



Repairing the Brain With Hyperbaric Oxygen

Sports fans know Joe Namath as the Hall of Fame quarterback with the rocket arm who led the New York Jets to victory in the 1969 Super Bowl. Others remember Broadway Joe, the flamboyant, charismatic playboy who was professional sports' premier rock star.

But you may not be aware of Joe Namath's current passion, which is helping people with neurological deficits caused by traumatic brain injury (TBI). Joe's interest is personal. He had at least five concussions during his football career, and his own memory concerns plus increasing awareness of the consequences of repetitive TBI in the NFL—highlighted by the 2012 suicide of former linebacker Junior Seau—prompted him to get checked out.

A golfing buddy referred him to a clinic in Jupiter, FL, that was using SPECT scans, which measure blood flow and metabolic activity in the brain, to look for signs of TBI. Sure enough, Joe's tests revealed damage on his left "blind side," where right-handed quarterbacks are most often hit. This clinic, however, did something few other clinics do. It offered a treatment: hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT). Conventional doctors maintain there's no treatment for TBI beyond acute care, medications (antidepressants, painkillers, anticonvulsants, etc.), and rehab, but that's just not true. HBOT actually gives damaged

neurons a chance to heal, making it our best hope for improving chronic neurological symptoms.

Joe underwent a course of HBOT, and as treatment progressed, repeat SPECT scans showed increased activity and blood flow in affected areas of his brain. These signs of recovery coincided with his subjective improvements: "My thinking is much clearer. Finding the right words has become easier and I remember events with more clarity.... I sleep more soundly and have vivid dreams. I now have more energy and strength. I feel great!"



NFL great Joe Namath's latest passion is HBOT for football-related brain injuries.

Not Just for Football Players

We've been using HBOT at Whitaker Wellness for 15 years and have treated thousands of patients—as many as 30 a day—so I know from experience that this kind of response is routine. Here's why.

Neurons that survive any kind of brain injury often remain in a state of "suspended animation"—they have just enough energy to stay alive but not enough to function properly. As you know, oxygen is essential for energy production, and the brain is a voracious consumer of oxygen. HBOT, which involves breathing 100 percent oxygen in a special pressurized chamber, provides an influx of oxygen that sparks energy production, wakes up inactive neurons, and turns on the process of building neuronal connections. Even an untrained eye can see the differences

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Health & Healing

YOUR DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO WELLNESS MEDICINE

Julian Whitaker, MD, has practiced medicine for over 35 years, after receiving degrees from Dartmouth College and Emory University. Dr. Whitaker has long been an advocate of living a healthy life. Dr. Whitaker is compensated on the sales of the supplements he formulates with Healthy Directions, LLC. He is not compensated for other companies' products that he recommends in this newsletter. He is the author of 14 health books including: *The Mini-Fast Diet*, *The Whitaker Wellness Weight Loss Program*, *Reversing Hypertension*, *Shed 10 Years in 10 Weeks*, *The Pain Relief Breakthrough*, *Reversing Heart Disease*, *Reversing Diabetes*, and *Dr. Whitaker's Guide to Natural Healing*.

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Remember, you can read current and past issues of *Health & Healing* when you create or access your account at drwhitaker.com.

Dear Reader,

Since Ted's prostate surgery in 2006, he's had problems with erectile function. Viagra works well for him, but his insurance doesn't cover it, so he pays for it out of pocket. Ten years ago, each pill cost \$7; today they're \$35 a piece—a five-fold increase! Fortunately, Ted found a solution. He orders a generic from a Canadian pharmacy that costs just \$3 per dose.

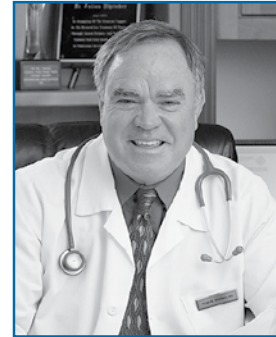
Some 5 million Americans order prescription medications from international pharmacies. Brand-name drugs often sell for 80 percent less than in the US; generics are even cheaper. Yes, it's illegal to order drugs from foreign countries, but federal agencies turn a blind eye to this common practice.

Big Pharma would love to put a stop to it. After all, it cuts into their profits. They've lobbied Congress hard and spread malicious rumors suggesting all imports are dangerous counterfeits. Sure, there are some bad players out there, but reputable, licensed pharmacies in Canada have a great track record and a vested interest in delivering safe, effective products.

Skyrocketing medication costs are making this option more and more attractive. In 2013, Maine passed a law allowing residents to purchase meds for personal use from licensed pharmacies in Canada and elsewhere, and similar bills have been introduced in the US Congress. If you're interested in pursuing this, get a copy of your prescription from your doctor. Then visit PharmacyChecker.com, which lists many licensed pharmacies, prices, customer reviews, and contact information. If you don't have computer access, here are a few options: Blue Sky Drugs 866-995-7387; Canadian Pharmacy King 877-745-9217; or Prescription Point 877-244-0431.

Other ways to save on prescriptions include pill-splitting (prices are often the same regardless of dose) and simply shopping around. *Consumer Reports* found dramatic differences in prices at discounters like Costco and Sam's Club compared to CVS, Rite Aid, and other drugstores.

To your health,

Julian Whitaker, MD
 America's Wellness Doctor

Director of the Whitaker Wellness Institute, Newport Beach, California

Share Your Story! 2015 Health Achievement Awards

Subscribers tell me how much they enjoy the real-life stories in *Health & Healing*, and I am grateful to all of you who share your inspiring experiences. Keep them coming! To sweeten the deal, we're having a contest. Simply write up your story about how the natural therapies and supplements discussed in the newsletter have helped you. Use the entry form enclosed with this issue, which includes details on prizes, deadlines, etc. You can also enter at drwhitaker.com/health-achievement-awards.

Brain Injuries (continued from page 1)

in before-and-after SPECT scans. After HBOT, areas around injury sites that were once dark and dormant light up with metabolic and electrical activity.

I could fill this newsletter with stories of Whitaker Wellness patients with brain damage who have flourished following hyperbaric treatment: people injured in falls, shootings, and car crashes; professional athletes and weekend warriors with a history of head trauma; children with cerebral palsy; adults who've had a stroke or suffer with neurodegenerative disorders.

Frank Bostwick was plagued with vision problems, dizziness, and brain fog that lingered for four years following coronary artery bypass surgery. (Memory loss and other neurological deficits are relatively common consequences of bypass.) HBOT improved his balance, vision, focus, and mental acuity, and he's now able to read, work on his computer, drive, and do chores around his ranch.

Angel Gomez, a 19-year-old Marine serving in Iraq at the time, sustained blast and shrapnel injuries from a roadside bomb, which destroyed portions of his skull and damaged his brain. After three years of reconstructive surgeries and rehabilitation, he made remarkable progress relearning how to walk, talk, and deal with a partially paralyzed right arm. He continued to have memory and cognitive problems, so he came to Whitaker Wellness for HBOT. After completing his treatment course, Angel reported significant improvements in his speech, memory, concentration, energy, and confidence.

Stan Smith had a massive brain stem stroke that resulted in right-sided paralysis and vision, speech, and swallowing difficulties. With intensive therapy, he regained a good deal of his function, but a year later, he had another stroke. At that point, Stan and his wife, Barbara, felt that if they didn't do something he'd have to go into a nursing home, and they were convinced that coming to my clinic for HBOT was his best option. Stan was so frail that Barbara had to push him through the airport in a wheelchair. Yet just three days into his HBOT course, he

was able to walk with the aid of a cane. He still has some balance problems and limitations with his right hand. However, he works in his woodshop, gives occasional motivational talks, and he and Barbara have a full and active life.

Millions Could Benefit From HBOT

Approximately 1.5 million Americans visit emergency rooms each year with acute TBIs sustained in falls, motor vehicle accidents, assaults, and other traumatic events, and untold numbers of "mild" concussions and head injuries go unreported and untreated. Then there are non-traumatic brain injuries caused by infections, drugs and other toxins, and strokes and cardiac arrest, which damage the brain by cutting off blood and oxygen supply.

Although many people recover and regain function, more than 3 million survivors have lingering physical, mental, emotional, and/or behavioral problems. Actually, the toll is

much higher. Recent research suggests that even mild repetitive brain injuries elevate risk of delayed or later-life neurological impairment and increased incidence—and earlier age of onset—of dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other neurodegenerative disorders. For example, autopsies reveal that Junior Seau and other football players and boxers have signs of chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a progressive degenerative brain disease linked to memory loss, impaired judgment, headaches, depression, and dementia.

Go, Joe!

Joe Namath's experience inspired him to spread the word about HBOT, and in 2014 he and his doctors created the Joe Namath Neurological Research Center in Jupiter, FL, to study HBOT as a treatment for brain injuries. I applaud his efforts. It's time HBOT is recognized for what it is: a promising therapy with the potential to change the lives of millions who are suffering with chronic neurological problems.

Reference

Boussi-Gross R, et al. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy can improve post concussion syndrome years after mild traumatic brain injury—randomized prospective trial. *PLoS One*. 2013 Nov 15;8(11):e79995.

My Recommendations

- ▶ Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is an excellent treatment not only for traumatic and non-traumatic brain injuries but also a host of other problems, including infected wounds and circulatory disorders.
- ▶ Visit namathneurocenter.com for more information about the Joe Namath Neurological Research Center and how you can participate in or donate to the center's clinical trial.
- ▶ To learn about HBOT treatment at Whitaker Wellness, call 800-488-1500 or visit whitakerwellness.com.

Dear Dr. Whitaker

Q *My doctor told me I cannot use soy because of my history of breast cancer. Many credible researchers say soy is dangerous. I want to know why so many supplement companies use soy in their products. — M.C., via phone*

A If soy is so dangerous, why do Asian women, who eat much more of it than American women, have some of the lowest breast cancer rates in the world? The soy-cancer myth stems from a misunderstanding of the phytoestrogenic effects of soy isoflavones. There are two types of estrogen receptors (ER): ER-alpha and ER-beta. ER-alpha activation underlies the well-known links between estrogen exposure and increased risk of breast cancer. ER-beta, in contrast, protects against the adverse impact of ER-alpha stimulation. Soy isoflavones selectively activate ER-beta but have little effect on ER-alpha—which is why soy-rich diets are consistently associated with reduced risk of breast cancer. Furthermore, studies show that women with breast cancer whose diets are relatively high in soy have a lower risk of cancer recurrence and better overall survival. Granted, some animal studies have indicated that soy isoflavones can boost breast cancer growth, but they involved mice given doses 100–1,000 times higher than what is normally consumed in foods and supplements.

I use minute amounts of soy in a handful of my products, and I personally eat edamame (fresh soybeans), tofu, and other minimally processed soy foods. I'm not saying soy is the perfect food for

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everyone, but the claim that it promotes cancer needs to be laid to rest once and for all.

Q *What is vitamin B4? Another health letter I get mentions B4 and says we do not get enough of it. I am confused. — Anonymous, via mail*

A It is confusing, but there is no such thing as vitamin B4. The “missing” B vitamins are substances once thought to be vitamins but later discovered to be synthesized in the body or not essential for human health. Vitamin B4 usually refers to choline or carnitine, which are important nutrients with multiple therapeutic uses, but they are not true vitamins. Visit drwhitaker.com to learn more about supplemental carnitine and choline.

Q *Are there any ways to naturally whiten your teeth at home? Dentists are expensive and I am not sure if the drugstore products, which are also expensive, really work. — R.G., via email*

A One popular home remedy is a paste of baking soda and lemon juice, but I don't recommend it because lemon's acids can erode the teeth. Another is “oil pulling”—swishing a tablespoon of coconut oil around in your mouth for 10–15 minutes per day before spitting it out. I don't know if it whitens teeth but it's safe and can't hurt. Over-the-counter strips, trays, gels, and rinses do a pretty good job as long as you stick with them. They all contain bleaching agents such as peroxide, the same thing dentists use but in weaker solutions, so results are slower and less dramatic.

From My Blog

The Many Health Benefits of Garlic

Garlic is far and away one of the healthiest culinary herbs. Not only does the bold flavor and aroma of this pungent herb spice up any dish, but it also helps ward off cardiovascular problems, infections, and possibly even cancer. But there's a “trick” you need to know in order to reap garlic's full health benefits. After you crush or chop the cloves, wait about 10 minutes before heating or adding it to other ingredients (lemon juice, olive oil, etc.). Why? The enzyme alliinase needs time to work on a compound called alliin to form allicin, the phytonutrient thought to be responsible for garlic's health boons. Just chop or crush and set aside while you do other kitchen prep work. Visit my blog, where I'll share additional health benefits of garlic—as well as a delicious garlic-packed recipe.

 [Get the rest of the story—and share your opinion—by visiting my blog at “Connect with Dr. Whitaker” on drwhitaker.com](https://drwhitaker.com).



Works for Me...

► **Chicken Soup** I read your 11/14 article on bone broth and feel that you left out one of the most important steps. You need to add two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar or lemon juice while boiling the bones. This helps leach out the amino acids (arginine, glycine, and proline), which turns it into “Jewish penicillin.” I have had a chicken soup ministry for years, and one “treatment” is always sufficient to get sick people eating again. — Eldon Riehm, Placentia, CA

Thank you for the suggestion, Eldon, and keep up the good work!

► **Sciatica** I cannot begin to thank you enough—I'm free from sciatica pain! Anyone who has had this terrible spine and leg pain can attest to the fact that it is agonizing and unbearable to live with. After suffering with back pain for years, I had five high-intensity laser treatments at your clinic and the misery is gone. Completely! This has been life-changing for me and I will be eternally grateful to the doctors and staff at Whitaker Wellness. — Lorraine Saunders, Ladera Ranch, CA

► **Snoring** In 2008, I was diagnosed with moderate sleep apnea and prescribed a CPAP machine, which I quit using after a sleepless week. Last summer, I was researching supplements that are supposed to help attention, and I started taking N-acetyl-cysteine 600 mg, acetyl-L-carnitine 500 mg, alpha lipoic acid 100 mg, L-arginine 500 mg, and coenzyme Q10 100 mg at bedtime. I don't know if they helped my attention, but the interesting side effect is I stopped snoring. According to my wife, the difference is dramatic. If I don't take them, my wife says I start to snore again. Interesting, right? I want to underscore that the anti-snoring effect was completely serendipitous. I have no idea why this combination has such a pronounced effect or if it would work for anybody else, but you may want to experiment with it. — Ted Lofstrom, via email

Although I can't think of a medical explanation for this—and I strongly endorse CPAP—all these supplements provide numerous benefits, so this may be worth a try. Look for them in your local health food store, online, or order from the clinic at 800-810-6655. And if this regimen works for anyone else, please let me know.

Have a Health Tip to share? Send it to worksforme@drwhitaker.com. Read more tips at drwhitaker.com/works-for-me.

Healing Tip

Want to get the most out of your vitamin D supplement? Research shows fat-soluble vitamin D is 32 percent better absorbed when taken with a fat-containing meal. It didn't really matter what type of fat was eaten in this recent study, but your best bets are healthy mono- and polyunsaturated fats in avocados, nuts and seeds, olive oil, and fatty fish like salmon.

 Like my Facebook page at facebook.com/WhitakerMD to receive daily healing tips and join the conversation.

Monthly Health Quiz

Winter Old Wives' Tales

Are these common adages true or false?

- 1.) Feed a fever, starve a cold.
- 2.) Alcohol warms you up.
- 3.) Going outside with wet hair increases risk of catching a cold.
- 4.) You lose most of your body heat through your head.
- 5.) Cold drafts cause colds.

Answer:

All are false. Though these old wives' tales are widely circulated, none of them are actually true.



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Valentine's Day Quote

“All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.”

— Charles M. Schulz, creator of *Peanuts*

No computer? Mail your question or health tip to *Health & Healing*, 6710-A Rockledge Dr., Ste. 500, Bethesda, MD 20817.

What Works/What Doesn't for Stomach Ailments

Heartburn, indigestion, nausea, gas, belching: Who hasn't experienced these digestive disturbances at one time or another? And for every symptom, dozens of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs promise to fix you right up. Americans spend billions every year on stomach acid-reducing drugs, and a single acid blocker, Nexium, raked in \$6.3 billion.

Occasional use of drugs to relieve digestive symptoms is one thing, but many people pop these pills like candy. One of my patients told me he keeps bottles of Tums in his car, on his desk, and by his bed and throws back handfuls several times a day. Another confessed to taking Pepcid every day for 10 years!

The FDA warns that high doses and long-term use of proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) such as Nexium, Prevacid, and Prilosec are associated with nutrient deficiencies, fractures, anemia, pneumonia, and *Clostridium difficile* infections. Excessive use of H2 blockers (Tagamet, Zantac, Pepcid) and antacids (Tums, Roloids, Maalox) can also cause problems, including constipation, diarrhea, aluminum toxicity, and serious mineral imbalances.

Even when taken as directed, these meds provide temporary relief at best. Furthermore, because the real causes of digestive distress are ignored, they essentially perpetuate the problem. Let's take a look at some of the most common stomach problems and how we treat them at Whitaker Wellness.

The Burn of Heartburn

Heartburn is a burn all right. It's caused by hydrochloric acid (HCl), which is secreted in the stomach to facilitate digestion. HCl is so caustic it would eat through the stomach itself if not for its thick, protective mucosal lining. The esophagus, however, has no such protection, and if the muscular valve between the stomach and esophagus allows stomach acids to seep up, you're going to feel it.

Most of us get occasional heartburn after overeating, etc., but for people with gastroesophageal

reflux disease (GERD), it's a chronic problem. GERD can cause frequent esophageal pain, inflammation, and erosion as well as seemingly unrelated symptoms such as hoarseness, sore throat, and chronic cough.

Conventional medicine goes after heartburn and GERD with medications to neutralize or reduce stomach acid. But what if the problem isn't too much stomach acid but too little?

My Recommendations

- ▶ Betaine hydrochloride, digestive enzymes, and GutGard should be taken as directed with meals. Deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL) is best chewed about 20 minutes before meals; it may also be taken for symptomatic relief. To order the products we use at the clinic, call 800-810-6655.
- ▶ Unresolved stomach distress may be a sign of a more serious underlying problem. Consult your physician or call 800-488-1500 to learn about treatment at Whitaker Wellness.

Too Much or Too Little?

Stomach acid activates enzymes that digest protein and break food down into smaller components so it can move on to the small intestine for further digestion. If there isn't enough HCl, food can't be adequately broken down and it lingers in the stomach—fermenting, putrefying, and causing gas, bloating, pain, nausea, inflammation, and acid reflux.

Low stomach acid also contributes to problems far removed from the stomach. For example, HCl is required for the absorption of vitamins and minerals, which is why acid-blocking drugs are associated with deficiencies of B12, magnesium, iron, calcium, zinc, and folate—plus increased risk of osteoporosis and anemia. HCl also kills bacteria and other microbes, which explains the connection between low stomach acid and greater risk of infections.

Your body's natural production of HCl declines with age, and even if you aren't taking an acid-reducing drug, low levels may be impairing your digestion and nutrient absorption. Supplemental betaine hydrochloride (a safe source of HCl) helps restore stomach acid and improves overall digestion.

Enzyme production also tapers with age, and this too can be corrected with supplements containing enzymes that break down protein (protease), carbohydrate (amylase), and fat (lipase)—as well as problematic foods like beans (alpha-galactosidase) and dairy (lactase). We keep bottles of digestive enzymes on the tables for our patients to take with meals, and they routinely report reductions in gas, bloating, belching, and post-meal discomfort.

All About Ulcers

Another common stomach problem is peptic ulcers. These open sores on the lining of the stomach, duodenum (upper small intestine), or esophagus used to be blamed on stress and spicy foods. We now know they're caused by *Helicobacter pylori*, spiral-shaped bacteria that burrow through the protective mucosa and trigger inflammation and ulcers. Ibuprofen, aspirin, naproxen, and other NSAIDs also play a role because they block an enzyme that suppresses the production of gastric mucus, making the stomach much more vulnerable to damage.

Ulcers are treated with a short course of antibiotics and acid-reducing drugs. It's an effective approach, but thanks to antibiotic resistance, it doesn't work as well as it used to. Therefore, many patients have recurrences or end up on extended courses of acid-reducing drugs.

Unless steps are taken to eliminate the causes of ulcers, heartburn, and other stomach complaints and support the health of the digestive system, you're setting yourself up for a lifetime of problems.

Safe Solutions for Stomach Distress

Start with lifestyle changes. Eat smaller meals. Figure out what foods you're sensitive to and eliminate them. (Fried foods, alcohol, coffee, carbonated drinks, chocolate, citrus, mint, and tomato products are among the most problematic.) Drink lots of water. Lose weight. Avoid lying down for a couple of hours after eating, especially if you have heartburn. Replace NSAIDs with safe, natural alternatives, and try traditional remedies such as cabbage juice and apple cider vinegar.

Take a good daily multivitamin. As we've discussed, stomach issues can interfere with nutrient absorption, so it's important to boost your intake of vitamins and minerals. Zinc is particularly important, as it's been shown to protect against NSAIDs' harsh effects—and to work as well as some drugs in reducing the size and symptoms of duodenal ulcers.

My all-time favorite therapy for stomach problems is licorice. Rather than suppressing stomach acid, licorice relieves pain and promotes healing by enhancing the body's own natural defenses. It supports the stomach's protective mucosal lining, curtails the growth of *H. pylori*, and one form—deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL)—has been shown to actually cure ulcers!

But licorice isn't just for ulcers. A newer extract called GutGard, which contains concentrated licorice flavonoids, was recently tested on people with symptoms of "functional dyspepsia" (indigestion). They were divided into two groups and given either 75 mg of this concentrated extract or a placebo twice a day. Retesting after 15 and 30 days revealed that over half of the licorice group had significant improvements in symptoms such as abdominal pain, belching, bloating, nausea, heartburn, regurgitation, and loss of appetite.

These natural solutions go a long way toward getting your stomach health back on track. If you have remedies of your own, please share them at worksforme@drwhitaker.com.

Reference

Raveendra KR, et al. An extract of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* (GutGard) alleviates symptoms of functional dyspepsia: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. *Evid Based Complement Alternat Med.* 2012;2012:216970.

Whitaker Wellness Success Story "Back in the Saddle Again"

"I wanted to express my thanks to you, Dr. Whitaker, and the wonderful staff there at your clinic! My heart problems made it impossible for me to take care of the animals on our farm, and my husband and I had to sell everything.

"After our visit to Whitaker Wellness, where I was treated with EECF, IVs, acupuncture, and APAP for sleep apnea, I am back in the saddle again. I am now able to do my farm chores without huffing and puffing and stopping every five minutes to catch my breath. I can also tend to my animals again, including goats and chickens given to me by our neighbor.

"My blood pressure was 180/98 when I arrived at your clinic, and when I left it was 132/60. Your wonderful staff worked with us to stay within our budget, and we really appreciated all the kindness, professionalism, and respect they displayed with us and all of the patients." — Holly Strickland, Owen, WI



Holly Strickland and her horse Pride.

To make an appointment at the Whitaker Wellness Institute, call 800-488-1500 or visit whitakerwellness.com.

Innovations in Wellness Medicine

Coffee and Alzheimer's Disease

Coffee drinkers, rejoice! In addition to enhancing concentration, improving endurance, and protecting against diabetes, Parkinson's, and cancer, epidemiological research suggests that moderate daily coffee consumption also helps stave off Alzheimer's disease. Scientists recently found that people who drank three to five cups of coffee per day may reduce their risk of developing Alzheimer's by as much as 20 percent.

This neuroprotection likely stems from coffee's caffeine plus its high content of chlorogenic acid and other beneficial polyphenols. Previous studies have shown that caffeine aids in the prevention of two signature signs of Alzheimer's, amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary tangles. And both caffeine and polyphenols have antioxidant effects, reduce inflammation, and protect brain cells in the cortex and hippocampus—the key areas responsible for memory. So drink up and enjoy the many health benefits of that cup of joe.

Natural Cough Remedies

Nearly a decade ago, a landmark study revealed that over-the-counter cough remedies are largely ineffective. That didn't do much to slow sales, however, and another problem has since emerged. More than 100 cough remedies—including popular brands such as Robitussin, Vicks, and Tylenol—contain dextromethorphan (DXM). DXM can have serious side effects, including shallow respiration, increased blood pressure, blurred vision, itching and rash, and, in rare cases, coma and toxic psychosis. And concern is mounting because a growing number of adolescents are using DXM in abusive doses to produce a cheap, hallucinogenic high known as “robo-tripping.”

So what does work for coughs? If your cough is chronic, rule out the usual suspects (GERD, allergies, asthma, ACE inhibitors, neuropathy, etc.). If it's related to a cold or flu, go the natural route. One of the best natural cough remedies is honey. You can add a tablespoon or so to lemon and hot water or herbal tea, take it straight up on a spoon from the jar, or use a honey-based cough syrup such as Zarbee's Naturals every few hours as needed. Homeopathic cough syrups are another safe and effective solution, particularly for kids and elderly people. Good brands include Hyland's and Heel Reboost. Look for them online or in health food and drug stores and use as directed.

Did You Know?

- Eighty million bacteria are transferred during a 10-second kiss.
- Vitamin D-deficient patients with COPD who took supplemental D had a 40 percent reduction in exacerbations.
- Flavanols in unprocessed cocoa improve blood flow in the brain and enhance memory.
- Every three minutes, a US kid is taken to an emergency room for injuries related to toys, mostly scooters and other ride-on vehicles.
- Older people who frequently take benzodiazepines for anxiety or sleep have a 51 percent higher risk of developing Alzheimer's within 5–10 years.
- Sleep apnea is linked to an increased risk of osteoporosis.
- More than half of our pet dogs and cats are overweight or obese.
- Vitamin D may improve winter eczema flare-ups.
- A Mediterranean diet is associated with a 50 percent lower risk of developing chronic kidney disease.
- Just 19 percent of full-time students at US public universities graduate in four years.

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