

True Natural Health

AUTUMN
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The Magazine of the Natural Health Society of Australia



Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Bell's Palsy Therapy

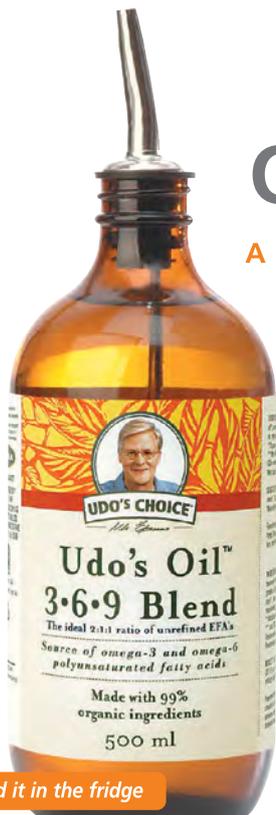
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Recipes – Protein-Rich



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Another Natural Health Society annual seminar is coming up! It will be on Sunday 1st April and at our favourite venue, the North Ryde Golf Club in Sydney, where we look out over lush greens and fairways. [We do apologise to members in other States that we don't present seminars elsewhere, but we just don't have the staff or resources.]

The program, outlined on page 12, is loaded with varied and novel presentations: breathing for life; 'sunbathing' safely to get the critically important vitamin D; the remarkable self-help EFT therapy; and how to slow ageing by a wholistic doctor who is right into super foods. The day will culminate with a stunning video presentation by a former BASE-jumping world record holder whose focus is on achieving goals.

In the editorial articles, a piece of good news is that there has been a win in the GM battle against Monsanto (see page 3).

Somewhat distressing news (as if we need more bad news on top of the torrent of bad news from the media) is that Prof. John Dwyer, formerly head of UNSW Medical School, is pushing for the ending of courses on natural therapies in universities. He wants only 'evidence-based medicine'. Well, we have news for him – evidence-based medicine is not scientific, according to two medical researchers who expose its inadequacies on pages 30 and 31.

It is worth drawing attention to Part 3 in our series, 'Food for Feeling Great'. This issue covers all the everyday protein foods, and it is extraordinary to

see just how nutritious are the plant-based foods. The popular view that vegetarian eating is inadequate compared to a meat-based diet is demonstrated to be plain ridiculous (provided we keep track of our vitamin B₁₂ levels). Fact is – nuts, legumes and seeds are super-nutritious foods, as are the veggies and fruits covered in the two preceding issues.

Enjoy the reading!

Roger French,
Editor and Health Director



About Natural Health Society

The Natural Health Society is Australia's longest established organisation dedicated to informing people about issues that affect their health, happiness and quality of life.

Established in 1960, the Society is not-for-profit with no vested interests. Recognising that prevention is far better than cure, the Society's objective is to explain how best to achieve genuine long-term health and wellbeing, using drug-free self-help methods as far as practicable. The result can be greater enjoyment of life and enhanced peace of mind.

Natural Health guidelines have been influenced by the experience gained at the Hopewood Health Retreat at Wallacia, NSW, which is owned and operated by the Australian Youth and Health Foundation. The Foundation is a registered charitable organisation and the founder of both the Society and Hopewood.

Subscribers to the Society receive:

- * 4 issues a year of our vital magazine, *True Natural Health*;
- * Discounts on selected books, juicers and other health products;

- * Discounts on environmentally-friendly household cleaning and personal-care products;
- * Discounts at our seminars.

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Subscription form

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Gaussbusting

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM EMR AT HOME AND AT WORK



by Lyn McLean

Do you have a Gauss lurking unseen at your workplace? Are there many milliGauss in your kitchen or your child's bedroom? Can they be found at your computer or hiding behind the bedroom wall?

If you live in a house, townhouse, villa or flat, if you work indoors or if you go to school, the answer is probably 'yes' to at least some of these questions.

What are milliGauss and should they be busted?

WHAT A MILLIGAUSS IS

They are the silent, invisible energies emitted by all things electrical.⁽¹⁾ They are present around all powerlines, the wiring in your home, every electrical appliance and sometimes even your water pipes.

The question is: does this really matter?

MAGNETIC FIELDS HARMFUL?

For over thirty years scientists have been studying the effects of magnetic fields on health. They have established beyond doubt that these fields do affect the body in ways that are suggestive of harm. They've found, for example, that magnetic fields can cause breaks in DNA, change the behaviour of important hormones such as melatonin, reduce immunity, affect sleep and cause skin problems.

They have also been linked with serious diseases. Scientists have found that people exposed to electromagnetic fields have a greater risk of developing Alzheimer's disease,⁽²⁾ brain tumours,⁽³⁾ cancer,⁽⁴⁾ reproductive problems⁽⁵⁾ and depression.⁽⁶⁾ However, the strongest connection is for childhood leukaemia, and a considerable number of studies have found that children exposed to 4 mG or more had double the risk of this disease.⁽⁷⁾ As a result of

this research, the International Agency for Research on Cancer in 2002 classified magnetic fields of more than 4 mG as 'possibly carcinogenic'.

These levels are well below the public exposure levels recommended in Australia in 1989 by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) of 1,000 mG and in 2010 by the International Commission of Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) of 2,000 mG. However, these recommendations only protect against a small number of short-term effects (such as burns, muscle stimulation and flashes of light in the retina). They don't even claim to protect against the long-term effects of exposure, such as the exposure that you and I receive if living or working in high magnetic fields.

IT'S OFFICIAL – TAKE RECAUTIONS

As the evidence connecting electromagnetic fields with health problems has mounted, many international authorities have responded by recommending precautions to reduce people's unnecessary exposure. Australia's Peak Electrical Body (now called the Energy Networks Association) adopted a policy of 'prudent avoidance' as early as 1991. National authorities have also introduced precautions to limit people's exposure in Switzerland, Denmark, Italy, Slovenia, Holland and Sweden.

In the fifteen-plus years that I've been working on this issue, I've been contacted by many people who felt their health was suffering as a result of electromagnetic fields in their homes and workplaces. In many cases, when these fields were reduced, their health improved.

Reducing the magnetic fields in your home or workplace (*gaussbusting*) makes a great deal of sense. Not only is there the likelihood that you will feel better

afterwards, but you will have removed a source of environmental stress which will help your body to cope better with the other stresses it faces.

TIPS FOR GAUSSBUSTING

Here are my top eight gaussbusting tips for the home:

- Identify the magnetic fields in your home.
- Because it's difficult to guess the location and intensity of these fields, I recommend that you take measurements. We have meters at EMRA that you can hire for this purpose (\$65 per week) or we can take measurements for you. We also have meters that measure the high frequency fields from cordless phones.
- Don't locate a bed on the other side of the wall from a meter box, as high magnetic fields at the box can travel through the wall.
- Keep digital alarm clocks away from your bed. I've measured over 1,000 milliGauss from some units – which is 250 times the level considered 'possibly carcinogenic'. A battery-operated alarm clock is a safer option.
- Don't place power cords, plugs or transformers underneath the bed.
- Try to keep electrical appliances out of the bedroom or turn them off at the power point at night. If you have an electric blanket, use it only to warm the bed before you get into it – be sure to turn it off at the power point before getting into bed.
- Keep your mobile phone charger – which also emits an electromagnetic field while it's operating – away from your bed or desk.
- Don't stand next to a microwave oven – whether or not it's cooking food. I've measured fields of around 100 mG from units that were

plugged in but not operating and many hundreds of mG from units that were operating.

- Check to see if your water pipes are conducting current.

Reducing exposure to electromagnetic fields does not have to be either expensive or difficult. Yet the benefits can include improvements to your health and protection for your family. There is nothing to be lost and everything to be gained.

NEXT ISSUE

Watch for our tips on wireless radiation.

THE AUTHOR

Lyn McLean is director of EMR Australia and author of *The Force – living safely in a world of electromagnetic pollution* (Scribe, 2011). You can contact her at www.emraustralia.com.au or 02 9576 1772 to hire a meter for measuring electromagnetic fields.

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THE GM SAGA ADVANCES

Solo Farmer Fights Monsanto and Wins

In the Summer 2011/12 issue of this magazine, page 4, we presented the story of Steve Marsh's impending court battle to obtain justice following the contamination of his farm with genetically modified canola from a neighbouring property. Now from the US, we are seeing successes in the battle against the GM giants. For the following stories, which we have abridged, we thank Dr Joseph Mercola, who published their details in his newsletter, Mercola.com, 25th December 2011.

DAVID vs GOLIATH

In 1998 Canadian canola farmer, Percy Schmeiser, was sued by Monsanto for patent infringement after his fields were found to contain Monsanto's patented GM canola. But rather than accepting Monsanto's bullying, Schmeiser decided to fight back – and in March 2008 he won.

Monsanto has long been trying to establish control over the seeds of the plants that produce food for the world. They have already patented a number of genetically altered food crops, the seeds for which must be purchased anew from Monsanto each year.

But genetically engineered crops cannot be contained, and many farmers' non-GM crops have been contaminated. Monsanto, instead of being found guilty, has successfully sued hundreds of farmers for patent infringement. Many have subsequently lost their farms.

Percy Schmeiser of Saskatchewan, Canada, had farmed and developed his own seeds for 50 years, and when his fields were contaminated with Roundup Ready canola (genetically modified to tolerate otherwise lethal doses of glyphosate), Monsanto threatened him and tried to take his land away.

The case eventually went before the Federal Court of Canada, and Schmeiser won. In March 2008, Monsanto settled out of court, agreeing to pay for all cleanup costs. The agreement specified that Schmeiser would not be under gag-order, and that Monsanto can be sued for recontamination.

This landmark case is now featured in the documentary film *David versus Monsanto*.

RICELAND FOODS vs GOLIATH

More recently, Riceland Foods, the largest rice cooperative in the US, won a lawsuit against the Bayer Corporation after its natural long-grain rice was contaminated with Bayer's unapproved genetically modified rice. The genetically modified rice was an experimental crop, meant for research purposes only. However, it is a perfect example of how impossible it is to contain genetically modified crops.

This case was just one of about 3,000 similar lawsuits filed against Bayer in recent years. In April 2010, Bayer CropScience was ordered to pay a dozen Arkansas farmers nearly \$50 million for allowing a GM strain of rice to escape into the commercial market.

Because of the contamination, countries within the European Union refused to purchase US long-grain rice, and American rice farmers and cooperatives lost \$389 million in projected sales, not to mention the clean-up costs.

In the Riceland case, the jury determined that Bayer had caused "tremendous harm to Riceland and the entire industry," and awarded Riceland \$11.8 million in compensatory damages and \$125 million in punitive damages.

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Seven tips to achieve happiness in any workplace culture

By Dr Mary Casey, psychologist

Have you ever started a new job only to discover it's a minefield of gossip and negativity? Is your workload causing your social life to shrivel up? Or is management leaving you feeling micromanaged or, worse, neglected?

It is a rare number of Australians that really focus on achieving contentment at work, most of us putting up with negative cultures and long hours as part and parcel of working life.

Even though many of us think we could never be content at work, we aren't powerless and can achieve satisfaction. We spend more time at our jobs than we do with family and friends, so having a good frame of mind at the workplace is essential to our health and wellbeing. A large part of what we can control is how we respond to the culture, colleagues and the work.

I always recommend that early on in a new role, you spot where the negativity is coming from – a particular person, team or project. Once you've identified it, set strong boundaries so it's easier to deal with. In my businesses, I manage 200 employees, so I have had plenty of experience in this area.

My strategies to deal with difficult people at work and difficult workplaces are a result of my research at the Casey Centre over five years. A lot of the following strategies are about creating a positive frame of mind, maintaining it by distancing yourself from negative influences, and nurturing a positive work environment.

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING HAPPINESS AT WORK

Choose your job carefully. Establishing a 'feel' for a work environment early on can save you later. It is difficult to know beforehand the office culture, but it is essential to not focus solely on salary when making a decision. In the interview, ask questions about management style and culture. Asking these questions will help you gauge the environment and whether the salary will be worth a potentially negative climate.

Don't take anything personally. For your sanity, it is worth developing some emotional and mental detachment – especially from any individuals who radiate

negativity. It is a skill that takes time to develop. Being detached in the workplace means you are able to judge and make decisions rationally and impartially.

Don't let negative emotions control you. Positive emotions make up 99 percent of our happiness quota. But negative feelings, however small, have such an impact on us that they can overwhelm anything positive. When you feel you are losing control to anger, stress or fear, take a short walk around the block. Never become emotional in front of managers or colleagues. In a negative work culture, it may be used against you in the future.

Disengage from manipulators. Manipulation can be so subtle that most victims are unaware they are a target. The most obvious sign is the way a victim feels around another person. Because manipulation is about controlling another person's behaviour, you can feel frustrated, guilty, exhausted or anxious when in contact with the manipulator. Set boundaries: make it clear to them what you will and won't accept, both verbally and behaviourally. When confronting a manipulative co-worker, they may play emotional games to make you feel guilty or discredit you. Don't be pulled into their tactics – take the discussion back to the issue you are trying to confront.

Create positive allies. You can create a positive workplace 'sub-culture' by developing friendships with like-minded co-workers. There's nothing like having a laugh in the day with colleagues. Identify positive, supportive colleagues and go to lunch or drinks with them to develop the relationship. However, if there is any gossip, you must disengage with them.

Find fulfilment elsewhere. Sometimes we think that work is the cause of our unhappiness, when it is actually another area in our lives, such as a relationship or our health, that we are unhappy with, and which is spilling into our work. Taking up a sport or hobby or volunteering can also create a sense of fulfilment in our lives. Committing yourself to something you really enjoy will help with your mindset when at work.

Treat yourself. Do good things for yourself throughout the day. If you find your

morning is turning into a disaster, organise dinner with a friend, buy flowers for your desk, do anything that makes you feel good. I always recommend that, when possible, you sit outdoors during lunch. Studies have shown that sunlight boosts moods.

Dr Mary Casey (Doctor of Psychology) is founder and CEO of the Casey Centre, a leading integrated health and educational service. Visit www.caseycentre.com.au. As a workplace relationship expert, Dr Casey is the author of *How to Deal with Master Manipulators* (\$69.95 from Casey Centre), a DVD and workbook with effective strategies to deal with manipulation at home or at work.

Visit dealwithmanipulators.com.

FEELING GENEROUS RE YOUR WILL?

Many subscribers and others who have gained benefit from the Natural Health Society may wish to support our work further.

One way of doing this is by a bequest through your will to the Society. Should you consider doing this, the following wording for your will may be helpful:

"I bequeath to the Natural Health Society of Australia (NSW) Inc. ABN 91 080 087 725 the sum of \$_____ (or part or all of residue of Estate) free of all duties to be applied for the purposes of the Society (or as directed by the donor) and the receipt of the Secretary of the Society shall be sufficient discharge for the same."

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Eye Health For Children

Focussing On Kids' Vision

By Jenny Livanos, holistic optometrist and nutritionist

Sight, more than any other sense, guides and shapes a child's experience of life. Vision is the key to a child's overall development – more than 80% of the information we receive about the world comes through our eyes. However, more than one in four children suffer from inadequate visual skills, and many children with learning and behavioural problems have reduced vision.

BE AN EYE SPY

Problems with seeing clearly are common and fairly obvious, but other issues with binocular vision and visual performance are not so easily recognised.

Look for these signs:

- Complaining of blurry vision for the blackboard (distance) or reading (near);
- Sitting very close for reading and watching TV;
- Squinting, excessive blinking, rubbing eyes, closing one eye, head tilting;
- Poor posture, eye fatigue with reading, regular headaches;
- Short attention span, slow reading, no interest in reading, poor school performance;
- Clumsiness, poor sport skills, messy handwriting.

MYOPIA – AN INTERNATIONAL EPIDEMIC

Now that we have settled into the school year, we need to be vigilant about our children's visual habits and lifestyle. As a holistic optometrist, I always encourage a balance of indoor and outdoor activities. I am now seeing an unprecedented number of children and teenagers with myopia (near-sightedness). Some optometrists believe this rise in distance vision problems to be a direct result of near-point stress: focussing the eyes too close for too long.

Domination of visual tasks by all types of screens, lack of sunlight

exposure and inadequate outdoor activity have negative long-term effects on our general health and wellbeing. We are living in an era where children seek their entertainment up close, on TVs, laptops, Ipods, Ipads and phones, sometime for hours at a time.

Research has found that children who spend more time outdoors have a reduced risk of developing myopia. For each additional hour spent outdoors, the chance of myopia drops by 2%. Increasing outdoor play under the sun (always with hat on) is a simple and cost-effective measure with significant benefits for vision and health.

ACTIVITIES TO OPTIMISE KIDS' VISION

The 'nature versus nurture' debate, which considers the relative importance of genetics and environment, can also be applied to eyesight. In my 20 years of practice, I have often identified certain lifestyle factors contributing to eyesight difficulties. It is important to provide a rich and nurturing environment for children to develop optimal visual skills for life.

From birth, a child is learning to see. There are critical periods early in life for brain, sensory, motor and vision development. Encourage crawling, creeping, rolling, jumping, climbing and kicking. Also, if the birth has been long, complicated or assisted, I suggest a cranial osteopathic assessment.

To stimulate visual development in toddlers, use building toys, finger paints, clay, card games, memory games, matching, colouring-in, cutting, dot-to-dot, mazes, jigsaw puzzles, brain teasers and bedtime stories. When older, try interactive computer games, team sports, riding bicycles, jumping rope, trampolining, rollerblading and ball games.

OPTIMAL NUTRITION FOR THE EYES

The brain and the eyes make up less than 2% of the total body weight, yet they require 25% of the body's nutrition. For better visual and brain development, include these in a child's diet:

- High quality, fresh, unprocessed, colourful fruit and berries plus raw or lightly-steamed vegetables like pumpkin, sweet potato, carrots and green leafy vegetables like spinach, tomatoes;
 - Nuts, seeds, eggs, whole grains, sprouts, olive oil, flaxseed oil;
 - Avoid refined sugar, soft drinks, fried foods, margarine, refined grains like white bread, sweets, chocolate;
 - Avoid artificial colours, flavours and food additives;
 - Drink adequate filtered water.
- For better vision and learning, I often recommend supplementation with a good-quality multi-vitamin and multi-mineral formula and omega-3 capsules, especially for fussy and poor eaters!

TV OR NOT TV

Make sure your child has a chance to use other sources of entertainment and relaxation besides TV. Remember, parents are powerful role models! Some ideas:

- No TV before school;
- One hour maximum viewing per day;
- Sit at least 3 metres away from the screen and look elsewhere during commercials;
- Watch educational shows with few commercials – help your child choose the programs and discuss afterwards.



DEVELOPING GOOD VISUAL HABITS

Adopt positive visual habits with study and close-up activities. Some suggestions for the child:

- Read in a room with natural, bright, even light, including desk lighting at night;
- Don't read in bed unless the back is supported by pillows;
- Look away from reading every few minutes, out the window or around the room, left to right, near to far and back;
- Take a physical break from reading every 15 minutes; stand up and stretch;
- Wear glasses only when and where advised;
- The parent can set up an individual workstation for the child, with appropriately-sized desk and chair;
- Computer screen should be 15 degrees below line of sight and 50 – 70cm away;
- When on the computer, keep head balanced, back straight, arms close to body, hands level with wrists and feet on the floor;
- No night light while sleeping.

Regular check-ups by optometrists can provide early vision therapy and correction where needed. I recommend a comprehensive eye examination at age three before commencing school. Testing should be carried out annually during school years, particularly if there are symptoms, a family history of eye problems or a child is not working to their best capability. Prevention is better than cure!

Jenny Livanos is a holistic optometrist who considers lifestyle, diet and visual habits in her approach to natural eye care. Call 02 8765 9600 for further information or go to www.naturaleyecare.com.au

A Natural Remedy for Head Lice

TEA TREE GEL BACKED BY RESEARCH



Head lice infestation is an important public health problem in Australia, with up to one third of children infested in some primary schools.

In this age of concern over toxic chemicals, parents are increasingly avoiding chemical treatments and turning to natural solutions, such as plant extracts.

In an independent study, Australia's head lice expert, Professor Richard Speare, discovered that natural ingredients are more effective at killing head lice than chemical insecticides.

Professor Speare and his team at the James Cook University in Queensland, evaluated six of the most popular head lice treatments containing natural ingredients and compared them with the chemical permethrin. Of the treatments tested, including 1% permethrin, the most effective was Thursday Plantation's Tea Tree Gel® with a kill rate of 96 per cent.

"Chemical treatments are not as effective because head lice tend to build resistance to the chemicals," said Morgan Bell, Education and Training Manager for Thursday Plantation.

Current topical insecticide treatments include the organochlorines (lindane), organophosphates (malathion), carbamates (carbaryl), pyrethrins and pyrethroids (permethrin, D-phenothrin, bioallethrin). Surprisingly, this arsenal of insecticides has failed to achieve adequate lice control, according to a 2006 study. And some are toxic chemicals that in the long term can have nasty effects.

"Unlike insecticides," commented Morgan Bell, "the tea tree gel doesn't leave a toxic residue on the scalp and the gel won't run into children's eyes. For ongoing hair hygiene and maintenance, we recommend Thursday Plantation's tea tree shampoo and conditioner.

"Demand for Thursday Plantation's Tea Tree Gel has risen

since these results were published in 2008," he noted.

Thursday Plantation's Tea Tree Head Lice Gel retails at 125 ml for \$21.55 and is sold nationally in pharmacies and health food stores. For details go to www.thursdayplantation.com

HOW TO TELL IF YOUR CHILD HAS LICE

- There may be itching, particularly towards the back of the scalp and neck and behind the ears
- Nits are most often recognised as a sign that lice are present. They are silver or white to light brown, oval shaped and are glued to the hair shaft close to the scalp. The nits, which are the eggs laid by the female louse, are most frequently found at the nape of the neck, behind the ears and at the crown of the head. They hatch in six to nine days.

Tips for spotting head lice

1. The area should be well lit – sunlight is best. Lice do not like bright light and will crawl away when hair is parted, so watch for their movement.
2. Wear gloves to ensure lice do not get under your fingernails.
3. Using a fine-toothed comb, work your way over the entire head of hair, parting each section of the hair slowly.
4. A magnifying glass is useful to identify the nits. Unlike dirt and dandruff, nits will not comb away easily, as the glue is quite strong.

HOW OFTEN TO CHECK FOR LICE

- Check periodically throughout the year.
- If head lice are reported in your child's class, check daily for 10 – 14 days to ensure early detection.

- If lice are detected, the whole family should be checked, and measures taken to prevent spreading.

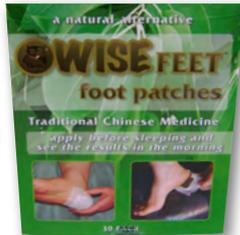
Inform babysitters, parents of friends, school officials and any people who have been in contact with the affected child (or adult).

How are lice spread? Lice can be caught by children playing together or by sharing clothing, towels, hats, combs, hairbrushes, ribbons, pillows, earphones, etc.

HOW TO TREAT HEAD LICE

- Massage the gel (1tablespoon for short hair, 2 – 3 tablespoons for long hair) into dry hair and scalp and leave in for 20 minutes. Do not comb through.

- Rinse the hair thoroughly with warm water.
- Gently massage Thursday Plantation Tea Tree Conditioner through the hair and scalp. Leave in for 1 – 2 minutes.
- Using a fine-tooth nit comb (available from pharmacies), comb the conditioner through the hair, one section at a time, wiping the comb onto a tissue, then rinsing it in warm running water after each section.
- Rinse the hair thoroughly with water.
- Repeat these steps again in 5 days.
- Rinse the hair thoroughly with water.
- Repeat these steps again in 5 days.



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YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERD



By
Roger French

Send your questions to Your Questions Answered, Natural Health Society, 28/541 High St, Penrith NSW 2750 or email rfrench@health.org.au. We regret that it is not possible to answer questions personally, nor can all questions be answered. Some may be answered in later issues.

Q OSTEOPOROSIS – PLANT FOODS VS MEAT:

Meat eating is credited with being a cause of osteoporosis because of high phosphorous levels, yet these levels are even higher in the plant sources of protein – nuts, legumes and seeds. Can you please explain the differences between plant foods and meats in relation to osteoporosis?
– G. E., Palm Beach NSW.

A Three minerals are prominent in the cause or prevention of osteoporosis – calcium, phosphorous and magnesium. Bones are essentially calcium phosphate with magnesium involved somewhere. To prevent bone thinning, we need plenty of calcium, adequate phosphorous but not excess, and plenty of magnesium.

Plant foods, on average, have just these minerals in the right proportions. Flesh foods don't have plenty of all three, nor do they have the right proportions. The table adjacent shows the details.

The ratio between calcium and phosphorous is highly significant. If phosphorous is in surplus, the body eliminates the surplus in the form of calcium phosphate, which leaches calcium out of the body. After many years of this leaching, the body runs out of calcium and has to raid the bones, making them porous – osteoporosis. This is not the only factor in porous bones, but it is a potent one.

Looking at the contents of these three minerals in a range of common foods, we can see why, on average, there is a big difference between plant and animal foods

Four things jump out at us in this chart:

Food	Calcium	Phosphorous	Magnesium	Calcium: Phosphorous Ratio
Plant foods				
Almond	250	473	260	1:2
Brazil	150	693	350	1:5
Hazelnut	86	337	160	1:4
Cashew	34	373	250	1:11
Walnut	84	453	150	1:5
Soya Beans	180	554	230	1:3
Peanuts	54	400	206	1:7
Chick Peas	150	331	80	1:2
Sunflower Seeds	100	837	370	1:8
Sesame, hulled	62	592	340	1:9
Flaxseed	271	462	N/A	1:2
Pepitas	51	1144	N/A	1:22
Wheat	30	383	100	1:12
Oats	45	371	130	1:8
Rice	11	282	120	1:26
Dates	41	63	58	1:2
Animal foods				
Beef	16	209	20	1:13
Veal	15	267	20	1:18
Lamb	10	165	20	1:16
Chicken	14	265	25	1:19
Pork	11	275	25	1:25
Liver	8	336	20	1:42
Cheese, cheddar	775	506	30	1:1
Milk	120	96	11	1:1
Eggs	39	218	10	1:4

- The much promoted calcium is a lot richer in plant foods than in flesh foods. In an animal, most of its calcium is in the bones, which we don't eat.
- Although phosphorous levels in plant foods are considera-

ble higher than in flesh foods, the all-important calcium-to-phosphorous ratios are far superior in plant foods. Between 1:2 and 1:9 is much preferable to 1:13 to 1:25 in meat. There are exceptions, but in a wide variety of foods,

these will average out.

- The 'miracle' mineral, magnesium (Dr Sandra Cabot's description) is many times richer in plant foods than in animal foods.
- Comparing cows' milk to plant foods, the ratio of calcium-to-magnesium is much better in the latter – we want at least 2:1 (magnesium to be at least half as much as calcium). In most plant foods, there is much more magnesium than calcium. Milk has a ratio of approximately 11:1 and cheese 26:1 (11 and 26 times *less* magnesium) which are very adverse ratios.

An additional factor in favour of plant foods is that we normally consume much lower quantities of nuts, seeds and legumes compared to flesh foods, because of the physical nature of these foods. On a plant-based diet we may therefore take in no more phosphorous, but still much more calcium.

On a high-meat diet, a person will take in a lot of phosphorous with little calcium to balance it. Along with excessive phosphorous from other sources, especially soft drinks, there can be too much phosphorous. Add in an acid-forming diet, lack of exercise, hormone imbalances, etc., and this is how osteoporosis develops.

Q CAFFEINE IN COFFEE, TEA AND RED BULL:

Many years ago, we Aussies used to drink mainly tea; now almost everyone is drinking coffee. Caffeine is getting some bad press. How much caffeine is there in coffee and tea, and what about so-called 'energy drinks'?
– A. P., Glenelg Vic

A There is not a fixed amount of caffeine in coffee, tea, iced tea, energy drinks or chocolate. The amount varies depending on many factors including brand, type of coffee or tea, brewing method and brewing time. In fact, various sources give different figures, so the following figures are somewhat 'rubbery'. All that I can give here are typical ranges for each kind of drink or food.

Coffee. The common kinds are Robusta and Arabica. Robusta is often used in cheaper coffees and instant coffees and contains almost twice as much caffeine as the more commonly used Arabica. Caffeine quantities for a 150 ml cup:

Drip-brewed Robusta	120 – 180 mg.
Drip-brewed Arabica	70 – 120 mg.
Instant coffee	20 – 115 mg.
Instant decaf coffee	2 – 10 mg.

Tea. Caffeine quantities are for one tea bag steeped for 3 minutes in a 200 ml cup:

Black tea 60 – 90 mg. For other steeping times 35 – 105 mg.

Green tea 55 – 65 mg. For other steeping times 25 – 75 mg.

White tea 55 – 65 mg. For other steeping times 25 – 75 mg.

Iced tea. Typically 42 mg per bottle.

'Energy drinks'. Red Bull 240 ml can, 80 mg caffeine. Other brands 70 – 100 mg per can.

Cola drinks. In a 375 ml can, 50 – 70 mg.

Chocolate. Per 100 gm: dark 70 mg; milk 20 mg; white 0 mg.

Herbal teas, including dandelion 'coffee' – almost all are caffeine free.

An account of the harmful effects of caffeine is a big subject in itself. In short, it is a nerve 'toxin' that causes the heart rate and circulation to rev up as the body pushes more blood through the liver and kidneys in order to eliminate the caffeine rapidly. This is how caffeine can cause heart palpitations. The increased circulation also goes to the brain and muscles, which makes us more alert, more active and unable to sleep.

But nothing is free in this world, and after half a day or so, the stimulation is over and the body goes into physiological depression as it attempts to recoup the nerve energy that was squandered in the emergency elimination. Then we reach for another cup and the cycle is repeated. Eventually, the depression becomes so acute that we are addicted.

Caffeine is so addictive that a medical doctor once told me that, as an ex-heroin addict, he believed that if caffeine was consumed in the same concentrations as heroin, it would be just as addictive.

Better to develop a taste for herb teas, dandelion 'coffee' or cereal 'coffee'.

Q CFLs OR HALOGEN LAMPS OK?:

Which type of lamp do you recommend – halogen or CFL? I know that both emit some EMR. Are either of these OK if not too close to your head? – J. S., Vermont South Vic.

A These are big questions that many people would like answered.

Halogen lamps. There are now two kinds of halogen lights/lamps – those with and those without a transformer (a transformer converts 240 volt mains power to 12 volts for the appliance).

Recessed ceiling lights are nearly all halogen these days. Our affiliated electrical engineer says there is normally no problem with halogen lights in the ceiling, especially in a single-storey home. The exception could be that in a two-storey home a bank of transformers could be placed together and could adversely affect a person sitting or sleeping immediately above the transformers. Even this may be reasonably safe because the lights are turned off at night when people are sleeping. In addition, the height of the bed or chair places the person further from the transformers.

A halogen desk lamp is a different story, because the transformer is in the base of the lamp and could be quite close to the

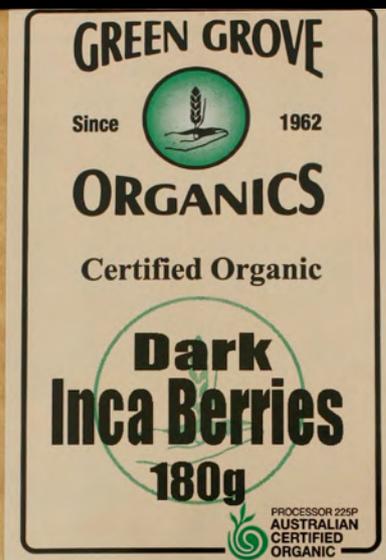
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Range - dark choc coated

Inca berries
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person's head, which could be dangerous in the long term. Ideally the transformer needs to be at least a metre away from the head.

A solution is to have a lamp which stands on the floor with the globe at the top of a long stem. The transformer in the base should then be more than a metre away and there will be no significant problem.

A halogen lamp without a transformer is relatively free of problems. It operates directly on the 240-volt system.

Compact fluorescent lights (or low-energy light globes) should be avoided because they produce higher magnetic fields than the old incandescent globes, and they contain mercury, one of the most toxic substances known. "In my experience," states Lyn McLean, Director of EMR Australia Pty Ltd, "most people are much more sensitive to this form of lighting than to incandescent globes. In fact, some electrically-sensitive people are not able to tolerate this form of lighting in their homes or to be in rooms that contain these lights."

With CFLs, it's not distance that is creating the problems. Just having them in the house may be a problem, irrespective of where the person is located. It is not known for sure why the adverse effects occur, but it is likely to be due to the radio frequency signal, caused by the flicker from the lights, which may run through the household wiring.

Q ANIMAL OR VEGETABLE RENNET IN CHEESE:

I would like to inquire about 'animal rennet' in various products, especially cheese, and whether cheese produced with vegetable rennet is readily available. What other products contain animal rennet?

– K. B., Adelaide SA

A The key ingredient in animal rennet is rennin, an enzyme that is secreted in the fourth stomach of calves, lambs and goats. It is most often derived from the dried and ground stomachs of young unweaned calves.

Rennet causes the milk protein, casein, to curdle and the liquid that is strained off is whey. Hence "Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet eating her curds and whey".

The kind of rennet that is used affects the flavour and texture of the cheese.

There are alternative sources of rennet, so we can relatively easily avoid animal rennet. The necessary enzymes occur in certain plants, fungi and microbes. Examples of vegetable rennet are phytic acid derived from unfermented soybeans and genetically-modified soy rennet.

Vegetable rennet may be used in the production of kosher and halal cheeses, but nearly all kosher cheeses are produced with either microbial rennet or genetically-modified rennet.

Commercial vegetable rennets usually contain rennet from the mould *Mucor miehei*. Another mold source is *Rhizomucor miehei*. Unfortunately, the European Food Safety Authority denies 'Presumption of Safety' status to enzymes produced by these moulds. The most common source of GM rennet today is the fungus *Aspergillus niger*.

GM rennet is sometimes produced from soya beans or phytic acid, so people with allergies to soya products need to watch for this.

Genetically-engineered microbial rennet is now more commonly used in cheese-making than animal rennet because it is less expensive. On the other hand, cheese from Europe is more likely to be made traditionally using animal rennet.

A completely different kind of coagulator for milk is an acid, such as citric acid. Cream cheese, paneer and rubing are traditionally made this way, as are some cheap mozzarellas.

It is easy to make cottage cheese at home by adding lemon juice to milk at room temperature (see under 'Cheese' in 'Food for Feeling Great' in this issue). Coagulation can also be provided by bacterial fermentation, as in cultured milk.

The Vegetarian Network Victoria has done a great job in identifying and listing dairy cheeses made without animal-derived rennet. Details are to be found in their website www.vnv.org.au.

Brands mainly available in health food shops, delicatessens and cheese shops include:

- Alpine (organic)
- Anelon
- Cloverdene (organic)
- Cowra Cheese
- Elgaar Farm (organic)
- Highland Organics
- Mount Emu Creek
- Mungalli Creek (biodynamic)
- Nimbin
- Piano Hills (biodynamic)
- Timboon Farmhouse (organic)
- Udder Delights

Brands mainly available in supermarkets include:

- Ashgrove
- Aussie Gold Fetta Cheese
- Devondale
- Farmland Shredded Light Mozzarella
- Italiano Perfect Light Mozzarella
- Lemnos
- Mainland ("Vegetarian Cheese")
- Nimbin
- Pantalica
- Shape
- South Cape
- True Organic (organic)
- Woolworths Select Light Tasty Slices
- Woolworths brand (Colby, Mild, Tasty, Vintage Cheddar)

Re rennet in foods other than cheeses, in my investigations of rennet, there was no mention of animal rennet being used in other foods. But my search was not exhaustive, so this is possible. As they say, more research might be required.

Q FRUIT FLY CHEMICAL CONTROL IN MANGOES:

A decade ago, mangoes were being dipped in a toxic chemical to prevent attack by Asian fruit fly. Is this still the case, and, if so, should we stay clear of them? – L. S., Henley Beach SA

A I am advised that some post-harvest chemical control is still being carried out for fruit fly. For the fruit fly-free states of Australia – Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania – this is mandatory. In other states, it is up to the individual grower or packing house to decide whether they apply fruit fly control or not.

The control involves dipping or spraying mangoes in one of a range of approved pesticides, all of which are toxic to insects as well as to humans. The important and difficult-to-answer questions are how much chemical is absorbed into the flesh of the mango and how toxic is the chemical. Fruit fly chemicals are systemic, so some at least must be absorbed through the skin of the fruit.

The chemical that has been most commonly employed for many years is *dimethoate*. It was used both as a pre-harvest and post-harvest insecticide to control many common insect pests in a wide range of vegetables and fruit crops. This included fruit fly control in many areas of Australia and the destruction of Queensland Fruit Fly before fruit is permitted to be traded interstate. Dipping mangoes in solutions of dimethoate has been found to be highly effective against fruit fly.

But its use was suspended in October 2011 following a review by the Aust. Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) that led to concerns about possible effects on human health and trade. Some of the estimated exposures for consumers were found to reduce, although not breach, the standard margins of safety. These safety margins are designed to ensure that we will not be exposed to high levels of residues in food.

The APVMA has recently issued several permits for alternatives to dimethoate in certain crops. A prominent one for fruit trees is *trichlorfon*, registered for use in all states.

Trichlorfon, an organophosphate insecticide, is a nerve poison and highly toxic. It is selective, meaning that it kills selected insects, but spares most other organisms. A fortunate aspect of trichlorfon is that it is rapidly excreted, about three-quarters being eliminated in the first twelve hours after exposure.

Also registered for fruit fly control is *fenthion* (*Lebaycid*), although growers are advised not to consider it a permanent replacement for dimethoate. Fenthion is also under review because of possible food safety and environmental concerns. It has been in use for a long time and is a very toxic chemical.

I was pleased to hear from a spokesman for the Aust. Mango Industry Association that they are moving towards Integrated Pest Management in which no toxic chemicals are involved.

I have not answered your question fully because it is almost impossible to discover just what chemicals are currently being used. Firstly, individual growers are spread over thousands of kilometres and act individually within overall regulations. Secondly, in the maze of information about pesticides, it is difficult to discover just what is available for mangoes and what is most commonly used.

Like all food crops that are not organically grown, mangoes may contain traces of pesticides. Unfortunately, those pesky, destructive fruit flies are so difficult to control that strong chemicals are needed.

As a mango lover myself, I intend to continue enjoying about five mangoes a week in summer as part of a Natural Health way of eating. In case there are minute traces of nasties, I gain peace of mind from the fact that there are high levels of antioxidants in the abundant veggies and fruits I consume.

Q WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO FAST?:

I understand that fasting has been employed since ancient times for bodily 'purification'. I believe that during fasting, the body begins to consume itself, but with great care. Is this right? I believe that bodily debris is metabolised and eliminated in a way that does not occur when food is consumed abundantly.

Periods of 24 – 36 hours without food have been

recommended on a monthly, fortnightly and even weekly basis. My own experience is that tummy rumblings are not agonising, but interesting. What is agonising is the headaches.

I believe that the phrase 'toxic hunger' might be relevant, but I don't know in what way. Might it relate to the modern diet in an over-stuffed and chronically synthetic culture? – B. McD, Kincumber NSW

A This very large topic has been covered in detail in our literature, namely, the Spring 2008 issue of *Natural Health and Vegetarian Life* and the Natural Health Society's book, *How a Man Lived in Three Centuries*, Chapter 15.

An interesting perspective on detoxing is that in countries where people are starving, they are dying from *deficiencies* of protein, carbohydrate and fat. In Australia, as far as nutrition is concerned, we are dying from *surpluses* of fat, protein and (refined) carbohydrate. The whole aim of detoxification is to enable the body to clear away the toxic acidic wastes (your "bodily debris" or 'toxaemia') from these surpluses as well as toxic man-made chemicals.

Self-healing is the only healing, there is no other form of healing. The process requires a lot of energy, the same energy that would otherwise be consumed in everyday activities, such as walking, working, studying or digesting food. As soon as we cease or greatly reduce our usual activities, and provided the level of vitality is adequate, energy is diverted to self-healing, which commences automatically according to need.

The key to self-healing is energy conservation – both physical and mental – that is, complete rest. Total rest has four components: physiological rest (rest of the digestive organs), physical rest, mental rest and rest of the sense organs (eyes, ears and nose).

During properly managed detox diets, including water fasting, *the body is nourished adequately from its own reserves*. A part of these

reserves is those toxic wastes, which are broken down and eliminated, yielding useful energy. It is an ingenious trick of nature that the body uses as fuel the very substances that were causing its health problems in the first place.

The body frees itself of benign tumours and other non-cancerous growths by dissolving them. Similarly, retained fluid and deposits of various kinds are reabsorbed, the useable portions being utilised for nourishment and the unusable portions eliminated.

Acute disease is a detoxifying and self-healing process. Loss of appetite and/or fever are characteristic features of acute disease. Your body is telling you that it is already in detox mode, so fasting or juices can begin immediately, along with complete rest as described above.

Self-healing for *non-acute conditions* is a little different. In the absence of fever, the body has to be warned of the need to switch over to self-nourishment – we must prepare for it in the correct way.

The 'toxic hunger' and hunger pangs to which you refer are not hunger, but the signs of an overworked stomach screaming for mercy – begging for a rest! It is only when breaking the fast that genuine hunger begins to strike. If there is genuine hunger during a fast, it may mean that the person is not self-nourishing, but starving, and harm may be

done to vital organs. The fast should be broken immediately.

The headache, which affects about one in every two people during detoxing, is mostly either withdrawal from the caffeine in coffee or signs of a congested liver beginning to cleanse itself. More advanced liver cleansing often results in nausea and vomiting.

Finally, we recommend *not* to fast on water as frequently as one day a week, because this tends to drain minerals out of the body. On the other hand, doing one day a week on veggie juices or dilute fruit juices or just whole fruit should be fine.

I consider it essential for readers to study one of the above accounts of detoxing before considering unsupervised fasting or a juice-only diet.

For more advanced detoxing, professional supervision is available at the Hopewood Health Retreat at Wallacia NSW (owned by a registered charitable organisation), which is where I originally commenced my road to good health 44 years ago. It is so much easier and safer to undertake detoxing with experienced guidance and in an environment where other people are doing the same thing. [Hopewood has a write-up on pages 24 and 25.]

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Generous donations from members are greatly helping the Natural Health Society to remain viable. For recent donations, we say a big 'thank you' to: *Angela Milne, Stuart and Heather Carter, Judy Wood, Norma Steele, May Port, Margaret De Stigter, Mark Bowman, Derek Sicklen, Nan Meynink, Valerie Luscombe and John Smith*

If other members would like to add their support – great or small – we would be very grateful. Simply call our office on 02 4721 5068 or send a cheque to the Natural Health Society, 28/541 High Street, Penrith NSW 2750, or go to our website www.health.org.au and click on the 'Donate' link. Donations are not tax deductible.

ILLAWARRA BRANCH, NHS, IS CLOSING

As we announced in the Summer 2011-12 issue of this magazine, our Wollongong Branch is in recess, and to keep it going needs expressions of interest by local members willing to join the Committee.

Inquiries: Shirley phone 4295 4255

or Terry phone 4271 3007 (after hours)

PENRITH DINNERS

Next dinner: Friday 16th March at 7.00pm.

Venue: **CB's Café**, 'At Home' Centre, Jamisontown, ground-floor Domayne building.

Meal: **A multi-course vegetarian buffet dinner**, interspersed with informal discussions and a brief talk.

Cost: \$35 per head

Bookings: NHS head office, phone 4721 5068 or email admin@health.org.au

LEPPINGTON NSW WELLNESS SUPPORT GROUPS

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5.00pm: **FOOD PREPARATION and DEMONSTRATION of VEGAN MEALS**, recipes provided, followed by **buffet meal** of organic natural foods, then talk at 7.00pm.

Sat. 31st March: Screening of outstanding film, *Food Matters* – followed by discussion.

April no meeting

Sat. 26th May: topic to be advised

Ph Marilyn, 9606 2203, 0410 627 556

MACARTHUR AREA NSW

Vegetarian group **meets monthly**, usually Sunday lunchtime, **at each other's homes**. Based in Campbelltown, includes people from the Southern Highlands to Liverpool. Each brings a plate and own crockery. Organiser, Glenys Hierzer, says, "We would love to meet new people whether you follow vegetarian or just enjoy the food." Phone Glenys 4625 8480

'LIVING NO LIMITS – a 'flying' journey into the mind'

Heather Swan, who holds two world records and a number of Australian records in the extreme sports of BASEjumping and wingsuit skydiving.



'REVERSING AGEING AND DISEASE NATURALLY'

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'SAFE SUN EXPOSURE FOR VITAMIN D'

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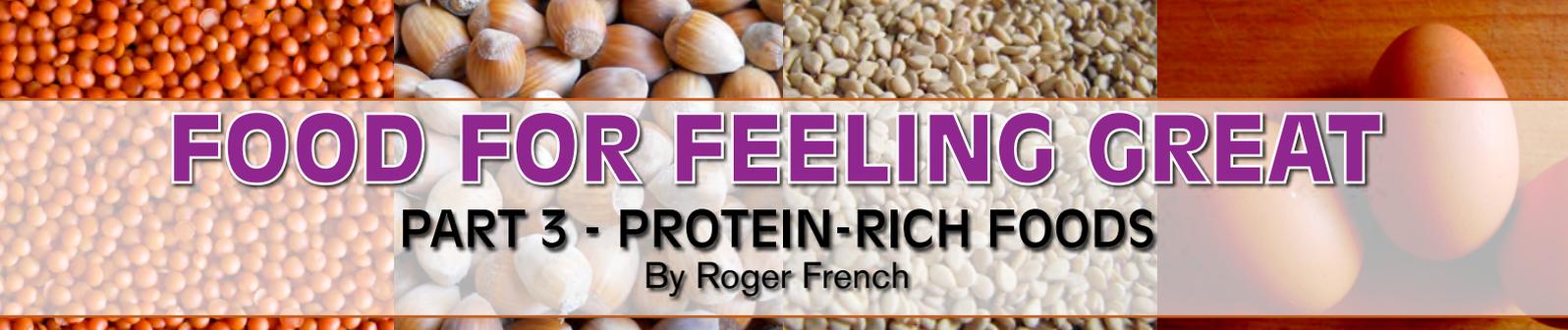
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FOOD FOR FEELING GREAT

PART 3 - PROTEIN-RICH FOODS

By Roger French

Most foods contain most categories of nutrients, but in very different proportions. Because protein is a key nutrient of which we need a certain quantity each day, any food containing a significant content of protein is regarded as a 'protein food'. A 'significant content' means about 10 percent protein or more, although preferably closer to 20 percent.

The range of protein contents is quite wide. For example, pecan nuts contain around 10 percent, while at the other end of the scale, soya beans contain approximately 31 percent.

NOTE that quantities of food constituents vary among individual foods due to differences in climate, soil fertility, the tests used and so on. Throughout this article, it is only possible to give approximate figures. All nutrient quantities are per 100 grams of the food.

Almost all the protein-rich foods contain high levels of fat, making them our main source of this other essential nutrient. In fact, nuts are the richest of all natural foods in fat by a large margin. In contrast, the water content of protein foods is very low, and quite the opposite of that of the fresh fruits and vegetables.

How much *pure* protein do we need each day? Nutritional authorities don't quite know the answer or they wouldn't keep changing their minds. Originally they said 100 gm so as to satisfy the meat industry, then 70 gm, and more recently half a gram per kilogram of body weight. Now they have upped the figure to three-quarters grams of protein per kg body weight, possibly because many people have mucked-up digestive systems.

The Natural Health guideline of around 80 – 150 grams of protein *food* (food as served on the plate) daily, according to the size of the adult, should supply somewhere between these later standards. Remember that many foods besides those that we label 'protein-rich' also supply small amounts of protein.

Because the various protein-rich foods contain widely differing levels of protein, having a large variety of protein foods should cause the amounts to balance out over, say, a week. *Variety is the 'spice' of good nutrition.*

Protein-rich foods are legumes, nuts, seeds, eggs, cheese and flesh foods. In an essentially plant-based way of eating, the sources of protein are legumes, nuts and seeds with perhaps small quantities of

free-range eggs and unprocessed cheese. Flesh foods are excluded.

There is considerable evidence that a plant-based meal pattern is nutritionally superior. However, some people's digestive systems may be unable to adapt to this after a lifetime of meat eating, and will require some protein from animal sources. For those who do eat flesh there are two requirements: (a) be sure not to overeat protein from any source, by keeping within the above quantities of total protein food; and (b) compensate for the lack of fibre in all animal foods by having an abundance of vegetables in the meal, ideally three times the weight of animal foods.

While it is important to have adequate protein each day (or at least 6 days per week), it is also very important to *not overeat* protein because the nitrogenous waste products are toxic and very heavy on the liver and kidneys. It is likely that Australia's 'epidemic' of kidney stones is due at least partly to people commonly eating something like twice as much protein as they need. Excessive protein is with little doubt also contributing substantially to our 'epidemics' of arthritis, heart attacks, strokes and cancer.

Because of the importance of vitamin B₁₂, people on any kind of diet, but especially plant-based where there is no B₁₂, should have levels checked periodically. A simple blood test does the job, and supplements (or injections if necessary) are effective.

LEGUMES

These dried beans and peas are very good sources of protein. They also contain carbohydrate in the form of starch and typically are well laden with minerals and vitamins. Fibre in most legumes is at very high levels. Some contain 'anti-nutrients', but these are greatly reduced by cooking and totally destroyed by sprouting.

Soya beans

The soya bean is the richest of all foods in protein, at 31% (dry weight). It is exceeded only by yeast which is a supplement rather than a food. The fat content is 20%, carbohydrate is 7% and fibre a huge 20%.

These beans are loaded with minerals, vitamins and phytonutrients, which may well explain why Asian peoples consume them widely, although in small quantities. In

every 100 gm of beans, there are potassium 1800 mg, sodium 6 mg, calcium 180 mg, magnesium 230 mg, iron 9 mg, zinc 4 mg, vitamin B₁ 0.76 mg, B₂ 0.16 mg and B₃ 2.7 mg. Soya beans are also very rich in folic acid (vitamin B₉) and vitamin K.

Lecithin – nature's detergent – is very rich in these beans, so much so that many confectionery items contain the emulsifying agent 'lecithin from soya beans'.

Also outstanding are the plant oestrogens, isoflavones, namely, *genistein* and *diazzein*, which tend to inhibit breast cancer and other oestrogen-dependent reproductive cancers.

Slightly offsetting these great benefits are two negative aspects of soya beans – very high levels of enzyme inhibitors, which compromise digestion, and lectins, which inhibit growth. Fortunately, both of these are mostly destroyed by cooking and fermenting and totally destroyed by sprouting. The substantial phytic acid content of soya beans does not significantly inhibit mineral absorption.

Soya beans take a long time to cook. The standard metaphor is to put a stone in with them, and when the stone is cooked the beans will be ready.

Over the millennia, the Chinese have invented numerous soy products. The common ones are:

Tofu. This 'bean curd' is produced by adding powdered gypsum to ground beans and straining off the liquid. It is bland in taste and picks up the flavours of other ingredients in a recipe.

Tempeh. This is fermented soya beans, and one of the best ways to consume them.

Tamari. Cooked beans and sometimes wheat are mixed with sea salt and water, impregnated with a particular fungus, sealed in vats and fermented for at least three years.

Soy sauce is made in the same way as tamari, but may contain caramel and other additives. Fermentation time may be much shorter.

Miso. A mixture of cooked beans, cooked rice and sea salt is fermented in vats with the same fungus as is used for tamari.

Natto miso is the Buddhist monks' version of miso.

Soya milk. Pre-soaked ground beans are mixed with water, boiled and then strained

to yield the 'milk', which is not milk, but soya beans in water. Soya milk can be made from whole beans or 'soy isolate' which is the extracted protein without most of the original minerals and vitamins. There is a good case for always choosing whole-bean milk. In contrast to cows' milk, soya milk is not mucus-forming.

Soya flour. A high-protein flour with a good oil content and no gluten.

Soya grits. Cracked beans that cook more quickly than whole beans.

Peanuts

Also called 'ground nuts' because the seeds grow underground, peanuts are not true nuts, but legumes somewhat similar to soya beans.

Peanuts are notorious for causing allergy, especially in children. They can cause severe reactions that may result in anaphylactic shock and, in extreme cases, death. Why they do this is a mystery.

Not as loaded with nutrients as soya beans, peanuts are still rich. They contain protein at 25%, fat at 47% (mostly monounsaturated) and fibre 8%. As with most legumes, minerals and vitamins are abundant. Richly supplied are potassium at 540 mg, magnesium at 160 mg and vitamins B₁, B₃, B₅ and folic acid. Zinc, iron, copper and manganese are at good levels.

Peanut butter is the most relished use of peanuts, but we need to be choosy. The big brands tend to add a lot of salt and sugar plus artificial antioxidants. Often the oil is hydrogenated resulting in the dreaded trans fats. Some health food shops make peanut butter before your eyes solely from roasted peanuts. Ask to taste the peanuts for rancidity first, and provided they are fresh, this is the best quality.

Roasted, salted peanuts are roasted in oil, which is akin to deep-frying. The safer cooking method is dry roasting. Raw nuts are high in enzyme inhibitors, so it is a bit like the devil or the deep blue sea.

Lentils

This popular legume was one of the first cultivated foods. Lentils are well known for their red and green versions, red having been developed in India and green lentils in China. Both kinds are packed with nutrition.

Protein content is 24% (well above red meat), starch is 34% and fibre a huge 14%. For people with a triglyceride (fat) problem, these are wonder foods, because, while supplying abundant protein, their fat content is only 2%. Of all the protein-rich foods, only a few other legumes can provide this most useful combination, with its particular role in heart disease reversal. However, two essential amino acids are low in lentils, so variety in protein foods is important.

Of the minerals, potassium is high at 840 mg per 100 grams of dry beans, and most other minerals, as well as B-vitamins, are not far below the soya bean levels. There are significant levels of the trace minerals copper, manganese and molybdenum.

Lentils cook much more quickly than soya beans. The classic Indian dish, dahl, is made from red lentils, tomatoes, onions, garlic, curry and a bay leaf. Lentil burgers/patties are commercially available (try Syndian brand) or can be home made. There are many recipes for lentil dishes. Canned lentils can be OK depending on whether additives are used. Lentils are very easy to sprout and super nutritious this way.

Lima beans

Also called 'butter beans', lima beans originated in ancient Peru. The common kind is white, but they can also be red, brown, black or purple.

Nutrient levels are very similar to lentils. Protein is 21%, starch is 34% and fibre is a massive 18%. As with lentils, fat is phenomenally low at 2%.

Lima beans contain more potassium than almost any other food at 1900 mg per 100 gm beans. Magnesium, iron and zinc are at high levels. Again, copper, manganese and molybdenum are at good levels. B-vitamins, including folate, are at high levels.

Like other legumes, lima beans contain purines, (fortunately low levels), which convert in the body to uric acid. Unless a person already has gout, the purines should not be a problem.

Kidney beans

This tasty Mexican food staple originated in Peru. It is closely related to navy beans, pinto beans, cannellini beans and haricot beans.

Its nutrition is similar to lentils and lima beans. Protein is 22%, starch is 32% and fibre is 21%. Once again, fat is phenomenally low at 2%.

These beans are loaded with potassium at 1470 mg, and iron, zinc, magnesium and calcium are at high levels. Copper and molybdenum are at good levels. Folate is extremely rich and other B-vitamins are at high levels.

Soaking kidney beans, the first step in sprouting, greatly shortens cooking time. In fact, sprouting or cooking is essential to reduce the content of toxic *haemagglutinin* which could otherwise lead to gastroenteritis.

Canned beans are fine because the can hermetically seals the beans while they cook and usually the only additive is salt.

Chickpeas

Also known as 'garbanzos', chickpeas are prominent in Middle Eastern dishes, most notably hummus and falafels.

Protein is around 16%, starch 30%, fat a little higher than lentils at 6%, and fibre is 12% or higher.

Minerals are broadly similar to the above legumes. B-vitamins are low, except for folate which is exceptionally rich, with 100 gm of dried beans containing more than a day's requirements.

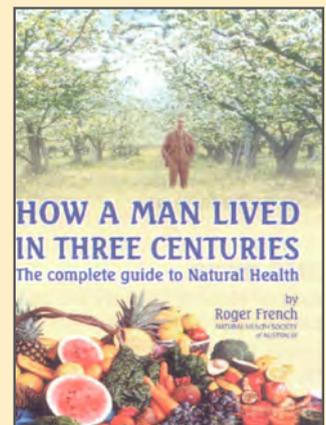
When cooking chickpeas, their nutrient availability is enhanced by soaking for a few days, rinsing a couple of times each day. This also reduces their contribution to flatulence.

Mung beans

These little beans have been in India and China since the 'beginning of recorded time'. In Australia we use them almost entirely for sprouting.

Protein is high at 24%, fat is insignificant, carbohydrate is unusually abundant at 60% and fibre is plentiful. Minerals and vitamins are broadly similar to the other legumes, except that potassium is outstanding at around 1100 mg; calcium and iron are rich at 130 mg and 8 mg respectively.

Folate is exceptionally rich at 625 micrograms per 100 gm, which is way above the recommended daily intake of 400 micrograms. This B-vitamin is exceptionally important for preventing spina bifida, anaemia and heart disease.



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NUTS

Nuts are the seeds of trees, and because they have to begin the life of a whole new tree, they are powerhouses of nutrients, including protein of good quality and fat (oil) at higher levels than in any other foods – but it is the kind of fat we need. In this regard, nuts are in stark contrast to legumes which, as we have seen, with the exception of soya beans, are exceptionally low in fat.

In spite of their high fat content, nuts reduce our risk of heart disease. Five large human studies, including the massive Nurses Health Study, all found that nut consumption reduces the risk. The researchers estimated that substituting nuts for an equivalent amount of carbohydrate resulted in a 30% reduction in heart disease; consuming nuts at least 4 times a week showed a 37% reduced risk; and when fat from nuts was substituted for saturated fats, the reduction was 45% compared to people who never or seldom ate nuts. Each additional serving of nuts per week was associated with an average 8% reduced risk.

Almonds

The almond, a cousin of the peach, cherry and apricot, is one of the most nutritionally dense nuts. The nutrients are well balanced, the fat is resistant to rancidity and almonds are very tasty. The mineral content is so high that almonds are alkali-forming, making them unique among the protein foods, all the others being acid-forming.

The protein content of almonds is 20%, carbohydrate is 5% sugar, fat is a rich 55% and fibre is 9%. Regarding extracted almond oil, as with all oils, the least processed is virgin and cold-pressed.

As well as providing an array of powerful antioxidant flavonoids, almonds are among the richest sources of antioxidant vitamin E and a very good source of potassium (740 mg per 100 gm), calcium (250 mg), magnesium (260 mg) and zinc (3.8 mg). Copper and manganese are at good levels, as are B-vitamins.

This level of calcium is higher than in any other food except cheese and tahini. The accompanying magnesium makes this nut an excellent source of these minerals.

Almonds are as effective as any other nut at preventing coronary heart disease, no doubt due largely to their monounsaturated fat, vitamin E, magnesium and antioxidant flavonoids.

As with the legumes, almonds provide potassium, but only a scrap of sodium, making them especially good in protecting against high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis. A study found that almonds can reduce C-reactive protein, a marker for artery-damaging inflammation, as much as statin drugs.

In spite of their high fat content, almonds

are helpful for losing weight. A diet that included almonds at least twice a week achieved greater weight loss than a low-fat diet. This may be due to not all the oil being released from the cells of the almond.

Consuming whole almonds is the best nutrition provided they are well chewed. Ground into almond butter is almost as good. Mix whole or chopped almonds into a tossed salad and try spreading almond butter down the hollow of a stalk of celery. Roasting causes some loss of nutrients and is not good for the fat.

Almonds with skins intact provide the most benefits. The flavonoids in the skins act synergistically with the vitamin E to more than double the antioxidant power.

Cashews

Some of us would run a kilometre for a feed of these delicious nuts that originated in Brazil; their popularity is inhibited only by their price. As with peanuts, cashews come to us 'raw', dry roasted or roasted salted (akin to deep-fried). 'Raw' cashews are not actually raw because the nuts were lightly cooked to extract them from their shells.

Cashews have good nutrition. Protein is 17%, fat 49%, carbohydrate 17% (starch 11%, sugar 6%) and fibre 6%. The fat is 90% monounsaturated, making it resistant to rancidity.

Of the minerals, potassium is mediocre, calcium is low, but richly supplied are magnesium (250 mg), zinc (5.5 mg), iron (5 mg) and copper (helps protect against oxidation). Vitamins B₁, B₂, B₃ are also at high levels.

As with all nuts, it is a good idea to mix cashews with a variety of other nuts in a meal to improve the balance of essential amino acids.

Brazil nuts

This nut is a must in the diet for one reason – *selenium*. Brazil nuts are by far the richest source, with a couple of nuts a day supplying most or all of our needs. Because Australian soils are deficient in selenium, we need this nut. But don't overdo Brazils because excess selenium is toxic.

Selenium is the key mineral in an enzyme that blocks the chain reaction of free radicals, making it protective against heart disease, cancer, degenerative nerve diseases, arthritis and many other degenerative conditions. In a long-term study, optimum selenium intake halved the number of deaths from cancers of the prostate, lung and colon.

Selenium and vitamin E tend to substitute for each other in antioxidant power.

At 68% fat, Brazils are among the richest of all natural, whole foods in (good) fat, which is mostly monounsaturated, some polyunsaturated and some saturated. Rancidity is a problem, so these nuts particularly need cold, airtight storage.

Protein is only 14%, but it contains more of the essential amino acid, *methionine*, than any other natural food. Most protein foods are limited by low methionine.

Add whole or ground Brazils to your protein meal each day. As one author states, this nut "could be considered a life saver".

Hazelnuts

Vitamin E is the outstanding feature of hazelnuts or 'filberts'. They are the second richest nut after almonds, making them significantly protective against free radicals and oxidation of fat and cholesterol. Hazels are also blood builders due to a good combination of iron (3 mg), manganese and abundant copper.

Other minerals at high levels are potassium (680 mg), calcium (86 mg) and magnesium (160 mg). B-vitamins are at useful levels.

Content of protein is modest at 15%, carbohydrate is only 5% and fibre at 10% is higher than in most other nuts. For a nut that is 'dry' to the palate, fat is a surprisingly high 61%.

Raw is always much preferable over roasted nuts to avoid oxidation of the fat.

Walnuts

These are well balanced in nutrients with an exceptionally high oil content of 69% of which 8% is the precious omega-3, making them unique among the nuts. The omega-3 and high contents of magnesium (150 mg) and phosphorous make walnuts good for the organ they resemble – the brain.

Protein is 14%, carbohydrate is low at 3% and fibre a modest 6%.

Iron, zinc and B-vitamins are average for nuts, except for folate which is richly supplied.

Walnuts have the highest antioxidant content of all the tree nuts, and have been found to be particularly effective at lowering the risk of coronary heart disease.

A great benefit of walnuts is that they are normally eaten raw, except when used in recipes. The heat-sensitive folate and the omega-3 remain intact in the raw nut.

Pecan nuts

Pecans are low in protein at 10%, but very rich in fat at 72%, much of which is high quality polyunsaturated. As part of a low-fat diet, pecans have been found to reduce blood fats (triglycerides).

Like hazelnuts, pecans are rich in copper, with above average zinc and magnesium, so they are also good for the brain. Other minerals and vitamins are average for a nut.

Pecans are close to walnuts in antioxidant content, and are also particularly effective at reducing the risk of coronary heart disease.

Macadamia nuts

'Maccas' or 'Queensland nuts' (native to Queensland) have the lowest protein content of the nuts (8%), except for coconut, and contain very modest levels of fibre, minerals and vitamins.

Their outstanding feature is the highest fat content of any nut at 76%, of which most is mono-unsaturated and quite resistant to turning rancid. Maccas are richer than olive oil in this regard. Their particular fatty acids enable fat to be metabolised with improved efficiency in the body. As with most nuts, the fat is very high quality.

The incredibly hard shell of Macadamia nuts makes them difficult to extract (try using a vyce), but their taste makes it worth the effort. Best eaten raw, they go well added to salads.

Pistachios

At first sight, these are fairly average nuts with protein at 20%, fat at 51% and fibre 9%.

But they are exceptional in two ways. They contain more phyto-sterols than any other nut and more of the invaluable alkaline mineral, potassium (950 mg), than any other nut. Phytosterols carry spent cholesterol out of the body via the bowel, and so help keep cholesterol at proper levels. Potassium, of course, helps counter the acid-forming foods of which almost every Australian consumes too much.

Other minerals and B-vitamins are generally at good levels.

Pine nuts

These nuts are taste par excellence, with a delicate crunch and oil content that make them delicious. Their fat is a very rich 70%, some being

monounsaturated and some polyunsaturated.

Protein is a low 13% and fibre only 5%.

At quite rich levels are the minerals phosphorous, magnesium (230 mg), iron (4.1 mg) and zinc (5.3 mg) and also B-vitamins, making pine nuts good food for the nerves, brain and circulation.

Pine nuts are used in many Italian dishes, such as pesto, and are delicious added to fruit or vegetable salads.

Coconut

Coconut oil is one of the two plant oils that is highly saturated, the other being palm kernel oil. But – as we have discovered in recent years – this fat is different from the saturated fat in animals. The latter has long-chain fatty acids, whereas coconut fat has short- to medium-chain fatty acids, and this makes all the difference. The coconut fatty acids go to the liver where they are immediately available for energy, whereas the animal saturated fats are stored as body fat.

Coconut fat is liquid above 20° to 25°C, hence 'coconut oil'; below these temperatures it is solid and called 'coconut butter'. As with all oils, the least processed is virgin and cold-pressed.

So beneficial is coconut fat that an entire book has been written about its benefits. It is *Coconut Oil – the miracle oil for heart disease, diabetes, cancer, weight loss and more*, written by Siegfried Gurshe, and available in the NHS bookshop.

Because coconut fat is 90% saturated, it is extremely resistant to oxidation and will keep for a long time without turning rancid. If you must fry your food, this is the fat to use.

Dried coconut flesh contains low protein at 6%, fat at 65% and fibre a huge 15%. Minerals are at moderate levels and vitamins are very low. Nevertheless, this largest of all nuts offers a string of benefits:

The fat increases metabolic rate, good for weight loss;

Coconut fat helps diabetes;

Populations consuming coconuts

have low rates of heart disease;

The fat is anti-inflammatory;

It is anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal.

The coconut water in green coconuts is refreshing and nutritious.

SEEDS

All plants produce seeds. What we are referring to in this context are edible protein-rich seeds that are not legumes or nuts – namely, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, pepitas, flax seeds, chia seeds and quinoa seeds. Like the tree nuts, these seeds are protein-rich and high in oil, fibre, minerals and vitamins.

In contrast to animal products, all raw seeds (and also raw nuts) contain life force and are capable of sprouting.

Sunflower seeds

These seeds that come from huge, bright yellow flowers that face the sun are super

nutritious. Those cockatoos that can live for 100 years on them aren't stupid!

The richest level of vitamin E in any natural food is found in sunflower seeds. This powerful antioxidant protects against premature ageing and free radical damage, so it defends against skin damage, artery disease, cancer and other degenerative conditions.

Protein is substantial at 23%, fat is 51% and fibre 11%. The fat is mostly polyunsaturated (hence its use in margarine) and some is monounsaturated. There is only a trace of omega-3.

Sunflower seeds are loaded with minerals, including magnesium (370 mg), iron (4.6 mg), zinc (6.4 mg), copper, manganese, silicon and phosphorous. Potassium and calcium are at average levels. These minerals between them benefit the brain, nerves, bones, cartilage, skin, nails and also immunity and fertility. There is a poor calcium-to-phosphorous ratio, but this should not be a problem as part of a balanced



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These seeds are truly good for us and when sprouted are even better.

Sesame seeds

Used for thousands of years, sesame seeds are widely eaten in China, India and the Middle East, where they are called the 'seed of immortality'. Sesame paste is known as 'tahini'. The seeds are too small for us to feel the need to chew them, so eating tahini enables them to be digested.

Nutritionally, they are very similar to sunflower seeds. Protein content is 22%, fat is 56%, carbohydrate is negligible and fibre is 10%. The protein is excellent with a rich content of methionine. Sesame seeds uniquely contain the antioxidant, *sesamol*, which protects the oil from rancidity and also tends to inhibit blood clotting. Because of sesamol, this oil is tolerably suitable for frying, although not nearly as suitable as coconut oil.

Another big plus is a very rich content of lecithin, nature's 'detergent' which keeps fat and cholesterol dissolved in the bloodstream.

Compared to the nuts, potassium and calcium (62 mg) are low in the hulled seeds (hulls have been removed), but there is an extremely rich supply of magnesium (340 mg), iron (5.2 mg) and zinc (5.5 mg). Copper and manganese are plentiful.

In sesame seeds with the hulls on, calcium is extremely high, but is opposed by a high content of phytates, so using hulled seeds is probably better. Phosphorous is rich, and as with sunflower seeds, there is a poor calcium-to-phosphorous ratio.

There are good levels of B-vitamins, although well below sunflower seeds.

Pepitas

These green kernels of pumpkin seeds have a few remarkable assets. At 11 mg iron per 100 gm, they contain about four times the iron of red meat, making them invaluable for anaemia or excessive blood loss. They are very high in protein at around 27%. Their fat at 47% contains a lot of omega-3. In addition, pepitas are helpful at preventing and relieving prostate enlargement.

The negatives for pepitas – as for sunflower and sesame seeds – are a poor calcium-to-phosphorous ratio, and high-ish phytates. Phosphorous is extremely high at over 1,000 mg.

The important mineral, magnesium, is very rich at over 500 mg and manganese and copper are average.

Anti-inflammatory is another bonus for these seeds.

Flax seeds

These seeds, also known as 'linseed', offer one huge benefit – they are richer in those vital omega-3 fatty acids than fish oil. Flax oil contains twice as much omega-3 as cod liver oil. The particular fatty acid in flax seeds is *alpha-linolenic acid (ALA)* which in our bodies is converted to EPA and DHA. However, some of us make this conversion less efficiently, especially if there is diabetes or a high consumption of saturated fat or alcohol. These people need to consume plenty of flax seeds or oil.

Most Western people are deficient in omega-3s and so have very adverse omega-3 to omega-6 ratios. Flax seeds or oil can effectively correct this imbalance.

ALA is anti-inflammatory, good for bone health, reduces high blood pressure, protects against diabetes, heart disease and cancer, and can increase fertility.

Flax seeds have a mediocre amount of protein (18%), overall fat content (34%) and fibre (9%), but are relatively high in carbohydrate content at 37%, all of which may be why some practitioners consider they are good for thin people trying to put on weight.

Calcium is very abundant at 270 mg, and there is a good calcium-to-phosphorous ratio. Iron is also rich at 4.4 mg.

Chia seeds

Chia is the richest plant-based source of omega-3. Containing 31% fat of which 57% is the omega-3, alpha-linolenic acid (approx. 18 mg ALA per 100 gm seeds), chia even surpasses flaxseed oil for ALA content.

In fact, chia seeds are akin to flax seeds, but have wider uses because of their milder flavour.

Chia was a staple of the Aztec and Mayan peoples. It comes in two varieties – black and white – both now being grown in Australia in the Kimberley region. Imported seed is mainly from Mexico.

Chia is a protein seed, with 16 to 21% protein content, depending on variety and growing conditions. The protein contains all the essential amino acids and is gluten-free.

Starch content is 42%.

Minerals are at super-food levels – potassium averages 580 mg, calcium is over 500 mg, magnesium 300 mg, zinc 44 mg, iron a super 6.4 mg. Copper and manganese are also richly supplied. B-vitamins are at high-ish levels. Chia seed is a great source of vitamin B₁₇, a particularly anti-cancer nutrient.

Chia seeds are richly endowed with antioxidants that protect the vulnerable omega-3 fatty acids from oxidation.

These seeds absorb water readily, up to 10 times their own weight, and this helps prevent dehydration.

Chia seeds can lower blood pressure so effectively that it can be reduced to a dangerously low level, especially if the person is taking blood pressure medication. People suffering heart problems or taking blood thinners like warfarin may be advised to avoid these seeds as they might increase the risk of bleeding.

From a nutritional point of view, chia seeds deserve a large tick of approval.



Quinoa seeds

Unknown in Australia until a few years ago, quinoa is a superstar seed. As a native of the Andes of South America, it was called 'the gold of the Incas'.

Often thought of as a grain, quinoa (pronounced 'keen-wa') is a seed and a relative of leafy green vegetables like spinach. It has the great advantage that it is gluten free and can be used in many of the ways in which wheat is used.

Unlike the grains, quinoa is protein rich. Its most striking quality is that it contains an almost perfect balance of all eight essential amino acids. In particular, it is very high in the amino acids, *lysine*, *cysteine* and *methionine*, which are typically low in grains, so it provides a great alternative. It nicely complements legumes, which are typically low in methionine and cysteine.

Protein content is 14%, fat a mere 6%, starch 52% and fibre 7%.

Quinoa contains excellent levels of minerals, in particular, magnesium (197 mg), zinc (3.1 mg), iron (4.6 mg), manganese and copper. B-vitamins are at very good levels, including folate (184 µg).

Powerful antioxidants in quinoa include *quercetin*, *curcumin*, *ellagic acid* and *catechins*. An abundant group of phytonutrients is lignans, which are protective against breast and colon cancers as well as heart disease.

If there is a bitter taste, it is due to saponins in the outer layer of the seed. These are

usually removed before the seed is put on sale.

Quinoa appears to be nutritionally far superior to wheat, corn and other grains.

CHEESE

Many people love cheese – how very popular are bikkies, cheese and wine, as are numerous other ways to consume cheese. Unfortunately, most cheeses are high in saturated fat, devoid of fibre, observed to be mucus-forming and prone to causing allergy.

Cheese is essentially protein, saturated fat, calcium and a quantity of B-vitamins. As examples of the hundreds of different cheeses, here are some protein contents and fat contents respectively: parmesan 38%, 32% (very low water content); Swiss 28%, 30%; edam 28%, 27%; gouda 26%, 31%; cheddar unprocessed 25%, 34%; cottage 15%, 9%; cottage low-fat 18%, 1%; ricotta 10%, 11%; ricotta reduced fat 10%, 9%.

The soft cheeses – cottage and ricotta – have much lower protein and fat contents simply because they are three-quarters water.

Cheese is a complete protein with a good balance of amino acids. But that contain too much saturated fat, and most cheeses are extremely salty, with sodium contents

ranging from a huge 2,900 mg in haloumi to 650 mg in cheddar to 200 mg in cottage and ricotta.

Dairy products are normally consumed for their abundant calcium, typically around 600 mg to 800 mg per 100 gm of cheese. The reason is to prevent osteoporosis, but this is questionable. It was reported in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 1997 (vol 87) that the 'Nurses Study' of 78,000 women found that higher intakes of milk and other calcium-rich foods (none took calcium supplements) did not reduce the incidence of bone fractures due to osteoporosis. In fact, hip fractures tended to be more common with the higher calcium intakes.

Other minerals are relatively low and there is a poor calcium-to-magnesium ratio.

Another big issue with dairy products is the observation by natural therapists and many parents that dairy products are the most mucus-forming of all foods, that is, the body makes it in response to them. Whether this is allergy or another kind of reaction is a good question.

Cheese is made from liquid milk by adding the enzyme, *rennin*, contained in rennet, which clots the protein, casein. The liquid whey (containing the lactose and most of the minerals) is squeezed away through cheesecloth and the semi-solid remainder is cottage cheese. Beating this with rubber fingers – *cheddaring* – makes it solid

cheddar cheese. Ricotta cheese is made from the whey.

Cottage cheese is remarkably easy to make at home by adding lemon juice (one cup) to milk (two litres) at room temperature. Wait a few hours for it to clabber (clot), then strain off the whey through a clean old tea towel. The cheese is lemony and delicious!

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Processing cheese involves additives and more salt, so unprocessed is much preferred. There is also a preference for the soft cheeses.

There is a cancer warning with large intakes of cheese. A British professor of natural sciences, Jane Plant, in 2001 warned that she had good reason to believe that eating a large amount of cheese (and red meat) every week had caused her breast cancer. When she ceased all intake of dairy and meat, the cancer healed.

We believe that small quantities of cheese (say 100 gm a week) should be fine, provided there is not an allergy problem. If the other sources of protein are plant foods, this pattern is referred to as lacto-vegetarian.

EGGS

Eggs are the other animal food in a lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet. Although egg yolks are very rich in cholesterol, eggs do not raise cholesterol or contribute to heart disease the way some cardiologists still assume. This is partly due to their very high content of lecithin, which is nature's 'detergent' keeping cholesterol and fat dissolved in the bloodstream. In any case, the state-of-the-art view of independent medical researchers is that cholesterol has little or nothing to do with the *initiation* of heart disease. So a moderate number of eggs in a week (say 2 to 4) should not affect the arteries.

The early heart disease researcher, Nathan Pritikin, recommended eating the egg white and throwing the yolk away, but this is ridiculous because the yolk has most of the nutrients, whereas the white is mostly the protein, albumen, which is difficult to digest and can cause allergy. The Natural Health view is to eat the whole egg, but perhaps throw away *some* of the white.

Whole egg statistics are: protein 13%, fat 10%, carbohydrate negligible, fibre zero as in all animal products. The protein is the best balanced for humans of any food.

Minerals and vitamins are surprisingly low, considering the egg can feed an embryo and foetus until it is a full chick. Potassium, calcium, magnesium, iron and zinc are at low-ish levels, whereas sodium is high-ish at 133 mg per 100 gm of egg. B-vitamin levels are mediocre, except for an abundance of choline. The yellow of the yolk is due to a good quantity of vitamin A.

Eggs are useful foods in a vegetarian diet because of their vitamin B₁₂ content, which ranges from about 0.3 micrograms in a small egg to 0.5 microgm in a large one. Our daily need for B₁₂ is 2 to 3 microgm. However, on average, no more than two to four eggs a week are recommended, as they share some of the problems of flesh foods.

Free-range eggs are far superior to battery eggs, not to mention the appalling cruelty of hens imprisoned in tiny cages.

FLESH FOODS

Most flesh foods are essentially protein and saturated fat. They do not contain fibre and may contain hormones, antibiotics, vaccines, fear poisons and sometimes high levels of pesticides. Flesh foods are highly acid-forming and need to be particularly avoided by people with arthritis, rheumatism or gout. The uric acid that causes gout is a big risk with a high meat or seafood intake.

In our intestines, we need extremely high concentrations of the 'friendly' bacteria, such as *acidophilus*, that feed on plant fibre. Flesh foods tend to discourage these and promote harmful putrefactive bacteria (*Escherichia coli*).

From another perspective, the human body has not a single quality in common with a carnivorous animal. In truly natural conditions, can we imagine a human tucking into a raw rabbit dripping with blood and intestines! Revolting! All these facts are why the Natural Health Society has promoted plant-based eating throughout its 51 years. The Vegetarian Societies share similar views, with strong concern for animal cruelty.

If flesh food is to be eaten, it is important to balance it with about three times its weight of fresh vegetables.

Particularly to be avoided are preserved meats cured with carcinogenic *sodium nitrite* – ham, bacon, corned beef, salami, red frankfurter sausages and some smoked fish.

Fish

Fish are not part of a lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet. For those people who do eat flesh foods, the best are deep-sea, cold-water fish because they contain the highly unsaturated omega-3 fatty acids, DHA and EPA. These fish include salmon, sardines, herrings and mackerel – and fresh-water trout. Tuna has a mercury problem and is best avoided.

Farmed salmon have a stack of nutritional problems. Of the *fresh* salmon on the market in Australia, 98% is farmed. The only way to obtain *wild* salmon is in a can in which the words 'Alaska', 'USA' or 'Canada' are pressed into the metal of lid. Everything else is farmed.

Looking at the make-up of salmon canned in brine and drained, well balanced protein is 22%, fat is 10% and water content is 68%. There is a lot of sodium (from added salt) and calcium is very rich (375 mg) due to the bones (softened by cooking alone). Other minerals are average. B-vitamins are at excellent levels.

Poultry

As flesh foods go, *free-range* chicken is next best to cold-water fish. Hens outdoors have sunlight, exercise, green pick and insects – a reasonably well balanced lifestyle – in stark contrast to hens raised in large intensive sheds with an unbalanced and cruel lifestyle. To counter the inevitable diseases in such an intense population, antibiotics are routinely added to the feed. Such carcasses must surely be unhealthy to eat.

Table chicken is around 21% protein and fat ranges from low levels in the breast to around 23% in the leg. About one-third is saturated. Fibre is, of course, zero. Minerals are at low levels, especially calcium because almost all of it is in the bones which humans don't eat.

Red meat

Some people love their steak, while some of us can't see what all the fuss is about. Nutritionally, the protein is well balanced and typically 20% to 23%. Fat content in beef and lamb is often 10% or less, depending on how fatty is the cut, but it is mostly saturated.

Red meat is promoted for its iron content, but at typically between 2 mg and 3 mg for many types, it pales against peppitas at around 11 mg per 100 gm. Further, plants contain mostly *non-haem* iron which the body can absorb selectively – it can reject what it doesn't need. Red meat contains mainly *haem* iron which tends to be absorbed regardless of need. Large amounts of red meat can easily lead to iron excess, which generates free radicals and can be quite dangerous.

As with chicken, calcium is almost negligible because most is in the bones of the steer or lamb. Magnesium is also very low, but zinc is well supplied. B-vitamins are at abundant levels and B₁₂ is substantial.

The worst aspect of red meat is that many people eat so much of it. If red meat is limited to around 120 gm in a day and eaten no more than three days a week and balanced by 350 gm veggies in the meal, this may not be such a problem. Nevertheless, the view of Natural Health, based on many years of study, is that plant-based eating is far superior.

In my case, as the writer of this article, after 44 years on an essentially lacto-ovo-vegetarian way of eating, the cardiologist has informed me that the condition of my arteries is "ridiculously" good for my age. And it so happens that my experience matches that of many earlier populations, such as the Hunzas, that were virtually free of heart disease.



NHS AUTUMN 2012 SEMINAR New South Wales and ACT Readers!

Did you see the announcement for the NHS Autumn 2012 Seminar on page 12 and the details in the leaflet accompanying this issue?

Date is Sunday 1st April, 9.30am to 4.15pm

Venue is North Ryde Golf Club, North Ryde, Sydney

This is an event not to be missed. It is a great opportunity to mix with other members and friends. As with all our annual seminars, the program will be packed with fascinating and useful information on quality of life and a novel session on goal setting.

The program will culminate with a stunning presentation on how to achieve our goals by a remarkable woman, Heather Swan. In 2006 Heather achieved the world BASEjumping record, jumping in a wingsuit from a 6,672 metre high Himalayan mountain. Last December, she and husband, Glenn, made the first wingsuit flight across Sydney Harbour – and it made big news. All achieved as a result of setting goals.

Rates, that include lunch, are: Subscriber discount \$85 ea.; concession \$75. Non-members \$97 ea.; concession \$87.

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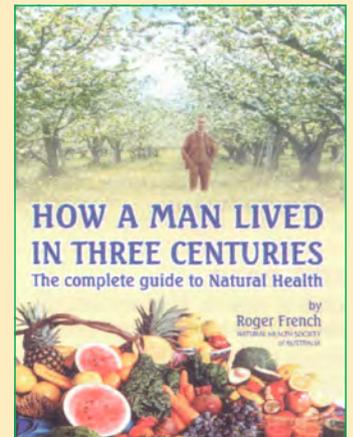
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CASHEW NUT ROAST

INGREDIENTS

- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 small tomatoes, chopped,
- 1 tbs extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- 350 gm cashews or cashew pieces, ground
- 150 gm cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten

METHOD

Sauté the onion in the olive oil over medium heat until transparent, then add tomatoes and cover to simmer a few minutes. Add mixed herbs.

In a medium-sized bowl, combine cheese and cashews. Add onion mixture and mix through. Add eggs and stir until well combined.

Pour into an oven-proof dish and bake at 180°C until golden brown, about 35 – 40 minutes.

Alternatively, Nut Roast can be cooked in a loaf pan – but line with baking paper for ease of removal.

Other nuts can also be used. Varying combinations of cashews, almonds, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, walnuts and pecans will give different flavours.



SPICY CHICKPEA HOTPOT

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 2 tbs extra-virgin olive oil | 1 tsp ground coriander |
| 1 onion, chopped | 800 gm tomatoes, chopped |
| 2 cloves garlic, crushed | 2 – 3 cups cooked and drained chickpeas |
| 1 tsp ground cumin | 2 – 3 zucchini sliced thickly |
| 1 tsp ground cardamom | 1 sweet potato, peeled and chopped |
| 1 tsp ground turmeric | 1 carrot, sliced thickly |
| 1 tsp ground sweet paprika | 1½ cups vegetable stock |
| 1 tsp ground cinnamon | |

METHOD

Heat oil gently in a saucepan. Add onion, garlic and spices, stirring until onion is soft. Add tomatoes, chickpeas, vegetables and stock, and simmer gently until vegetables are tender.

You can vary this recipe by adding different vegetables. You can also use canned chickpeas and/or canned tomatoes for a quicker meal.

BEAN NACHOS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tbs coconut oil (or olive oil)
- 2 tbs Mexican seasoning (see below)
- 400 gm chopped tomatoes
- 2 cups cooked kidney beans
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese (optional)
- Corn chips
- Avocado and sour cream for garnishing (optional)

Mexican seasoning

- 2 heaped tsp cumin
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ - ½ tsp Tabasco sauce or chopped red chilli to taste
- 2 tsp cocoa powder
- Mix all seasoning ingredients together

METHOD

Heat oil gently, add onion and sauté till soft. Add spices and stir. Add tomatoes and cook till soft. Add kidney beans, stir and heat through.

Serve on a plate with layers of corn chips and bean mixture. Top with grated cheese and garnish with avocado and sour cream (optional).



NUT CREAM

INGREDIENTS

75 gm cashews
75 gm Macadamia nuts
1 tsp honey
1 tsp vanilla essence
Water to cover nuts
in processor

METHOD

Place all ingredients in small food processor and whiz until smooth.

This is a delicious combination to be served over fruit salad. The consistency can be varied by adding more water. Different nut combinations can be used equally well.



FRITTATA

INGREDIENTS

1 onion, chopped
300 gm mushrooms, sliced
1 zucchini, sliced finely
1 tbs extra-virgin olive oil
4 eggs, beaten
50 gm cheddar
cheese, grated

METHOD

Heat oil gently in heavy frypan. Sauté onion, mushrooms and zucchini until just cooked. Add beaten eggs. As the eggs cook, gently lift the edges of cooked egg to allow runny egg to run down. When almost set, add cheese and put frypan under grill until golden brown. (Take care not to burn the handle of the frypan).



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Good Healthy Habits Reinforced



As the Summer months fade into Autumn, these lazy days are the perfect time to make small adjustments to your health. After all, it's the little things in life that count, right? Try our tips below to help you feel rejuvenated and ready for the change in seasons.

1 Not everyone has heard this, but breakfast really is the ideal time to get your hands on some delicious fresh fruit – and perhaps vegetables too. Take advantage of the season and try

taken in the form of tea, so start sipping and stop sniffing!

3 In the spring and summer, everyone focuses on fitness, so much so that you might be a bit bored with that gym membership by now. It's fine to give yourself a bit of a break from the usual – try to keep fit in other, possibly less obvious ways. Exercise doesn't have to be difficult. Take the stairs instead of the lift or try getting off the bus one stop early. When

boxes are all you need to get these cleaned up. Sort all the things you don't need into 'trash', 'donate' and 'keep' piles, neatly putting back all the things you do want. Before you know it, you'll be organised. A great tip is to put aside 10 minutes each evening for a '10 minute tidy.' Pick up clothes, books and games, do a quick wipe of the counters. Whatever you can get done it 10 minutes, do it. It is always nicer to wake up to a clean house.



something new. For those people who are used to a cereal breakfast, rather than making stressful sudden changes, try a little fresh fruit first, followed some time later by Bircher muesli, one of our favourites. By adding to this muesli some fresh blueberries, raspberries and strawberries, you'll be waking up with a smile in no time.

2 If you have allergies, this time of year can often require you to be armed with a box of tissues every time you step outdoors – but it really doesn't have to be so difficult! Honey is a great natural remedy, and using it can be as simple as eating some natural raw honey throughout the year to build immunity and prevent your body over-reacting to the pollen released in summer and autumn. Nettle and butterbur are two great plants that help to soothe allergies and boost your immunity. Both are best

arranging dates with friends, ditch the car and organise a sporty outing like a walk or bike ride.

4 We've all heard it all before, but in the warmer months it can't be said enough: drink lots of water. It's such a simple thing to do with so many amazing benefits! The reasons are endless; as well as aiding digestion and nutrient transportation in the body, water can assist with joint pain, weight management and energy levels. So fill up that (recyclable) bottle and get sipping!

5 If spring cleaning isn't your thing, get in early and try a little autumn cleaning to help get your life decluttered. The easiest place to start is always with your cupboards; three

6 Meditation is a great way to help combat stress, foster physical health, help with chronic pain, sleep better and feel happier. Starting with just 15 minutes a day, find a comfortable place and focus on your posture and breathing. It is natural that your mind will wander – when a thought comes, acknowledge the thought, let it pass, and go back to focusing on your breath. In no time at all, you'll begin to notice the effect that meditation has on your day-to-day life – you'll feel relaxed and prepared for the change in pace as we move into the autumn and winter seasons.

Being healthy and looking after yourself doesn't have to be boring. At Hopewood Health Retreat we like to think outside the square, and hope that these tips will help you to do the same!

A HOPEWOOD RECIPE

MIXED LETTUCE SALAD WITH ORANGE, PINEAPPLE, AVOCADO & SESAME SEEDS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cos lettuce or 250 gm mixed lettuce
- 2 avocados
- 2 oranges
- ¼ pineapple
- Fresh dill for garnish
- 1 tbsp roasted sesame seeds

DRESSING

- 1 clove garlic
- Juice from ½ lemon
- Juice from ½ orange
- 1 tbsp seeded mustard
- 2 tbsp fresh coriander
- 2 tbsp apple vinegar

Combine all dressing ingredients

METHOD

Dice avocado, orange and pineapple. Place on top of lettuce and sprinkle with sesame seeds and garnish with sprigs of dill.



OUR NEW CHEF

Doesn't this recipe sound delicious? Stay tuned for more recipes from our new chef, John Estival. John hails from Belgium, where he spent most of his youth tending animals and helping to grow fruit and vegetables on his grandparent's farm.

Before moving to Australia, John travelled all over Europe to discover new foods and cooking styles. His recipes are heavily influenced by his appreciation for how food is grown and processed, and its effect on the human body.

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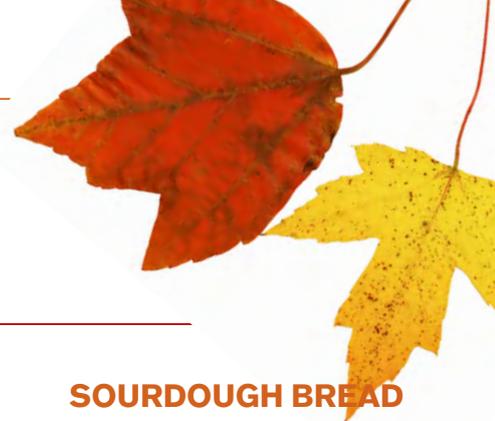
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SLOW FOOD

By Marion Steinmetz



We've all heard of fast food – take-away and packaged food fit neatly into our busy lifestyles of juggling family, work and social life. But while convenience foods are helpful at times, relying on them frequently can disconnect us from what we are eating.

Our meals are often gulped down with little or no knowledge of where the ingredients came from; how they were grown or how the meal was cooked. One of the overlooked side-effects of eating this way can be that farmers are grossly underpaid. The environment may also suffer from the use of pesticides, over-packaging or high carbon emissions from extensive transport. Our own health can suffer due to poor nutrition, toxic residues or simply eating too rapidly and not allowing good digestion.

There is a movement that aims to re-connect us with what we eat – 'Slow Food'. Slowing down, choosing our food conscientiously and enjoying what we eat have far-reaching benefits. There are many ways to approach and practise the Slow Food philosophy, whether by becoming a member of the movement or by adopting a few changes to your lifestyle. It is a challenge to buy all our food (and other products) from ethical sources and take the time to truly appreciate them. However, even small steps can make a difference.

BUY FROM FARMERS MARKETS

By buying locally at farmers markets, you will have the advantage of fresh seasonal food and will often find people who are able to give information as to how the food was grown or produced.

BUY ORGANIC

Studies have shown that organically grown produce contains significantly higher

levels of nutrients, including antioxidants, than commercially grown food. A bonus that comes with high levels of antioxidants is that the food tends to have a better taste, as many antioxidants are volatile compounds and responsible for flavour.

Organic food is free of antibiotics, antimicrobials, hormones and other growth promoters. It is also free of pesticide and other chemical residues.

GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

If you have some land or a spare corner of the garden, try growing your own food. There are seed companies that specialise in heritage varieties of plants that are not genetically modified and are chemical free. The Lost Seed Company (www.thelostseed.com.au) claims that plants such as these are hardy and easy to grow, are more nutrient dense, grow true to type, are more resistant to pests and disease and produce over a longer season.

Growing your own food gives you more control over the quality of your food – and there are many books on organic gardening to get you started. Home-grown food nearly always tastes superior to supermarket food, and children are often more interested in vegetables they have picked fresh from the garden than those that have been bought.

If you have a garden and sometimes find you have a surplus that you don't need, consider joining or starting up a fruit and vegetable exchange in your community.

If you lack garden space, you may be able to join a community garden. To find one near you try: www.communitygarden.org.au.

BUY FAIR TRADE

By buying Fair Trade products you can be assured that farmers are being paid a reasonable wage. Fair Trade began with companies called Alternative Trade Organisations (ATOs), which worked directly with indigenous farmers and producers. By cutting out the middle man, they were able to pay producers much more than they would receive otherwise.

Another benefit with Fair Trade products is that ecologically sustainable farming is encouraged. Small farmers are also given a fair chance and are able to not only survive but improve their standard of living.

JOIN THE SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT

You can join the Slow Food movement by visiting their Australian website: www.slowfoodaustralia.com.au. The organisation began in Italy in 1986 and has over 100,000 members worldwide. Their mission is to encourage people to eat food that is 'good, clean and fair.' There are many workshops and events that take place across the world – check the website for updates.

The Slow Food movement is just one manifestation of a much larger Slow Living philosophy that claims that it is good for us to take time for guilt-free relaxation.

This also relates to how we eat – there may be times when you want to throw together an 'instant' meal, but there will be other times when you can slow down and enjoy the whole process of growing or buying food, cooking and eating.

Even when we are rushed, we can aim to use packaged foods that are organic, Fair Trade and good for us – and it only takes a few moments to stop and give a quiet thank you before you dig into a meal.

SOURDOUGH BREAD

You can't get much slower – or more relaxing – cooking-wise, than making sourdough bread from scratch. The beauty of home-made sourdough is that it will have its own unique taste, based on the wild yeast that grows in your particular locality.

To begin, mix one cup of whole wheat flour with one cup of pure water (filtered water or rainwater, as the chlorine in tap water will prevent the yeasts from growing). Leave this mixture in a bowl, covered with a tea-towel, in a warm corner of your kitchen. After a couple of days it will begin to bubble. Give it a mix if the water and flour start to separate. Throw it out if there's any sign of mould.

After five days, mix in another cup of flour and cup of water. A day or so later, when the mixture has taken on a slightly sour smell and is bubbling nicely – you have your starter dough. Now you can make your bread:

- Two cups sourdough starter
- Four cups whole wheat flour
- One teaspoon sea salt
- One tablespoon oil
- Warm pure water

Mix all the ingredients, except the water, in a large bowl. Then slowly add some warm water until you have soft dough. Knead until it is elastic and let it rise in an oiled bread tin. When the dough has doubled in size, bake it in the oven at 220°C for 25 minutes, then 180°C for another 25 minutes.

REFERENCES:

The Slow food websites: www.slowfood.com and www.slowfoodaustralia.com.au

The Organic Federation of Australia website: www.ofa.org.au



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- March 17th Curry delights Lao style
- April 21st Soup up our life
- May 19th Noodle soup, noodle stir fry, Noodle salad
- June 16th Rice and more rice
- July 21st Celebrating with party food in style
- August 18th Wrap delights
- Sept 15th Healthful spring Lao salads
- Oct 20th Malvern specials
- Nov 17th Totally Asian cookery
- Dec 15th Delightfully RAW

Ling's vegetarian cooking workshops aim to assist people in changing their eating and cooking patterns for the better. Her dishes are very simple, nutritious and yum yum!

Ling emphasises the many benefits that eating vegetarian can bring for health and the environment. All her dishes are prepared with love, laughter and team effort.

Each workshop has its own theme. To encourage the participants to grow their own veggies and fruit, she includes a short tour of a nearby community garden.

"I loved the energy Ling brought to her lessons and how informative she was on a range of cooking issues," reported one student. "She made cooking fun, something I never thought possible. Her recipes are quick and easy – and very very tasty."

Venue for workshops: Earth Care Centre, UWS Hawkesbury Campus, Richmond NSW.

Cooking demos in other parts of australia READERS, if you know of classes demonstrating healthy, plant-based dishes being conducted in other cities and towns in Australia, please advise editor Roger French (phone 02 4721 5014, email rfrench@health.org.au).

OBITUARY CHRIS READING, MD 1938 – 2011



Born in England on 28th June 1938, Dr Chris Reading graduated in medicine from Sydney University in 1968 and qualified in psychiatry in 1973.

He specialized in organic psychiatry, subsequently researching vitamin and mineral deficiencies, metabolic disorders, food allergies and clinical immunology/ecology and genetics as they apply to neuropsychiatric disorders.

Dr Reading practised in Dee Why in Sydney.

He wrote a number of books, including *Trace Your Genes to Health: Use Your Family Tree to Guide Your Diet*, and was author of over 25 articles published in medical journals.

Dr Reading was a Fellow of the Australasian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine and was Patron of the SOMA Health Association of Australia.

Dr Reading passed away on 26th September 2011 in Sydney.



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Forests absorb one third our fossil fuel emissions

From CSIRO Media Centre, 15 July 2011

The world's established forests remove 2.4 billion tonnes of carbon per year from the atmosphere – equivalent to one third of current annual fossil fuel emissions – according to new research published in the *journal Science*, 15th July 2011.

This is the first time that volumes of the greenhouse gas absorbed from the atmosphere by tropical, temperate and boreal forests have been so clearly identified.

"This is a timely breakthrough with which we can now clearly demonstrate how forests and changes in landscape, such as wildfire or forest regrowth, impact the removal or release of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂)," says CSIRO's Dr Pep Canadell, co-author of the paper:

A Large and Persistent Carbon Sink in the World's Forests.

"What this research tells us is that forests play a much larger role as carbon sinks as a result of tree growth and forest expansion," said Dr Canadell, who is also the Executive Director of the Global Carbon Project.

In addition to the large carbon sink, he said, scientists now know that deforestation is responsible for emitting 2.9 billion tonnes of carbon per year – an exchange that had not been known in the past because of a lack of data. For comparison, total emissions from fossil fuels are currently above eight billion tonnes of carbon per year.

Dr Canadell said emissions from deforestation are much larger than previously thought,

suggesting that the potential benefits of avoiding deforestation through the United Nations-backed Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) scheme, are much larger than previously appreciated.

A surprising finding, said Dr Canadell, was the large capacity of tropical forest re-growth to remove atmospheric CO₂. Regrowth takes place following the end of logging and slash-and-burn land clearing projects, and, to a lesser extent forest plantations.

"We estimate that tropical forest regrowth is removing an average of 1.6 billion tonnes of carbon per year. Unfortunately, some countries have not looked on forest regrowth as a component of REDD, and so

are missing a very important opportunity to gain further climate benefits from the conservation of forests.

"Combining the uptake by established forests and forest re-growth plus emissions from deforestation, the world's forests have a net effect on atmospheric CO₂ equivalent to the removal of 1.1 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.

This work has been undertaken as part of the Australian Climate Change Science Program, funded jointly by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO.

Visit the Global Carbon Project's website at: <http://www.globalcarbonproject.org/news/forestsink.html>

Massage Therapy May Help Arthritis

Improving mobility and managing pain

By Anna Anderson

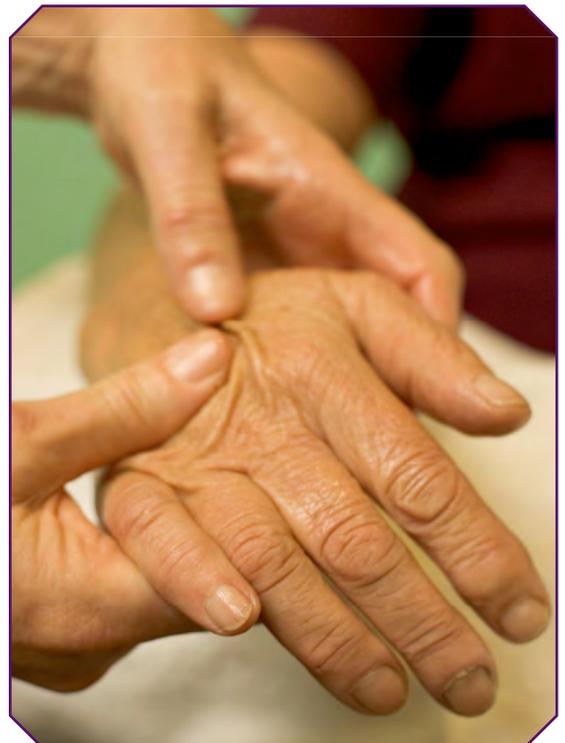
Did you know that massage therapy can help alleviate some of the symptoms and pain of arthritis?

The benefits vary depending on a person's condition, but generally remedial massage can help reduce swelling, improve circulation, reduce muscle tension, alleviate pain, and improve flexibility.

Ensure that remedial massage therapy is an appropriate treatment option by talking to your practitioner.

Five facts about massage therapy for people with arthritis:

- Remedial massage can help alleviate pain, improve flexibility and reduce muscle tension.
- It is common for hand and knee areas to benefit from massage.
- Massage is not appropriate when joints are inflamed.
- Massage therapists can work with your practitioner to complement your treatment plan.
- Massage therapists have different qualifications. Check yours is accredited and a member of AAMT. Visit www.aamt.com.au or call 1300 138 872.





Carbs at night help you lose weight

By Robyn Chuter

For years, I've been hearing from clients that their personal trainer-nutritionist-astrologer (OK, I made up that last one) told them not to eat 'carbs' after 4pm, or 6pm, or whatever particular witching hour their self-appointed weight-loss guru nominates, if they want to lose weight.

The popular theory goes that eating a lot of carbohydrate-rich food stimulates excessive insulin release, and that, since we are less active at night than during the day, all that insulin will cause the glucose we absorb from digested starches to convert to fat. This theory is quoted as gospel truth on gazillions of weight-loss websites – but it turns out that it's completely false.

A recent study⁽¹⁾ compared the outcomes of 78 obese police officers who were put on a low-calorie diet containing 20% protein, 30 – 35% fat and 45 – 50% carbohydrate. The control group were told to distribute their carbohydrate intake throughout the day, while the experimental group were instructed to eat most of their carbohydrates at

night. The researchers found that, after six months following the dietary plan, the carbohydrate-at-night group had lost substantially more weight, abdominal girth and body-fat mass than the control group, despite the two diets containing the same calories and the same proportions of macronutrients.

Furthermore, the carbohydrate-at-night group experienced less hunger and had greater improvements in fasting glucose, average daily insulin concentrations, insulin resistance, cholesterol and the inflammation markers C-reactive protein, tumour necrosis factor- α and interleukin-6, which are elevated in overweight people and linked to increased risk of heart disease, cancer and depression. Although you wouldn't know it from reading popular weight-loss books and websites, the idea that carbohydrate-rich foods cause increased insulin secretion was debunked nearly 15 years ago in a study⁽²⁾ that examined the insulin demand generated by various foods.

Researchers fed 1,000 kJ [238 Kcal] portions of a variety of foods to healthy people, and measured the amounts of insulin their bodies secreted in response. They found that both protein-rich foods and bakery products (which are high in fat as well as carbohydrate) elicit disproportionately high insulin secretion. Beef and cheese, for example, raise insulin levels more than pasta! Even earlier research⁽³⁾ found that glucose raises insulin secretion only slightly more than an equivalent amount of protein.

The bottom line here is that popular theories of weight loss should never be used as the basis of a weight-loss plan. There is no substitute for properly conducted testing of these theories, no matter how 'scientific' their proponents make them out to be.

The scientific literature is, in fact, very clear about what works for sustainable weight loss – namely, a diet based

on unrefined plant foods. For more information and scientific references, see my articles on meat and diabetes (<http://www.empowertotalhealth.com.au/meat-diabetes>) and the big fat-protein swindle (<http://www.empowertotalhealth.com.au/protein-swindle>)

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Evidence-Based Medicine: Neither Good Evidence nor Good Medicine

by Steve Hickey, PhD, and Hilary Roberts, PhD

Evidence-based medicine (EBM) is the practice of treating individual patients based on the outcomes of huge medical trials. It is currently the self-proclaimed gold standard for medical decision-making, and yet it is increasingly unpopular with clinicians.

Their reservations reflect an intuitive understanding that something is wrong with its methodology. They are right to think this, for EBM breaks the laws of so many disciplines that it should not even be considered scientific. Indeed, from the viewpoint of a rational patient, the whole edifice is crumbling.

Evidence-based medicine breaks the laws of so many disciplines that it should not even be considered scientific.

The assumption that EBM is good science is unsound from the start. Decision science and cybernetics (the science of communication and control) highlight the disturbing consequences. *EBM fosters marginally effective treatments, based on population averages rather than individual need.*

Its mega-trials are incapable of finding the causes of disease, even for the most diligent medical researchers, yet they swallow up research funds. Worse, EBM cannot avoid exposing patients to health risks. It is time for medical practitioners to discard EBM's tarnished gold standard, reclaim their clinical autonomy, and provide individualised treatments to patients.

The key element in a truly scientific medicine would be

a rational patient. This means that those who set a course of treatment would base their decision-making on the expected risks and benefits of treatment to the individual concerned. If you are sick, you want a treatment that will work for you, personally. Given the relevant information, a rational patient will choose the treatment that will be most beneficial.

Of course, the patient is not in isolation but works with a competent physician, who is there to help the patient. The rational decision making unit then becomes the doctor-patient collaboration.

The idea of a rational doctor-patient collaboration is powerful. Its main consideration is the benefit of the individual patient. However, EBM statistics are not good at helping individual patients – rather, they relate to groups and populations.

THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE

Nobody likes statistics. OK, that might be putting it a bit strongly, but, with obvious exceptions (statisticians and mathematical types), many people do not feel comfortable with statistical data. So, if you feel inclined to skip this article in favour of something more agreeable, please wait a minute. For although we are going to talk about statistics, our ultimate aim is to make medicine simpler to understand and more helpful to each individual patient.

The current approach to medicine is "evidence-based." This sounds obvious but, in practice, it means *relying on a few large-scale studies and statistical techniques* to choose the treatment for each patient. Practitioners of EBM incorrectly call this process using the "best evidence". In order to restore the authority for decision-making to *individual* doctors and patients, we need to challenge this orthodoxy, which is no easy task. Remember Linus Pauling: despite being a scientific genius, he was condemned just for suggesting that vitamin C could be a valuable therapeutic agent.

Historically, physicians, surgeons and scientists with the courage to go against prevailing ideas have produced medical breakthroughs. Examples include William Harvey's theory of blood circulation (1628), which paved the way for modern techniques such as cardio-pulmonary bypass machines; James Lind's discovery that limes prevent scurvy (1747); John Snow's work on transmission of cholera (1849); and Alexander Fleming's discovery of penicillin (1928). Not one of these innovators used EBM. Rather, they followed the scientific method, using small, repeatable experiments to test their ideas. Sadly, practitioners of modern EBM have abandoned the traditional experimental method, in favour of large group statistics.

WHAT USE ARE POPULATION STATISTICS?

Over the last twenty years, medical researchers have conducted ever larger trials. It is common to find experiments with thousands of subjects, spread over multiple research centres. The investigators presumably believe that their trials are effective in furthering medical research. Unfortunately, despite



the cost and effort that go into them, they do not help patients. According to the fundamental principles from decision science and cybernetics, large-scale clinical trials can hardly fail to be wasteful, to delay medical progress, and to be inapplicable to individual patients.

Much medical research relies on early twentieth century statistical methods, developed before the advent of computers. In such studies, statistics are used to determine the probability that two groups of patients differ from each other. If a treatment group has taken a drug and a control group has not, researchers typically ask whether any benefit was caused by the drug or occurred by chance.

The way they answer this question is to calculate the "statistical significance." This process results in a p-value: the lower the p-value, the less likely the result was due to chance. Thus, a p-value of 0.05 means a chance result might occur about one time in 20. Sometimes a value of less than one-in-one-hundred ($p < 0.01$), or even less than one-in-a-thousand ($p < 0.001$) is reported. These two p-values are referred to as "highly significant" and "very highly significant" respectively.

SIGNIFICANT DOES NOT MEAN IMPORTANT

We need to make something clear: in the context of statistics, the term *significant* does not mean 'important' or 'relevant'. The level of significance reflects only the

degree to which the groups are considered to be separate. Crucially, the significance level depends not only on the difference between the studied groups, but also on their size. So, as we increase the size of the groups, the results become more significant – even though the effect may be tiny and unimportant.

LARGE TRIALS ARE POWERFUL METHODS FOR DETECTING SMALL DIFFERENCES

Furthermore, once researchers have conducted a pilot study, they can perform a power calculation, to make sure they include enough subjects to get a high level of significance. Thus, over the last few decades, researchers have studied ever bigger groups, resulting in studies a hundred times larger than those of only a few decades ago. This implies that the effects they are seeking are minute, as larger effects (capable of offering real benefits to actual patients) could more easily be found with the smaller, old-style studies.

Now, tiny differences – even if they are ‘very highly significant’ – are nothing to boast about, so EBM researchers need to make their findings sound more impressive. They do this by using *relative* rather than *absolute* values. Suppose a drug halves your risk of developing cancer (a relative value). Although this sounds great, the reported 50% reduction may lessen your risk from two in ten thousand (2/10,000) to one in ten thousand (1/10,000). Such a small benefit is typically irrelevant, but when expressed as a relative value, it sounds important. (By analogy, buying two lottery tickets doubles your chance of winning compared to buying one; but either way, your chances are miniscule.)

THE ECOLOGICAL FALLACY

There is a further problem with the dangerous assertion implicit in EBM that large-scale studies are the best evidence for decisions concerning individual patients. This claim is an example of the ecological fallacy, which wrongly uses group statistics to make predictions about individuals. There is no way around this; even in the ideal practice of medicine, EBM should not be applied to individual patients. In other words, EBM is of little direct clinical use. Moreover, as a rule, the larger the group studied, the less useful will be the results.

To explain this, suppose we measured the foot size of every person in New York and calculated the mean value. Using this information, the government proposes to give everyone a pair of average-sized shoes. Clearly, this would be useless, since the shoes would be either too big or too small for most people. Individual responses to medical treatments vary by at least as much as their shoe sizes, yet despite this, EBM relies upon aggregated data. This is technically wrong; *group statistics cannot predict an individual's response to treatment.*

EBM SELECTS EVIDENCE

Another problem with EBM's approach of trying to use only the ‘best evidence’ is that it cuts down the amount of information available to doctors and patients making important treatment decisions.

REAL SCIENCE MEANS VERIFICATION

As we have implied, science is a process of induction and uses experiments to test ideas. From a scientific perspective, therefore, we trust but then verify the findings of other researchers. The gold standard in science is that: *the power of a scientific result is that you can easily repeat the experiment and check it.*

If it can't be repeated, for whatever reason (because it is untestable, too difficult or wrong), a scientific result is weak and unreliable. Unfortunately, EBM's emphasis on large studies makes replication difficult, expensive and time consuming. We should be suspicious of large studies, because they are all but impossible to repeat and are therefore unreliable.

In their models and explanations, scientists aim for simplicity. By contrast, EBM generates large numbers of risk factors and multivariate explanations, which makes choosing treatments difficult. For example, if doctors believe a disease is caused by salt, cholesterol, junk food, lack of exercise, genetic factors and so on, the treatment plan will be complex.



Surprisingly, the more risk factors you use, the less chance you have of getting a solution. Too many risk factors mean that ‘noise’ and error in the model will overwhelm the genuine information, leading to false predictions or diagnoses. Once again, a rational patient would reject EBM, because it is inherently unscientific and impractical.

MEDICINE FOR PEOPLE, NOT STATISTICIANS

Diagnosing medical conditions is challenging, because we are each biochemically different. As explained by an originator of this concept, nutritional pioneer Dr Roger Williams, *"Nutrition is for real people. Statistical humans are of little interest."* Doctors must encompass enough knowledge and therapeutic variety to match

the biological diversity within their population of patients.

The basic approach of medicine must be to treat patients as unique individuals, with distinct problems.

Personalised, ecological and nutritional (*orthomolecular*) medicines are converging on a truly scientific approach. We are entering a new understanding of medical science, according to which the wholistic approach is directly supported by systems science.

Orthomolecular medicine, far from being marginalised as ‘alternative’, may soon become recognised as the ultimate rational medical methodology. That is more than can be said for EBM.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Steve Hickey holds a PhD in Medical Biophysics from the University of Manchester, England. He has published hundreds of scientific articles in a variety of disciplines and co-authored five books on health and disease.

Hilary Roberts has her PhD in the effects of early-life undernutrition from the Department of Child Health at the University of Manchester, England. She also holds degrees in computer science, physiology and psychology.

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What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

BY LYN CRAVEN, NATUROPATH



Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) occurs when the median nerve, which runs from the forearm into the hand, becomes pressed or squeezed at the wrist. The median nerve runs into the hand to supply sensation to the thumb, index finger, long finger and half of the ring finger. The nerve also has a branch to the muscles of the thumb, the *thenar muscles*. The carpal tunnel is a narrow, rigid passageway of ligament and bones at the base of the hand that contains the median nerve and tendons.

Thickening can occur here from irritated tendons or other swelling that narrows the tunnel and causes the median nerve to be compressed. The result may be pain, weakness or numbness in the hand and wrist, radiating all way up the arm.

The carpal tunnel is an opening into the hand that is made up of the bones of the wrist on the bottom and the transverse carpal ligament (TCL) on the top. Through this opening, the median nerve and the flexor tendons run into the hand. The median nerve lies just under the TCL.

The flexor tendons allow us to move the hand, such as when we grasp objects. The tendons are covered by a material called *tenosynovium*. The tenosynovium is very slippery, and allows the tendons to glide against each other as the hand is used to grasp objects. Any condition which causes irritation or inflammation of the tendons can result in swelling and thickening of the tenosynovium. This is called *tenosynovitis*. If all the tendons begin to swell and thicken, the pressure begins to increase in the carpal tunnel because the bones and ligaments that make up the tunnel are not able to stretch in response to the swelling. Increased pressure in the carpal tunnel begins to squeeze the median nerve against the TCL. Eventually, the pressure reaches a point when the nerve can no longer function normally. This is when pain and numbness in the hand will manifest.

Although painful sensations may indicate other conditions, CTS is the most common and widely known of the entrapment nerve diseases in which the body's peripheral nerves are compressed or traumatized.

There are many conditions which can result in irritation and inflammation of the tenosynovium, and eventually cause CTS. Different types of arthritis can cause inflammation of the tenosynovium. A fracture of the wrist bones may later cause CTS if the healed fragments result in abnormal irritation on the flexor tendons.

SYMPTOMS OF CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

Symptoms are often gradual over time with frequent burning, tingling or itching and numbness in the palm of the hand and the fingers, especially the thumb and index and middle fingers. You could experience a sharp, piercing pain that shoots up through your wrist and arm, or a cramping sensation could be present. Some carpal tunnel sufferers say their fingers feel useless and swollen, even though little or no swelling is apparent.

The symptoms often first appear in one or both hands during the night, since many people sleep with flexed wrists (this is where splints are useful at night). A person with CTS may wake up feeling the need to 'shake out' the hand or wrist. As symptoms worsen, people might feel tingling during the day.

Decreased grip strength may make it difficult to form a fist, grasp small objects or perform other manual tasks.

In chronic and/or untreated cases, the muscles at the base of the thumb may waste away. Some people are unable to tell between hot and cold by touch, since the nerves are not registering due to being impeded by compression.

CAUSES OF CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

CTS is often the result of a combination of factors that increase pressure on the median nerve and tendons in the carpal tunnel; it is rarely a problem with the nerve itself.

CTS can be due to a congenital predisposition – the carpal tunnel is simply smaller in some people than in others.

Other possible contributing factors include:

- trauma or injury to the wrist causing swelling, such as a sprain or fracture;
- over-activity of the pituitary gland;
- hypothyroidism;
- rheumatoid arthritis;
- mechanical problems in the wrist joint;
- work stress;
- repeated use of vibrating hand tools (RSI);
- fluid retention during pregnancy/menopause;
- the development of a cyst or tumour in the canal.

In some cases no cause can be identified.

Since there is little clinical data to prove whether repetitive and forceful movements

of the hand and wrist during work or leisure activities can cause CTS, there may be some disbelief in medical circles and work environments as to the validity of the case presented.

Repeated motions performed in the course of normal work or other daily activities can result in repetitive motion disorders such as bursitis and tendonitis. Writer's cramp – a condition in which a lack of fine motor skill coordination and ache and pressure in the fingers, wrist or forearm is brought on by repetitive activity – is not a symptom of CTS. Commonsense and basic logic can be applied with regard to how the person has used their body over time. Have there been repeated, forceful movements? Has the person been carrying/lifting extremely heavy items repeatedly? These actions can create 'wear and tear' in the part of the body being repeatedly over used.

Women are three to four times more likely to contract CTS than men. This could be due to the carpal tunnel being smaller in women than in men, or the fact that men have greater physical strength in their forearms and wrists. There is a higher percentage of women performing keyboard work, in particular as touch typists. This is not a normal task for our hands/arms to perform at speeds of 80/90 words a minute for many years. The dominant hand is often affected first, due to the greater overuse, and pain is generated.

This is also apparent with the use of a computer mouse – the repetitive clicking movement puts more strain on the dominant hand.

Anyone experiencing metabolic disorders, such as diabetes, that can directly affect the body's nerves will be more susceptible to developing CTS.

TREATMENT – MEDICAL APPROACH

In the early stages of CTS, a splint is used to decrease the symptoms, especially the numbness and pain occurring at night. It may also help to control the swelling of the tenosynovium and reduce the symptoms of CTS. If this fails to control symptoms, a cortisone injection into the carpal tunnel may be suggested. This medication will decrease the swelling of the tenosynovium and may give temporary relief of symptoms. However cortisone is a toxic drug. If these treatments fail to control the symptoms of CTS, surgery will be recommended to reduce the pressure on the median nerve.

Avoidance of any heavy use of the hand for four weeks after surgery is essential. Pain

and numbness will be present initially and will improve over time; however tenderness in the area of the incision can be present for several months.

Some people may opt for surgical intervention; they may also have left the problem too long and created further damage and weakness with surgery being their only option. However natural therapies can assist with many cases of CTS.

HOW CAN NATURAL THERAPIES HELP?

Two therapies that can be helpful are acupuncture and Bowen therapy. Both are excellent in easing inflammation and relieving pain and discomfort. Sports massage would be quite painful to receive, since the area is highly inflamed, but it could be used later, once the inflammation and much of the pain have eased, to aid recovery of strength.

Naturopathic support is recommended. Individual cases need to be assessed for any nutritional deficiencies, in particular minerals. Specific mineral supplements are given to increase strength and integrity of the cells, tissues, muscles and ligaments. These minerals include calcium, magnesium, silica, boron and selenium, ideally in an all-round formulation.

It is commonly believed that calcium and magnesium are good to take for bone strength, etc, but recently I have observed from hair analysis tests that the mineral you suspect you need may not be appropriate. On occasions, I may recommend trace minerals rather than higher potency minerals. Further, it is always far better to obtain appropriate tests that indicate ratio's between respective minerals and not just the levels.

Minerals in lesser potencies are often assimilated more efficiently. A good example is calcium which is particularly well absorbed in the form of monobasic calcium phosphate. Some very high potency calcium products can, in fact, either contribute to too much calcium or fail to be absorbed properly.

Dietary changes may be required in addition to supplementation.

Topical liniments that penetrate deeply into the nerves can help to nourish and give supporting strength to the underlying nerves that are often impeded and pinched during CTS or injuries that weaken the nerves.

There needs to be assessment of any medication, in particular thyroid medication, since calcium levels may be affected by it.

Homeopathic and herbal remedies may be helpful depending on the individual situation. This could be hormonal (after pregnancy, menopause); hypo/hyperthyroid; pituitary imbalance; reducing the inflammatory process; malnutrition; nerve and adrenal exhaustion; and any other imbalance of the body. These must be addressed to encourage efficient healing.

Splints or support gloves that extend up the forearm are also recommended at night and when performing any light tasks. However, contrary to some types of treatments, patients are encouraged to move the arms and hands throughout the day to encourage blood flow without the use of splints or support gloves. These are applied only when executing specific tasks. Patients are highly recommended to cease any normal/heavy tasks of the kind that could have instigated the CTS.

Postural assessment is important, and lifestyle habits may need to be addressed and changed.

Excellent results have been achieved with both Bowen therapy and acupuncture – incorporating relevant remedies for underlying weaknesses and deficiencies. Patient compliance [adhering fully to the prescribed program] is important to assist in overhaul recovery.

One lady with CTS that I treated improved by 95% in six weeks with Bowen therapy. She was very compliant and made the necessary changes to her work/home lifestyle activities and taking the relevant remedies. She was on thyroid medication and presented with an imbalance of calcium. Another habitual symptom she had was grinding her teeth, which can in some cases reflect a mineral imbalance. She continued receiving Bowen therapy every

four weeks for maintenance, along with taking relevant remedies I had prescribed.

Another case took a little longer to achieve positive results, since the young lady was not very compliant. In this case a glove support and splint were used at night, and, due to her having young children and a busy home life, I recommended she also wear the supports when doing light household tasks. She could remove them when she was sitting relaxing and also occasionally through the day to allow gentle movement to encourage blood flow to the nerves and tissues.

It is so easy to forget that you have a problem with your hand/arm, since we tend to take for granted how often we use them during the course of the day. By supporting them or even tying a temporary sling around the weak arm, you will remind yourself that you must allow it

time to rest and heal.

People who continue to perform the same tasks at work while strapped are not allowing healing to take place. The support should not be used as a means to continue doing what probably instigated the CTS in the first place. Rest is paramount to healing. Changes to attitude and lifestyle may need to be addressed here. In many cases there is no need for surgery. People do need to be patient, since the body has incredible ability to heal itself with the correct support.

Lyn Craven is a practitioner of naturopathy and Bowen therapy and an Energy/Reiki therapist, meditation teacher, corporate health facilitator and presenter for health expos. She is also a health researcher and writer and has produced a meditation CD. She runs a private practice in Sydney and can be contacted on 0403 231 804 or by email at lynraven@bigpond.com. Website www.lyncravencorporatehealth-naturopath.com



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BELL'S PALSY

– BENIGN, BUT FRUSTRATING

By Roger French

I have been asked by a 40-year-old woman if there is a natural way to treat Bell's palsy other than with the corticosteroids that her doctor would prescribe. "I've had a sudden onset of Bell's palsy," she stated. "I am generally a healthy person and take no medications. This paralysis of my face has come out of the blue as a complete shock."

Bell's palsy is a very frustrating, typically benign medical problem that causes one side of the face to droop. It occurs if the facial nerve is disrupted so that no signals can get through to the muscles supplied by that nerve. Depending on the degree of disruption, the affected half of the face experiences muscle weakness or paralysis, which is normally temporary. Bell's palsy ('palsy' = paralysis) comes on suddenly, and usually peaks within about two days.

The impaired muscle control prevents normal operation of facial actions such as closing the eye, eating and smiling. Other possible symptoms include uncontrolled tears, loss of taste, slurred speech, sensitivity to sound, facial paralysis and drooling.

Most patients with Bell's Palsy are terrified that they have had a stroke. Fortunately, it is much less serious. The symptoms are the consequence of the facial nerve – actually the *seventh cranial nerve* – becoming inflamed or damaged.

Although initially scary, this condition normally does not result in long-term consequences. However, it is possible to not fully recover the function of the muscles of the face, or end up with annoying long-term consequences like facial spasms and crocodile tears. Typical recovery time ranges from two weeks to several months. In order to have the best prognosis, it is important to apply supportive and regenerative measures promptly.

Bell's palsy affects both sexes and all ages; the older the person, the poorer the prognosis.

CAUSES OF BELL'S PALSY

Bell's palsy is the result of inflammation and swelling of the facial nerve. This could be due to:

- Facial nerve damage;

- Traumatic injury to the face or head, such as a skull fracture;
- Acidic toxemia of the system in which bacteria and viruses can thrive;
- Diabetes;
- Viral infections such as herpes simplex, herpes zoster, mumps, influenza, the common cold, infectious mononucleosis or HIV;
- Bacterial infections;
- Lyme disease (acquired via insect bites);
- A tumour causing nerve compression;
- Chemotherapy;
- Multiple sclerosis;
- Guillain-Barre syndrome;
- Myasthenia gravis;
- Exposure to cold;
- Stress;
- Pregnancy.

Stress can easily be a precipitating factor as it also suppresses the immune system.

It is very common for pregnant women to develop Bell's Palsy, especially in the third trimester, which supports the theory that the immune system is suppressed. The body's elevated progesterone levels in pregnancy naturally suppress the immune system so that it does not attack the developing foetus. This is why upper respiratory infections are commonly associated with Bell's palsy.

Bell's palsy can be associated with pre-eclampsia, a form of toxemia which causes high blood pressure and swollen ankles in the advanced stages of pregnancy.

Some women develop Bell's palsy immediately after childbirth as a result of the extreme physical and emotional stress of labour. Fortunately, it usually eases within a couple of weeks.

There is a theory that the chicken pox virus can cause Bell's palsy when the immune system is compromised. A member of the herpes family of viruses, *varicella-zoster*, commonly referred to as 'herpes zoster', can be associated with chicken pox in childhood and/or remain dormant for decades, but eventually flare up and attack nerves. The flare-up is commonly shingles, but if the facial nerve is attacked, it would be Bell's palsy.

FACILITATING RECOVERY

Bell's palsy affects each individual differently. Some cases subside on their own within a couple of weeks, while more serious cases need treatment to bring the paralysis to an end if this is possible. If an obvious cause can be found, this makes the approach more straightforward.

It is important to bring about recovery as promptly as possible so that the nerves and muscles fully recover, and there are no long-term symptoms such as crocodile tears, permanent paralysis or facial tics. Supportive and regenerative measures can be based on nutrition, herbs, supplements and stress management

Orthodox medical treatment relies on powerful steroids, such as *prednisolone* or *methylprednisolone*, to reduce the inflammation and swelling of the facial nerve. Anti-viral drugs, such as *acyclovir*, may be prescribed in case the nerve inflammation is caused by a viral infection. Painkillers may be used to relieve pain. Remember, though, that pain is nature's warning that something is wrong and needs attention, not just suppression of the pain.

There are inadequacies and dangers in the drug therapy. For a start, these drugs are not always effective. A review of Bell's Palsy treatment concluded that steroids do not seem to offer any significant benefits (*Cochrane Database Syst Rev* 2002; (1): CD001942). And as most people are aware, steroids can cause quite nasty side effects, such as stomach upsets, thrush, irregular periods, weight gain and depression. Acyclovir may cause jaundice, skin rashes, dizziness, tiredness and kidney failure.

Natural, wholistic methods, properly applied, don't have any such negative effects.

Nutrients, Herbs

Vitamin B₁₂ cuts recovery time. The single most effective 'remedy' for Bell's palsy is probably vitamin B₁₂. This vitamin is critical for nerve function and reduces nerve inflammation (*Altern Med Rev* 1998,3(6): 461-463). In fact, vitamin B₁₂ has been found to be more effective than steroids in hastening recovery. In one study it brought recovery in two weeks on average, whereas steroids took about 10 weeks.

Many people lack vitamin B₁₂, and large numbers of these need it by injection because they also lack the *intrinsic factor* which enables the vitamin to be absorbed. Consequently, oral B₁₂ often cannot be absorbed. In this case, a doctor's B₁₂ injections are not only beneficial, but also essential. Initially, injections may need to be three or more times a week. As the paralysis of the face eases, they can be tapered off. The form of injectable B₁₂ that is most likely to be helpful is *methycobalamin* because it aids the production of myelin.

Vitamins B₁, B₂ and B₆ are particularly effective at boosting other mechanisms that nourish the nerve. They have been used for any form of nerve damage or brain failure. But rather than supplementing just a few B-vitamins, it would be wise to take the entire B-complex, for the reason that the B-vitamins tend to be found together and are thought to act in harmony like members of an orchestra. However, B₁₂, because of its special requirement in Bell's palsy, would be injected independently in large doses – unless sub-lingual, accompanied by 'methyl factors', is found to be adequate.

In addition to vitamin B₁₂, **acetyl-L-carnitine (ALC)**, has been found to improve the symptoms of Bell's palsy (*Neurol* 1997,12(1): 23-30). ALC is anti-inflammatory, reduces damage due to free radicals and stabilises the membrane of the nerve. It is available in health food stores and some pharmacies.

Taking high-dose vitamin C and chelated magnesium is recommended.

Recovery may be enhanced by natural anti-inflammatories, particularly **ginger** and **turmeric**, along with the B₁₂ injections. The omega-3 fatty acids in **flax oil** will aid the repair of the myelin sheath of the facial nerve.

Another anti-inflammatory nutrient that might offer benefit is the sulphur-containing compound, **methyl-sulphonyl-methane (MSM)**. It is readily available as a supplement.

A food that is anti-inflammatory, immune boosting and antioxidant is **blueberries**, which could be consumed, some say, at up to a cup a day.

Herbs that are good for the nervous system include:

St John's Wort, the main herb for Bell's palsy;

Avena sativa (oats or oatstraw) – soothing and restorative;

Skullcap – especially good for eye tics and muscle spasms;

Astragalus – for chronic immune deficiency and the adrenal glands

Meadowsweet and **Willowbark** – for acute inflammation

Echinacea – strengthens the immune system;

Licorice – provides anti-inflammatory support for a person coming off steroids (but should not be used if the person has high blood pressure or is pregnant).

Homeopathic remedies may also be helpful, the key remedy being *Hypericum*. After acute exposure to cold conditions, a homeopath might recommend *Aconite*, and for more chronic cases *Causticum 200*.

Be sure to seek the guidance of a herbalist or homeopath when using herbal or homeopathic remedies.

If the practitioner suspects an acute viral infection, the immune system could be strengthened by high levels of vitamin C, vitamin A and zinc.

Overall good health is the best defence against viral outbreaks, including outbreaks of *varicella-zoster* virus. **Healthy eating** that incorporates **healing foods**, having plenty of **sleep**, and easing the effects of stress through meditation and other **relaxation techniques**, such as deep breathing, can go a long way towards reducing Bell's palsy symptoms and preventing future attacks.

It has been reported that some people swear by **cayenne pepper** for Bells palsy. Cayenne pepper, which is actually dried chilli, is rich in a hot, pungent compound called *capsaicin*, a potent stimulant that promotes blood flow. Herbalists consider it a powerful healing agent. Cayenne achieves its results with Bell's palsy by improving blood flow to the affected nerves. Pills are readily available in health food stores and some pharmacies. Cayenne can increase blood pressure, so a person with high blood pressure or taking blood pressure drugs should consult a practitioner before taking cayenne.

For bacterial infections, a relatively 'natural' antibiotic is **colloidal silver**, which is effective against many more kinds of bacteria than regular antibiotics. Colloidal silver is non-toxic, non-addictive, free of side effects and considered by some natural therapists

to be probably the most versatile and effective natural agent against bacteria. The same therapists believe that it is safe for adults, children, pregnant and nursing women and also animals. They say it has no reactions with other medications. Colloidal silver could also be tried in a topical poultice.

Massage, Chiropractic, Acupuncture

Regularly **massaging** the paralysed side of the face will increase the likelihood of regaining full control of the face after the Bell's Palsy.

Some sufferers experience great improvement from a **chiropractic adjustment**. Those that it helps may experience a remarkable change and reduction of symptoms within 24 hours.

Acupuncture in some cases can provide wonderful assistance.

Special care for an affected eye

If the eye will not close properly or blink, special care is needed to keep the eye moist and prevent damage by foreign bodies. Under the supervision of an ophthalmologist, the following safety measures may be considered:

- Administer artificial tears every two hours to keep the eye moist;
- Wear sunglasses or an eye-patch to protect the eye and reduce dryness;
- Apply a lubricant and tape the eye shut before you sleep to keep the cornea from drying;
- A weight could be placed in the eyelid to keep it shut.

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This is the fourth and final article in a series on growing your own veges. It is written by Toni Salter of Narellan, NSW, who presents garden workshops, online workshops, seminars and consultations on home veggie growing.

Autumn Harvest

If you live in a temperate area, Autumn in the garden is a time of reaping all the hard work you did in your garden last spring. Beans, tomatoes and corn are prolific at the moment. Remove tomatoes from the plant when they turn yellowy-orange and allow them to ripen inside. In a warm room they will continue to ripen and develop good flavour without the fear of damage from pests.

You should be able to harvest potatoes once their foliage dies down, and store them in a dark, dry place to stop them going green. In contrast, pumpkins need to be 'cured' in the sun before storage. Make sure pumpkins are harvested with the stalk on to avoid rotting and lay them in the sun to dry out so the skins become hard.

For those in tropical areas, it's a busy time preparing your beds for the main vegetable growing season ahead.

Now is the last chance for those in cool regions to transplant many kinds of vegetable seedlings including beetroot, Brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, endive, leek, parsley, parsnip, silverbeet and Swedes. So this makes it a busy month for getting these cool season crops going before the cooler weather hits.



WHAT TO SOW

You can get a great start to your onion crop from now until late winter in cool and temperate zones. Onions are day-length-sensitive plants. This means that green shoot growth continues until the shortest day of the year. Good shoot growth is important for the plant to photosynthesise and store up food supplies. Once the days begin getting longer after the winter solstice, growth of the shoot stops and energy is redirected into bulb formation. Seeds planted too late in the season do not have enough time to get established before bulb set.

Sow pea seeds directly into the garden and use a mixture of varieties, from old fashioned shelling varieties to sugar snap and snow peas for garden salads. Most will need a trellis or climbing support. Peas provide a great source of nitrogen for the soil, so plant them together with lettuce and spinach. Add lime to your soil now if it is slightly acidic. Check the pH with a simple test kit purchased at your local nursery. Peas, spinach and onions like a slightly alkaline soil with pH 7.0 up to 8.0 (note that 7.0 is neutral).

After your corn and cucumbers have been harvested, consider sowing a 'green manure'

crop to add nutrients and bulk to your soil. A green manure crop is a fast growing plant (usually given six to eight weeks) that is grown only to about knee height, then slashed and turned back into the soil. A good combination is oats and pod vetch; lupins or even broad beans can also be used. A legume (or plant producing a bean-like pod) adds atmospheric nitrogen to the soil through the action of nitrogen-fixing bacteria on the roots. The bulky mulching material of the



crop is added to the soil by slashing the leaves before the crop has a chance to flower. This helps feed and prepare the soil ready for the next crop to be grown.

Vegetable seeds to consider sowing in the tropics in Autumn include broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, capsicum, eggplant, celery, beans, peas, okra, potatoes, tomatoes and winter lettuce such as cos and iceberg.

HERBS

This is a good time to plant out a herb garden in all areas. Many herbs are mid-season plants, preferring conditions to be not too cold but not too hot. In a position in the garden that ranges from dappled light to mostly sun all day, work in well rotted manure and compost. Add a bit of wood ash or lime to sweeten the soil and a sprinkle of blood and bone. Remember that soil that is too rich gives the herbs lots of leaf but not so much flavour.

Now is a good opportunity to get quick crops of parsley, coriander, mint, dill, chervil and salad burnet before the winter cold knocks them all back.

PEST ALERT!

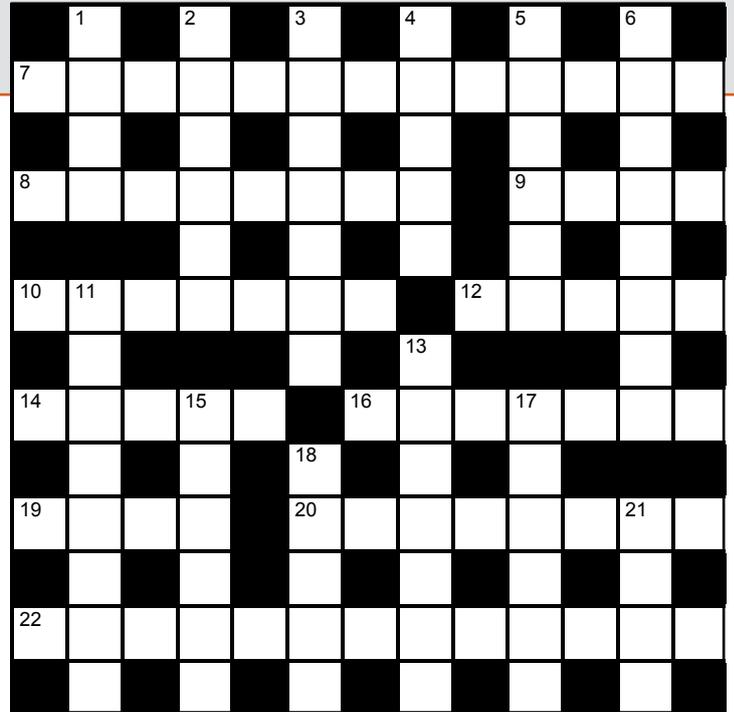
Keep an eye out for caterpillars still, especially on vulnerable young cabbage-family plants. Hand removal is often best. Aphids can be sprayed off with a blast of water from the hose.

Keep the area around plants clear of fallen fruit and vegetables so that fruit fly is not attracted to them. *Cera-trap* is a new trap for both male and female fruit flies, and is a great organic way to help control these persistent pests. Pick them up at your local nursery or produce store.

Crossword

Across

- 7 Another name for okra... (6,7)
 8 Computers that sit on the desk! (8)
 9 Pleasant place in France? (4)
 10 States categorically. (7)
 12 Edible pod and source of chocolate substitute... (5)
 14 Deciduous hardwood tree, famous for syrup... (5)
 16 Large deep-yellow fruit of the Squash family? (7)
 19 Pastry filled with custard? (4)
 20 Leg pain associated with a bad back? (8)
 22 Torn it, I come up (anag) old movie? (6,7)



Down

- 1 Curly leafed cabbage... (4)
 2 Preserve? (6)
 3 Accompanies someone. (7)
 4 Winner... (5)
 5 "To do" list (6)
 6 A super veggie? (8)
 11 Also known as shallot, spring onion, etc... (8)
 13 I sat Uni (anag)... (7)
 15 Pulse... (6)
 17 Tuber... (6)
 18 Employing (5)
 21 Heart of an apple... (4)

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Fruit and vegies cancel out bad heart genes

Abridged from EMPOWERED newsletter, 1st November 2011, produced by Robyn Chuter

A new study further reinforces the crucial point that our genes are not necessarily our destiny. In a nutshell, eating a diet high in fruits and raw or lightly cooked vegetables was found to cancel out the effect of having a gene variant that is well-known to be associated with an increased risk of developing heart disease.

The research centred on a gene variant called 9p21. Carriers of this variant (known as an allele) are well-known to be at much higher risk of heart disease – in fact, the association between being a carrier and developing heart disease, is considered to be one of the most robust by geneticists. In this study, carriers were found to have up to 20% higher chance of having a heart attack.

The researchers analysed variants of 9p21 in over 27,000 individuals who were enrolled in two different studies. The INTERHEART study compared

8,114 men and women of varying ethnic backgrounds who have suffered an acute non-fatal heart attack (the cases) to similar subjects without heart disease (the controls). Case-control studies are retrospective – they involve interviewing people about their health behaviours prior to experiencing a health problem. This makes such studies prone to recall bias – the tendency people have, intentionally or unintentionally, to be somewhat less than accurate in their recollections about past health behaviours.

To make their study more robust, the authors also included 19,129 participants of the FINRISK study, which is a prospective study – participants' diets are assessed at various times before they develop the disease being studied, and the health behaviours of those who do develop the disease are compared to those who don't.

Both arms of the study found the same

outcome. Those who had the dodgy gene variant, but also consumed a diet high in fruits and raw or lightly cooked vegetables, cancelled out their excess risk of heart disease. They had no greater risk than people who had a 'normal' gene. But the combination of the risk allele and a low-fruit-and-veg diet conferred the greatest cardiovascular disease risk of any combination of factors.

When clients tell me they're confused by all the contradictory information out there about healthful eating, I point out to them that this confusion only exists in the popular media. The message coming out of the scientific literature is extremely consistent and crystal-clear – good health is completely dependent on a very high intake of fruits and vegetables. I tell all my clients to centre every meal on fruit and/or vegies. Treat these wholesome, attractive, tasty foods as the main dish – not the garnish!

NEW PRODUCT

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CROSSWORD



SOLUTION

Restaurant Reviews

Eating out in Sydney and Adelaide

SYDNEY

Peasants Feast Organic Cafe

121a King Street, Newtown NSW 2042

Phone 02 9516 5998

www.peasantsfeast.com.au

Open Tuesday to Saturday 6pm to 10pm

Catering available

A Certified Organic Retailer serving wholesome and delicious meals, over 90% vegetarian and vegan, most 100% organic (except duck and seafood), prepared with double-filtered water, low in salt, free from added sugar, artificial additives, pesticides and hydrogenated fats, no deep-frying, cooked at low temperatures, and serving raw vegetables whenever possible to maximise nutrient intake.

Owner Dr Robert Warlow, immunologist, allergist, and pathologist, acquired the eatery which served mostly red meat but he reduced this to 10%, adding vegetarian, vegan, gluten free and raw food dishes. He will phase out red meat, leaving only one dish each of fish and poultry. He uses the cafe to educate people about the value of consuming an organically grown, mostly raw or lightly cooked plant-based diet to achieve good health. He says "I'm simply following the recommendations on the Cancer Council website, practising cutting edge preventive medicine through a food outlet." It's no wonder his nickname is Dr Organic.

The most popular vegetarian/vegan dishes include the famous vegetarian platter (steamed seasonal vegetables, rice timbale, mushroom dip, eggplant, potato rosti, spinach

cake, homemade sauces), a raw food submenu with lots of gourmet soups and salads including homemade sprouts, potato gnocchi with tomato salsa, beetroot/babaganoush/hummus dips and sourdough, spinach parcel with spicy couscous, lentil/pumpkin/spicy cabbage hotpot, vegetarian pasticcio with aromatic lentils, vegetarian crepes filled with sweet potato and almonds... and lots more!

Desserts have no added sugar and include two chocolate dishes, one of which is raw & vegan.

The best way to feed your body and affordable!

Entrees mostly \$10 to \$12, Mains \$17 to \$19, Desserts \$12



ADELAIDE

Vego and Lov'n It

240 Rundle St, Adelaide.

Look for the mosaic sign above the door on the north side of the street, a little east of Frome Road.

Open Mon – Fri, 10am to approx. 3.30pm.

Up a winding flight of wooden stairs at this address is 'Vego and Lov'n It'. This is mainly a place for light lunches and morning or afternoon snacks, offering fresh juices, soups, wraps, teas and delicious looking burgers made with plenty of salad and incorporating home-made patties.

Robin has been preparing food here and people have been lov'n it now for 23 years, and there is a loyal following of regulars. With its peaceful atmosphere and retro décor, Vego and Lov'n It is not so much a cafe as an experience, and well worth a visit when in Adelaide.

However, if you are wanting lunch, it is better to be early as the place can get quite busy after about 12 noon.

Veg Eateries, Adelaide

For a list of Veg Eateries in and close to Adelaide see 'Eateries' in VegSA website: www.vegsa.org.au – Anne Sanders, Secretary, VegSA



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JAZZY VEGETARIAN

Lively Vegan Cuisine That's Easy and Delicious

By Laura Theodore

\$41.00

The recipes replicate the tempting creations demonstrated on Laura's television shows in the US, where she is a jazz singer, songwriter and radio and TV host. She has an infectious passion for plant-based, environmentally conscious living.

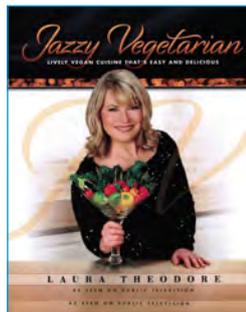
Laura transforms regular favourites into meatless versions that include soups, sandwiches, entrees, salads, main dishes, pastas and desserts. The recipes look quite awesome.

Jazzy Vegetarian provides a wide range of menus for every occasion, each one nutritionally balanced with 'perfectly' coordinated flavours and textures.

Part of Laura's goal is to provide quick, easy recipes that will especially appeal to people transitioning to eating more plant-based meals.

An abundance of large and small colour photographs show how enticing the recipes can be. As a few examples: Strawberry Delight Smoothie, Choc-Chip Banana Muffins, Avocado-Cashew Salad, Nutritious Nachos, Quick Lasagne Rolls, Black Bean Burritos, Caramelised Balsamic Artichokes, Fabulous Oven Fries, Roasted Butternut Squash with Garlic, and 16 decadent desserts including Chocolate Truffle Trio and Peanut Butter Fudge.

A very large number of recipes, indexed in 211 pages in a hard-cover.



RAINBOW RECIPES

By Aileen Sforcina

\$38.50

Discover the delights of plant-based eating with *Rainbow Recipes*, a remarkable creation that presents over 200 recipes, well laid out, but with no photos.

There are no refined or processed foods. It is designed as an everyday recipe book to guide you to food choices that come direct from nature herself.

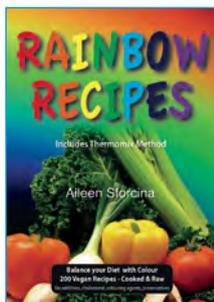
Some recipes look and taste decadent, but are actually high in fibre and wholesome. For example 'Pure Decadence' wows your taste buds with its sweet creaminess, yet contains no added sugar and all ingredients are plant based.

Rainbow Recipes gives two methods of preparation for each recipe: the 'Conventional Method' that uses everyday utensils found in most kitchens, and the 'Thermomix Method' that uses the revolutionary Thermomix electrical appliance that takes the place of perhaps 10 other kitchen appliances.

Aileen Sforcina, has co-presented Lifestyle Education Seminars with her husband for over 16 years to audiences Australia-wide.

"With just a handful of healthy ingredients," declared one customer, "Aileen puts together recipes that leave you wanting more. Even my sceptical meat-loving family look forward to the nights I am cooking a Rainbow Recipe."

Wrote another, "We are dairy/egg free due to dietary intolerances, and it is so lovely to be able to open the book and not have to change anything."



A MODERN WOMAN'S GUIDE TO A NATURAL EMPOWERING BIRTH

By Katrina Zaslavsky

\$38.50

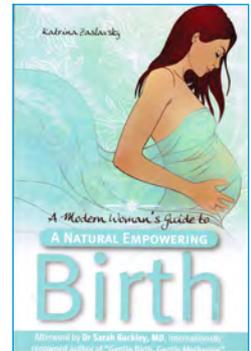
This self-help, inspirational guide is a collection of inspiring birth stories. Rich in philosophical advice, but well sprinkled with practical tips, the whole thrust (pardon the pun) is to motivate women to see birth as a natural process that has been going on for millennia. Under 'Doctors and Drugs are Optional' are the words: "Midwives see birth as a miracle and only mess with it if there's a problem. Doctors see birth as a problem and if they don't mess with it, it's a miracle."

Some other chapter headings are: 'Make a Commitment'; 'Knowledge is Birth Power'; 'Consciously Prepare Mind and Body'; 'Words Have Power'; 'Create a Support Team'; 'A Whole World of Tips and Tricks'; 'Pain is Good or Nothing at All'; 'Birth is Beautiful'; 'Trust Your Instincts'; 'The First Magical Moments'.

In one of numerous stories: "She found that the more deeply she breathed, the easier the contractions were."

And in another case: "As I smiled at him, my whole body relaxed and my baby was born in one big whoosh. I didn't even feel a contraction, let alone any pains."

As the founder of Inspiring Birth Stories and profoundly impacted by her own personal journey into motherhood, Katrina has become an advocate of natural and conscious parenting, committed to supporting women to give birth naturally and to overcome their fears about birthing in a world that has become so medicalised and fearful of something perfectly natural.



HERBAL HEALING FOR CHILDREN

By Demetria Clark

\$27.50

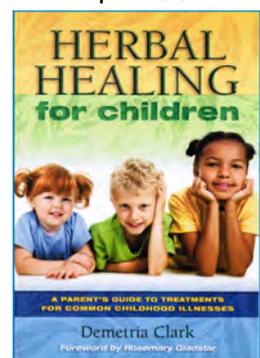
Sub-titled, 'A Parent's Guide to Common Childhood Illnesses', this book is just that. And it is easy to follow and very practical.

Many families are finding the use of herbal medicines to be a safer, more natural way to care for their children than treating with conventional medications. The author has found that children often improve after just a few doses of herbal remedies – even when standard medicines have been ineffective – and often recover with fewer side effects.

Chapters cover 'Commonly Used Herbs'; 'Remedies for Common Childhood Illnesses'; 'Buying, Gathering and Preparing Herbs'; 'Making Your Own Herbal Remedies' and 'Easy Recipes for Home-made Remedies'.

Dozens and dozens of herbs are described briefly, simply and compactly, including how to use each and whether it can be used without professional supervision.

The core of the book is the remedies for a wide variety of ailments listed alphabetically for quick reference. Commencing with bed-wetting, bites and stings, bruises, burns, car-sickness, chickenpox and cold care, this section progresses through to pertussis (whooping cough), roseola, sinus infections, sprains, teething, thrush and warts. This section finishes with 'Especially for Teens' – acne, menstrual problems and depression.



Kindred Organisations

These not-for-profit societies are closely affiliated with the Natural Health Society



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VEGETARIAN/VEGAN SOCIETY OF QLD Inc

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Email vegsocq@tpg.com.au
Web www.vegsoc.org.au

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1,000 Vegan Recipes

By Robin Robertson.

\$47 - postage up to \$10.70

612 pages of delicious, healthy, vegan recipes. A wonderful resource.

Whitewash

By Joseph Keon.

\$21.50 - postage up to \$10.70

Dr Keon's research and meticulous documentation will show you the disturbing truth about cow's milk and your health.

Veganist

By Kathy Freston.

\$23.50 (hard cover) postage \$6.05

Lose weight, get healthy, change the World. "Kathy Freston writes so beautifully and convincingly that even this most carnivorous of rock stars finds himself staring at his bleeding protein with new eyes." Bono.

Ninety Five

Edited by No Voice Unheard.

\$27 - postage up to \$10.70

Meeting America's farmed animals in stories & photos. 95 is the number of animals spared each year by one person's vegan diet.

The Face on your Plate

By Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson

\$25 - Postage \$6.05

The truth about food. An Essential book for anyone who thinks and/or eats.

Eating Animals

By Jonathan Safran Foer

\$23 - postage \$6.05

Everyone who eats flesh should read this book. Moving, disturbing and should be compulsory reading.

But You Kill Ants

By John Waddell \$16

Provides answers to all the silly, and not so silly, questions that get fired at you all the time.

The New Good Life

By John Robbins

\$38 - postage up to \$10.70

Living better than ever in an age of less. The choices Robbins has made and the integrity with which he has lived have illuminated the way for many people during an era of greed running amok.

Skinny Bitch Ultimate Everyday Cookbook

By Kim Barnouin

\$35 - postage up to \$10.70

Crazy, delicious recipes that are good to the earth and great for your body.

500 Vegan Recipes

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Plant-based recipes for top taste and vital health.

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Raw Food: A complete guide for every meal of the day.

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Proof that eating raw food can be simple, inexpensive and delicious.

Green Smoothie Revolution

Victoria Boutenko

\$26 - includes postage

Combining nutrition and know-how with recipes that pack a powerhouse punch.

The China Study

By T. Colin Campbell PhD & Thomas M. Campbell

RRP \$35. Special price \$25 plus postage up to \$10.70

The most comprehensive study ever undertaken of the relationship between diet and the risk of developing obesity and disease. Startling implications for achieving long-term health.

Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease

By Caldwell B Esselstyn Jr.

\$24 plus postage \$6.05

The revolutionary, scientifically proven nutrition-based 'cure' with more than 150 great tasting recipes. This powerful program could make you almost heart-attack proof.

Vegan Bodybuilding & Fitness

By Robert Cheeke

\$28 plus postage up to \$10.70

The complete guide to building your body on a plant-based diet, written by the world's most recognised bodybuilder.

Food for Life

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Colourful A3 size fridge magnet with all four food groups info at a glance.

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Natural Health Society
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Fax (02) 4731 1174
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* NB 'Members' means financial members of the Natural Health and Vegetarian Societies

Compact Juicer

- Comes with Bonus Mincer
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- Mill-type single auger making less juice foam
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- Extracts pure concentrated juice.
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In-Lieu Toilet Converter



- Converts ordinary toilet so that you can squat instead of sit
- Prevents injury to pelvic-floor nerves caused by straining while sitting
- Has been found helpful for constipation, incontinence, prostate problems, haemorrhoids, diverticulitis, bed-wetting in children under 10 years
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Healthstart ION-70 Air Purifier

- For people with sensitivity to chemicals, microorganisms, odours, etc
- Can be beneficial for asthma, sinus, bronchial, other respiratory problems.
- Eliminates moulds, fungi, bacteria, viruses, pollen, dust, dust mites, chemicals, volatile organic compounds, odours, tobacco smoke
- Suitable for home or workplace
- Large coverage area – 70 square metres.
- Automatically monitors particles and odours
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- All filters washable and long-life, except activated carbon and HEPA filters
- Two-year warranty



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