



Hyperbaric Oxygen: Something Old, Something New

The earliest documented use of hyperbaric therapy dates back to 1662, when a British physician treated patients with respiratory conditions in a chamber filled with compressed air. America's first hyperbaric chamber was built in 1861, and in 1928 Dr. Orval Cunningham constructed a five-story, 900-ton pressurized spherical chamber, where scores of patients could stay for long periods. Criticism by the American Medical Association, however, undermined enthusiasm for hyperbarics, and the "steel ball hospital" was eventually dismantled for scrap metal.

Conventional medicine's interest faded, but research continued. In 1939, the US Navy began administering 100 percent oxygen under pressure—true hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT)—to treat decompression illness from diving accidents. During the next three decades, European doctors discovered HBOT to be an effective therapy for carbon monoxide poisoning, stroke, radiation injury, multiple sclerosis, wound healing, bone infections, and more.

Although bias among US physicians endures, thousands of scientific papers have been published on the benefits of HBOT for dozens of serious conditions.

Wound-Healing Wonder

HBOT is a proven therapy for wounds and injuries of all kinds. When 100 percent oxygen is

breathed under pressure, it dissolves in all the body's fluids and saturates tissues with oxygen. This massive influx reduces inflammation, curbs infection, signals the release of reparative stem cells and growth factors, and boosts production of collagen and new blood vessels (angiogenesis).

Cecil came to Whitaker Wellness in a last-ditch effort to save his leg after antibiotics, intensive wound care, and amputation of several toes failed to stem a festering diabetic ulcer. Within days of begin-

ning treatment with HBOT and sugar dressings, the infected ulcer began to close. It eventually healed, and amputation was avoided.

This is not an isolated case. Diabetic ulcers lead to 73,000 amputations annually. Just imagine how many limbs could be saved and how much pain and suffering reduced with routine use of HBOT.



Hyperbaric oxygen chambers at Whitaker Wellness Institute

Dramatic Stroke Recovery

Strokes cut off blood flow in the brain. Deprived of oxygen and glucose, brain cells in the immediate area die and those nearby go into "hibernation"—they're still alive but nonfunctioning. No therapy can raise the dead, but by flooding the brain with oxygen, HBOT provides the energy needed to revive stunned neurons. It also reduces swelling and activates cell regeneration and angiogenesis, which promote the

continued on page 3

Inside This Issue

- Hyperbaric Oxygen 1
- Resistant Starches 4
- Six Steps for Preventing Falls. . 6
- Dear Reader 2
- Works for Me. 5
- Success Story 7
- Venous Insufficiency, Gout 4
- Mindfulness Meditation 5
- Wellness Medicine. 8

Health & Healing

YOUR DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO WELLNESS MEDICINE

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

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

Dear Reader,

We live in contentious times, but one thing most Americans will agree on is the exorbitant price of medical care. Insurance premiums, deductibles, copays, and out-of-pocket expenses have risen year after year, and per capita healthcare spending now exceeds \$10,000—more than twice the average of other developed countries.

It's taking a toll. In a 2016 survey, 26 percent of respondents said medical bills have caused serious financial problems.

Many reported skipping doctor visits, putting off procedures, or otherwise going without needed care. And most of them have health insurance!

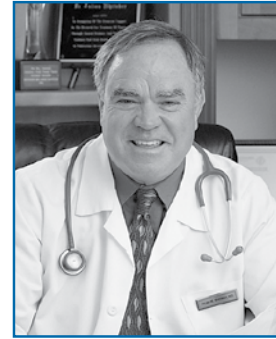
Finding physicians who accept their insurance was also a concern for 35 percent of survey participants. In today's fractured healthcare system, insurers drop doctors from their networks and pull out of some areas altogether. Medicare and insurance reimbursements are often so low that they barely cover expenses, treatments and tests are arbitrarily denied, and payment is delayed by months. If doctors can't cover basic costs, they have no choice but to stop accepting those particular plans.

This is especially problematic for small private practices, which don't have hospitals' and large medical groups' ability to negotiate costs, handle piles of required paperwork, and deal with punitive regulations. As a result, many doctors in independent practices—especially those who offer alternative therapies—do not participate in Medicare or private insurance programs.

Whitaker Wellness used to operate on a cash-only basis. We've always tried to make it easier on patients by keeping costs as low as possible. For example, while hospitals charge more than \$1,000 for hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), we charge around \$200 per treatment. However, the situation has become untenable for patients who cannot afford the out-of-pocket costs to get the treatments they want, especially since so few clinics offer HBOT, EECF, chelation, IV nutrients, prolotherapy, PRP, high-intensity laser, and other integrative therapies.

Therefore, Whitaker Wellness began accepting some of the major insurance plans several years ago and recently started taking Medicare. Yes, it's an administrative hassle, and no, insurers don't cover all of our therapies. But it's worth it, since more and more patients are now able to consult practitioners who treat serious health challenges with nutrition, supplements, lifestyle changes, bioidentical hormones, and noninvasive therapies—rather than simply resorting to prescription drugs.

To your health,

Julian Whitaker, MD
 America's Wellness Doctor

Director of the Whitaker Wellness
 Institute, Newport Beach, California

brain's ability to develop new connections and compensate for injury.

The ideal time to receive HBOT is immediately after a stroke, but that option is rarely offered. Fortunately, HBOT is beneficial at any time. Israeli researchers conducted a trial of patients who had enduring deficits from strokes suffered six months to three years earlier. Forty treatments resulted in remarkable improvements in function and quality of life.

Gary made some progress during his stint in a rehab facility following a serious stroke, but he was unable to drive, walk, or even stand without assistance. So he came to the clinic for HBOT. By the time he returned home, his balance, strength, speech, and swallowing dramatically improved, and he no longer required a wheelchair.

Strokes are a leading cause of long-term disability. Don't all patients deserve a shot at this potentially life-altering treatment?

ABCs of HBOT for TBI

HBOT is, hands down, the best available treatment for another common cause of brain damage: traumatic brain injury (TBI). Curtis had lingering problems stemming from a TBI sustained in a childhood bicycle accident. When he was 22, his parents brought him to the clinic for HBOT and neurofeedback. After treatment he wrote, "Taking on challenges became easy for me. My coordination was immensely better, and I started using my left hand more. This was an amazing opportunity for me."

Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath is a vocal proponent of HBOT, based on his personal experience and his concerns about the TBI-related degenerative brain diseases in more and more retired pro football players. Military veterans suffering with TBI or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) also report great results with this therapy.

You'd think neurologists, the Veteran's Administration, and the National Football League would be on the frontlines promoting HBOT, but that isn't case—for all the wrong reasons. As Kenneth Stoller, MD, explained in a 2015 article, "HBOT is an efficacious, benign, and humanitarian way to affect brain repair but it has not been adopted because it lacks patent protection and has no large corporate sponsors. It has also met interference because other agendas are present be they

the protection of the status quo, myopic budgetary constraints, or perceived liability issues."

A Safe and Versatile Therapy

HBOT speeds recovery from muscle, ligament, and bone injuries and reduces post-exercise muscle fatigue and soreness, which explains its popularity among elite athletes such as Michael Phelps, Novak Djokovic, Tiger Woods, Terrell Owens, and Darren Sharper.

A treatment course relieved N.L.'s post-herpetic neuralgia pain and William's excruciating diabetic neuropathy. It rapidly healed Stephanie's facial burns and E.B.'s facelift incisions. Cynthia's Lyme disease-related problems improved dramatically after 40 treatments, and G.G.'s rosacea cleared up with just one. Liam, a six-year-old with autism, became more social and verbal following HBOT and neurofeedback. Ashley had notable improvements in her balance, sensation, vision, and other symptoms of multiple sclerosis.

This therapy has also been demonstrated to improve quality of life in patients with fibromyalgia, terminate acute migraines and cluster headaches, reverse sudden sensorineural hearing loss, and reduce symptoms of ulcerative colitis. HBOT even has an adjunct role in cancer treatment: It sensitizes tumors to radiation and reduces adverse effects of chemotherapy/radiation.

Whitaker Wellness's hyperbaric department has treated thousands of patients with this safe, versatile therapy. Although it can cause uncomfortable pressure in the ears and claustrophobia, serious safety issues are very rare and overblown. Most patients tolerate treatment well and enjoy their one-hour sessions watching videos, reading, or simply relaxing.

Don't expect to hear about HBOT from your doctor—old biases die hard. But for stubborn conditions that don't respond to conventional treatments, HBOT is a game changer. To locate a hyperbaric facility in your area, visit hyperbariclink.com, and to learn about treatment at Whitaker Wellness, call 800-488-1500.

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Dear Dr. Whitaker

Q *I have trouble with my legs and testing revealed venous insufficiency. I planned to have endovenous ablation. Now I am wondering if there is a good alternative. I wear compression stockings but would like to quit wearing them. I have low blood pressure and was hoping the treatment would help in that regard as well. I am 67 and in otherwise good health, with the exception of osteoarthritis. Do you have any suggestions? — Barbara M., via Facebook*

A Laser or radiofrequency ablation is sometimes necessary to cauterize veins affected by this condition, which is usually caused by varicose veins or blood clots. However, compression stockings and horse chestnut seed extract are my top recommendations. Compression stockings are effective and inexpensive, and a Cochrane review found that horse chestnut supplements improved leg pain, swelling, and itching in chronic venous insufficiency. The usual dosage is 300 mg twice a day of an extract standardized for 20 percent or 50 mg of aescin. If your blood pressure is always on the low side and not causing symptoms such as dizziness, fatigue, or blurred vision, it's likely nothing to worry about, but eating more salt, drinking more water—and wearing compression stockings—may help. Visit drwhitaker.com for my recommendations for arthritis.

Q *I've heard turmeric and curcumin are poorly absorbed and that combining black pepper with curcumin increases absorption, even across the blood-brain barrier. I would like to know if this is true. — P. M., via email*



Read more Q&As at drwhitaker.com, and send your own questions to drwhitakerquestions@drwhitaker.com.

A It is true. Piperine, a black pepper extract added to many curcumin supplements, dramatically increases absorption. At the clinic, we use two other curcumin extracts that boost bioavailability in other ways: Meriva, which is bound to phosphatidylcholine from sunflower and is best studied for relieving pain and inflammation; and Longvida, which is complexed with lipids (fats) and has positive effects on the brain. Doses vary depending on the product so use as directed. Look for curcumin supplements online and in stores, or call 800-722-8008 to order. For best results, take with food. Dietary fats/oils and black pepper (as little 1/8 teaspoon) have also been shown to raise blood levels of curcumin.

Q *I am prone to painful attacks of gout. Are there any supplements I can take to prevent them? — Frank M., Phoenix, AZ*

A Gout is linked with elevated levels of uric acid. A recent double-blind, placebo-controlled study found that 500 mg of quercetin, a flavonoid abundant in onions, taken daily for a month lowered levels of uric acid. (Quercetin is often combined with bromelain, which enhances absorption and reduces inflammation.) Flavonoids in tart cherries also curb uric acid and counter inflammation; eating 10 to 12 tart cherries, or their equivalent in supplements or juice, may reduce gout attacks. Also, don't forget to drink lots of water to flush out excess uric acid, eat plenty of plant-based foods, reduce your fat intake, and go easy on red meat, shellfish, and alcohol.

From My Blog

All Starches Are Not Created Equal

It's common knowledge that starchy foods are quickly converted into sugars and wreak havoc on blood glucose levels, right? Not so fast. New research suggests that “resistant starches,” found naturally in bananas, plantains, legumes, lentils, and unprocessed whole grains—as well as potatoes, pasta, and rice that have been cooked and cooled—are broken down more slowly. Rather than being digested in the small intestine, resistant starches are fermented in the colon by intestinal bacteria. In this respect, these starches behave more like fiber, slowing the blood sugar/insulin response, promoting the growth of beneficial gut bacteria, improving intestinal health, and increasing satiety (the feeling of fullness)—all factors that could positively affect our current epidemics of diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and obesity. For more information on how you can reap the benefits of resistant starches, visit my website.



Get the rest of this story at drwhitaker.com.



Works for Me...

► **Allergies and Asthma** *I've suffered with pretty severe allergies and asthma my whole life and have spent countless dollars on over-the-counter and prescription medications that didn't work. A few months ago, I saw an ad on TV for a handheld steam inhaler called MyPurMist. I've been using it twice a day now for about two months and I just can't say enough good things about it. I can breathe deeply—and I mean really deeply—for the first time ever! My head and sinuses are clear at nighttime and I'm down to only using my prescription nasal spray once a day in the morning. The unit is a little on the pricey side (\$150) but it's totally worth it to me to be able to breathe freely.* — Julie Smith, Ridgecrest, CA

Steam eases congestion and other symptoms associated with a wide variety of respiratory problems. This device gets great reviews for ease of use (no humidifiers or boiling water), and it's self-cleaning. It comes with a 60-day, risk-free guarantee. For more information, including where to purchase, visit mypurmist.com.

► **Healthy Eating** *My sister sent me a gift certificate from Blue Apron. I redeemed it at their website and the next week received an insulated box full of fresh vegetables, salmon, chicken, farro (which I had never eaten), spices, and more, along with recipes to make three dinners. My husband and I loved the meals, and it got me out of the cooking rut I had fallen into. The food was very high quality, and the recipes were easy to follow. I thought other subscribers might be interested.* — Judith M., Lakeland, FL

Blue Apron and similar companies like Hello Fresh and Sun Basket help you serve up healthy, home-cooked, reasonably priced meals without the fuss of meal planning or shopping. Do an internet search for “meal delivery services” to find companies in your area.

► **Flossing** *I have always been a bad flosser. I never remembered or took the time to do it. Then I started keeping dental floss in my car, right in plain sight. Now, I floss my teeth when I'm at stoplights, waiting in the car, etc.* — K.B., Irvine, CA

🔔 Do you have a Health Tip to share? We'd love to hear it! Send it to worksforme@drwhitaker.com.

Healing Tip

Looking for a safe, natural way to alleviate anxiety, stress, and depression? A recent study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* suggests mindfulness meditation eases symptoms more effectively than general stress management techniques. For more info and free guided-meditation sessions, visit mindfulness-solution.com.

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

Monthly Health Quiz

Summer Sun Facts: True or False?

- A) To produce adequate vitamin D, aim for 30 minutes of sun daily.
- B) Never go outdoors without sunscreen.
- C) Don't worry about getting sunburned in the shade.
- D) The higher the SPF, the better.



Answer: All are false. Just 10–15 minutes of summertime exposure without sunscreen is usually enough for your body to produce vitamin D. Indirect UV rays, reflecting off water, sand, etc., can cause sunburn. Broad-spectrum SPF 30–50 sunscreen that blocks UVA and UVB is adequate. SPF 100 provides only minimally more protection and is often mislabeled.

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Notable Quote

“Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships.”
— Stephen Covey, 1932–2012, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

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

Six Steps for Preventing Falls

Wile E. Coyote falling off a cliff while chasing the Road Runner. Buster Keaton slipping on a banana peel. Charlie Chaplin tumbling down a staircase. *America's Funniest Home Videos'* spectacular spills and falls. Celebrities, strangers, and even friends slipping and tripping. Falls make us laugh, often against our better judgment.

But they really aren't funny. Medical bills and workers' compensation claims related to workplace falls exceed \$70 billion per year. Falls are the leading cause of nonfatal injuries in children and a significant cause of pain and disability for adults of all ages, but they are particularly hard on older people.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 95 percent of hip fractures are sustained during falls, and risk of death within a year skyrockets after such a fracture. Falls are also the primary cause of traumatic brain injuries and a major factor in bleeding and internal injuries in this age group. All told, more than 2.8 million older people are treated in emergency rooms and 800,000 are hospitalized every year for injuries sustained in falls.

Let's look at six steps to reduce your risk of falls.

1. Take Vitamin D, Leucine, Carnitine

Vitamin D is essential for bone health, muscle strength, and balance, and research suggests that optimizing levels with supplements can reduce the risk of falls and fractures by about 20 percent.

However, a 2017 study concluded that the current dosage guideline of 800 IU per day is inadequate, especially for frail older people. I recommend having your 25(OH)D blood level tested and taking enough vitamin D3 to keep it in the desired range of 40–60 ng/mL. This often requires 2,000–5,000 IU of supplemental vitamin D per day.

Other supplements for staving off falls include L-leucine, an essential amino acid that facilitates the synthesis of muscle protein, and L-carnitine, which has been shown to boost energy, strength, mobility, and lean muscle mass in older people. Reasonable daily doses are 2 g each, along with a good multivitamin and adequate dietary protein.

2. Discontinue Problematic Meds

More than a third of older Americans are on five or more prescription medications, and far too

many are taking drugs associated with dizziness and falling. The use of multiple, inappropriate meds can have serious consequences. All Nan remembers about her fall is feeling lightheaded; the next thing she knew she was on the bathroom floor, in terrible pain with three broken ribs. She was taking six drugs, including three that were clearly inappropriate for people her age.

The most problematic prescriptions are those that affect the central nervous system, such as antidepressants, sedatives, hypnotics (sleeping pills), benzodiazepines, and antipsychotics. Review your medications with your physician and discuss safer alternatives.

3. Strengthen Your Muscles

Walking is great exercise, but to build muscle and prevent bone loss, which also factors in falls, resistance or strength training is imperative. Spanish researchers reported that 80-to-90-year-olds who participated in a three-month program of twice-weekly muscle building had significant improvements in balance and strength and a reduced risk of falls.

One of my patients Toni struggled to get out of a chair and had a not unreasonable fear of falling. Her son started taking her to LA Fitness, where he helped her with leg extensions, knee curls, and other resistance exercises to strengthen her legs. She now reports feeling steadier on her feet and having an easier time sitting and rising from a chair.

Look into strength training programs at a local gym or community center. It can make a tremendous difference.

4. Improve Your Balance

Lou, a self-described “klutz,” had more than her fair share of mishaps, bumps, and bruises—until she took up yoga. “When I first started yoga, I couldn't hold a one-legged posture for more than a few seconds. But I stuck with it and I'm so glad I did. Yoga has dramatically improved my balance, strength, and fitness.” Tai chi, Pilates, ballet, and other similar types of exercises also improve balance, posture, and body awareness and reduce risk of falls.

If you know your balance is poor and you've been recommended to use a cane or walker, use it! In a study published in *The Lancet*, researchers observed round-the-clock videos in a long-term care facility and found that most falls were due to loss of balance

rather than tripping or slipping. One reason was because only one in five of the 75 percent of residents who had walkers or wheelchairs were using them at the time of their falls.

5. Improve Home Safety and Be Careful!

The importance of home safety is obvious but all too often ignored. Hazards such as clutter and furniture in walkways, poor lighting, exposed cords, and loose rugs can be easily fixed. Be particularly careful around slippery stairs, bathtubs, and showers, and wear shoes or non-slip socks around the house.

Dustin Johnson, the 32-year-old ranked as the number-one golfer in the world, had to pull out of the Masters Tournament in April after injuring his lower back and left elbow in a fall. He slipped and fell while running downstairs in his socks. And this should go without saying: Put away your mobile phone and pay attention when you're walking.

6. Get a Handle on Chronic Diseases

Age isn't the only risk factor for falls. Neuropathy, arthritis, obesity, anemia, Parkinson's, dementia, vision loss, alcoholism, diabetes, some

cardiovascular diseases, and other chronic conditions also increase risk.

Most of these disorders can be ameliorated with safe, natural therapies. William's diabetic neuropathy improved so much with infrared light therapy that he was able to give up his cane and resume playing golf. Hugh, who suffered with Parkinson's disease, had significant improvements in his gait and balance with hyperbaric oxygen and IV glutathione.

To learn about Whitaker Wellness's drug-free approach to treating these and other chronic conditions, call the clinic at 800-488-1500.

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Whitaker Wellness Success Story

Better Health: "A Gift to Ourselves for Our 40th Anniversary"

"We first subscribed to your *Health & Healing* newsletter because it was filled with alternative treatments for a variety of conditions. Over the years we have learned so much and continue to learn something from each issue.

"Our first experience with Whitaker Wellness involved treatment for my husband's Bell's palsy in 2005. He took three hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) treatments, which were very helpful in restoring his facial muscle tone.

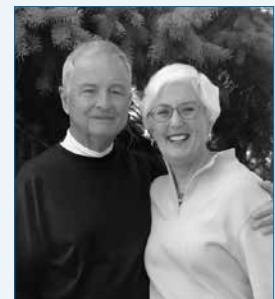
"In 2016, we decided to enroll in the Back to Health Program as a gift to ourselves for our 40th anniversary. What a great way to celebrate a milestone event by spending two weeks at the clinic.

"For Phil it was important to get HBOT and EECF treatments for his polyneuropathy, which he has had for many years. He also received alpha lipoic acid, glutathione, EDTA, and infrared light therapy along with reflexology, which we continue to do at home. This combination of treatments helped him to feel better, and we are still in the process of working on building more muscle strength in his legs. As an extra bonus we both received massage therapy.

"As for me, the problem was a very sore lower back. When we arrived at the clinic, our doctor suggested therapies that may be beneficial. After having the infrared light treatments with good success, we decided to purchase a unit to use when we returned home. It has been a very helpful addition to the treatments we received at the clinic.

"The entire clinic staff was so very kind and helpful making sure that we had every opportunity to learn about making good life changes for our own health, and the morning lectures were most informative. Our special thanks to everyone for making our Back to Health two-week visit a good start to improvements in our health."

— Chris and Phil Rundus, Colorado



Chris and Phil Rundus

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

Innovations in Wellness Medicine

B Vitamins Protect Against Effects of Air Pollution

Air pollution can have serious adverse health effects, and the most dangerous particles are so small (less than 2.5 micrometers) that they can only be seen through an electron microscope. In addition to obvious respiratory problems, these tiny particles can get into the bloodstream and are associated with increased risk of irregular heartbeat, heart attacks, immune dysfunction, and premature death. Protective measures include using air filters, rolling up your windows and using only recirculated air in heavy traffic, and staying indoors when air quality is poor. (Visit airnow.gov for current conditions.)

A new study suggests that B-complex vitamins may also blunt the impact of air pollution. Columbia University researchers gave healthy nonsmokers daily B-vitamin supplements for four weeks prior to exposure to fine particulates. Adverse effects on inflammation, white blood cells, and other markers of heart and immune health were 106–150 percent lower than when study volunteers were taking a placebo. The researchers concluded that B-vitamins could significantly improve public health, especially in areas with high levels of air pollution. Take note: The supplements in the study contained 2,500 mcg of folic acid, 50 mg of vitamin B6, and 1,000 mcg of vitamin B12—considerably higher levels than the current RDAs.

Whole Body Vibration for Bone Health

“Good, good, good, good vibrations...” The Beach Boys may have been on to something with their 1966 chart-topping hit. Proponents claim that whole-body vibration, which involves sitting or standing on a rapidly vibrating platform, has a variety of benefits for athletic performance, weight loss, Parkinson’s, stroke recovery, and more. But where this therapy really shines is in the arena of bone health.

In a 2016 review of clinical trials involving 1,486 older female patients, before-and-after DEXA scans revealed that whole-body vibration resulted in significant increases in bone mineral density. Another recent study found that it not only increased lumbar spine density, but decreased risk of falls as well. You can purchase whole-body vibration devices online, but they can be expensive. Many gyms and physical therapy/rehab centers offer this therapy, so that might be your best place to start.

Did You Know?

- Camping helps reset circadian rhythms, boosts melatonin, and improves sleep.
- Obese young men have double the risk of severe liver disease later in life.
- Vitamin E protects against acute kidney injury, an adverse effect of angiography and angioplasty.
- People who did Iyengar yoga for 12 weeks had dramatic reductions in major depression.
- Chinese researchers found that regular consumption of tea protects against Alzheimer’s.
- More than half of college football players tested had low vitamin D levels and a higher risk of muscle injuries.
- Proscar, Propecia, and Avodart (drugs for prostate enlargement) are linked with increased risk of depression and self-harm.
- Neurofeedback reduces pain, burning, and other symptoms of chemo-induced nerve damage.
- Strawberries have the most pesticide residue of all produce.
- Acupuncture has been shown to reduce long-term frequency of migraine headaches.

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