically indicate neurodegeneration. However, as Mr. McNamara pointed out, symptoms of neurodegenerative diseases can manifest in dreams years before they become apparent in waking life. Therefore, you should consult a doctor



metabolic health and brain health.

concrete mechanisms of action, I realized long term," Dr. Palmer said. there's something much bigger here. I'm he told The Epoch Times.

book "Brain Energy," highlighting his gies to mitigate discoveries and theorizing that mitochondrial disorders are the root cause of all mental illnesses.

Drawing from decades of research on metabolism and mitochondria, Dr. Palmer said he believes that mental disorders are metabolic disorders of the brain. This means that these conditions aren't permanent defects and can be corrected by identifying and addressing their root cause. This insight challenges the notion that conditions such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder are lifelong disorders.

"People with labels such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder can put their illnesses into remission, they can heal, and they can recover," he said.

"That goes against much of what we tell people today."

What's Mitochondrial Dysfunction? Cellular structures called mitochondria are vital for all cells to function normally, including brain cells. When mitochondria aren't operating correctly, various health problems can arise, including cardiovascular disease, hypertension, obesity, and Type 2 diabetes.

Dr. Palmer pointed out that when mitochondria fail to work correctly, this can also lead to mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. The brain needs a considerable amount of energy to work efficiently. When mitochondria aren't churning out enough energy, this can lead to abnormalities in the brain's structure and function, leading to mental illness.

### Dr. Christopher Palmer said he believes that mental disorders are metabolic disorders of the brain.

Dr. Palmer said mitochondrial dysfunction can produce several changes in the brain that can cause mental illness to develop. These changes include fluctuations in neurotransmitter levels, oxidative stress, and inflammation.

If the origin of mental disorders is mitochondrial dysfunction, treatments that address the underlying issue could be more successful than traditional tools. Some of Dr. Palmer's patients have experienced remission of mild to severe symptoms, including depression, psychosis, and hallucinations, and then reduced or discontinued their medications. Although helpful for some patients in the short term, psychiatric medications can duced libido, increased risk of suicide, and weight gain

"We seriously need to look at the risks carbohydrates. "The more I uncovered in terms of those and benefits of those treatments over the

He cautioned that people should nevbeginning to connect a lot of dots that our er discontinue the use of medications lizing effects. field hasn't been able to connect before," without speaking with their medical providers.

In November 2022, he released the Dr. Palmer suggests numerous strate-

nurse and medical writer.

if you routinely experience nightmares.

### What Recurring Dreams

### Might Indicate

According to the Academy of Sleep and Wellness, 60 to 75 percent of adults experience recurring dreams. Recurring daily, this was a significant intervention. dreams can often be attributed to "the mind working through current stress, processing a past event, or preparing for a future event," Dr. Alex Dimitriu, a psychiatrist specializing in sleep health, told The Epoch Times.

"Freud called this 'day residue' or the tendency to dream at night, as a continuation of thoughts or concerns from the daytime," he added.

Therefore, when we experience repetitive dreams, it could indicate that the mind is attempting to compartmentalize stress and trauma, allowing for processing and resolution.

### Is Vitamin B6 the Secret to Vivid Dreams?

Although the science of dreams is still highly speculative, researchers have found that nutrition may affect our dreams. One nutrient that has shown a been found to play a role in dream quality. close relationship with dream quality is vitamin B6.

To investigate B6's influence on dreams,

a team of scientists conducted a study in which 12 trial participants were randomly assigned to receive either 100 milligrams cy of vitamin B6. However, the current of vitamin B6, 250 milligrams of B6, or evidence doesn't definitively explain a placebo. Considering that most adults consume no more than 2 milligrams of B6

### **Recent research suggests** that nightmares and bad dreams may be early warning signs of neurodegenerative diseases, including Parkinson's.

Researchers used a dream composite score that assessed participants' dreams' vividness, bizarreness, emotionality, and color. The results supported their hypothesis, demonstrating that B6 supplementation significantly increased the composite scores and dream recall.

Vitamin B6 is integral in synthesizing for The Epoch Times based in the Pacific serotonin, a neurotransmitter that has Northwest. He holds a B.S. in jour-Scientists theorize that supplementing B6 inspiring health-related news. He is the increases serotonin production, enhancing dream salience.

the effects of mitochondrial dysfunction, including common-sense lifestyle changes such as exercise, improved diet, stress reduction, and adequate sleep.

The ketogenic diet has proven to be the most successful for Dr. Palmer's patients. The ketogenic diet, which dates back to 1920, was first used to treat epilepsy. The diet-high in fat, moderate in protein, and low in carbohydrates—has been shown to increase the number of mitochondria in cells and enhance their function.

One of the ways the ketogenic diet benefits mitochondrial health is through the production of ketones. When the body is in ketosis, it produces ketones from stored fat as an alternative, more efficient fuel source. These ketones can provide energy to cells, including brain cells, which rely heavily on mitochondria for their energy needs.

Mitochondria assist in the production of neurotransmitters, chemicals that influence mood and behavior, such as serotonin and dopamine.

The ketogenic diet also improves insulin resistance because it's low in sugar and carbohydrates. Insulin resistance can also impair the creation of new mitochondria. Insulin resistance results in dysfunction of the mitochondria, reduced energy production, and cellular damage, including in brain cells.

### A Picture of the Research

Research from 2015 found that the ketone metabolite, which is the energy molecule created when the liver breaks down fat, could block NLP3 inflammasome-mediated inflammatory diseases. A study published in BMC Psychiatry in April found that inflammatory processes linked to NLP3 were an important contributor to severe psychiatric disorders and that NLRP3 inflammasome was elevated in people with psychiatric disorders.

A review published in Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews in 2018 looked often produce side effects such as re- at research regarding a ketogenic diet's effect on mood disorders. A ketogenic diet fuels the body with fat rather than

According to the review, preclinical studies at the time found that the diet had antidepressant and mood-stabi-

The researchers said the diet should be considered a "promising intervention."

Michelle Standlee, R.N., is a health reporter for The Epoch Times. She has a background as a registered

> covering topics including mental and behavioral health. women's and children's health traditional health care, complementary medicine, and alternative medicine.

> > The ketogenic diet is high in fat, moderate in protein, and low in carbohydrates.

Based on the findings, the inability to

recall dreams could indicate a deficien-

the relationship between vitamin B6

Quality of sleep is closely related to the

quality of dreams we experience, Dr.

Dimitriu said. He advises against con-

suming meals, alcohol, or caffeine too

close to bedtime, as these can undermine

sleep architecture and, consequently,

Furthermore, Dr. Dimitriu emphasizes

the significance of maintaining regular

sleep and wake times, allowing for an eight-hour window to ensure sufficient

sleep. "This means nothing exciting—

screens, etc.—ideally one to two hours

"Good sleep loves quiet, darkness, regu-

Vance Voetberg is a freelance journalist

nalism and aims to present truthful,

founder of the nutrition blog "Running

before bedtime," he said.

larity, and rhythm."

On Butter.

How to Have Good Dreams

INTENTIONAL LIVING

### If Your Goal Is More, You'll Never Get There

Gratitude and satisfaction can bloom inside us when we recognize that enough is enough

### By Joshua Becker

Many of us fall into the trap of spending our entire lives reaching for something we can never attain.

I'm talking about our constant pursuit for more: more money, more home, more status, more likes, more success. We believe that if we have a little more,

we will be happier. But the very nature of "more"—and our desire for it-makes it unattainable. Constantly needing more to be happy is like chasing the proverbial carrot just out of reach, or a mirage that recedes as we approach it.

Because when more becomes the goal, we'll never get there. The finish line always moves away from us.

Rarely do we stop long enough to ask, "How much do I need to be happy?" How much money, how much house, how expensive a car, how many pairs of shoes? Very few people sit long enough to answer that question.

Instead, we just assume, for one reason or another, that "more than I have now" is the right answer. We fail to recognize that it is our desire for more that leaves us wanting.

We can never arrive at contentment if more is always required to achieve it. The relentless pursuit of "more" obscures our arrival at "enough." When we focus on the things we don't have, we lose sight of all that we do have.

This may not be true in every situation, but many of us are already living with more than we had before—including the debt it took for us to get it.

Meanwhile, we devalue what we already have, blinded by the allure of what we don't. And our existing blessings get overlooked by the race for "more." The very pursuit of "more" cultivates a

sense of lacking, a feeling of insufficiency, an ingrained discontent in our hearts. What if we recognized that contentment

isn't about acquiring more, but about appreciating what we already have? A whole new way of life would open for each of us.

So let's redefine our pursuits, and let's aim for "enough" instead of "more." Consider how your attitude, your days, and your pursuits would change if you did. Do you have food on your table and a roof over your head? Are there clothes in your closet? Do you have love in your life and opportunity to serve others? If so, maybe you already have all that you need to be happy.

Just to be clear, this article isn't about settling for less in life; it's about understanding the value of contentment and the ambition that accompanies it. And removing the unquenchable de-

sire for more may be the most life-giving decision you make today. Enough is a reachable destination.

More is a journey with no end.

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

### Contentment isn't about acquiring more, but about appreciating what we





and dreams.

dream quality.

### **TRUTH** and **TRADITION**

In Our Own Words

# The Journey to Good Health



It's made me realize that getting healthy doesn't have to be about sacrifice or self-denial. When you know better, you naturally want to do better.

**Conan Milner** Senior Health Reporter

### Dear Epoch VIP,

My name is Conan Milner, and I'm a health reporter for The Epoch Times. I've been writing for the paper since 2005, and exclusively for the Mind & Body section since 2014. This job has given me the opportunity to research and report on subjects I'm very passionate about, such as understanding how our bodies work and learning new ways I can take care of mine.

Health was not always my passion. For years, it wasn't even a concern. In college especially, I had about as unhealthy a life as you can imagine. I smoked compulsively, worked nights, and slept little. My diet consisted primarily of Coney dogs and Burger King. But it all caught up with me by my early 20s. It seems so young, but I felt old—miserable both mentally and physically.

Luckily, I met (and then married) an acupuncturist and my lifestyle changed dramatically. In addition to writing for The Epoch Times, I have helped my wife manage her clinic for over 20 years. In that time I've learned a ton about herbs, witnessed the power of natural medicine, developed an enormous respect for ancient Chinese wisdom, and have honed exceptional kombucha brewing skills.

My own health journey has served me well as a reporter because it has given me the kind of perspective that only comes with falling on your face, picking yourself back up, and walking a new road. This process has taught me that better health is often about making better choices. Even if you're born with great genes and enjoy top-notch health insurance, you still must eventually face the consequences of your lifestyle. My articles give me a chance to share this journey

with my readers. For example, after the opportunity

of talking to several trainers, physical therapists, and a couple of back surgeons, I began to see exercise in a whole new light. Previously, I had little time or interest for anything athletic, but I've since developed a regular weight lifting routine that is still going strong after more than three years. Likewise, I've learned how to take care of my microbiome, discovered that a simple walk in the woods can inspire and help me let go of anxiety, come to know how to meditate for a clear mind, and have found that I should always be kind to others and grateful for what I have.

For me, these habits have little to do with willpower, and much more to do with an understanding of what hurts me and what heals me. It's made me realize that getting healthy doesn't have to be about sacrifice or self-denial. When you know better, you naturally want to do better.

I choose the topics I write about primarily on what I would like to read, and I know I couldn't find such freedom at any other publication. The Epoch Times has given me the support and encouragement to tackle subjects that many other organizations shy away from. It's allowed me to cover controversial subjects such as vaccines, wireless radiation, GMOs, and other topics that are often ignored or censored due to corporate interests.

Of course, I always keep in mind that our success comes from our readers-individuals who are curious, thoughtful, and hold the

truth in high regard. Thanks for sharing this journey with me.

In truth and tradition,

Conan Milner The Epoch Times





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In Chinese

medicine, living

in harmony with

the world is not

only vital for a

healthy body,

mind, and spirit

but is an essential

aspect of a happy,

fulfilling life.

production.

mechanisms.

▲ Seasonal fruits and vegetables are at their peak ripeness and bursting with flavor. They will also help keep the body cool during the peak summer months.

# SEASONAL LIVING Living in Harmony With Summer

Get the most from the season with insight from Chinese traditional culture

By Emma Suttie

more, in the winter, less.

in some places, but most people today ing ourselves freely. are disconnected from nature, from each other, and even from themselves.

In Chinese medicine, living in harmo- In Chinese medicine, summer is the sealooks at adjusting to the seasons.

The Summer Season

Raw honey is rich

in antioxidants

from the flower

nectar it's

created from and

is a surprisingly

close substitute

to real sugar.

Immune System

Yang represents fire, activity, expansion, n a time not so long ago, people motion, and outward expression. Summer lived in harmony with the world is a time of growth and abundance, when around them. The shift from one the plants, trees, and flowers flourish—fed season to another signaled a by the sun's nourishing rays. Summer is L change in behaviors—what to eat the time when we should embody these and how to prepare foods, when to get qualities, rising early to benefit from the up and go to bed, and so on. Our level of sun's energy and enjoying nature's beauty activity also naturally aligned with the and plenitude. We feel these yang qualities planet's rhythms. In spring, we worked most in summer—being drawn outside to engage with friends, family, and the This interplay is still a vital part of life planet; moving our bodies; and express-

### The Heart and Joy

ny with the world is not only vital for a son of the heart, which represents our healthy body, mind, and spirit but is also capacity for joy. This means that cultian essential aspect of a happy, fulfilling vating joy strengthens the heart and all life. Here's how this ancient discipline of its processes. Conversely, a lack of joy in life adversely affects the heart and, if prolonged, can lead to symptoms such as insomnia, dream-disturbed sleep, palpi-Summer is the most yang time of year. tations, and poor memory. So cultivating

> Sucralose Try these 5 safer options to the popular artificial sweetener better known as Splenda May Harm the

### By Sean Lin & Jacky Guan

Widely embraced as a safe sugar substitute, the popular artificial sweetener sucralose is now under scrutiny for its potential effects on the immune system. More than 140 million Americans use sugar substitutes. These biochemicals undergo rigorous tests for stability, safety, and toxicology to gain approval from disruptions impede the body's defense

the Food and Drug Administration. Sucralose (sold as Splenda), boasting a sweetness that's 600 times stronger than lose affects other parts of the immune 1. Stevia However, a recent study published in induce liver inflammation, and change times sweeter than sugar. Nature suggests that sucralose hinders the normal function of sugar receptors

joy is vital for good health.

Because summer is the season associated with the heart, it's the best time to feed the heart energy and engage in activities and pursuits that make you joyful and fill you with a sense of wonder and delight. Think about what makes you happy, and do it with the intention of feeding your heart energy-whether it's calling a friend who makes you laugh, spending time with pets who love you unconditionally, or engaging in creative pursuits that feed your spirit.

Those with healthy, balanced heart energy are friendly, open, and humble. They have a clarity of mind that makes them able to effortlessly deal with difficulties and find smart solutions to nearly any problem. They bring positivity to their interactions, regardless of the situation.

### Summer Behaviors

In the summer months, Chinese medicine encourages us to get up early with the sun and go to bed later so that we can enjoy longer days and warm sum mer nights.

The sun revitalizes and rejuvenates us, so being outside and active in summer is what feeds our bodies and spirits. Physical activity is yang as opposed to activities such as meditation or yoga, which are slower and more introspective-or vin. Running, biking, swimming, or playing sports are all yang activities that we tend to be drawn to at the most yang time of year.

Continued on Page 18 zucchini blossoms.

a crucial function of T cells, the im- in mice. High concentrations also inmune system's first responders against hibit the release of calcium, a crucial tors (TCRs) to recognize threats such as many functions. bacteria and viruses and activate the immune system. When present in high

digested, it creates a harmful metabolite called sucralose-6-acetate. Researchers say that this substance can damage DNA.

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sugar, is one of the most popular arti-system, the artificial sweetener has been Derived from the leaves of a South ficial sweeteners in the United States. found to disrupt the gut microbiome, American plant, stevia is a few hundred Continued on Page 14



Why are we America's fastest-growing media?

The study further notes that sucralose

may inhibit the immune-activating en-

While there's no evidence that sucra-

See it yourself for just \$1\*.

### Cooling **Summer Foods**

Thankfully, many of the cooling foods that we need to counteract the intense heat of summer are abundant this time of year. Because balance is necessary, we want to add cooling foods to our meals to balance all the yang energies outside

and inside our bodies. Here are some cooling foods that you can add to your diet in the hottest

Salads

- Fruits such as apples. watermelons, lemons
- and limes
- Sprouts

 Tofu Flower and leaf teas

such as mint, chamomile, and chrysanthemum

Some cooling, pungent herbs and spices are also beneficial at this time of year. They include peppermint, spearmint, lavender, lemon balm, lily bulbs, and

pathogens. T cells rely on T-cell recep- mineral that the body uses to carry out Another recent study found that sucralose is "genotoxic," because after it's concentrations, sucralose inhibits TCRdependent proliferation, limiting T-cell

5 Healthier Sugar Alternatives zyme phospholipase C gamma-1, which Regarding sugar substitutes, there are plays a vital role in cell growth, migravarious options available, each with its tion, apoptosis, and proliferation. These advantages and disadvantages. While no perfect sugar substitute exists, several alternatives offer similar qualities.

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**Cayes** 

# Parkinson's Disease: 9 Very Early Warning Signs to Be Aware Of

Early treatment can slow the progression of symptoms and preserve quality of life for many, say experts

### **By George Citroner**

arkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder that the damage or death of neurons in the brain region that's responsible for muscle control.

When assessing Parkinson's disease, doctors distinguish between two phases: during walking. the prodromal and clinical phases. The prodromal phase is characterized by patients noticing symptoms that aren't yet serious enough to warrant a diagnosis, while the clinical phase comes once symptoms are significant enough to justify testing to diagnose the disease.

Understanding this progressive neurological disorder is crucial because of its life-changing impact. Recognizing the different phases helps patients to identify concerning symptoms and enables doctors to diagnose the disease accurately.

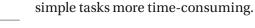
### Key Early Signs to Watch Out For

### Tremors

Among the most common early signs of Parkinson's disease are tremors or shaking, primarily in the hands, arms, legs, jaw, or face, Dr. Guy Schwartz, codirector of the Stony Brook Parkinson's and Movement Disorders Center at Stony Brook Medicine, told The Epoch Times. The tremors may occur at rest or during tasks and can initially be mild, but tend to worsen over time.

### **Changes in Movement**

Parkinson's disease can lead to changes or rigidity, which can impede daily ac- or family members. tivities such as dressing and turning in Dr. Schwartz explained that one of the bed, Dr. Schwartz said. Additionally, in- most established early symptoms is rapid dividuals may experience bradykinesia, eve movement (REM) sleep behavior disa slowing of movement, which makes order, a sleep disorder characterized by



Impaired Balance and Coordination Parkinson's disease can disrupt one's balaffects movement by causing ance and coordination, thus increasing the likelihood of falls and related injuries. Common manifestations include a stooped posture, shuffling gait, and challenges in turning or changing direction

### Loss of Smell

Anosmia, a loss of the sense of smell, is a notable early symptom of Parkinson's disease. Individuals may struggle to detect specific odors such as those from food or flowers and may face difficulties in identifving familiar smells.

Dr. Schwartz stressed that a clinician must identify these four cardinal signs, particularly bradykinesia, to diagnose Parkinson's disease or a Parkinsonian symptom accurately. "The slowness is an obligatory sign; there has to be bradykinesia. Without it, one can't be certain about the diagnosis," he said.

However, early nonmotor symptoms can suggest the onset of Parkinson's disease, preceding noticeable motor symptoms by several years or even decades. While there's currently no cure for Parkinson's, initiating treatment early can significantly enhance a patient's function and quality of life.

### **Behavioral Changes**

### **Acting Out Vivid Dreams**

Some of the earliest signs of Parkinson's disease may not be noticed by the person in movement, including limb stiffness experiencing them but rather by friends



A common response to a diagnosis of Parkinson's is denial. Sometimes symptoms must progress dramatically before a person accepts the diagnosis.

### Sucralose May Harm the Immune System

### Continued from Page 13

It contains virtually no calories and has shown potential health benefits, including lowering blood pressure and blood sugar.

### 2. Xylitol

Like many other sugar alcohols, xylitol shares a similar sweetness to sugar and offers additional advantages, such as reducing tooth decay.

While you should consume sugar alternatives only in moderation, xylitol won't raise blood sugar or insulin lev- from flower nectar and is a surprisingly els. Keep in mind that xylitol is toxic close substitute to real sugar. Unheated for dogs and contains a fair amount raw honey has more benefits, as it conof calories. It also may cause some tains live enzymes.

digestive problems for some people.

### 3. Erythritol

Tasting almost like sugar, erythritol doesn't cause spikes in blood sugar or insulin levels, making it suitable for diabetics. Unlike xylitol, this sweetener is less likely to cause digestive issues. Erythritol should be consumed in moderation because it takes a long time to metabolize in the body. Concerns have arisen regarding a potential link between high intake and adverse cardiac events, although further research is needed to establish a definitive connection.

### 4. Honey

Raw honey is rich in antioxidants, benefits blood sugar control, reduces throat irritation, and offers a pleasant taste. It's essentially pure sugar derived



physically acting out vivid dreams and sudden, sometimes violent, arm and leg movements during REM sleep.

However, in some cases, Dr. Schwartz added, the full account of symptoms may not be obtained due to incomplete patient history, such as when a bedmate sleeps in a separate room or is a deep sleeper.

### Basic Abilities, Such as

Breathing, Disrupted Another particular symptom of Parkinson's disease is multiple-symptom atrophy. This rare degenerative neurological disorder affects the body's autonomic functions, such as blood pressure, breathing, digestion, and motor control.

Multiple symptom atrophy and REM sleep behavior disorder typically appear about 10 years before the onset of Parkinson's disease, Dr. Schwartz said.

### **Changes in Handwriting**

Handwriting changes, such as progressively smaller and cramped writing, may be an early indicator of Parkinson's disease.

Characterized by the gradual reduction in the size and legibility of handwriting, the condition-called micrographia-occurs because of the disease's impact on motor control and coordination, particularly the fine motor skills required for writing.

### Constipation

**5. Monk Fruit Extract** 

or carbohydrates.

Constipation is another early sign to watch for. It arises as the disease interferes with the autonomic nervous system, which controls various involuntary bodily functions, including digestion.

Parkinson's disease can affect the digestive system's muscles, leading to a slowing

Made from a fruit that's native to

Southeast Asia, monk fruit extract

is approximately 250 times sweeter

than sugar but without the calories

It contains compounds that fight in-

flammation and is generally consid-

ered safe for humans. However, you

should always check the packaging

when purchasing monk fruit extract,

as it may have been diluted with other

Dr. Xiaoxu Sean Lin is an assistant

professor in the Biomedical Science

Department at Feitian College in

Middletown, N.Y. Dr. Lin is also a

frequent analyst and commentator

for Epoch Media Group, VOA, and

RFA. He is a veteran who served

as a U.S. Army microbiologist

and also a member of Com-

China.

mittee on the Present Danger:

sweeteners or even sugar.

### Anxiety disorders are also known to co-occu with Parkinson's, with

PERCENT

of patients experiencing 'substantia anxiety.

There could be some problems with sweat, regulating sweat, and a rash. These are what we call non-motor precursors of

### Parkinson's disease.

Dr. Guy Schwartz, co-director, Stony Brook Parkinson's and Movement Disorders Center, Stony Brook

Medicine

of bowel movements and a decrease in the muscle contractions needed for proper digestion and elimination.

### Sweating

One symptom that may not be commonly associated with a neurodegenerative condition is sweating.

"There could be some problems with sweat, regulating sweat, and a rash. These of Delaying Treatment are what we call nonmotor precursors of Parkinson's disease," Dr. Schwartz said. Changes in sweat regulation are caused by the autonomic dysfunction associated

with the disease. It's important to note that experiencing one or more of these symptoms doesn't

necessarily indicate Parkinson's disease. Still, the symptoms could serve as early indicators, prompting the decision to consult a doctor.

### Depression and Anxiety Can Occur Before Diagnosis

A 2013 study of more than 23,000 people found that those diagnosed with depression had more than three times the risk of developing Parkinson's disease than those without it.

Another study published in 2015 observed more than 140,000 people diagnosed with depression. The condition was found to potentially serve as a prodromal symptom, a very early sign, or a contributing factor to the risk of developing Parkinson's disease.

Anxiety disorders are also known to cooccur with Parkinson's, with an estimated stantial anxiety."

Researchers also found that anxiety often emerges before the typical movement disorders associated with Parkinson's, indicating a link to disease-related brain changes rather than psychological or social factors.

Consequences

Delayed treatment may cause people to miss the opportunity to start medication when it's most effective. Untreated Parkinson's can lead to decreased mobility and difficulties in daily activities, significantly affecting one's quality of life.

Research published in the American Journal of Managed Care highlights the importance of early intervention for optimal outcomes in Parkinson's disease. Clinical trials suggest that early treatment may slow disease progression and alleviate symptoms, greatly improving the patient's quality of life.

Dr. Schwartz also emphasized the significance of early diagnosis, although it marks the beginning of a challenging neurodegenerative journey. "On the downside, [some] early-onset people would rather not know," he said.

A Parkinson's diagnosis can have a significant psychological impact on a person and on their social circle.

"Some patients are in denial, and that's OK," Dr. Schwartz said. "I've often got a kind of respect for that. Sometimes, ignorance is bliss. Some people have a burning desire to know, and it's only fair. Some of them, you can sense that they can wait. 40 percent of patients experiencing "sub- They'll come back in a year and revisit the diagnosis if something changes."

> excessive sugar consumption. Emphasize that sweets should be enjoyed in moderation as occasional treats.

- **Explore healthier alternatives:** Introduce naturally sweet foods such as fruits, which provide essential nutrients and natural sugars. Experiment with healthier dessert options, such as homemade fruit popsicles or yogurt parfaits.
- Focus on other rewards: Celebrate achievements or milestones with outings, fun activities, or small gifts instead of relying on sugary treats.

Remember, every child is different, and it's important to balance promoting healthy eating habits and allowing occasional indulgences. It's about fostering a lifelong relationship with food that prioritizes nutrition while leaving room for enjoyment.

More than MILLION AMERICANS

Monk fruit extract is a natural sugar alternative that is around 250 times sweeter than sugar without the calories or



use sugar substitutes.

carbohydrates.



To prevent potential health issues associated with excessive sugar consumption, developing a balanced approach to sugar cravings from an early age is crucial. This is to proactively prevent the potential adverse health effects at their source rather than addressing the consequences after they've already occurred. **Excessive sugar intake** contributes to obesity, dental problems, and an increased risk of chronic conditions such as Type 2 diabetes.

To promote a healthier lifestyle and reduce the likelihood of children developing a sweet tooth at a young

- 5 a variety of nutritious foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats, to develop diverse tastes.
- Encourage water as the primary choice and reduce consumption 6. of sodas, fruit juices, and sports drinks, as they're often high in added sugars.
- moderation by serving sweets and desserts in small quantities.
- Educate about nutrition: Teach children the importance of a balanced diet and the potential adverse effects of









A loss of sense of smell is a notable early symptom of Parkinson's disease.

**SUGAR INTAKE** 

age, here are some tips:

- 1. Offer a balanced diet: Provide
- 2. Limit sugary beverages:
- Control portion sizes: Teach

# The Rise of POTS in the COVID-19 and Vaccine Era

A surge in cases of this debilitating autonomic nervous system disorder is spurring innovative treatments

### By Sheramy Tsai

The COVID-19 pandemic casts a concerning shadow in the form of postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS). This perplexing health issue, marked by a significant surge in heart rate when standing, is gaining increasing attention in the medical community because of a rise in cases.

### 2 Journeys, 1 Diagnosis

Phoebe Eaton and Aubrey George, two active women in their mid-20s, found their lives abruptly disrupted by the puzzling symptoms of POTS.

Ms. Eaton, a 25-year-old teacher in training, noted the onset of symptoms after her initial COVID-19 vaccine. She reported recurring urinary tract infections, persistent fatigue, migraines, weight loss, and erratic blood sugar levels. Her health deteriorated after her final vaccine dose.

"I started passing out, which developed into seizures, forcing me to aban-

don my teacher training," she said. For Ms. George, her symptoms surfaced after enduring three concussions within six months. Chronic headaches, dizziness, and fatigue became her unwelcome constants.

Previously dubbed the "Energizer Bunny," Ms. George now grapples with many symptoms spanning the cardiovascular and digestive systems.

"Every single activity requires extra thought and preparation, which can be exhausting," Ms. George said. POTS poses a unique challenge as it's

frequently overlooked. "Lots of people say to me, 'but you

look so well,' which is nice to hear, but when you feel rubbish, it makes you feel like you're lying or making it up," Ms. Eaton said.

### Unmasking the Hidden **Disorder Called POTS**

POTS falls within the wider category of disorders called dysautonomia. It signifies a malfunction in the autonomic nervous system, which quietly controls crucial functions such as breathing, digestion, and heart rate. When this system falters, as in POTS, it can undermine health and daily quality of life.

POTS primarily manifests as a substantial increase in heart rate when moving from a sitting or lying position to standing. It's typically diagnosed when a person's heart rate rises by more than 30 beats per minute within just 10 minutes of standing. For instance, if someone's heart rate jumps from 70 while seated to 100 or more upon standing, it's a strong indication of POTS.

For children and adolescents, the diagnostic threshold is higher, requiring an increase of 40 beats per minute or more. The ramped-up heart rate doesn't coincide with a drop in blood pressure.

POTS presents a wide array of symptoms, including fatigue, headaches, lightheadedness, heart palpitations,

There has been a significant increase in referrals to our POTS clinic since the COVID pandemic.

Dr. Tae Chung, lead researcher, POTS program, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

66

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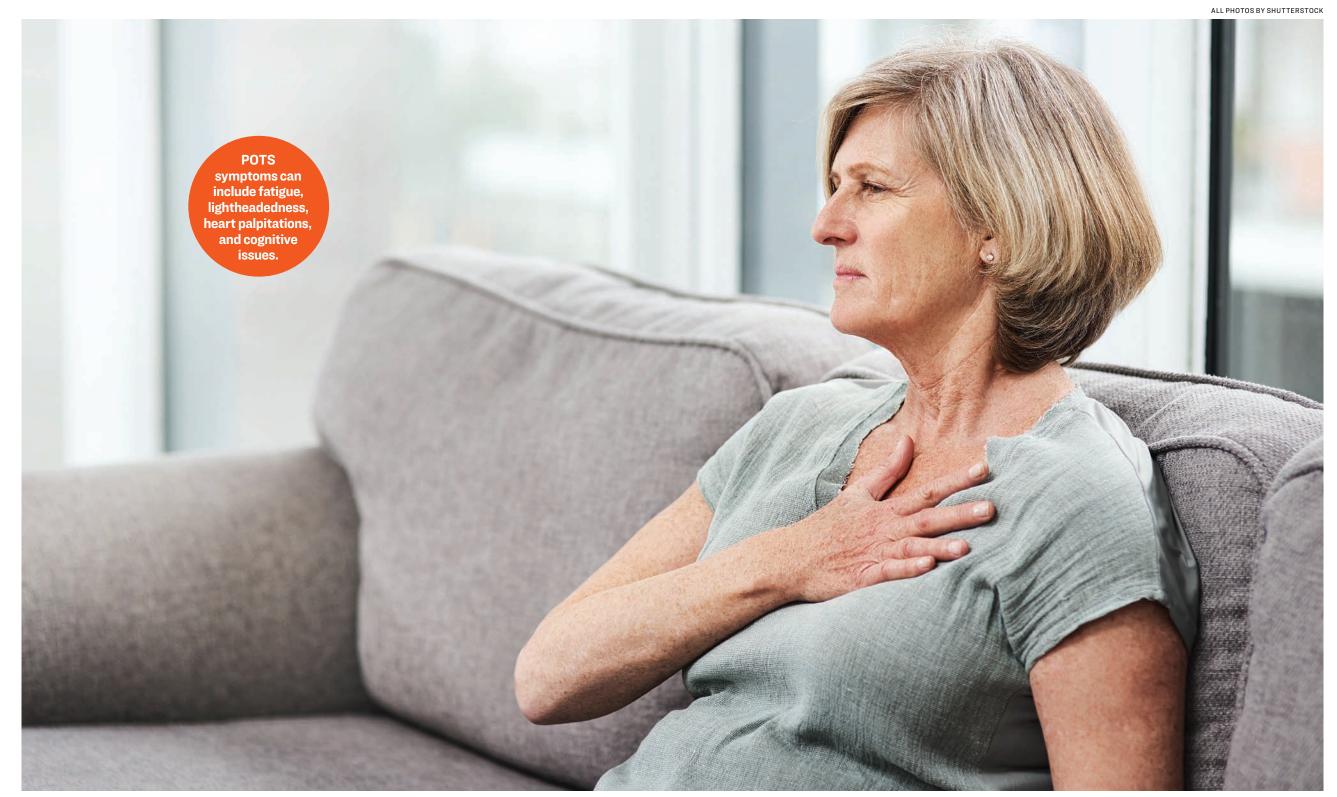
to abandon

my teacher

training.

Phoebe Eaton,

teacher-in-training



such as brain fog. The mix and intensity of these symptoms, which must be gestive heart failure. present for at least three months, can A pivotal study with more than 5,500

as a rare disorder. Dysautonomia Inter- living with POTS. national, a key nonprofit organization dedicated to dysautonomia research and awareness, estimates that POTS affects about 6 million Americans. This number has doubled since the COV-ID-19 pandemic began, they reported. However, due to the elusive nature of the disease and limited awareness in the health care community, the actual prevalence may be significantly higher. The variability of POTS symptoms is matched only by their impact on patients' daily lives. While some individuals with mild symptoms manage to keep up with their regular work,

school, and social activities, others may find routine tasks such as bathing, housework, eating, sitting upright, and even standing or walking significantly challenging because of severe caregivers." symptoms.

"I can't drive. I tire very quickly and have heart pain and lack of breath when carrying out tasks. I can't do simple things like emptying the daily. shopping or the dishwasher without passing out. I have lost most of my independence." Ms. Eaton

said.

Specialists treating POTS often compare the functional impairment

nausea, and cognitive disturbances observed in these patients to those with conditions such as cancer or con-

fluctuate significantly among patients. participants has uncovered the eco-Historically, POTS has been viewed nomic and employment impacts of

> The research, which was carried out in collaboration with Dysautonomia International, revealed that only 48 percent of POTS patients were employed. Among them, 67 percent desired to work more hours but were hindered by their condition.

> Nearly three-quarters of participants reported income loss attributed to POTS, with one-third losing more than \$10,000 in the year preceding the survey. The research also highlighted broader societal effects, as 28.5 percent of caregivers suffered income loss because of their caretaking duties.

> The authors said, "POTS poses a significant risk for reduced employment and increased economic loss in individuals with this disorder and their

> Dr. Tae Chung, who leads the POTS program at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, observes the stark reality of these statistics in his clinic

> "Many POTS patients who remain employed have to modify their lifestyle due to their symptoms," he told The Epoch Times. "For example, a significant number manage to retain their full-time roles primarily because they are afforded the flexibility to work remotely. This condition hits young people particularly hard, as they often have to work to keep their medical insurance."

Drawing from his frontline experience, Dr. Chung emphasized the critical situation.

"For these reasons, there's a pressing need to develop disease-modifying treatment for POTS, alongside improved recognition, diagnosis, and treatment," he said.

### COVID-19 and the Unexpected POTS Increase

POTS continues to pose challenging questions, with a clear-cut cause still eluding scientists. However, the scientific community is increasingly uncov-

# MILLION An estimated 6

million Americans are affected by postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome

Many postural orthostatic tachy cardia syndrome patients reported symptoms starting after a COVID infection or a dose of the vaccine.

associated vaccines.

While the precise cause of post-COfrom the virus, or a stimulated sympathetic nervous system response.

"There has been a significant increase in referrals to our POTS clinic since ter SARS-CoV-2 infection," the authors the COVID pandemic," Dr. Chung said.

He suggested that COVID-19 may predispose individuals to POTS, a theory that he says is supported by emerging research.

Echoing this, Dr. Jordan Pastorek, supervising physician at The POTS Treatment Center, has observed this shift.

"A significantly large portion of our patients now report their POTS symp- The Health Care Hurdles toms starting after a COVID infection or Facing POTS Patients from infections like influenza, Lyme and resources. disease, and mononucleosis, as well as concussions," Dr. Pastorek said.

global case reports suggesting a trend COVID-19 vaccine dose.

The findings may be associated with vaccines utilize a snippet of the virus's genetic code to create a protein in our to generate antibodies.

"The formation of antibodies triggers an autoimmune response that stimulates POTS disease," the report's authors wrote.

A detailed study in Nature Cardiovascular Research, published in December 2022, also identified a potential correlation between POTS and COVID-19 vaccination but highlighted a stronger link between POTS and the residual effects of a SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Using a dataset of 284,592 vaccinated individuals, 93 percent of whom received the mRNA vaccine, the study found a 33 percent increase in the like-

ering connections to COVID-19 and its half of the 4,526 total POTS diagnoses Multifaceted Treatment occurred after vaccination.

> proximately five times lower than afconcluded.

> The authors cautioned against using the study results to avoid vaccination.

"These study results are not intended to discourage use of the COVID-19 vaccine, especially given the relatively move from sitting to standing. Physi- POTS signals a fresh chapter in manhigher risk of developing POTS after SARS-CoV-2 infection," they wrote.

a dose of the vaccine. This is a noticeable Amid a health care system strained by any underlying conditions. This could shift from pre-pandemic times when we the aftermath of a global pandemic, encompass the use of beta-blockers or Sheramy Tsai, BSN, RN, is a seasoned commonly saw POTS cases resulting POTS patients confront issues of time other heart rate-reducing drugs. For *nurse with a decade-long writing* 

vears just to get patients into our treat- or those promoting blood vessel con- combines her writing and nursing His insights align with increasing ment center," Dr. Chung said.

Despite its global impact on millions, of previously healthy individuals de- POTS remains largely unknown to veloping POTS after mRNA COVID-19 many health care professionals, often vaccinations. One report details a resulting in a lengthy and challenging 42-year-old male with no previous path to an accurate diagnosis. A 2013 POTS symptoms who developed the survey by Dysautonomia International condition following his first mRNA highlighted this struggle for more than 700 POTS patients.

On average, patients face a six-year the operation of mRNA vaccines. These delay before receiving a correct diagnosis. Only 25 percent are diagnosed within the first year of symptom onset, cells, prompting the immune system and many travel more than 100 miles for POTS-related medical care. Further complicating matters, 59 percent of patients are initially dismissed by doctors who believe that their severe symptoms are purely psychological. Dr. Chung highlights many other

hurdles that POTS patients face—a lack of awareness, elusive biomarkers, limited treatment options, and debilitating disease severity.

Yet he underscores a critical roadblock. "While my view may be biased, I be-

lieve the dearth of research funding presents one of the most formidable challenges for advancing POTS care," lihood of developing POTS. More than Dr. Chung told The Epoch Times.

### **Approach for POTS Patients**

"POTS-related diagnoses appear to One of the complexities in treating tomatic treatment. VID POTS is still under scrutiny, po- be acquired with increased frequency POTS arises from the stark variations tential theories include the production after, compared to before, COVID-19 in individual symptoms, necessitating at its core," Dr. Wolfson told The Epoch of autoantibodies, direct toxic effects vaccination, particularly when com- a personalized treatment strategy. At Times. "Our approach is about identipared to more commonly diagnosed the Johns Hopkins POTS Treatment fying and treating the cause. For some conditions, but at a rate that is ap- Center, the process begins with a pa- patients, it's mold toxicity. For others, tient-centric focus, devising strategies it's a high burden of other toxins. Still, that range from subtle lifestyle adjust- for others, it's an imbalance in the nerments to the use of medications.

> involves enhancing fluid intake to bolster blood volume and adjusting daily activities, such as altering how patients integral to the therapeutic regimen.

The role of medication is twofold, targeting both POTS symptoms and fers renewed hope for many patients. some, medications that amplify the *career. An alumna of Middlebury* "We're facing a backlog of over two body's ability to absorb salt and fluid College and Johns Hopkins, Ms. Tsai striction to improve blood flow to the *expertise to deliver impactful content*. heart and brain may be recommended. Living in Vermont, she balances her

cations, such as increased salt intake *ing and raising three children*.

and hydration, form another line of attack, providing symptomatic relief. A small Vanderbilt University study corroborates this approach, demonstrating symptom improvement in POTS patients on a high-salt diet, although it fell short of complete symptom eradication.

Compression stockings have shown promise in aiding POTS management by helping to improve blood flow and alleviate symptoms. Ms. Eaton championed this intervention.

"Compression leggings really help in managing my day-to-day symptoms," she said.

The final crucial element of the approach involves counseling, providing patients and their families with practical strategies to manage life with POTS.

### Addressing POTS With

Holistic Approaches While conventional medicine typically focuses on managing POTS symptoms, there's a shift toward targeting the root causes.

POTS Care in Texas pioneers this approach by integrating biofeedback, specialized supplements, and low-inflammatory diets into its treatment. Biofeedback, a noninvasive method, enables patients to control bodily functions such as heart rate. The facility provides personalized supplement regimens to meet individual nutritional needs and recommends a low-inflammatory diet to minimize symptom triggers.

"Our efforts go towards locating and treating the underlying cause of POTS and its numerous comorbid conditions," the clinic's website reads.

The goal extends beyond symptom relief—it aims for lasting, sustainable health improvement.

Board-certified cardiologist Dr. Jack Wolfson, lauded for his success in treating POTS patients through natural methods, runs the Natural Heart Doctor clinic. Known for his affinity toward holistic therapies, Wolfson echoes the ethos of POTS Care, setting a firm stance on curative over symp-

"POTS is an inflammatory condition vous system. We've seen remarkable A vital cornerstone of this strategy progress in our patients by directly addressing these factors."

The move toward alternative treatments and a deeper comprehension of cal therapy exercises, tailored to suit aging this intricate syndrome. Despite each patient's tolerance levels, are also the ongoing challenge of fully understanding POTS, integrating alternative therapies with traditional methods of-

The prescription of dietary modifi- professional life with sustainable liv-



Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome is typically diagnosed when a person's heart rate rises by more than 30 beats per minute within10 minutes of standing.



▲ Being active outside in the sun can revitalize and rejuvenate us.

# Living in Harmony With Summer

### **Continued from Page 13**

**Balance in All Things** the year and yang energies are at their peak, we must be mindful to keep these energies balanced so that they don't become excessive. Keeping yang balanced rest, especially at the hottest times of the day, and staying hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids; emotionally, we can stay on an even keel by not allowing ourselves to get worked up.

Anger, in particular, is associated with the liver (and spring) and is prone to heat. Excess anger can cause a surplus of heat in the body that, if prolonged, can lead to physical symptoms such as red eyes, headaches, and a bitter taste in the mouth. It can also lead to mental symptoms such as angry outbursts, irritability, and aggressive or reckless behavior.

An essential aspect of Chinese medicine, and living with the seasons in par- with nutrition.

ticular, is practicing moderation and finding balance in all aspects of life. When there's too much of something, Because summer is the hottest time of it can make us sick—physically and psychologically. This is why the wisdom of seasonal living has endured through the millennia; it's a guide, helping people to live in alignment with their surroundincludes making sure we get adequate ings and stay connected to not only their environment but also themselves.

### Think about what makes you happy, and do it with the intention of feeding your heart energy.

### **Eating in the Summer Season**

Instinctively, we know that eating with the seasons is good for us. Foods that are in season and at their peak ripeness are bursting with flavor and loaded

the shipping of foods from the four corners of the globe, regardless of the season, it's easy to see how we've become disconnected from this seasonal type of eating. Having summer fruits flown in during the winter months is wonderful but not part of the natural cycle of how humans have eaten for thousands of years.

Find out what foods grow where you of the planet. In the summer months, this should be easy with an abundance of fruits and vegetables for us to enjoy.

Summer should inspire us to choose a wide variety of brightly colored fruits and vegetables to create beautiful meals that are a feast for the eyes as well as the taste buds.

and the summer season is red, and and can be hard on the stomach. Add-

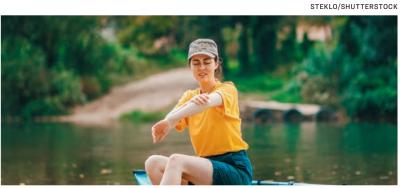
With the proliferation of air travel and many red foods strengthen the heart and are especially beneficial at this time of year.

### Summer Cooking Methods

In the summer, the foods we eat are at their peak of ripeness, so cooking methods should be quick and light to preserve the essential vitamins and nutrients they contain. Steaming and blanching are some of the best ways to live and when they're harvested so that cook foods in the hot summer months, you can enjoy them at the right time of as they're infused with water, helping us the year. This local, seasonal eating will to stay hydrated. Poaching, steaming, or help you align with the gentle rhythms simmering briefly in water are all good cooking methods to balance the summer heat and get the most out of foods.

We tend to eat many raw foods such as salads in the summer months. Raw foods are considered cooling in Chinese medicine, so although some are appropriate in the hottest months of the year, we don't want to overdo it, as cooling The color associated with the heart foods will exacerbate digestive problems

Contracting a disease from a mosquito bite is rare in the United States.



# Prevent Mosquito Bites-and the Diseases They Carry

Concerns over a rise in malaria may prompt people to reach for pesticides and insecticides, but there are safer options

### By Megan Redshaw

A domestic resurgence of U.S. malaria cases for the first time in 20 years, with predictions the numbers will rise, population at risk. has created concern about mosquitoborne diseases and how to prevent them.

Prevention (CDC) issued a health ad- many effective ways to naturally previsory on June 27 after five malaria vent both mosquito bites and sickness cases were confirmed in Florida and from the pathogens they carry.

additional cases, bringing U.S. cases to seven. Globally, malaria is a larger threat, with nearly half of the world's

Although the CDC advises people to protect themselves from mosquitoes by applying potentially toxic repellents, The Centers for Disease Control and pesticides, and insecticides, there are

### West Nile Virus

mosquito-borne disease in the United States, with 17 cases reported by the CDC as of June 27. Eight out of 10 people **DEET and Insecticide Repellents** infected with West Nile don't develop symptoms. Those who do may experience fever, headache, disorientation, a weakness, numbness, and paralysis.

### Malaria

Malaria is spread by an infective Anopheles female mosquito bite. The disease is rare in the United States. There have diovascular and neurological effects. only been 150 cases of locally acquired malaria in the past 50 years. Malaria can be a serious and sometimes fatal disease that spreads to humans through an infective Anopheles female mosquito bite.

Although easily treatable, malaria may cause sickness with high fevers, shaking, chills, and flu-like symptoms. Certain Texas. Days later, Florida reported two species of parasites are associated with more severe illness. Failure to treat the condition could cause chronic infection with relapsing episodes.

> Malaria is treated with several different drugs, including hydroxychloroquine, which is generally effective and well tolerated.

> **Preventing Mosquito-Borne Diseases** The best way to prevent mosquito-borne diseases is to prevent mosquito bites.

Synthetic chemical repellents may repel West Nile virus is the leading cause of mosquitoes, but this may come at a cost to humans and the environment.

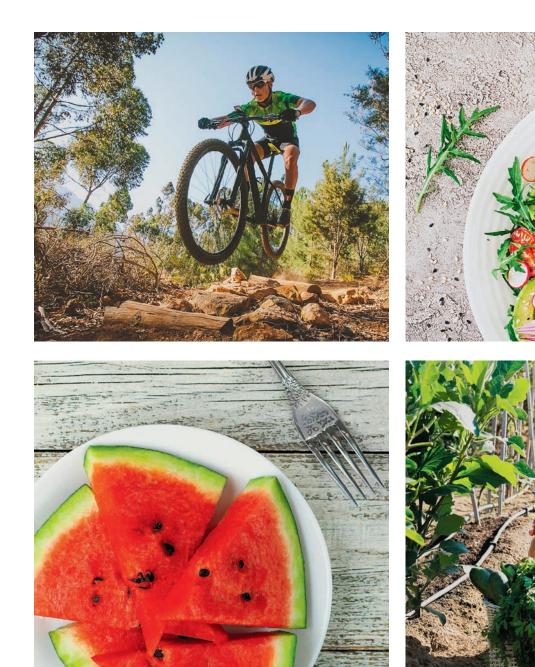
U.S. regulatory agencies recommend using commercial repellents produced with chemical components such as N,Nstiff neck, tremors, convulsions, muscle diethyl-meta-toluamide (DEET), allethrin, N,N-diethyl mandelic acid amide, and dimethyl phthalate.

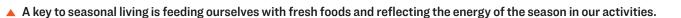
> Unfortunately, chemical mosquito repellents can cause adverse reactions such as allergies, dermatitis, and car-Using synthetic repellents has disturbed ecosystems, contributed to insecticide resistance and the resurgence of mosquito populations, and adversely affected other organisms.

> At large enough doses, DEET can cause symptoms of neurotoxicity. Neurological symptoms may develop at lower doses with frequent usage over a short time.

Permethrin is a pesticide that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and CDC recommend applying to clothes and fabric to repel mosquitoes. According to the EPA, permethrin is "highly toxic" to honeybees, freshwater and estuarine aquatic organisms, and other beneficial insects.

Laboratory studies show that permethrin can impair the human nervous system and a child's developing brain;





ing warming herbs and spices to raw or cold foods can help maintain a balance. These include chives, scallions, sage, rosemary, thyme, basil, white and black pepper, and small amounts of garlic and fresh ginger.

### **Cultivating joy** strengthens the heart and all of its processes.

### **Final Thoughts**

For many, summer is one of the most enjoyable seasons and the one that countless people look forward to after the long, cold months of winter. It's a time to soak up the beauty of the natural world that surrounds us—to be active, connect with friends and family, and be joyful. Seasonal living is how we feed ourselves and reconnect with the beautiful planet that we call home.

however, the EPA says its assessments have found that the pesticide poses a low risk to human health

Outside of DEET and permethrin, the CDC recommends picaridin—a synthetic insecticide that's produced by Bayer and has sparse safety data-IR3535 oil, and lemon eucalyptus oil, which is synthetically derived from para-menthane-3,8diol. The agency doesn't recommend using any essential oils.

### **Creating an Environment** Adverse to Mosquitoes

Creating an environment that's adverse to mosquitoes is one of the easiest ways to prevent mosquito-borne disease. Some species of mosquitoes like living near people, while others prefer forests and tall grasses; all mosquitoes like warm, humid weather and water.

To create an unfriendly environment for mosquitoes, consider the following:

- Remove standing water from areas around your home.
- Repair damaged windows and door screens.
- Use UV light traps to lure and catch mosquitoes.
- Use air conditioners, dehumidifiers, and fans to reduce warm

### **Foods to Avoid**

There are some foods that we typically want to avoid in the summer months usually extremes of hot and cold—so that we can better maintain the delicate internal balance of yin and yang, or hot and cold.

- Cold foods that come directly out of the refrigerator require more energy from the body to warm them up, which can weaken digestion, according to Chinese medicine.
- Greasy, heavy, or fatty foods, such as deepfried foods and creamy foods, make

temperatures and humidity.

hours from dusk to dawn.

working outside.

mosquitoes.

· Time outdoor activities to avoid the

• Wear long sleeves and pants when

• Promptly wash off sweat to deter

Synthetic chemical

repellents may repel

mosquitoes, but this may

come at a cost to humans

and the environment.

Create an outdoor firepit so that the

Though the CDC recommends using re-

pellents evaluated by the EPA, numerous

studies suggest that there are safer and

equally effective natural alternatives.

smoke will repel mosquitoes.

• Use citronella candles.

Natural, Nontoxic Ways to

**Prevent Mosquito Bites** 

us sluggish and require more energy to process. Limit meat and egg consumption and enjoy lighter fare in the summer months

Processed foods are always best to avoid. Instead, indulge in the variety of fresh fruits and vegetables available in summer.

 Stimulants such as coffee, alcohol, and spicy foods generate internal heat and can exacerbate internal heat conditions and emotional restlessness. Stimulants should be consumed in moderation, especially in summer

> erties that are safe and biodegrade into nontoxic byproducts.

> A 2019 systematic review in Malaria Journal evaluated 62 eligible studies on the effectiveness of plant-based repellents against Anopheles mosquitoes that cause malaria. Ligusticum sinense extract, followed by citronella, pine, Dalbergia sissoo, peppermint, and Rhizophora mucronata oils, had the highest repellent effects, with protection ranging from 9.1 to 11.5 hours. Essential oils from plants such as lavender, camphor, catnip, geranium, jasmine, broad-leaved eucalyptus, lemongrass, lemon-scented eucalyptus, Amyris, eucalyptus, carotin, cedarwood, chamomile, cinnamon oil, juniper, cajeput, soya bean, rosemary, niaouli, olive, Tagetes, violet, sandalwood, Litsea, galbanum, and Curcuma longa also repelled different species of mosquitoes for around eight hours.

> Other plants shown to effectively and safely repel mosquitoes include basil, garlic oil, witch hazel, topical apple cider vinegar, and catnip—a common garden herb known for its euphoric and hallucinogenic effects on cats, scientifically shown to be as effective as DEET.

Megan Redshaw is an attorney and investigative journalist with a back-In recent years, researchers have taken ground in political science. She is also an interest in plant-based repellents be- a traditional naturopath with addicause they have a rich mix of bioactive tional certifications in nutrition and phytochemicals and insecticidal prop- exercise science.

# Natural Remedies for Headaches

Use these 3 easy remedies to relieve headache pain

### By Josh Brisbane

ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Traffic jams. Tight schedules. Work problems. Family demands. The stresses of everyday life can give us all throbbing headaches from time to time, but popping painkillers isn't the only way to escape the nagging thump.

In fact, quite a few home remedies have been proven effective in relieving the pain and tension associated with headaches, and they will cost you little to nothing. Moreover, they are 100 percent natural and have zero side effects. The next time your head feels like it might explode, try one (or all) of the following methods.

### Herbs have long been used for their medicinal properties, and herbs such as ginger and basil make good natural headache remedies.

### Massage and Constrict

You see that web of skin connecting your forefinger to the base of your thumb? It's a well-known acupressure trigger point that, when stimulated, can ease pain and pressure in the head. In a circular motion, firmly massage it for five to seven minutes. Then, switch over to the other hand and repeat. Do this until the headache pain dissipates. Before massaging away, tie a necktie or bandana (or similar item) around your forehead, tightening it until you feel some pressure. Doing this will reduce blood flow to your scalp, which can help relieve the pain.

### Heat and Cool

This may sound a little strange, but immerse your feet in a bowl of hot water. Keep them in for 15 to 20 minutes. The hot-water soak will draw blood to your feet and relieve pressure on the blood vessels in your head. If the headache is quite intense, add 1 tablespoon of dry mustard powder to the water. This is said to draw toxins from the body and boost lymph and blood circulation. If you have a tension headache, a hot compress on the forehead or back of the neck should help, and you can follow up with a cold compress in the same areas.

### **Try Some Herbs**

Herbs have long been used for their medicinal properties, and herbs such as ginger and basil make good natural headache remedies. Ginger is particularly helpful, as it affects the hormonelike prostaglandins within the body that contribute to inflammation. Half a teaspoon of freshly ground ginger stirred into a glass of water should do the trick. Alternatively, create a paste by mixing 1 teaspoon of dry ginger powder with 2 tablespoons of water and apply to the forehead. If you prefer the basil remedy, add three leaves to 1 cup of boiled water and sip. Mint works, too.

### **Prevention Is Always Best**

Knowing how to treat headaches is great, especially if you can do so naturally. But if you identify your headache triggers, you can take the steps needed to avoid them altogether. Common triggers include dehydration, stress, sleep deprivation, and certain foods (such as alcohol, chocolate, and caffeine). Other causes include medication, physical activity, incorrect posture, glare (your computer screen, sunlight, overhead lights, etc.), and noise. Frequent headaches can indicate an underlying disease, so see your health care provider if you get them often.

### Republished from Organic Lifestyle Magazine.



### **WISE HABITS**

# The Joy of Small Comforts

We all need breaks and measured indulgences from time to time

### By Leo Babauta

Some days, I need some comfort. I'm tired, emotionally drained, or just feeling besieged by the world.

On these days, I try to recognize my physical, mental, and emotional state, and I ask myself what I need.

Just noticing is a big step for most of us. We often don't recognize when we're feeling drained or a bit battered by life. We just focus on what we think we need to be doing, and we push through. This might feel necessary, but it's rarely helpful because we're forcing ourselves to act when we're depleted or feeling confronted.

So if we notice, we might pause, take a breath or two, and check in with ourselves to ask, "What do I need?"

Sometimes, for me, it's a little rest. I'll take a nap. This is a beautiful little comfort I give myself, and I feel much refreshed after.

Today, I would love to advocate for small comforts. A nap is a great example, but there are so many more.

Here are some of my favorite small comforts:

- A minute of breathing and being present to what I'm feeling.
- A luxurious stretch.
- A hot cup of tea.
- A hot shower.
- A relaxing walk in nature.
- Some berries or another delicious fruit.
- A hug from a loved one.
- A short meditation session.
- A spoonful of peanut butter.
- Curling up with a good book.
- A massage.
- Sitting in a hot tub.
- Sitting with someone and listening



Savor the small comforts that restore your well-being and bring easy joy.

to music.

• Having a square or two of dark chocolate.

Small comforts are generally riskfree, but there are a few tips that can help you really get the most from them.

### 1. Avoid Overdoing It

While it might seem weird to talk about overdoing comforts, many of us are capable of overindulgence to the point of approaching addiction. For example, if you enjoy the small comfort of a glass of wine, you can overdo it by feeling like you need to have wine whenever you're feeling stressed. Then it can move to needing to have five glasses of wine per day. The same kind of thing can happen with food, watching TV, playing

We often don't recognize when we're or a bit battered by life.

video games, and so on. There's nothing wrong with any of these—just have them in nice small doses. Use a variety of ways to find comfort when you need it, not just one thing that you become reliant upon.

### 2. Face Discomfort When You Can

You can't always be comfortable. If that's your goal, you'll end up shrinking from life. I'm a strong advocate of learning to be with more and more of life, including what's uncomfortable. That's how we grow.

That said, we can't do that all the time. Sometimes we need some nurturing, replenishing, and revitalizing. Sometimes we need comfort. This isn't an all-or-nothing kind of deal-we can find a balance that's right for ourselves.

### 3. Let Go of Guilt

Despite what I said in the first two tips, this article is about small comforts, not "guilty pleasures." Comforts, when we need them, are healthy and wonderful. See if you can give yourself full permission to savor these small pleasures.

### 4. Be Present and Enjoy Them

Eating a treat isn't much of a comfort if you're distracted by your phone. Let yourself fully savor and find the wonder and deliciousness in small comforts.

I hope you'll give yourself permission to take care of yourself when you need it. Here's to the small comforts in life.

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





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