

DR. MICHAEL MURRAY'S

NATURAL LIVING NEWS

EXPERT ADVICE FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

January/February 2014

STATIN OVERLOAD THE DRUG-FREE HEART SOLUTION



ANCIENT **GRAIN REVIVAL**

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WHAT IF NATTOKINASE WERE A DRUG?

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Sometimes I take a look at the actions of a natural product and wonder: If a drug had these effects, how popular would it be? Take a look at nattokinase, a protein-digesting enzyme isolated from natto (a traditional Japanese food prepared from soybeans fermented with *Bacillus subtilis*). Nattokinase is a natural “clot buster” that has shown significant potential in improving cardiovascular disease (CVD).

Nattokinase works primarily by breaking down fibrin, a component of blood clots and atherosclerotic plaque. Elevated levels of the fibrin precursor fibrinogen in the blood are a clear risk factor for CVD. In fact in many cases, fibrinogen levels are a bigger CVD risk factor than cholesterol levels. Nattokinase supplementation has been shown to:

- Dissolve excess fibrin in blood vessels to improve circulation, dissolve clots, and reduce the risk of severe clotting.
- Reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol and increase HDL (good) cholesterol.
- Reduce blood viscosity, improve blood flow, and lower blood pressure.

These are all key goals in preventing strokes and heart attacks. In addition, nattokinase has been shown to prevent the formation of blood clots during long flights when combined with pine bark extract (grape seed extract would provide similar benefit).

In my article on page 22, I discuss the current standard treatment for CVD—statins—and the problems they can cause. Still they're prescribed to millions of people a year, and that number is about to go up, thanks to new industry guidelines.

With all of nattokinase's impressive benefits noted in clinical trials, I have no doubt that if nattokinase were a drug it would be among the most popular prescriptions for both the treatment and prevention of CVD. The typical dosage for nattokinase is 100 mg once or twice daily.

—Dr. Michael T. Murray
www.DoctorMurray.com



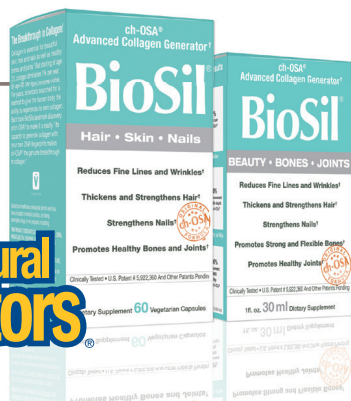
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Factors**



By now you know. Adding body collagen directly reduces wrinkles, increases skin elasticity and adds vital moisture to your skin. Indirectly, collagen thickens and strengthens your hair. You may also know that collagen production slows by 1% per year after the age of 21. Can you gain it back? Yes. But not by eating collagen. You see, collagen is a protein. When you ingest it, your body breaks it down, like any other protein, and uses it as food. When you want the real beauty benefits of collagen, you have to generate it.

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* Based on clinical testing on the forearm and forehead.

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DR. MICHAEL MURRAY'S

NATURAL LIVING NEWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014

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HEALING FOODS

ANCIENT GRAIN RENAISSANCE

If you've been in the cereal aisle of the grocery store lately, you may have noticed that many brands are going beyond corn and wheat. Several so-called "ancient grains" are making their way into modern-day breakfast foods—and with good reason.

Ancient grains are ones that once were mainstays, but now have fallen out of favor in our part of the world. Especially after the food shortages of the early 20th century, heavily subsidized wheat and corn flooded the market. Today, almost every processed food contains some amount of either wheat or corn (or sometimes both).

One of the ancient grains experiencing a renaissance is millet. A recent study published in the journal *Comprehensive Reviews in Food Science and Food Safety* points out that increasing water scarcity and booming populations have led many people to see the benefit of growing this hardy crop that also happens to be full of important nutrients.

Since millet and other similar grains have not undergone crossbreeding and manipulation, they are closer to their original state than are popular grains like wheat and corn. Plus, millet has a host of benefits over common grains:

- It's higher in fiber and protein than comparable choices.



NUTRITION COMPARISON OF A 100G SERVING OF DIFFERENT COMMON GRAINS

Food	Protein (g)	Fiber (g)	Carbohydrate (g)
Brown rice	7.9	1.0	76.0
Wheat	11.6	2.0	71.0
Corn	9.2	2.8	73.0
Sorghum	10.4	2.0	70.7
Common Millet*	12.5	5.2	63.8

* Common millet (also called Proso millet), is the most available millet variety in the United States.

- It's gluten-free.
- It's low on the glycemic index.
- Millet flour easily mixes with other flours to make familiar recipes.
- It's packed with antioxidants.
- Studies show it can lower cardiovascular disease rates in rats.
- Populations that consume sorghum and millet have lower rates of esophageal cancer.
- Drought tolerance means millet has the potential to use less energy than other more popular grains.

Try cooking millet in place of rice or other grains, or pick up some cereal made with it, and you'll understand why this ancient grain is new again.



Have that heavy feeling?

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Green tea extracts are widely used in products for weight management. But, not all green tea extracts are alike. Absorption of the active constituents varies and low absorption reduces efficacy. Only Indena offers proven Greenselect® PHYTOSOME.

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¹ Di Piero F., Menghi A.B., Barreca A., Lucarelli M., Calandrelli A., "Greenselect® Phytosome as an Adjunct to a Low-Calorie Diet for Treatment of Obesity: A Clinical Trial", *Alternative Medicine Review*. Volume 14, Number 2 (2009).

CONDITION



ANTIDOTE TO THE WINTER BLUES

With short winter days, and lower temperatures keeping people inside more, many people suffer from a form of depression known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD symptoms usually start in autumn and continue until spring.

If you're experiencing SAD symptoms—decreased energy, increased food intake, feelings of hopelessness, and social withdrawal—take a lesson from a recent South Korean study. The animal study found that exercise and light therapy—either alone or in combination—increased neuron production in the hippocampus. That can have the same effects as antidepressants.

This winter, bundle up, get outside, and get your heart rate up. Take a short walk, go for a brisk jog, or build a snowman. The benefits are innumerable: physically, psychologically, and biochemically.

NATURAL MOOD BOOSTERS

In addition to exercise and sunlight, several natural supplements can help improve mood. Here are a few that are shown to help turn the blues around—regardless of season:

- Omega 3s
- 5-Hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP)
- St. John's wort extract (*Hypericum perforatum*)
- DHEA

Note: If you are currently on a prescription antidepressant drug, do not stop taking it without the supervision of your healthcare professional. Contact your doctor or pharmacist before taking any of these supplements while on any prescription medications.



*Which do you choose
for improved mobility?*

A.



B.



A.  *Just one-a-day for
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NUTRIENTS

KIDS NEED MAGNESIUM, TOO

We have long known that magnesium is a necessary nutrient in adult bone health. In a study released last year at the Pediatric Academic Societies annual meeting, it also appears that magnesium is equally important for a child's bone health and development.

Parents are often advised to make sure their children receive calcium through sources like milk and other dairy products. The study's lead author, Steve A. Abrams, MD, is quoted in the *American Academy of Pediatrics News* as saying, "Calcium is important, but, except for those children and adolescents with very low intakes, may not be more important than magnesium." This may be especially true because many people in the United States take in less than the recommended daily allowance of magnesium.



Feeding children healthy food can often be a challenge due to time constraints and a child's palate. But research continues to emphasize the importance of getting out of the chicken-nugget-and-french-fry rut and getting back to real, whole, nutritious foods.



As always, it's best to get your nutrients from whole, unprocessed foods. Foods rich in magnesium include the following.

- Dark, leafy greens
- Beans and lentils
- Whole grains
- Dairy
- Dried fruit
- Nuts and seeds
- Fish
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Dark chocolate

MOVEMENT

STRENGTH AND BALANCE THROUGH YOGA

Yoga is adaptable and gentle, making it a good fitness choice for people with physical limitations and for older adults. Using yoga “props” such as foam blocks, blankets, and straps can allow yoga enthusiasts to practice in spite of just about any physical limitation.

Research is now being conducted to determine how yoga can best be used

to help people maintain strength and balance as they age. Experts at the University of California conducted a study to determine the specific physical demands of various yoga poses. The researchers, who have backgrounds in biokinesiology, physical therapy, and geriatrics, looked at seven common standing yoga poses. Of those poses,

YOGA FOR STABILITY

CHAIR

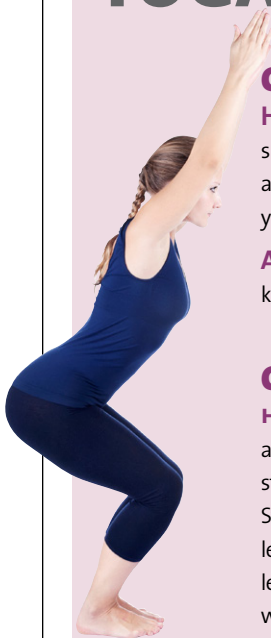
HOW TO DO IT: Start with your feet hip-width apart and hands by your sides. As you begin to lift your arms straight overhead, hinge at the hips and knees like you’re trying to sit in a chair. Don’t arch your spine. Keep your arms overhead and in line with your spine.

AREAS TARGETED: Hip extensor and abductor; knee extensor and abductor; ankle plantar/flexor

CRESCENT

HOW TO DO IT: Start with your feet hip-width apart and hands by your sides. Lift your hands straight overhead. Keep both feet facing forward. Step forward with your left foot and bend your left knee. This will bring your left knee over your left ankle. Your left thigh should approach parallel with the ground. Repeat on the other side.

AREAS TARGETED: Hip extensor and flexor; knee extensor; ankle plantar/flexor



Crescent, Chair, Warrior II, and One-legged Balance poses showed the greatest muscle recruitment and joint stabilizer activation.

The participants averaged about 70 years old and attended two 60-minute yoga sessions per week for 32 weeks. Their health was good overall without any significant medical conditions. The researchers designed and tested, “senior-adapted Hatha yoga poses

intended to be suitable for ambulatory older adults.”

If you’re interested in increasing your strength and stability as you get older—both key to preventing falls—try some of the poses researched in this study. Here’s a quick guide to how to do them, and what areas they strengthen. Remember to consult with your health-care practitioner before starting any new exercise regimen.



ONE-LEGGED BALANCE

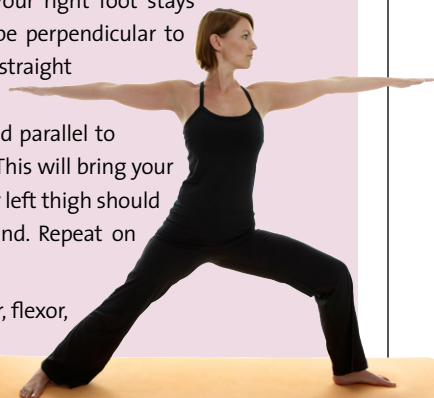
HOW TO DO IT: Start with your feet hip-width apart and hands by your sides. Lift your hands straight overhead. Bend your left knee and lift your foot off the ground. If need be, this can be done with yoga blocks under your elevated foot. Repeat on the other side.

AREAS TARGETED: Hip extensor and abductor; knee flexor and abductor; ankle adductor

WARRIOR II

HOW TO DO IT: Start with your feet hip-width apart and hands by your sides. Step your feet out to about double-hip-width and turn your left foot out 90 degrees. Your right foot stays planted. Now your feet should be perpendicular to one another. Raise your arms straight out away from your sides. Your arms will be in a straight line and parallel to the ground. Bend your left knee. This will bring your left knee over your left ankle. Your left thigh should approach parallel with the ground. Repeat on the other side.

AREAS TARGETED: Hip extensor, flexor, and adductor; knee adductor; ankle abductor



APPLES

AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS
THE CARDIOLOGIST AWAY

Numerous studies have now documented a broad range of health benefits that come with regular apple consumption. In fact, a new analysis published in the December 2013 issue of the *British Medical Journal* found that eating just one extra apple a day would reduce the same number vascular deaths as prescribing statins to every person over the age of 50. And of course apples are free of the risks and side effects that statins carry with them. (See “Statin Overload” on page 22 for a thorough explanation of the problems statins pose.)

The authors of this study don't claim that apples have some previously unknown healing power. Instead, they note that the simple addition of an apple has a ripple effect across the diet. The apple eater's diet has lower total dietary fat and saturated fat, and higher fiber intake. But the standout dietary message is that adding one apple per day seems to inspire people to increase their fruit and vegetable intake overall.

KEY HEALTH BENEFITS

The benefits of apples may be the result of antioxidant effects that protect our cells and cellular components like DNA from damage. Eating fresh apple or drinking its

equivalent as juice has shown an ability to increase the antioxidant activity in the blood within 30 minutes, and that effect lasts for 90 minutes. This antioxidant effect may explain why apple consumption was found to reduce the risk for cancer, cardiovascular disease, asthma, and Alzheimer's disease. Apple intake is also associated with improved outcomes related to age-related cognitive decline, diabetes, weight management, bone health, lung function, and peptic ulcers. Fresh apple juice has also been shown to possess antiviral effects.

In one study, researchers in Finland followed more than 5,000 Finnish men and women for over 20 years. Those who ate the most apples and other flavonoid-rich foods (such as onions and tea) were found to have a 20 percent lower risk of heart disease compared to those who ate the least of these foods. Apples lower cholesterol and also reduce the oxidative damage to cholesterol that promotes hardening of the arteries.

Apple consumption may also lower the risk for asthma. One study published in 2001 in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* surveyed nearly 1,500 adults in the United Kingdom and found that people who



ate at least two apples each week had a 22 to 32 percent lower risk for asthma compared to those who ate less of this fruit. Other studies have shown that eating five apples per week is associated with significantly improved lung function in adults, and it even offsets the typical decline in lung function associated with aging.

KEY NUTRIENTS AND PHYTOCHEMICALS

Apples are a good—but not great—source of many vitamins and minerals, particularly if they are unpeeled. It is their phytochemicals that really provide the health benefits, and many of them are found in the highest concentration in the peel. Unpeeled apples are particularly high in plant pigments (carotenes and flavonoids) and pectin. Pectin is a remarkable type of fiber that has been shown to exert a number of beneficial effects. Because it is a gel-forming fiber, pectin can improve the intestinal

GO ORGANIC

When you add that extra apple, make sure it's organic. You may be aware of the Dirty Dozen—a list of fruits and vegetables that have the most pesticide contamination, even after being washed or peeled. Would you believe that the wholesome apple holds the number one spot? The list contains grapes, strawberries, spinach, and cucumbers, but apples top them all, with a whopping 48 different pesticides contaminating 98 percent of the apples sampled. Visit the Environmental Working Group's page (www.ewg.org) and find out how to keep pesticides out of your kitchen.

muscle's ability to push waste through the gastrointestinal tract. Pectin can also bind to and eliminate toxins in the gut, as well as help reduce cholesterol levels. Since pectin is a water-soluble fiber, fresh juice still retains a portion of this the fruit's pectin content.

APPLES

Apples contain high levels of flavonoid compounds with significant anticancer actions. Fresh whole apples and fresh apple juice contain approximately 100–130 mg per 100 grams (roughly 3½ ounces) of these valuable compounds. The content of these compounds in canned, bottled, or frozen apple juice is at or near zero—another strong case for eating apples or drinking your apple juice fresh.

Apples are also a great source of ellagic acid, a flavonoid that has shown a great deal of anticancer activity. Much of the recent research on ellagic acid has focused on pomegranate as the source because it contains flavonoid compounds that are broken down to ellagic acid in the body. But apples may be a better and more economical source. One of the prime actions of ellagic acid is to protect against damage to our DNA and block the cancer-causing actions of many pollutants. For example, ellagic acid has been shown to block the cancer-causing effects of several compounds in cigarette smoke known collectively as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). Ellagic acid is also a potent antioxidant and can increase many of the body's antioxidant compounds, including glutathione.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

You should definitely buy organic apples if you can (see sidebar). A few years ago, publicity about the dangerous chemical known as ALAR that is sprayed on



apples curtailed its use, but apples are still treated with many other chemicals.

Fresh apples should be firm, crisp, and well-colored. If an apple lacks color, it has likely been picked before it was fully mature and has been ripened artificially. Apples picked when mature will have more color and better flavor. They'll also store longer than apples picked too early. Check the firmness of the apple. A fresh apple will produce a characteristic snap when you apply pressure to the skin with a finger. Overripe apples will not give you a crisp snap; they will feel softer.

Take a simple (and tasty) step to improve your health. Just follow the age-old adage, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away."

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L-THEANINE

SERENITY NOW

L-theanine is a unique amino acid found almost exclusively in green tea (*Camellia sinensis*). Over the past decade, L-theanine has emerged as one of the premier natural products to help people suffering from stress and/or anxiety.

L-theanine is actually the primary amino acid found in green tea. It accounts for between 1 and 2 percent of the dry weight of tea leaves. L-theanine has been available in the United States in a purified form known as Suntheanine since 1998 and is protected by more than 40 US and international patents for its various benefits, as well as specific production processes.

YOUR BRAIN ON L-THEANINE

Clinical studies have demonstrated that L-theanine reduces stress, improves the quality of sleep, diminishes the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome, heightens mental acuity, and reduces the negative side effects of caffeine. These clinical effects are directly related to L-theanine's ability to stimulate the production of alpha brain waves (a state often achieved by meditation and characterized by being relaxed with greater mental focus and mental alertness). It also reduces beta-waves, which are associated with nervousness, scattered thoughts, and hyperactivity.





L-theanine has been approved for use in Japan as an aid to conquer stress and promote relaxation. It is a very popular ingredient in functional foods and beverages, as well as dietary supplements designed to produce mental and physical relaxation without inducing drowsiness.

L-theanine is fast-acting. Generally, the effects are felt within the first 30 minutes and have been shown to last up to eight to 12 hours. I recommend taking L-theanine in a chewable tablet, as it seems to produce quicker results via nearly immediate transport to the brain.

ADHD AND AUTISM

L-theanine shows promise in reducing the sleep problems that plague children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism. A double-

blind trial conducted at the University of British Columbia on L-theanine in 98 boys with ADHD showed significant improvements in sleep quality with L-theanine supplementation (200 mg twice daily provided in a chewable tablet).

DOSAGE INFORMATION

Based on the results of numerous clinical studies, it has been established that L-theanine is effective in the range of 50 to 200 mg. People with higher levels of stress are often advised to take at least 100 to 200 mg one to three times daily. Although L-theanine is completely safe and without any known adverse drug interaction, as a general guideline it is recommended to take no more than 600 mg within a six-hour period, and no more than 1,200 mg within a 24-hour period.

L-THEANINE

At typical dosages, L-theanine does not act as a sedative, but it does significantly improve sleep quality. It is also an excellent synergist to melatonin and 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP) in promoting sleep (Tranquil Sleep from Natural Factors is an example of this sort of combination). On its own, L-theanine at a dosage of 200 mg was shown in a double-blind trial to produce statistically significant improvements in sleep efficiency, an index of actual sleep time enjoyed between the time of falling asleep and nighttime awakenings.

SAFETY AND DRUG INTERACTIONS

L-theanine has been shown to be safe and without side effects based on numerous safety studies and clinical trials. Beyond that, Suntheanine has been consumed in beverages, foods, and supplements since 1994 with no indication of adverse reactions or contraindications. Suntheanine received confirmation from the FDA in 2007 as a Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) ingredient for its use in food and beverages, as well as being available as a dietary supplement.

There are no known drug interactions with L-theanine. In fact, L-theanine may help the action of antianxiety and antipsychotic medications. For example, a 2011 study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* clearly showed the benefit of L-theanine in improving the



FAR-REACHING EFFECTS

Some of L-theanine's many effects include the following.

- Increasing brain serotonin, dopamine, and GABA levels
- Counteracting some of the stimulatory effects of caffeine
- Producing mental and physical relaxation without inducing drowsiness
- Improving learning and memory in both human and animal studies
- Reducing feelings of stress
- Improving sleep quality
- Diminishing the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome
- Increasing the production of alpha brain waves

effectiveness of psychiatric medications. In the study, 60 patients with schizophrenia added 400 mg per day of L-theanine to their ongoing antipsychotic treatment for more than 2.5 years. Compared with placebo, L-theanine was associated with a significant reduction of anxiety and mental symptoms. L-theanine was found to be a safe, and there were no adverse drug reactions.

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HIGH CHOLESTEROL

STATIN OVERLOAD

The American Heart Association (AHA) and American College of Cardiology (ACC) recently released four new guidelines dealing with the prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD). The big news is that doctors are now being urged to move away from specific targets for cholesterol and instead focus on clinical assessment of risk.

Unfortunately, the misguided recommendation will be to increase the focus on prescribing statins rather than important dietary and lifestyle recommendations.

Under the current guidelines that target blood lipids, statins are recommended for about 15 percent of adults. With the new guidelines 44 percent of men and 22 percent of women would meet the criteria for taking a statin.

This is great news for the drug industry, but not for patients. In fact, statins have already failed to increase life expectancy for 80 percent of the people taking them. Increasing the number of prescriptions likely won't improve outcomes, but it will increase the number of people who suffer statin-induced side effects.

WHEN DO STATINS HELP?

The medical literature *does* show that in people with a history of a heart attack, stroke, or current signs and symptoms of existing CVD reduce their risk of death due to a heart attack by taking statins. On the other hand, research shows that statin drugs do not improve life expectancy in people without a history of heart attack or stroke. The largest and most thorough review of statins analyzed 11 clinical trials involving 65,229 participants and was published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* in June 2010. The results showed that statin therapy did **not** result in reduction in all-cause mortality in high-risk patients.



About 75 percent of the prescriptions for statins are written for people with no clinical evidence of CVD. And, since statins have **not** been shown to increase life expectancy in these patients, the easy conclusion is that the majority of people on statin drugs are achieving no real benefit from them. In fact, in my opinion relying on these drugs and not focusing on effectively reducing heart disease risk through diet, lifestyle, and proper nutritional supplementation is costing many people their lives.

NATURAL ALTERNATIVES TO STATINS

When it comes to managing cholesterol, I look to the pantry first. Diet can be as effective as statins in lowering cholesterol levels in many people with high cholesterol levels. In particular, the “Portfolio Diet,” which focuses on plant-based cholesterol-lowering foods, produces great results. In one study participants were randomly assigned to undergo one of three interventions on an outpatient basis for one month: a diet low in saturated fat; the same diet plus lovastatin, 20 mg/day; or the “Portfolio Diet,” which was high in plant sterols, soy protein, fiber, and almonds. The control, statin, and Portfolio Diet groups had average decreases in LDL of 8 percent, 30.9 percent, and 28.6 percent, respectively. The Portfolio Diet was also almost as effective as statins in reducing the inflammatory marker C-reactive protein (CRP). This study and others



ARE STATINS SAFE?

While drug companies and many doctors state that statins are so safe and effective they should be added to drinking water, the reality is that they are very expensive medicines, provide very limited benefit, and carry with them considerable risks for side effects. For example, a 2012 study by the Mayo Clinic found that the use of statins in postmenopausal women increased their risk for type 2 diabetes by 74 percent. Some of the other side effects noted with statins include the following.

- Liver problems and decreased liver function
- Interference with the manufacture of CoQ₁₀
- Rhabdomyolysis, the breaking down of muscle tissue, which can be fatal
- Nerve damage
- Impaired mental function
- Possible increased risk of cancer and heart failure
- Decreased energy levels

HIGH CHOLESTEROL

show that a diet rich in cholesterol-lowering components produces results comparable to a statin drug, but without the side effects.

As far as natural cholesterol lowering products go, three are worthy of special mention.

Red Yeast Rice. Statin drugs owe their origin to red yeast (*Monascus purpureus*) fermented on rice. This traditional Chinese medicine has been used for its health-promoting effects in China for more than 2,000 years. Red yeast rice is the source of a group of compounds known as *monacolins*. In fact lovastatin is also known as monacolin K, which is one of the key monacolins in red yeast rice extract. When the supplement industry

started marketing red yeast rice extracts standardized for monacolin content, they were thwarted because it contained a natural source of a prescription drug. The FDA eventually ruled that red yeast rice products could only be sold if they were free of monacolin.

That's unfortunate, since studies have shown that red yeast rice containing monacolins can significantly lower levels of total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol. But since the FDA only allows red yeast rice products to be sold if they do not contain monacolins, we don't know whether the available products have any effects on cholesterol levels.

Niacin. Since the 1950s niacin (vitamin B₃) has been known to be effective in lowering blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels. In fact, in numerous clinical studies niacin has demonstrated better overall results in reducing risk factors for coronary heart disease than other cholesterol-lowering agents, including statin drugs.

Niacin does have an unpleasant side effect, though—hot, itchy skin. To combat that, manufacturers have developed sustained-release—also called timed-release or slow-release—niacin products. Unfortunately, earlier versions of timed-release niacin were more toxic to the liver than regular niacin. Newer timed-released preparations, referred to

STATINS AND COENZYME Q10

If you are on statins, there are some things you can do to support your body and prevent side effects. One of the most important things you can do is to supplement with CoQ₁₀, since statins block the enzyme necessary to synthesize this important nutrient. Researchers believe this could explain the most commonly reported side effects, especially fatigue and muscle pain, as well as the more serious side effects such as severe muscle damage (rhabdomyolysis). The recommended dosage is 100 mg twice a day.



as “intermediate release,” are as effective at improving blood lipids (fats) as larger dosages of the older forms (3,000 mg), but without the risk of liver toxicity.

Niacin can be used alone or in combination with statins. Some studies have shown that niacin used in conjunction with statins significantly improves patient outcomes, as opposed to using statins alone.

Sytrinol. This extract of citrus peel is standardized to contain greater than 30 percent polymethoxylated flavones. This mixture provides a comprehensive formula that addresses high cholesterol, high LDL cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol), and high triglyceride levels. Sytrinol works by blocking the enzymes in the liver responsible for manufacturing cholesterol and triglyceride production. Clinical results have shown that Sytrinol exerts effects very similar to statin drugs, but without side

effects. The recommended dosage is 150 mg twice daily.

FINAL NOTES

The benefits of the longer chain omega-3 fatty acids eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexanoic acid (DHA) on cardiovascular health has been demonstrated in more than 300 clinical trials. Supplementation with EPA + DHA has little effect on cholesterol levels, but does lower triglyceride levels significantly. It also produces myriad additional beneficial effects in protecting against CVD. In general, for preventive effects against CVD, the dosage recommendation is 1,000 mg EPA + DHA per day, but for lowering triglycerides the dosage is 3,000 mg EPA + DHA.

For the full story on CVD prevention, download a free copy of my book *Cholesterol and Heart Health—What the Drug Companies Won’t Tell You and Your Doctor Doesn’t Know*. Just click [here](#) or visit www.DoctorMurray.com.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

COMMIT TO THE LIFE YOU WANT

Not too long ago, many of us were setting New Year's resolutions and goals. But how are we doing today?

If you're starting to falter already—and even if you're still holding strong—it's a good time to put your attention on what it takes to make those goals stick.

Achieving a high level of wellness (and happiness) in our lives requires constant, unwavering commitment. The payoff is worth it, but the price is too steep for many. The fact is you can't fear commitment—it's the first step in achieving anything in life that is worth achieving.

Commitment and perseverance are required traits in the path to self-actualization—the fulfillment of one's highest potential. If you are not familiar with the term “self-actualization,” it was popularized by the founding father of humanistic psychology Dr. Abraham Maslow (1908–1970). His work and theories were the result of intense research on psychologically healthy people over a period of more than 30 years. Maslow was really the first psychologist to study healthy people. He strongly believed the study of healthy people would create a firm foundation for the theories and values of a new psychotherapy. And it turns out he was right. That's exactly

how psychotherapy has evolved to what it is today.

OUR INNATE DRIVE

Maslow believed that there is an innate drive within each of us to achieve the experience of self-actualization in our lives. Maslow discovered that healthy individuals are motivated toward self-actualization through a process of developing their potentials, capacities, and talents as part of a fulfillment of a strong sense of mission in their lives. As our lives unfold, we gain insights and acceptance of our strengths and weaknesses.

THE TRAITS OF SELF-ACTUALIZED PEOPLE

Maslow studied self-actualized people and noted they had strikingly similar characteristics. Here is an abbreviated list of some of Maslow's findings. Self-actualized people:

- perceive reality more accurately and effectively than others and are more comfortable with it. They are not frightened by uncertainty. They possess true courage.
- have an acceptance of self, others, and nature. They can accept their own human shortcomings without too much condemnation.



- are relatively spontaneous in their behavior and thinking. They take advantage of situations to laugh and enjoy life, as well as those that help them with their goals.
- have a problem-solving orientation toward life. They commonly have a mission in life, some problem outside themselves that enlists much of their energies. In general this mission is unselfish and is about making a positive impact in the lives of others or the world in general.
- have deeper and more profound interpersonal relationships. They are capable of more closeness, greater love, more perfect identification, and more erasing of ego boundaries than other people would consider possible.
- have a quality of detachment that allows them to remain above the battles of life that often occupy others. They possess the needed discipline to be self-governing, responsible, and positive.
- have a wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again the basic pleasures of life, such as nature, children, music, and sexual experience.
- commonly have experiences in life that confirm there is meaning to living. They become strengthened by these experiences.
- are democratic in the deepest possible sense. They accept everyone regardless of class, education, political beliefs, race, or color.
- have a keen, unhostile sense of humor, and they love to laugh.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION



THE ROAD TO SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Self-actualization doesn't happen all at once. It happens by degrees, subtle changes accumulating one by one. You are on the path. Set in motion, our commitment leads to actions that produce cause then effect, which ultimately provide us direction in creating our destiny. It begins with commitment. So, to solidify your commitment, here are some important questions to answer.

- What are three key commitments in your life?
- Why are you committed to these items?
- How would you feel if you maintained or achieved these commitments in your life?
- How would you feel if you failed to achieve these commitments?
- What are you willing to do to maintain these commitments?
- What are you willing to give up to achieve these commitments?
- What steps can you take today to show your commitment?

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Our commitment has to be sustained in order to make a positive impact on our lives. One trick that I have discovered to help me maintain a high level of commitment is to collect inspirational quotes. They really motivate me. Without question, the quote I am most fond of one from the famous German writer and politician Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). The first time I read it, it hit me in a profound way—and changed my life forever.

“Until one is committed there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never have otherwise occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meeting and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!”

That quote might not work for you. You must find your own trick to help you feed your inner self to stay motivated in your commitment. Remember, it is not what we do once that usually makes the biggest impact in our lives; it is what we do day in and day out. And that takes unwavering commitment.



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EXPERT ANSWERS TO YOUR **HEALTH QUESTIONS**

FROM THE EDITOR

Do you have a question for Dr. Murray? Submit it online at www.DoctorMurray.com/contact-us. Please note that answers to health questions are not medical advice. If you have an issue that requires medical attention, please see your doctor.

Q Is there any advantage to taking a timed-release alpha-lipoic acid supplement instead of an immediate-release capsule?

A Alpha-lipoic acid is a vitamin-like substance that is often described as “nature’s perfect antioxidant.” The existing evidence does not seem to support an advantage to taking a timed-release product. In fact, it looks like immediate-release formulations are better utilized and produce better clinical results.

Based on detailed absorption studies, we know that alpha-lipoic acid is quickly absorbed with dosage proportionality—meaning that roughly the same percentage is absorbed whether the dosage is 50 or 600 mg. The absolute bioavailability of alpha-lipoic acid indicates amounts to roughly 93 percent of the administered dose. While 93

percent may be absorbed, only about 30 percent actually gets into the bloodstream before it is broken down by the liver.

We know a great deal about how the body handles immediate-release alpha-lipoic acid, but only one study has been conducted using a timed-released preparation. The timed-release product was absorbed more slowly over time, but it did not produce as high of peak value as the immediate-release, nor was the total absorbed amount as high as it was with the immediate release. The study concluded that the timed-released formula was associated with an approximately 40 percent reduction in overall bioavailability compared to the immediate-release product.

The clinical results with the timed-released product were also not very good despite the fact that subjects took a dosage of 1,200 mg of a timed-released alpha-lipoic acid supplement.

It appears the greatest clinical benefits with oral alpha-lipoic acid come from immediate-release products. Most double-blind studies have shown benefits with 300 to 600 mg daily. Its primary use has been in the treatment of diabetic neuropathy.



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