



## Top to Bottom Treatments for Digestive Disorders

**H**ow much food do you eat in a year? Data from the US Department of Agriculture suggests that the average American puts away 1,996 pounds, or nearly a ton of food per year—almost 5.5 pounds per day!

I must say I find that number hard to swallow, but regardless of how much you eat, every mouthful must go through the complex process of digestion to be broken down into components the body can use. As food passes through the gastrointestinal (GI) tract (mouth, esophagus, stomach, and small and large intestines), the liver, gallbladder, and pancreas do their parts to transform it into amino acids, fatty acids, carbohydrates, and micronutrients that can be absorbed and delivered in the bloodstream to cells throughout the body.

Digestion is something we rarely think about it until something goes wrong. Let's take a look at natural solutions for some of the most common digestive disorders.

### All-Around Protection

Before we get into specific conditions, I want to emphasize the basics. Regular physical activity is particularly important for the intestinal tract, as it

helps keep things moving through the system. Weight loss can have a dramatic impact on stomach problems, and stress management reduces irritable bowel syndrome and “butterflies” in the stomach.

Diet is obviously a significant contributor to digestive problems, and too little fiber is a primary culprit. Recommended daily intake is 30–38 g for men and 21–25 for women, yet we average just 15 g per day. No wonder 63 million Americans are constipated.

In addition to improving elimination, fiber cultivates bacteria in the GI tract, which has profound effects on multiple aspects of health. (See sidebar to the left.)

### Tummy Aches

Twenty percent of adults regularly experience heartburn, belching, regurgitation, nausea, or other symptoms of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), which is triggered by stomach acid backing up into the esophagus. Peptic ulcer disease, a less common cause

of stomach pain, is usually due to a bacterial infection and can generally be eradicated with antibiotics.

Acid-reducing medications provide temporary relief but can cause serious problems over the long term. Safer solutions include eating smaller meals,

*continued on page 3*

### Nurture Your Gut Bacteria

The microbiota (gut flora) is involved in much more than digestion. This collection of trillions of microbes synthesizes vitamins K and B12, produces fatty acids used for energy, fights infection and boosts immune function, reduces inflammation, and protects against allergies. Gut flora even affects weight—thin individuals harbor different bacterial species than heavy people. It also produces or regulates neurotransmitters and hormones that influence mood, emotions, and cognitive function, and plays a role in anxiety, depression, chronic pain, and autism.

Nurture your gut bacteria by avoiding antibiotics unless absolutely necessary, taking probiotic supplements, and eating lots of fiber and fermented foods that promote beneficial bacteria and fewer pathogenic microbes.

For serious intestinal infections and inflammatory bowel disease, fecal transplant, which involves transferring “donor feces” from a healthy person, refurbishes the microbiota and often results in remarkable recovery.

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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](http://drwhitaker.com).

Dear Reader,

Medication adherence is a hot topic in conventional medicine. Fifty percent of people with chronic conditions do not take their drugs as prescribed. They skip or reduce dosages, fail to refill prescriptions—and one in five never fill them at all.

This is considered to be a significant public health problem, but is it? An often-cited report states that \$105 billion of avoidable annual healthcare costs is due to medication noncompliance.

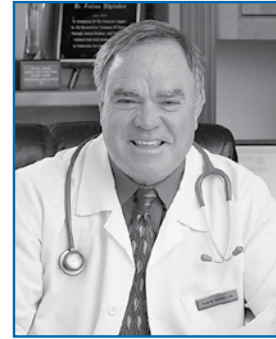
However, \$44 billion of this is attributed to the “disease” of hypercholesterolemia—which isn't a disease at all! Furthermore, the treatment in question, cholesterol-lowering statin drugs, has numerous side effects and provides surprisingly little benefit for most people who are recommended to take them.

The real question is why is there so much noncompliance. For some, it's a financial matter. The average price of prescription drugs went up 11 percent last year and a similar increase is expected in 2017—at the same time out-of-pocket requirements are rising. For others, keeping up with multiple medications and dosing schedules is just too difficult. But there are also more fundamental reasons.

Many people simply have a negative view of prescription medications. They are leery of unnatural substances and concerned about side effects. They know drug efficacy is often overstated, and although they're not averse to all medications, they don't want to take drugs for prevention or be on lifelong regimens.

These individuals—and if you're a *Health & Healing* reader or Whitaker Wellness patient, you may be one of them—are generally quite knowledgeable and proactive about their health. They are more likely to exercise, eat right, take supplements, and opt for safe natural therapies over drugs. But because it's easier to accept a prescription and not fill it than to try to talk to skeptical doctors who believe drugs are the key to treatment and prevention, they are counted as “medication adherence failures.”

To your health,

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

Director of the Whitaker Wellness Institute, Newport Beach, California

### Prescription Drug Take Back Day: April 29, 2017

Do you have any half-empty or expired prescription drugs lying around? Rather than throwing them away or flushing them down the toilet, which can contaminate water supplies, safely dispose of them on April 29, the DEA's upcoming biannual Take Back Day. Ask your pharmacist about drop-off locations in your area.

## Digestive Disorders (continued from page 1)

avoiding foods that cause symptoms (such as fried foods, carbonated drinks, coffee, alcohol, citrus, spicy foods, and tomatoes), remaining upright after eating, drinking more water, and losing weight—which may completely eliminate GERD.

Folk remedies for stomach distress include cabbage juice and apple cider vinegar. My number-one supplement recommendation is deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL), which reduces inflammation and regenerates mucosal cells lining the GI tract for lasting relief. Zinc, melatonin, aloe vera, and Iberogast (a German herbal tonic) are also helpful.

Counterintuitive as it seems, low stomach acid may also be a problem. As we get older, our stomachs produce less hydrochloric acid. This impairs the digestive process and can result in pain and bloating. Restoring stomach acid with betaine hydrochloride capsules may rectify this condition.

## Intestinal Issues

Intestinal problems, such as chronic constipation, diarrhea, gas, bloating, and cramping, are also incredibly common. But because they are generally functional in nature—function is impaired but there are no underlying physical problems—they're tricky to treat.

Constipation can be prevented with increased fiber intake, but far too many people rely on laxatives. Occasional use of osmotic laxatives such as MiraLAX, Milk of Magnesia, or magnesium 500–1,000 mg is acceptable. However, with the exception of bulk-forming fiber products like Metamucil and Citrucel, regular use of laxatives can make matters worse.

Pepto-Bismol and Imodium are helpful for infrequent bouts of diarrhea, and over-the-counter products like simethicone, activated charcoal, and digestive enzymes reduce intestinal gas. None of these quick fixes, however, gets to the bottom of the problem.

Furthermore, many patients suffer with multiple GI problems. This constellation of symptoms, called irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), can be treated, but

it requires a personalized program of diet changes and targeted supplements—and a commitment from patients to stay the course.

## Common Culprits and Solutions

Every person's dietary hot buttons differ, but common triggers are gluten, cruciferous vegetables, beans, grains, and fermentable carbs such as lactose, fructose, and sugar alcohols. Helpful supplements include the amino acid L-glutamine, which bolsters the integrity of the intestinal lining; inflammation-reducing omega-3s; and peppermint for gas and cramping.

Imbalances in gut bacteria, or dysbiosis, may also underlie IBS—or any intestinal issue. If you suffer with digestive distress, promoting a healthy microbiota should be your first order of business. If problems persist, natural antimicrobials such as garlic, oregano oil, and berberine are recommended. Serious overgrowth of *Candida* or small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) may call for antifungal drugs or minimally absorbed, gut-targeted antibiotics.

These same recommendations may also provide relief for inflammatory bowel diseases such as Crohn's and ulcerative colitis, serious autoimmune disorders that usually require more intensive treatment.

### My Recommendations

- ▶ Suggested supplements for stomach pain include deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL) 1 tablet chewed 20 minutes before meals, zinc 30 mg, melatonin 3 mg at bedtime, and betaine hydrochloride, starting with one capsule and increasing gradually as needed. Use aloe vera and Iberogast as directed.
- ▶ For intestinal issues, aim for 30–40 mg total of dietary and supplemental fiber with lots of water. High-potency probiotics are particularly important. Take digestive enzymes with meals and L-glutamine 3.5–5 g and enteric-coated peppermint capsules twice a day between meals. Use natural antimicrobials (high-dose garlic, oregano oil, and berberine), as directed.
- ▶ Look for these supplements online and in stores, or call the clinic at 800-810-6655 to order.

## Say Goodbye to Digestive Woes

I'll close with a note I recently received from Liz, a *Health & Healing* subscriber from Maine. "My husband, Joe, has had digestive problems for as long as I can remember. A few months ago we decided to clean up our diet, cut out processed foods and sugars, and add probiotics, fiber, and fish oil to our supplement regimen. Within weeks, Joe's issues rapidly improved. He was having solid bowel movements for the first time in over a decade and he lost a few pounds in his waistline as well."

## Reference

Lacy BE, et al. Bowel disorders. *Gastroenterology*. 2016 May;150(6):1393-1407.

# Dear Dr. Whitaker

**Q** *My teenage granddaughter is experiencing a pretty bad case of acne. I'd love to share a solution with her that really helps. — Julie Davis, Bloomington, CA*

**A** Not that it will make her feel any better, but 80–85 percent of teenagers get acne. Diet is closely linked with this inflammatory skin condition, and avoiding dairy, refined vegetable oils, and high-glycemic sugars and starches often reduces breakouts. On the supplement front, start with a good multivitamin and anti-inflammatory fish oil (1,000 mg EPA/DHA daily). Zinc (25–50 mg per day) is a tried-and-true treatment for skin conditions, and more recent research links vitamin D deficiency with acne. Niacinamide, which can be taken orally (500 mg three times a day) or applied topically, also gets high praise.

Other topicals include antibiotics and Retin-A, a vitamin A derivative that requires a prescription. Over-the-counter antibacterial cleansers may help, and tea tree, manuka, or coconut oil, which have natural antibacterial properties, are also good cleansers. For more severe cases, oral antibiotics, birth control pills, and Accutane may be prescribed. However, I recommend diet changes, supplements, and topical solutions as first-line treatments.

**Q** *I am about to undergo treatment for breast cancer. My oncologist insists that I discontinue all nutritional supplements. Stopping them doesn't feel right to me. Please advise. — N.K., Oklahoma City*

**A** This is a controversial issue, but your oncologist's response suggests he hasn't done his homework.

 **Read more Q&As online at [drwhitaker.com/featured-questions-and-answers](http://drwhitaker.com/featured-questions-and-answers). Send your own questions to [drwhitakerquestions@drwhitaker.com](mailto:drwhitakerquestions@drwhitaker.com).**

Contrary to what some doctors believe, most supplements do not interfere with conventional cancer therapies. In fact, numerous studies show that certain supplements help patients with some of the adverse effects of cancer treatment.

For example, vitamin E, glutamine, and acetyl-L-carnitine protect against drug-induced neuropathy, and glutamine also reduces risk of chemo- and radiation-related oral mucositis. Selenium defends against lymphedema and antioxidants against radiation dermatitis. Omega-3s and vitamin D have multiple protective effects, and vitamins and minerals bolster both nutrient status and immune function, which are sorely needed by cancer patients. I suggest you consult with an integrative doctor to help you develop a personalized, evidence-based supplement program. Visit [acam.org](http://acam.org) to find practitioners in your area.

**Q** *I have three soft round lumps about an inch across under the skin of my arms. They do not hurt and my doctor said they are nothing to worry about, but I am concerned they may turn into cancer. Should I have them removed? — P.L., Austin, TX*

**A** Lipomas are benign, slow-growing, moveable fatty deposits under the skin. Because they are usually painless and pose no cancer risk, they require no treatment except for cosmetic reasons. If their appearance bothers you, talk to a dermatologist about removal, which is usually a minor surgical procedure in a doctor's office under local anesthesia. Rapidly growing, painful, unmovable lumps should be checked by a physician.

## From My Blog

### Is Your Car Toxic?

Air pollution is one of the world's top-10 health threats, resulting in more than seven million premature deaths annually. Air quality issues are especially problematic in urban areas, where researchers have compared the carcinogenic effects of high levels of pollution to those of smoking! You'd think pedestrians and cyclists would fare the worst; however, sitting in congested traffic or at red lights can create sky-high levels of pollution inside your vehicle. A recent study revealed that people at red lights were exposed to up to 29 times more toxic pollution than in free-flowing traffic. You can protect yourself by keeping windows shut and turning off fans and air conditioning. If fans are needed, use the re-circulating air function that does not pull in polluted air from outside. For more tips on steering clear of air pollution, visit [drwhitaker.com](http://drwhitaker.com).

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



# Works for Me...

► **Colds & Flu** *Whenever I get a cold or the flu, I drink 1/4 cup of organic carrot juice every hour or two until symptoms disappear. I also take 1,000 mg of vitamin C (Ester C) three times a day. The beta-carotene in carrot juice is very powerful in keeping mucous membranes healthy, the vitamin C gives my immune system a boost, and this natural duo does wonders for me. — S.B., via email*

► **Plantar Fasciitis** *I didn't start running until I was in my mid-30s. As I increased my distance, I started experiencing debilitating pain in my heels and the arches of my feet. Since I have high arches, I purchased Sof Sole arch support inserts for my running shoes. (My good friend at the sporting goods store also swears by a brand called Superfeet.) Those arch supports helped during my runs but what really offered me lasting relief was wraparound, Velcro-strap, hard arch support inserts I could wear around during the day. Now I never run without my inserts, I have my other wraparound supports for occasional flare-ups, and I'm training for my sixth half-marathon—pain free. — Elizabeth R., via email*

Great suggestions! You can find a wide variety of inserts and arch supports in drug stores, running/sporting goods retailers, and online.

► **Carotid Artery Blockage** *A while back, one of my employees found out that she had an 80 percent blockage in her carotid artery. A friend told her about Carlson liquid fish oil and she started taking it. About six months later, her doctors were still pushing her for surgery, so she decided to go through with the tests to check the blockages. Guess what? Her blockage was GONE! — Whitaker Wellness Patient*

The omega-3 fatty acids in fish oil are essential for cardiovascular health. Although I'm not aware of research showing that fish oil reverses carotid artery blockages, its anti-inflammatory effects do help stabilize arterial plaque. This reduces risk of plaque rupture and the formation of blood clots that can cause heart attacks and strokes. Carlson makes a great product; however, it can be substituted with any quality concentrated fish oil. The suggested dose for people with cardiovascular disease is 1,000–2,000 mg EPA/DHA daily.

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).

## f Healing Tip

You probably know a serving a day of nuts reduces risk of heart disease, stroke, and cardiovascular death. New research reveals that a daily handful of tree nuts or peanuts is also linked with lower cancer incidence and dramatic reductions in death from diabetes and respiratory or infectious diseases. Nothing nutty about that!

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

## Monthly Health Quiz

### Egg-cellent Facts About Eggs: True or False?

- A) Eggs are good for your eyes and brain.
- B) Ohio is the highest egg-producing state.
- C) A large egg contains 78 calories, 6 grams of protein, and 5 g of fat.
- D) Eggs increase risk of heart disease.



### Answer:

B and D are false. Iowa was the top producer in 2015 with 12,463 million of the US's 96.4 billion eggs. (Ohio was second.) The egg-cellent facts about eggs myth has been debunked. And eggs are great sources of lutein and choline, essential nutrients for the eyes and brain.

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

- 5 Spring Health Tips
- Treating Asthma and Allergies Naturally
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## Notable Quote

“Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'”

— Robin Williams, Comedian and Actor, 1951–2014

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

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# Help for Your Aching Back

If you've never had low back pain, consider yourself lucky. Most of us deal with it at one time or another, and in the past three months a quarter of adults have had painful bouts lasting at least a day.

Physicians used to tell patients—and uninformed docs still do—to take ibuprofen, Tylenol, or stronger painkillers and come in for further evaluation. New guidelines by the American College of Physicians now recommend doctors reassure patients that acute and subacute back pain (lasting up to one month and four to 12 weeks, respectively, with or without sciatica) usually improves over time regardless of treatment.

Drugs are discouraged, while heat, massage, acupuncture, and spinal manipulations are recommended. If medications are warranted, only ibuprofen and other NSAIDs or muscle relaxants should be used. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and steroids are ineffective for back pain, and opioids should never be used for acute/subacute low back pain.

## What About Chronic Pain?

Even for chronic pain, these guidelines instruct doctors to first recommend proven nondrug treatments such as acupuncture, manipulations, exercise, physical therapy, tai chi, yoga, biofeedback, laser therapy, and mind-body techniques. Only when a patient fails to respond to these should drugs be considered, starting with NSAIDs and moving on to duloxetine or tramadol.

Opioids should be considered only for patients who fail to respond to other treatments and understand the drugs' serious risks and meager benefits. In 2015, 30,000 Americans died of prescription or illegal opioid overdoses. A disturbing number of addicted users first got hooked after their doctors prescribed OxyContin or other opioids for pain—even though repeated studies show that high daily doses provide no clinically significant improvements for chronic low back pain.

Current guidelines also discourage routine use of X-rays, MRIs, and other imaging scans, especially within the first six weeks of pain onset, unless progressive neurological deficits, cancer, or other serious problems are suspected. Early imaging not only

fails to improve outcomes but often leads to surgeries that actually make matters worse.

## Natural Pain Relief

I'm 100 percent on board with these noninvasive approaches to low back pain. However, rather than taking NSAIDs if drugs are indicated, I suggest trying natural anti-inflammatories. Bromelain, ginger, white willow bark, and other botanicals reduce inflammation and pain, but we've had the best results at the clinic with fish oil and standardized extracts of curcumin and boswellia.

Topical treatments are another overlooked option. Capsaicin, the "heat" in chili peppers, interferes with the transmission of pain signals and is a proven therapy for back pain. DMSO has significant anti-inflammatory and pain-reducing effects and is my personal go-to for flare-ups. We also get excellent feedback on OxyRub, an oxygenated essential oil ointment.

For severe chronic pain, I may prescribe creams or gels containing NSAIDs or other drugs. Applied topically to painful areas, they deliver relief right where it's needed and sidestep the adverse gastrointestinal effects of oral medications.

## Relieve Pain and Promote Healing

At Whitaker Wellness, we use several of these recommended drug-free therapies. Patient favorites include acupuncture, massage, laser, chiropractic, biofeedback (neurofeedback), and back/core-strengthening exercises. We also offer three regenerative therapies that are largely ignored by conventional doctors.

Low back pain, whether it's due to overuse, lifting, or straining, often stems from injury to the ligaments that hold the vertebral discs in place. Weakness and laxity of these supporting structures increases vertebral instability and risk of disc herniation and nerve impingement. Prolotherapy is a regenerative treatment that repairs and strengthens affected ligaments, stabilizing spinal structures and taking pressure off discs and nerves.

### My Recommendations

- ▶ The suggested daily dosage of fish oil is 1,000–2,000 mg EPA/DHA. Curcumin and boswellia dosages vary by product; use as directed. At the clinic we use Meriva curcumin 500 mg and AprèsFlex boswellia 100 mg per day.
- ▶ To learn more about pain-relieving therapies, visit [whitakerwellness.com](http://whitakerwellness.com) or refer to back issues of *Health & Healing*. For treatment at Whitaker Wellness, call 800-488-1500.

Platelet-rich plasma (PRP), which is particularly popular with professional athletes, concentrates patients' own platelets (components in the blood that jumpstart healing) and injects them into areas of injury for faster healing.

Stem cell therapy—the most powerful and versatile regenerative therapy—removes and separates stem cells from fat in a mini-liposuction procedure and returns them to the patient's body, where they seek out areas of inflammation and orchestrate the healing process.

The drug-free, nonsurgical approach certainly worked for R.K., a subscriber from Arizona who

endured years of low back pain that radiated into his legs and interfered with his sleep—and his golf game. After an MRI revealed bulging discs and a specialist recommended surgery, he decided to try a less invasive approach and came to the clinic. Improvements were rapid and lasting. When I heard from him 18 months after treatment, he felt 90–95 percent better and was playing golf every day.

## Reference

Qaseem A, et al. Noninvasive treatments for acute, subacute, and chronic low back pain: a clinical practice guideline from the American College of Physicians. *Ann Intern Med.* 2017 Feb 14. doi: 10.7326/M16-2367. [Epub ahead of print]

## Whitaker Wellness Success Story

### Mercury Toxicity: A Hidden Health Threat

“Several years ago, I spent four days at your clinic along with my wife. After having seen over 46 doctors in Utah, we came to Whitaker as a last resort to see if your team could unravel my complex health issues. I had been sick for 21 years and was getting worse. Your team finally found the culprit—mercury poisoning.

“You had just written an article on mercury and handed us a fresh copy before it was even published. This started us down the right road where we researched all the available treatment options. Since my visit with you, I have learned a great deal about mercury poisoning, mostly from *Amalgam Illness: Diagnosis and Treatment* by Dr. Andrew Hall Cutler. I often refer to myself as a ‘professional patient,’ as I’ve done my research to find what works and what doesn’t. I cannot recommend Dr. Cutler’s book enough. More recently, I learned about Quicksilver Scientific’s new mercury testing technologies and chelation products and suggest you check them out as well.

“Your diagnosis and his information and protocol for self-treatment literally saved my business and is giving me back my life. Although I could not make weekly visits to your clinic from Utah for the necessary treatments to rid my body of this monster within, I did have all 13 of my dental amalgams removed. I am still following a weekly chelation program using DMSA along with alpha lipoic acid, and I am about 70 percent better. The horrific symptoms I suffered with for years dissipated within the first few months. I continue to improve, although this process will likely require over five years to complete.

“The thing I will never forget that meant more to me than you know is what you said to me after listening to my story of having been to so many doctors and spending \$109,000 out of pocket on useless medical bills: ‘We’re going to cure you.’ You gave me hope—which is the most powerful medication there is.” — *Ken Gallacher, Riverton, UT*

*Ken’s experience is a sobering reminder of the serious health ramifications of mercury—and of conventional doctors’ ignorance of heavy metal toxicity. When patients come to Whitaker Wellness with multiple problems nobody can figure out, we test their heavy metals burden and treat accordingly. Treatment, as Ken suggests, can be a lengthy process that should be done under the care of a knowledgeable physician. (Visit [acam.org](http://acam.org) for doctor referrals.) Dr. Cutler’s book, which offers sound advice for physicians and patients, is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [noamalgam.com](http://noamalgam.com). Quicksilver’s website is [quicksilverscientific.com](http://quicksilverscientific.com). Visit [whitakerwellness.com](http://whitakerwellness.com) to read my article “Mercury Toxicity: Malady or Myth?”*

*Mercury in industrial emissions ends up in marine ecosystems and accumulates in fish as methylmercury, which adversely affects virtually all organ systems, especially the brain, kidneys, heart, and digestive tract. The FDA and EPA warn against eating king mackerel, marlin, orange roughy, shark, swordfish, tilefish, and ahi (big eye) tuna and limiting intake of other fish such as albacore, mahi-mahi, and halibut to one serving a week. Salmon, light canned tuna, sardines, trout, shellfish, and crustaceans are safe to eat two or three times a week. This toxin is also released from amalgam dental fillings, and a 2016 study found that levels are elevated in people with more than eight fillings. A quarter of Americans have 11 or more amalgam fillings. Amalgam removal should be performed only by an experienced dentist.*



Ken Gallacher

# Innovations in Wellness Medicine

## High-Dose Biotin for Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple sclerosis is a tough diagnosis. This autoimmune disease attacks the central nervous system and can cause a variety of symptoms including extreme fatigue, blurred vision, memory problems, and, in severe cases, mobility issues. At Whitaker Wellness, we have a multi-pronged treatment approach to MS that includes hyperbaric oxygen, low-dose naltrexone (LDN), targeted IV nutrients, and oral supplements, which improves symptoms, reduces flare-ups, and enhances overall health. New research supports the addition of another supplement to our MS treatment arsenal: high doses of biotin.

In a 2016 controlled clinical trial, taking 100 mg of biotin three times daily had a stabilizing effect on a significant percentage of patients with progressive MS. Although biotin didn't help every study participant and further research is needed (this was a small phase II trial), outcomes were sufficient to give hope to patients suffering with this debilitating disease. Furthermore, this B-complex vitamin is safe, inexpensive, and appears to have broad neuroprotective effects. To learn more about treatment of MS and other autoimmune diseases at Whitaker Wellness, call 800-488-1500.

## Berberine for Diabetes Prevention

I've often sung the praises of berberine. This herbal supplement has been shown to work as well as the popular diabetes drug metformin for lowering blood sugar. Exciting new research suggests that berberine may also reduce risk of developing diabetes in at-risk individuals.

This recent study focused on an up-and-coming marker called oral Disposition Index (DIo), which measures the pancreatic beta cells' response to blood glucose and predicts the risk of developing diabetes over the next few years. (For reference, low DIo suggests an impaired glucose response, while higher levels indicate a normal ability to metabolize blood sugar.) In this 12-week randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial, patients with impaired glucose metabolism took a supplement containing berberine (500 mg), chromium (133 mcg), and cinnamon (333 mg) three times a day or a placebo. At the study's conclusion, DIo levels increased an impressive 88.6 percent in the supplement group, an indication that the pancreas was responding to blood sugar normally. Furthermore, fasting glucose, cholesterol levels, and insulin sensitivity also markedly improved.

## Did You Know?

- Studies suggest that children have stronger, more satisfying relationships with their pets, especially dogs, than with their siblings.
- An anti-inflammatory diet protects women against bone loss and fractures.
- Canadian researchers found that one-third of adults diagnosed with asthma did not have it on reevaluation.
- Drinking white wine is associated with increased risk of melanoma.
- Drain-clogging items to avoid putting down garbage disposals include oils, fats, coffee grounds, eggshells, flour, rice, and pasta.
- Half of adults and two-thirds of kids drink one or more sugary drinks every day.
- The cost of raising a child from birth through age 17 is now \$233,610, or nearly \$14,000 per year.
- Drilling holes in the skull to let the "madness" out was once a common treatment for mental illness.
- More than a third of injury-related emergency room visits are attributed to falls.
- Home sleep apnea tests have been shown to be as reliable as expensive overnight sleep lab testing.

## Health & Healing Resources

- **Renew Your Subscription** . . . . . 800-539-8219 (M-F 9 AM-5 PM EST)
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## Coming in Future Issues

- What You Need to Know About Cardiac Arrest
- Solutions for Cold Sores and TMJ
- Spring Cleaning the Nontoxic Way



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