

# True Natural Health

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*The Magazine of the Natural Health Society of Australia*



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- what's really in them?

Paleo diet

- good nutrition or passing fad?

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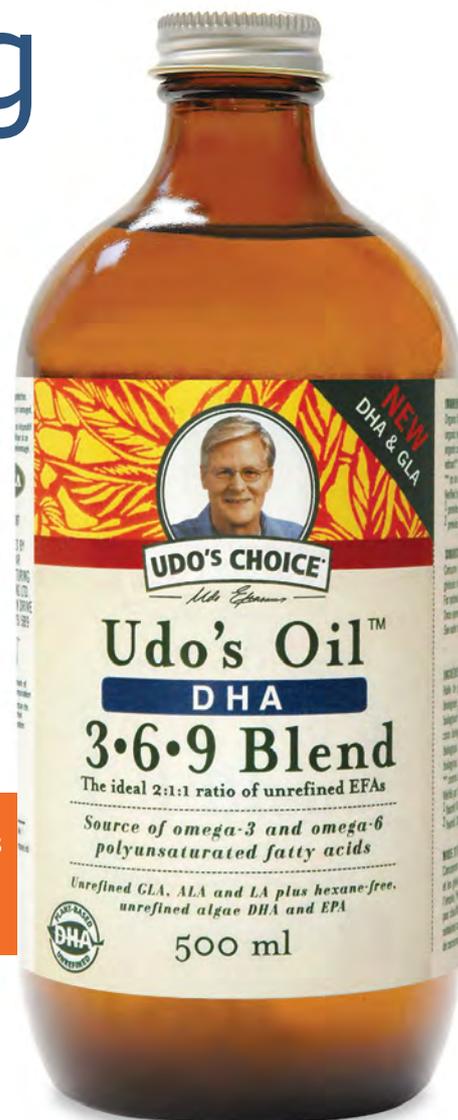
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Most of us love a hug with someone we like, and it does feel good. In fact, it has to feel good because – surprise, surprise – hugging generates a hormone in our bodies that makes us feel good. This wonderful hormone, *oxytocin*, is actually known as the ‘feel good hormone’. It also generates trust and has a lot to do also with making love. So it is worth reading about, which you can do on the next page.

While on the subject of hormones and related aspects, we are discovering that women’s tampons may be a bit like ‘poisoned chollises’ in that the usual brands may contain quite nasty chemicals. Thanks to the good Dr Mercola of Illinois, we spell out the details on page 10 and follow with a brand that uses only the best material, pure organic cotton.

Still another group of hormones that receives attention in this issue is the thyroid hormones.

This is a major topic that we have not addressed for many years, and, being a widespread issue, thyroid problems are dealt with here, page 26, thanks to our frequent contributor, the well researched naturopath, Robyn Chuter of Burraneer in Sydney.

What is it about the Paleo diet that has made it so in vogue today? This question is raised in ‘Your Questions Answered’ and it is quite interesting. Although the standard Paleo diet is meat-based, a plant-based version is easily achieved, and turns out to be very close to the Natural Health Dietary Guidelines. Incidentally, we last covered dietary guidelines in the Spring 2009 issue of *Natural Health and Vegetarian Life* and in our book, *How a Man Lived in Three Centuries*, which is out of print, but being reprinted a.s.a.p.

Two other feature articles related to nutrition are how to choose an effective supplement and how to obtain adequate vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.

Also in this issue, we commence a regular column by the dynamic naturopath, osteopath and chiropractor of Cronulla in Sydney, Greg Fitzgerald.

Enjoy the reading!

*Roger French*,  
Editor and Health Director



## About Natural Health Society

The Natural Health Society is Australia’s longest established organisation that is 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.

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# Oxytocin

- The feel-good, love hormone



By Roger French

## INTRODUCTION

This is a wonderfully positive hormone that makes us feel good, that makes life better. Classically generated by hugging, oxytocin has been labelled 'the feel good hormone', 'the love hormone', 'the happy hormone', 'the love drug' and 'the moral molecule' – all very inspiring names.

Giving someone a hug or a cuddle triggers off nature's own fairly potent love drug. Oxytocin could be considered to be central to human bonding, which is the process of developing a close relationship between two people. When we become attached to a romantic partner, a close friend or a parent or child, this is the process of bonding. Central to the bond are affection, empathy and trust.

## OXYTOCIN DOES WONDERFUL THINGS

Besides being involved in hugs, love and bonding, oxytocin is the hormone that regulates childbirth, breastfeeding and sexual intercourse. During labour, it regulates uterine contractions and then the delivery of the baby. It restrains bleeding after delivery and initiates milk let-down for breastfeeding. It is also the key hormone in sexual arousal and in orgasm in both men and women.

Interestingly, oxytocin is the mirror image of the 'firing-up' hormone, adrenalin, in that it is calming and produces positive feelings. It lowers the levels of stress hormones and reduces blood pressure. Consequently, it makes us relaxed and reduces anxiety, stress and addictions. It truly earns its name, the 'feel good hormone'

The feel-good hormone has a bearing on our social behaviour, being associated with a range of feel-good emotions, including trust, empathy and generosity, and acting like a glue that creates strong bonds between people.

Technically speaking, oxytocin is also a neurotransmitter (transmits messages between nerve fibres) that acts on the limbic system, the brain's emotional centre, promoting feelings of contentment, reducing anxiety and stress and even making mammals monogamous. University of California research indicates that it has a civilising effect on human males, making them more

affectionate and better at forming relationships, along with dramatically increasing libido and sexual performance. However, it is also partly responsible for lulling men off to sleep soon afterwards!

## DISCOVERED LONG AGO

Way back in 1909 a British pharmacologist discovered oxytocin, which is a mammalian hormone synthesized in the hypothalamus and secreted from the pituitary gland into the bloodstream.

The pharmacologist found that this hormone could cause contractions and speed up the birthing process and also stimulate the release of breast milk by contracting cells around the mammary glands.

The word, 'oxytocin' is derived from the Greek words for 'quick childbirth'

## OXYTOCIN OFFERS MULTIPLE BENEFITS

The fact that nature has given our bodies oxytocin indicates that the normal qualities of kindness, trust, generosity and empathy are the way we have evolved to be. In other words, we are instinctively 'moral'.

Paul Zak, a Californian scientist who has been studying the numerous benefits of oxytocin, is responsible for the view that oxytocin is "a social glue that keeps society together" and that it is the "moral molecule" that helps foster trust, reciprocity, affection, empathy and love.

Paul Zak – or Dr Love, as he calls himself – has conducted a number of experiments, including a trust game, involving two strangers lending each other money. He discovered that trusting someone, who then shows trust in return, releases oxytocin in both parties' brains, which in turn stimulates feelings of generosity and more trusting behaviour.

Interestingly, Paul Zak believes that trust is an essential requirement for economic prosperity, because transactions of any kind depend on being able to trust the other party. Further, in an affluent society where you are no longer battling for survival, you can afford to be more trusting of other people.

The golden rule in this, says Paul Zak, is 'treat others as you would like to be treated', which is probably a philosophy that many people have instinctively adopted. He believes that this is the basis of civilisation.

It has been found that women who have higher levels of oxytocin during the first three months of their pregnancy bond better with their babies and in an exclusive way. Further, a mother who has had high levels of oxytocin during her entire pregnancy and in the month after the birth is more likely to shower her infant with love and make the baby feel very special.

If a baby or child is stressed, a comforting hug by the mother or her showing adoration in another way causes the child's level of oxytocin to rise, making him/her feel better and more relaxed.

Oxytocin is secreted in the brain during lovemaking and is believed to play a key role in strengthening monogamous bonding of males and females.

In summary, this hormone offers many benefits, including reducing the effects of stress and anxiety, easing addictions and lessening the problems of childbirth. Through its multiple benefits, it has great significance for us for all our lives.

## INTERESTING EXPERIMENTS

In an experiment conducted by Paul Zak to investigate the role of oxytocin in trust, the first person is given a small sum of money and then invited to send some of it electronically to a second person. The motive for the first person to send some to the second is that any money that he/she sends to the second will triple in value. The recipient then has the option of sending some of it back as a thank-you.

It is to be expected that the game probably wouldn't even start, because the first person would most likely assume that the second would be selfish and hang on to all the money. But that is not what happened in the large majority of cases. In the trials, 90 percent of the first people sent money and 95 percent of the recipients sent some back.

Measurements of the blood oxytocin levels revealed why. The second person receiving money from the first saw this as a sign of trust – and receiving trust causes oxytocin to increase, which inspires generous behaviour in return. It is not the act of receiving money that causes oxytocin to surge, says Paul Zac, it is being trusted. Trust in one person triggers oxytocin in the other, which triggers more trustworthy behaviour, and so on, in a virtuous circle – that is, except for about five percent of people who don't reciprocate.

Other research has backed Paul Zac's conclusions. In a trust game, people were given oxytocin inhalers, some of which were filled with oxytocin and the remainder with a placebo (something that appeared to be oxytocin but wasn't). The participants inhaling oxytocin displayed much greater levels of trust and generosity than those who inhaled the placebo, confirming that it is trust that generates the hormone.

Clearly, we should be doing all we can to boost oxytocin levels, though in benign ways.

## HOW TO GET PLENTY OF OXYTOCIN

Firstly, let us look at how NOT to get oxytocin:

- Chronic stress inhibits the production of oxytocin.
- Insufficient maternal nurturing impairs production. In animals in this situation, the oxytocin receptors in their brains tend to atrophy.
- Adult survivors of childhood abuse have been found to have lowered ability to produce oxytocin.
- It has been estimated that about five percent of people do not respond to the positive effects of oxytocin.

There are many ways to boost our oxytocin levels naturally.

- One of the simplest and surest is hugging. Paul Zak recommends hugging a minimum of eight times a day. Or a caress or a pat on the shoulder. Or have a massage.
- When you walk with your partner or a family member who you care for, hold hands or link arms. Don't be afraid to show affection.

- Daydream about your partner. It has been found that happily married women quickly released a dose of oxytocin when asked to think about their husbands.
- Enjoy sex. Foreplay spurs the levels, and orgasm can spike the level to twice normal.
- Appreciate your pet. Patting or hugging a dog or cat you love can increase oxytocin levels.
- Find comfort in some of your favourite things, such as: hearing kind words from someone you care about; hearing the early morning choir of backyard birds; immersing yourself in familiar and comforting smells, sounds, music or even pleasant memories or fantasies.
- Other things that can send oxytocin soaring include watching soppy movies, dancing, meditating and making music. And – surprise, surprise – roller-coaster rides can also send oxytocin levels soaring.



- Even interactions through Twitter and Facebook can send oxytocin surging, countering the argument that social contact must be face to face if it is to act like good company.

Synthetic oxytocin has been invented for medical purposes. Called 'Pitocin' or 'Syntocinon', it is often used to induce

labour, to reduce the risk of post-birth haemorrhage and to stimulate milk production for breastfeeding.

Not surprisingly, big business is beginning to market bottled oxytocin to salespeople and single men for trust-enhancing purposes. Businesses may one day manipulate oxytocin to boost trust in brands.

## IT HELPS AUTISM, ASPERGER'S

There are indications that autism may be associated with low levels of oxytocin.

People who have autism or Asperger's syndrome commonly have oxytocin at abnormally low levels, and it is being suggested that they could benefit from supplemental oxytocin. Now a new French study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* suggests that administering oxytocin to mildly autistic adults and children could help them feel calmer and socialise more easily. They became more trusting, used more eye contact and were more cooperative.

## IN CONCLUSION

So there it is - a well-known sex hormone that has a number of physical roles in the process of reproduction, but also a very decided emotional role, including making us feel good when we have positive contact with other human beings. A key part of feeling good is being trusted by another person and being able to trust another person.

As production of oxytocin is triggered by positive contact, such as hugging and cuddling, the good feelings trigger more oxytocin and a virtuous circle is created. Production commences at birth, when a mother first touches and breastfeeds her newborn baby, and the bond unleashes a surge of the love chemical that makes both mother and baby feel good. And, in ideal circumstances, feel-good relationships like this can be repeated frequently throughout life.

This hormone is truly a wonderful one, and one for which it is greatly to our advantage to have in abundance.





# The Power of Enzymes



BY LYN CRAVEN, NATUROPATH

Enzyme therapy is not new, but is often overlooked by medical doctors and some natural therapists for its role in obtaining optimum health.

## WHAT ARE ENZYMES?

There are many thousands of enzymes in our bodies, commencing with digestive enzymes that break down the proteins, fats and carbohydrates we eat. These enzymes are imperative for optimum digestive function and enabling us to absorb all the nutrients in our foods.

Metabolic enzymes initiate the biochemical functions of the body, such as helping to repair damaged cells, detoxification and energy production.

We also have exogenous (from outside) enzymes, which are present in all biodynamic and organic raw foods. Raw foods help improve digestion due to the contribution from these enzymes, so I recommend consuming raw food with cooked food, and eating a few mouthfuls of the raw food first.

How would you know if you are deficient in enzymes? Some simple signs and symptoms that may indicate poor enzyme function would be:

- Bloating;
- Reflux and burping;
- Constant wind and smelly flatulence;
- Constipation – especially after eating certain foods;
- Diarrhoea;
- Irritable Bowel Disease;
- Allergies of many types;
- Food intolerances and sensitivities;
- Inability to lose or gain weight.

These are just a few examples. Obviously, some of these common symptoms and disorders can manifest for other reasons, but often the source of the problem lies within the functioning of the digestive system.

## WHAT YOU CAN ACHIEVE TAKING ENZYMES

You can expect to improve your overall health and resolve some of the above unpleasant symptoms. For people wishing to lose weight, you achieve a much flatter tummy and smaller waistline, as you will be stimulating the entire digestive tract, including pancreatic function. Daily elimination by the bowels will be

considerably improved – especially in those people who constantly experience constipation when eating proteins and chocolates or too many starchy foods. Some people are carrying around a huge amount of stagnant waste in their colon. Weight loss is easier once you establish optimum enzyme function.

Taking the appropriate enzymes is not a licence to indulge in takeaway foods, refined carbohydrates and sugar-laden confectionery; you need to eat healthy fresh food that ideally you have prepared yourself.

Most restaurants do not serve adequate vegetables with meals; often you have a tiny salad, almost like a garnish, and perhaps one or two cooked vegetables in small quantities, with the focus mainly on the protein component of the meal. Ideally, we should aim to eat at least five different vegetables, including some raw salads, with our choice of protein. Eating raw salad with cooked vegetables will enhance digestive function. You can then expect to experience more energy and mental vitality.

## SOME FINER POINTS OF ENZYME THERAPY

There are many enzyme products available on the market, but it is important to ensure that you take the correct type as formulations may vary. I use only a particular brand of 'practitioner only' enzymes which have high potency. However, I do recommend that you seek professional advice concerning any disorder you may have, even if it is a weight issue. It is always better to be assessed by a qualified naturopath who is experienced in enzyme therapy.

Enzyme therapy has been around for a very long time, and, besides supporting digestion, has also been used to support serious health disorders – cancer being one of them. Since all conventional medications have a tendency to interfere with normal, healthy gut function, it is no wonder that enzyme activity will be impaired. To support people with enzyme/food therapy during any treatments they are receiving can only help to improve absorption of the nutrients they need.

People who have eating disorders and cravings for certain foods are often suffering from malnutrition. They are often unable to assimilate and absorb nutrients from their food due to overloading their digestive system with excessive quantities of foods, typically refined carbohydrates such as chocolate, confectionery, white breads, puddings and sugar-laden cola drinks as well as fried and fatty foods, etc. Enzyme therapy can improve nutrient absorption once a healthy diet has been established.

People often stay on enzyme therapy indefinitely, since they experience optimum vitality, mental clarity and perhaps elimination of gut/allergy disorders, including various bowel problems. All these can result from more efficient digestive function. Once people cease the enzyme therapy, they may experience a lessening of vitality and some of the old symptoms may eventually return.

Since enzymes improve assimilation and absorption of nutrients, you may not require the same amount of food to satisfy your appetite. The body often craves certain foods or experiences hunger when nutrients are not fully absorbed.

This may mean that you don't need to continue to supplement as frequently with various minerals and vitamins as previously, since your food may now be providing most of your nutritional requirements. And from an economical point of view, this can be an additional huge benefit. Obviously, each person will differ in nutritional needs, depending on physical activity and whether their metabolism is fast or slow, as well as during and/or after illness.

The subject of enzymes is quite in-depth, but it is essential to have the basic understanding that enzymes are imperative to our health, and that as we age, our bodies produce less and less active enzymes. This is often why people over 50 complain about bloating and gastrointestinal problems and the inability to eat some foods that they used to eat. Once the supply of enzymes 'dies off', they cannot be replaced. This is partly due to the ageing process and partly to faulty diets, food fads and over-indulging, etc.

## PRACTITIONER GUIDANCE

Naturopaths with many years of experience always consider the stomach to be the 'Seat of Disease'. Nothing will improve in your body without a fully functioning digestive system. Enzyme therapy helps improve recovery from injuries more efficiently, since the body will absorb necessary minerals from the food that the muscular skeletal system requires.

There are specially formulated enzyme products that must be consumed away from meals for the purpose of assisting in combating inflammation in the body. Every organ and system in the body will benefit from enzyme therapy, since the body is reliant on optimum mineral absorption from food, so that it can also absorb vitamins from the food adequately.

Food intolerances are different for every person; they are driven by a number of things, including genetic background, diet, level of physical activity and metabolic rate. Usually intolerance is due to inability to digest proteins and fats or carbohydrates (sugars and starches). In severe cases, the person may be unable to digest any of the food groups.

Having awareness of your blood type can also work hand-in-hand with enzymes, since the level of digestive acids will vary depending whether you are O, A, B or AB. A naturopath who combines such knowledge and expertise along with enzyme therapy can allow you to discover which foods work more in harmony with your body, therefore

reducing digestive stress and opening the way to more bountiful energy and zest for life.

## ADVANTAGES OF ENZYME THERAPY

They have:

- rapid effect;
- excellent tolerance;
- no acute or chronic side effects;
- no incompatibility with medications;
- they can be used by diabetic and cancer patients;
- they do not suppress the immune system;
- and are useful for people of all ages.

Many practitioners say "Enzymes are the missing link to optimum health".

Lyn Craven is a practitioner of naturopathy and Bowen therapy and is a Food/Enzyme Therapist and Energy/Reiki Therapist. Lyn specialises in stress management and has created a meditation CD to assist in relaxation. She has researched and written articles on a variety of health topics and runs a private practice in Sydney and conducts workshops in Bondi & Noosa. She can be contacted on 0403 231 804 or [lynraven@bigpond.com](mailto:lynraven@bigpond.com) Website [www.lyncravencoprporatehealth-naturopath.com](http://www.lyncravencoprporatehealth-naturopath.com). And join her on Facebook.



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# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



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](mailto: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. PALEOLITHIC DIET OR 'PALEO DIET':**

**The Paleo diet seems to be all the rage currently. Is it really good nutrition for humans or is it just a passing fad?**

– J. P., Oxley Qld

**A.** Let me establish at the outset that this diet is not for me or many readers of this magazine because it is meat based, although a plant-based version can be selected. Nevertheless, it is of interest to know what all the fuss is about, so let's look at the details of the full Paleo diet and do a critique of it.

The Paleo diet is what humans (or various *hominid* species – see below) are believed to have eaten in the Paleolithic era, an era that lasted about 2.5 million years and ended around 10,000 years ago. The Paleo diet is often referred to as the 'Stone-Age diet', 'caveman diet' or 'hunter-gatherer diet', and was ended by the appearance of agriculture, which established grain-based eating.

('Hominid' refers to the family *Hominidae* or 'great apes', which evolved to culminate in modern humans, species *Homo sapiens*.)

Based on the premise that our genes are much the same as they were before the beginning of agriculture plus the fact that those Paleolithic hunter-gatherers were largely free of the diseases of affluence, some nutritionists have concluded that a diet that resembles our ancestral diet should be an ideal diet for our health and wellbeing.

The modern, standard Paleo diet therefore consists essentially of the following:

- Protein-rich foods – grass-fed meats, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds;
- Vegetables, fruits, roots and fungi.

Some researchers have concluded that a guiding principle is that if a food can't be eaten raw, it shouldn't be eaten. Fortunately, this doesn't mean that it *must* be eaten raw; it means that it *should* be able to be eaten raw.

## **The following foods make up the diet:**

**Protein-rich foods.** Loren Cordain, author of *The Paleo Diet*, believes the animals from which the meat and eggs come from should be fed a natural, organic diet and people should seek out low-fat meat sources. The **vegetarian version** would use nuts and seeds for protein – and also the 'forbidden' legumes – with the option of eggs in moderation.

**Vegetables** are vital for good health. Some nutritionists exclude green beans and peas because they are legumes. There is divided opinion as to whether potatoes and other starchy tubers should be allowed.

**Fruits** are part of the diet, although quantity should be limited by people who need to lose weight, especially with dried fruits and juices.

**Nuts and seeds.** These are excellent sources of protein and other nutrients. In a plant-based Paleo diet, they are the staple protein foods. For those who want to lose weight, Loren Cordain limits them to approx. 120 gm per day, which, in Natural Health Dietary Guidelines, is close to the recommended amount for an adult of average size. Unsweetened nut 'milks' such as almond milk and coconut milk can be useful additions.

It should be remembered that peanuts are not true nuts; they are legumes like soya beans and not part of the diet.

**Oils.** Favoured oils are olive oil, flax oil and nut oils including coconut oil.

**Beverages.** Top of the list is pure water, the ultimate drink. Tea is OK, but there is controversy regarding coffee and alcohol. In Natural Health we know that the body would be better off without either. There is no place for drinks sweetened with added sugar or artificial sweeteners.

## **The following foods are forbidden:**

'Forbidden' sounds a little ominous, so let's see how bad they might be.

**Refined sugars.** None of our bodies wants foods as refined and unbalanced as are these, so it is top priority to avoid them. It is debatable whether small amounts of honey or pure maple syrup are acceptable.

**Grains.** All the cereal grains are out. They are not natural foods for humans anyway. Test this by hoeing into half a cup of raw wheat and see how appealing it is.

**Starchy Tubers.** Researchers generally agree that these are *not* part of a Paleo diet – potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava and manioc. However, in Natural Health we regard these as very nutritious foods and consider it would be ridiculous to avoid them if you like them. Some Paleo enthusiasts do agree with this view.

**Legumes (dried beans and peas).** Soya beans, peanuts, chick peas, lentils, kidney beans, lima beans and other legumes are excluded because they have a high content of anti-nutrients called *lectins*. However, except perhaps for peanuts, these are extremely nutritious foods and we consider them to have a valuable role in a plant-based diet.

**Dairy products.** Hominids did not have dairy products until farming of animals began. We often see people reporting noticeable improvement in wellness after excluding all dairy products. Possibly, small amounts of unsalted butter could be included if desired. If you are going to eat dairy, make sure the animals are grass-fed, as are most dairy cows in Australia.

**Processed meats.** These are not allowed. In Natural Health, we see these as the worst of the flesh foods. The red preserved meats are cured with sodium nitrite which is mildly carcinogenic.

**Extracted oils.** Proponents say the following are to be avoided: corn oil, cottonseed oil, peanut oil, soybean oil, rice bran oil and wheat germ oil. The reason is probably the medium to high levels of omega-6 fatty acids in them. Omega-6 fats *in excess* cause blood clotting.

**Salt.** Avoid or at least use sparingly. In Natural Health, we go for sea salt or the highly favoured Himalayan Rock Salt.

## The plant-based version excellent

One fan of the Paleo diet writes, "Once you go Paleo, you'll feel so amazing that it will be very hard to go back to the way you used to eat".

The plant-based version is no doubt better still. By eating vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds – and legumes too – this may well be the ideal diet for humans. Herbs and spices can make food interesting. It is remarkable to hear many people say how much better they feel after excluding dairy products, grains and refined sugars, and adhering to an essentially plant-based way of eating, which we know to be strongly protective against heart disease, cancer and the rest.

## Q. MAKING SOYA YOGHURT:

**I would like to know if it is possible to make yoghurt from soya milk and how to do it. I have a shop-bought yoghurt maker. Where might I get the culture? – R. R., Newcastle, NSW**

**A.** Yes, soya yoghurt can be made using a regular yoghurt maker.

You'll need a yoghurt maker to hold one litre and a small flask to store some of the yoghurt to be the culture for the next batch.

The only ingredients for making plain soya yoghurt are soya milk and a starter. The easiest starter to use is plain soya yoghurt itself that you would need to purchase from a shop to get you going initially. Alternatively, you may be able to purchase a freeze-dried culture, which comes in packets.

Because soya milk has less natural sugar than cows' milk, some recipes include a tablespoon of sugar to aid the fermentation. However, most Australian soya milks already have added sugar in the form of malt sugar or raw sugar.

Cleanliness is vital when making cultured foods. Use plenty of boiling water to scald the flask and utensils.

Use unsweetened soya milk that contains nothing but soya beans and water, if you can find it. Don't use a milk sweetened with apple juice as this will affect fermentation. It is also highly desirable to avoid gums and flavourings that are among the ingredients in some brands.

The steps are as follows:

1. Buy or make soymilk, 1 litre.
2. Bring the milk to a temperature of 42° – 45°C (107 – 113°F). It is important that the temperature is correct. The culture will only remain alive and active in this narrow temperature range. It will be necessary to use a thermometer to get it right.
3. Add 2 tablespoons of the starter to the soy milk and mix well with a sterile spoon. Standing the spoon in boiling water for 10 minutes should suffice.
4. Pour the mixture into a yogurt maker and follow the directions of your particular brand of yogurt maker. Stand the yoghurt flask for the recommended time, which might be around 8 hours. The fermentation time can range from 6 hours to 12 hours or more. If you don't have a yogurt maker, you can put the yogurt in the oven at the above temperature for about 5 – 8 hours.
5. When the yogurt has thickened, chill it in the fridge. If it's still runny, it may need longer, or you might have a problem. It will normally be a little thinner than cows' milk yogurt.
6. Save one or two tablespoons of the freshly made live yoghurt in the small beaker, ready for the next batch of yoghurt. Store this in a small flask or screw-top jar that you have sterilised by scalding with boiling water. This starter culture needs to be kept away from the main yoghurt in order to keep it sterile.
7. Store the yoghurt and starter flask in the fridge – as you normally would. Fermentation will continue and the yoghurt will become thicker as it cools. It should keep for 7 to 10 days in the fridge.

The culture can be used for several batches of yoghurt before becoming 'tired'. Each time it is used, the culture becomes less effective, and should eventually be discarded. You will then need to buy some more shop-bought yoghurt for fresh, new culture.

## Q. CAN MODERN FIBREGLASS INSULATION CAUSE CANCER?:

**I heard long ago that fibreglass insulation could be the 'new asbestos' in terms of lung cancer. This would, of course, mainly be a problem during installation when the fibres fill the air. Our house is entirely insulated this way and I was the installer. I did take great care to be well clothed, gloved and face-masked.**

**Is there any up-to-date information since 1994 when the US government classified glasswool as a potential lung carcinogen?**

**I and many others would no doubt be grateful for this information, especially anyone considering installing glass wool insulation or removing it during renovations. – Ian Brothers, 'Bridgewater', 213 Barkers Rd, Grenfell NSW 2810 [Name and address published on Ian's request to invite any feedback from readers.]**

**A.** You are quite correct, Ian. In 1994 the United States Food and Drug Administration classified glasswool as "reasonably anticipated to cause lung cancer in humans". Fortunately, there is newer information.

Insulating our homes has a big effect on reducing the costs of energy. Fiberglass insulation, now called 'glasswool' insulation, is the most popular form of household insulation. Glasswool insulation consists of fibres blown or spun from molten glass and collected in an entangled mat. But it has been associated with

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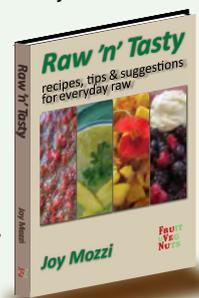
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various health problems, ranging from skin irritation to cancer.

Yes, it is capable of causing skin irritation in installers, but this is relieved by showering to remove the fibres from the skin, and is not a problem for the occupants of the insulated house or other building.

But what about the lung cancer fear? Fibreglass and asbestos are both very good heat insulators, but fibreglass became popular when the cancer-causing effect of asbestos became apparent. However, it was then discovered that some of the fibres in fibreglass insulation are as fine as those of asbestos and this initiated the lung cancer scare. Typically, glasswool insulation fibres are between 5 and 10 microns in diameter (a micron is one millionth of a metre), but a small proportion of the fibres are fine enough (less than 3 microns in diameter) to be breathed into the lungs and remain there indefinitely.

The situation has been substantially improved. Binding resins and oils are now used during manufacture to stiffen and bond the fibres together and to prevent them from becoming airborne. These binders can also cause skin irritation, but this is a relatively minor problem.

Further, the development of biosoluble fibres has been a major step forward. In 1995 European manufacturers perfected the technology to make glasswool and rockwool fibres more soluble in living tissue without impacting on product performance. Thorough testing showed that the persistence of biosoluble products is less than 10 days, well below the typical 20 days biopersistence of the everyday dusts we might encounter walking down the street.

In 1997 European regulators recognised that biosoluble glasswool insulation is not a likely cancer risk to humans. Even the American Lung Association declares that glasswool is safe "when properly installed".

The Western Australian Department of Commerce states that The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) changed its classification in November 2001 as follows: "Fibreglass is now **not** classifiable as carcinogenic to humans and is no longer considered 'possibly carcinogenic to humans'".

The reasons for the change are:

Studies of occupational exposure during manufacture of fibreglass show no evidence of increased risk of cancer; and

There is an increased use of 'biosoluble' fibreglass, which has been found to be non-carcinogenic.

Now the Australian National Asthma Council's 'Sensitive Choice' product advisory panel has concluded that both

glasswool and rockwool insulation are low allergen products suitable for asthma and allergy sufferers.

Once it's installed, glasswool rests safely between the panels, and only when it's removed will fibers become airborne.

Western Australia has adopted the ASCC *National Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Synthetic Mineral Fibres* (see [www.ascc.gov.au](http://www.ascc.gov.au)). If the work practices in this Code are followed, there is considered to be negligible risk to employees using either 'traditional' or biosoluble glasswool insulation.

The prominent Australian supplier of glasswool insulation, Bradford™, changed, their formulation of glasswool and rockwool insulation in 2001 and now use biosoluble fibres, identified by the 'FBS-1' logo on their packs.

If people still want an alternative insulation, there is cellulose produced from recycled newspapers and the oldest form of home insulation. It is treated with chemicals to make it more fire resistant, although it always has the potential to burn. The chemicals are usually *sodium borate*, *boric acid* or *ammonium sulphate*, which are generally considered safe for human contact.

## **Q. MOUSE CONTROL:**

**How can we prevent these little pests from getting into our homes? Are naphthalene flakes effective in deterring mice? – M. G., Blackheath NSW**

**A.** As usual, I will cover the topic somewhat comprehensively.

Mice want to get to places where food is available, and physical barriers can upset their plans. To keep mice out of the home, or at least the kitchen where food is stored, seal all holes and openings that are wider than 6 mm (1/4 inch). Use tough materials that will resist gnawing, including concrete mortar, galvanized sheeting, steel wool or perhaps hardwood.

If mice are eating your veg. garden seedlings, surround the garden bed with wire-netting screens, and bury the bottoms of the screens in the soil five to eight centimetres deep.

Repellents are a humane way of being free of mice. But they can only be effective in small enclosed areas, so are usually not a solution. The naphthalene that you ask about, which comes in the form of mothballs or flakes, may work in small enclosed areas if sufficient concentration of the chemical in the air can be attained. Other aromatic compounds such as the concentrated oils of mint or cedar have *not* been found to be effective.

Your home can be made less attractive to mice by minimising any cover that enables them to move around without being vulnerable to predators. Remove weeds and other vegetative cover as well as litter in and around the home and keep lawns well mown.

Wherever possible, store food in rodent-proof containers and keep kitchen benches clear of food scraps and crumbs. Sweep floors frequently to remove crumbs and to permit early detection of mouse droppings. Keep garbage areas clean and lids fitting neatly on bins.

In offices, mice can hide behind cabinets and other furniture, so be sure to clean up crumbs and food scraps after lunch or morning tea.

Another way of deterring mice is a device that frightens them away. There are commercial devices that emit very-high-frequency signals that are uncomfortable to mice, although they are limited by direction and distance, because their intensity drops off rapidly with distance. Nevertheless, they could be worth investigating.

Poisoning mice is not humane and many readers of this magazine would not do it. The most common rodenticides are anti-coagulants, such as Warfarin, Rozol or diphacinone. More recently available are anticoagulant baits that can be lethal in a single feeding, such as *brodifacoum* and *bromodialone*. Anticoagulants can be lethal to all animals, so they should be kept well away from pets, native animals and livestock - and humans!

There are other rodenticides besides anti-coagulants, including *strychnine*, *zinc phosphide* and *bromethalin*. These baits would be used mainly where anticoagulants are not feasible, because the mice eventually become wary of them and they are a big hazard to other animals.

Fumigants in the hands of licenced pest controllers can be very effective, but there is the problem for the human residents of breathing residual toxic fumes.

Mouse traps can be effective, but can be cruel, and many people would not use them.





# NHS NOTICES



## MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE NHS

Thoughtful donations from members are making a big difference to keeping the Society's finances stable. For recent donations, we say a big 'thank you' to:

*John Bentley, Shirley Drake and Melva Fleming, Lesley Johnson, Doreen Adamthwaite, Larissa Bergmann, Glenda Johnson, John Wood, Kaye and Alistair Millar, Angela Milne, Carol Houston, Sharon Lamey, Katie Deverell, Robyn Wellman, Pam Robinson.*

If other members would like to add their support – no matter how great or small – we would be very grateful. Simply call our office on 02 4721 5068 or send a cheque to Natural Health Society, 28/541 High Street, Penrith NSW 2750, or go to our website at [www.health.org.au](http://www.health.org.au) and click on the 'Donate' link. [Please note: donations not tax deductible.]

## Vegetarian Food Preparation Classes

### RICHMOND NSW

#### LAO VEGETARIAN COOKING WORKSHOPS

Presented by **Ling Halbert**



- Hands-on, how to make simple, delicious and nutritious meals
- Straightforward and easy-to-prepare recipes
- Tips on making vegetarian meals appeal to the whole family
- Includes a tour of the community garden

#### Dates and themes (Third Saturday each month):

- Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June – Budget Party food
- Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July – Lao BBQ
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Aug – Malvern specials
- Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Sept – Traditional Lao wraps
- Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> Oct – Raw Lao special
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> Nov – Traditional Lao salads (Nov will be the last workshop for the year.)

**Time:** 11am to 2pm Saturdays

**Cost:** \$35 (we share the lunch we cooked)

**Where:** Hawkesbury Earth Care Centre, UWS Hawkesbury Campus, Richmond NSW

**Bookings:** [ling300ppm@gmail.com](mailto:ling300ppm@gmail.com) or 0410 688 499 one week in advance.

## PENRITH DISTRICT DINNER

We are planning a social lunch at (sunny – usually) **Hopewood Health Retreat**, Greendale Rd, Wallacia, on **Sunday 30th June 2013**.

Hopewood is located in a beautiful rural environment. The grounds are well-kept, super attractive and with plenty of shade trees. It is a nice place to visit.

Hopewood serves a wonderful, abundant **vegetarian buffet lunch**. The cost will be **\$25 per head**, to be paid in advance.

For inquiries and bookings, contact NHS office, phone **4721 5068** or **email [admin@health.org.au](mailto:admin@health.org.au)**

## 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**

### OFFICE HOURS, PENRITH NSW

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm. For administrative issues, our Admin Officer, Tracey, is available only between 9.00am and 2.30pm.  
Office closed weekends.

## MERRYLANDS NSW WHOLE SYSTEM HEALTH MEAT-FREE MEET UP

Also presented by **Ling Halbert**

First Saturday each month, March to December, at Malvern Ave, Merrylands.

Bring a plate of vegetarian food to share.

**Bookings:** [ling300ppm@gmail.com](mailto:ling300ppm@gmail.com) or 0410 688 499 one week in advance.

## PARRAMATTA NSW MEAT-FREE COOKING WORKSHOPS

Also presented by **Ling Halbert**

Ling has secured a grant to run meat-free cooking workshops in the Parramatta area. Dates and venues will be announced in a later issue of this magazine.

**Bookings:** [ling300ppm@gmail.com](mailto:ling300ppm@gmail.com) or 0410 688 499 one week in advance.

## LEPPINGTON NSW WELLNESS SUPPORT GROUPS

Conducted by **Marilyn Bodnar (naturopath)** and **Cecil Bodnar**, both long-time NHS members.

**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. 29<sup>th</sup> June** – Prof. John Ellerman – 'Digestive Health – Is Your Probiotic Working for You?'

**Sat. 27<sup>th</sup> July** – Doug Evans, Hopewood practitioner – 'Fasting for Rejuvenation and Regeneration'

**Sat. 24<sup>th</sup> August** – Roger French, Health Director Natural Health Society – 'Why Antioxidants Prevent Nasty Degenerative Diseases'  
**To book, phone Marilyn, 9606 2203 or 0410 627 556**

## ADELAIDE SA

### COOKING UP A STORM

Vegetarian with style  
Presented by **Natalie Playford**

*Cooking Up a Storm* is unique to Adelaide. It was initiated in 2006 by Natalie to teach people how to cook nutritious, delicious vegetarian food. Natalie is a professional cook and trained teacher and has eaten vegetarian for over twenty years.

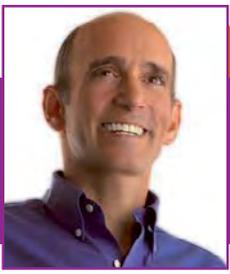


#### Natalie offers:

- Cooking classes in your home;
- Cooking classes at venues, such as the WEA (in Adelaide);
- Fabulous, easy vegetarian cuisine.

"There is a big trend towards healthier, more plant-based eating," says Natalie. "People are wanting new ideas or simply a place to start. Or they may have health issues that have led them to require a more restricted diet. I create most of the recipes I use, and explain a lot about the nutritional aspects of the foods."

For more information, visit [www.cookingupastorm.com.au](http://www.cookingupastorm.com.au) or phone **(08) 8386 1672** or **0403 555 011**.



## WOMEN'S HEALTH

# Tampons 'Whiter than White' May be a Ticking Time-bomb...



*Abridged and edited from an newsletter by Dr Joseph Mercola, dated 29-12-12.*

*Dr Mercola, of Illinois USA, produces free, regular newsletters accessed via his website, <http://www.mercola.com>. They are natural health oriented and very informative.*

**Soft, cottony tampons look so innocuous, but they're often laced with dioxin ... And a woman unwittingly places them against her skin repeatedly for decades on end. It's the risk no one talks about.**

**Something you wear so intimately and with such regularity you would want to know for sure it's safe. You may be thinking, what could possibly be not safe with feminine hygiene products?**

### Why feminine hygiene products may not be 'protecting' in all respects

Your skin is the most absorbent organ in your body. A substance you place on your skin may be able to pass right through it, straight into your bloodstream. Vaginal tissue is an exceptionally absorbent area.

### How they may be jeopardising your health

In my opinion, the feminine hygiene industry has done a terrific job in deceiving and misinforming women, freely using words such as "cotton-soft" and "cottony feel" in slick advertising campaigns. The truth is, today's feminine hygiene products are made mostly from rayon, viscose and cellulose wood fluff pulp ... not from cotton.

- Rayon is made from cellulose fibres derived from bleached wood pulp.
- Viscose is a form of wood cellulose acetate that's fabricated to have a pleasing cotton-like touch.
- Fluff pulp is manufactured from wood and is the major filler used in conventional sanitary pads.

None of these comes close to natural cotton. Rayon and viscose present a potential danger, partly because of their highly absorbent fibres. These fibres can stick to your vaginal wall, and when you remove the tampon, the loosened fibres stay behind inside your body.

### The toxic bleaching process

Rayon is most commonly bleached with chlorine. Whenever something is bleached with chlorine, there is the possibility of creating the toxic carcinogens, *dioxin* and disinfection by-products (DBPs) such as *trihalomethane*. ['Carcinogen' = cancer causing.]

Dioxin, in the same family as Agent Orange, is found in the air, water and ground, thanks to decades of pollution. It's a by-product of pesticide spraying, pollution from incinerators and the production of paper and rayon products such as coffee filters, toilet paper, disposable diapers and possibly feminine hygiene products.

Studies show that dioxin accumulates in the fatty tissues of animals and humans. Published reports show that even trace levels of dioxins may be linked to:

- Abnormal tissue growth in the abdomen and reproductive organs
- Abnormal cell growth throughout the body
- Immune system suppression
- Hormonal and endocrine system disruption

### Tampons and pads can contain dioxin and chlorine disinfection by-products

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) labels dioxin a serious public health threat, and states that there is no 'safe' level of exposure to dioxin – even trace amounts are a risk as they accumulate in tissue and may remain in the body for as long as seven to 11 years.

Surprisingly, the US Food and Drug Administration has concluded that there is no health risk expected from dioxins in tampons and pads. According to the FDA:

*"While there may have been a problem in the past with chlorine bleaching, rayon raw material used in US tampons is now produced using elemental chlorine-free or totally chlorine-free bleaching processes.*

*"Elemental chlorine-free bleaching refers to methods that do not use elemental chlorine gas to purify the wood pulp. These methods include the use of chlorine dioxide as the bleaching agent, as well as totally chlorine-free processes. Some elemental chlorine-free bleaching processes can theoretically generate dioxins at extremely low levels."*

### There may be petrochemicals, too

Consider the applicator used in your brand of tampon. If it's plastic, you're exposing your body to plastic material every time you insert a tampon, and that plastic could potentially be harmful.

If it's cardboard, the nice glossy finish that makes it smooth comes from phthalates – chemical plasticisers used in many items, including pills, children's toys, medical devices and personal care products, such as perfumes, liquid soap, nail polish and hair spray.

Phthalates, along with many plastics, are known 'endocrine disruptors' because they interfere with normal hormone system function – possibly leading to obesity and birth defects.

### The new generation of potentially toxic sanitary pads

As for sanitary pads, today we're seeing a whole new generation made from petrochemicals. Conventional sanitary pads are made from over 90% plastic derived from crude oil, including superabsorbent *polyacrylates*, *polypropylene* and *polyethylene*.

Synthetics and plastic restrict the free flow of air and can trap heat and dampness, potentially promoting the growth of yeast and bacteria in the vaginal area. Labels such as "non-woven" are just fancy-talk for petrochemicals.

### Why we haven't been told about this

Many of these products have been used for decades. Why haven't you heard of these potential dangers before now?

Firstly, the manufacturers have an interest in selling their product. Secondly, the sanitary pad industry is not required to disclose ingredients, including chemicals used in the manufacturing process.

Thirdly, manufacturers frequently hire their own researchers to conduct research, and those research results are all that the FDA sees. In fact, the FDA's reassurances to the public are based on the data given to them by the product manufacturers.

### Another potential problem with tampons

Tampons can create a favourable environment for bacterial growth, and the result may be Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS). This may be

caused by toxins from either *Staphylococcus aureus* (golden staph) or group A *streptococcus* (strep) bacteria.

TSS can be a life-threatening condition.

The signs and symptoms may be:

- Sudden high fever
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Low blood pressure
- Seizures
- Rash on palms or soles
- Muscle aches
- Redness of eyes, mouth and throat.

## Reducing the risk of toxic shock syndrome

Any tampon can create a friendly environment in the vagina for the growth of these two types of bacteria. However, there are steps you can take to minimise the risk of developing this condition:

- Avoid super absorbent tampons – choose the lowest absorbency rate to handle your flow;
- Alternate the use of tampons with sanitary napkins or mini-pads;
- Never leave a tampon inserted overnight; use overnight pads instead;
- Change tampons at least every 4 - 6 hours;
- When inserting a tampon, be extremely careful to avoid scratching the vaginal lining (and avoid plastic applicators);

- Do not use a tampon between periods.

## Naturally-grown cotton, a best friend

'Natural' cotton is cotton without dioxins or chlorine by-products. Hydrogen peroxide replaces any chlorine-containing substances used in the bleaching process.

Natural cotton has many benefits:

- Soft and fluffy, natural cotton feels comfortable against your skin;
- Unlike synthetic materials, natural cotton allows your skin to breathe as air flows easily through the cotton fibres;
- Compatible with your body's pH;
- Hypoallergenic [low allergy risk];
- Natural absorbency may replace the need for super-absorbent fluff wood pulp found in conventional pads.

## Why organic cotton matters

Organic cotton is grown without the use of pesticides, herbicides or synthetic fertilisers. Look for cotton that is certified organic by one of the recognised certifying bodies in Australia, such as BFA or NASA.

Organic cotton cannot be genetically modified and is much easier on the environment.

Organic cotton is not 'Big Business'. When

you support organic cotton, you're helping to support farms that are mostly small and family owned.

Naturally, we expect to pay a little more for organic cotton. But we are protecting our health against potential toxins and their nasty consequences.

## Organic cotton tampons available

A brand named TOM™ organic produces tampons made from organic cotton. No bleaches have been used, there are no dyed strings and no 'silky smooth' polypropylene (plastic) coating – just chemical-free organic cotton. TOM™ claim that their tampons are as comfortable, easy to use and absorbent as any other tampon.

TOM™ products – tampons, pads and liners – are Australia's first feminine hygiene range to be certified by ACO (Australia Certified Organic), Australia's largest certifier for organic and biodynamic products. TOM™ products are unique in Australia

Considering a woman could use thousands of tampons during her lifetime, it's important that the tampons be non-toxic and safe.

TOM is stocked nationally in Woolworths, Coles, Thomas Dux, Selected IGA Supermarkets, Healthy Life stores, health food stores and pharmacies.

To find your closest retailer or for more information about TOM™, the website is [www.tomorganic.com.au](http://www.tomorganic.com.au)




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# Vitamin and Mineral Supplements:

## To Take or Not To Take?

*Abridged with kind permission from an article by Cyndi O'Meara published in Cyndi's March Newsletter, dated 20th March 2012. Website [www.changinghabits.com.au](http://www.changinghabits.com.au)*

As a young nutrition student, I was taught that there is no difference between the vitamins and minerals found in food and the synthetic versions made in a chemical laboratory.

When I first began to consult as a nutritionist, I trusted a supplement company and the head of that company. I took supplements myself, the best kind I thought. I wanted to have children at this stage, so I took supplements in the lead up to pregnancy.

Fast forward 30 years, and I wish I had known then what I know now.

Becoming a food distributor and learning about supplements and how they are made has started a whole new learning curve for me with regards to who makes the vitamins and minerals; who puts them together; how they put them together; what is a gel cap made from; how is a capsule made; what are the ingredients of the capsule and how is a tablet bound.

I have found that they add synthetic vitamins to natural super foods to increase the vitamin percentage, and they increase the potency of fish oil with synthetic derivatives.

There is a revolution happening and people are no longer complacent about their health and wellbeing; they are no longer trusting their health care provider, but rather questioning and becoming informed. As Dr Jack Kruse says, 'Question everything'.

I believe that vitamin manufacturers are not deliberately being deceitful – it is simply that I have a different philosophy from theirs.

Just as drug manufacturers conduct seminars to teach doctors how to use their drugs, there are also supplement companies running seminars to teach chiropractors, osteopaths, naturopaths, iridologist, nutritionists, etc, how wonderful are their supplements and what they can be used for.

I'm not saying that drugs and supplements are on a par. Far from that! Medications have contributed to many side effects, ill health and tens of thousands of deaths a year, whereas the supplement industry is far removed from such problems. A recent annual report of the American Association of Poison Control Centers shows that there have been zero direct deaths from multiple vitamins and zero deaths from vitamins A, niacin, B<sub>6</sub>, D and E. Vitamins are far safer than medications.

The issue is – is taking vitamin and mineral supplements the best thing to do for optimum

health, or is it more important to get what you eat under control?

The body needs vitamins and minerals (micronutrients) as well as fats, proteins and carbohydrates (macronutrients) in order to function properly and be healthy. Some are essential, which means we must eat them for survival, while others can be made by the body as long as the building blocks are available. Some of our nutrients are synthesised by the microorganisms within our gut and other spaces in the body. If we take, for example, antibiotics and don't eat the foods that our evolutionary past has dictated, then a poorly functioning body is the result.

Never in the history of our evolution did we find a single nutrient existing without a cloud of macro and micronutrients surrounding it. In other words, food was the delivery tool, and without antibiotics or preservatives in food or chlorine in water, our microorganisms were able to synthesise the other essential nutrients that they have provided for us for eons.

So how can we know whether a supplement is from natural or synthetic sources, and whether it is an important part of our survival mechanism?

My first realisation in all this was in regard to the iodine that was added to table salt – it was *potassium iodate*. I discovered how it was mined, processed and imported into the country – in a barrel marked 'poison', that is, not only poisonous via mouth but also on skin. So I looked at the iodine in supplements and found it was the same iodine they added to table salt – potassium iodate.

Next I found that research on calcium supplementation was pointing to the fact that one of the worst pieces of advice that was being given to premenopausal women and also postmenopausal women was to take calcium supplements to prevent osteoporosis. Most supplement brands use calcium that is *not from natural sources* and is not absorbed from the gut. The portion that is absorbed often runs free in the bloodstream and can contribute to calcified arteriosclerosis as well as lipping and spurring on bones.

Men are not free from problems with calcium supplementation either. Men who have a high intake of [non-natural] calcium supplements appear to have a greater risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) death, as was reported by researchers from the National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Md, in *JAMA Internal Medicine*. The men taking over 1,000 mg/



day in calcium supplementation had a 20% greater risk of total CVD death, including 19% higher risk of heart disease and 14% higher risk of cerebrovascular disease death.

[Readers – please note that the 'Green Calcium' that we advertise periodically in this magazine contains calcium balanced – importantly – by magnesium and 72 trace minerals, all from an organic marine plant. – Editor]

Iron was another supplement and food fortifier that I realised had some crookedness. When I found that some iron supplements and most foods fortified with iron were magnetic (you can remove them with a magnet), I began to question every fortification and every laboratory-based supplement.

My next question was, how were the vitamins and minerals made and what were they made of? This is not easy to find out, but I did discover that some vitamin A is synthesised from acetone, some vitamin C from keto acid and other vitamins from petrochemicals.

Basically, the supplement market has been taken over by the chemical companies. Companies in Germany are making many of the ingredients for many Australian supplement companies, including brands I've always trusted. Even practitioner-only companies make their vitamin and mineral supplements from synthetic sources and have flavours, colours and other additives that I wouldn't consume and don't recommend.

Ethics is the most important issue in a company. When I see a company that I have trusted add preservatives, flavourings, soy protein isolate and other additives to their products, I lose all trust in that company.

## How do you make a best-selling supplement?

Many supplements, such as glutathione and coenzyme Q10, have become big sellers. The supplement market in the US alone annualises to a \$28 billion industry.

But these isolated supplements are never found in nature alone, they are always found in nature with other macro and micronutrients. What happens is that the biochemical pathway for energy may need hundreds of different nutrients, but for some reason one nutrient is given priority by a biochemist and that single nutrient becomes a best seller.

The body has millions of biochemical reactions happening every second of the day, and thousands of nutrients are needed in order for these reactions to be successful. The wisdom and innate intelligence of the body knows how to carry out every single one of them. The most important thing for these biochemical reactions is the wide range of nutrients in real foods that allows them all to operate optimally. One nutrient all by itself does not do it.

Let's now look at how to decipher the thousands of ingredients used by companies and how to determine what is real and what is not.

## 10 Steps to Reading a Supplement Label

Reading a label for supplements is much the same as reading a label for food. The only problem is that supplement companies do not have to disclose all their ingredients. You will have to call the company to find that information.

1. Look for the word 'natural'. If the package does not say 100% natural plant or animal, it probably isn't. The word 'natural' can be on the product even if only 10% is natural. If a supplement label uses words like 'Food state', 'Food source', 'Food base' or 'Organic', what does this mean? Many companies are not being totally honest, as the supplement may
2. Look to see if there are any additives. It may say that the supplement is free from gluten, sugar, flavours, preservative or colour, or it may say no added sugar, flavour, wheat, dairy, etc. If it says 'no' or 'free from', you can be assured that it has none of those ingredients. If it says 'no added ...' then even though the manufacturer has not added sugar or flavour or additive, the supplier of some of the ingredients may have added it. This situation is exactly the same in the food industry.
3. Does the label say "No artificial colours or flavours"? Another trick is that labels will say "No added", "Free from" or "No artificial colours and artificial flavours", but what they may fail to say is that there are 'natural' colours and flavours present. Remember 'natural' is a very loose term, and it may be that the colour or flavour is 10% natural and the rest artificial. I have a rule of thumb

and that is that I want no flavours or colours, whether artificial or not in, a supplement.

4. Is the supplement in a capsule (that can be pulled apart), a tablet (bound) or a gel cap? Many gel caps are believed to be made from gelatine, but some may also include the following ingredients: glycerine, sorbitol, methacrylic acid, copolymer, hypemellose phthalate, titanium dioxide, propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol or vanillin (synthetic vanilla). If any of these are present, you won't know because the ingredients in the gel cap, capsule or binders don't have to be on the label.
5. Does the capsule, tablet or gel cap have an *enteric coating*? This means that it won't dissolve until it hits the small intestine, which is important for some supplements and medications. Enteric coatings are made from plastics and phthalates, including some of the chemicals mentioned in step 4, as well as acrylic resin, shellac and timellitate. These enteric coatings are dissolved in organic solvents like acetone, methanol, ethanol, isopropyl alcohol and ethyl acetate, and are applied to capsules and tablets (for both supplements and medicines). These coatings may be sprayed on or applied as a chemical vapour, and the solvent will evaporate leaving the coating behind. You won't know whether your capsule, tablet or gel cap has an enteric coating unless



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you call the manufacturer. My rule of thumb is no tablets or gel caps, but if the supplement is in a pull-apart capsule, then I know that I can pull the capsule apart, use what's inside and discard the capsule.

6. Look for "Manufactured by ..." or "Manufactured for ..." When a company leaves the manufacturing process to someone else (outsources), they may lose control of how the product is made and where the vitamins and minerals are sourced. Toxic agents may be added to the product or sneaky substitutions made in order to save money. You can call the company to see if they know their sources and the exact ingredients of their pills. I've done this on several occasions and they refer me to the manufacturer for the answers.
7. Are your vitamins and minerals synthetic? To find out, there are a few rules of thumb. If the vitamin ends in '...ate' or '...ide', it has a synthetic source rather than a food source. The source can be acetone, coal tar, nicotine, alloxal, petrochemicals or keto acid. If 'dl-' precedes the vitamin name, it is synthetic. Here are some examples as well as some other common synthetic names to help you decipher the nomenclature. By no means is this list complete, but these are the more common names:

## VITAMIN OR MINERAL followed by SYNTHETIC PRODUCT

Vitamin A	acetate, palmitate, retinol acetate
Vitamin B1	thiamine mononitrate, thiamine hydrochloride, thiamine nitrate
Vitamin B2	riboflavin
Vitamin B3	nicotinamide
Vitamin B6	pyridoxine hydrochloride
Vitamin B12	cyanocobalamin
Pantothenic acid	calcium D-pantothenate
PABA (para aminobenzoic acid)	aminobenzoic acid
Folate	folic acid, pyerolyglutamic acid
Choline	choline chloride, choline bitartrate
Biotin	d-biotine
Vitamin C	ascorbic acid, sodium ascorbate, calcium ascorbate dehydrate
Vitamin D	irradiated ergosterol, calciferol, cholecalciferol
Vitamin E	dl-alpha-tocopherol, dl-alpha-tocopherol acetate, dl-alpha-tocopherol succinate
Vitamin K	menadione, menadiol acetate, menadiol sodium phosphate
Iron	ferrous fumarate
Calcium	calcium carbonate
Chromium	chromium chloride
Iodine	potassium iodate, potassium iodide
Phosphorus	calcium hydrogen phosphate
Boron	borax, boric acid
Magnesium	magnesium chloride
Selenium	seleno-methionine
Zinc	zinc sulphate monohydrate

8. Look for Real Foods. For example, if the product is a powder and contains the ingredients, rose hip, acerola or camu camu, these are real foods that are high in vitamin C. So not only is natural vitamin C present, but so are all the other nutrients that the body requires to use vitamin C. Other real foods to look for are wheatgrass, barley grass, chlorella, spirulina, spinach powder, broccoli powder, powdered herbs, beetroot powder, inca inchi oil, avocado, rosehip oil and so on. These products are usually dried and then made into a powder or extracted as oil.
9. What about probiotics? These are another supplement that many people are taking on a daily basis. The questions you need to ask are: is the source a petrie dish or is it food based? Is the source genetically modified or has it a patent? My choice here is always a probiotic made on food – read the ingredients and choose a probiotic that is fermented-food-based, rather than just the microorganisms.
10. Should you ask a doctor or pharmacist for advice about supplements? Most doctors and pharmacists do not have the information presented here unless they are a compounding chemist, and then I would consider asking some questions. But in the end, it is important to be informed and to know exactly what you are buying so that you cannot be coaxed into believing propaganda. Print out the above list of synthetic forms of vitamins and inorganic forms of minerals and peruse the supplement shelves; you may be very disappointed.

## 'WHOLE' IS FUNDAMENTAL

95% of the supplement market uses synthetic vitamins and minerals. These do not function as whole foods and may deplete your body of other nutrients. A good example is vitamin C, the majority of which is ascorbic acid or ascorbate. These are not actually Vitamin C, but represent the *outer ring* of the molecule that serves as a shell for all members of the Vitamin C complex. This complex includes *rutin, bioflavonoids, factor K, factor J, factor P, tyrosinase and ascorbinogen*. When you take synthetic ascorbic acid, your body needs to gather all these other components within its cells to make the ascorbic acid work. If they are not available, the ascorbic acid is simply eliminated via the urine.

All vitamins require enzymes, co-factors, co-enzymes, minerals and other micro-nutrients for their full benefit. For example, vitamins K, P and D have 4, 5 and 12 active components respectively, while vitamin E works closely with the mineral selenium, and copper is required by vitamin C.

These are things we know, but there are also many things we don't know. The intelligence of real, natural, evolutionary foods combined with the innate intelligence of the body knows it all!

## CONCLUSION

Just as medicine has its place in emergency health situations, so do synthetic vitamins and minerals, so I am not totally against these products. What I am against is the indiscriminate use of medicines and synthetic supplements in the numerous instances when food would be a far cheaper and healthier option.

There is a nutritional supplement for every complaint from poor vision to low libido, but in the end, if you are eating real natural foods and taking supplements made from natural foods – plant or animal sources – for general health and wellbeing, this should do what nature intended to do and create a healthy, vital, energetic body.



# MERCURY MADNESS

## Part 4 – Detoxification to be postponed

We are sorry to have to inform our subscribers and readers that Dr Lisa Matriste's dental clinic in Melbourne was burgled at Easter-time and she has had to devote time and energy to assisting police and re-establishing her practice. Consequently there will be a break in the sequence of brilliant articles she has been writing on the dangers of dental amalgam. We anticipate being able to publish Part 4 the Summer 2013/14 edition of *True Natural Health*.

Meanwhile, for those with internet access, a wealth of information is available on the websites provided by Dr Lisa (below), with her personal apologies for the forced break between instalments and a strong recommendation for qualified supervision of any detoxification program.

### RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON MERCURY DETOXIFICATION

For list of websites, turn to page 30.

Protect yourself, others and our planet ...

### SAY NO TO MERCURY AND GIVE YOUR SUPPORT TO Australians for Mercury Free Dentistry

It takes courage to stand up for what you believe is right in the face of overwhelming bias, prejudice and fear of recrimination from your peers. I believe that the organisation I have founded represents the voice of the silent majority of Australians who **no longer** want to have the primitive, polluting, poisonous product of mercury dental amalgam implanted into their bodies. NOW is the time for Australians to find their voices and to shout out loud, **NO TO MERCURY!**

The final UNEP negotiation session for the Minamata Treaty will be held in Geneva in January 2013. The world is currently divided between countries which are committed to a phase-out of dental amalgam and those that want to continue using it during a long-term phase-down. With less than six months to go, Australians for Mercury Free Dentistry needs resources to continue active lobbying both in Canberra and internationally.

You can pledge your support to **PHASE OUT MERCURY AMALGAM and end the mercury age of dentistry in 2018** by:

1. Registering as a member on our website, [www.mercuryfreedentistry.com.au](http://www.mercuryfreedentistry.com.au)
2. Making a donation
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4. Becoming a district leader for our national campaign

The Australian Chapter of the World Alliance for Mercury Free Dentistry

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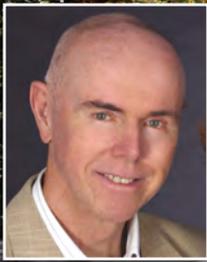
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A REGULAR COLUMN

# Knowing This Difference Could Save Your Life!

By Greg Fitzgerald, Osteopath and Naturopath

How often do I hear someone utter surprise that so and so died of a heart attack or a stroke, yet "he was just so fit". Many people mistakenly use the words 'healthy' and 'fit' interchangeably, not realising that there is a huge difference between the two.

Fitness is a term which describes a person's ability to perform life's functions with energy to spare. In everyday language, we describe as fit someone who regularly engages in exercise, either formally such as resistance training, running, swimming, cycling, etc, or in their occupation which requires large amounts of daily energy expenditure.

Although there are specific parameters of fitness, such as cardio-respiratory, muscular strength, flexibility, recovery time, etc, for the purposes of this article the term 'fit' or 'fitness' is used to describe someone who, through either formal exercise or occupation, maintains a good level of general fitness and is not overweight.

It is a common belief that if you engage in regular exercise, keep to your ideal weight and don't smoke, then you are not only fit, but also healthy. This is a widespread and potentially deadly misconception.

In fact, it is possible that someone who is very fit and strong can be simultaneously very unhealthy. A recent case serves as an example:

John (not his real name) came to see me a few months ago. He regularly engaged in many activities, including weights, running, bike riding and outrigger (ocean water rowing) and had been very active all his life. At age 53, John was regarded as very fit and healthy by his friends. He did not smoke, was lean and muscular and had no previous medical issues, apart from a few exercise-induced injuries over the years. His heart rate was slow, which is good, and his blood pressure normal.

Lately, though, he had been experiencing some dizziness, palpitations and fatigue and had even blacked out for a few seconds at work, which had prompted him to get a full medical investigation. To John's absolute shock, the tests revealed he had atrial fibrillation and a 90% blockage in one of his main coronary ('crown') arteries. His cholesterol level was also very high.

To say he was upset would be an understatement. He was indignant – how could this be? He had taken pride in his youthful appearance and was very fit and strong. He had no family history of heart problems and had kept himself in great shape – externally.

I had known John for many years, as he would come to me for osteopathic treatment for his sports injuries. During these visits, John made it clear that he had no interest in nutrition or 'natural health' ideas, apart from exercise. So we never went there.

This scare motivated him and he came to seek my opinion on his situation, specifically on his nutrition and diet. He had remembered my involvement in this area and was unhappy with the advice given by the dietitian, which was simply to eat "a balanced diet".

John's diet was what we call the SAD – Standard Australian Diet: plenty of animal protein and dairy products every day, refined carbohydrates and sweets regularly (he "burned it up," he said) and liberal quantities of caffeine and alcohol. He ate a little fruit, but, to his credit, did eat plenty of vegetables.

I emphasised to John that his poor diet had to change, otherwise he would probably be in for a very hard landing with his health. What was the good of being the fittest corpse in the cemetery!

Such a diet wreaks havoc on the inside, even if the outside is being buffed by plenty of exercise. It is a common scenario.

The well known runner and author, James Fixx, didn't get the chance that John did to wake up to the difference between fitness and health. In the late 70's Fixx became famous when his book, *The Complete Book of Running*, became a sports best seller. In it he stated that anyone who could run a marathon was immune to heart attacks. At that time, Nathan Pritikin of *The Pritikin Diet* fame, saw the danger in Fixx's book, and wrote an article called 'Run and Die on the American Diet', warning people not to believe such dangerous advice.

In 1982 James Fixx died of a severe heart attack while running, with the autopsy revealing up to 95% blockages in some coronary vessels. He was only 52. His diet was the typical US SAD (Standard American

Diet), basically the same as the Australian SAD. He could 'run it off', so he thought. He was wrong, and, tragically, his ignorance proved fatal.

You cannot, I repeat *cannot*, exercise your way out of a bad diet. Just because someone's body (the container) looks good, this doesn't mean the insides (the contents) are healthy. There is often a big discrepancy between the container and the contents.

To be optimally healthy, *all* the conditions of health must be provided, not just one.

You can be fit and unhealthy or you can be fit and healthy. The choice is yours.

## THE AUTHOR

Greg Fitzgerald is an osteopath, chiropractor, naturopath and Principal of the Health for Life Centre, 31 Cronulla St, Cronulla, Sydney. Phone (02) 9540 1962; website [www.healthforlife.com.au](http://www.healthforlife.com.au); email [info@healthforlife.com.au](mailto:info@healthforlife.com.au) or [gdfitz5@iprimus.com.au](mailto:gdfitz5@iprimus.com.au)

Greg was a speaker at the Natural Health Society's Annual Seminar of 24th March this year, and has spoken at other Society seminars previously.

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# Gerson Therapy Case Studies

By Jo Thompson

Today, in Australia, we are blessed with an abundance of food, temptations and quick easy meals to grab on the run. So we struggle to maintain, sustain or implement a fully healthy diet. We continue to be led by our desires, whims and the need to distract ourselves from our emotional pain. Many of us lack the discipline to stay on a nutritional program, even though we know, feel and see the awesome results.

I counsel, educate, monitor and support all kinds of people on the Gerson diet. Most people take on the therapy/diet for medical conditions that include cancer, diabetes, arthritis, intolerances and chronic constipation. Please don't wait to change your eating habits because you have been given a 'terminal' diagnosis.

The diet is the most important part of the Gerson program. The other three components are:

- The juices
- The supplements
- The coffee enemas

Here we will focus on the diet, its importance, what it is and the do's and don'ts.

This diet is strict, challenging and has a clear rationale as to why certain foods have been omitted. For further details on this you can email me for the complete program and explanation.

The diet is plant based with no animal protein until the sixth week when we allow yoghurt and fish. There are no grains or pulses until week 4 – 6, depending on your medical status and reason for pursuing the treatment

All food, except for salads and some fruit, is cooked very slowly and at a low heat. We are aiming for pre-digested food so that the energy of the body is not focused on digestion, but on healing, eliminating toxins, building the immune system and increasing vitality so that the body can become free of disease.

The diet is high in potassium-rich foods to increase oxygen in the cells, and rich in enzymes and nutrients to promote healing and optimum health. Green, leafy vegetables and potatoes are example of potassium-rich foods which are abundant in the diet.

For the person with cancer and similar conditions, nuts and seeds are to be avoided. The rationale is that because they contain enzymes inhibitors, they halt good enzyme activity in the cells.

No cucumber is allowed as it is high in sodium which reduces potassium in the cells. If we have high potassium in the cells we have high oxygen. Where there is oxygen, cancer is unable to grow and develop its own blood supply.

## Example of the daily diet

**Breakfast:** rolled oats slowly cooked with filtered water. Small amount of allowable stewed fruits – usually apple, pear or rhubarb.

**Lunch:** Hippocrates special soup. 1 slice of rye or sourdough bread (no salt in the bread).

Salad with a dressing of lemon juice and flaxseed oil.

**Dinner:** slow cooked vegetables (from the allowable foods list). Salad.

Only herbal teas are allowed, especially peppermint and chamomile as these aid digestion. No normal tea or coffee is allowed and, of course, no alcohol.

You will lose weight in the first few weeks. You will have more energy, sleep better and be less emotional. It will take time and effort to adjust. You can expect to recover from most illnesses with this diet and the other component of the therapy.

## Case study

A female in her 60's came in for a consultation after she had been told to go home and die. She had stage-4 lung cancer, for which she had been treated with chemotherapy, radiotherapy and pharmaceutical medications. She was pale and coughing up blood, and she walked – or should I say shuffled – with a rollator (walking frame). Her kidney function was failing and her liver enzymes were elevated, indicating liver damage. She was teary and emotional, she didn't want to die, and wanted to commence Gerson therapy. We had our work cut out for us.

We commenced very gently and slowly in implementing the therapy. Firstly, we changed her diet to the one above. We really pressed her to take in the soup to help heal her kidneys. She did everything I suggested. She then moved onto juices and the enema.

I first saw her in November last year. It is now April, and she is stronger, has colour in her face, walks unassisted, laughs and chats about life. The most impressive result is that her kidney function is back to normal. Her oncologist, who was against nutritional therapies, couldn't believe the results, and told her to keep doing what she is doing. This lady now has quality of life.

This therapy can change a person's life. Stop the excuses and sabotages and take control of your life. Feed your brain healthy, nutritious food, and you will no longer struggle with temptation and lack of discipline. You will improve your health and vitality.

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**Joanne Thompson**  
Health Practitioner  
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# Broccolini® baby broccoli

## – the green that other greens envy

By Perfection Fresh, Australia

Broccolini® baby broccoli, the green veggie which joined the brassica family 14 years ago, has gone from being a virtual unknown in Australia to being one of the most frequently purchased greens. It has an appealing nature and whole-veggie eating attributes.

### GREAT PLATE APPEAL

The bright, fresh, green colour and long, tender stems of Broccolini®'s add instant plate appeal. It can be arranged, draped, balanced, stacked or mingled with other complementary ingredients to great effect.

### THE ONE AND ONLY

Trademarked Broccolini® baby broccoli is a varietal cross between broccoli and Chinese kale. While there are copycat products available, only Broccolini® has its distinct, unique taste with a peppery edge.

It is a specialty green veggie grown and marketed exclusively by Perfection Fresh Australia.

### VERSATILITY PLUS

Broccolini® baby broccoli is one of the few green veggies which is entirely edible, needing only a quick rinse. From the base of its tender asparagus-like stalks to the tip of its soft and loose deep green florets, every part can be eaten – including any leaves which remain on the bunch.

It doesn't need peeling or scaling and chopping is optional. It can be cut diagonally, into small, even batons or into florets and stalks. It's a fast-cooking, no-waste veggie with wide appeal thanks to its mild, succulent taste which becomes sweeter when cooked. It suits all cuisine styles from Asian stir-fries and curries to Mediterranean-style pasta dishes or contemporary Australian salads. It's also an ideal first veggie to start children on the path to healthy eating.

Broccolini® contains various textures and tastes within a single stalk. It can be prepared in many ways, then presented creatively as the main ingredient of a meal for colour, flavour or shape or simply served on the side for everyday green super nourishment.

### 10 WAYS TO COOK AND SERVE BROCCOLINI®

- Steamed: Encase in a stovetop steamer with a little water and cook for one to two minutes. Serve as a side, in a salad or toss through pasta.
- Blanched: Immerse in boiling water for less than two minutes, plunge into ice water to refresh, then serve in omelettes or quiches.
- Puréed: Pulse whole in a food processor and mix into other ingredients. Serve as a salsa, soup or dressing.
- Wok-tossed: Stir-fry whole or chopped with other colourful veggies along with

nuts or legumes.

- Sautéed: Simmer whole or chopped with creamy sauces or clear stocks. Serve as a main or side.
- Roasted: Slow roast whole until colour deepens and texture becomes crunchier. Serve as a side.
- Baked: Combine Broccolini® in a cheesy, white sauce and bake in the oven. Serve gratin as a main or side.
- Sun-dried: Sun-dry florets and use as sprinkles to garnish.

### WHERE AND WHEN TO FIND BROCCOLINI®

Broccolini® is available year-round at supermarkets and independent retail outlets across Australia. Store in the fridge and eat within a few days of purchase.

### WHERE IT'S GROWN

Unknown in Australia until Perfection Fresh introduced it in 1999, this baby broccoli is now grown *year round* by 14 producers located in Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania.

Despite the 'baby' reference, Broccolini® is a unique registered variety and not broccoli picked early. Up to 12 stems are harvested by hand from each plant.

### ABOUT PERFECTION FRESH

Founded in Australia in 1978, Perfection Fresh is serviced by fresh produce growers across Australia and supplies specialised fruit and vegetable lines to premier food retailers, processors and distributors Australia-wide and internationally.

Besides Broccolini® baby broccoli, these lines include The Original™ grape tomatoes, Il Bello Rosso® baby red capsicums, Vine Sweet Minicaps® baby capsicums, Qukes® baby snacking cucumbers, Romatherapy® baby roma tomatoes, Midnight Beauty® seedless black grapes and mangoes.



# Chia, the Tiny Seed that Packs a Mighty Nutritional Punch

By Melissa Argiro, BHSc, ND, Phytocare

Chia is an edible seed from the desert plant, *Salvia hispanica*, a flowering plant of the mint family, *Lamiaceae*. Although native to central and southern Mexico, chia is also grown in Australia. It is said that Mayan and Aztec cultures favoured the seed for its energy boosting abilities. Chia means 'strength'.

Chia is one of the most functional and nutritious superfoods. It is the richest known plant source of omega-3 fatty acids, in the form of alpha-linolenic acid. Chia is also loaded with protein, fibre, vitamins, minerals and an army of antioxidants. It is an excellent source of plant protein, as all essential amino acids are present.

There are two colours – black and white. Black chia is a combination of both colours of seeds, while the white has simply been separated from the black seeds.

The mild, nutty flavour of chia seeds makes them quite versatile and easy to add to foods and beverages. Chia can be added to salads, sauces, vegetables, salsas, rice dishes,

cereals, smoothies and soups to boost the nutritive properties of these foods. Chia is said to be able to absorb many times its own weight of water, so it is important when eating chia to consume plenty of water.

Six reasons to include chia in your diet:

- Rich in valuable omega-3 fat;
- Excellent source of fibre;
- Gluten free;
- Is a whole, unrefined seed;
- Packed with calcium, magnesium, iron and vitamin C;
- Easy to digest.

Why use Australian chia? Australian-grown chia is produced in the beautiful Kimberley region of Western Australia. Innovative and sustainable farming practices are employed to ensure a 100% natural, high-quality Australian-grown product.

Chia can be purchased as seed, oil, bran and flour. If you are looking to add a boost of fibre

and energy to your day, remember chia is nutritious and easily digestible.

## REFERENCES

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Kindest regards,  
Daniel Baden  
Naturopath  
Managing Director

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## DEEP GREEN WINTER SOUP WITH SEASONAL GREENS

Serves 6 - 8 | Prep time: 6 mins | Cooking time: 45 mins.

A hearty, healthy soup that's packed full of antioxidant-rich winter greens. Recipe created by executive chef Andrew Mirosh of Sirromet Winery, Brisbane.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 Broccolini® baby broccoli, sliced
- 1 Treviso™ radicchio, sliced
- 1 Tuscan cabbage (cavolo nero), stems removed
- 1 baby endive outside leaves, trimmed and sliced
- 250g baby Brussels sprouts, trimmed and sliced
- 1 Spanish onion, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1.5 L vegetable stock
- 2 tsp pistachio nuts, chopped
- 90 ml extra virgin olive oil
- Sea salt and ground black pepper, to taste

### METHOD

- Heat 60 ml oil in a saucepan and add onion and garlic. Cook until onion is tender but not browned.
- Add all vegetables and cook for a further 2 - 3 minutes until wilted.
- Add stock and simmer for 30 minutes. Transfer to a blender and purée until smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Serve soup sprinkled with pistachio nuts and drizzled with remaining oil.



## BABY FENNEL AND CELERIAC SOUP

Serves 6 - 8 | Prep time: 15 mins | Cooking time: 40 mins.

A sophisticated, creamy soup with earthy anise flavours. Recipe created by executive chef Andrew Mirosh of Sirromet Winery, Brisbane.

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 witlof stems, trimmed and sliced
- 8 witlof leaves, whole
- 2 baby fennel, trimmed and sliced
- 1 celeriac, peeled and sliced
- 750 ml vegetable stock
- 600 ml pure cream
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp white pepper

### Remoulade

- ½ cup celeriac, grated
- ½ cup whole-egg mayonnaise
- 1 tsp lemon juice

### METHOD

- In a saucepan bring stock to the boil and add sliced witlof, fennel and celeriac. Simmer for around 30 minutes, or until tender.
- Add cream, salt and pepper. Bring to the boil.
- Transfer to a blender and purée until smooth. Keep warm.
- For remoulade, combine all ingredients and mix well.
- Serve soup topped with fresh witlof leaves filled with remoulade.



## ORIENTAL BABY VEGETABLE STIR-FRY

Serves 4 | Prep time: 10 mins | Cooking time: 4 - 5 mins.

This crisp and delicious stir-fry combines delicate, baby vegetable flavours with an exotic, oriental twist!

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 bunch Dutch carrots, scraped and diagonally cut into thirds
- 250 gm packet Il Bello Rosso® baby red capsicums, seeded, cut into wedges
- 1 bunch Broccolini® baby broccoli, diagonally sliced
- 125 gm packet fresh baby corn, diagonally sliced
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 60 gm sachet oriental vegetable stir-fry paste
- Handful coriander leaves, to serve (optional)

### METHOD

- Heat oil in large wok or frying pan over medium-high heat.
- Add carrots and 2 tbsp water. Stir-fry 2 minutes.
- Add baby red capsicum and Broccolini®. Stir-fry 1 minute.
- Add baby corn and stir-fry paste, stir-fry 1 minute, or until vegetables are tender.
- Serve garnished with coriander, if liked.



## RED CURRIED D'VINE RIPE TRUSS TOMATO SOUP

**Serves 6 - 8 | Prep time: 15 mins. | Cooking time: 50 mins.**

This bright red, spicy tomato soup is perfect warm on a wintery day or chilled in summer. Recipe created by executive chef Andrew Mirosoch of Sirromet Winery, Brisbane.

NOTE: d'VineRipe® truss tomatoes are grown in state-of-the-art glasshouse at Two Wells, South Australia, and are *available year round*. They are ripened on the vine.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg D'VineRipe® truss tomatoes, blanched and peeled
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 60 gm Rapadura (unrefined) sugar
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 1.5 L vegetable stock
- ½ tsp mild red chili flakes
- 50 ml balsamic vinegar
- 100 ml water
- 30 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp white pepper

### METHOD

- Blanch tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds. Peel, reserving the skins, then cut tomatoes in half.
- Squeeze pulp and seeds from tomato halves over a bowl so just the flesh remains. Reserve all.
- Heat oil in a saucepan until hot then add tomato flesh, onions and garlic. Cook for 5 minutes.
- Add sugar, tomato paste, cumin, curry powder, chili flakes, salt, pepper and stock. Simmer for 30 minutes.
- Transfer to a food processor and blend until smooth. Strain and discard any solids.
- In a saucepan bring reserved tomato skin, seeds and pulp to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Strain and discard solids.
- Return liquid to the saucepan and add balsamic. Reduce until syrupy.
- Serve soup hot or chilled, drizzled with tomato and balsamic syrup.



## A DUO OF ORANGE AND PURPLE DUTCH CARROT SOUP

**Serves 6 | Prep time: 15 mins | Cooking time: 30 mins.**

Serve this duo of colourful carrot soups side by side to make an impact. Recipe created by executive chef Andrew Mirosoch of Sirromet Winery, Brisbane.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 bunches purple Dutch carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 bunches orange Dutch carrots, peeled and sliced
- 500 ml orange juice
- 1 L water
- 2 pinches cardamom
- 2 tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp white pepper

### Orange Caramel Syrup

- 100 ml orange juice
- 50 gm Rapadura (unrefined) sugar

### METHOD

- In a saucepan bring 500 ml water and 250 ml orange juice to the boil.
- Add one pinch cardamom, one tsp salt, ¼ white pepper and purple carrots. Cook until carrots are tender.
- Transfer to a blender and purée until smooth. Add a little water if too thick. Keep warm.
- Repeat first three steps with orange carrots.
- For orange caramel syrup, bring orange juice and sugar to the boil and reduce by half.
- Serve soups side by side, drizzled with syrup.



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# SYDNEY resident's life-changing health retreat visit



When the GP of Sydney North Shore resident, Tony Coyle, advised a visit to Hopewood Health Retreat, Tony was sceptical but thought it just might be what he needed to help his long-term health problems. An all-natural health retreat for the first time at 69 years of age? It just didn't make sense to him. However, with the approval of his cardiologist, Tony was happy to take the approach of changing his lifestyle. He was pleasantly surprised and thankful for what he would achieve during his stay.

Hopewood Health Retreat has been practising Natural Health for over 50 years with a simple philosophy of natural, fresh plant foods as a part of a nutritional and enticing menu, fresh air and early morning sunshine, fresh or filtered water, moderate exercise and time for relaxation.

"The great thing about the program was that it helped me to ease into a healthy eating pattern before returning home. I even purchased a copy of Hopewood's recipe book *hopewood@home* to make some of my favourite meals myself. The family have since enjoyed some wonderful salads!"

Tony could not be more appreciative of the support provided to him by the warm and friendly staff, who helped guide him through his road to rejuvenation.

"Having no coffee was the hardest thing in my detox, but Hopewood's staff were

always on hand to treat headaches or any discomfort with natural alternatives," said Tony.

"All the food was vegetarian, and was absolutely delicious. I enjoyed a range of salads, fruits and a mixture of protein-rich and starch-rich foods. My diet was flexible and I was given the opportunity to try new things, while not being pressured to eat anything I didn't like. I was on a prescribed diet until the last five days when I could select from the vegetarian smorgasbord."

"I felt extremely supported during my stay. The naturopath who looked after me was really professional and enthusiastic. Her regular talks at the Retreat taught me how to improve my health through nutrition, which has totally changed the way I will now live my life," added Tony.

As a male aged 69 with many serious health problems, being referred to Hopewood by his doctor was a huge shock for Tony.

"I would never have dreamed of coming to a place like Hopewood and was unsure how much it would help me. Wow, was I wrong! I am glad I was convinced to come by my GP as I have had a marvellous time and will certainly come back. My stay at Hopewood made me feel healthy, fantastic and alive!"

"When I left, one of my goals was to maintain the healthy lifestyle I learned at Hopewood, and I am pleased with the progress I am making, even changing from full cream milk to skim!"

## About Hopewood Health Retreat

Nestled in the peaceful foothills of the Blue Mountains on the banks of the Nepean River, just one hour from Sydney, Hopewood Health Retreat is the perfect destination to escape the hustle and bustle of city living. Boasting over 50 years of experience in natural health, Hopewood's approach to healthy living is simple – combine natural, fresh, vegetarian foods with plenty of water, regular gentle exercise, fresh air and relaxation to feel energetic, look your best and perform at your optimum level.

Hopewood has the perfect health-focussed package with a program individually prescribed by your Naturopath. Why not try the Revive Package which helped Tony so much? Hopewood is currently running a special on the Revive Your Health package. Purchase the Revive Your Health package for 7, 8, 9 or 10 nights and receive two extra nights free.

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# Treating thyroid disorders naturally

By Robyn Chuter, Naturopath

Three facts you need to know about disorders of the thyroid gland:

1. They are very common;
2. They often go undiagnosed for many years; and
3. Even when they are diagnosed, they are frequently poorly managed, resulting in below-par physical and mental health.<sup>(1)</sup>

Here's what you need to know to look after your thyroid health.

## MEET YOUR THYROID GLAND

Your thyroid gland is located in your throat, just beneath the larynx (voice box). Its sole job is to make two hormones: *T4*, or *thyroxine*, and *T3*, or *triiodothyronine*.

These thyroid hormones have a broad range of effects on our bodies and minds. They:

- Elevate *basal metabolic rate* (BMR), which simply means the amount of energy the body uses to carry out its vital functions;
- Raise body temperature, heart rate and breathing rate;
- Stimulate protein synthesis;
- Increase the use of glucose and fats for energy production;
- Affect mood, emotions and thinking processes;
- Lower blood cholesterol (by increasing the excretion of cholesterol in bile);
- Accelerate growth, particularly of bones and nervous tissue (in conjunction with human growth hormone and insulin).

## HOW DOES IT ALL WORK?

The hypothalamus in your brain monitors the level of thyroid hormones circulating in your bloodstream. If the level drops, the hypothalamus causes the pituitary gland to release a hormone called *thyroid stimulating hormone*, or TSH, which prompts the thyroid to release more of its hormones. If thyroid hormone levels rise, TSH drops. Think of the relationship between these two hormones as being a see-saw: when T4 goes down, TSH goes up; and when T4 goes up, TSH goes down. TSH is always the first thing a doctor will test if he or she suspects you have a thyroid problem.

Once the thyroid releases its hormones, they travel through the bloodstream, bind to

thyroid hormone receptors on the membranes of your cells, and then travel to the nucleus of the cell where they 'switch on' genes involved in metabolism, protein synthesis and growth.

## WHAT CAN GO WRONG WITH THE THYROID GLAND?

The major types of thyroid disorders are:

1. **Hypothyroidism** or underactivity of the thyroid gland;
2. **Hyperthyroidism** or overactivity of the thyroid; and
3. **Thyroid nodules** or abnormal growths within the thyroid. Thyroid nodules can be either 'cold' – that is, they don't produce excess thyroid hormone – or 'hot' – that is, they overproduce thyroid hormone, leading to hyperthyroidism. 95% of thyroid nodules are NOT cancerous.<sup>(2)</sup>

**Goitre** or enlargement of the thyroid gland is a symptom of thyroid disease that can occur in either hypo- or hyperthyroidism, and also in some cases of multinodular thyroid. The most common cause of goitre worldwide is severe iodine deficiency; but this is rarely seen in Australia.

Let's take a closer look at each of these thyroid disorders.

## HYPOTHYROIDISM

In hypothyroidism, the thyroid gland fails to make enough thyroid hormone, either because of a problem within the gland itself, or lack of stimulation by either the pituitary gland or hypothalamus. Women are five times more likely to suffer low thyroid hormone levels than men.<sup>(3)</sup> Low-grade hypothyroidism may affect up to ten percent of the population, while two percent suffer severe hypothyroidism.<sup>(4)</sup>

**Hashimoto's thyroiditis** is the most common hypothyroid condition, affecting one in ten women at some point in their lifetime.<sup>(5)</sup> The risk of developing hypothyroidism rises with age, especially in women.<sup>(6)</sup>

In my practice, I've found that people who are eventually diagnosed with clinical hypothyroidism (elevated TSH with low levels of T4 and T3) often have a long history of sub-clinical hypothyroidism (mildly elevated TSH with normal T4 and T3). These people – usually women – have been experiencing symptoms of low thyroid function (see below)

for many years, but when they seek medical help, they're told that their blood tests results are 'normal'. What does 'normal' mean? Most pathology labs use a reference range for TSH of around 0.3 – 0.5 to 5 – 6 mU/L, so if your test result is within this range, you're considered 'euthyroid' meaning your thyroid is working normally.

However, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) recommends that doctors "consider treatment for patients who test outside the boundaries of a narrower margin based on a target TSH level of 0.3 to 3.0." Why? Because:

1. Many people show signs and feel symptoms of low thyroid with a TSH of only 3 or 4;
2. People with low-grade subclinical hypothyroidism are at high risk of progressing to 'full blown' clinical hypothyroidism; and
3. Treating mild thyroid disease at an early stage can help prevent the serious health effects of hypothyroidism, including elevated cholesterol, heart disease, osteoporosis, infertility and depression<sup>(7,8)</sup>

In my experience, low-grade hypothyroidism is the easiest of all the thyroid disorders to treat naturally (see case study below), and should be addressed as soon as it becomes evident.

## Signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism

### Cardiovascular system

Slow pulse; increased cholesterol and triglycerides; anaemia; oedema (swelling) – especially under the eyes; high or low blood pressure; enlarged heart; angina; increased risk of heart disease if untreated.

### Reproductive system

Females: low libido; prolonged and heavy periods with lengthened menstrual cycle; anovulation; infertility; miscarriage; premature delivery; stillbirth; production of breast milk when not breastfeeding.

Males: impotence; low libido; low sperm count.

### Hair, skin and nails

Dry, rough skin with fine superficial scales; eczema; psoriasis; acne; yellowing of skin especially on palms.

Coarse, dry, brittle, dull hair; hair loss (can be severe); thinning of outer eyebrows.

Thin, brittle nails with transverse grooves.

### Gastrointestinal tract

Constipation; decreased appetite.

## Musculoskeletal system

Muscle weakness; joint stiffness and swelling; muscle and joint pain and tenderness.

## Immune system

Frequent or chronic infections, especially fungal and viral.

## Mental and psychological

Depression; decreased concentration; severe forgetfulness; slowed thinking; emotional instability; apathy; irritability; agoraphobia; anxiety.

## General

Difficulty losing weight and/or moderate weight gain; decreased basal body temperature; sensitivity to cold; headache; lethargy; fatigue; increased sleepiness; shortness of breath; clumsiness; numbness and tingling in hands and feet; impaired kidney function; deep, hoarse voice; slurred speech; night blindness; hearing loss.

## What about the basal body temperature test?

Many alternative practitioners, and some doctors, believe that the TSH blood test is not sensitive enough to detect mild hypothyroidism. They suggest using the basal body temperature (BBT) for diagnosis. Whereas 10 – 12% of people have mild hypothyroidism if blood tests are used for diagnosis, that figure is around 25% if the BBT is used.<sup>(9)</sup> However, many conditions, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders and kidney failure can cause a lower-than-normal BBT – so, clearly, the BBT is not precise enough to identify hypothyroidism. In any case, only severe hypothyroidism causes a drop in body temperature, as opposed to a perception of being 'cold'.<sup>(10)</sup>

## What causes hypothyroidism?

The most common cause of low thyroid function in Australia and other developed countries is **Hashimoto's thyroiditis**, an autoimmune condition in which the immune system makes antibodies that destroy thyroid hormone-producing cells.

Other causes include:

- Radioactive iodine therapy, drugs or surgery for hyperthyroidism, goitre or thyroid cancer;
- Viral infection (viral sub-acute thyroiditis);
- Drugs including diet pills, oestrogen, some anticonvulsants, rifampin, p-aminosalicylic acid, iodides, lithium, amioderone, interferon and interleukin-2,<sup>(11)</sup> and
- Radiation treatment for head and neck cancers, lymphoma or acne.<sup>(12)</sup>

Interestingly, people with blood type A are more prone to developing hypothyroidism.<sup>(13)</sup>

## HYPERTHYROIDISM

The major types of hyperthyroid conditions are an autoimmune condition called **Graves' disease** (more common in people aged 20 to 40) and **thyroid nodules** (usually in the over-40s). Increased thyroid activity also occurs as a normal adaptation to life circumstances, such as cold environments, high altitude and pregnancy.<sup>(14)</sup> Women are five to ten times more likely to develop hyperthyroidism than men.<sup>(15)</sup> The thyroid gland may be either enlarged or shrunken in hyperthyroidism.

## Signs and symptoms of hyperthyroidism

### Mental and psychological

Nervousness; anxiety; panic attacks; irritability; fluctuating moods; over-reaction to minor setbacks; depression; hypochondria; disorganised thinking; emotional withdrawal; loss of emotional control; paranoia; aggression; episodes of erratic behaviour; psychosis.

### Reproductive system

Females: low or exaggeratedly high libido; infertility; menstrual irregularity (usually more frequent periods); light menstrual flow. Males: impotence; enlargement of breasts; low libido; infertility.

### Hair, skin & nails

Hair loss (alopecia areata), thinning and greasiness.

Soft, easily torn nails; separation of the nails (especially of the ring finger) from the nail beds; clubbing of the fingertips.

Excessive sweating; vitiligo (patches of white, dry, scaly skin); dry or itchy skin (in older people).

### Eyes

Exophthalmos (bulging eyes – think Marty Feldman!); staring.

### Musculoskeletal system

Weakness, particularly of the thigh, shoulder and upper arm muscles; osteoporosis.

### Gastrointestinal system

Increased hunger; frequent bowel movements; diarrhoea; vomiting.

### Cardiovascular system

Rapid pulse; enlarged heart; atrial fibrillation (fluttering beat); systolic hypertension – predisposing to heart failure; angina; reduced platelets (causing prolonged bleeding).

### General

Insomnia; fatigue; over-activity; intolerance to heat; weight loss; tremor (especially in the hands); increased thirst.

## What causes hyperthyroidism?

- Autoimmunity (**Graves' disease**);
- Excessive intake of iodine supplements or iodine-rich food, e.g., kelp<sup>(16)</sup>;
- Excess thyroid hormones from over-medication or endocrine changes;

- Sub-acute thyroiditis (due to a viral infection) or silent thyroiditis (an immune attack on the thyroid gland); both cause transient hyperthyroidism followed by hypothyroidism<sup>(17)</sup>;
- Diet pills;
- (Very rarely) pituitary tumour.

People with blood type O are more prone<sup>(18)</sup> (contrary to Peter D'Adamo's assertion, in *Eat Right 4 Your Type*, that type Os are more prone to hypothyroidism).

## NATURAL TREATMENT OF THYROID DISORDERS

To be successful, natural treatment of thyroid disorders must begin early – preferably as soon as the problem is diagnosed. The difficulty is that subclinical hypothyroidism in particular often goes undiagnosed for many years. By the time a client turns up in my office with a diagnosis of Hashimoto's thyroiditis, asking me if there's any natural alternative to the prescription for thyroxin that her doctor gave her, she may have already lost so many of her thyroid-hormone-producing cells that she really won't be able to avoid taking thyroid replacement therapy. In cases like this, my aim is to optimise her nutrition and stress management so that she can take the lowest possible dose of thyroxin while still maintaining ideal levels of TSH, T4 and T3.

When subclinical hypo- or hyperthyroidism is caught early, it's a completely different story: the autoimmune process can often be stopped, and the person can regain normal thyroid function – although they will always have a susceptibility to thyroid disorders in the future.

## Key treatment strategies:

**A high nutrient diet consisting of minimally-processed plant foods, with little or no animal products and no added salt.**

A fruit-and-vegetable-rich vegan diet, without added fats (which hinder immune function, particularly the clearance of immune complexes from the bloodstream), but containing adequate essential fatty acids, is an effective treatment for autoimmune disease. Water-only fasting is also highly effective in many cases,<sup>(19)</sup> but needs to be supervised by experienced practitioners, for example, those at Hopewood Health Retreat at Wallacia NSW.

Animal proteins are known to trigger autoimmune disease through a process called *molecular mimicry*: Incompletely digested proteins can slip through the intestinal wall if it has become damaged ('leaky gut') and enter the bloodstream, causing immune cells to manufacture antibodies against them. Because proteins from animal-derived foods resemble human body proteins (we are animals too!), these antibodies are far more likely to 'cross-react' with body cells than are proteins from plant foods, and cause autoimmune damage.<sup>(20)</sup>

Salt intake causes a crucial shift in immune function – differentiation of pathogenic T-helper 17 cells – which plays a key role in thyroid autoimmunity.<sup>(21)</sup>

A diet high in unprocessed plant foods also supplies the antioxidants needed to protect the body against the excessive free radical production induced by hyperthyroidism.

Many alternative health practitioners recommend a gluten-free diet to Hashimoto's sufferers even if they don't have coeliac disease, but unfortunately, although many people feel better on a gluten-free diet, going gluten-free does *not* appear to slow the progression of the disease.<sup>(22)</sup>

### Vitamin D

The 'sunshine vitamin' is crucial for normal thyroid function. Vitamin D deficiency is more common in sufferers of autoimmune thyroid disease, and deficiency also correlates with the presence of anti-thyroid antibodies.<sup>(23)</sup> I advise all my clients to have their GP run a blood test for 25-hydroxyvitamin D, and to take a D<sub>3</sub> supplement (preferably a plant-derived one such as Vitashine, available from my website [www.empowertotalhealth.com.au/products](http://www.empowertotalhealth.com.au/products)) if their blood level is below 100 nmol/L.

### Stress management

Stress is a well-recognised trigger of autoimmune disease. There is particularly strong evidence that Graves' disease can be precipitated by stresses such as serious illness or death of a family member, divorce or financial troubles. The incidence of Graves' disease has also been observed to rise significantly during and after wars.<sup>(24)</sup>

One of the major symptoms of Hashimoto's thyroiditis is depression, but the disease may also be *triggered* by an episode of depression.

One of the reasons why anxiety, depression and other psychological symptoms associated with thyroid disease may not go away, even if treatment causes thyroid hormone levels to return to normal, is that these symptoms may be the *cause* of the thyroid imbalance, not the consequence. If you're currently dealing with an autoimmune thyroid disease, have had a bout of it in the past or are at risk of developing it due to family history, you need to prioritise stress management! My favourite tool for reducing the effects of stress on mind, body and emotions is Emotional Freedom Technique, or EFT (commonly known as 'tapping'). I use this simple acupressure-based technique with all my clients with thyroid disorders to quickly and effectively deal with their stress-inducing thoughts, beliefs and emotional reactions.

### Quit smoking!

Smoking increases the severity of autoimmune attacks on the thyroid.<sup>(25)</sup> If you have a thyroid disorder and you smoke, QUIT! (If you *don't* have a thyroid disorder and you smoke, you should quit too!) EFT is incredibly useful in helping smokers quit.

### Avoid excess iodine

I have seen a number of clients who have attempted to self-medicate their thyroid

condition with high-dose iodine, or large quantities of kelp, and ended up making it worse! We need an adequate amount of iodine to make thyroid hormone, but excess iodine inhibits the release of thyroid hormones,<sup>(26)</sup> may trigger autoimmune attacks on the thyroid gland, and causes increased rates of thyroiditis and thyroid cancer.<sup>(27)</sup> Stick to the recommended daily intake of 150 mcg of iodine from food and supplements.

### Correct iron deficiency anaemia and depletion of iron stores

Both these conditions are associated with lowered levels of thyroid hormones, and iron supplementation helps to restore thyroid hormone levels to normal.<sup>(28)</sup> Don't take iron supplements unless you have iron depletion (detected through a blood test for *ferritin*), because excess iron is toxic. Boost your intake of iron-rich foods such as green leafy vegetables and juice made from them, legumes, dried apricots, nuts and seeds (eaten with a vitamin C-rich food to enhance absorption), and if an iron supplement is necessary, choose an organic form such as *iron picolinate*.

### Herbs

Constituents of *Melissa officinalis* (lemon balm) reduce the activity of the abnormal antibodies that cause thyroid over-activity in Graves' disease; and essential oil of thyme may also reduce thyroid activity.<sup>(29)</sup>

## CASE STUDY – HYPOTHYROIDISM

Pauline, a 55-year-old American woman who was visiting family in Australia, originally came to see me for high blood pressure. She was taking a beta blocker called Karvea for it, and was also on Synthroid (called Oroxine in Australia) to treat her hypothyroidism. She reported that her blood pressure, which she measured on a home monitor, rose as high as 180/120 in spite of the anti-hypertensive drug.

I gave Pauline detailed dietary and lifestyle guidance, including vegetarian diet, regular moderate exercise and stress management advice, and asked her to continue monitoring her blood pressure regularly, so that we would know when she could begin to reduce her blood pressure medication.

Pauline followed my advice to the letter. At her next visit, two weeks later, she reported that her blood pressure had dropped to 120/80 after just three days on the program. By her third visit, her blood pressure had decreased even further and she had also lost 5 kg. She had only six Karvea pills left and was happy to begin phasing them out. She did so over the next week, and her blood pressure remained at its new lower level. She found that it only became elevated after she went to an exciting church meeting!

Some months later, Pauline rang me from the US to tell me she had begun feeling very agitated, couldn't sleep at night and was experiencing palpitations. I couldn't

make sense of her symptoms until I went back over her file and recalled that she was on Synthroid. She confirmed that she was still taking the same dose of this drug. Her symptoms sounded like hyperthyroidism, and I suspected that she would need to reduce her dose of Synthroid.

I advised her to see her doctor for thyroid function tests, which revealed an excessive level of thyroid hormones. Her doctor advised her to stop taking Synthroid altogether! This was a truly remarkable outcome, given that people who go on thyroid hormone replacement are told they will be on it for life. Pauline was unclear about the exact nature of her hypothyroidism, but she almost certainly had Hashimoto's thyroiditis. It seems quite clear that the vegetarian diet and stress management techniques that I prescribed for her high blood pressure also resolved her autoimmune thyroid condition. Measures which restore health almost always have positive 'side-effects' such as this; whereas treatments that merely address disease symptoms almost invariably have negative side-effects.

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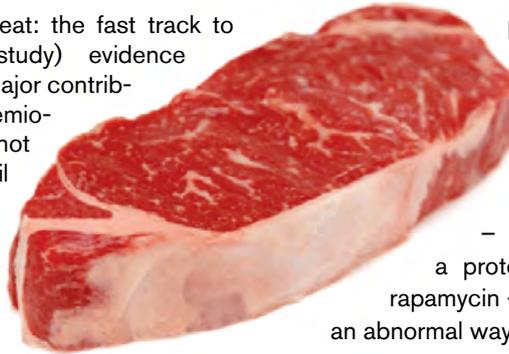
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# Don't feed the (wo)man diabetes

By Robyn Chuter

As I wrote in an earlier article, 'Eating meat: the fast track to *diabetes*', epidemiological (population-study) evidence strongly points to meat consumption as a major contributing factor to obesity and diabetes. Epidemiological studies, however, can only suggest, not prove, a cause-and-effect relationship. Until a 'smoking gun' that shows a mechanism of action is found, the ideas generated by epidemiological research are just hypotheses. Well, in the case of animal protein consumption as a contributor to diabetes risk, that smoking gun has been found, and it bears the decidedly unsexy *ribosomal protein S6 kinase 1*.



title of

First, a little bit of background on the epidemiological studies:

The EPIC-PANACEA study (which involved nearly 400,000 European men and women) found that the more red meat, processed meat and poultry people consumed, the more weight they gained over the 5 year study period,<sup>(1)</sup> even if their energy (kilojoule/calorie) intake was lower than those who ate less meat.

A meta-analysis of 12 studies on meat consumption and diabetes<sup>(2)</sup> found that high intake of meat of any kind increased the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 17% compared to low meat intake; high intake of red meat by 21%; and high intake of processed meat by 41%.

The Adventist Health Study found that eating a vegetarian diet reduced the risk of developing metabolic syndrome, a precursor to diabetes, by a whopping 56%,<sup>(3)</sup> while a vegan diet slashed the risk of developing diabetes itself by nearly 50%.<sup>(4)</sup>

And now we can turn our attention to the studies which spell out exactly how excess protein – the component of animal foods that most people think is so good for them – causes insulin resistance, the metabolic defect that leads to type 2 diabetes. A person suffering insulin resistance has more insulin circulating in their bloodstream than a 'normal' person, but their insulin doesn't work properly. As a result, their cells have reduced ability to take up glucose from the bloodstream and burn it as a fuel, leaving the person with a sustained high blood glucose level that contributes to elevated blood pressure, cholesterol and triglycerides, heart disease and fatty liver. Over time, insulin resistance can progress to type 2 diabetes.

Firstly – and in direct contradiction to the claim made by advocates of high-protein diets, that carbohydrates make you fat because they stimulate insulin release while protein does not – it's been known for many decades that amino acids (the building blocks of protein) are responsible for roughly 60% of the rise in insulin levels after a meal.<sup>(5)</sup> Intake of protein causes a 360% larger insulin spike in obese people compared to those of normal weight,<sup>(6)</sup> suggesting that excess protein intake is even more dangerous if you're already overweight.

Secondly, the branched-chain amino acids *leucine*, *isoleucine* and *valine*, which cause the biggest spikes in insulin after a meal, are found in higher amounts in animal proteins – especially in whey protein,<sup>(7)</sup> which is one of the two protein types found in milk, not to mention the main ingredient in those enormous tubs of

protein powder beloved of body builders.

Thirdly, and this is where *ribosomal protein S6 kinase 1* (S6K1 to its friends) comes in, excess amino acids in the bloodstream – the simple consequence of eating too much protein – activate S6K1, which in turn activates a protein called mTOR (mammalian target of rapamycin – a protein involved in insulin signalling) in an abnormal way, causing insulin resistance.<sup>(8)</sup>

So the 'smoking gun' linking excess protein intake to diabetes is that the amino acids in protein cause insulin resistance to develop. The fact that vegans have a dramatically lower risk of diabetes than meat-eaters indicates that the particular pattern of amino acids found in plant proteins does not cause insulin resistance.

So, next time your personal trainer, neighbour, colleague or other self-appointed expert on nutrition tells you that 'carbs' cause diabetes and you should be on a high-protein diet to prevent it, grab this golden opportunity to look *really* smart: ask them how on Earth it is that they don't know that amino acids negatively affect insulin signalling through class 3 PI3K or hVps34 mediation of mTOR/S6K1 phosphorylation of IRS1. That should stop them dead in their tracks.

***Having lost several of my close family members to type 2 diabetes, I have a particular passion for diabetes prevention and reversal. If you need help with overcoming insulin resistance or diabetes, or – like me – you have a family history that puts you at high risk of it – contact me for an appointment, or book online today, phone 02 8521 7374, email [robyn@empowertotalhealth.com.au](mailto:robyn@empowertotalhealth.com.au) web [www.empowertotalhealth.com.au](http://www.empowertotalhealth.com.au)***

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# NEW PRODUCT

## LACTEEZE

LACTEEZE is a lactase supplement that allows people with lactose intolerance to digest dairy products without suffering the unpleasant symptoms caused by inability to digest the milk sugar, *lactose*. These well-known symptoms include bloating, flatulence (wind), abdominal cramps and diarrhoea.

Lacteeze is the only supplement of its kind and is easy to use. A lactose intolerant person simply takes 1 – 2 tablets immediately before consuming any dairy product in order to avoid or minimise the symptoms.

Lacteeze is TGA approved. It is not a drug or medicine, and the manufacturer declares that it is safe for everyone from newborn babies to adults, and that you cannot overdose on it because any excess is simply eliminated from the body. Lacteeze does not interact with any medication.

Lacteeze comes in the form of tablets and drops. Ingredients are as follows:

**TABLETS** – source: Aspergillus.

**Children's Strength.** Dextrose, microcrystalline cellulose, lactase (3,000 FCC lactase units), calcium stearate, strawberry fruit crystals, citric acid, natural flavours and natural colour. Each tablet contains tilactase 36 mg and glucose.

**Extra Strength.** Dextrose, microcrystalline cellulose, lactase (4,000 FCC lactase units), calcium stearate and natural mint flavour. Each tablet contains tilactase 90 mg and glucose.

**DROPS** – source: Saccromyces. Ingredients are lactase and glycerol.

Lacteeze drops and tablets are said to be suitable for vegetarians.

In the case of infants on goats' milk formula, Lacteeze can help,



states the manufacturer, because goats' milk also contains lactose.

What about people allergic to yeast? Lacteeze drops are derived from yeast so they should not be used by people who are allergic or intolerant to yeast. On the other hand, the tablets don't contain yeast so can safely be used by such people.

Lactose intolerance or overload is the most common food intolerance in Australia today, affecting approximately 25% of the Australian population. Decreased production of this enzyme is not a surprising phenomenon because we humans were meant to be weaned at three or four years of age, not at 60 or 80 or 100.

Lactose intolerance can make eating out a chore, as sufferers need to constantly check that their meals do not contain any or much lactose.

Retail prices for Lacteeze are: Extra Strength 100pk \$36.95; Adults smaller version 10pk \$4.95; Children's Strength 100pk (with mint or strawberry flavours) \$29.95.

Lacteeze is available in many pharmacies and health food stores around Australia. It can also be purchased directly from Allergyfree Pty Ltd, phone 1300 66 22 50.

For more information, visit [www.lacteeze.com.au](http://www.lacteeze.com.au)

## MERCURY MADNESS CONTINUED

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### RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON MERCURY DETOXIFICATION

<http://www.dentalwellness4u.com/browse/guide.html> – *Mercury Detoxification: The Natural Way to Remove Mercury from Your Body* by Dr Tom McGuire – eBook and printed version available.

[http://www.mercola.com/article/mercury/mercury\\_elimination.htm](http://www.mercola.com/article/mercury/mercury_elimination.htm)

[http://www.mercola.com/article/mercury/mercury\\_elimination2.htm](http://www.mercola.com/article/mercury/mercury_elimination2.htm)

[http://www.mercola.com/article/mercury/detox\\_protocol.htm](http://www.mercola.com/article/mercury/detox_protocol.htm)

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2008/12/04/how-sunshine-and-vitamin-d-can-help-you-eliminate-mercury.aspx>

<http://customers.hbci.com/~wennonah/new/9steps.htm> – *9 Steps to Detox from Mercury Fillings* (The Klinghardt Neurotoxin Elimination Protocol)

<http://health.dir.groups.yahoo.com/group/DrClark/message/3478> –

*Mercury Detox Autism Protocol* (originally published on [www.mercola.com](http://www.mercola.com))

<http://www.proliberty.com/observer/20070907.htm> – *How to remove mercury and other heavy metals from your body, safely and inexpensively*

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-mark-hyman/autism-mercury-toxicity\\_b\\_497047.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-mark-hyman/autism-mercury-toxicity_b_497047.html)

Chelation with modified citrus pectin (from natural sources):

<http://www.alsearsmd.com/2011/01/01/six-steps-to-a-pure-and-clean-body/>

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# Meet Maud, My Belly Monster

By Lisa Lu Atwood

Have you ever raided the refrigerator after a huge meal, when you know that you shouldn't be hungry, but you think you are? Oh so hungry for salt, sugar or fat! I sometimes give in to my Belly Monster, Maude, and take a few chews of something, then spit out the barely eaten treat immediately. "Damn it! Why did I have to do that?"

It has been far worse than that before. There was once a piece of cake – the thick and delicious kind with glossy icing – that I decided to throw away in a moment of self-control and overconfidence. "You're so good, you don't need cake ... get rid of it!" my self-control and overconfidence cried.

So I did, only to retrieve it four hours later when Maud chucked a tantrum. "I'm so hungry," she roared. "You know it's there. You know you want it. Eat it or you'll die!" OK, at least it was a fresh bin liner with nothing else in it but delicious cake. I must admit that I learned two valuable lessons from that episode of shame:

- If you throw something out in a moment of glory – be sure to damage it beyond all recognition. Use dirt if you have to!
- Belly Monsters are very real and powerful entities. They really need to be understood.

I have gleaned some insight about Belly Monsters and how they operate by observing my own in all her splendor. Here are a few things I've been exploring lately.

## Psychological stress

Incessant negative mind chatter is equally as harmful as physical stress. When we're stressed we release adrenalin, which can lead to that shooting feeling that makes you either want to stab someone with a fork or hide in a cupboard. Most people are familiar with the fight or flight response, but what you may not know is that there is another hormone in our chemical cocktail called *cortisol*, which inhibits fat loss and – here's the kicker – makes you feel hungry. So being stressed is making us fat. Your Belly Monster will want to be satisfied. The cure?

- Remember to breathe.
- Mind Body Soul. Explore your spiritual side. Yes, everyone has one.

- Say to yourself, 'I love and accept myself' as often as you can. It makes you see the world as it is, rather than how you feel about it. Just try it.

Drink nothing but water – which is more difficult than you think, but well worth it – clearer skin, happier head, pee that's not nuclear yellow. What's not to love?

## Australia – The fattest nation in the world?

Seriously true! When I think of fat, I immediately think 'sad, sad, sad'. I don't know why. Maybe it has something to do with this image I have of happy little Vegemites and golden beaches juxtaposed with the reality of childhood obesity and our skewed perception of what junk food is and how much we should be consuming.

You know what I mean... We justify our choices all the time, saying things like; it's only three Tim Tams, what's that really going to do? I had a bit of a run earlier... Chips come from a vegetable, so they can't be that bad. Doesn't 'occasionally' mean once a day? Nice try, Belly Monster. Occasional treats should happen once a week. Just so we're clear, it is only ONE of something you love (one piece of cake, one scone, one little bag of chips) not one of all the above.

It's as though we're in denial. We're akin to one of those awful singers on a reality show who thinks they are better than they are. The cure?

- Change your habits – but only one at a time. It's fair enough to say, "I won't eat any more white bread, drink any more Coke or have any more sugar in my coffee," but you need to choose your battles wisely or your Belly Monster will win.
- Accept that ultimately it is a competition – and we're losing. Badly. What are you doing about it for yourself other than watching 'The Biggest Loser'?

If by now you really don't know what I'm talking about, then you must be one of the lucky few. Either way, I'd love to know what you think. I have decided to write something



substantial on this subject. It's called *Killing the Belly Monster*.

I guess I have finally accepted my tendency towards unsolicited encouragement – yeah, I'm that happy person in your life telling you that it is possible to change. You can get some POW if you really want it. What's POW? Well ... it's all of the little improvements you begin to see. For me, it's definitely that part of my hip when I stick it out as far as it will go and it creates this beautiful little hollow that I've never seen before. POW!

The self-improvement bug bit me when I was 10 years old, and its influence has never shown any signs of leaving my bloodstream. Recently, I spoke of the Belly Monster with my friend and trainer, who encouraged me to share it with you.

I'm on my way toward Wonder-Legs. What are you running towards?

## Further reading

Taboltt, S 2007, *The Cortisol Connection: Why stress makes you fat and ruins your health – and what you can do about it*. Hunter House, Alameda.

All that we are is the result  
of what we have thought.  
What we think we become.

# Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and Vegetarian Diets – what you should know

By Dr Kate Marsh, Carol Zeuschner and Angela Saunders

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> is an essential vitamin needed by the body for cell division, the formation of red blood cells and maintaining a healthy nervous system. Deficiency can result in anaemia and neurological damage.

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> is found almost exclusively in animal products that include red meats, offal, poultry and seafood as well as milk, eggs and cheese, where it is derived from the activity of bacteria present in the large intestine of the animal. Plant foods do not generally contain vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.

Most cases of B<sub>12</sub> deficiency occur in the general population and are due to a lack of intrinsic factor, which is required for the absorption of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>. The lack of this vitamin in the diet for those following a strict vegetarian or plant-based diet means that consideration of this vitamin is essential. In fact, over half of vegans and 7% of vegetarians have been shown to be deficient in vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.<sup>(1)</sup>

## DEFICIENCY

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency is a serious health problem, and can result in *megaloblastic anaemia*, inhibition of cell division and neurological disorders. There are many factors which may contribute to vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency in an individual including:<sup>(2-4)</sup>

- Inadequate dietary intake
- Inadequate absorption (which may result from a number of factors including loss of *intrinsic factor*, loss of gastric acid, loss of protein digesting enzymes, certain diseases and use of some medications)
- Inadequate utilisation
- Increased requirements (for example, pregnancy)
- Increased excretion caused by alcoholism

In those following a vegetarian or plant-based diet, however, inadequate dietary intake is the major cause.<sup>(5,6)</sup> Furthermore, high levels of folate can mask B<sub>12</sub> deficiency – which is a concern for vegetarians and vegans whose folate intake is generally high while vitamin B<sub>12</sub> intake is low. Subtle neurological damage (even in the absence of anaemia) is more likely in vegans because of their increased folate levels which prevent early detection of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency.<sup>(6)</sup>

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency can also lead to nerve damage and neuropsychiatric abnormalities. Neurological symptoms of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency include numbness and tingling of the hands and feet, decreased sensation,

difficulty walking, loss of bowel and bladder control, memory loss, dementia, depression, general weakness and psychosis.<sup>(6,7)</sup> Unless detected and treated early these symptoms can be irreversible.

In older individuals vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency is associated with impaired cognitive function or worsening of co-existing dementia.<sup>(8-10)</sup> Low intake of B<sub>12</sub>, folate and B<sub>6</sub> have also been linked to increased homocysteine and the risk of heart disease and dementia<sup>(11,12)</sup>

## ASSESSING VITAMIN B<sub>12</sub> STATUS

Measurement of serum (blood) levels of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> is a common low cost method of assessing vitamin B<sub>12</sub> status, but doesn't provide a measure of the body's reserves of this vitamin. There is also concern that the current reference ranges are too low and a higher reference level (>360 pmol/L) has been proposed<sup>(6,13,14)</sup>. Objective measures of neurological damage have been found in those with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels below 258 pmol/L<sup>(15-17)</sup>.

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> reserves can also be measured using other markers including blood levels of *homocysteine* (Hcy) or *holotranscobalamin II* (TC2) and blood or urinary *methyl malonic acid* (MMA).

**Homocysteine (Hcy)** – as there is an inverse relationship between vitamin B<sub>12</sub> stores and serum homocysteine (that is, as vitamin B<sub>12</sub> stores fall, homocysteine increases), raised homocysteine levels can be a useful indicator of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency.

**Holotranscobalamin II (TC2)** is the protein that transports B<sub>12</sub> in blood and levels fall in vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency. Testing for this carrier protein can identify low vitamin B<sub>12</sub> status before total serum vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels drop.<sup>(18)</sup>

**Methyl malonic acid (MMA)** – vitamin B<sub>12</sub> is the only co-enzyme required for a metabolic reaction in the body which results in the production of MMA, hence MMA levels are a good measure of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> status and as this detects deficiency in the early stages, it may be one of the better ways of assessing B<sub>12</sub> status.<sup>(14)</sup>

**Table 1: Recommended dietary intakes (RDIs) for vitamin B<sub>12</sub> in Australia<sup>(19)</sup>**

	RDI (µg)
Men 19 – 70+ years	2.4
Women 19 – 70+ years	2.4
- Pregnant Women	2.6
- Breastfeeding Women	2.8
Children	
0 – 6 months	0.4 (adequate intake)
7 – 12 months	0.5 (adequate intake)
1 – 3 years	0.9
4 – 8 years	1.2
9 – 13 years	1.8
14 – 18 years	2.4

## VEGETARIANS AND VITAMIN B<sub>12</sub> STATUS

While reported cases of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency in vegetarians or vegans are rare, several studies have found lower vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels in vegans and vegetarians compared to the general population.<sup>(5,20-27)</sup> The EPIC (European Prospective Investigation into Cancer) study found that 52% of vegans, 7% of vegetarians and one omnivore were classed as vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficient (with a serum vitamin B<sub>12</sub> <118 pmol/l)<sup>(1)</sup>. There was no significant association between age or duration of subjects' adherence to a vegetarian or vegan diet and the levels of serum vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.<sup>(1)</sup> While the body's small requirements, large storage capacity and efficient enterohepatic circulation of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> mean that it can take a number of years for deficiency to occur, it is likely that all vegans, or anyone who doesn't regularly consume animal foods or fortified foods or supplements, will *eventually* develop vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency.

An infant born to a mother who has been vegetarian or vegan for many years is also at a high risk of deficiency if the mother's vitamin B<sub>12</sub> intake is inadequate and her vitamin B<sub>12</sub> stores are low. Vegetarian or vegan women need to ensure an adequate intake of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. Recent studies have shown that when a mother has low level of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> in her blood, vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels in her breast milk will also be low, and her baby will not receive adequate vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.<sup>(28,29)</sup> There have been many reports of deficiency

in the breastfed infants of vegan mothers who did not supplement their diets with vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.<sup>(29-39)</sup> Infants have presented with a range of symptoms, including developmental delay, and even if supplements are given at this stage to return vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels to normal, it is unclear whether a period of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency could have any long-term effects for the child.<sup>(39-41)</sup>

## VITAMIN B<sub>12</sub> IN THE VEGETARIAN DIET

Lacto-ovo vegetarians (those who eat dairy foods and eggs) will have a reliable source of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> in their diet, provided they consume adequate amounts of dairy products, although intake is likely to be lower than in meat eaters. On the other hand, those who follow a vegan diet will not have a reliable intake unless they consume foods fortified with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> or take a supplement.

It was once thought that some plant foods, such as spirulina and fermented soy products, including tempeh and miso, were dietary sources of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, but this has been proven incorrect.<sup>(42)</sup> In fact, the vitamin B<sub>12</sub> detected in most plant foods is likely to be the inactive analogue, which is of no use to the body, and can actually interfere with the absorption of the active form of this vitamin.<sup>(43)</sup> While recent research has found traces of B<sub>12</sub> in white button mushrooms<sup>(44)</sup> and Korean laver (nori)<sup>(45)</sup>, the quantity in a typical serving means that they are not a significant dietary source of this vitamin. For example, with only 5% of the RDI in an average serving, the quantity of mushrooms required to supply adequate amounts of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> to vegetarians would be impractical. Korean laver (nori) has been shown to be a useful plant source of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> for vegetarians,<sup>(46)</sup> but is not commonly eaten in the Australian diet.

## Fortified foods

In Australia, only a few foods are currently fortified with vitamin B<sub>12</sub>. This includes selected soy milks, yeast spreads (for example, Marmite) and vegetarian meat analogues such as soy-based burgers and sausages. Examples of the vitamin B<sub>12</sub> content of common fortified foods and comparison to animal sources are shown in table 2.

Research has shown that vitamin B<sub>12</sub> added to foods is highly bioavailable, especially in those people with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency caused by inadequate dietary intake. An Australian study compared the effectiveness of the following in raising serum vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels in subjects with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency:

- soy milk (two servings of 250ml/day);
- soy-based meat analogues (one serving/day);
- vitamin B<sub>12</sub> supplements (one low-dose tablet per day or one high-dose tablet per week);
- vitamin B<sub>12</sub> intramuscular (IM) injections (1 per month).

The study found that fortified foods were better at increasing B<sub>12</sub> levels than tablets or injections.<sup>(6)</sup> In addition, a large study comparing foods fortified with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> concluded that the vitamin B<sub>12</sub> added to foods or supplements may be better absorbed than that naturally found in foods such as in meat.<sup>(16)</sup>

**Table 2: Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> content of foods**

Vegetarian sources	Vitamin B <sub>12</sub> (µg)
Vegetarian sausage, fortified (2 sausages)	2.0
Vegetarian burger, fortified (1 burger)	1.9
Cow's milk, 250ml	1.8
Egg 1 whole	1.7
So Good Soy Milk range (250ml)	1.0
Vitasoy Calci-Plus (250ml)	1.0
Up & Go (250ml)	1.0
Cheese, cheddar, 40g	0.7
Sanitarium One Square Meal Bar (175g)	0.7
Yoghurt, (200g tub)	0.4
Marmite (1 tsp)	0.5

(See fortified Sanitarium products next page.)

## Supplements

In a vegan diet, using a supplement or consuming fortified foods is the only way to obtain adequate vitamin B<sub>12</sub>. As the body can only absorb a limited amount of B<sub>12</sub> at any one time, it is best to take small doses more often, rather than large doses less often. One study found that small doses of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> in the range of 0.1 to 0.5 µg resulted in absorption of between 52% and 97%; doses in the range 1 to 5 µg, resulted in a range of absorption between 56% and 28% respectively, while higher doses had an even lower absorption with 10 µg and 50 µg resulting in 16% and 3% respectively, being absorbed.<sup>(47)</sup>

Another study found that in those with dietary vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency, small frequent oral doses (2 µg daily) were more effective than infrequent (weekly or less often) large doses for improving vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels.<sup>(5)</sup> While sublingual (under the tongue) supplements are often promoted as being more efficiently absorbed, there is no evidence to show that this form of supplement is superior to regular oral vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.<sup>(48)</sup>

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> supplements are not made from animal products and are suitable for inclusion in a vegan diet.

## CONCLUSION

Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> is a serious concern, and eventual deficiency is likely in anyone with insufficient dietary intake of vitamin B<sub>12</sub> particularly those following a strict vegetarian or plant-based diet. All vegans and lacto-ovo-vegetarians who don't consume adequate amounts of dairy products to provide sufficient vitamin

B<sub>12</sub> should therefore supplement their diet with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> from fortified foods or supplements. It is particularly important that pregnant and breastfeeding vegan women consume a reliable source of the vitamin to reduce the risk of their baby developing deficiency.

**Note:** This article has been adapted from a paper published in a recent supplement to the Medical Journal of Australia on vegetarian diets – the full paper can be accessed from the following link <https://www.mja.com.au/open/2012/1/2>

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## VITAMIN B<sub>12</sub> CONTENT OF SANITARIUM PRODUCTS

Vegetarian Products (Sanitarium)	Serve	B <sub>12</sub> (ug)
<b>CHILLED</b>		
Hot Dogs	100g (2 hot dogs)	2.0
BBQ Sausages	100g (2 sausages)	2.0
Curried Sausages	100g (2 sausages)	2.0
Vegie Sausages	100g (2 sausages)	2.0
Bacon Style Rashes	58g (4 rashes)	1.2
Deli Luncheon HENCHEN	62g (6 small slices)	1.2
Deli Luncheon Smoked	62g (6 small slices)	1.2
Smoked Deli Slices	42g (2 slices)	0.8
Tender Fillets	83g (2 fillets)	1.7
Vegie Roast with Rosemary & Mint Glaze	120g	2.0
Thai Sweet Chilli & Lime Burger	75g (1 burger)	1.5
Rosemary, Sage & Parsley Sausage	120g (2 sausages)	2.0
Sundried Tomato & Kalamata Olive Sausage	120g (2 sausages)	2.0
Spicy Pepperoni	25g	0.5
<b>FROZEN</b>		
Not Burgers	94g (1 burger)	1.9
Tender Schnitzels	75g (1 schnitzel)	1.5
Lentil Patties	75g (1 patty)	1.5
Vegetable Patties	75g (1 patty)	1.5

Vegetarian Products (Sanitarium)	Serve	B <sub>12</sub> (ug)
<b>CANNED</b>		
Casserole Mince	138g (1/3 can)	2.8
Nutmeat	85g (2x10mm slices)	1.7
Nutolene	85g (2x10mm slices)	1.7
Savoury Lentils	--	--
Tender Pieces	138g (1/3 can)	2.8
Vegetarian Sausages	80g (2 sausages)	1.6
<b>BEVERAGES—So Good</b>		
So Good Regular	250ml	1.0
So Good Lite	250ml	1.0
So Good 99.9% Fat Free	250ml	1.0
So Good Essential	250ml	1.0
So Good Vanilla Bliss	250ml	1.0
So Good Chocolate Bliss	250ml	1.0
<b>BEVERAGES—Up &amp; Go</b>		
Up & Go Choc, Straw, Van, Banana	250ml	1.0
<b>ONE SQUARE MEAL BARS</b>		
OSM Cranberry	170g (2 bars)	0.67
OSM Apricot	175g (2 bars)	0.67
<b>MARMITE</b>	5g	0.5

# Herbs For Every Reason

## Herb of the month: abundant sorrel – *Rumex Acetosa*

By Margie Hare

With the winter months looming, sorrel keeps growing and delivering delicious crispy fresh green leaves to add a distinctive lemony-sour flavor to salads, to include in your hearty winter soup or make a protein dish delicious with sorrel sauce for something really different. Try adding to mashed potato, to scrambled egg or to steamed spinach – it's a very versatile addition to the winter table.

Common sorrel grows on the roadside, in fields and in woodlands. Some people call it a weed, but the best place for me is in my own backyard. This perennial grows to about 60 – 90 cms high with smooth succulent, tender leaves, a long stalk and a reddish spike of small flowers. It flowers in late spring and early summer. I pick the long flower stalks to encourage more leaf growth and use them in flower arrangements. Sorrel is easy to grow. Make sure you sprinkle broken egg shells all around the base of the plant. The snails love sorrel too. They are not stupid – they know a good thing when they see it!

### HOME SELF-HELP TIPS

**Sorrel.** Drink an infusion of the leaves (28 gm in 568 ml boiling water). Sorrel's cooling quality helps relieve the body of fevers. It is also a laxative. A decoction of the root can be used for boils and acne. (The root is boiled for 5 – 10 minutes and allowed to cool before being strained.) It is taken internally, 60ml three times a day and can also be used as a lotion.

**Nutrition.** Sorrel contains a good balance of the minerals potassium, calcium, chlorine, iron, lesser amounts of phosphorus and sodium, and large quantities of sulphur. Sulphur has a tonic effect on the bloodstream. The organic sulphur cleanses the body of waste accumulations, which is also helped by sorrel's high pre-vitamin A content. Sorrel is high in vitamin C and is rapidly digested.

**Potassium.** This mineral works in harness with sodium to help regulate bodily fluid balance. The natural correction to this fluid imbalance is to include in your daily diet the 'French' salad combination: celery, cucumber, lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, watercress, dandelion greens and – you guessed it – sorrel. The French salad would balance their bread and meat, slowly cooked with sauces and gravy. By the time the gastric juices reached their full strength, there would be a potassium flood from the

salad to move such heavy food through the intestines and into the bloodstream at the right speed. Always include sorrel in your daily salad!

**CAUTION** with sorrel: The plant contains oxalic acid, which is contra-indicated with rheumatic complaints. However, I point out that natural oxalic acid can be handled by the body with no excess build-up into gallstones, kidney stones, bladder stones or any other type of calcification, unless other predisposing factors are present. Natural oxalic acid cleanses the bloodstream altogether, removing free calcium and converting it into substances more readily assimilated.

### HERBS FOR THE WINTER MONTHS

Be ready for the cold winter changes and take natural alternative supports instead of pharmaceutical drugs.

There are some common herbs that will help you through the winter months. The common cold is a general inflammation of the mucous membranes of the respiratory passages associated with a variety of viruses which are highly contagious. Poor nutrition resulting in a poorly functioning immune system is one of the most prevalent causes of colds. Prevention of colds includes getting adequate sleep and having a well-balanced diet.

**Catmint** – *Nepeta cararia*: A catnip tea enema is good for a fever. It promotes perspiration and thus reduces the temperature.

**Eucalyptus:** This is the source of *eucalyptol* which makes some cough drops so effective. Steam using eucalyptus cider vinegar, 'E. herb vinegar', which has absorbed the aromatic oils of this healing herb, helps clear a stuffy head or a clogged respiratory system.

**E. cider vinegar.** Purchase the best quality organic apple cider vinegar you can find, and take a wide-mouthed pickling jar and fill it with clean eucalyptus leaves, gently crushed in your hands. Heat the cider vinegar to just below boiling point and pour it over the leaves and seal jar immediately with screw top lid. Leave to seep on a sunny windowsill for two weeks, shaking a little every day. Test for flavor. Repeat the process, if necessary, by straining the vinegar to remove all leaves. Heat the remaining vinegar again and pour it over another jar full of fresh eucalyptus leaves. Once the desired strength is achieved in the vinegar, strain it off and bottle. This is

E. cider vinegar. Use through the winter as a steam inhalation to clear congestion, or for a sore throat gargle with one glass warm water and one tablespoon E. cider vinegar, or use some to make a cough syrup.

**Eucalyptus cough syrup:** 'Fight' germs by sipping one tablespoon every four hours. Mix together ¼ cup honey and ¼ cup E. cider vinegar, or alternatively sip on a syrup made of:

½ cup E. cider vinegar,

½ cup water,

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

and 3 tablespoons honey.

Soothe a dry night cough by sprinkling E.cider vinegar on the pillow slip.

**Elder** – *Sambucus Nigra*: Elder flowers can be gathered in as the florets open. Use fresh or dry or freeze for use later. The berries are rich in vitamin C and are used to make wine or juice. It can be taken hot as a traditional remedy to ease colds, flu, sinusitis or catarrh brought on at the change in seasons. Elderflowers mixed with peppermint and drunk hot as an infusion (28 gm to 550 ml boiling water) is a most pleasant healing fragrant tea.

**Fennel** – *Foeniculum vulgare*: Fennel seeds help with shortness of breath and wheezing. Drop one teaspoon of seeds into 280 ml boiling water. Cover to steep and drink slowly during the course of the day.

**Fig Tree** – *Ficus carica*: A syrup made from the green leaves and green fruit is excellent for coughs, hoarseness or shortness of breath and many diseases of the chest and lungs.

**Garlic** – *Allium sativum*: Garlic can be taken in increasing quantities as a preventative for colds and flu this coming season. Garlic, which has antiviral and anti-bacterial properties, and the rest of the onion family can help to protect your immune system. An easy way to extract juice from the onion plants (garlic, onions, chives, garlic chives and spring onions) is to chop finely and drizzle with honey, leave covered for an hour, then start sipping the juice on the hour by the desertspoonful. I use a big old-fashioned soup bowl, scoop the chopped garlic and onion to one side, then place a folded dishcloth under that end and wait for the delicious juice to seep out and collect in the dip on the lower side of the dish.

**Ginger:** I store my fresh ginger in a ginger jar. No need to keep it in the fridge – in fact, it lasts better out of the fridge. When cooking, I grate immediately before use just enough, and stir in just before serving.

**Fresh ginger tea:** The perfect winter warming drink and ideal if you have the first signs of a cold or a cough. Take five slices of ginger and two tablespoons of dark brown sugar (try Rapadura unrefined sugar). Pound ginger slightly with the back of a knife and pour over it 2 cups boiling water. Cover and allow to steep for 5 – 10 minutes. Drink all the tea while still hot.

**Ginger rice soup:** Take 5 slices of fresh ginger, 100 gm polished round grain rice and 30 gm green onion. Cook the ginger and rice for 30 minutes in 4 cups water. Then add green onion and simmer for 30 minutes. Drink the entire amount while still hot. After drinking it, lie in bed and cover yourself with a warm duvet/blanket. You will sweat out the cold.

**Grape Vine** – *Vitis vinifera*: This is one of the oldest cultivated plants. The dried fruit – both raisins and currents – are good to eat or suck when you have a cough or a chest infection. The whole grape and the fresh juice are rich in vitamins and minerals, particularly iron. This provides an instant source of energy and is ideal when you are not well. Great Mullein.

**Honeysuckle** – *Lonicera periclymenum*: This common climbing shrub produces leaves that are the only part of the plant used in a gargle for sore throats – an infusion using 1 part leaves to 100 parts water. For a cough you may add the flowers as well, using the same proportion but add honey and simmer at the very lowest temperature to reduce the water to a syrup. Take one teaspoon three times a day.

**Hyssop** – *Hyssopus officinalis*: Hyssop grows to about 30 cm tall, with many stalks, square at first and then rounding as they come into flower. Leaves are long and narrow and the flowers are blue in long spikes. An infusion of Hyssop, rue and honey (28 gm dried herb in 550 ml boiling water) can be sipped as a tea three times a day to help with shortness of breath, troubled cough and wheezing.

**Hyssop and feverfew** – *Tanacetum parthenium* – are useful especially for fevers provided the infusion is drunk frequently so that perspiration is induced.

**Jasmine** – *Jasminum officinale*: This is the common garden climber. The white flowers are like longish tubes, with a delicious aroma, but the berries are toxic. The syrup is made from the flowers and is useful for coughs and catarrh. One drop of the pure essential oil dropped onto a sugar lump is helpful for respiratory disease.

**Onion cough syrup:** Place 6 organic, chopped white onions in a double boiler

with ½ cup of honey. Cook slowly on low heat for 2 hours, strain and bottle. Use as necessary.

**Pennyroyal** – *Mentha pulegium*: I just love this herb, and always plant it wherever I go – on paths, where ants like to hide, under trees where nothing grows, and the bees love it when it is in full flower. When making an infusion, never boil this herb due to the rich volatile oils. Drink as herbal tea infusion sweetened with honey as a cure for whooping cough and to lower fevers.

**Rocket cress** – *Eruca sativa*: Do we love rocket in our summer salads? Most restaurants have rocket somewhere on the menu. For colds and flu the best way to use it is in syrup. It will cure stubborn coughs and relieve the ache in the chest. It is so easy to grow in your garden, and once you let it go to seed it will pop up every year. Cut well back to allow a second and third crop per season. Remove the flower stems throughout the season to prompt more leaves to grow.

**Sage** – *Salvia officinalis*: This shrubby herb with wrinkled leaves has purple/blue flowers. It is one of the best remedies for laryngitis, tonsillitis and sore throats.

Sage gargle is so easy. Take a handful of leaves, cover completely with boiled water and steep for 2 hours. When cool, add 1 drop each of pure essential oil of tea tree, peppermint and eucalyptus. Bottle and gargle whenever necessary. Store in a cold, dark place.

You may also take this internally by replacing half the water after the two hours with cider vinegar. Sweeten with honey and sip slowly to soothe a sore throat.

**Thyme** – *Thymus vulgaris*: Thyme is a natural antiseptic and rich in *thymol*. It relieves sore throat, bronchial irritation and the spasms of whooping cough. An infusion is made from the dried herb by adding 28 gm to 550 ml boiling water. Take 60 ml three times a day. (I like to mix sage and thyme in equal quantities.)

**Vervain** – *Verbena officinalis*: Another ground herb that has great healing properties. I like to combine vervain and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), especially in the early stages of a cold. Prepare as per thyme infusion.

**White Horehound** – *Marrubium vulgare*: This common wasteland plant found on roadsides and hedges has square hairy stalks with crumpled leaves and small white flowers. I plant it as a companion plant in every herb and vegetable garden I design. Its hardy, the birds love it and it confuses the pests!

It is well noted for its help with coughs and shortness of breath and the ability to expel tough phlegm from the chest. A decoction can be made with the leaves and roots and drunk sweetened with honey.

The syrup is made by adding honey to a strong infusion (28 gm dried herb to 550 ml water). Boil for 20 minutes. Take 60 mls three or four times a day.

**Echinacea.** You might wonder why I have not mentioned Echinacea. It is not available as a tea. Its natural and bitter taste precludes this anyway. Most of the useful ingredients are only extractable by alcohol preparation. A tea from this herb would be totally ineffective. This is a very multi-purpose and complex plant with contra-indications. Please consult a trained herbalist before self-medicating with Echinacea.

## HELPFUL PURE ESSENTIAL OILS

The pure essential oils extracted from some herbs are especially helpful over the winter months. The following pure essential oils can be used in a massage oil to massage gently the neck, throat, chest and back. Use in an inhalation or simply add to the bath water and allow the magic of the oils to go to work in your body: bergamot, cypress, eucalyptus, lavender, marjoram, peppermint, rosemary and sandalwood.

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

### How to best store herbs?

Thank you, Carolin Maher from the Hills district in NSW, for your question. I am looking forward to working with you in your patio garden.

How do I store herbs best, especially if I have more than I need to use at the time?

**Answer.** Most of the soft-leaved herbs can be chopped or cut and frozen in ice cubes and put in zip lock bags for later use: parsley, chives, chervil, thyme, fennel greens, sage, dill, elder, marjoram, savory, tansy, wormwood, lemon verbena and mint.





Great example of a herb garden using many varieties of thyme in the beds and lavender to line the path.

**Mint:** My best way to store mint is to make it into mint sauce and store in the fridge. Here is my father's recipe: Pick leaves off stalks, place on wooden chopping board and sprinkle with sugar. Now chop finely, adding more sugar if necessary. While doing this, bring vinegar to the boil, but before it boils, put the chopped mint and sugar into serving dish/storage jar and pour on the boiling vinegar. Seal immediately. Voila!

**Basil and rocket.** I don't like to use in this way. It will turn brown and lose flavour. Store in olive oil in the fridge or make up pesto with all the spare leaves before the winter sets in.

I store **garlic** like this as well. Peeled and in separate cloves covered with oil. I add chillies and peppercorns into the jar also.

**Chillies.** Sew together on a cotton string and hang to dry and use as and when necessary. They last for over 12 months.

I also pick bunches of herbs and tie them in bundles (bay, yarrow, rosemary, catmint, sage, feverfew, hops, horehound, honeysuckle, hyssop, lavender and marjoram), but not too thickly. Hang them upside-down with open-ended paper bag to stop the dust. Wait a few weeks until crispy then strip and store in glass jars. Label well.

**Chamomile flowers.** I pick these and dry out of the sun in basket trays.

I like to use the very best leaves in terms of aroma. So picking at the right time is just as important as correct storage. Pick after the dew has lifted, before full flowering so the oils are at their highest levels.

If you have **lemon verbena** in the garden, it is ready right now or over the next 4 – 6 weeks to be fully harvested and pruned so that it will be ready for a winter rest. This hardy shrub will come back strongly even after the harshest of pruning and will still do well with no pruning. It is easy to train into a hedge. It makes the best tea that can be mixed with many other herbs.

## GROW YOUR OWN FOOD WORKSHOPS

I would be delighted to discuss with anyone interested in hosting a vegetable and herb workshop in their garden for friends, family, neighbours and interested gardeners.

The host or hostess receives a free herb garden consultation, valued at over \$500.00

**Until the next issue use herbs for every reason, Margie**

## A NEWS Bite

### Processed meats take years off "your life"

*Abstracted from What Doctors Don't Tell You enews, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013*

Eat two sausages and a rasher of bacon every day and you're more likely to die prematurely than someone who eats only a small amount of processed meat [or none]. This kind of diet increases your chances of dying 'before your time' by 44 per cent. To live a long and healthy life, you should be eating no processed meat any day.

The salt and chemicals [usually sodium nitrite] that are used to preserve the meats could be the culprits, say researchers from the University of Zurich. They discovered that people who every day eat 160 grams or more of processed meats, such as sausages, ham and cured meats, are 44 per cent less likely to be alive 12 years later compared to people not eating these foods.





## The Price of organic foods is justified

**Abstracted from a release by Australian Organic, 15th February 2013**

**Australian Organic was formerly Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA)**

A recent study by Suncorp Bank shows there is an average 79 percent difference in price between organic and conventional produce.

The main reason is that organic produce often costs more to produce and distribute.

Consumers can be confident that they are getting what they are paying for if it has the Bud or other organic certification logo.

Dr Andrew Monk of Australian Organic explains: "Organic food is generally not mass produced and farms are less intensive than larger conventional farms, often giving them different economies of scale. Most organic farms are family owned and rely on more rural labour for managing pests, diseases and weeds.

"Organic reflects a fair price for farmers who are caring for the environment, while producing foods that a growing band of consumers want – foods produced without synthetic chemicals, GMOs or synthetic weedicides."

Don Murray of Nature's Haven farms, which grow certified organic fruit and vegetables in New South Wales and Queensland, adds that the price difference can be partly attributed to the difference in economies of scale. He says, "Conventional farmers sell produce by the truckload, whereas we sell produce by the pallet load.

He also says the costs of production are higher because organic farmers don't use synthetic chemicals to grow crops and that means farmers, like him, use manual labour to tackle pests and weeds.

"We hand weed our onions and carrots," says Don. "Our staff are on their hands and knees across a 10 to 15 acre paddock, so, depending on the crop, labour costs are 30 to 40 percent higher than for conventional farms.

"And then there are the harvesting costs. We can have 10 people in a paddock with wheelbarrows bringing crops in."

Nature's Haven also incurs extra costs to do with organic certification which means that they have rigid guidelines to abide by.

Organic food isn't a luxury, it's how food is supposed to be, yet the average Australian household spends more on junk food than on fruit and vegetables, and more on fast food than on fruit and vegetables.

The Australian Organic Market Report 2012 shows that price remains the main barrier to Australians buying more organic produce.

Organic foods are now worth \$1.27 billion dollars annually to Australia, which suggests that consumers are willing to pay the price for food that is free of synthetic chemicals and additives, is farmed with environmentally friendly practices and treats animals humanely.

## Oestrogen-mimicking chemicals a big threat

**Based on an item in Medical Observer newsletter, 20th February 2013**

It appears that the risk of harm from chemicals that mimic oestrogen and other hormones may be greater than previously thought, according to a report by United Nations agencies.

Known as *endocrine-disrupting chemicals* (EDCs), they are linked to early breast development, poor semen quality, low birth-weight and increasing cancer rates.

Almost 800 chemicals are already known or suspected of mimicking or adversely affecting oestrogen or other hormones. Most of these have not been studied for their effects on humans or animals.

Endocrine-disrupting chemicals occur in some pesticides, electronic equipment, personal care products, cosmetics and food additives, and are entering water supplies and the food chain.

In recent decades, scientists have observed a rise in endocrine-related disorders in humans and wildlife, including studied populations of deer, sea lions and sea otters.

In some countries, up to 40% of young men have low semen quality, which reduces their ability to father children, said the report, *State of the Science of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals*.

Consistent with the widespread contamination with these chemicals are the following changes globally:

- Hormone-related cancers, including breast, endometrial, ovarian, prostate, testicular and thyroid, have been increasing over the past 40 to 50 years.

- a trend towards earlier breast development in young girls, which increases the risk of breast cancer.
- An increased incidence of genital malformation in young boys, such as non-descending testes.

Because these things have developed relatively rapidly, they cannot be due to genetics.

The UN agencies report calls for more research into hormone-disrupting chemicals and better international coordination regarding endocrine diseases and disorders.

## Deception regarding the source of imported foods

**Based on an interview by Tony Eastley with Hugh Gurney of AUSVEG on radio ABC's AM program, 19th February 2013**

Australians are increasingly using imported vegetable products. New Zealand is the main source of imported foods, followed by China. But New Zealand products are not always what we assume.

In some cases, produce can be exported from China in a frozen form to New Zealand and then re-packaged and shipped to Australia with the label stating, "Made in New Zealand from local and imported ingredients".

As is commonly known, food in China is often grown using chemicals which are banned in Australia, so this is a deceptive practice. Tony Eastley exclaimed, "So it is a form of food laundering?"

The products to which this applies are mainly frozen vegetables, such as frozen broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, carrots and similar vegetables.

It is certainly very confusing for we Aussies when we think we are buying food from New Zealand, but it was actually grown in China.

A large part of the problem is our high dollar, which is making imported products much cheaper than those grown or produced in Australia.

Hugh Gurney explained that AUSVEG would like to see the law amended so that food labels show the true country of origin and that Australian consumers can easily identify locally-grown Australian produce. Research has shown that many of us want to buy Australian.

*Hugh Gurney is with AUSVEG, the peak industry body for vegetable and potato growers.*

# Restaurant Review

## PARRAMATTA, SYDNEY: Sahra by the river

At last! A restaurant with decent vegetarian options in the west of Sydney – Parramatta. The restaurant is Sahra, overlooking the Parramatta River and the parklands along its banks.

Owner, Talal Alamein, is a warm and friendly host with a passion for food. Talal arrived in Australia from Lebanon in 1969. After operating various restaurants and coffee shops in Sydney, he built and opened Sahra in 2004. The food is Lebanese and all the dishes are prepared from scratch on the premises.

The principles behind Talal's cuisine reflect his passion: "Our aim is to provide health, taste and value." He declared that his wish is that patrons leave happier, healthier and wiser.

For the non-vegetarians there is a wide range of Middle Eastern lamb and chicken dishes. For those who have the need for gluten free, the chef will happily adjust many of the dishes on request. The restaurant is also fully licensed.

We started with fresh homemade lemonade, its flavour enhanced with a special citrus blossom essence.

There is a 3-course lunch special for

\$19.90. We had the Vegetarian Banquet (\$47 per person), which allowed us to sample all the entrees and two of the main dishes. Our advice is to allow yourselves plenty of time to enjoy this abundant feast.

All the dishes were generous. There were three dips – the babaghanouj with its smoky flavour was super tasty; the hommous was delicious and the labneh (drained yoghurt) was creamy and tart.

The entrées also included stuffed vine leaves, tabouleh and fattoush – a garden salad with pomegranate seeds and syrup and fried Lebanese bread. The fatayer pastry contains English spinach and sumac and was devoured with relish.

Another taste delight was the roasted coriander potato morsels, and there were also pickled vegetables. The entrees were accompanied by a stack of Lebanese bread.

The two plant-based main dishes are Roasted Eggplant Casserole and Rice and Lentil Pilaf. In the former, the eggplant is roasted to perfection and served with a delicious rich tomato and chickpea sauce on basmati rice. The Rice and Lentil Pilaf was made tasty with caramelised onion and served with salad.

The banquet for two was so generous that our healthy appetites were assuaged long before we could finish all the dishes.

For those who want a sweet conclusion to the meal, dessert is available in the form of a wide variety of Lebanese sweets, including baklava, Turkish delight and others, all made on the premises. The coffee served is Arabian. Needless to say, we had to save the sweets for later, much later!

We noted that on Friday and Saturday nights, there is entertainment to make the visit more memorable. A stunning bellydancer and a Gypsy fortune-teller are part of Talal's philosophy of wanting patrons to leave happier, healthier and wiser.

We left the restaurant feeling delighted to have discovered a delicious vegetarian menu in western Sydney and feeling inspired by the integrity, passion and warmth of our host, Talal.

Ask and you shall be given!  
Knock and the doors shall open!



### Contact:

2/76 Phillip Street, Parramatta  
Phone 9635 6615  
[www.sahrabytheriver.com.au](http://www.sahrabytheriver.com.au)

### Hours:

Lunch: Tuesday – Friday Noon to 3.30pm  
Dinner – Tuesday to Saturday – 6.00pm till late  
Sunday – open all day.  
Monday – closed

# Kindred Organisations

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



## AUSTRALIAN VEGETARIAN SOCIETY (NSW) Inc

PO Box 56, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone 02 9698 4339  
Email [veg@veg-soc.org](mailto:veg@veg-soc.org)  
Web [www.veg-soc.org](http://www.veg-soc.org)

## VEGETARIAN/VEGAN SOCIETY OF QLD Inc

1086 Waterworks Rd, The Gap QLD 4061

Phone 07 3300 9320  
Email [vegsocq@tpg.com.au](mailto:vegsocq@tpg.com.au)  
Web [www.vegsoc.org.au](http://www.vegsoc.org.au)

## VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN SOCIETY (VegSA) Inc

PO Box 311, Kent Town SA 5071

Phone 08 8260 2778  
Email [info@vegsa.org.au](mailto:info@vegsa.org.au)  
Web [www.vegsa.org.au](http://www.vegsa.org.au)

## NATURAL HEALTH SOCIETY (SA) Inc.

7 Emily Ave,  
Clapham SA 5062

Phone 08 8277 7207

## The Vegetarian/Vegan Society of Qld Inc. Books and Products

For orders: [www.vegsoc.org.au](http://www.vegsoc.org.au) [maureen@vegsoc.org.au](mailto:maureen@vegsoc.org.au) Phone 07 3300 9320

### Simple, Tasty, Good

Plant-based recipes for top taste and vital health

**\$30 + postage up to \$12**

Great recipes for every meal of the day, with beautifully coloured photos for every recipe.

### 500 Vegan Dishes. (New)

**By Deborah Gray.**

**\$19.95 + postage up to \$12**

The only compendium of vegan dishes you will ever need.

Some recipes are vegan adaptations of familiar dishes.

(Not to be confused with 500 Vegan Recipes)

### The Starch Solution [New]

**By John McDougall MD & Mary McDougall**

**\$33 + postage up to \$12**

Eat the foods you love, regain your health & lose the weight.

### Forks Over Knives DVD [New]

**\$23 + \$1.20 postage**

Based on the best selling book. Heart disease, Cancer, Stroke.

The leading causes of death around the world. Diabetes is at epidemic levels even amongst adolescents. An important film.

### Forks over Knives - The Cookbook

**By Del Sroufe**

**\$35 + postage up to \$12**

Companion to the hit Documentary and the #1 New York Times bestseller. Over 300 Recipes for plant-based eating. All through the year.

### Vegan for Life [New]

**By Jack Norris, RD & Virginia Messina, MPH, RD**

**\$23 + postage \$6.65**

Everything you need to know to be healthy and fit on a plant-based diet.

### The Complete Guide to Vegan Food Substitutions [New]

**By Celine Steen & Joni Marie Newman**

**\$25 postage \$6.65**

Foolproof methods for transforming any dish into a delicious new vegan favourite Includes recipes.

### Divine Vegan Desserts (New)

**By Lisa Fabry**

**\$25 + postage up to \$12.00**

Beautiful, wholesome and delicious desserts such as Double Chocolate Layer Cake with raspberry puree. Mouth-watering favourites like Sticky Date Pudding, New York Style

Lemon Cheesecake, Double Fudge Pecan Brownies, and Tiramisu. A divine experience.

### The Ultimate Book of Vegan Cooking. Hard Cover

**By Tony & Yvonne Bishop-Weston**

**\$40 + up to \$12 postage**

Everything you need to know about going vegan, from choosing

the best ingredients to practical advice on health & nutrition.

### The Get Healthy, Go Vegan Cookbook [New]

**By Dr. Neal Barnard and Robyn Webb**

**\$25 plus postage \$6.65**

125 easy, delicious recipes to jump start weight loss and help you feel great.

### Why Animal Suffering Matters (Hard Cover) [New]

**By Reverend Professor Andrew Linzey**

**\$45 + postage \$6.65**

Philosophically astute, theologically sensitive and eminently readable. Andrew Linzey's innovative thesis is that, far from granting a secondary significance to animals, their (alleged) lack of reasoning and linguistic capacities argue for treating them with the care and concern that we extend to our very young.

### Peaceable Kingdom:

The Journey Home. [New]

**(DVD 78 mins)**

**\$18 with postage of \$1.20**

Five farmers, an animal rescuer and a humane police officer each embark on a riveting journey of awakening conscience in this artful tapestry of memory, music and personal truth. A life-changing film.

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

**E. Palmcrantz & I. Lilja**

**\$35 postage up to \$12**

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

### Becoming Raw: The Essential Guide to Raw Vegan Diets

**B. Davis and V. Melina**

**\$35 postage up to \$12**

This is the definitive book on health & the benefits of adding more raw fruits and vegetables to your diet. A treasure chest of easy-to-read, well-researched information on raw food.

### Green Smoothie Revolution

**Victoria Boutenko**

**\$26 includes postage**

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

200 recipes

### Sweet Gratitude

**M. Rogers & T.A. Tamborra**

**\$36 postage up to \$12**

A new world of raw desserts. This book contains fresh takes on old favourites like Pumpkin Pie & Tiramisu plus ingenious new creations including Goji Berry - Chocolate Cheesecake & Brazil Nut Ganache Truffles. Beautifully illustrated.

# Kindred Organisations

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



## A Note from VegSA

VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN SOCIETY  
(VegSA) Inc.

PO Box 311 Kent Town SA 5071.  
Phone 08 8260 2778, email [vegsocsa@gmail.com](mailto:vegsocsa@gmail.com).  
Web [www.vegsa.org.au](http://www.vegsa.org.au)

For over 60 years VegSA (formerly Vegetarian and Vegan Society of SA) has been promoting the advantages of vegetarianism and a healthy lifestyle. It disseminates information through contact with like-minded organisations through its local *Food for Thought* newsletter and distribution of *True Natural Health* magazine.

VegSA also offers support to people who wish to follow a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle through regular social functions where members and friends can share food and ideas. Details can be found on the 'DIARY DATES' section of our website. Many events are also organised by the subgroups.

**Southern Group:** Meets 2nd Saturday each month.  
Contact 08 8326 1062,  
email [vegsu2003@yahoo.com.au](mailto:vegsu2003@yahoo.com.au)

**Northern Group:** Contact 08 8260 2778,  
email: [vegsocsa@gmail.com](mailto:vegsocsa@gmail.com)

**Vegewise:** Meets 3rd Wednesday each month.  
Contact 08 83742531,  
email [theshoppe@tpg.com.au](mailto:theshoppe@tpg.com.au)

VegSA also works in with VegSA Meet-up:  
See <http://www.meetup.com/VegSA-Meetup/>

## The China Study

By **T. Colin Campbell PhD**

& **Thomas M. Campbell**

**\$25 Postage up to \$12**

**Special price RRP \$35**

Startling implications for diet, weight loss and long-term health. Findings from the most comprehensive large study ever undertaken of the relationship between diet and the risk of developing disease are challenging much of American dietary dogma.

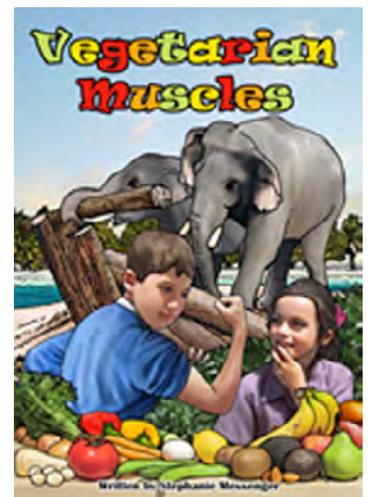
## A Book Review by Vegetarian/Vegan Society of Qld

### VEGETARIAN MUSCLES

Reviewed by **Maureen Collier**

*Vegetarian Muscles*, written by Stephanie Messenger, is a children's book that explores a day in the life of a healthy, environmentally conscious, vegetarian family.

Jordan, Penny and Katie enjoy delicious vegetarian snacks, chat about their favourite vegetarian foods, and help mum and dad in the garden. As they plant seeds and harvest their fresh produce, Mother educates the children on the nutritional and ethical aspects of a vegetarian diet.



This simple tale is really an instructional guide for vegetarian children, designed to arm them with the knowledge necessary to answer the tough questions they may face from their peers and empower them to conduct their own education along the way.

Parents who have struggled to provide responses to the myths surrounding vegetarianism in words that a child can absorb will find this book a helpful tool. Though the language is simple, some of the concepts could be considered to be quite complex, so I recommend the content for those in late primary school to early high school. The vivid illustrations, however, will capture the attentions of younger children – the colourful imagery seems to jump off the page.

*Vegetarian Muscles* is available from The Vegetarian/Vegan Society of Queensland for \$15 (plus \$1.80 postage).

**Vegetarian/Vegan Society of Qld. Inc,**  
**1086 Waterworks Rd, The Gap Qld 4061.**

## Classifieds

### VITAMINS MADE FROM WHOLE FOODS

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# Natural Health Society Shop

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## YOU CAN CONQUER CANCER

Third revised edition, published 2013

By Dr Ian Gawler

38.50

When first published in 1984 this was a revolutionary book. Having sold a quarter of a million copies worldwide, it is a classic in the management of cancer because the author practised what he preaches. This edition is greatly expanded due to Ian's accumulated knowledge of the subject.

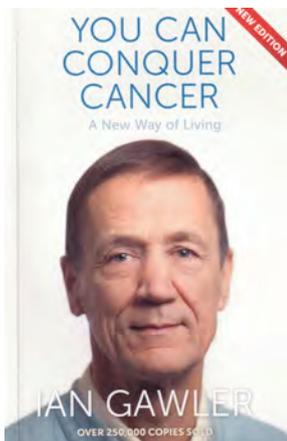
In 1975 as a young veterinarian and decathlon athlete, Ian had his right leg amputated due to bone cancer. Later that year, the cancer returned and in 1976 he was given a matter of weeks to live. Ian discovered meditation – through Dr Ainslie Meares – and nutrition and against almost impossible odds, he recovered and went on to found the Yarra Valley Living Centre to help people with life-threatening illnesses.

This book elaborates a truly wholistic approach to cancer, based on nutrition, the power of the mind, meditation, family and social support and the spiritual aspects of life. As an example of its practicality, there is a two-page list of what to have and what to avoid. In particular, the focus is on foods with anti-cancer properties and having seven veggie and fruit juices daily.

Ian emphasises that there is no magic bullet for cancer. It *can* be conquered using a process that takes effort, perseverance and the willingness to make changes.

The book is a wonderfully practical guide to prevention of cancer and the chance of recovery through self-healing.

436 pages in plain language including index.



## NATURAL STRESS AND ANXIETY RELIEF

The Adrenaline Connection

By Helen Johnson

\$29.00

Helen Johnson has been through hell. Anxiety, fatigue, obesity, depression and panic attacks dominated her life for 20 years. She had no idea why and nor did practitioners, except for a psychiatrist who thought he knew and told Helen's family that she had a mental illness. Not only was this wrong, but it exacerbated her troubles – she was now completely alone.

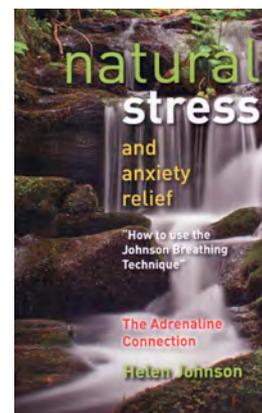
Why was she periodically wallowing in emotional pain – feelings of loss, hurt, rejection, anger, low self-esteem and low self-worth?

The first half of the book is Helen telling her story. She knew there was nothing wrong with her physically and yet there was something wrong, terribly wrong. She tells about her search for answers as to what was wrong and why. This first-hand story reads like fiction and would depress the reader, except that we know she recovered in the end and became a naturopath teaching how to recover from problems like hers. It is a great success story.

Helen had come to understand that her nervous system was running on adrenaline and she was "addicted to adrenaline". At last she could stop searching and blaming herself and others for her problems. She was suffering 'anxiety syndrome' which she discovered to be a worldwide problem. Her list of symptoms of adrenaline addiction occupies two pages.

The essence of Helen's solution is her breathing technique – the 'Johnson Breathing Technique'. Explained in half a dozen pages, it is extraordinarily simple, easy to do and requires very little time.

This short book, 136 pages, has the potential to help a lot of people in highly stressed modern Australia.



## SHATTERING THE PAIN MYTH

How you can live a pain free life now!

By Gary Little

\$34.00

Once we understand the connection between physical and emotional pain, we can understand the cause of our pain, declares the author with conviction. And he knows what he is talking about.

After studying Reiki, NLP and meditation and hearing Wayne Dwyer, Anthony Robbins and other world leading health speakers, then learning deep-tissue massage, Gary was led to work on the world's top sports stars, helping them to address the root causes of their injuries. "It was exhilarating," he writes, "to free them from pain and then watch as they smashed records or won tournaments after they had almost been sidelined by injury."

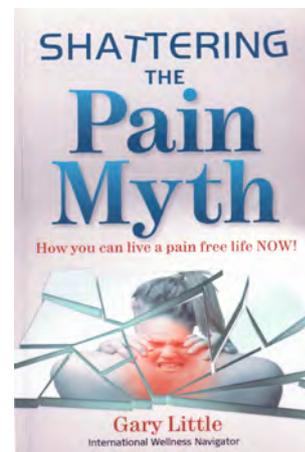
Gary came to realise that most practitioners are only treating the symptoms, not the cause of pain, which is why it returns after treatment. A surgeon might say that the cause of your need for knee replacement is your genetics, which completely misses the true lifestyle cause. And painkillers are now the second greatest cause of accidental death in the USA.

At the core of Gary's approach is his discovery that 90 – 95 percent of all illnesses are caused by physiological and/or emotional stress which has accumulated over time. Stress takes the form of worry, perfectionism, time restraints, relationships, finances, children and mortgages – and it is on the rise. The key to finding the origin of the pain is to locate the emotional imprint responsible.

Part of our problems too can be the foods we eat, which are accounted for in a later chapter.

From all of this can be understood disc pain, joint pain, muscle strains, cartilage problems, knee and hip replacements and contracted muscles.

This book presents a truly revolutionary approach to eliminating pain by a man who 'walks his talk'.



# NATURAL HEALTH SOCIETY BOOKSHOP ORDER FORM

Prices include postage (in Australia) and members' discounts. Some have extra discounts

Payment can be by Visa, MasterCard, cheque or money order. Please forward order with payment to:

Natural Health Society of Australia, 28/541 High St, Penrith NSW 2750. Phone 02 4721 5068; fax 02 4731 1174; email admin@health.org.au

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Tri Nature Products (total from page 44)			
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A dreamy blend for those who love these two opulent blooms.

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2D	Citrus Dishwasher Rinse Aid 500ml		15.95	
52B	Sanazone Odourless Disinfectant 1lt		18.95	
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13	Alpha Plus Pre-Wash Soaker Bucket 2kg		37.95	
13D	Refill 1kg Q: 17.95	13A	Refill 2kg Q:	31.95
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14D	Refill 1kg Q: 18.95	14A	Refill 2kg Q:	32.95
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21D	Golden Silk Shwr Balm Citrus Orchard 250ml		12.95	
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Less 10% subscriber discount if applicable			\$	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>			\$	
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*The word 'superfood' is thrown around so much in the mainstream media that it kind of lacks credibility. However, there are a few special foods that have genuinely earned this title and Spirulina is one of them.*

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*Jessica Ainscough - TheWellnessWarrior.com.au*



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