



## Neuropathy: What Works/What Doesn't

If you've ever experienced the excruciating pain of hitting your funny bone or numbness and tingling from your foot or arm falling asleep, you have an inkling of what neuropathy feels like. Now imagine dealing with this day in and day out. That's the norm for the 20 million Americans who suffer with this chronic condition.

Neuropathy is caused by damage to the peripheral nerves, which relay messages between the brain/spinal cord and the rest of the body. It generally affects the axons, the long, thin nerve fibers that conduct electrical impulses, or the myelin sheaths, which insulate and protect axons and speed nerve conduction.

If the autonomic nerves are damaged, you may have problems with digestion, bladder control, erections, swallowing, or other involuntary functions.

Involvement of the motor nerves may lead to muscle weakness, cramps, and atrophy. Sensory nerve damage, the most common type, distorts nerve impulses that transmit pain, heat, cold, and other sensations and causes pain, tingling, numbness, or complete loss of feeling.

### 100+ Underlying Causes

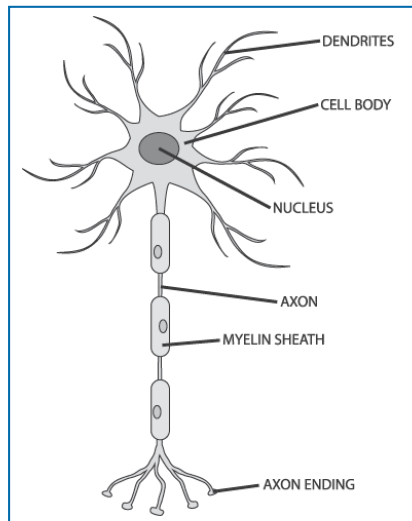
More than 100 conditions are linked with neuropathy, including nerve trauma or compression, autoimmune diseases, nutritional deficiencies, heavy metal toxicity, chemotherapy and other drugs, and infections

like shingles and Lyme disease. A third of cases are labeled idiopathic, meaning doctors don't know why they occur. But the most common cause is diabetes.

Chronically high concentrations of blood sugar injure nerve fibers and the blood vessels that deliver oxygen and nutrients to the peripheral nerves. More

than half of patients with diabetes develop some degree of neuropathy, and it contributes to several diabetic complications.

For example, poor sensation in the feet affects balance and coordination. Injuries occur more often if you can't feel pain, and small nicks, blisters, or pressure sores may go unnoticed. Diabetes-induced circulation problems and impaired wound healing make small lesions vulnerable to rapid progression into full-blown infected diabetic ulcers, which lead to 73,000 lower limb amputations per year.



### Relieve Pain and Facilitate Healing

The good news is that, as long as the nerve cell itself is still alive, once you treat the underlying conditions and put the brakes on further damage to the axons and myelin sheaths, peripheral nerves have the capacity to regenerate.

At Whitaker Wellness, we help our patients control their blood sugar with lifestyle changes, berberine, and other natural therapies. We treat infections with hyperbaric oxygen and IV vitamin C and curb autoimmunity with low-dose naltrexone (LDN). If

*continued on page 3*

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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*.

**Dr. Julian Whitaker's Health & Healing**® (ISSN 1057-9273) is published monthly by Healthy Directions, LLC, 6710-A Rockledge Dr., Ste 500, Bethesda, MD 20817, telephone 800-539-8219. Please write to us at *Dr. Julian Whitaker's Health & Healing*, 700 Indian Springs Dr., Lancaster, PA 17601, or call if you have a question concerning your subscription. Periodicals postage paid at Bethesda, MD and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Dr. Julian Whitaker's Health & Healing*, 700 Indian Springs Dr., Lancaster, PA 17601.

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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](http://drwhitaker.com).

## Dear Reader,

This is the time of year when we're reminded to use sunscreen to protect against UV radiation and skin cancer. But I want to warn you about a far more hazardous type of radiation and cancer risk that gets much less attention: ionizing radiation from medical imaging.

The most problematic imaging tests are CT scans, which deliver 100–1,000 times more radiation than a typical chest X-ray. Australian researchers followed 680,000 children who had undergone CTs and discovered that a single scan increased risk of developing cancer over the next 10 years by 24 percent, and each additional scan raised risk another 16 percent. One in 10 Americans gets a CT every year and many have repeat scans. The National Cancer Institute estimates that at this rate, hundreds of thousands of excess cancer diagnoses and deaths—3–5 percent of all future cancers—will be directly linked to medical radiation.

Experts agree that at least a third of all CT scans are medically unnecessary. So why are 80 million performed every year?

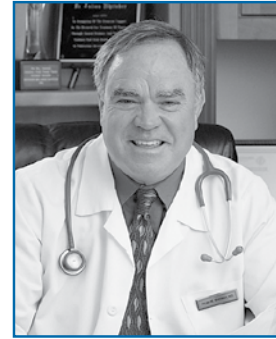
First, physicians either underestimate the dangers or, worse, fail to discuss them with their patients. A *Consumer Reports* survey conducted earlier this year revealed that only 15 percent of patients were warned about the risks of medical radiation. Second, many doctors order superfluous tests simply to protect against lawsuits. Finally, there's the money angle. Physicians who have a vested interest in scanners or radiology clinics tend to order more tests.

Used appropriately, imaging tests are invaluable—but there's the rub. If a CT or a PET scan (which also delivers a wallop of radiation) is ordered, find out why. Would results change your treatment or improve your outcomes? Is a radiation-free alternative such as MRI or ultrasound an option? If a CT scan is necessary, insist that radiation exposure is minimized, and do your best to avoid repeat scanning.

Be especially wary in emergency departments, where CTs are often ordered as a matter of course. Say no to CT angiogram—it has no advantages whatsoever over functional tests that don't bombard you with ionizing radiation.

Finally, remember that although the radiation dose from dental X-rays is minimal and the dose from mammograms and chest X-rays is low, effects are cumulative, and risks increase with repeated exposures.

To your health,

**Julian Whitaker, MD**  
 America's Wellness Doctor

Director of the Whitaker Wellness Institute, Newport Beach, California

## Neuropathy (continued from page 1)

toxins are the problem, we remove them with chelation, and we correct nutritional imbalances with supplements and IV nutrients. None of this is an overnight fix, but over time, symptoms improve.

Many of our patients come in on prescription painkillers. Others are on antidepressants such as Cymbalta, amitriptyline, and nortriptyline, or anti-seizure medications like gabapentin (Neurontin) and pregabalin (Lyrica), which are generally more effective for nerve pain. I can't argue against using drugs for intractable pain, but these particular drugs have many side effects and are a stopgap measure at best.

Yet conventional physicians rely on them because they have little else to offer. That's because they're following the "clinical guidelines," which focus on drugs to the exclusion of natural therapies that not only reduce pain but also slow disease progression, promote nerve regeneration, and can actually reverse neuropathy.

## Nutrients for Nerves

Dozens of clinical trials demonstrate the benefits of intravenous or oral alpha lipoic acid, a potent and versatile antioxidant, for diabetic neuropathy. This inexpensive supplement was subscriber Thelma T.'s ticket back to health. "My feet felt like they were on fire and I was walking on razor blades. After six days on alpha lipoic acid, I started to feel relief. I now take 600 mg daily, and it has made my terrible pain livable. I think otherwise I would be in a wheelchair."

Borage and evening primrose oil (rich in gamma linolenic acid) have a long history as a treatment for diabetic neuropathy. James Teel recently wrote, "I was suffering from unbelievable constant pain. I could only sleep an hour or two, and if I hadn't had an automatic transmission, I would not have been able to drive. No prescription drugs helped, but by the grace of God, I spotted what you said in the newsletter about borage oil. It stopped the pain completely and almost immediately! I am never without it now."

Benfotiamine, a highly absorbable form of vitamin B1, also provides sustained improvements in pain and sensation. Other nutrients that are

essential for normal nerve function include omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D, and especially B-complex vitamins. B12 deficiency is a well-known risk factor for nerve damage, and low stores of B1, B6, and folate are also associated with neuropathy.

A host of additional vitamins and minerals play supporting roles in nerve health, and everyone at risk of or suffering with neuropathy should take a daily multivitamin. Be particularly vigilant if you have diabetes. High blood sugar levels also trigger significant nutrient losses, further increasing the risk of nerve damage.

## Noninvasive Therapies

Severe symptoms may require more intensive interventions. Susan developed peripheral neuropathy from the toxic chemotherapy she received for colon cancer. For eight long years she was so miserable—despite heavy-duty narcotics—that she actually considered amputation of both legs! She came to the clinic for stem cell therapy, a powerful regenerative treatment. Her symptoms

gradually subsided, and within two months she had weaned herself off the drugs and was pain free.

N.L., who had terribly painful post-herpetic neuralgia (neuropathy due to nerve damage caused by shingles), found relief with hyperbaric oxygen therapy and acupuncture. M.H. was treated with infrared light therapy, which penetrates deep into the tissues to stimulate nerve repair, along with EECP to restore circulation. She reports, "I'm feeling the balls of my feet now!" We also have good success with reflexology, high-intensity laser, microcurrent therapy, and chelation.

In many cases, it's the right combination of therapies that does the trick, as it did for William E. "After just four days of treatment at Whitaker Wellness, I put my cane away and I haven't used it again to this day! My family and friends cannot believe the difference. I can now walk and do things I hadn't been able to do for three or four years!"

## Reference

Head KA. Peripheral neuropathy: pathogenic mechanisms and alternative therapies. *Altern Med Rev.* 2006 Dec;11(4):294-329.

## My Recommendations

- ▶ Suggested daily doses of nerve-nurturing supplements: alpha lipoic acid 600–1,200 mg, fish oil 2–8 g, borage oil 2–3 g, evening primrose oil 4–6 g, benfotiamine 300 mg, vitamin D 2,000–5,000 IU, and a daily multivitamin with robust doses of B vitamins. Be patient; nutritional therapies may take a few weeks before you notice results.
- ▶ To learn more about stem cell therapy, hyperbaric oxygen, infrared light, EECP, acupuncture, and other treatments for peripheral neuropathy, visit [whitakerwellness.com](http://whitakerwellness.com). To schedule treatment at Whitaker Wellness, call 800-488-1500.

## Dear Dr. Whitaker

**Q** *I want to start taking triple therapy [alpha lipoic acid, silymarin, and selenium] for my liver. My question is, can I start taking lipoic acid with my mercury fillings still in or should I have them removed first? I have been doing a lot of research and some say it will draw the mercury out and be harmful to the body. What's your take? — Shelley Bailey, via email*

**A** Let me put your mind at ease. The reduced form (DHLA) can chelate mercury, and some research suggests it may have a detoxifying role in mercury poisoning. Most supplements, however, are the oxidized form. Regardless of the form, there is no scientific evidence that lipoic acid would or could draw the mercury out of your fillings and cause harm. I encourage you to go ahead with triple therapy for liver support. Suggested daily doses are 600 mg alpha lipoic acid, 900 mg silymarin, and 400 mcg selenium.

**Q** *My husband has quite a few tiny red spots on his torso. They look like very small red moles or blood blisters. He refuses to have them checked out. Should I be concerned? — Mary P., Arnold, MD*

**A** Sounds like those spots are cherry angiomas, or in medical jargon Campbell de Morgan spots. Usually appearing after age 30, these benign lesions are most commonly found on the trunk of the body and tend to be hereditary. Although they typically require no treatment and are nothing to worry about, it's not a bad idea to do regular skin checks on yourself and have any new moles or other

abnormalities evaluated by a dermatologist. Early detection of problems can lead to better prognoses.

**Q** *If I eat yogurt almost every day, do I still need to take probiotic supplements? — B.B., Chico, CA*

**A** Even yogurt that carries the “Live and Active Cultures” seal is only required to meet a quota of live cultures (100 million or 10 million for frozen yogurt) at the time of manufacture. So there's no guarantee how many bacteria are present when you eat it—or whether they even populate the gut. Fermented foods, including high-quality yogurt that does not contain added sugar or artificial flavoring or sweeteners, are an important part of a healthy diet. But for optimal support of the beneficial bacteria in your gut, I suggest taking a good probiotic supplement.

**Q** *I've noticed that during and after the exact same exercise routine at the same intensity level, my husband sweats a lot more than I do...he's drenched! Is there a reason men sweat so much more than women? Just curious. — Liz D. Huntington Beach, CA*

**A** Turns out, women are more efficient “sweaters,” meaning that their perspiration tends to evaporate more quickly, which cools the body faster. Some speculate it's primal—women's core temperatures have to be well regulated in order to protect offspring during gestation and to retain fluids during labor. Testosterone and body composition may also play a role. And across the board, fit people sweat more than those who are unfit.

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## From My Blog

### When Life Gives You Lemons...

Lemonade is always an option, but what else can you do with this tangy citrus fruit? Added to hot tea or water, lemon juice helps ease the pain and inflammation of a sore throat, and its antimicrobial compounds help knock out germs. On the beauty front, citric acid in lemon juice combined with a little baking soda makes an inexpensive at-home teeth whitener. Mix the two together in a small bowl until it bubbles and use a cotton swab to apply to teeth. Leave on for one minute (longer will erode tooth enamel) and brush off. Rich in vitamin C, lemon juice is a popular ingredient in pricey skincare regimens and can also be used to lighten dark spots on the skin. Just apply topically for 5 to 15 minutes each day. For additional little-known uses for lemons, visit my blog.

 [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...

► **Hypertension** *I want to share my wonderful experience with Balance3 for controlling blood pressure. As an operating room nurse/supervisor for years, I have evaluated many therapies, and I can tell you that Balance3 works like a charm.*  
— H.R., Palm City, FL

Thanks for the feedback. Balance3, a blend of Chinese herbs, gets rave reviews from many of my patients with hypertension. To order, call the clinic at 800-810-6655. Use as directed.

► **Depression** *About three years ago, I went through a very rough time in my marriage. I was a nervous wreck—sleeping poorly, no appetite, and on the verge of tears all the time. I had done a little yoga but started going to classes regularly. Yoga requires intense focus and was the only time I was able to let go of negative thoughts and completely relax. I truly believe yoga helped bring me out of my depression, and it is still an important part of my life. It is also great exercise, and I am in better shape than ever.* — P.S., Bethesda, MD

► **Insect Bites** *We have been using Adolph's meat tenderizer for mosquito and flea bites for decades, ever since I read about it in a hunting/camping magazine. Take about ¼ teaspoon of Adolph's, add water to make a paste, rub into the bite (be sure to open the tiny hole where the insect sucked the blood out), and let dry. The itch and swelling will improve within five minutes and be mostly gone in less than 30 minutes. Unless you can find the no-salt type of Adolph's, it will burn as it is rubbed into the bite. The reason it works is that the papain (papaya) enzyme in the tenderizer dissolves the anticoagulant the insect injects into the bite to keep the blood flowing.* — Paul Sumida, via email

Great suggestion, Paul. It's also helpful for bee and wasp stings.

► **Hiccups** *I recently had the hiccups, and my wife suggested something she read in your newsletter. I put a spoonful of sugar in my mouth and held it on the roof of my mouth. The hiccups stopped immediately. I have no idea how it works but it certainly does.* — H.B., Claremore, OK

🔗 **Have a Health Tip to share? Send it to [worksforme@drwhitaker.com](mailto:worksforme@drwhitaker.com). Read more tips at [drwhitaker.com/works-for-me](http://drwhitaker.com/works-for-me).**

## Healing Tip

Looking for an easy way to improve your balance, posture, and foot strength? Go barefoot! Several studies show multiple health benefits of walking around without shoes or socks—from improving the health of your feet to the esoteric benefits of “earthing” or “grounding” (reconnecting to the healing properties of the earth's energy).

🔗 Like my Facebook page at [facebook.com/WhitakerMD](https://facebook.com/WhitakerMD) to receive daily healing tips and join the conversation.

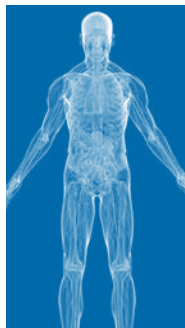
## Monthly Health Quiz

### Summertime Health: True or False?

- A) Milk and honey can be used to soothe a sunburn.
- B) Beach sand often contains disease-causing bacteria.
- C) Vinegar applied to a jellyfish sting eases pain.
- D) Scratching makes bug bites worse.

### Answer:

All true. Milk and honey (and, of course, aloe) applied topically eases the pain of a sunburn, sand can contain *E. coli* and other bacteria that cause gastrointestinal issues, the acidity in vinegar inactivates the “stinger,” and scratching bites spreads histamine and makes them itchier.



## Now Available at [drwhitaker.com](http://drwhitaker.com)

- 5 Ways to Avoid Summer Health Hazards
- Reap the Benefits of Summertime Fruits and Vegetables
- Vitamin A Protects Against Melanoma

Visit today for these articles and more in-depth wellness advice to help you achieve optimal health.

## Notable Quote

“Happiness is someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for.”

— Chinese Proverb

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

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# It's Your Health: Own It!

It isn't the Oscars, Player of the Year, or the Nobel Peace Prize, but I am pleased to announce the winners of *Health & Healing's* 2015 Health Achievement Awards. I've been reading and rereading your entries, and I can't tell you how gratifying and humbling it is to know that my newsletter has made a difference in so many lives.

I wish I could share all of your great stories, but since I can't, here are some highlights. I hope they will inspire you to try some of these natural therapies—and become a more active participant in your own health care.

## Nutrients Save the Day

Many subscribers credit vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients with helping them overcome a broad range of health challenges, including cataracts, dry eyes, elevated cholesterol, diabetes, menopausal symptoms, shingles, knee pain, COPD, osteoporosis, toenail fungus, and more.

Thelma Page, from North Carolina, developed congestive heart failure from a viral infection, and her ejection fraction dropped to a life-threatening 10 percent. "I took Dr. Whitaker's advice and began taking coenzyme Q10, L-carnitine, magnesium, and other supplements, which strengthened my heart whereas the drugs did not. Twenty-four years later, my heart is strong and healthy and my ejection fraction is a normal 60 percent."

Doris Eddy, from Virginia, reported that 5-HTP and GABA got her through severe depression and anxiety, which was a "turning point" in her life.

C.M., from Ontario, Canada, had severe prostate enlargement that required several rounds of medications, catheterizations, and hospitalizations—until he started taking a supplement containing saw palmetto, pygeum, and other ingredients for prostate health. That was nine years ago, and he hasn't had any prostate problems since.

Jana Rhinehart, from Arkansas, was diagnosed with glaucoma and told she would have to use prescription eyedrops for the rest of her life. She began taking vitamins and herbal extracts

to protect her retinas and help reduce pressure in her eyes. When she returned to her doctor several months later, to his astonishment there were no signs of glaucoma.

Rev. Maggie De Vore, from New Mexico, wrote, "I read in your newsletter about a young cyclist who was given magnesium for heart arrhythmias. I started taking magnesium, and I was completely and happily surprised that three weeks was all it took before my skipped heartbeats were gone. I have read and shared so many of your suggestions that folks are contacting me to see what you say about their conditions."

## Distrust of Conventional Medicine

Maggie also voices another grievance many

subscribers share. "Sad to say, I have come to not trust the medical profession. I've had several bad experiences when I was advised to do a particular procedure. You suggested an alternative in your newsletter—and it proved to be the better choice."

Bruce Wheeler, Jr., from California, has a particularly harrowing story. "In 2013, I was fishing on the Kenai River in Alaska when I noticed pain and tightness in my chest. After

returning home, I consulted my VA doctor and had a treadmill stress test, which I failed big time. Two cardiologists told me I could have a heart attack at any moment, and I was given several medications and sent by ambulance for an emergency cardiac catheterization.

"In the recovery room I was told I required immediate open heart surgery and a four-way bypass. I had heard about the high mortality rate for this surgery at my age, so I refused to consent. The cardiologist called me 'stupid, dumb, etc.,' but I was forewarned about being stampeded into bypass, and I was determined to find an alternative.

"When I arrived home the next day, I called Dr. Whitaker's clinic and started treatment with EECF, hyperbaric oxygen, and chelation therapy as well as diet changes and exercise. After my 30<sup>th</sup> treatment I had another stress test, which I passed with flying colors! I do 'mini-fasts' three days a

### And the 2015 Health Achievement Award Winners Are...

**Pearl Nicolino**, California

**Doris Eddy**, Virginia

**Bruce Wheeler, Jr.**, California

**Dee Conway**, California

**Rev. Maggie De Vore**, New Mexico

Congratulations and thanks to everyone for sharing your stories. The real prize is better health, and you're all winners in my book.

week to control my weight and have lost almost 40 pounds. I feel that the keys to successful treatment outcomes are lifestyle changes and discipline. The Whitaker Wellness motto is now my motto: Every day in every way I get better and better!”

## Lifestyle Changes Can Change Your Life

Lifestyle changes also figure prominently in your testimonials. John O’Connor, from Alberta, Canada, wrote, “In January 2010, I was living alone, 50 pounds overweight, smoking, not eating healthy, had high blood pressure and high stress at work as a subcontractor, and was hemorrhaging behind both eyes. Then I met my wife, Diane Laflamme-Betteridge, a dedicated reader of *Health & Healing* since 1994, who was going to change my life.

“She told me I needed to make a decision to stop smoking, eat healthy, exercise regularly, and take vitamins and minerals. I started immediately on this new lifestyle, following what Dr. Whitaker suggested. After the first 10 months, I no longer had high blood pressure, and with the doctor’s permission, I stopped all medications. I had also suffered from depression and anxiety most of my life and had been given prescription pills, but this is now also under control.

“It’s now four years since I started on my life change. I’ve lost 35 pounds, and I have been off all medications for three years. I’m in excellent health, and thanks to my wife and Dr. Whitaker I’m still

here to advocate for all the knowledge you are sharing with us.”

## Pay Attention to Your Health

These and scores of other subscriber success stories are a testament to the effectiveness of alternative therapies. Equally important, they’re concrete evidence of the power you as a patient can have not only over your health but also your medical care. You simply have to do what these exceptional folks have done and own it.

Pay as much attention to the maintenance and upkeep of your body as you do your car and your home. Evaluate proposed drugs, surgeries, and medical treatments as diligently as you would a family vacation, new vehicle, or other major purchase. Ask your doctors about alternatives, do your own research, compare risks and benefits, and get second opinions from independent physicians.

In closing, I want to say thanks again for the positive feedback—and for your many kind words, such as these by Dee Conway, from California, a subscriber since 1993: “I could not be a woman in my sunset years today, strong, energetic, and functioning, without Dr. Whitaker’s *Health & Healing*. His precious info and advice have added more quality years to my life.”

It is a pleasure and honor to participate in some small way in your quest for optimal health.

## Octogenarians and Nonagenarians in Their Prime

Among the many inspiring entrants in our 2015 Health Achievement Awards are several octogenarians (ages 80–89) and 10 nonagenarians (folks in their 90s). These *Health & Healing* subscribers epitomize the concept of healthspan. They take care of themselves, they’ve managed to sidestep the medication merry-go-round most people their age are stuck on, and they are living long, active, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

Virtually all these remarkable people emphasize the importance of a good diet, physical and mental activity, and purposeful engagement in life. Pearl Nicolino, a 92-year-old from California, tends a vegetable garden, sews, paints, and teaches a class once a week. She also plays the guitar and banjo and sings in a trio. After flying for more than 67 years, D.W. hung up his wings last year at age 87. He continues to travel, stays busy on his ranch in Idaho, and is “trying to learn how to retire.”

J. W., age 92, bakes his own bread, grows vegetables and berries in his garden, mows the grass, and shovels

snow on his acre of land in Vermont. H. K., an 87-year-old from Connecticut, goes to the gym five or six days a week for kickboxing and aerobics—“the regular, not the seniors classes.” M.E. from Montana, who lives alone and drives, says nobody believes her age. She’s 95.

These people shy away from prescription drugs, which I am convinced is a significant factor in their health and longevity. But they are devoted to their nutritional supplements. As M.M. from New Jersey says, “At my age, I realize time cannot slow down the aging process, but by proper eating and taking the nutrients that are geared to one’s needs, many ‘old age’ problems can be delayed.”

I’m not suggesting these octogenarians and nonagenarians are running around like 30-year-olds. Common complaints include fatigue, vision and hearing problems, creaky joints, “rusty plumbing,” and a “92-year-old brain.” But all in all, they are models of optimal aging.

# Innovations in Wellness Medicine

## Melatonin: Beyond Sleep

Most folks associate melatonin with sleep—and rightfully so. This hormone, produced in the pineal gland, regulates the circadian rhythms that dictate our sleep/wake patterns. But melatonin also has a plethora of other health benefits. It is a potent antioxidant that helps reduce inflammation and boosts immune function. Research suggests it protects against several types of cancer, particularly sex hormone-mediated cancers of the breast and prostate. A recent study reveals that men who have higher melatonin levels (and who get more sleep) have a lower risk of developing prostate cancer. This hormone also improves bone density and positively affects fat storage in animal studies, suggesting possible osteoporosis prevention and weight loss links.

Melatonin is present in small quantities in foods such as almonds, sunflower seeds, fennel, and cherries, but to ensure therapeutic doses your best bet is to take a high-quality supplement. The recommended dose is 1–3 mg about 30 minutes before bedtime. Even if some of these assumed health benefits don't pan out, you'll still sleep like a baby.

## Posture and Health

Poor posture can make your back ache and your neck and shoulders tense, but it also impacts other aspects of your health and well-being. Hunching over can decrease your lung capacity, impair digestion, increase risk of arthritis, depress your mood, and elevate stress hormones. Harvard researchers found that when men and women assumed a “high-power” posture with a straight spine and open shoulders, their cortisol levels decreased by an average of 25 percent and their testosterone increased by 19 percent; slouching had the opposite effect. Posture also affects your self-confidence and the way others perceive you.

So straighten up! Easy ways to improve posture include engaging regularly in exercise like yoga, Pilates, and resistance training to keep your back, core muscles, and bones strong. When sitting or working at a desk, pay attention to your posture, get up and move around frequently to avoid slumping, and consider investing in an ergonomically correct chair. It's never too late to work on your posture. In many cases, with appropriate exercise and focus, even a dowager's hump (kyphosis) and other issues can be remedied.

## Did You Know?

- In a recent study, children ages 8–16 who took omega-3s had fewer behavioral problems.
- Eighty percent of the world's opioids are used in the US.
- Replace air fresheners, which contain toxic chemicals, with fresh air and essential oils.
- Ninety-five percent of “supercentenarians” (age 110+) are women.
- Only humans cry tears of emotion.
- Regular aspirin use helps delay the advancement of emphysema.
- One in three American adults, and half of those over age 60, have metabolic syndrome.
- Spinal surgery rates are twice as high in the US as in Canada and five times higher than in the UK.
- Men who drink coffee are less likely to have erectile dysfunction.
- Women recover more slowly from back pain than men and are more likely to develop chronic pain.
- Lyrica and other drugs for neuropathy work no better than older generics—but cost 10 times more.

## Health & Healing Resources

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- Answers for Aging Skin
- Can Heart Failure Be Reversed?
- All About Astaxanthin



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