



## Cardiac Arrest: Stayin' Alive

Carrie Fisher passed away from cardiac arrest at age 60, and her mother Debbie Reynolds, age 84, had a fatal stroke the following day. Comedian Gary Shandling died of pulmonary thrombosis at 66, singer George Michael succumbed to heart failure at 53, and 61-year-old actor Bill Paxton died of complications following heart valve surgery.

These recent deaths caught our attention not only because they involve celebrities, but also because they were sudden and unexpected. Most of these individuals were relatively young, busy professionals in apparent good health—which adds to the perception that cardiovascular events strike randomly and without warning. Unlike cancer death, which is frequently described as “losing a long and courageous battle,” cardiovascular fatalities often seem to come out of the blue.

But that really isn't true. Debbie Reynolds' death certificate lists hypertension as an underlying cause of her stroke, and extreme stress also increases risk. Gary Shandling had complained of leg pain and shortness of breath the day before he died of a blood clot blocking an artery in his lungs. George Michael had a history of lung disease and substance abuse, which can contribute to heart failure. And Bill Paxton's death, as discussed on page 2, illustrates the tragic risks of surgery.



Carrie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds

### What Is Cardiac Arrest?

Cardiac arrest seems to be particularly mysterious and indiscriminate. When a young athlete drops dead on the playing field or a healthy person suddenly keels over, the most common cause is cardiac arrest.

Carrie Fisher's cardiac arrest was initially reported as a heart attack, and although the two are often linked, they are not the same. A heart attack, or myocardial infarction, occurs when a coronary artery is blocked, usually by a blood clot that cuts off blood delivery to the heart muscle. Symptoms such as radiating chest pain, fatigue, and shortness of breath may begin immediately but are more likely to come on gradually. Although areas of the heart muscle may be damaged and heart function impaired, many people survive heart attacks.

Cardiac arrest is an electrical malfunction. The heart's electrical system goes haywire and the ventricles (the large chambers in the bottom of the heart) begin to quiver rather than rhythmically squeezing and pumping blood throughout the circulatory system. Without blood and oxygen delivery to the brain, patients rapidly lose consciousness, and unless blood flow is restored within minutes, death is inevitable.

Because it all happens so fast—fewer than 10 percent of people who have a cardiac arrest survive—it's called sudden cardiac death.

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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,

Actor Bill Paxton died in February of "complications from heart surgery." Stroke was the immediate cause of death, but it was precipitated by aortic valve replacement surgery and aortic aneurysm repair several days before his death.

Heart valve narrowing (stenosis) or leaking (regurgitation) can cause fatigue, shortness of breath, palpitations, chest discomfort, and other symptoms, which often get worse with age. Aortic valve damage can also lead to more serious problems, such as heart failure and aortic aneurysm and dissection.

Although surgery to repair or replace damaged heart valves is sometimes necessary, Bill Paxton's untimely death underscores the potential dangers of all surgical interventions. A 61-year-old man in reasonably good health is not an exceptionally high-risk patient. However, any time you "go under the knife," things can go very, very wrong.

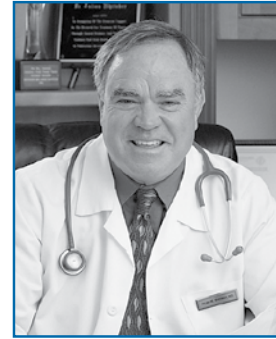
Stroke is one of the most devastating complications of surgery, but it's by no means the only one. Dangerous blood clots may form in the legs or lungs. Adverse reactions to anesthesia and other medications can occur. Temporary and in some cases lingering cognitive problems are not uncommon post-surgery. Two and a half million patients develop bedsores, and hospital-acquired infections kill 75,000 every year.

Then there's plain old human error—medication overdoses, surgical slip-ups, misdiagnoses, and poor judgment calls. Medical mistakes are responsible for 251,000 deaths annually!

Hysterectomy, back surgery, radical prostatectomy, thyroid removal, and double mastectomy are examples of surgeries that all too often offer no clear benefits to patients. But heart procedures take the cake. The bulk of patients who undergo coronary artery bypass or angioplasty have stable angina, characterized by chest pain on exertion. Multiple large, randomized clinical trials have demonstrated that for these patients, invasive heart procedures are no more effective than drugs, exercise, and diet changes for preventing heart attacks and reducing deaths.

Surgery is risky business. Research your options, weigh the pros and cons, and always get an unbiased second opinion. If you decide that surgery is necessary, select an experienced surgeon and a high-volume hospital, and designate a friend or loved one to look out for you while you're in the hospital. For information on alternatives to surgery and second opinions, call Whitaker Wellness at 800-488-1500.

To your health,

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

Director of the Whitaker Wellness  
 Institute, Newport Beach, California

## How Is Cardiac Arrest Treated?

Although sudden cardiac death is responsible for about half of all cardiovascular demises, approximately 325,000 per year, heart rhythm can be restored and lives saved—but only if treatment begins at once. Most cardiac arrests occur outside of hospitals, so you can't count on professional help. That's why everyone needs to learn CPR.

The first thing to do if you witness a sudden collapse is call 911. Then begin administering CPR and continue until help arrives and the heart can be shocked back into rhythm with a defibrillator. Automated defibrillators are available in many public places and should be used if available. However, if you're at home, it's all on you.

CPR has been simplified in the last few years. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is not absolutely necessary. Just press firmly with the heel of both hands, one on top of the other with elbows straight, in the center of the chest 100–120 times per minute. CPR educators suggest timing chest compressions to the rhythm of the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive."

Don't underestimate the importance of bystander CPR. It doesn't always save lives, but by keeping blood circulating, it at least provides a fighting chance of preventing brain damage and death following cardiac arrest. Keep it up until paramedics take over. Japanese researchers studying out-of-hospital cardiac arrests found that favorable neurological outcomes were possible with up to 38 minutes of CPR.

## Who Is at Risk?

Although sudden cardiac deaths of adolescents make headlines, these heartbreaking tragedies are exceedingly rare. The average age of people who die of cardiac arrest is 66, and in all but about 5 percent of deaths, an underlying cause can be identified.

In some cases, it is a disease of the heart muscle such as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy or right ventricular dysplasia. In others, there's an inherited electrical

abnormality like long QT syndrome. Damage to the heart muscle is often an issue, due to a previous heart attack, heart failure, or drug or alcohol abuse. There is speculation that Carrie Fisher's history of bipolar disorder, drug use, and addiction may have contributed to her cardiac arrest. Heart attacks are another trigger. In fact, malignant ventricular arrhythmias are the leading cause of heart attack deaths.

However, the major cause of cardiac arrest is coronary artery disease, the narrowing or hardening of the coronary arteries that deliver blood to the heart. (Note: Although atrial fibrillation is a heart rhythm disturbance, it is not a risk factor for cardiac arrest.)

## My Recommendations

- ▶ Preventive measures include smoking cessation, regular exercise, stress management, weight control, healthy diet, moderation of alcohol intake, and treatment of risk factors such as coronary artery disease, heart failure, hypertension, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome.
- ▶ Supplements for cardiovascular support include fish oil 1,000–2,000 mg EPA/DHA, coenzyme Q10 100–200 mg, vitamin D 2,000–5,000 IU, and a daily multivitamin with hefty amounts of antioxidants, magnesium, and B vitamins. To order, visit [drwhitaker.com](http://drwhitaker.com) or call 800-722-8008.
- ▶ Pay attention to warning signs and learn CPR. For instructions, visit [cpr.heart.org](http://cpr.heart.org).
- ▶ Whitaker Wellness specializes in the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease. To become a patient, call 800-488-1500.

## Can It Be Prevented?

Prevention focuses on reducing the usual cardiovascular risk factors: smoking, inactivity, obesity, stress, hypertension, poor diet, and nutrient deficiencies. Diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and sleep apnea are also linked with increased risk of cardiac arrest, and these conditions should be addressed as well.

You should also learn the subtle warning signs. Roughly half of affected patients have symptoms such as lightheadedness, shortness of breath, and pressure in the chest in the month leading up to their cardiac arrest.

Implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICDs) are sometimes recommended for very high-risk patients, such as survivors

of cardiac arrest and those with serious heart failure or ventricular arrhythmias. These devices detect dangerous rhythm disturbances and shock the heart back into normal rhythm. ICDs can be lifesaving, but they also have risks and drawbacks, including use in many patients who don't really need them. Get a second opinion before agreeing to an ICD.

To recap, cardiac arrest is not some mysterious force that arbitrarily strikes healthy people in their prime. Be aware of the risk factors and modify those that are within your control, recognize subtle warning signs, and encourage everyone in your family to learn CPR. The lives that could be saved may be your loved ones' or your own.

# Dear Dr. Whitaker

**Q** *I have been donating blood every two months. I am now 74 years old. Do you recommend that I continue this practice? — David A., via email*

**A** As long as you meet the usual qualifications for donating blood (health status, past disease exposures, minimum weight, etc.), there is no upper age limit. Thank you, David, for helping with the ever-present and often-urgent need for blood donations. To learn how to become a donor, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call a Red Cross office or hospital in your area.

**Q** *I read your article in the March newsletter about aspirin's protective effects for heart disease and cancer. However, it did not answer two questions I have. I take an 81 mg aspirin tablet every day. Is there is a best time to take it, and is enteric-coated or regular aspirin better? — J.S., Reno, NV*

**A** Heart attacks and strokes are more likely to occur in the morning, when platelet reactivity (tendency to form blood clots) peaks. Studies suggest that taking aspirin at bedtime reduces this morning surge and provides greater cardiovascular protection. Evening as opposed to morning use may also have a modest blood pressure-lowering effect. Regular aspirin appears to be preferable because enteric coating has been shown to hinder absorption and reduce therapeutic benefits. Although none of this research is definitive, it suggests that it's best to take regular aspirin with your evening meal. Do not take aspirin on an empty stomach due to potential gastrointestinal irritation and damage.

 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).

**Q** *What do you recommend for fever blisters? I have had them from time to time since I was a child but now I seem to be getting them more often. I really need to find a solution for this embarrassing and painful problem. — W.D., Tulsa, OK*

**A** Unfortunately, herpes simplex 1, the virus that causes fever blisters (also called cold sores) is never entirely eliminated from the body, so there is no permanent cure. But there are things you can do to reduce recurrences and speed healing of outbreaks. Doctors often recommend antiviral medications, but a 2015 Cochrane analysis of all the pertinent research found that long-term use of oral antiviral drugs provided only small preventive benefits and topical antivirals none.

A popular alternative is L-lysine (500–1,000 mg per day), an amino acid that inhibits the growth of the herpes virus. A multivitamin with robust levels of zinc, vitamin C, and other immune-boosting nutrients is also recommended. And be aware that sun exposure, stress, skin trauma, hormonal changes, and infectious illnesses also trigger eruptions. A number of over-the-counter and prescription salves and ointments are available for acute outbreaks. Home remedies include topical zinc oxide, ice, garlic, tea tree oil, and bentonite clay. All work best when used as soon as symptoms appear. There's little consensus as to which therapy is the most effective. I suggest you experiment and see what works for you. If any readers have suggestions, please email them to me at the address below.

## From My Blog

### Spring Cleaning With Natural Household Cleaners

Spring is finally here, and it's the proverbial time to tackle some serious cleaning. Unfortunately, many commercial cleaning products are chock-full of harmful, even toxic chemicals. The good news is that you probably have safe, inexpensive, natural cleaning agents already on hand. For instance, white vinegar diluted with water makes an excellent streak-free window and mirror cleaner, especially when wiped dry with newspaper. Vinegar is also useful for removing mineral deposits in coffeemakers and on kitchen and bathroom faucets and fixtures. Lemon juice paired with olive oil works beautifully as a natural furniture polish. And baking soda sprinkled on carpets, pet beds, and garbage cans is a safe, non-toxic deodorizer. For more information on how to use these natural household cleaners along with other useful spring cleaning tips, visit [drwhitaker.com](http://drwhitaker.com).

 Get the rest of the story—and share your opinion—by visiting my blog at [drwhitaker.com](http://drwhitaker.com).



# Works for Me...

## ▶ Blood Sugar & Cholesterol

Just wanted to share my excellent results using berberine (500 mg three times a day). In four months, my A1C went from 6.4 to 5.2 and my cholesterol went from 225 to 165 with minimal changes in my diet and evening snacks (mainly eating fewer crackers). Thanks! — Fred Warman, via email

## ▶ Wound Healing

My left knee was really scraped and packed with fine sand when I wiped out on my bicycle. I applied honey to a patch, placed it on my knee, and wrapped a bandage around it. The next evening I changed the dressing. There wasn't a grain of sand left in my knee. I made another patch with honey, and again wrapped the knee. The result? A perfectly healed knee with no scarring. It's not messy either, when applied right! — Cleo H., via email

As you may know, at Whitaker Wellness we use sugar—regular white sugar—to treat serious wounds such as diabetic ulcers and burns. It too works like a charm.

## ▶ Pickleball

I was introduced to pickleball about three years ago and now play regularly with a group of friends, all of us old-timers who were quite athletic in our time. It's fun, social, and a great fast-paced, low-impact workout. — R.L., Fairbanks, AK

Pickleball, which is something of a hybrid of badminton, ping-pong, and tennis, is increasingly popular, especially among seniors. Visit [usapa.org](http://usapa.org) to learn more and to find leagues and places to play.

## ▶ Weight Loss

I have been using a nutritional supplement called Lovidia for three and a half months and have had excellent results. It controls my appetite and especially my sweet tooth. I get full faster and no longer crave midnight snacks. I have lost 15 pounds during this period, and I don't miss eating any of the junk food, such as chocolate, that I used to crave. — Silvia C., Newport Beach, CA

Although I'm skeptical of many weight loss supplements, Lovidia is backed by solid research and great clinical results. Safe and well tolerated, it contains natural ingredients that act on hormones in the gut, which regulate appetite as well as glucose and energy metabolism. To order, call 800-810-6655.

 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

Summer is just around the corner. If you're planning to visit Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Denali, or any of our 413 national parks, monuments, or historical sites, consider purchasing a lifetime senior pass. This pass, for people 62 and older, costs just \$10–20. To learn more, visit [store.usgs.gov](http://store.usgs.gov).

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

## Monthly Health Quiz

Which of the Following Can Cause a Chronic Cough?

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| A) Asthma      | D) Heartburn          |
| B) Bronchitis  | E) Prescription drugs |
| C) Lung cancer | F) Postnasal drip     |



### Answer:

All are linked with persistent coughing. A dry cough is a notorious side effect of ACE inhibitors (drugs prescribed to lower blood pressure). D is something of a trick question. Heartburn per se doesn't cause coughing but is a primary symptom of gastroesophageal reflux disease, which can also irritate the throat and trigger coughing.

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## Notable Quote

“All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you.”

— Walt Disney, 1901–1966

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

# The Healing Powers of Red Hot Chili Peppers

Like most Americans, I love Mexican food, and I like mine hot. Salsa, jalapeños, Cholula, Tapatio: bring 'em on. Sometimes I overdo it or encounter a pepper that's too hot to handle. But for me, a burning mouth is a small price to pay for chilies' fiery piquancy.

Capsaicin is the phytochemical that gives peppers their kick, and how much heat they pack depends on their capsaicin content. Relative hotness as measured by the Scoville scale ranges from bell peppers' zero heat units, to jalapeños' 2,500–8,000 and cayenne's 30,000–50,000, all the way up to Carolina reapers' 1.4–2.2 million.

Research on capsaicin is also red hot. More than 13,000 scientific papers have been published on its therapeutic effects on pain, appetite and weight control, insulin resistance, inflammation, cardiovascular function, gastrointestinal and respiratory disorders, and even longevity. Let's take a look.

## The Pain Paradox

It seems odd that a burning, irritating compound like capsaicin can relieve pain, but that is its most common medicinal use. Prescription and over-the-counter creams, ointments, and patches are a popular treatment for neuropathy, osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis, shingles, and muscle pain.

The key to these paradoxical effects—both causing pain and relieving it—is activation of TRPV1 receptors. When triggered by capsaicin, these receptors interact with sensory nerves to transmit pain signals to the brain. Repeat activation, however, desensitizes them. That's why initial application of topical capsaicin burns like heck but sensitivity and pain decrease with frequent use.

TRPV1 receptor activation is involved in much more than heat and pain perception. It also affects energy expenditure, fat and glucose metabolism, nitric oxide synthesis, and more—which explains many of capsaicin's broad therapeutic effects.

## Heats Up Weight Loss

One of the most exciting areas of research is weight loss. Capsaicin stimulates thermogenesis, the production of heat in the body. If you've ever broken

into a sweat while eating spicy foods, you know what I'm talking about. Heat generation burns calories, and capsaicin has a special talent for triggering the burning of fat, especially brown fat, which is particularly important for enduring weight loss.

Capsaicin also reduces appetite and boosts metabolic rate, making it a promising therapy for obesity. In a 2016 placebo-controlled clinical trial, participants who took capsaicin capsules daily for 12 weeks had marked reductions in appetite, caloric intake, and waist-to-hip ratio.

These metabolic effects enhance insulin sensitivity as well, and early research suggests that capsaicin protects against metabolic syndrome, diabetes, fatty liver, and cardiovascular disease.

## Cardiovascular Connection

I've been aware of capsaicin's cardiovascular benefits since the early '90s, when I came across a book by Richard Quinn describing how cayenne pepper eliminated his angina.

After writing about this in *Health & Healing*, I heard from a number of subscribers who had similar improvements. For example, M.T. couldn't walk more than 20–30 yards without stopping to catch his breath. Within three days of starting on cayenne capsules, his energy rebounded and his shortness of breath and blood pressure improved. A month later, he was climbing ladders and scaling scaffolding.

I couldn't explain it at the time, as the research was in its infancy. We now know that capsaicin-activated TRPV1 increases the production of nitric oxide, which relaxes the arteries, increases blood flow, and reduces angina.

## Don't Spicy Foods Cause Ulcers?

If there's one area you'd think hot peppers would hurt rather than help it's the gastrointestinal system. Although spicy foods may irritate an existing ulcer or trigger heartburn in people with GERD, capsaicin actually protects the stomach.

It stimulates the secretion of gastric mucus, reduces stomach acid, and has been shown in

### My Recommendations

- ▶ For pain relief, rub capsaicin ointment into the affected area up to four times a day. The initial burning sensation will decrease with use. Do not apply to broken skin.
- ▶ The average 500 mg cayenne capsule contains about 40,000 heat units. The usual dosage is one capsule two or three times per day, taken with meals to reduce risk of stomach distress.

clinical trials to guard against damage to the gastric mucosa caused by NSAIDs and excessive alcohol. As for stomach ulcers, the real culprit is a bacterial infection (*H. pylori*), and capsaicin's antibacterial properties offer further protection.

Capsaicin also blunts inflammation and positively alters the gut microbiota, and early research suggests benefits for patients with irritable bowel syndrome.

## A Bounty of Benefits

Have you ever been plagued with uncontrollable itching? Regardless of the cause (psoriasis, fungal infection, post-herpetic neuralgia, etc.), topical capsaicin may help.

How about a chronic cough? If you've ruled out all the usual suspects (see page 5), it may be due to an oversensitive cough reflex. By desensitizing TRPV1 receptors, oral capsaicin reduces hyper-responsiveness that triggers coughing.

Runny nose or congestion? Non-allergic rhinitis often responds to capsaicin nasal spray, as it blunts sensitivity to household chemicals, perfumes, and other environmental irritants. (Note that it will not help with airborne allergies.)

Some people claim capsaicin gives them more energy, and others use it in place of caffeine for increased alertness. If I nick myself shaving, I dab on a little cayenne pepper to stop the bleeding, and my wife's panacea for colds and flu is cayenne-laced chicken soup. Cayenne pepper, along with lemon juice and maple syrup, is also an ingredient in a trendy concoction for "detox" and rapid weight loss.

Capsaicin may even increase longevity. In a study published earlier this year, researchers analyzed data on more than 16,000 people over a 19-year period and found that hot pepper consumption was linked a 13 percent reduced risk of death.

If you find mouth-scorching chili peppers intolerable, and many people do, cayenne capsules are a great alternative. Either way, I recommend that you avail yourself of the red-hot benefits of capsaicin.

## References

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## Whitaker Wellness Success Story

### "Mystery" Issues Solved, A New Beginning

"For some time I had been feeling drained and exhausted. My doctor ran a lot of tests and couldn't find anything wrong, but I continued to get weaker with abdominal and back pain and no energy or appetite.

"Three months later, I went to the emergency room. They did all of the same tests but didn't find anything wrong with me either and said I was 'normal.' But I was weak, could barely walk or work, and abdominal and back pain kept me awake at night.

"It was my boss who suggested Dr. Whitaker's clinic. He and his wife had come years ago for her diabetes. I also have diabetes, and he thought that might be part of the problem. My specialist at home was not going to see me for two months, and I don't think I would have made it until then.

"I was impressed with the thoroughness of my doctor at Whitaker Wellness. She knew right away what some of my 'mystery' issues were. Within a couple of days my energy level increased by 50 percent, I was thinking more clearly, and I just kept getting stronger and stronger.

"Diabetes was part of the problem; my numbers were all over the map. When I was first diagnosed five years earlier, I took care of it with exercise and diet, but I got lazy. I tried metformin, which caused abdominal pain, other medications that didn't help, and finally insulin, which I was on for about two months. As soon as I came to Whitaker Wellness, they took me off insulin—I am grateful for that—started me on a diet and supplement program, and my blood sugars began to normalize.

"When I arrived at the clinic I was empty. Vitamins, minerals, hormones—there was nothing left in me. To be diagnosed quickly and thoroughly was a godsend. I've learned how to relax more, eat right, make good choices, and not fall back into bad habits. I look forward to this new beginning. I am getting better every day, in every way!"

— Clay Bergen, Saskatchewan, Canada

# Innovations in Wellness Medicine

## Magnesium for Heart Disease, Diabetes, and More

Magnesium is a trace mineral that is essential for optimal health, and the cold, hard truth is most people just aren't getting enough of it. Epidemiological data shows that more than 50 percent of Americans have an inadequate magnesium intake from the foods they eat. Why is this important? In a massive meta-analysis involving more than a million people in nine different countries, researchers discovered that an increase in dietary magnesium of just 100 mg per day is associated with significant reductions in risk of heart failure (22 percent reduction), diabetes (19 percent), stroke (7 percent), and death from all causes (10 percent).

Magnesium-rich foods to incorporate into your daily diet include spinach and other leafy greens, beans, nuts, seeds, fish, avocados, and whole grains. However, I'm not convinced diet alone will cut it. To bolster magnesium stores—and further protect your overall health—take 400–500 mg of supplemental magnesium daily.

## Napping for Improved Cognitive Function

What do Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy, and Albert Einstein have in common? In addition to being some of the brightest, most influential men in recent history, they all took naps. They were definitely on to something. Regular naps have an abundance of health benefits including improved mood, increased alertness and concentration, better productivity, and reduced stress. And a recent study confirms it.

Chinese researchers examined the napping and nighttime sleeping habits of nearly 3,000 men and women aged 65 and older, approximately 60 percent of whom reported napping 30–90 minutes daily. They found that study participants who slept for about an hour after lunch performed better on tests of cognitive function (word recall, simple questions, copying geometric shapes), compared to those who didn't nap and those who slept for a significantly longer or shorter duration. Although this study found one hour to be the sweet spot, other research suggests that just 20–40 minutes of napping also increases alertness and performance. Make sure you don't nap too long or too late in the afternoon so it won't interfere with nighttime sleep. And if you find yourself excessively tired during the day, I recommend getting tested for sleep apnea, low thyroid function, and other causes of fatigue.

## Did You Know?

- A 2016 study found that older people are the happiest, while those in their 20s–30s have the most stress, anxiety, and depression.
- The average American produces 4.4 pounds of garbage per day; one-third is recycled but the rest goes into landfills or incinerators.
- Hemorrhoids affect 75 percent of Americans over age 45.
- Nine of the 12 fastest-growing occupations involve taking care of aging baby boomers.
- Frequent soccer heading is linked with signs and symptoms of traumatic brain injury and concussion.
- One in three people who followed a Mediterranean diet for 12 weeks had dramatic improvements in depression.
- Research suggests that excessive intake of high-mercury fish may increase risk of ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease).
- Melatonin (3 mg at bedtime) has been shown to improve eczema in children.
- Diabetes is now our third leading cause of death.
- Fecal transplant improves behavior and intestinal problems in children with autism.

## Health & Healing Resources

- **Renew Your Subscription** . . . . . 800-539-8219 (M–F 9 AM–5 PM EST)
- **Buy Supplements** . . . . . 800-722-8008 or [drwhitaker.com](http://drwhitaker.com)
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## Coming in Future Issues

- How to Prevent Falls
- Help for Neuropathy
- New Research on Hyperbaric Oxygen's Diverse Benefits



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