

PART ONE

Conditions

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Abscesses and Boils

An abscess is an accumulation of pus that can occur anywhere in the body, including on the skin and inside of organs and tissues. When an abscess forms around a hair follicle, it is known as a boil. Boils often surface on the buttocks, the underarms, the neck, and the face. They first begin as small, firm, and tender nodules that become red and swollen. Generally, boils do not spread. Within two to four days, a pustule usually forms in the center of the infected area. Then, several days later, it tends to rupture and drain the white or yellow-colored pus. The abscess is called a carbuncle when the skin is red, painful, swollen, and warm, and it forms an elevated lump.

An abscess can occur on anyone at any age. No one is immune to them. They are generally triggered by an impaired immune system, trauma, improper drainage of tissues, bacterial invasion, poor nutrition, and other factors. Skin abscesses tend to develop in places where tight clothing rubs against the skin, as well as around small puncture wounds or cuts. The infected area becomes tender, red, and swollen, and fever may be present.

Delayed or improper treatment can lead to a spreading of the infection. People with a compromised immune system, such as those with HIV/AIDS or diabetes, are more susceptible to a serious infection. Depending on the severity and the location of the infection, antibiotics may be required. In some cases, the abscess will be cut and drained by your doctor. Consult your doctor about any skin abscess that appears on your face, contains red streaks, or is filled with fluids. See your dentist regarding any mouth abscesses. If antibiotics are required, ensure a quicker recovery by simultaneously using natural treatments.

SYMPTOMS

Each of the following symptoms can appear on the face, the chest, or the back.

- Red spots, bumps, or white/yellow pustules, often inflamed and painful
- Swollen, red, and hot area around the lesion
- Fever

Testing Techniques

The following tests will help to assess possible reasons for chronic abscess or boil formation:

- Immune system imbalance or disease—blood
- Intestinal permeability—urine
- Detoxification profile—urine
- Vitamin and mineral analysis (especially vitamins C, E)—blood, urine
- Digestive function and microbe/parasite/candida testing—stool analysis
- Anemia—blood test (CBC, iron, ferritin, % saturation)
- Food and environmental allergies/sensitivities—blood, electrodermal
- Blood-sugar balance—blood

ROOT CAUSES

- Poor diet and food allergies or sensitivities
- Impaired immune system
- Trauma
- Improper drainage of tissues
- Bacterial invasion, poor nutrition
- Clothing rubbing against the skin
- Puncture wounds or cuts

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Dark-green or orange vegetables are especially helpful because they contain beta-carotene, which helps maintain and repair the skin. Eat them raw or lightly cooked to retain their nutrients and fiber.

A quarter of a cup of ground flaxseeds provides helpful essential fatty acids and plenty of fiber for proper elimination. Take with at least 8 ounces of water.

Nuts and seeds, such as almonds, walnuts, and pumpkin seeds, are good sources of skin-healthy vitamin E and essential fatty acids.

Quality protein sources are beans, peas, lentils, eggs, and fresh cold-water fish, such as salmon, mackerel, herring, and sardines. The latter are rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

Meat products should be hormone- and antibiotic-free.

Drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours to flush toxins out of the body and maintain good general health.

If you must use antibiotics, be sure to eat some live unsweetened yogurt every day. The yogurt will replace the “friendly” bacteria in your digestive tract, which are necessary for good health and which antibiotics destroy.

Food to Avoid

Eliminate chips and nachos, colas, sugar, and candy. These products suppress immune function.

Food allergies or sensitivities, such as an allergy to cow’s milk, can be a root cause. See the Food Allergies section for more information.

Avoid saturated and hydrogenated fats, which worsen skin inflammation. Stay away from fried foods and solid fats, such as margarine, lard, and vegetable shortening.

Coffee and other caffeinated products may aggravate skin conditions. If they cause problems for you, cut them out and drink herbal teas instead.

People with carbohydrate sensitivity may notice skin improvement by reducing their carbohydrate intake and increasing their protein sources. This is because elevated levels of the blood sugar–regulating hormone insulin increase skin inflammation.

Detoxification

Detoxification helps to cleanse the body of inflammatory poisons. A three-day vegetable juice fast will sweep away toxic buildup. You should drink a variety of juices during your fast, but those made from carrots, apples, and beets with their tops, as well as green drinks (spirulina, wheatgrass, barley grass, chlorella), are especially supportive of a skin cleanse.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Abscesses and Boils

Super Prescription #1 Tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) oil

Apply topically as a cream or 10 drops diluted in a half-ounce of water three times daily. Tea tree oil has antimicrobial effects and helps to draw the pus out.

Super Prescription #2 Colloidal silver

Apply 2 drops four times daily to reduce the infection. Colloidal silver has potent antimicrobial effects.

Super Prescription #3 Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*) and goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*)

Take 500 mg or 2 to 4 ml of tincture four times daily. Both herbs enhance immune function.

Super Prescription #4 Oregano oil (*Origanum vulgare*)

Take 500 mg in the capsule form four times daily, or take the liquid form as directed on the container. It can be applied directly on the lesions as well. Oregano has powerful antibacterial properties. *Note:* Do not take internally if you are pregnant.

Super Prescription #5 Vitamin C with bioflavonoids

Take 1,000 mg three times daily. Vitamin C supports immune function, and bioflavonoids reduce skin inflammation.

Super Prescription #6 Burdock root (*Arctium lappa*)

Take 3 ml or 500 mg three times daily. Burdock root is used as a skin detoxifier.

Super Prescription #7 Zinc

Take 30 mg twice daily, along with 2 mg of copper. Zinc supports immune function and promotes skin healing.

The antimicrobial activity of oregano oil has been recognized for centuries. A test tube study at the Western University of Australia found that oregano oil had powerful antimicrobial activity against several types of bacteria, including *Staphylococcus aureus*, the bacteria commonly associated with skin infections.

General Recommendations

Super green food supplements, such as chlorella, spirulina, or blends of green foods, support skin healing and detoxification. Take as directed on the container.

Vitamin E is required for a healthy immune system and skin. Take 400 IU of a mixed complex twice daily.

Vitamin A supports immune function. Take 10,000 IU for ten days, and then stop.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms in this section. For acute abscesses and boils, take a 30C potency four times daily. For chronic abscesses and boils, take a 6x, 12x, 6C, 12C, or 30C twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive results. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*) is used in the initial stages of an abscess or a boil, where there is a rapid onset characterized by redness, burning, throbbing, and swollen skin. Pus is not usually present. Symptoms are worse from touch or jarring and at midnight. A high fever may also be present.

Hepar Sulphuris is for abscesses that come to a head. The lesion is very sensitive and tender to touch, with a sharp, sticking pain. There may be a cheesy odor with the pus formation. Symptoms are worse in cold air or from cold applications and are better from warmth. This remedy helps to bring the pus out of the abscess or the boil.

Lachesis is used for boils with a purplish or dark-bluish color. Pustules may be bloody and very painful, with a burning sensation. Symptoms are worse at night; with touch, heat, and pressure; and on the left side of the body.

Mercurius Solubilis or Vivus is for burning and stinging pustular discharges. There is often a foul smell and swollen glands. Symptoms are worse at night. Warm applications may make the pain worse.

Silica (*Silicea*) is a great choice for abscesses or boils that do not discharge pus and that fail to heal. It is often used in addition to or following Hepar Sulphuris, to finish the suppuration. Warm compresses feel good on the lesions.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Spleen 10 clears heat from the blood.
- Large Intestine 4 relieves fever and inflammation.

Bodywork

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

- Work the kidneys and the liver to detoxify the blood.
- If acne is caused by a hormonal imbalance, work the endocrine glands.
- To prevent constipation and speed the elimination of toxins, work the colon.

Hydrotherapy

Alternate a hot and a cold cloth over the affected area to help reduce pain and help expel pus, if the abscess is on the skin: thirty seconds hot, followed by thirty seconds cold, and alternate.

Aromatherapy

Red thyme helps to draw the pus out. Add 1 drop to a hot compress, and apply twice daily to the skin abscess.

Stress Reduction

The effects of stress can worsen skin conditions. Techniques to reduce stress will ultimately help with skin health and appearance. Exercise, prayer, reading, and many other techniques can be used to reduce the effects of stress.

Bach Flower Remedies

Select the appropriate remedy, and place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds, and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Try Crab Apple if your skin is causing feelings of shame about your appearance.

If you've given up hope of finding a cure for your acne, Gorse will renew your spirits.

Larch is helpful for people who lack self-confidence or who are embarrassed because of their skin condition.

Sunlight can inhibit bacterial growth. Get fifteen minutes of sunlight daily, but never allow the skin to burn.

Other Recommendations

Do not squeeze a boil, and keep the area clean.

REFERENCES

Hammer, K. A., C. F. Carson, and T. V. Riley. 1999. Antimicrobial activity of essential oils and other plant extracts. *Journal of Applied Microbiology* 86:985–90.

Acne

The familiar red and white pimples of acne are caused by pores that are blocked and often infected. Although acne is most common in adolescents (more than 80 percent of those between ages twelve and twenty-one are afflicted), it now appears with increasing frequency in adults.

As most people are aware, hormones play a significant role in acne. Normally, the body produces sebum, an oily lubricant, and secretes it through sebaceous glands to the skin. This lubricant is necessary to protect the skin from the elements and to keep it moist. During adolescence and other times of hormonal change, fluctuating hormones change this process and create several conditions that are likely to produce acne. For one, sebum production increases, and the oil, instead of passing harmlessly through the glands, hardens and clogs up the glandular canals. As a result, a red bump—a pimple—appears on the skin. Second, there is also increased production of keratin, a protective protein that covers the skin. Third, the same hormones cause an increase in the number of sebaceous glands, so there are more opportunities for acne to develop.

All of these factors can lead to clogged and infected pores, resulting in increased bacteria and yeast overgrowth on the skin. Overgrowth of these organisms causes skin inflammation. Superficial inflammation results in pustule formation and skin redness. Inflammation that occurs deeper in the skin can result in the formation of nodules and cysts and, possibly, scars.

One must also consider the role of food sensitivities, which can cause or worsen acne. These are discussed further in the foods to avoid section further on. In addition, candida or yeast overgrowth can be an underlying cause of acne. This is most common after chronic antibiotic use, where “friendly bacteria” are destroyed, setting up the overgrowth of candida. Many people are on long-term antibiotic use for the treatment of acne, which sets up not only a further acne problem but potential digestive problems as well. Finally, nutritional deficiencies often need to be addressed to improve acne. Zinc, essential fatty acids, and other nutrients are crucial in preventing acne.

If you suffer from acne, be wary of the usual conventional treatments. Most prescription drugs for acne are either harsh topical lotions, which can cause dryness, redness, scaling, and sun sensitivity, or antibiotics, which disrupt the natural balance of intestinal flora and may give you yeast infections and diarrhea. Instead, try a natural treatment plan for acne that emphasizes dietary changes, detoxification, stress reduction, natural hormone balancing, and identification of possible food allergies.

Surprising Facts about Acne

A key hormone during male adolescence is testosterone. More important, there is greater activity of the enzyme 5-alpha reductase in the skin, which converts testosterone to a metabolite known as DHT (dihydrotestosterone). These hormones, as well as the delicate balance of estrogen and progesterone, along with stress hormones, play a role in female adolescent, as well as in adult female and male, acne.

CAUSES OF ACNE

Hormones can fluctuate at times other than adolescence, most notably during pregnancy, around the time of menses or menopause, and during periods of emotional stress. Oral contraceptives can also affect hormonal production. Acne can appear on babies as well. This is normal and goes away with time.

It would be a mistake, however, to attribute acne solely to fluctuating hormones. The second biggest contributor to acne is poor nutrition. Fat, sugar, and processed foods accelerate skin inflammation and acne. They also contribute to constipation, and thus the body responds by trying to expel the poisons through a different avenue—via the skin.

SYMPTOMS

Each of the following symptoms can appear on the face, the chest, or the back.

- Red spots, bumps, or pustules, sometimes inflamed and painful
- Blackheads
- Whiteheads
- Oily skin

ROOT CAUSES

- Genetics
- Poor diet
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Food sensitivities
- Hormonal fluctuation or imbalance
- Emotional stress
- Poor digestion/toxic body system
- Candida/yeast overgrowth

Testing Techniques

The following tests can be helpful in choosing therapy that will be the most beneficial:

- Stool or blood analysis for candida overgrowth
- Food allergies/sensitivities (see Food Allergies section)
- Saliva hormone analysis for estrogen/progesterone/testosterone balance
- Nutritional testing (blood/urine/hair) for nutritional deficiencies
- Blood sugar testing

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

In general, acne sufferers should follow a simple diet of basic, unprocessed foods.

Dark-green or orange vegetables are especially helpful for their beta-carotene, which helps maintain and repair the skin. Eat them raw or lightly cooked to retain their nutrients and fiber.

A quarter cup of ground flaxseeds provides plenty of fiber for proper elimination, as well as helpful essential fatty acids. Take with at least 8 ounces of water.

Nuts and seeds, such as almonds, walnuts, and pumpkin seeds, are good sources of skin-healthy vitamin E and essential fatty acids.

Quality protein sources are beans, peas, lentils, eggs, and fresh cold-water fish such as salmon, mackerel, herring, and sardines. The latter are rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

Meat products should be hormone- and antibiotic-free.

Drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours to flush toxins out of the body and to maintain good general health.

If you must use topical or oral antibiotics for acne, be sure to eat some live unsweetened yogurt every day. Antibiotics destroy the “friendly” bacteria in your digestive tract, which are necessary for good health, and yogurt will replace it.

Food to Avoid

Eliminate junk and processed food, such as chips and nachos, colas, and candy. These products are a large source of toxins in the average diet.

Sugar encourages oil production and provides food for bacteria and yeast. Do not consume foods that contain added sugar. Avoid artificial sugar substitutes like saccharine or aspartame. They have a poisonous effect on the body and also encourage an addiction to sweets.

Adult acne is often an allergic or sensitivity reaction to a certain food or foods. Although any food can conceivably result in an allergic response, by far the most frequent triggers are dairy, wheat, sugar, chocolate, and corn. Try the elimination diet on page 253 to determine whether a food allergy is causing your problem, or see a natural health-care practitioner for testing.

- Saturated and hydrogenated fats are particularly difficult to digest, and they worsen acne. Stay away from fried foods and solid fats, such as margarine, lard, and vegetable shortening.
- An acidic internal environment encourages acne, so avoid alcohol, sugar, chocolate, fried foods, and soda, and limit meat products.
- Coffee and other caffeinated products may aggravate skin conditions. If they cause problems for you, cut them out and drink herbal teas instead.
- People with carbohydrate sensitivity may notice improvement in their skin by reducing their carbohydrate intake and increasing protein sources. This is because elevated levels of the blood sugar–regulating hormone insulin increases skin inflammation.

Detoxification

Detoxification helps cleanse the body of acne-causing poisons. You may find that your acne actually worsens immediately after trying the following therapies because your skin is eliminating toxins at a faster rate than usual. Once the toxins are expelled, your acne should be reduced or even eliminated.

A three-day vegetable juice fast will sweep away toxic build-up. You should drink a variety of juices during your fast, but those made from carrots, apples, and beets with their tops, as well as green drinks (spirulina, wheatgrass, barley grass, chlorella), are especially supportive of an acne cleanse.

News about Acne Treatments

- Vitex (chasteberry) and saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) alleviate hormone-related acne.
- Homeopathic Silica (*Silicea*) reduces pus formation.
- Reducing simple carbohydrates in the diet decreases skin inflammation.

Dry brushing removes dead skin and improves circulation. It's also a relaxing way to enhance the effects of a fast. Do not brush areas of the skin where pustules are present.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Acne

Super Prescription #1 Vitex (chasteberry)

Take 160 mg of a standardized Vitex extract (0.6 percent aucubin or 0.5 percent agnuside) or 40 drops of the tincture form daily.

Vitex (chasteberry) is an excellent hormone balancer to reduce acne formation and is effective for men and women. Use this super supplement or a hormone-balancing herbal formula for at least six weeks. If you see improvement, continue with the same dose as long as it remains effective.

Super Prescription #2 Essential fatty acids

Take 1 to 2 tablespoons of flaxseed oil or 3 to 5 grams of fish oil daily.

Essential fatty acids, formulations that contain flaxseeds, fish, or a mixture of omega-3, 6, and 9 fatty acids, are helpful for acne and reduce skin inflammation. Take as directed on container. It may take four to eight weeks for improvements to be noticed.

Super Prescription #3 Zinc

Take 50 mg of zinc twice daily with meals for three months, and then reduce the dosage to 50 mg daily for long-term supplementation. It should be taken in conjunction with copper (3 to 5 mg).

Zinc is one of the best minerals to use for the treatment of acne. It works to reduce the build-up of DHT and promotes skin healing. It may take up to three months for benefits to occur. Do not use zinc sulfate, which is not readily absorbed.

Super Prescription #4 Burdock root (*Arctium lappa*)

Take 300 to 500 mg of the capsule form, 30 drops of tincture, or 1 cup of tea three times daily.

Burdock root works as a blood purifier and a detoxifier, and it improves elimination. It also has hormone-balancing properties. Take it for a minimum of eight weeks.

Super Prescription #5 Tea tree oil (*Melaleuca alternifolia*)

Apply a solution by dabbing it onto blemishes twice daily. It's available in many over-the-counter acne preparations.

A 5 percent solution of tea tree oil in diluted water acts similarly to benzoyl peroxide but without the drying side effects. Since tea tree oil is quite potent, test the solution on a small area of your skin first.

Super Prescription #6 Homeopathy

Use a combination acne formula or one of the following if it matches your symptoms. Use a 6x, 12x, 6C, or a 30C potency for two weeks. If there is improvement, discontinue using it.

Calcarea Sulphurica is for cystic acne or chronic acne where there is a yellow discharge.

Hepar Sulphuris (Hepar sulphuris calcareum) may provide relief if you have several pus-filled spots that are painful when touched, and if your skin lesions feel better with a warm compress.

Ledum palustre is helpful for pustular acne on the nose and the cheeks that feels better with cold applications.

One double-blind study of ninety-one people with moderately severe acne found that 90 mg of zinc significantly improved the acne more than a placebo did.

One study showed that a 5 percent tea tree oil gel extract was comparable to the effects of benzoyl peroxide in the treatment of mild to moderate acne. Tea tree oil users experienced fewer side effects (dryness, burning, redness, and itching).

Pulsatilla (*Pulsatilla pratensis*) is for acne associated with the hormonal changes of puberty, menstrual onset, or menopause.

Silica (*Silicea*) is for chronic white pustules.

Sulphur is for reddish, inflamed acne pustules that may be itchy or very sore. Heat or washing may cause a worsening of symptoms.

These formulas contain the most common homeopathic medicines for acne and skin health. In rare cases, your acne may initially worsen for a week and then begin to clear up. They are safe to use for all ages. Take as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #7 Vitamin A

Vitamin A is helpful for the skin and has been shown in studies to reduce sebum production and keratin production. Take 5,000 IU to 10,000 IU or higher daily, under the guidance of a doctor.

The problem with vitamin A is that high dosages are needed to be effective for acne, and these may cause side effects. A way around this problem is to use a lower dosage, along with other nutrients that work synergistically for skin health, such as selenium, vitamin E, and zinc. Pregnant women or those trying to conceive should not use more than 5,000 IU daily.

General Recommendations

Saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) blocks excessive DHT of the sebaceous glands and is effective for both sexes. Take 160 mg of an 85 to 95 percent liposterolic standardized extract or 30 drops of tincture twice daily.

Dandelion root (*Taraxacum officinale*) supports your liver, which may be overtaxed with toxins. This herb is also a gentle laxative and can facilitate waste removal. Take 300 to 500 mg of the capsule form, 30 drops of tincture, or 1 cup of the tea three times daily.

Milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*) also supports liver detoxification. Find a product that's standardized for 70 to 85 percent silymarin content, and take 200 to 250 mg twice a day.

Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*) and hops (*Humulus lupulus*) is used when stress is contributing to your acne. Drink a cup of these calming teas whenever you need to wind down.

Vitamin E-complex enhances the beneficial effects of selenium and vitamin A. Take 400 to 800 IU of mixed vitamin E-complex with tocopherols and tocotrienols.

Selenium, a trace mineral, is helpful in reducing the inflammation of acne. Take 200 mcg daily. Multivitamins contain selenium, and many have a dosage that's close to 200 mcg.

Chromium helps with blood sugar regulation, which can be an important factor with acne. Take 200 to 400 mcg daily.

Vitamin B6 is useful for premenstrual acne. Take a 50 mg B-complex before and during premenstrual flare-ups.

Oregano oil (*Origanum vulgare*) destroys yeast overgrowth associated with acne formation. Take 500 mg twice daily or use a liquid form.

Natural progesterone cream is effective for premenstrual and menopausal acne. To improve premenstrual and premenopausal acne, apply 20 mg once daily for 10 days before your expected menstrual flow. Menopausal women can apply 20 mg one to two times daily for 3 or all weeks of the month.

Colloidal silver has an antimicrobial action. Dab it onto pimples twice daily.

Chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*) has an anti-inflammatory property, as well as a soothing effect on the nervous system.

Super green food supplements, such as chlorella, spirulina, or blends of green foods, support skin healing and detoxification. Take as directed on the container.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Spleen 10 clears heat from the blood.
- Bladder 23 and 47, as well as Stomach 2 and 3, help clear acne.
- Bladder 10 can relieve stress that's related to acne.
- Large Intestine 4 relieves constipation and depression.

Bodywork

Reflexology

See pages 686–675 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

- Work the kidneys and the liver to detoxify the blood.
- If acne is caused by a hormonal imbalance, work the endocrine glands.
- To prevent constipation and speed the elimination of toxins, work the colon.

Hydrotherapy

To promote blood circulation and detoxification, soak in a hot tub full of Epsom salts. Rinse well afterward. You can also add any of the oils listed in the Aromatherapy section.

Aromatherapy

Lavender is calming to the emotions and the skin; it also fights bacterial infection. Apply it with a compress or put it in your bath.

Germanium will regulate the production of oil.

Bergamot is both an astringent and an antidepressant. When the skin improves, apply a lotion made with diluted water, lavender, and orange blossom to reduce scarring.

Stress Reduction

The effects of stress can throw the body into a state of imbalance. Stress can affect the skin by altering hormone levels and disrupting digestion and detoxification. People with acne generally feel more self-conscious about their looks. Techniques to reduce stress will ultimately help with skin health and appearance. Exercise, prayer, reading, and many other techniques can be used to reduce the effects of stress.

Bach Flower Remedies

Select the appropriate remedy, and place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Try Crab Apple if acne is causing feelings of shame about your appearance.

If you've given up hope of finding a cure for your acne, Gorse will renew your spirits.

Larch is helpful for people who lack self-confidence or who are embarrassed because of their skin condition.

Sunlight can inhibit bacterial growth. Get fifteen minutes of sunlight, but never allow the skin to burn.

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Aging

Aging is a natural process and not a disease. It is something we all will experience and, it is hoped, deal with in a positive manner. Ideally, numerous benefits attend old age: wisdom; the pleasure of watching your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren flourish; and having time to help others and to enjoy life fully.

But to many people, old age is synonymous with ill health and disability. That's too bad, because most of the diseases we associate with aging—arthritis and other painful conditions, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, digestive problems, frailty, depression, sexual dysfunction, and fatigue—are not an inevitable part of growing older. These “age-related disorders” are mainly caused by lifestyle factors, such as diet, exposure to environmental toxins, lack of exercise, and stress, along with genetic susceptibilities. If you're young or middle-aged, you can prevent many problems by changing your habits now. If you're older and are already experiencing health difficulties, it's not too late to bring balance and harmony to your bodily systems.

Normal aging occurs when old cells start dying at a faster rate than new ones are generated. Since the body's tissues have a smaller supply of cells to draw upon, they begin to degenerate and malfunction. This process happens to everyone; it's simply a natural part of life. It appears that our cells are preprogrammed to have a maximum life span. Yet the key is to prevent premature aging, where one ages faster than one's genetic programming would have ordained. In addition, most people will agree that quality of life is paramount to life span.

In recent years, we have come to understand more about the highly reactive kinds of atoms or molecules called free radicals. In many cases, free radicals assist the body by destroying invaders, producing energy, and helping to carry oxygen through the bloodstream. When they are present in overwhelming numbers, however, they attack healthy cells, sometimes destroying them or mutating their DNA. When cells die before their time or are damaged, the normal aging process is accelerated, and the body becomes vulnerable to life-threatening ailments such as cancer, arteriosclerosis, and many degenerative diseases.

It is becoming more and more difficult to keep the number of free radicals in the body down to a healthy level. Many aspects of modern living, including unwholesome diet and exposure to pollution, tobacco smoke, environmental contaminants, and even the sun, put us in contact with more free radicals than any previous generation ever encountered. Luckily, nature has equipped us with the means to neutralize free radicals in our bodies. Substances called antioxidants accomplish the task, and they're found in many fruits and vegetables and in some herbs. A combination of healthful eating, combined with antioxidant supplements and wise living, can prevent excessive damage from free radicals.

Other major causes of several age-related diseases are diet and nutritional deficiencies. Studies on laboratory mice prove that a reduced-calorie diet significantly extends their lives. Research is starting to show that this is true for humans as well. In addition, diets that are high in fat and sugar lack many essential nutrients, fiber, and antioxidants. Poor diets also contribute to gastrointestinal disorders, which can inhibit the body's ability to absorb important vitamins and minerals. Sometimes, however, a good diet is not enough to keep deficiency at bay. As a result of normal or accelerated aging, older people are often simply less efficient at absorbing nutrients, even if they eat well. If you have reached old age, you will need to redouble your efforts to take in nutrients.

Aging is accelerated by a lack of exercise. If you don't regularly exercise, you increase your risk for almost every kind of disorder, including heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and osteoporosis.

Hormone balance is a key to healthy aging. This is particularly true of the stress hormones such as cortisol and DHEA. A deficiency or an abnormal elevation of these hormones (particularly cortisol) accelerates aging and immune system breakdown. In reality, all of the hormones are important for healthy aging. Thyroid, estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, as well as growth hormones, must be kept at balanced levels to slow the aging process. Researchers are finding that growth hormones may play a special role in slowing down the "aging clock."

It is also important to keep blood-sugar levels in the normal range. Elevated levels of glucose lead to a process known as glycosylation. This contributes to a weak immune system and speeds up aging. An example of this process is diabetes.

Finally, the effects of stress appear to play a role in aging. People who experience prolonged periods of intense stress are more likely to develop chronic diseases. One major stressor is loneliness. This has become a big problem with the elderly, who lack companionship and stimulation. Many older people cut back on social obligations, intellectual activities, and sports and exercise. Giving up these essential activities has been linked to a shorter life span and an increased risk of disease. It is up to all of us, whatever our age, to create families and communities in which the elderly are welcome, active members.

SYMPTOMS

- Frequent illness or chronic disease
- Painful conditions and stiffness
- Memory loss or impairment
- Digestive problems
- Weight loss
- Decreased sex drive
- Poor skin and/or muscle tone
- Frailty

ROOT CAUSES

- Free radical damage
- Poor diet and nutritional deficiencies
- Genetics
- Environmental toxins
- Poor digestion and detoxification
- Lack of exercise
- Hormone imbalance
- Elevated blood-sugar levels
- Stress and isolation

Testing Techniques

The following tests can give you an assessment of the degree of your aging:

- Oxidative stress analysis—urine or blood testing
- Antioxidant testing (urine, blood, or biophoton scanning)
- Blood profile for cardiovascular, immune, and blood-sugar markers (glucose and insulin)
- Stool analysis
- Detoxification profile—urine
- Hormone analysis by saliva, urine, or blood (estrogens, progesterone, testosterone, DHEA, cortisol, melatonin, IGF-1, thyroid panel)

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Older people often have difficulty absorbing nutrients. When digestive enzymes aren't working at their optimal level, deficiencies, especially in the B-vitamins, can result. To compensate, eat plenty of whole grains and leafy greens, and add brewer's yeast and wheat germ to your meals.

Make sure you get enough fiber. Whole grains, oats, flaxseeds, and raw vegetables can prevent constipation and will reduce toxins in the digestive tract.

Yogurt and other fermented sour products (sauerkraut, kefir) encourage healthful bacteria in the digestive system. These bacteria fight colds and other infections.

Deeply colored fruits and vegetables are packed with antioxidants such as carotenoids, the substances that neutralize free radicals. They can also discourage the build-up of arterial plaque, so it's important to eat several servings with each meal. Remember, "think color!"

Vitamin E and selenium work together to prevent many different diseases. To lower your risk of cancer, heart disease, and arthritis, eat plenty of seeds, nuts, and vegetable oils.

Be sure to incorporate sufficient quality protein into your diet. Beans, soy products, fish, and lean chicken and turkey will give you energy.

Vitamin C helps fight free radical damage, reduces cancer risk, and strengthens the immune system. Good dietary sources of vitamin C include citrus fruits, green leafy vegetables, red peppers, strawberries, tomatoes, asparagus, and avocados.

Garlic and onions also have antioxidant properties and improve circulation, so enjoy them freely.

Whether you're thirsty or not, drink a glass of purified water every two waking hours. Dehydration is linked to kidney malfunction, malabsorption of nutrients, chronic constipation, weight gain, high cholesterol, fatigue, and headaches. It can also cause disorientation and memory loss; many people who are thought to be senile are actually just severely dehydrated.

The skins of red grapes reduce plaque in the walls of arteries. They also have antioxidant properties, so drink a glass of red grape juice or an occasional glass of red wine.

Food to Avoid

Reduce your total caloric intake, while maintaining good nutrition. As you get older, your metabolism slows down, and you require fewer calories to support your activities. Also, studies on laboratory mice have shown that a reduced-calorie diet significantly extended their lives. You can reduce calories by cutting out processed and junk foods, alcohol, sugar, and white flour—but don't skimp on nutritious foods that will keep you healthy.

In addition to the previous suggestions, avoid red meat and processed foods, as well as any food made with additives and preservatives. These foods are all high in free radicals. What's more, they clog up your digestive tract and inhibit proper functioning.

If you have trouble sleeping, don't consume alcohol, caffeine, and simple sugars in the evening. These substances keep you alert. Instead, eat complex carbohydrates, which can promote relaxation and a good night's rest.

Detoxification

Keeping the digestive tract clean is essential for preventing disease, especially if you've spent a lifetime consuming and breathing toxins. Fresh juices and "super green foods," such as chlorella and spirulina, are excellent. Supplements such as milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*) and many of the antioxidants support proper detoxification.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Anti-Aging

Super Prescription #1 Super green food supplement

Take an organic super green food such as chlorella or spirulina or a mixture of these each day. Take as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #2 Green tea

Green tea contains a rich source of antioxidants and substances that assist detoxification. Drink the organic tea regularly (2 cups or more daily), or take 500 to 1,500 mg of the capsule form.

Super Prescription #3 High-potency multivitamin

Take a high-potency multivitamin and mineral formula daily, as it will contain a strong base of the antioxidants and other nutrients that protect against aging.

Super Prescription #4 Essential fatty acids

Take 1 to 2 tablespoons of flaxseed oil or 3 grams of fish oil daily, or a formulation that contains a mixture of omega-3, 6, and 9 fatty acids.

These essential fatty acids are needed for healthy cell functioning and replication, as well as for many other body processes.

Super Prescription #5 Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

Take 1 to 2 capsules of an aged garlic product daily.

Garlic benefits the immune and cardiovascular systems. It also improves detoxification and has antioxidant properties.

Super Prescription #6 Siberian ginseng (*Eleutherococcus Senticosus*)

Take 600 to 900 mg of a standardized product daily. As with most types of ginseng, *Eleutherococcus* works to help the body adapt to mental and physical stress.

Super Prescription #7 Ginkgo biloba

Take 60 to 120 mg twice daily of a standardized product containing 24 percent flavone glycosides and 6 percent terpene lactones.

This popular herb improves circulation, has potent antioxidant properties, improves memory, and reduces one's tendency to get blood clots.

General Recommendations

Enzymes aid in the digestion of food and are essential for all the metabolic activity in the body. Take 1 to 2 capsules with each meal.

Cordyceps sinensis is a revered fungus used in Chinese medicine as a supplement to combat fatigue and the aging process. Take 2 to 4 capsules daily.

Royal jelly, the substance produced by worker bees as the sole food for their queen, contains a wide range of nutrients. Take as directed on the container.

Alpha lipoic acid is one of the most important antioxidants in the body. Take 50 mg twice daily.

CoQ10 is a potent antioxidant and a nutrient involved in many aspects of cardiovascular function. Take 50 to 300 mg daily.

Reishi extract, revered in Chinese medicine, is made from the “mushroom of immortality.” It improves liver and immune system function. Take 2 to 4 capsules daily.

Ashwagandha, known as “Indian ginseng,” is a revered herb in Ayurvedic medicine and is used as a tonic for people with chronic disease. Take 1,000 to 3,000 mg daily.

Panax ginseng is revered in Chinese medicine as an antiaging herbal therapy. Take a standardized product containing 4 to 7 percent ginsenosides at 100 to 250 mg twice daily. Do not use if you have high blood pressure.

DHEA is a hormone that research shows is an accurate marker of aging. If your level is low, talk with your doctor about starting at a 15 mg dosage.

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is indeed excellent for aiding the digestion; it also prevents blood clotting and has anti-inflammatory properties. Instead of drinking sugary ginger ale, try ginger tea, made by boiling water over fresh ginger. You can also take 1 to 2 grams of a powdered capsule or a tablet, divided over the course of a day. Or you can use 1 to 3 ml of a ginger tincture three times daily.

Homeopathy

See a homeopathic practitioner who can prescribe a remedy to strengthen your particular state of body and mind.

If you're an older person who has already developed an illness or a painful condition, you will find homeopathic suggestions listed under the specific disorder that's plaguing you.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Stomach 36 is a good point for keeping up health in general. It strengthens the entire body but gives particular support to the immune and digestive systems.

Bodywork

Bodywork is more important than ever in old age. Not only does it increase circulation and reduce aches and pains, it can supply significant emotional benefits to people who are deprived of nurturing physical contact. If you are isolated or depressed, or if your body has become rigid from lack of touch, you might find massage both relaxing and invigorating.

A double-blind clinical trial studied the effects of 1,500 mg of *Panax ginseng* on forty-nine elderly people. This herb was found to improve coordination and reaction time, as well as to increase alertness and energy.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the entire foot to provide support for all the systems of the body.

If you want to concentrate on just a few areas, work the kidneys, the liver, and the colon to encourage detoxification.

Hydrotherapy

Hot and cold hydrotherapy will get your circulation going and increase your energy.

Aromatherapy

If you feel tense or irritable or have trouble sleeping, lavender can help you relax. Try it in a bath or as an inhalant, or slip a lavender-filled sachet under your pillow.

If you are depressed, bergamot, clary sage, geranium, or rosemary can be uplifting.

A few drops of jasmine, ylang ylang, sandalwood, or patchouli in a bath will reignite sexual desire.

Stress Reduction

Exercise, prayer, reading, yoga, positive mental imagery, and many other techniques should be used to reduce the effects of stress and aging.

Bach Flower Remedies

You may find the following suggestions useful, but also consult the chart on pages 648–650 to find the appropriate flower remedy for your particular personality and tendencies. Once you've found the right remedy, place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

If you have experienced a loss and feel sorrowful and depressed, try Mustard.

Hornbeam will help if you feel too fatigued to participate in everyday activities.

If you are unhappy with present times and tend to dwell on the past as a period of perfect happiness, Honeysuckle will help you cultivate a more positive attitude toward the here and now.

Other Recommendations

- Keep moving. Regular exercise plays a significant role in preventing heart disease, arthritis, osteoporosis, diabetes, and many other disorders. For maximum benefits, your exercise plan should include aerobic exercise (for your heart and lungs), weight lifting (to keep your bones strong), and stretching. It is never too late to start. People who begin exercise and weight-lifting programs as late as their nineties show marked improvement in their general health. If you're older, ill, or overweight, consult with your doctor before beginning an exercise plan.
- If you're having problems digesting your food, your body may not be producing sufficient enzymes. Take an enzyme supplement daily.

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AIDS and HIV

It is a disturbing and widespread myth that HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS, the usually fatal condition believed to be caused by HIV, no longer pose a grave public health threat. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that 5 million Americans are considered to be at high risk for HIV infection. Half of all new cases of HIV occur in people under the age of twenty-five. Although scientists have discovered several treatments that extend the life span of people with the virus, there is still no cure. Even grimmer is the news that AIDS rates, after a short period of decline, are on the rise. Gay men were once thought to be the group most at risk for contracting HIV, but statistics show that heterosexual teenagers, both male and female; Hispanics; blacks; and women are now contracting the disease in rapidly increasing numbers.

HIV is transmitted via vaginal or anal sex or by blood-to-blood contact. It is vitally important for everyone to practice safe sex, preferably in the form of a monogamous relationship with an HIV-free partner, and to abstain from intravenous drug use. Don't rely solely on condoms to protect you, as they sometimes let HIV and other viruses pass through. Intravenous drug users are at a high risk: if you have an addiction, you should seek help, but at the very least you should never share needles with anyone.

The virus may also be passed from mother to child during birth or breastfeeding. It is possible to greatly reduce the chance of transmitting the disease during birth. Pregnant women should be tested for HIV as soon as possible, so that they and their unborn children can receive vital treatment. HIV is sometimes contracted by health-care workers who are stuck with infected needles. Also, be aware that the virus cannot be transmitted through casual contact, such as coughing, sneezing, shaking hands, or dry kissing.

Like all viruses, once HIV has entered the body, it seeks to replicate itself. What makes HIV far deadlier than, say, a cold virus, is that it takes a particularly aggressive tactic within the body: once it invades a cell, it reprograms that cell's genetic material. Normally, a cell will reproduce by dividing and creating a copy of itself. In this way, the body regenerates itself at the most basic level. But when cells that are invaded by HIV divide, they don't create copies of themselves—they create copies of the virus. Those copies then invade other healthy cells, so that, eventually, the virus cells far outnumber the healthy ones. To make matters worse, HIV attacks a particular kind of immune cell, called a Helper T-cell (these lymphocytes have a receptor protein called CD4+ in their outer membrane and so are also referred to as CD4+ lymphocytes). As more and more CD4+ cells are destroyed, the body's ability to fight off infections is dramatically weakened.

Most people do not notice any symptoms when HIV first invades the body. People with HIV will usually go for years without knowing it, unless they are tested for the disease. Before AIDS develops, many will begin to experience symptoms such as night sweats, fatigue, fevers, diarrhea, weight loss, enlarged lymph nodes, thrush, herpes, mouth ulcers, and bleeding gums. Later, as the number of T-cells continues to decrease, their bodies will be highly vulnerable to infection by viruses and bacteria. HIV-positive people might contract a variety of diseases that are otherwise rare, such as Kaposi's sarcoma (a kind of skin cancer characterized by raised purple welts), the Epstein-Barr virus (also known as chronic fatigue syndrome), neurological problems, eye infections (including cytomegalovirus, which can cause blindness), toxoplasmic encephalitis (a brain infection), and systemic candidiasis (yeast

infection). Other infections are those we usually consider common, such as pneumonia and various respiratory ailments.

Acquired immunodeficiency virus (AIDS) is the most severe form of HIV infection. A person with HIV infection is considered to have AIDS when at least one complicating illness develops or the person's ability to defend against infection significantly declines, as measured by a low CD4+ lymphocyte count. Since the number of CD4+ lymphocytes in the blood helps to determine the ability of the immune system to protect the body from infections, it is a good measure of the degree of damage done by HIV infection. A healthy person has a CD4+ lymphocyte count of roughly 800 to 1,300 cells per microliter of blood. Typically, 40 to 60 percent of CD4+ lymphocytes are destroyed in the first few months of infection. After about six months, the CD4+ count stops falling so quickly, but it continues to decline. If the CD4+ count falls below about 200 cells per microliter of blood, the immune system is susceptible to severe, life-threatening infections.

It is important to note that while all people with AIDS are HIV-positive, not all people with HIV develop AIDS. Most HIV-positive people develop AIDS within eight to twelve years after first contracting the virus, but some develop it much faster, and many others still remain healthy decades after contracting HIV. It appears that people who are able to ward off full-blown AIDS are those whose immune systems are the strongest. Therefore, complementary therapies for HIV and AIDS work to bolster the ability of the immune system to fight infection.

If you contract HIV, you need to work with a doctor who knows about the latest treatments available for the disease. Although a cure has yet to be found, research is producing new therapies on an almost monthly basis. In addition, you will need medication to combat any infections that might arise.

SYMPTOMS

There are no symptoms during the early stages of HIV, except perhaps a fever when the virus first invades the body. As the virus continues to invade, the following symptoms can occur:

- Night sweats
- Fatigue
- Fevers
- Diarrhea
- Weight loss
- Enlarged lymph nodes
- Thrush (mouth fungus)
- Herpes
- Mouth ulcers
- Bleeding gums

Several conditions are associated with full-blown AIDS. Following are some of the most common:

- Kaposi's sarcoma (a type of skin cancer characterized by raised purple welts)
- Epstein-Barr virus

Neurological problems:

- Eye problems (often related to cytomegalovirus, which can cause blindness)
- Toxoplasmic encephalitis (a brain infection)
- Pneumonia and other respiratory ailments
- Candidiasis
- Salmonella
- Cancer of various organs

Testing Techniques

Diagnosis of HIV is done with the use of the following blood test:

HIV ELISA Test

If this test is positive, it is confirmed with a more accurate test known as Western Blot. Also, the CD4+ count and the viral load are used to monitor progression of the disease.

It is also helpful to have:

Oxidative stress analysis—urine or blood testing

Antioxidant testing (urine, blood, or skin scanning)

Stool analysis

Hormone analysis by saliva, urine, or blood (estrogens, progesterone, testosterone, DHEA, cortisol, melatonin, IGF-1, thyroid panel)

ROOT CAUSES

- Anal or vaginal sex with an infected partner
- Blood-to-blood contact with an infected person (such as from sharing needles for intravenous drug use)
- Transfusions of infected blood (in the United States, blood donations have been screened for HIV since 1985)
- In the womb, at birth, or during breastfeeding

TREATMENT

Diet

To reduce the risk of toxins entering your body, food should be as clean and pure as possible. If you cook meat and poultry at home, reduce your risk of food poisoning by keeping preparation areas sanitary and by cooking at high-enough temperatures. Eat organic food, if it is available. If organic products are not an option, at least wash your food with pure water to get rid of pesticides and other toxins.

Recommended Food

If you have HIV or AIDS, you absolutely must eat well. A good basic diet will include plenty of raw vegetables, seeds, nuts, grains, fresh fruit, and lean protein from quality sources. As the virus continues to invade your body, you may find that you lose your appetite, but try to keep eating healthful meals; an adequate intake of calories is more important now than ever. Protein is particularly important to prevent weight loss and maintain optimal immune function. Try to consume 2.0 grams for every 2.2 pounds of body weight. A high-quality whey protein is helpful in attaining this goal.

Garlic and onions have natural antibiotic effects, so use them often.

To fight HIV or AIDS, include cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, brussels sprouts, and others) in your diet.

Drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours. Make sure the water is from a good source, to avoid bacteria and parasite infection.

The “good” bacteria in your digestive tract help fight infection, so maintain their presence by eating yogurt with live cultures, especially *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *bifidus*. This is especially important if you are taking antibiotics, which kill the good bacteria along with the bad. If you cannot tolerate yogurt, take probiotic capsules.

If you have HIV, it is strongly advised that you invest in a good juicer. Live juices will help your weakened system absorb a maximum amount of nutrients. Drink several glasses daily of a variety of juices, especially those made from cruciferous vegetables, black radishes, cabbage, greens (such as wheatgrass), and carrots.

Food to Avoid

Do not consume raw eggs; unpasteurized milk, cheese, or cider; or rare meat. All of these products can contain harmful bacteria. In people who have compromised immune systems, these bacteria can lead to septicemia, an extremely dangerous and often fatal condition.

Cut out junk food, fried food, sugar, and alcohol, all of which suppress your immune system and tax your entire body.

Find out now if you have any food allergies or sensitivities, because they cause the immune system to attack itself. See the elimination diet on page 253 for further details.

Detoxification

Every month consider doing a juice fast. Juices made from carrots, cabbage, greens, and apples help cleanse the body. Green drinks are another excellent way to purify the blood.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—HIV/AIDS

Super Prescription #1 Super green food supplement

Take an organic super green food, such as chlorella or spirulina, or a mixture of super green foods each day. It supplies a host of nutrients and antioxidants. Take as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #2 High-potency multivitamin

Take a high-potency multivitamin and mineral formula daily, as it will contain a strong base of the antioxidants and other nutrients that improve immune function.

Super Prescription #3 Whey protein

Take 25 grams daily or as directed by your doctor. It helps prevent tissue wasting and repairs the digestive tract.

Super Prescription #4 Antioxidant formula

Many studies have shown that people with HIV have a greater need for antioxidants. Take a combination antioxidant formula, as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #5 B-complex

Take a 50 mg complex twice daily. Many people with HIV have deficiencies of the B vitamins, which can impair immune function.

Super Prescription #6 Vitamin C

Take 1,000 to 3,000 mg daily. It supports immune function.

Super Prescription #7 Probiotic

Take a daily probiotic supplement that contains at least 4 billion active organisms. Probiotics are used to replenish healthful bacteria that fight intestinal infection and support immunity.

One clinical trial found that HIV-positive men who took a multivitamin-mineral supplement had a slower onset of AIDS, as compared to men who did not take a supplement.

General Recommendations

DHEA may help prevent the depression and the fatigue associated with an HIV infection. Take 10 to 25 mg or higher, under the supervision of a doctor.

Enzymes aid in the digestion of food and are essential for all the metabolic activity in the body. Take 1 to 2 capsules with each meal.

L-glutathione is one of the most important antioxidants in the body. Take 500 mg twice daily.

CoQ10 is a potent antioxidant and a nutrient involved in energy production and immunity. Take 50 to 300 mg daily.

Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) extract improves liver and immune system function. Take 2 to 4 capsules daily.

Garlic (*Allium sativum*) supports immune function. Take an aged garlic supplement daily.

Milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*) (80 to 85 percent silymarin) supports liver function while you use pharmaceutical medications for HIV/AIDS. Take 250 to 300 mg three times daily.

Aloe (*Aloe vera*) has antiviral effects. Use a food-grade product, and take as directed on the container.

Selenium has antiviral effects. Take a daily dosage of 400 mcg.

Maitake (*Grifola frondosa*) supports immune function and has antiviral properties. Take 1 mg of the MD or D fraction per 2.2 pounds of body weight daily.

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) (90 to 95 percent curcumin) is shown in test tube studies to inhibit HIV infection. Take 500 mg three times daily.

Zinc supports immune function. Take a daily total of 30 to 50 mg.

Thymus extract supports healthy immunity. Take as directed on the container.

Homeopathy

HIV and AIDS are complex disorders with many variables. A homeopathic practitioner can suggest a preparation that addresses your individual needs.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Conception Vessel 17 helps the immune system and also eases depression and anxiety.
- To ease digestive problems and improve the absorption of nutrients, try Stomach 36.

Bodywork

Massage

A lymphatic massage, especially with the oils listed in the Aromatherapy section further on, will drain toxins from your body. Massage, in general, can help relieve stress, depression, and fatigue.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the liver point to support this critical organ of the immune system.

If you are constipated or experience diarrhea, massage the area corresponding to the colon.

Hydrotherapy

Hot and cold hydrotherapy promotes healing and energy and also combats stress.

See Constitutional Hydrotherapy on pages 676–677.

Aromatherapy

Add juniper to a carrier oil, and use in a lymphatic massage. Juniper helps break down toxins that have built up in fatty deposits.

Several oils have antibacterial properties, especially tea tree and eucalyptus. These oils can be used in any form but are highly recommended for use in lymphatic massage.

To lift your spirits, use lavender or geranium oils in any form.

Stress Reduction

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

A diagnosis of HIV can be devastating. You need someone you can talk to as you work through the initial shock and then face each successive challenge. Although family and friends are always a welcome source of strength, you may also want to recruit the help of a professional who has experience working with people suffering from a difficult illness. A religious adviser, a psychotherapist, or a support group leader can offer you invaluable advice and help.

In a world of expensive and invasive medical treatments, meditation and positive mental imagery can come as a relief. All you need is some private space and a comfortable place to sit. As you grow skilled at meditation, you'll find that you can use its calming techniques whenever necessary, even if you're ill and bedridden.

Bach Flower Remedies

Consult the chart on pages 648–650 to find the appropriate flower remedy for your particular condition. Once you've found the right remedy, place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

For fear of the unknown, try Aspen.

For exhaustion and fatigue, Hornbeam or Olive can be useful.

Rescue Remedy is excellent in any stressful crisis.

Other Recommendations

- Get plenty of rest and fresh air.
- Regular exercise will counteract stress and help keep you healthy, but don't overdo it. A daily morning walk is a good idea. Weight lifting helps to maintain muscle mass.
- Try to get early morning sunlight on your skin, but make sure to stay away from harsh or bright sun. People with HIV have a heightened vulnerability to skin cancer.

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Ince, S. 1993. Vitamin supplements may help delay onset of AIDS. *Medical Tribune* 9:18.

Alcoholism. *See Substance Abuse*

Allergies. *See also Asthma and Food Allergies*

An allergic reaction occurs when the immune system misinterprets a normally nontoxic substance, such as grass, pollen, a detergent, or a certain food, as a harmful invader. The immune system then responds to this perceived threat, called an allergen, by releasing substances called histamines. Histamines produce a wide range of bodily reactions, including respiratory and nasal congestion, increased mucus production, skin rashes and welts, and headache. In the case of an actual threat to the body, in the form of, say, a flu virus, these reactions would form an important line of defense against the invader, helping to trap it and expel it, and encouraging you to rest and recover. But during the false alarm of an allergic response, the body overreacts to a harmless agent.

Most allergens are found either in the environment or in food. (For information about allergic reactions to food, see Food Allergies.) Environmental allergens include pollen (reactions to pollen are often called hay fever), mold, animal dander, dust, feathers, insect venom, certain cosmetics and household products, and metals. When the environmental allergens are removed or make their seasonal disappearance, the body returns to normal. If the allergens are not removed, the immune system will continue its artificially high state of alert. In these cases, the allergic response can develop into chronic allergic rhinitis, in which the nasal passages remain persistently inflamed.

Why some people develop allergies to certain substances and others do not remains unclear. It does seem that certain allergic responses, such as hay fever, have a genetic basis. An excess accumulation of mucus in the body, which attracts and stores the irritant, also contributes to or causes allergic responses. In addition, stress and a generally depressed immune system may contribute to the severity of allergies.

CAUSES

- Allergies happen when the immune system attacks a harmless substance. Common triggers for allergies include mold; dust; tree, grass, or flower pollen; animal dander; feathers; insect venom, especially from bee stings; metal, particularly nickel; household chemicals; and some cosmetics.
- An excess of mucus, caused by a poor diet
- Stress, which depresses the immune system

SYMPTOMS

Allergic responses can produce any one or a combination of several of the following symptoms:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| • Nasal congestion | • Headache |
| • Sneezing | • Fatigue |
| • Coughing | • Fluid retention |
| • Red, itchy, or watery eyes | • Swelling of the throat and the tongue |
| • Wheezing | |
| • Sore throat | |
| • Hives, rashes, eczema, or other skin eruptions | |

A note about allergy tests: many conventional doctors suggest skin or blood tests to determine the source of allergies, but take care. These tests are invasive, expensive, and of questionable reliability. If your doctor recommends one of these tests, question him or her closely about the benefits you should expect.

Caution: If you experience difficulty breathing or develop hives that spread rapidly, *get emergency help at once*. Allergic reactions like these can quickly be fatal. If you know you have severe reactions to certain substances, talk to your doctor about emergency adrenaline kits you can keep on hand.

ROOT CAUSES

- Genetics
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Poor digestion and detoxification
- Limited diet (in cases of food sensitivities, the lack of variety in the diet)

Testing Techniques

Blood IgG4 and IgE food and environmental screen
 Electrodermal testing for sensitivities
 Muscle testing by a skilled practitioner

TREATMENT

Diet

If you have allergies, dietary therapy should include strategies for mucus reduction, elimination of allergenic pathogens, and general immune support.

Recommended Food

Base your diet on non-mucus-forming foods: whole grains (although gluten sensitivity is common), fresh vegetables and fruits, cold-pressed oils, and raw seeds and nuts. (Many people with environmental allergies also have reactions to nuts, so monitor your reactions carefully.)

To keep your immune system healthy, make sure to get enough lean protein. Seafood and tofu are good sources that don't encourage mucus production.

Drink six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day to thin mucus secretions.

Flaxseeds and flaxseed oil can reduce inflammation. Take 2 tablespoons every day.

Food to Avoid

Eliminating foods that cause mucus should be a priority for any allergy sufferer. Mucus-forming foods include all dairy products, fried and processed foods, refined flours, chocolate, and eggs.

The immune response stresses your digestive system, so place as few additional burdens on it as possible. Cut down on bad fats and oils (saturated, hydrogenated, or those containing trans-fatty acids)—as well as the refined flour and the processed foods mentioned earlier—and increase your intake of fiber, especially from raw vegetables.

Many people with environmental allergies also suffer from food allergies. See the Food Allergies section and follow the elimination diet there to ensure that certain foods aren't making your environmental allergies worse.

Wheat is the unsuspected culprit behind many allergies, including those that seem to be triggered by environmental allergens. Try eliminating wheat during the seasons that usually coincide with your allergic responses.

Detoxification

A three-day juice fast to expel mucus is strongly encouraged. During and after the fast, you will feel your congestion begin to clear.

Green drinks are good for flushing out mucus and toxins. Drink one daily, whether you're fasting or not.

R_x Super Seven Prescriptions—Allergies

Super Prescription #1 Homeopathy

Take a combination allergy homeopathic remedy, as directed on the container, or read the description under Homeopathy in this section to pick a single remedy.

Super Prescription #2 Vitamin C

Take 1,000 mg three to five times daily (reduce the dosage if diarrhea occurs). It has a natural antihistamine effect.

Super Prescription #3 Stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*)

Take 300 to 500 mg daily. Studies show that it is effective for hay fever.

Super Prescription #4 Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM)

Take 3,000 to 5,000 mg daily. It reduces allergic and inflammatory responses.

Super Prescription #5 Quercetin

Take 1,000 mg three times daily. It has a natural antihistamine effect.

Super Prescription #6 Eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis*)

Take 1 capsule three times daily or apply as a solution to irritated eyes by putting 5 drops of the tincture form in a half ounce of saline. Apply it to the eyes twice daily.

Super Prescription #7 Essential fatty acids

Take 1 to 2 tablespoons of flaxseed oil or 3 grams of fish oil daily. They reduce inflammatory responses associated with allergies.

Study

A randomized, double-blind study involving the use of freeze-dried nettles and people who had hay fever found that after one week of use, 58 percent of participants had a reduction in their sneezing and itching.

Other Recommendations

Thymus extract has been shown to calm the immune response to allergies. Take as directed on the container.

Probiotics reduce the potential for allergies. Take a product containing at least 4 billion organisms of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *bifidus*.

Protease enzymes decrease allergic and inflammatory responses. Take 2 capsules twice daily on an empty stomach or as directed on the container.

Digestive enzymes assist in the digestion of food and reduce the likelihood of food sensitivities. Take 1 to 2 capsules with meals.

Betaine hydrochloride assists in the digestion of food and reduces the likelihood of food sensitivities. Take 1 to 2 capsules with meals.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms. Take 2 pellets of 30C potency twice daily. Should the first three days pass without any sign of improvement, you're probably taking the wrong remedy. Stop using the current one, and switch to

something else. When you first notice improvement, stop taking the remedy unless your symptoms begin to return.

Allium Cepa is good for burning, watery eyes and a runny nose. Sneezing is common, and your symptoms feel better in the open air.

Arsenicum Album is for people with burning eyes and a runny nose that doesn't stop, causing the skin under the nose to get red and excoriated. This remedy is effective for the highly sensitive person with many allergies.

Euphrasia is for red, burning, tearing eyes.

Histaminum is for non-life threatening allergy symptoms that come on quickly.

Lycopodium (*Lycopodium clavatum*) is for people who have right-sided nasal and throat symptoms. Bloating after meals is common.

Natrum Muriaticum is for people who sneeze from the sun. They often get cold sores and crave salty foods.

Nux Vomica (*Strychnos nux vomica*) is also for people with diverse allergy symptoms, but those who benefit from this remedy tend to crave sweets, tobacco, and other stimulants. They often wake up sneezing.

Pulsatilla (*Pulsatilla pratensis*) is for people whose allergies are worse in a warm room and who crave the open air. Their nasal passages often get congested at night.

Sabadilla is for people who suffer from many repeated sneezes in a row and a runny nose.

Silica (*Silicea*) will help if your allergies manifest as upper respiratory problems that develop into infections and if you often feel fatigued and low in stamina.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Large intestine 4 relieves headaches and sneezing.
- For fatigue, swollen eyes, and headache, use Bladder 10.
- Triple Warmer 5 fortifies the immune system.
- Stomach 36 is a good all-over toner and promotes balance within the body.

Bodywork

Massage

A percussive massage will help break up mucus. Percussive motions are best used on people who are relatively strong and healthy. If you are frail, thin, or elderly, check with your massage therapist about the suitability of this treatment for you.

A lymphatic drainage massage will carry mucus away from the body.

Almost any massage can help relieve stress, but one that incorporates relaxing essential oils may be the best approach. See the Aromatherapy section for suggested oils.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Working the big toes and the inside of the heels helps abate allergic reactions.

Hydrotherapy

Hot baths induce sweat, which carries toxins out along with it. And if you're congested, a steamy bath feels just plain wonderful. If you want a more powerful release of toxins, add Epsom salts to the water.

A wet compress will help draw out chest congestion. You can add ginger or cayenne for increased strength.

Nasal saline irrigation of both nostrils daily will reduce nasal and sinus symptoms related to allergies.

Aromatherapy

If you suffer from plant allergies, use caution when trying aromatherapy oils.

Several essential oils are excellent at loosening mucus. Try any combination of the following in a steam inhalant or a bath or diffused into the air: eucalyptus, peppermint, lemon balm, and tea tree.

Both lavender and chamomile are good stress relievers, in any form. If you're suffering from allergies, however, they may be of most help when combined with steam, so use them in a steam inhalant or a hot bath.

Bach Flower Remedies

According to Bach remedy philosophy, most allergic conditions are related to some form of emotional intolerance.

If you have little patience for other people, take Beech.

If self-acceptance is the problem, try Rock Water.

Other Recommendations

- Exercise to expel toxins, support the immune system, and reduce stress.
- Don't smoke or expose yourself to secondhand smoke.
- Avoid or reduce exposure to allergy triggers. If you have mold or dust allergies, keep your house extremely clean and dry. A dehumidifier in the basement is a good idea, as are air filters and feather-free pillows and comforters. If you have a wood- or coal-burning fireplace or stove, you may need to find an alternate source of heat. In extreme cases, you may have to rid your home of any item that's likely to collect dust, including upholstered furniture, rugs, and curtains. A HEPA (high-energy particulate air) filter is highly recommended, especially in the bedroom at night.
- Xylitol nasal spray reduces allergy symptoms. Follow directions on the container.
- Consider desensitization treatments from a natural health-care practitioner.

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Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that begins with memory loss and eventually leads to dementia and death. In the United States, it affects up to 10 percent of people over sixty-five and almost half of those over eighty-five. Scientists predict that in the coming years, these percentages are likely to rise. Such an increase, combined with the rapidly growing size of the older population, could very well result in an epidemic of Alzheimer's cases.

Where Did I Put My Sunglasses?

We all have occasional memory lapses, and many people notice that by late middle age, it's harder to remember details than it used to be. If you've misplaced the remote control again or forgotten to pick up milk at the grocery store—even if you can't remember the names of your new neighbors—you're probably not suffering from Alzheimer's. More likely, you just need to boost your nutritional intake and follow a few other brain-boosting steps. See Memory Problems for further details. And your sunglasses? They're on top of your head.

Alzheimer's disease targets a part of the brain called the hippocampus, which is the seat of memory and intellect. In a person with Alzheimer's, the neurons in the hippocampus become entangled. The resulting formations, often called plaque, result in the loss of brain cells, especially those that make new memories and retrieve old ones. And memory problems characterize the symptoms of Alzheimer's.

In the beginning stages of the disease, people will experience some mild memory problems. They may struggle with complex tasks like planning a party or balancing a checkbook. As the disease progresses, it becomes increasingly difficult to remember events that occurred very recently—say, the day before, or even just a few hours prior to the present time. Memory loss at this point looks more and more like dementia: affected people may not recognize others close to them or be able to recall appropriate words. Eventually, complete dementia sets in. Personal memories disappear and, with

them, the ability to recognize beloved people and places. Functional memories also become irretrievable. The person forgets how to perform daily functions, which include getting dressed, brushing the teeth, and using the toilet. Hallucinations or episodes of violence often attend this stage of the disease. At this point, it is rarely possible for a family member or a close friend to look after the sufferer, who needs twenty-four-hour-a-day care.

Many disorders cause symptoms that are quite similar (or even identical) to those of Alzheimer's. Before your doctor makes a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, make sure that he or she rules out the following possibilities:

- Depression
- Anemia
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Allergies, either food or environmental
- Dehydration
- Hypothyroidism
- Metabolic disorders
- Nutritional deficiencies of vitamins B12 and folic acid

- Alcoholism
- Brain tumor
- Not keeping mentally active (by reading, etc.)
- Head injury
- Drug abuse

In addition, certain pharmaceutical medications, whether alone or in combination, can cause significant memory problems, disorientation, and even dementia. Bring a list of all your current medications, including over-the-counter drugs (better yet, bring all the pill bottles with their labels), to your doctor so that he or she can examine them for potential side effects.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for Alzheimer's, largely because no one is quite sure of the cause. Heredity certainly plays a factor, but as with most inherited diseases, a certain gene probably does not result in Alzheimer's all on its own: it is likely that environmental causes must be present as well. The most promising research into Alzheimer's has discovered that free radicals (the unbalanced molecules that destroy or damage cells of the body) play a significant role in the disorder. Since we know that good nutrition and herbal therapies effectively prevent and fight much free radical damage, it's wise for anyone in the early stages of Alzheimer's (or who has a family tendency toward the disease) to follow the recommendations given here. Environmental toxins seem to be an important factor as well. Although the link between Alzheimer's to toxins like aluminum and mercury has not been firmly established, it is certainly prudent to avoid these poisonous substances as a preventative measure. In addition, stress appears to be a major factor with the development of this disease. Many researchers also feel that prolonged elevation of the stress hormone cortisol is a major causative factor. And finally, elevated levels of the protein metabolism by-product homocysteine is known to contribute to Alzheimer's disease.

Although there is distressingly little that conventional medicine can do for Alzheimer's sufferers, it is very important to see a doctor if you think you may have the disease. One reason is that many elderly people take several different medications at once, and these combinations often result in memory loss, confusion, or even dementia—side effects that can easily be mistaken for those of Alzheimer's. The first step for anyone suffering from memory problems should be a rigorous examination of prescription and other drugs. Furthermore, the symptoms of Alzheimer's mimic those of several other disorders that are quite treatable; many people who believe they have Alzheimer's are actually suffering from depression, hypothyroidism, B12 or folic acid deficiency, or other conditions. Only after your doctor has ruled out all other possibilities will he or she make a diagnosis of Alzheimer's. If your doctor diagnoses you with Alzheimer's after just one or two visits, make an appointment to see someone else—preferably a doctor with a strong background in geriatrics or neurological disorders. If you do have Alzheimer's, it's important to work with a good specialist. Although there's no cure, there are ways to help you improve your health, comfort, and independence.

Natural therapies should be employed to prevent or help slow down the disease and to improve life quality.

SYMPTOMS

Alzheimer's is a progressive disease. Its symptoms are listed here in the order in which they usually occur.

- Memory problems
- Confusion and disorientation
- Mood swings
- Depression
- Paranoia
- Inability to manage basic tasks
- Inappropriate behavior
- Hallucinations and delusions
- Episodes of violence and rage or childlike passivity
- Dementia

ROOT CAUSES

Although researchers are not yet sure what causes Alzheimer's, it is likely that a combination of the following factors plays a significant role in the disease.

In vitro studies at the University of Calgary have shown that mercury vapors cause a degeneration of brain neurons and also cause lesions similar to those found in people with Alzheimer's disease.

- Genetics (including elevated homocysteine levels)
- Free radicals
- Nutritional deficiencies (especially of vitamins B1, folic acid, and B12)
- Smoking
- Environmental toxins, especially aluminum and mercury
- Chronically elevated cortisol levels

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Eat a wholesome diet of basic, unprocessed foods. Because conventionally grown foods often contain toxins, buy organic whenever possible. If organic food is unavailable or too expensive, wash your food thoroughly before eating.

The antioxidant vitamins A, C, and E will combat damage from free radicals. Fresh fruits and vegetables are among the best sources of antioxidants, so have a couple of servings at every meal. For vitamin E, add wheat germ to salads, cereals, or juices. Nuts and seeds are other good sources of this vital nutrient.

The consumption of fish is very important. Salmon, halibut, cod, sole, and others are healthful sources of DHA, an essential fatty acid involved in brain function and GPA, which reduces inflammation.

A deficiency of the B-complex vitamins can both cause the disease and imitate its symptoms. Brewer's yeast is a potent source of B vitamins, as are wheat germ, eggs, and spirulina.

Use turmeric as a spice when preparing meals.

Many people with Alzheimer's are found to be deficient in zinc. To boost your intake, snack on pumpkin seeds regularly.

To improve circulation, increase energy levels, and detoxify your body, drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours.

Eat plenty of fiber to keep toxins moving through your digestive tract and to prevent them from taking up residence in your body. Whole grains, oats, and raw or lightly

cooked vegetables are good sources of fiber that are also nutritionally dense.

If you're older, your digestive system may not be able to absorb nutrients as well as it used to. Fresh fruit and vegetable juices are easily absorbable and packed with the vitamins you need, so have several glasses daily.

Food to Avoid

If you have Alzheimer's or have a family tendency toward the disease, it is imperative that you stay away from all foods containing toxins and additives. Eliminate processed and junk food from your diet. Alcohol and excessive caffeine are also too toxic for you to consume.

This book never recommends drinking tap water, but in your case it is even more important that you avoid it. Tap water is full of environmental contaminants, including those that are linked to Alzheimer's.

Fish is medicine for the brain.

The *Archives of Neurology* published a study of 815 participants, ages 64 to 94 years. Over a seven-year period, researchers reviewed food frequency questionnaires to quantify fish consumption and dietary intake of the essential fatty acids DHA and EPA. Researchers found that people who ate fish only one to three times a month had a 40 percent lower risk of Alzheimer's than those who never ate fish. Those who consumed fish one time per week had a 60 percent lower risk.

Testing Techniques

Conventional testing, such as a CT scan, an MRI, and an electroencephalogram, as well as routine blood work, are standard. Additional helpful testing includes

Toxic metal testing for elements toxic to brain tissue, such as aluminum, mercury, lead, arsenic, and others. The best test is a toxic element challenge urinalysis. The patient takes a chelating agent such as DMSA or DMPS, which pulls toxic metals out of tissue storage. Urine is then collected, usually for twenty-four hours.

Oxidative stress analysis—urine or blood testing

Antioxidant testing (urine, blood, or skin scanning)

Stool analysis

Hormone analysis by saliva, urine, or blood (estrogens, progesterone, testosterone, DHEA, cortisol, melatonin, IGF-1, thyroid panel)

It may surprise you to learn that many foods, especially baked goods, contain aluminum. Read all food labels carefully. Don't use self-rising flour, choose nonaluminum baking powder, and avoid pickling salts. You'll also need to avoid food cooked in aluminum pots and pans, as well as beverages that come in aluminum cans.

Sometimes food allergies cause reactions that are similar to the symptoms of Alzheimer's. See the Food Allergies section and the elimination diet discussed there, to determine whether you're allergic to any foods.

Detoxification

A three-day juice fast once a month will help flush toxins out of your body. Support your fast with a wide variety of juices so that you get the nutrition you need.

If you do indeed suffer from heavy-metal poisoning, consider oral or IV chelation therapy to rid your body of these toxins. Make sure you find a qualified, reputable practitioner.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Alzheimer's Disease

Super Prescription #1 Acetyl-L-carnitine

Take 1,000 mg three times daily. It improves brain cell communication and memory.

Super Prescription #2 DHA

Take a fish oil supplement that contains a daily dosage of 1,000 mg of DHA. It supplies essential fatty acids for proper brain function.

Super Prescription #3 Ginkgo biloba (24 percent flavone glycosides)

Take 120 mg two to three times daily. It improves circulation to the brain, improves memory, and has antioxidant benefits.

Super Prescription #4 Club moss (*Huperzia serrata*)

Take a product standardized to contain 0.2 mg of huperizine A daily. This compound has been shown to increase acetylcholine levels in the brain and to improve memory in people with Alzheimer's disease.

DHA is the primary component of the cell membranes of neurons. It also promotes nerve transmission in the central nervous system and protects the mitochondria (energy warehouse of cells). Studies have shown that low levels of serum DHA are a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease.

The herb ginkgo biloba has been shown to be helpful for people with early-stage Alzheimer's disease. It has been approved for the treatment of this disease by the German government. A study done in 1994, involving forty patients who had early-stage Alzheimer's disease, found that 240 mg of ginkgo biloba extract taken daily for three months produced measurable improvements in memory, attention, and mood. In addition, three other double-blind studies have demonstrated that ginkgo is helpful for the early stages of the disease.

Several clinical trials have found that supplementation of acetyl-L-carnitine delays the progression of Alzheimer's disease, improves memory, and improves overall performance in some people with Alzheimer's disease.

One placebo-controlled trial found that 58 percent of people with Alzheimer's disease had significant improvement in memory, as well as in mental and behavioral function, from taking 200 mcg of huperzine A twice a day for eight weeks. This was considered a statistically significant improvement, compared to the 36 percent who responded to placebo.

Super Prescription #5 Phosphatidylserine

Take 300 mg daily. This naturally occurring phospholipid improves brain cell communication and memory and has shown benefits for early-stage Alzheimer's disease.

Super Prescription #6 Vitamin B12

Take 800 to 1,600 micrograms daily. Consider using a sublingual form. Vitamin B12 deficiency mimics the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease.

Super Prescription #7 Vitamin E

Take 2,000 IU daily of a complex with added tocotrienols. Vitamin E is a potent antioxidant that protects against free radical damage. Studies show that it slows the progression of Alzheimer's disease. Do not take this high a dosage if you are on blood-thinning medication.

General Recommendations

Ashwagandha (*Withania somniferum*) is used as a brain tonic in Ayurvedic medicine. It reduces stress hormone levels. Take 100 to 3,000 mg daily.

Panax ginseng improves memory and balances stress hormone levels. Take a standardized product containing 4 to 7 percent ginsenosides at 100 to 250 mg twice daily. Do not use it if you have high blood pressure.

DHEA is an important hormone for cognitive function. If your level is low, talk with your doctor about starting at a 15 mg dosage.

Cordyceps sinensis is used in Chinese medicine for poor memory. Take 2 to 4 capsules daily.

DMAE helps the body produce acetylcholine for memory, and it also has antioxidant properties. Take 600 mg daily.

An antioxidant formula to use should contain a wide range of antioxidants, such as selenium, carotenoids, vitamin C, and others.

Chlorella speeds up the detoxification of toxic metals that may be causing free radical damage. Take as directed on the container.

Phosphatidylcholine increases acetylcholine levels to improve memory. Take 1,000 to 1,500 mg daily.

NADH has been shown to improve mental function in one clinical trial. Take 10 mg daily.

Vitamin B1 has been shown to improve mental function in people with Alzheimer's disease. Take 3 grams daily.

Homeopathy

Although homeopathy cannot cure Alzheimer's, it can reduce or alleviate many of its symptoms. Consult with a licensed homeopath for a constitutional remedy. In the meantime, here are a few temporary suggestions.

Alumina can clear confusion and reduce memory impairment. The person often suffers from constipation. Take 30C daily for three or four days, and see if improvement occurs within a week.

Lycopodium (*Lycopodium clavatum*) can help if you're fearful and have trouble recalling words. Take 30C two times daily for two weeks.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Stomach 36 tones the entire body, while improving the absorption of nutrients into the bloodstream.
- Governing Vessel 24.5 is easy to reach (it's at the center of the forehead, between the eyebrows), and it strengthens both memory and concentration.
- To relieve anxiety or nervous tension, work Pericardium 6.
- Lung 1 will ease depression and encourage deep, slow breathing.

Bodywork

Massage

Lymphatic massage detoxifies the body, while improving circulation (including circulation to the brain). Because it is a gentle therapy, lymphatic massage is ideal for people in the later stages of Alzheimer's, who may be upset by more vigorous manipulation. If your skin is dry, you may want the therapist to use a little lubricating oil during treatment.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

To detoxify cells and tissues, work the area corresponding to the lymph system.

Encourage blood flow to the brain by working the heart.

Work the lungs to oxygenate the blood.

Other Bodywork Recommendations

Hot and cold hydrotherapy is invigorating and stimulates blood flow to the brain. Try alternating hot and cold baths for the best effect.

Aromatherapy

Juniper helps break down toxins that reside within fatty deposits. Add it to your bath or use it during a lymphatic massage.

Black pepper will stimulate digestion, which can improve the absorption of nutrients. Dilute it in some carrier oil, and rub directly onto the abdomen.

The changing mood states of people with Alzheimer's may sometimes call for relaxing oils; at other times, oils with a stimulating effect are in order. Oils that have relaxing, calming properties include lavender and melissa. To rouse the mind and raise the spirits, try geranium, jasmine, neroli, bergamot, or rose.

Stress Reduction

A diagnosis of Alzheimer's is an extremely stressful event, especially when you are still quite capable and aware of the challenges to come. During these early stages, it's vital that you find stress-reduction techniques that work for you; they will increase the quality—and perhaps even the quantity—of the time you have left.

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Alzheimer's can make you feel alone, even if you're supported by a loving family. Join a support group of other people who have Alzheimer's, to share your feelings. (You may also want to encourage your loved ones to attend a support group of their own. They're coping with the shock, too.)

Meditation and prayer will help you manage stress and will also keep your mind and memory functioning at their optimum level for as long as possible.

Bach Flower Remedies

Select the appropriate remedy, and place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Rescue Remedy will help you deal with any crisis calmly, including the initial diagnosis or the difficult times afterward.

If you are so afraid of what the future holds that you tend to cling to the past, take Honeysuckle.

If you usually handle obstacles with aplomb and courage but just can't find the strength to face the challenges posed by your illness, take Oak.

Other Recommendations

- Regular exercise will keep blood flowing to the brain. A daily walk in the morning sunlight can also do wonders for your spirits.
- If you're trying to prevent Alzheimer's, keep yourself active and learning. A lack of mental engagement may be connected to loss of brain function.
- Avoid sources of aluminum and mercury. Some food sources of aluminum were listed earlier, but you must also read the labels on antacids, diarrhea medications, buffered aspirin, deodorants, and douches. You may want to consider having dental fillings composed of a silver-mercury amalgam replaced with a nontoxic substance.
- Simple routines are quite helpful to many people in the early and middle stages of Alzheimer's. Make a schedule for your day, and plan to perform more complicated tasks during the hours when you usually feel your best.
- Although it is very difficult to face the inevitable, many people with Alzheimer's feel much better when they plan ahead. If you work out your legal and financial arrangements now, and discuss your wishes for the future with your family, you may find that you can enjoy a stronger sense of peace and well-being.
- If you are the caregiver of a person who has Alzheimer's, you probably need some help. Contact local support groups to find low-cost assistance with transportation, meals, and even day care for the elderly.

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Anemia

Given the frenetic pace of modern Western life, it can seem almost normal to feel fatigued, weak, or short of breath. But these symptoms are never normal; they always point to a disorder of some kind. For millions of Americans, that disorder is anemia.

Every cell in the human body gets a large portion of its energy from oxygen. In a healthy person, cells receive an adequate supply of oxygen, thanks to a substance called hemoglobin, which transports oxygen through the blood. Without sufficient hemoglobin, the cells don't get enough oxygen; without enough oxygen, the brain, the muscles, and all the other tissues begin to slow down. The anemic person feels weak and tired at first and then may experience several other symptoms, including headaches, difficulty concentrating, and a series of illnesses that are the result of a suppressed immune system.

The body needs iron to produce the necessary amount of hemoglobin, and the vast majority of anemia cases are caused by a deficiency of this mineral. Iron deficiency most often results from a poor diet, especially one that's high in junk food, or from long-term or repeated dieting. There are many other ways a person can end up with a deficiency of iron, however. Blood loss for any reason, including surgery, trauma, gum disease, hemorrhoids, polyps, cancer of the colon, bleeding ulcers, and heavy menstrual periods, can produce an anemic state. So can an increase in the body's need for iron, which usually happens during pregnancy. Iron deficiency can also be caused by an inability to absorb certain nutrients, as can happen with folic acid and vitamin B12. In rarer cases, deficiencies of vitamins A, B2, B6, and C, as well as of copper,

may lead to anemia. The elderly often lose their ability to absorb these nutrients, as do people with certain digestive disorders like Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis. Usually, iron deficiency is caused by a combination of these factors.

In rare cases, anemia is the result of a hereditary blood disorder, in which red blood cells are destroyed prematurely. Thalassemia, sickle-cell disease, and spherocytosis are all very serious and sometimes fatal forms of anemia; people with these diseases must be under lifelong medical care. Anemia can also be caused by an inability to absorb any vitamin B12 at all. This condition can easily be treated with sublingual B12, with regular injections of vitamin B12, or by improving stomach acid levels.

If you suspect that you have anemia, it's likely that you can be cured with simple home treatments and supplementation. It's important, however, that you see a doctor for an official diagnosis. The symptoms of anemia can mimic those of other disorders, so you'll need to get a thorough physical examination. If you are diagnosed with anemia, don't let your doctor stop there. Make sure he or she explains the specific cause of your problem so that you'll know how to address any underlying disorders and prevent a recurrence.

SYMPTOMS

- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Shortness of breath after mild exertion
- Headaches
- Dizziness or fainting
- Difficulty concentrating
- Pale skin, lips, and nail beds
- Cold extremities
- Frequent illnesses
- Cessation of menstruation

ROOT CAUSES

- A poor diet, especially one that's deficient in iron, folic acid, or vitamin B12. This category includes eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia.
- Acute blood loss (most often from menstruation, surgery, or injury)
- Chronic blood loss (commonly from bleeding ulcers, colon disorders, gum disease, or bleeding hemorrhoids)
- Pregnancy
- Inherited blood disorders
- An inability to absorb vitamin B12 or folic acid
- Poor digestion and absorption—particularly, low stomach acid

TREATMENT

Diet

Dietary changes are of utmost importance for the anemic person. If you adhere to the following suggestions for several weeks but still feel tired, consult your doctor. There may be an underlying disorder at work, or you may have something other than anemia.

Recommended Food

Plan your meals so that you get plenty of iron. The best source of this mineral is organic calf's liver; while this book usually discourages the consumption of organ meats, it may

be necessary for you to incorporate this one into your diet until your body recovers. Green leafy vegetables (except for spinach—see the note about oxalic acid under Food to Avoid in this section), leeks, cashews, cherries, strawberries, dried fruits, figs, kelp, and eggs are all excellent sources as well. If you're a vegetarian and can't eat calf's liver, include one or two servings of green leafy vegetables at every meal.

Blackstrap molasses is also rich in iron, so take a spoonful of it every day. Blackstrap molasses can usually be found next to the pancake syrup at your grocery store. Make sure to read the label carefully, as you don't want molasses that's been sulfured.

Brewer's yeast is a good source of iron, folic acid, and B12, so add 1 tablespoon to cereals, salads, or juices daily.

Vitamin C will help your body absorb and retain iron. When you're eating foods that are high in iron, have some citrus fruits alongside them or take supplemental vitamin C.

Cook your food in cast-iron pots and pans. The food will absorb some of the mineral from the cookware. This strategy is especially helpful for vegetarians, who have difficulty meeting iron requirements.

If you have a digestive disorder that prevents you from absorbing food properly, juice the vegetables that are suggested here and drink several glasses daily. Juices don't require much digestive work from the stomach and the intestines, and their nutrients are easily passed into the bloodstream.

Testing Techniques

- Blood testing—complete blood count (CBC), ferritin (iron stores), B12, folate
- Comprehensive stool analysis

Food to Avoid

Do not eat spinach, rhubarb, tomatoes, or chocolate. These foods are high in oxalic acid, a substance that inhibits your body's ability to absorb iron.

Sodas, dairy products, coffee, and black tea are other iron-blockers. Eliminate them from your diet.

Iron is removed from your body through the bowels, so eat your fiber or take fiber supplements separately from iron sources. Avoid raw wheat bran entirely: it's a strong laxative that could well deplete an entire day's supply of iron.

Avoid cow's milk, which may cause hidden bleeding in the intestinal tract. This is particularly true with children.

Many young women—and, increasingly, men—become anemic as a result of following fad diets. If you truly need to lose weight, don't starve yourself; instead, restrict your consumption of fats and sugars, while eating lots of foods with high nutritional density, such as vegetables, fruits, soy products, and whole grains. For further weight-loss suggestions, see Obesity.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Anemia

Super Prescription #1 Iron

Take 50 to 100 mg of a well-absorbed form of iron, such as iron citrate, gluconate, glycinate, or fumarate, one to two times daily. Also, labels that state iron chelate

Phycocyanin, a phytonutrient found in spirulina, has been shown in animal studies to stimulate the bone marrow to produce blood cells more effectively. Spirulina is considered a rich source of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids.

are generally well absorbed. Avoid the use of iron sulfate (ferrous sulfate), which is poorly absorbed and can cause digestive upset. *Note:* Supplement iron only if you have iron-deficiency anemia.

Super Prescription #2 B12

Take 1,000 to 2,000 mcg of B12 daily, preferably in the methylcobalamin form. Sublingual is very absorbable, or your doctor may use the injection form to start. *Note:* Supplement this higher dose of B12 if your doctor has diagnosed a B12 deficiency.

Super Prescription #3 Folic acid

Take 800 to 1,200 mcg of folic acid daily. Sublingual is very absorbable, or your doctor may use the injection form to start. *Note:* Supplement this higher dose of folic acid if your doctor has diagnosed a folic acid deficiency.

Super Prescription #4 Homeopathic Ferrum phosphoricum

Take 5 pellets of the 3x or 6x potency three times daily. This homeopathic remedy improves iron utilization in the cells.

Super Prescription #5 Spirulina

Take 2,000 mg daily, as it has been shown to help improve anemia by stimulating the bone marrow production of red blood cells.

Super Prescription #6 Yellow dock (*Rumex crispus*)

Take 1 capsule or 20 drops of the tincture form with each meal. It contains iron and improves iron absorption.

Super Prescription #7 Vitamin C

Take 250 to 500 mg with each dose of iron. It provides an acidic environment for enhanced iron absorption.

General Recommendations

Gentian root (*Gentiana lutea*) increases stomach acid for improved absorption. Take a 300 mg capsule or 20 drops of tincture at the beginning of each meal.

Betaine hydrochloride increases stomach acid. Take 1 to 3 capsules with each meal.

Several herbs leach iron from the soil as they grow. When you consume them, you get the benefit of their mineral density. Some of the best herbs for anemia treatment include dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), pau d'arco (*Tabebuia avellanedae*), and nettle leaf (*Urtica dioica*). There are several commercial preparations available that combine these herbs into one “blood-building” formula; take as directed on the product label. If you wish to buy and take the herbs separately, here are the recommended dosages:

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), in addition to having a high iron content, cleanses the blood and detoxifies the liver. Choose a product made from dandelion root, and take 3 to 5 grams or 5 to 10 cc daily.

Pau d'arco (*Tabebuia avellanedae*) can be used as a tea; drink several cups a day. Take 100 mg or 0.5 to 1.0 cc three times daily.

Nettle leaves (*Urtica dioica*) are used for anemia because they have a rich nutritional content. Take 300 mg two or three times daily, or use 2 to 4 cc of a tincture three times daily.

Ashwagandha (*Withania somniferum*) has been shown in human studies to increase red blood cell count. Take 2,000 to 3,000 mg daily.

Dong quai is a traditional Chinese blood builder. Take 500 mg twice daily for one month.

Homeopathy

Select the appropriate remedy from the following list, and take 30C two times daily for two or three weeks.

Calcarea Phosphorica is for anemia in school children or chronic anemia in adults.

China Officinalis will improve anemic conditions that are a result of blood loss or illness.

Natrum Muriaticum is for anemia that's accompanied by headaches and constipation.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Improve your strength and energy, along with your ability to absorb nutrients from food, by working Stomach 36.
- For tension, work Lung 1 and Pericardium 6.
- If you have a headache, use Large Intestine 4.

Bodywork

Massage

While massage won't address any of the causes of anemia, it's an effective way to improve your circulation and increase your energy level. A full-body massage is probably the best choice, but there are easy home-care techniques you can use to relieve headaches or to warm up cold extremities.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the spleen to encourage the manufacture and the recycling of hemoglobin.

To aid circulation, blood formation, and detoxification, stimulate the liver.

Aromatherapy

Eucalyptus, ginger, black pepper, and rosemary all improve poor circulation. Add any of these oils—or if you prefer, a combination of them—to a bath. You can also dilute them in a carrier oil and use in a massage.

For an uplifting effect, try geranium or jasmine oils. Use them in any preparation you like, but for a long-lasting effect, you might like to add a few drops to a diffuser and let the scent envelop your room or office.

Bach Flower Remedies

Select the appropriate remedy, and place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Olive is a potent way to address the prolonged fatigue that accompanies anemia.

Clematis is for people who feel dreamy and unable to concentrate. It is also good for people who feel a constant, almost overpowering urge to sleep.

If anemia has drained you of the hope that you'll ever feel better, take Gorse. It will help you regain the more balanced outlook that's often necessary for healing.

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Angina. See Cardiovascular Disease

Anorexia Nervosa. See Eating Disorders

Anxiety

Anxiety is a tool of the human body that is meant to be a healthy response to stresses in life or even to a dangerous situation. When we are afraid, our metabolism speeds up, our muscles tighten, and our adrenal glands produce extra quantities of adrenaline (a hormone that makes our hearts beat faster).

Anxiety becomes a troublesome response only when we can't burn up the nervous energy it creates. When a meeting, a deadline, or a family problem sets us on edge, our bodies signal "danger"—but physical action is rarely appropriate. Instead, we endure the unpleasant sensation of a rapid heartbeat and tensed muscles, often while having to smile at the opponent who sits across the desk or the dinner table. We are all able to handle occasional bouts of unreleased anxiety, but if the anxiety doesn't go away, or if it recurs frequently, it can lead to serious health problems. People who are exposed to prolonged anxiety—those who are going through a divorce, for example, or who are subject to intense pressures at work—often suffer from high blood pressure, insomnia, digestive problems, skin disorders, mood swings, depression, and many other conditions. The effects of anxiety can also make any existing health problems much worse.

Sometimes people feel the symptoms of anxiety even when they're not facing a serious challenge or danger. Anxiety disorder is the name given to an excessive amount of worry that lasts longer than six months. What's excessive? Any nervous response that's out of proportion to its cause. A new job or a serious illness should naturally produce more anxiety than, say, planning a party. And if people cannot pinpoint the source of anxiety, or if it constantly changes, there's a good chance that they suffer from anxiety disorder.

People with anxiety disorders are vulnerable to the same health problems as anyone else with prolonged anxiety. They may also experience extreme states of nervousness and worry, called panic attacks. During a panic attack, the heart pounds and breathing becomes rapid or difficult. Sufferers may break into a cold sweat, experience tingling in the extremities, or feel dizzy and weak. Although panic attacks rarely last long—they can take anywhere from a few seconds to half an hour—they are quite frightening. People may feel certain that they are having a heart attack or a stroke or may simply feel overwhelmed by intense terror.

If you suffer from prolonged anxiety, whether as a result of an anxiety disorder or from a major unresolved source of tension, you can take certain steps to ease your symptoms. Bodywork and stress-reduction techniques will give you immediate relief but can also help you work on the root of your problem. Dietary changes and herbal therapies can have a calming, stabilizing effect on your mood.

As you employ these complementary healing strategies, it's also important to rule out any underlying physical causes. Disorders like low blood sugar, thyroid problems, heart problems (mitral valve prolapse), and clinical depression can lead to the symptoms of anxiety, as can nutritional deficiencies. Certain substances can also create anxiety or make it worse. Caffeine is perhaps the most notorious tension-inducing chemical, but sugar and other food allergens, nicotine, alcohol, environmental toxins and allergens, and other causes can all be just as potent.

SYMPTOMS

- Restlessness and tension
- Trembling
- Heart palpitations
- Dry mouth
- Sweaty palms
- Diarrhea
- Lump in the throat
- Mood swings
- High blood pressure
- Dizziness
- Sleep disturbances
- Appetite disorders
- Fatigue
- Impotence
- Chest pains
- Hyperventilation
- Headache
- Backache
- Muscle tension and/or spasms
- Panic attacks

ROOT CAUSES

- Stress
- Caffeine
- Sugar
- Nicotine
- Alcohol and street drugs
- Prescription medications
- Disturbed sleep
- Food allergies
- Environmental toxins
- Poor nutrition
- Thyroid problems
- Mitral valve prolapse
- Low blood sugar
- Depression
- Adrenal disorders

Testing Techniques

The following tests can give you an assessment of possible metabolic reasons for your anxiety:

Hormone analysis by saliva, urine, or blood (estrogens, progesterone, DHEA, cortisol, thyroid panel). DHEA and cortisol are of particular importance.

Fasting blood sugar

Food allergy/sensitivity testing

TREATMENT

Diet

Some foods can create anxiety, and others soothe it. If you're a victim of prolonged or frequent tension, a good diet can significantly—and sometimes completely—alleviate your symptoms.

Recommended Food

An anxiety-healing diet starts with a good base of nutrients. Plan well-rounded meals of basic, clean foods. To keep your blood-sugar levels stable, eat smaller meals throughout the day, rather than three large ones.

Complex carbohydrates contain serotonin, a neurotransmitter that has a calming effect on the brain. Have some whole grains, like brown rice or oats, at every meal.

Make sure you get enough B-vitamins by increasing your intake of brewer's yeast, brown rice, and leafy green vegetables.

If you have a bowel disorder, fibrous foods will help regulate your digestive tract. The whole grains and vegetables that were suggested earlier are an excellent source of fiber. For further suggestions, see the entry that addresses your particular problem.

Calcium and magnesium calm the body. Good sources include sea vegetables, green leafy vegetables (except spinach), soybeans, nuts, molasses, salmon, oysters, sardines (with the bones), broccoli, and unsweetened cultured yogurt.

Food to Avoid

Caffeine and alcohol cause anxiety or the symptoms of anxiety. Wean yourself off black tea, coffee, and alcohol, even if they seem to comfort you when you're stressed. Ultimately, these substances just put a further strain on your system.

Refined sugars are another enemy of anxious people. Whole fruits and naturally sweet products are fine in moderation, but candy, cake, cookies, refined flour products, and soft drinks will cause your blood sugar to spike and then plummet. The resulting low levels of blood sugar produce feelings of irritability, tension, and depression.

A response to food allergies can lead to trembling, dry mouth, heart palpitations, misbehaving bowels, and other symptoms that mimic anxiety. See Food Allergies to learn more, and use the elimination diet presented there to identify any problematic foods.

If you suffer from anxiety, chances are that you're short on B vitamins. Since refined flour and processed foods deplete your body of this nutrient, cut them out of your diet.

Detoxification

Stress can be a result of toxins, and stress itself is poisonous to your entire system. Consider doing a three-day supervised juice fast. Be sure most of your juices are made from vegetables, as too many fruit juices can give you unwanted sugar shock. A fast is also an ideal time to rest up and enjoy various types of therapy, like a massage or a hot bath, that combine detoxification with relaxation.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Anxiety

Super Prescription #1 Homeopathy

Take a combination anxiety homeopathic remedy, as directed on the container, or read the descriptions further on in the Homeopathy and Bach Flower sections to pick a single remedy.

Super Prescription #2 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP)

Take 50 to 100 mg two to three times daily. Note that 5-HTP increases serotonin levels, which have a calming effect on the mind. *Note:* Do not take in conjunction with a pharmaceutical antidepressant or an anti-anxiety medication.

Super Prescription #3 Kava (*Piper methysticum*)

Take 200 to 250 mg two to three times daily of a product standardized to 30 percent kava lactones. Kava (*Piper methysticum*) can significantly relieve a panic attack, as well as the symptoms of generalized anxiety. If you're using a pharmaceutical tranquilizer, you should talk to your doctor about making the switch. Do not, under any circumstances, take kava at the same time you're taking a medication for anxiety, depression, or Parkinson's disease. Do not use kava while consuming alcohol or if you have elevated liver enzymes. This supplement should be used with a doctor's supervision.

Super Prescription #4 Calcium and magnesium

Take a combination of 500 mg of calcium and 250 mg of magnesium twice daily. These minerals help calm the nervous system.

Super Prescription #5 Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*)

Take 250 mg or 0.5 ml two to three times daily. Passionflower relaxes the nerves and is gentle enough to use during the day.

Super Prescription #6 B-complex

Take a 50 mg complex one to two times daily. B vitamins help combat the effects of stress and will balance your brain chemicals. Vitamin B6 is especially important.

Super Prescription #7 GABA

Take 500 mg two to three times daily between meals. This amino acid has a calming effect.

Double-blind studies have shown that kava (*Piper methysticum*) is effective in helping people with mild to moderate anxiety. One trial found that kava also reduced anxiety symptoms in menopausal women.

General Recommendations

Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) is a strong nerve relaxer and is especially helpful for insomnia caused by anxiety. Take 300 mg or 0.5 to 1.0 ml two to three times daily.

Saint-John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) can lift anxiety that's accompanied by depression. Take 300 mg three times daily. If you're on medication for depression or anxiety, talk to your doctor before switching to an herbal preparation.

Ashwagandha (*Withania somniferum*) helps balance stress hormone levels and reduce tension. Take 2,000 to 3,000 mg daily.

Chromium balances blood-sugar levels. Take 200 mcg two to three times daily.

Inositol has been shown in studies to be helpful for panic attacks. Take 4 grams three times daily.

Chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*) and oatstraw (*Avena sativa*) are great herbal nerve relaxers. They can be taken as a tea or in supplement form.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms. Take 2 pellets of 30C potency twice daily to prevent or reduce anxiety. Should the first three days pass without any sign of improvement, you're probably taking the wrong remedy. Stop using the current one, and switch to something else. After you first notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms begin to return. For acute anxiety or a panic attack,

take a 30C potency every fifteen minutes for up to 6 doses. After improvement is noticed, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return.

Aconitum Napellus is for acute panic attacks, especially those that make you feel as if you might die. You may experience shortness of breath, a sensation of impending doom, and heart palpitations.

Arsenicum Album is for anxiety and insecurity that are accompanied by a fast heartbeat, chills, and a disturbed appetite. People who benefit from this remedy are often obsessively tidy and organized.

Calcarea Carbonica is for symptoms of anxiety and a feeling of being overwhelmed. You are generally chilly and tire easily.

Gelsemium (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) is effective for acute anxiety from stage fright or from being in crowds. Trembling and diarrhea often accompany anxiety.

Ignatia (*Ignatia amara*) is for when you feel moody, weepy, and brooding and may feel a lump in your throat. It is excellent for anxiety that results from an emotional trauma.

Kali Phosphoricum is for generalized anxiety, poor memory, and fatigue. Take a 6x potency three times daily.

Lycopodium (*Lycopodium clavatum*) will ease stage fright or social anxiety due to low confidence. You often crave sweets and have a digestive upset, such as gas and bloating.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- For quick relief of anxiety, work Lung 1. A detailed method for working this point can be found on page 670.
- Pericardium 6 is another good point for nervous tension. Because it's located on the wrist, you can easily work this point whenever you need quick relief—at the office, in meetings, or on a bus.
- For fear, work Bladder 23.
- For anxiety that leads to depression, work Conception Vessel 17.

Bodywork

Massage

A regular full-body massage is a great way to relieve the tension that collects in your muscles. If you don't have the time or the money for a professional treatment, you or a loved one can easily perform some spot techniques at home. A neck, a shoulder, or a foot rub can help you unwind. Use any of the essential oils recommended under Aromatherapy in this section for an even more relaxing effect.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the areas corresponding to the diaphragm, all the glands, the heart, and the solar plexus.

Hydrotherapy

If you suffer from insomnia, it's important to draw blood away from your head before bedtime. Take a ten-minute hot foot bath to encourage the blood to move down and out toward your limbs.

Aromatherapy

Many essential oils have relaxing properties, but lavender, melissa, jasmine, and ylang ylang are among the best for anxiety. Use them in a bath or a massage, or add some to a room diffuser for extended relief.

During a panic attack, inhale frankincense to encourage deep breathing.

If you have diarrhea, use chamomile, peppermint, lavender, and melissa to soothe gastric cramps. Add a few drops to a massage oil, and rub gently onto your abdomen.

Bergamot will restore a lost appetite. Try some in a room diffuser, or simply inhale deeply over the bottle.

Stress Reduction

If you suffer from anxiety, it's wise to have a repertoire of stress-reduction techniques you can call upon. Any of the techniques discussed in the Exercise and Stress Reduction chapter can help, but following are some specific suggestions.

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Use prayer to alleviate and prevent anxiety. The Bible contains many scriptures that address anxiety.

It is also prudent to seek help from a counselor who specializes in anxiety disorder.

Positive mental imagery and meditation are useful. Whenever you feel your mind racing ahead to upcoming deadlines or unpleasant situations, try to bring it back to an awareness of the present. Focus for a moment on something beautiful: the sound of a bird, the color of the sky, the steam drifting up from your cup of tea.

Many people with anxiety have cold hands and feet, because the panic response pulls blood away from the extremities. Thermal biofeedback can help you use this symptom to your advantage. During a thermal biofeedback session, you'll be asked to try to warm your hands. As you learn this technique, you'll actually learn to control the nervous-system arousal mechanism that is set off by anxiety. Soon you'll be able to ward off a panic attack just by mentally warming your hands.

If you suffer from severe anxiety, consider EEG biofeedback. This form of biofeedback can be expensive, but it does have an excellent track record of helping people calm their brainwaves.

Don't let stress management itself become a source of stress. You're not a failure if you have a panic attack or an episode of anxiety; no one can manage anxiety perfectly. Just keep practicing tension-relieving techniques daily, and try to accept whatever comes your way as best you can.

Bach Flower Remedies

If none of the remedies suggested here applied to you, consult the chart on pages 648–650 to find one that suits your personality. Once you've found the appropriate remedy, place 10 drops of it under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

If you are prone to acute anxiety, keep a bottle of Rescue Remedy on hand. When a panic attack strikes, it will restore your peace of mind.

Rock Rose is one of the primary components of Rescue Remedy and is extremely helpful in a physical or emotional emergency. If a bad shock or a fright leaves you feeling helpless or blank, Rock Rose will help you return to a calmer state.

Aspen is for people who are gripped by fears they can't name. Their anxiety may come on suddenly and may produce intense feelings of dread.

For people who are all too able to name the fears that provoke their anxiety, Mimulus can help. This remedy is especially good for people who tend to keep these fears to themselves.

If your anxiety is brought on by excessive concern for others, Red Chestnut will help you put things in perspective.

Other Recommendations

- Exercise is still one of the best anxiety-relievers. A daily walk is enough for many people, although most methods of exercise will help reduce the effects of stress and anxiety.
- Acupuncture is helpful in controlling anxiety for some people.

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Arteriosclerosis. See Cardiovascular Disease

Arthritis

Arthritis is a degenerative joint disease that causes swelling and pain that can range from mild to excruciating. Although more than two hundred diseases are classified under the name “arthritis,” most arthritic conditions fall into one of two categories: osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Osteoarthritis is by far the more common, afflicting 40 million Americans and 80 percent of people over fifty. The pain and the inflammation occur when the cartilage that protects the bones from rubbing against each other wears down. Not surprisingly, the disease usually appears in joints that do most of the body’s hard work: the knees, the hips, the spine, and the hands. Although injury or the normal wear and tear of life often bring on cartilage damage, it can be made much worse by food allergies, poor diet, and mineral deposits in the joints. For some people, the effects of mental and emotional stress aggravate arthritis pain. Changes in the weather—usually, rain and falling barometric pressure—often cause arthritis flare-ups

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is quite another story. Most experts believe it is caused by an inappropriate immune reaction, in which white blood cells attack the cartilage in the joints; it can go on to destroy the bones themselves and even the muscles and

the skin. It is often exceedingly painful and can cripple its sufferers. While osteoarthritis affects men and women equally, RA appears three times more frequently in women. It affects only 2 to 3 percent of the population and can occur at any age, even in childhood. The course of the disease is difficult to predict. It may disappear a few months after its appearance, or it may grow progressively worse. Experts disagree over the causes of RA, but it seems clear that genes, food allergies, bacterial or viral infection, stress, excess acid in the body, and the presence of certain antibodies in the blood all play a role. Many of the complementary therapies used for osteoarthritis are also effective in reducing the pain and slowing the spread of rheumatoid arthritis.

Underlying factors for both of these conditions may include poor digestive function (intestinal permeability), hormone imbalance, nutritional deficiencies, food allergies, and lifestyle factors.

SYMPTOMS OF OSTEOARTHRITIS

Symptoms usually come on gradually, progressing as follows:

- Morning stiffness
- Painful, swollen joints
- Restricted range of motion
- Deformity of joints (in some cases)

SYMPTOMS OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

- Inflammation, pain, tenderness, and discoloration in the joints, usually the shoulders, the elbows, the wrists, the fingers, the ankles, or the toes
- Morning stiffness
- Lumps under the skin at the site of damaged joints
- Deformity of joints in long-term cases
- Fatigue, weight loss, weakness, and occasionally fever.
- Chronic infections

ROOT CAUSES OF OSTEOARTHRITIS

- Fractures or other injuries, even those that occurred early in life
- Food allergies
- A diet high in fats, animal products, and other foods that promote an internal acidic environment
- Excess of body fat, which places extra stress on joints
- Emotional stress
- Poor digestion health (increased intestinal permeability, bacteria imbalance)
- Hormone imbalance
- Biomechanical imbalance (e.g., poor posture and abnormal foot arch)

ROOT CAUSES OF RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

No one is exactly sure what causes RA. It is likely multifactorial.

- Autoimmune malfunction (presence in the blood of the rheumatoid factor [RF], a set of antibodies in the blood that leads to an attack on the body's joint tissue)

Canadian researchers examined the association between synthetic hormone replacement and a new diagnosis of arthritis. It was discovered that women who use synthetic hormones for five years or longer were twice as likely as nonusers to develop osteoarthritis. A separate study examining synthetic estrogen replacement therapy and arthritis found a 96 percent increased risk among women who used it from four to ten years.

- Infection (mycoplasma, bacterial, or viral)
- Overgrowth of harmful bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract (dysbiosis)
- Food allergies
- Toxic metal accumulation
- Emotional stress

Testing Techniques

The following tests can give you an assessment of possible metabolic reasons for arthritis:

Hormone analysis by saliva, urine, or blood (estrogens, progesterone, DHEA, cortisol, IGF-1, thyroid panel).

Fasting insulin levels—blood

Food allergy/sensitivity testing (including screening for celiac disease or gluten intolerance)

Intestinal permeability—urine test

Stool analysis—bacteria balance, parasites, candida, food breakdown

Vitamin and mineral analysis—blood or urine

Toxic metal test—hair analysis or urine

TREATMENT

Diet

An effective diet will go a long way toward controlling arthritis for many people.

Recommended Food

Flaxseeds and cold-water fish are high in essential fatty acids and have anti-inflammatory properties. Salmon and mackerel are good examples.

Eat lots of fiber in the form of raw vegetables and whole grains. It will help sweep away mineral and acid build-up and keep your digestive system free of harmful bacteria. Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower also have anti-inflammatory properties.

Foods high in sulfur will help repair cartilage and bone. Try eating some asparagus, cabbage, garlic, or onion every day.

To keep cartilage lubricated and healthy, drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours. Dehydration has been linked to arthritis pain.

Raw pineapple, whether whole or juiced, has an enzyme called bromelain, which has been shown to reduce inflammation.

Food to Avoid

Too much acid in the body causes inflammation, which leads to pain. Avoid acid-promoting foods such as red meat, eggs, saturated fats, oils, fried foods, sugar, dairy products, refined carbohydrates, foods high in gluten (such as breads, pasta, and pastries), alcohol, and caffeine. Although this list is long, allergy sufferers who eliminate these foods often experience great relief. Food allergy or sensitivity testing helps to narrow down the group of offending foods (see the Food Allergies chapter).

Animal products generally worsen inflammation in the joints. Avoid all eggs, dairy, and meat, with the exception of fish, which contains anti-inflammatory oils.

Use the list on page 252 to determine whether you have food allergies. Allergies cause inflammation, and for people with RA, they also do further damage to the immune system and may increase the intestinal tract's vulnerability to bacteria.

The nightshade vegetables—tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, and peppers—contain a substance called solanine, which can trigger allergic responses and pain in some allergy sufferers. Eliminate these foods from your diet for a period of six weeks to see if there is improvement.

Detoxification

A vegetable juice or water fast is helpful to reduce joint pain. Work with a nutrition-oriented doctor.

Lemon and grapefruit juices are especially supportive of an arthritis fast.

Mix 1 teaspoon of apple cider vinegar and 1 teaspoon of honey into a glass of clean water, and drink it every day of your fast. This concoction will help alkalinize your body.

Green drinks are excellent for detoxification.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Arthritis

Super Prescription #1 Glucosamine sulfate

Take 1,500 mg daily. Many formulas combine it with 600 to 1,200 mg of chondroitin sulfate, a related compound that also reduces joint pain and rebuilds cartilage. Benefits are usually noticed within four to eight weeks.

Note: Glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate are specific remedies only for osteoarthritis.

Super Prescription #2 Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM)

Take 2,000 to 8,000 mg daily. MSM has natural anti-inflammatory benefits and contains the mineral sulfur, an integral component of cartilage. Reduce the dosage if diarrhea occurs.

Super Prescription #3 Fish oil

Take a daily dosage of at least 1.8 mg of DHA and 1.2 mg of EPA. Fish oil contains a direct source of the omega-3 fatty acids that reduce joint inflammation and promote joint lubrication. This makes it a better choice than flaxseed oil, although flaxseeds are an option for vegetarians. Improvement may take up to twelve weeks of use.

Super Prescription #4 High-potency multivitamin

Take a formula that is rich in a blend of antioxidants, which will prevent joint tissue destruction. Take as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #5 Betaine HCL or bitter herb digestion formula

Take betaine HCL or a bitter herb digestion formula. These supplements increase stomach acid and improve digestion. Take as directed on the container with each meal.

Super Prescription #6 Bromelain

Take 500 mg three times daily between meals. Look for products standardized to 2,000 M.C.U. (milk-clotting units) per 1,000 mg or 1,200 G.D.U. (gelatin-dissolving units) per 1,000 mg. Bromelain has a natural anti-inflammatory effect. Protease enzyme products also have this benefit.

Many studies have confirmed the efficacy of glucosamine sulfate for relieving osteoarthritis symptoms. A three-year, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial involving 212 people with knee osteoarthritis found that 1,500 mg of glucosamine sulfate taken daily significantly reduced symptoms. In addition, diagnostic images found that people supplementing glucosamine had no significant joint space loss, while those on placebo had joint deterioration.

Super Prescription #7 Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*) cream

Apply the cream to the affected area two to four times daily for symptomatic relief. Choose a cream standardized to between 0.025 and 0.075 percent capsaicin. Capsaicin depletes the nerves of substance P, a neurotransmitter that transmits pain messages.

General Recommendations

Many excellent herbs reduce inflammation. Devil's claw root (*Harpagophytum procumbens*), alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), and yucca root (*Yucca schidigera*) capsules are among the best. Give these herbs at least two months to take effect. Recommended dosages are as follows:

Devil's claw (*Harpagophytum procumbens*) should not be taken if you have a history of gallstones, heartburn, or ulcers. Take 1,500 to 2,500 mg of the standardized powdered herb in capsule or tablet form daily, or use 1 to 2 ml of a tincture three times a day.

White willow (*Salix alba*) products that are standardized to contain 240 mg of salicin daily or 5 ml of the tincture form should be taken three times daily.

Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*) comes in the form of capsules or tablets made from dried alfalfa leaves. Take 500 to 1,000 mg daily, or take 1 to 2 ml of a tincture three times daily.

Yucca root (*Yucca schidigera*) in the capsule form is taken in 1,000-mg doses twice daily.

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is a popular choice for relief of both inflammation and pain. Pour boiling water over the grated root and drink the tea, or try adding ginger fresh to your meals. If you want something stronger, take 1 to 2 grams of dried powder in a capsule two or three times daily, or use 1 to 2 ml of a tincture three times daily.

Boswellia (*Boswellia serrata*) is taken in doses of 1,200 to 1,500 mg of standardized extract, containing 60 to 65 percent boswellic acids, two to three times daily.

Plant sterols and sterolin is more specifically used for rheumatoid arthritis, to calm down an overactive immune system. Take as directed on the container, between meals, three times daily.

DHEA: If your levels are low, work with a holistic doctor and start with 10 to 25 mg daily.

SAMe (S-adenosylmethionine) is an excellent supplement to reduce the symptoms of osteoarthritis. Take 600 to 1,200 mg for two months and then 400 to 800 mg as a maintenance dosage.

Evening primrose oil, black currant, or borage oil contain the essential fatty acid GLA, which reduces joint inflammation. Take up to 2.8 grams of GLA daily.

Cetyl myristoleate (CMO) is shown in preliminary studies to be helpful for arthritis. Take 540 mg daily.

Vitamin E is preferably taken via a vitamin E-complex with additional tocotrienols. If you are on blood-thinning medication, use a lower amount under your doctor's supervision. Take 800 to 1,200 IU daily.

Vitamin C: Take 1,000 two to three times daily.

Boron: Take 1 mg per day.

Niacinamide: Take 500 mg four times daily.

Plant enzymes: Take as directed on the container to improve food absorption.

Chlorella or spirulina are super green foods high in antioxidants and aid detoxification. Take as directed on the container.

DMSO (dimethyl sulfoxide) is a topical substance used for pain relief. Work with a doctor to use this substance.

Protease enzymes reduce inflammation. Take 1 to 2 capsules twice daily between meals.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms. Take 2 pellets of 30C potency twice daily. Should five days pass without any sign of improvement, you're probably taking the wrong remedy. Stop using the current one, and switch to something else. After you first notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms begin to return.

Apis (Apis mellifica) is for joints that are swollen and hot and having stinging pain that feels better with cool applications. It is more commonly used with rheumatoid arthritis.

Arnica (Arnica montana) is for bruising pain, especially for osteoarthritis arising from injuries.

Belladonna (Atropa belladonna) works on joints that are hot, red, and burning and that feel worse with motion. Pain and swelling may come on suddenly.

Bryonia (Bryonia alba) is for stitching pains and swollen, hot joints that are worse with any movement. People who benefit from *Bryonia* tend to be irritable from the pain.

Calcarea Carbonica is for joint pains made worse from dampness and coldness. The person usually is overweight and chilly.

Calcarea Fluorica is for arthritis with enlarged joints or bone spurs, as well as for hypermobile joints.

Calcarea Phosphorica is for joint and bone pains that are made worse from cold and drafts of cold air. It's useful for arthritis that occurs from bone spurs, especially in the neck region.

Dulcamara is for arthritis that flares up from cold, damp weather.

Pulsatilla (Pulsatilla pratensis) is helpful if your pain wanders from joint to joint and if your symptoms improve in fresh, cool air or with cool applications.

Rhus Toxicodendron relieves arthritis that is worse in the cold and the damp or during long periods of inactivity. Stiffness is the main symptom, which improves with some movement and warmth.

Sulphur is for arthritis characterized by burning pains. Symptoms are better with cold applications.

Acupressure

Acupressure can be quite helpful in reducing or even eliminating arthritis pain. Because the suggested points may be very tender, be sure to press them firmly instead of massaging them. You may need to work the appropriate points two or three times a day for up to six months before you see complete results; afterward, reduce your practice to once daily. For more information about pressure points and administering treatment, see pages 668–675.

- To relieve arthritis in the hands, the wrists, the elbows, the shoulders, or the neck, use Large Intestine 4.
- Large Intestine 11 reduces pain and swelling in the elbow and the shoulder.
- For ankle pain, try Spleen 5 and Kidney 3.
- Stomach 36 supports the entire body, including the joints. In addition, it promotes the sense of well-being that arthritis sufferers sometimes lack.

Bodywork

Massage

A light drainage massage of the areas surrounding an arthritic joint will reduce the build-up of lymphatic fluid.

Stress and tension can trigger painful episodes, especially for sufferers of RA. Regular massage will relax the body and the mind. It will also loosen muscles that have tightened in reaction to pain.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Massage of the entire foot is best for relief of arthritis pain, with special attention to the region that corresponds to the painful area (i.e., shoulder, hands, or back).

Hydrotherapy

Soak in a hot bath with Epsom salts or mineral salts for at least twenty minutes. You'll eliminate toxins through sweat, and the salts will help replenish the body's mineral stores. Constitutional hydrotherapy is excellent (see the Hydrotherapy section for directions).

Aromatherapy

A number of different oils will reduce stress, so you should try several to see which ones work best for you. Some good choices are chamomile, jasmine, lavender, and rose.

To assist in cleansing the joints of mineral and acid deposits, use juniper or lemon balm in a hot bath.

Chamomile, lavender, and rosemary all have anti-inflammatory properties. Use them in a bath, or combine them with a base oil and apply gently to the painful area. Lavender is an especially good choice for people with rheumatic pain.

Black pepper, ginger, and eucalyptus all stimulate blood flow around the joints and are invigorating in a bath.

Stress Reduction

Many doctors and other experts have noted that emotional stress and an inability to accept criticism seem to appear frequently in arthritis sufferers. In addition, arthritis itself can cause great tension, both muscular and emotional, and even depression.

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Yoga works wonders for some people, as may tai chi or Pilates. Take a class with a qualified instructor, preferably one who has experience with arthritic clients.

Thermal biofeedback has produced good results for many arthritis sufferers. It teaches you to open up your blood vessels and stimulates warmth and nourishment to your hands and joints.

Bach Flower Remedies

Consult the chart on pages 648–650 if the following suggestions do not apply to your particular needs. Once you have selected the right remedy, place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold them in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

If you are inflexible and critical of yourself and others, try Rock Water.

To relieve fatigue and exhaustion brought on by pain, use Hornbeam or Olive.

If you are sensitive to weather changes, use a combination of Aspen, Olive, Elm, and Holly.

Other Recommendations

- Vitamin D from sunshine is crucial to bone health. Don't let arthritis pain keep you from getting out in the early morning sun every day.
- Arthritis sufferers often cut back on activity, but studies show that moderate exercise actually reduces pain and swelling. While you must avoid joint-pounding workouts like jogging or tennis, low- or no-impact exercises like swimming, aqua-aerobics, cycling, and walking are excellent choices.

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Asthma

Asthma is a serious respiratory disease that literally leaves its victims breathless. People with asthma usually have a combination of problems in the lungs: bronchial muscle spasms, swelling of the mucus linings, and increased mucus production. When a susceptible person is exposed to a trigger, such as environmental irritants, allergens, heavy exertion, or even anxiety, the passages inflame further and block air from flowing freely, resulting in an asthma attack. In a severe attack, a person who doesn't receive emergency medical care can suffocate.

In America, the number of people with asthma has increased by one-third in the last decade, probably because of pollution, the effects of emotional stress, and a Western diet that's high in additives, meat products, and fats, all of which can cause inflammation and excess mucus production. Alarmingly, the incidence of asthma continues to rise among children. It is most common in children under the age of ten.

Diet, nutritional supplements, bodywork, and other therapies can go a long way toward preventing and relieving asthma, but if you suffer from this potentially life-threatening disease, you also need to be under the care of a good doctor.

SYMPTOMS

- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Tightness in the chest
- Loss of sleep due to coughing and blocked airways
- Increased heart rate
- Constriction of the muscles in the bronchial airways
- Inflammation of the mucus linings
- Increased mucus flow

ROOT CAUSES

Triggers that bring on an attack vary from person to person but most often include

- Allergies, either environmental or food
- Pollution and irritants
- Infections (colds, flu, or other respiratory infections)
- Cold air
- Heavy physical exertion
- Poor digestive function
- Hormone imbalance
- Emotional stress

Important: If you experience a severe asthma attack, *get emergency help at once*. Have someone call an ambulance or drive you to the hospital, where you will receive medication to open your air passages.

TREATMENT

Diet

While it may take some discipline, following an antiasthma diet will reduce inflammation and the clogging of air passages. If you have trouble getting started, try the detoxifying fast recommended further on. It will help break your addiction to unwholesome food and will allow you to “hear” clearly what your body needs.

Note: Check with a pediatrician or a holistic doctor before eliminating any food group from a child’s diet.

Recommended Food

Eat a simple, light diet, based on foods that don’t promote mucus production: raw vegetables and fruits, seeds, whole grains, lean poultry, and fresh fish.

Carotenoids are antioxidants that have natural antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. They are found in dark-green leafy vegetables and deep-yellow and orange vegetables.

Studies show that children who eat fish more than once a week have one-third the risk of developing asthma.

Garlic and onions have anti-inflammatory properties and are a savory addition to vegetable dishes.

A glass of clean water every two waking hours will help keep your system clean. Water is especially helpful after an asthma attack to break up mucus.

Ground flaxseeds are an excellent source of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids. For children over five years of age, use 1 to 2 teaspoons, and for adults, the dosage is 1 to 2 tablespoons daily.

Food to Avoid

It is most important to discover whether certain foods provoke allergic reactions. See the Food Allergies entry, especially the elimination diet on page 253.

Even if you don’t have an allergy to dairy products, eliminate them from your diet. They encourage the production of mucus that plugs your airways. For the same reason, stay away from sugar, junk food, and fried and refined foods.

Do not eat foods that contain additives or preservatives. This means avoiding processed foods, dried or smoked foods, and salad bars, which are often sprayed with preservatives, such as tartrazine (yellow dye number 5), red dye, sulfites (as found in dried fruits), benzoates, and monosodium glutamate (MSG).

Never eat frozen or extremely cold foods, which can cause the muscles in your airways to tighten.

Keep pressure off your diaphragm by eating small meals and by avoiding foods that cause gas, such as beans and cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts are the most common offenders).

Detoxification

Every three months, consider doing a three-day vegetable cleansing juice fast to expel mucus. Also, daily consumption of super green foods, such as chlorella and/or spirulina, is recommended.

Testing Techniques

The following tests can give you an assessment of possible metabolic reasons for your asthma:

- Food allergy/sensitivity testing—blood, electrodermal testing (see Food Allergies for more details)
- Vitamin and mineral analysis—blood
- Candida and flora balance—stool analysis
- Toxic metals—hair or urine analysis
- Intestinal permeability—urine
- Stress hormones DHEA and cortisol—saliva or urine

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Asthma

Super Prescription #1 Homeopathy

Read the description under Homeopathy in this section, and pick the single remedy that best matches your symptoms. If possible, work with a practitioner who is well trained in homeopathy.

Super Prescription #2 Essential fatty acids

Take 1 to 2 tablespoons of flaxseed oil or 4 to 8 grams of fish oil daily. Essential fatty acid formulations that contain flaxseed oil, fish oil, or a mixture of omega-3, 6, and 9 fatty acids are helpful for preventing asthma. Take as directed on the container. It may take four to eight weeks for you to notice an improvement.

Super Prescription #3 Magnesium

Take 250 mg two to four times daily. Reduce the dosage if loose stools occur. Magnesium relaxes the bronchial tubes and improves lung function. Nutrition-oriented doctors may also use magnesium intravenously for acute asthma.

Super Prescription #4 Vitamin C

Take 1,000 mg two to four times daily. Reduce the dosage if loose stools occur. Vitamin C lessens spasms of the bronchial passages and has antiallergy benefits. Use a nonacidic product, such as calcium ascorbate.

Super Prescription #5 Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*)

Take 500 to 1,000 mg twice daily. Astragalus is used to strengthen the lungs and to prevent respiratory infections that can trigger asthma. Do not use if you have a fever.

Super Prescription #6 Antioxidant formula

Take as directed on the container. Antioxidants decrease inflammatory responses of the airways.

Super Prescription #7 Enzymes

Take a full-spectrum enzyme product with each meal to improve the absorption of nutrients and decrease reactions to foods.

General Recommendations

Vitamin B12 reduces the reaction to sulfites that causes asthma symptoms in some people, especially in children. Take 1,500 mcg orally or 400 mcg sublingually. The injectable form is also used by nutrition-oriented doctors.

Vitamin B6 has been found to be low in people who have asthma. In addition, asthma medications may lower B6 levels in the body. Take 100 to 200 mg daily.

N-acetylcysteine is a good antioxidant that also liquefies mucus in the bronchial tubes and the sinuses. Take 500 mg two to three times daily.

Lycopene is an antioxidant that has been shown to reduce exercise-induced asthma. Take 30 mg daily of a natural Lycopene complex.

Betaine HCL is helpful for some people with asthma. This supplement increases stomach acid levels, which tend to be low in people with asthma. Take as directed on the container, with meals, or as directed by a doctor.

Ginkgo biloba has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits for the lungs. A study using ginkgo extract found that it decreased asthma symptoms. Take 120 to 240 mg daily of an extract containing 24 percent flavone glycosides.

Quercetin is useful for its anti-inflammatory and anti-allergy benefits. Take 1,000 mg three times daily.

Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), licorice, and marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*) root have historically been used in the herbal treatment of asthma. Choose formulas that contain a combination of these herbs, and use as directed on the container.

Cordyceps is a medicinal mushroom used in Chinese medicine to reduce bronchial secretions, improve lung function, and energize the body. Take 800 mg twice daily of a standardized product.

Adrenal-support formulas are helpful in the prevention of asthma. They include herbs such as *Panax ginseng*, American ginseng, adrenal glandular, and pantothenic acid (vitamin B5). Take as directed by a nutrition-oriented doctor.

Homeopathy

Many homeopathic remedies exist for asthma. The following suggestions are for use until you can consult with a qualified homeopath to find the remedy appropriate for your constitution. During an asthma attack, take 30C every ten or fifteen minutes until the symptoms subside. Long-term use of the proper homeopathic remedy can reduce your susceptibility to asthmatic attacks.

Aconitum Napellus is for attacks that start suddenly, especially after exposure to cold air, and that cause a great deal of fear or anxiety.

Arsenicum Album is for people with asthma who feel anxious, restless, and worse in the cold air and between midnight and 2 A.M. They feel better sitting up and when sipping warm drinks. This remedy is used for chronic and acute asthma.

Carbo Vegetabilis is for people who feel chilly and faint, yet better when being fanned or near a window. They may have a sensation of fullness in the upper abdomen

A double-blind trial found that more than half of people with exercise-induced asthma had significantly fewer asthma symptoms after taking 30 mg of lycopene per day for one week, compared to when they took a placebo.

and the chest and may feel relief from burping. They feel worse from talking, eating, or lying down.

Ipecacuanha is helpful when a lot of mucus formation causes coughing, gagging, and vomiting.

Kali Carbonicum is for asthma that is worse between 2 A.M. to 4 A.M. The person is usually chilly. Sitting up and leaning forward help to relieve symptoms.

Lachesis is for a feeling of constriction in the throat and the chest. Symptoms are better with fresh air. The person cannot stand any touching or pressure on the throat or the chest and tends to feel warm.

Medorrhinum is for chronic asthma, where the person is prone to reoccurring respiratory tract infections, is usually very warm, and craves citrus fruit, especially oranges.

Natrum Sulphuricum is for asthma that comes on or is worse in cold, damp weather. Symptoms are often worse from 4 A.M. to 5 A.M.

Nux Vomica (*Strychnos nux vomica*) is for a constricted feeling in the chest and fullness in the stomach or stomach upset. Asthma symptoms are often worse upon awakening in the morning. Overindulging in food, especially alcohol, spicy foods, or sweets, can bring on symptoms. The person feels chilly and irritable.

Pulsatilla (*Pulsatilla pratensis*) is for asthma symptoms that are worse in the evening; in hot, stuffy rooms; or after eating fatty foods. The person often coughs up yellowish mucus, which may also cause gagging. The person desires fresh air and to be comforted by someone.

Acupressure

Acupressure is highly effective at increasing lung capacity and relaxing the muscles of the airways. Massage these points daily for best results. For more information about pressure points and administering treatment, see pages 668–675.

- Lung 1, 7, and 9 relieve congestion and coughing due to asthma.
- Conception Vessel 17 relieves tension in the chest.

Bodywork

Massage

A back massage will relax your bronchial muscles. A professional treatment is always nice, but you can ask a loved one to rub your back, if you like. And children enjoy receiving back massages from their parents, especially just before they go to bed.

To break up congestion, get a cupping massage on your back or chest.

Any kind of massage, especially with a calming essential oil, will dispel stress and anxiety.

Other Bodywork Recommendations

Osteopathic, acupuncture, and chiropractic treatments are useful for long-term treatment. Craniosacral therapy should also be highly considered, especially for children.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Massage the points that correspond to the lungs, the diaphragm, and the adrenal glands.

Hydrotherapy

Hot baths and saunas are relaxing ways to sweat out toxins and mucus. Do not take a sauna if you have hypertensive cardiovascular disease.

Aromatherapy

Test separate oils for an allergic response before using any in a combination.

- Many oils open airways and loosen congestion. Try eucalyptus, lavender, tea tree, or a combination of these in a steam inhalation or a bath.
- Frankincense encourages deep, relaxed breathing. Do not use frankincense in a steam, as it can inflame the mucus membranes.
- Mix lavender oil in a base, and rub it directly on your chest to ease breathing and loosen congestion.

Stress Reduction

Anxiety can trigger an asthma attack, so keeping stress levels down is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Children in particular often feel helpless and fearful as a result of asthma; teaching them to manage stress can help them live normal lives that are not dictated by their disease.

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Yoga and deep breathing will help train asthma sufferers to take deep, regular, and calm breaths.

EEG biofeedback can teach you to control your brainwaves, and children, who love working with computers and machinery, respond especially well to this therapy.

Bach Flower Remedies

Consult the chart on pages 648–650 to find the right flower remedy for your particular condition. Once you've found the right remedy, place 10 drops of it under your tongue. Hold them in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Take Rescue Remedy if you feel a crisis coming on. It is in no way, however, adequate treatment for a full-blown asthma attack.

Other Recommendations

- Mild to moderate exercise will increase your ability to take in oxygen, so get in a daily walk or other activity. Cold air can trigger an attack, though, so either wear a mask over your face and mouth during the cold months or exercise indoors.
- Perform deep breathing exercises every day.
- Use a HEPA (high energy particulate air) filter to clean the air in your room and home.
- Have the air vents in your house professionally cleaned each year.
- Wash all bedding in hot water one to two times weekly to remove dust and dust mites, which can trigger asthma. Use allergy-proof coverings for the bed mattress, the pillow covers, and the box spring.
- Vacuum twice weekly with a HEPA filter vacuum. Consider removing carpets and rugs, especially in the bedroom, and replace with nontoxic wooden or laminate flooring.
- Avoid all sources of smoke.

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Athlete's Foot

Athlete's foot, also known as tinea pedis, is a persistent and annoying fungal infection of the foot. It commonly occurs between the toes and the toenails but can also occur on other areas of the foot. The skin between the toes can appear red, cracked, and scaly. Sores and blisters can form on the soles of the feet and between the toes. The infected areas may burn or itch.

Moisture and warmth provide an environment for this fungus to thrive. Public or private showers, locker rooms, gym floors, and hotel bathrooms are common places for a child to contract this fungus. People with sweaty feet are more susceptible to getting athlete's foot. Some have a natural resistance to athlete's foot, while others must be more careful with hygiene. Changing into clean socks reduces the risk of reinfection.

We find that in many cases of chronic athlete's foot, there is an underlying systemic problem with candidiasis. For more effective therapy in these cases, it is important to have a systemic treatment to eradicate the fungus. See the Candidiasis section for detailed information.

Most cases of athlete's foot can be treated at home. However, complications can arise when a bacterial infection sets in, along with the existing fungal infection. If your athlete's foot does not improve with natural treatment or gets worse, see a doctor for evaluation.

SYMPTOMS

- Burning, itching, and cracking between the toes and on other places of the foot
- Patches of dry skin
- Yellowish-brown toenails

ROOT CAUSES

- Prolonged or frequent use of antibiotics or corticosteroids, leading to a depletion of good bacteria that normally keep fungus in check
- Poor digestion and elimination
- Depressed immune system (e.g., diabetes)
- A high-sugar diet
- Poor hygiene (feet in a damp environment)

Testing Techniques

The following tests help assess possible metabolic reasons for candidiasis:

Candida levels—stool, blood (antibodies), or urine (yeast metabolites)

Intestinal permeability—urine test

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

For high-density nutrition and immune support, base your meals around fresh vegetables, whole grains, and quality sources of lean protein, such as beans, lentils, fish, and organic poultry.

For severe toenail fungal infections, you can try the following home therapy. Make sure the nails are trimmed as short as possible. Please note that this therapy cannot be used if you have cuts or openings in the skin.

1. In a bucket, dilute 1 cup of bleach in 10 cups of water.
2. Dip the affected foot in the bucket for five seconds. Remove and towel dry.
3. Repeat this procedure every other day for four weeks. Make a new mixture each time.

You should notice that the skin dries out and flakes off. This is normal. You can apply tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) oil and calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) between treatments for better results.

To replace friendly bacteria, eat unsweetened yogurt daily. Make sure the brand you're using has live yogurt cultures. Sauerkraut and miso are other examples of foods that contain friendly bacteria.

Vegetable and green drinks will improve your resistance.

Drink 8 glasses of pure water a day to help flush out yeast toxins.

Consume 1 to 2 tablespoons of ground flaxseeds daily. Flaxseeds have antifungal properties.

Food to Avoid

Fungus feeds on sugar and yeast, so reduce or eliminate obvious sugars in the diet, such as refined foods, which are likely to be loaded with sugars.

Avoid or reduce the use of fruits and fruit juices during the initial phase (first month) of treatment. It is especially important to avoid these foods between meals.

Detoxification

Consume foods such as garlic, onions, chlorella, spirulina, wheatgrass, and others known to support detoxification.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Athlete's Foot

Super Prescription #1 Tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) oil

Apply tea tree oil liquid directly to the fungal infection. For toenail fungus, trim the nails, wash the feet with soap (tea tree oil soap is a good choice), and apply as far under the nail as possible. Repeat daily for six to eight weeks or until the infection is cleared.

Super Prescription #2 Oregano oil (*Origanum vulgare*)

Take a 500 mg capsule or the liquid form (as directed on the container) orally, three times daily with meals. The tincture variety can also be applied topically. Oregano oil (*Origanum vulgare*) has a powerful antifungal effect, internally and externally.

Super Prescription #3 Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

Take 500 to 1,000 mg of garlic twice daily. Garlic fights fungal infections and also boosts immune strength.

Super Prescription #4 Grapefruit seed extract

Take 200 mg two to three times daily. Practitioners rely on this herb for its antifungal properties.

Super Prescription #5 Caprylic acid

Take 1,000 mg three times daily. This type of fatty acid has been shown in studies to have antifungal properties.

Super Prescription #6 Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*) and goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*)

Take 500 mg or 2 to 4 ml of tincture three times daily. Both herbs enhance immune function. Echinacea has been shown to have antifungal effects.

Super Prescription #7 Probiotic

Take a product containing 4 billion active organisms, twice daily, thirty minutes after a meal. It supplies friendly bacteria such as *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *bifidus*, which fight fungus and prevent its overgrowth.

General Recommendations

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) tincture or gel can be applied to the affected area in-between treatments of tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) oil. This herb has an antiseptic effect and promotes skin healing.

Thuja (*Thuja occidentalis*) oil has potent antifungal effects. Apply 2 drops to the affected area twice daily.

Pau d'arco (*Tabebuia avellanedae*) has strong antibacterial and antifungal properties. Drink several cups every day.

Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*), Oregon grape (*Berberis aquifolium*), and rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) all have antifungal properties. Take as part of a candida formula.

A high-potency multivitamin provides the many nutrients needed to support immune function. Take as directed on the container.

Vitamin C is used to enhance immune function. Take 1,000 mg two to three times daily.

One double-blind study reported in the *Australian Journal of Dermatology* looked at the effect of tea tree oil on people with a diagnosis of athlete's foot (tinea pedis). Patients applied the solution twice daily to affected areas for 4 weeks and were reviewed after 2 and 4 weeks of treatment. Fungal cure was assessed by a culture of the skin and was found to be 64 percent in those applying a 50 percent tea tree oil, compared to 31 percent in the placebo group.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms in this section. Take a 6x, 12x, 6C, 12C, or 30C potency twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive improvements. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Graphites is helpful when there is cracked skin that oozes a thick, yellow fluid.

Silica (*Silicea*) is a good choice when there is profuse foot sweating and an offensive smell that excoriates feet.

Sulphur is the best choice for chronic athlete's foot when there is intense itching and burning of feet.

Thuja (*Thuja occidentalis*) is used when you have long-standing fungal infections of the skin that do not respond to other remedies.

Other Recommendations

- Expose your feet to the open air. Wear sandals or porous slippers around the home or outside (if the climate permits).

- Use cotton socks. If your feet perspire a lot, change socks twice daily.
- Wear waterproof slippers or sandals in locker rooms and showers.
- Make sure your feet are washed with soap daily.

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is defined as age-inappropriate impulsiveness, lack of concentration, and sometimes-excessive physical activity. This condition is associated with learning difficulties and a lack of social skills. Because there is no laboratory or physical test that diagnoses ADHD, its diagnosis is based on a clinical history of symptoms and behavior. Since it is a subjective diagnosis, it brings up controversy as to whether the behavior is actually normal in many cases, especially for younger boys. There are three subtypes of ADHD, one of which mainly involves an attention problem and not a hyperactivity issue. Between 30 and 40 percent of children with ADHD have learning disabilities, although in many cases these children are quite bright. ADHD often goes undiagnosed, if not caught at an early age, and it affects many adults who may not be aware of their condition.

Many parents instinctively believe that the problem is connected to their children's diet. They know that children can respond negatively to sugar or other foods, and they wonder if their child is simply suffering from an extreme version of this reaction. In most cases, these parents are absolutely correct. In the last few decades, sugars, preservatives, and colorings have been added to our food at an increasing rate. Too many children consume nothing but convenience foods, like hot dogs, fried chicken fingers, and highly sweetened fruit drinks and sodas. Since children's small bodies are especially vulnerable to additives in these foods, it is not surprising that many of them have a toxic response. For some, the response takes the form of traditional allergies—say, a runny nose or hives. For others, however, the poisons surface as extreme behavior problems.

Unfortunately, Western doctors have been trained to discount the importance of diet in hyperactive kids. Instead of nutritional therapy, they will often suggest medication to suppress the symptoms of ADHD: it is estimated that more than two million children take drugs like Ritalin on a daily basis. While medications may be necessary in a few cases, parents should cultivate a healthy wariness of giving them to their children. The long-term effects of ADHD medications are not yet well known, and there are signs that the drugs can retard growth and lead to substance abuse or emotional problems later in life. Teens who take Ritalin may be tempted to mix it with alcohol, marijuana, or other recreational drugs, creating a dangerous brew with unknown consequences. And as with many conventional prescription drugs, the most compelling argument against ADHD drugs is that they fail to address the cause of the problem. Without the underlying cause being treated, children may have to take Ritalin well into their twenties.

There are many underlying reasons why a child may have attention or behavior problems. Studies show that frequent ear infections and the regular use of antibiotics, as well as premature birth and family history, are associated with a greater likelihood

of developing this disorder. Holistically speaking, causative factors include food additives and food allergies, environmental allergens, and heavy metal toxicity (such as lead, mercury, and aluminum). A poorly functioning digestive system and increased intestinal permeability lead to an increase in metabolic toxins that disrupt brain chemistry. Nutritional deficiencies of essential fatty acids, B vitamins, magnesium and other minerals, and iron appear to play a role. Finally, do not underestimate the role of emotional stress and its relationship to ADHD. The breakdown of the family unit in our culture places abnormal stresses on a child, which can result in attention and behavior changes.

If your child has ADHD, try the home-care suggestions here for at least a month and optimally for three months. Some children settle down to a normal level of activity after just a few days without troublesome foods; others will need three or four weeks before the toxins are out of their bodies. Buying and preparing natural foods can be a challenge for busy parents, but your perseverance will be rewarded with a healthier child and a stronger family. Nutritional supplements can work extremely well for most children to correct underlying biochemical imbalances.

SYMPTOMS

- Inability to sit still
- Mood swings
- Restlessness
- Short attention span
- Inability to concentrate
- Frequent tantrums
- Poor coordination and motor skills
- Impaired memory
- Failure to complete age-appropriate tasks
- Impulsiveness
- Speech or learning disorders

ROOT CAUSES

- A diet that's high in sugar and additives
- Food allergies/sensitivities
- Hypoglycemia
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Poor digestion and absorption
- Heavy metal poisoning
- Emotional stresses

Testing Techniques

The following tests can give you an assessment of possible metabolic reasons for ADHD:

- Food allergy/sensitivity testing—blood, electrodermal testing (see the Food Allergies section for more details)
- Vitamin and mineral analysis—blood
- Candida and flora balance—stool analysis
- Toxic metals—hair or urine analysis
- Intestinal permeability—urine
- Blood-sugar levels—fasting blood test
- Essential fatty-acid levels—fasting blood test
- Amino acid levels—urine or fasting blood test

TREATMENT

Diet

Nutritional therapy should be an important component of the treatment of ADHD. The strategies described here will improve behavior and promote age-appropriate concentration and stability, and they will also help keep your child free of many other diet-related disorders. The same general recommendations hold true for adults with this condition.

Recommended Food

The best way to ensure that your child eats an additive-free diet is to buy only fresh foods and prepare them yourself. You don't need to prepare special meals for your child; instead, feed your entire family a whole-foods diet. Younger children will usually eat what everyone else is eating, especially if you can reserve a small portion for them before you season the meal to the taste of adult palates.

Healthful Bean Dip

Let your kids dip to their hearts' content.

Ingredients

Black beans, cooked

Juice of 1 lime

1 teaspoon cumin

1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves

1/2 clove of minced garlic (optional)

Combine the previous ingredients (leave out the garlic, if you like) in a food processor, and whirl until the consistency is smooth. For a fancy presentation and added nutrition, garnish with chopped tomato.

B vitamins are healing to stressed-out nerves. Good sources include brown rice, brewer's yeast (which you can add to smoothies and yogurt), and leafy green vegetables.

Many children with ADHD suffer from an excess of copper or lead. Food that's high in vitamin C will encourage the release of these toxins from the body, so feed your child citrus fruits for dessert.

Iron deficiency is linked to short attention spans and memory problems. If a blood test finds an iron deficiency, a daily tablespoon of unsulfured blackstrap molasses is a naturally sweet way to give your child an adequate amount of this mineral.

Tryptophan encourages the production of serotonin, a chemical that produces a sense of calm. Incorporate soy products, live unsweetened yogurt, whole grains, and organic turkey and chicken into meals and snacks. If your child has trouble sleeping, be sure to include some of these foods at dinner, and try a snack of turkey or chicken on whole-grain crackers before bedtime.

Anyone with food sensitivities should drink lots of clean water. Children over ten years of age should have a glass every two waking hours; children ten and under should drink half this amount.

Make sure to keep blood-sugar levels balanced by avoiding simple sugars and refined carbohydrates and providing adequate protein with meals (nuts, legumes, lean poultry, and fish). Also, as much as possible include vegetables with meals, as they slow down blood sugar release. Eating smaller, more frequent meals and snacks (every two to three hours) works well. Make sure that breakfast is not skipped, as it sets the biochemical balance for the rest of the day.

Regularly serve brain-healthy foods that are rich in essential fatty acids. Examples include fish (trout, salmon, halibut), nuts (walnuts, almonds), and ground flaxseeds (1 to 2 teaspoons for children and 1 to 2 tablespoons for adults).

Food to Avoid

If your child suffers from ADHD, it's likely that he or she is allergic to at least one food product, if not several. Read the Food Allergies section in this book, and follow

the elimination diet and testing techniques to determine which foods may be causing behavior problems. You may already suspect that a certain food is a trigger for your child, and you should target that product right away. You should also closely examine your child's consumption of the following, all of which are common allergens: wheat, dairy, corn, chocolate, peanuts, citrus, soy, food coloring, and preservatives.

- Do not feed your child anything with artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives. This means you'll have to eliminate fast food, as well as all junk and processed food. If you must buy canned or frozen products, read the labels carefully. Even items advertised as "all natural" may contain small amounts of additives.
- Sugar is famous for making children hyper, and, in fact, excess sucrose often leads to hypoglycemia, a factor in ADHD. Obviously, candy, sodas, and sweets are out of the question, but so are most store-bought fruit juices, which usually contain added sugar, and products made with white flour. If your child has been eating large quantities of refined sugar, you may see a dramatic difference in his or her behavior within just a few days of eliminating it.

Detoxification

Teenagers may want to try a short juice fast to cleanse their bodies of toxins and prepare themselves for their new diets. Don't force a teen to fast, however, as you may set the stage for a future eating disorder. Never put a child on a fasting program.

For preadolescent children and teens who don't want to go without solid food, try to increase the amount of raw fruits and vegetables in the diet, so that your child is eating 50 to 75 percent raw foods for several days. This will help move toxins through the body at an accelerated rate. Kids who usually balk at vegetable dishes are often happy to eat a platter of raw crudité's served with yogurt or a homemade bean dip.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—ADHD

Super Prescription #1 Essential fatty acids

Take a product that contains a daily dosage of 500 to 1,000 mg of DHA. Also, take 100 mg of GLA, which is found in evening primrose oil, black currant, or borage oil. Products are available that have a combination of these essential fatty acids.

Super Prescription #2 Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms. Take a 6x, 12x, 6C, or 30C potency twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive improvements. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Super Prescription #3 Phosphatidylserine

Take 300 to 500 mg daily for three months. A maintenance dosage of 100 to 300 mg may be effective for some kids and adults. Phosphatidylserine is a naturally occurring substance found in high concentrations in brain cells; it helps brain cells function properly.

Super Prescription #4 Calcium and magnesium complex

Take a combination of these two minerals, at a dosage of 500 mg of calcium and 250 mg of magnesium twice daily. These two minerals relax the nervous system.

Super Prescription #5 Probiotic

Take a probiotic to maintain good bacteria levels in the digestive tract. Take as directed on the container.

A study involving 21 cases of youths ages 4 to 19 with ADHD found that daily supplementation of phosphatidylserine at dosages between 200 and 300 mg daily for 4 months benefited greater than 90 percent of cases. Attention and learning were the symptoms most improved.

A study in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* confirmed that vitamin-mineral supplementation modestly raises the nonverbal intelligence of some groups of schoolchildren.

Super Prescription #6 Vitamin B6

Give 100 mg daily for children five years or older. B6 is involved in the formation of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that has a calming effect. High doses of this vitamin are best used under the guidance of a nutrition-oriented doctor, along with a B-complex for balance.

Super Prescription #7 High-potency multivitamin

Take as directed on the container. It provides a base of nutrients required for brain function.

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Schoenthaler, S. J., I. D. Bier, K. Young, D. Nichols, and S. Janssens. 2000. The effect of vitamin-mineral supplementation on the intelligence of American schoolchildren: A randomized, double-blind placebo-controlled trial. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* 6(1):19–29.

General Recommendations

Western Herbal

Ginkgo biloba brings oxygen and nutrients to the brain. Look for a product standardized to 24 percent flavone glycosides. People who are 16 and older should take 60 to 120 mg twice a day. Give 30 to 60 mg twice a day to children ages 10 through 15. Those under 10 should be given 15 to 30 mg twice daily.

GABA is an amino acid that has a calming effect on the mind. Give 250 mg two to three times daily between meals.

Zinc deficiency can contribute to ADHD symptoms. Children ages 2 and older should get a daily total of 10 to 15 mg, along with 2 mg of copper.

B-complex vitamins supply all the B vitamins involved with brain function. Give a 50 mg B-complex daily.

Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*) can be effective in calming children with ADHD. Those 16 years of age and older should take 100 to 200 mg twice a day. Children ages 10 through 15 should take 50 to 100 mg twice daily. Children under 10 should be given 25 to 50 mg twice daily.

If your child is depressed, Saint-John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) may help. Children ages 10 through 15 should take 50 to 150 mg twice a day. Children under 10 should take 25 to 75 mg twice a day. Adolescents and young adults who are 16 and older can take 100 to 300 mg twice a day.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms. Take a 6x, 12x, 6C, or 30C potency twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive results. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Anacardium Orientale is for children who tend to be cruel to animals and people. There is low self-esteem, and they are antisocial and absentminded. They often curse and swear.

Hyoscyamus Niger is for children who are very impulsive and violent, especially toward younger siblings. They are very talkative and sexually precocious.

Medorrhinum is for children who have major temper tantrums and are violent

toward other kids. They have a hard time concentrating, are very warm, and crave oranges and ice.

Stramonium is for children who have many fears, such as of the dark or of animals. They have fits of anger and rage and destroy things. Night terrors are common.

Sulphur is for children who are curious, stubborn, and hyperactive. They are very warm, sweat easily, have a great thirst for cold drinks, and crave spicy foods.

Tarentula Hispanica is for children who are extremely hurried and restless. They are mischievous, destructive, and impulsive. They love music and dancing.

Tuberculinum is for children who are very stubborn, demanding, and impatient and get bored easily. They often have violent tempers and may hit other people and animals. They crave milk and smoked meats and are prone to respiratory infections.

Acupressure

Even young children can be taught acupressure techniques to practice when they feel upset. In fact, by teaching them to identify disquieting emotions and to take time out for a calming acupressure session, you'll give them a valuable life skill. For information about pressure points and administering treatment, see pages 668–675.

- Lung 1 releases tension and helps restore normal, deep breathing.
- If your child's hyperactivity seems to be triggered by frustration, teach him or her to press Conception Vessel 12 while slowly repeating the point's descriptive name, Center of Power.

Bodywork

Massage

Young children—if you can persuade them to remain still long enough—enjoy soothing massages from their parents. Teenagers may prefer to have an appointment with a massage therapist; you can also show them the self-care techniques listed in the Bodywork chapter of this book.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the areas corresponding to the diaphragm and the solar plexus to encourage a sense of peace and stillness.

Other Bodywork Recommendations

Craniosacral therapy by a qualified practitioner is highly recommended to balance out the nervous system for people with ADHD.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy makes a relaxing complement to the other treatments suggested here. Use chamomile, lavender, or sandalwood to encourage serenity; try them in a bath or a massage, or add a few drops to diffuser and let the pleasing scent waft through an entire room. These applications are especially helpful just before bedtime.

Stress Reduction

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Although biofeedback may seem like the stress-reduction technique that's least likely to work for children, it is actually highly effective for kids with ADHD, many

of whom enjoy the interaction with machines and computers. Of all the biofeedback techniques, EEG seems to work best for hyperactivity.

Consider signing up for a parent-and-child yoga class. Children usually have fun making the animal poses, and you'll both enjoy the lifelong health benefits of this ancient discipline.

Bach Flower Remedies

Select the appropriate remedy and place 5 drops of the liquid under your child's tongue. For children over fifteen, you can use 10 drops. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Rescue Remedy will help soothe a child in an emotional crisis.

Impatiens is for children who move, talk, and think quickly and who are angered by people who don't keep up with them.

Children who are plagued by recurring destructive impulses should take Cherry Plum.

Crab Apple will help children who are ashamed of their hyperactive behavior.

Other Recommendations

- Encourage your child to play or exercise outside in the fresh air. Limit exposure to sedentary, passive activities, like watching television or playing video games.
- Consider buying an air filter to purify your household of environmental allergens.
- Work with a counselor to help your child with behavior modification and learning styles. Every child is different and requires an individualized approach. Emotional counseling may be necessary for healing, especially in cases of broken families or abuse.

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Back Pain

If you're an American, you have an 80 percent chance of experiencing back pain at some point in your adult life. Back pain is one of the most common reasons for emergency room visits; in fact, it is the fourth most common ailment in our country.

A few years ago, it was generally believed that back pain was caused by the degeneration of one or more discs, the "shock absorbers" of the spine. This results in an impingement and possible damage to the nerves that exit the spinal column. Today we know that almost all adults over forty have some disc deterioration; moreover, many people with degenerated discs don't feel any pain at all. While disc problems can be one cause of back pain, a more common cause is strained muscles. Stress, bad posture, and long periods of inactivity all weaken the back, making it vulnerable to pain from injury or exercise. When the back is very weak, even minor actions like twisting or coughing can trigger severe pain. Chronic back pain is frequently caused

by muscular imbalance in the back, poor flexibility, spinal misalignment, and ligament or tendon injuries.

Although many cases of back pain have their roots in the muscles, other conditions can cause or contribute to pain. Pregnancy and obesity, which place stress on the muscles, are two common factors, as are arthritis, osteoporosis, and disorders of the kidney, the bladder, the pelvis, and the prostate. Constipation and other digestive disorders can also refer pain to the back area.

Proper lifting techniques are very important to prevent strain and injury of the back. This is especially true for people who have had previous back injuries.

Back pain does not automatically mean surgery and a lifetime of agony. It is now considered highly preventable and treatable with exercise, stretching, bodywork, supplements, and stress management. However, if you have pain that lasts for several weeks or extremely acute pain, contact your doctor so that he or she can check for underlying disorders that may be causing your pain. For example, certain kinds of back pain can signal a stroke, osteoporosis, or other serious medical conditions like cancer. If the pain radiates down your leg or is accompanied by numbness or loss of muscular, bowel, or bladder control, get medical help immediately.

SYMPTOMS

- Any kind of pain—sharp, lancing, dull, aching, gradual, sudden—usually in the lower or middle back
- Pain can radiate to the hips or the neck

ROOT CAUSES

- Inactivity, especially when punctuated by sudden exercise
- Poor posture and spinal misalignment
- Muscle strength and flexibility imbalances
- Sleeping on a poorly made mattress
- High heels
- Obesity
- Pregnancy
- Disorders of the kidney, the bladder, the prostate, or the pelvic region
- Arthritis
- Osteoporosis
- Emotional stress
- Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Constipation
- Smoking

TREATMENT

Diet

Constipation, extra weight, and toxic build-up can aggravate back pain. Diet and detoxification therapies will help keep your body free of these stressors.

Recommended Food

Eat small, light meals. Heavy eating puts a burden on your digestive tract and weakens the back.

Constipation makes back pain worse, so eat plenty of fiber, preferably in the form of vegetables.

Testing Techniques

The following tests can give you an assessment of possible metabolic reasons for lower back pain:

- Vitamin and mineral analysis—blood or urine
- Diagnostic image of the spine

Dehydration aggravates back pain. Drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours. If you have an episode of back pain, drink a few glasses as soon as the pain starts.

Keep your bones well fed. Get protein from fish, soy products, and beans; for calcium, eat your leafy greens, sea vegetables, nuts and seeds, and tofu.

Consume foods that are rich in essential fatty acids (salmon, mackerel, almonds, walnuts, and ground flaxseeds).

Food to Avoid

Stay away from products that are high in saturated fat and sugar, especially if you are overweight. Extra pounds on the waist and the hips means a heavier load on the back.

Avoid caffeine and alcohol products, which are known to worsen inflammation.

Detoxification

A three-day juice fast will speed the removal of waste. If you're overweight and are starting a diet to reduce strain on your back, a juice fast may be a good way to break food addictions.

If you are chronically constipated, take 1 to 2 tablespoons of ground flaxseeds daily, along with 12 ounces of water.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Back Pain

Super Prescription #1 Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM)

Take 3,000 to 8,000 mg daily in divided doses. Reduce the dosage if diarrhea occurs. MSM alleviates muscle spasms and has natural anti-inflammatory effects.

Super Prescription #2 Calcium and magnesium

Twice daily, take a complex of these two minerals that contains 500 mg of calcium and 250 mg of magnesium. These minerals alleviate muscle spasms.

Super Prescription #3 Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms under Homeopathy in this section. For acute back pain, take a 30C potency four times daily. For chronic back pain, take twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive improvements. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Super Prescription #4 Bromelain

Take 500 mg three times daily between meals. Look for products standardized to 2,000 M.C.U. (milk-clotting units) per 1,000 mg or 1,200 G.D.U. (gelatin-dissolving units) per 1,000 mg. Bromelain has a natural anti-inflammatory effect. Protease enzyme products also have this benefit.

Super Prescription #5 White willow (*Salix alba*)

Take a product standardized to contain 240 mg of salicin daily or 5 ml of the tincture form three times daily. This herb reduces pain.

Super Prescription #6 Glucosamine sulfate

Take 1,500 mg daily. It's useful for back pain that is caused by osteoarthritis.

Super Prescription #7 Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*) cream

Apply the cream to the affected area two to four times daily for symptomatic relief. Choose a cream standardized to 0.025 to 0.075 percent capsaicin. Capsaicin depletes the nerves of substance P, a neurotransmitter that transmits pain messages.

General Recommendations

Vitamin C reduces inflammation and strengthens connective tissue. Take 1,000 mg three times daily.

Pine bark or grape seed extract reduces inflammation. Take 100 mg three times daily.

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is a popular choice for relief of both inflammation and pain. Pour boiling water over the grated root and drink the tea, or try adding ginger fresh to your meals. If you want something stronger, take 1 to 2 grams of dried powder in capsule form, two or three times daily, or use 1 to 2 ml of a tincture three times daily.

Boswellia (*Boswellia serrata*): Take 1,200 to 1,500 mg of a standardized extract containing 60 to 65 percent boswellic acids two to three times daily.

DMSO (dimethyl sulfoxide) is a topical pain-relieving substance. Work with your doctor to use DMSO.

Many excellent herbs reduce inflammation. Devil's claw root (*Harpagophytum procumbens*), alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), and yucca root (*Yucca schidigera*) capsules are among the best. Give these herbs at least two months to take effect. Recommended dosages are as follows:

Devil's claw should not be used if you have a history of gallstones, heartburn, or ulcers. Take 1,500 to 2,500 mg of the standardized powdered herb in capsule or tablet form daily, or use 1 to 2 ml of a tincture three times a day.

Arnica (*Arnica montana*) oil reduces pain and spasm. Rub this oil over the affected area twice daily.

Saint-John's-wort oil (*Hypericum oil*) reduces nerve pain. Rub over the affected area twice daily.

D-L phenylalanine is an amino acid used to reduce pain. Take 500 mg three times daily on an empty stomach.

Vitamins B1, B6, and B12 have been shown to reduce the amount of medication needed for back pain. Take 50 mg of B1 and B6 and 400 mcg of B12 three times daily. Also, when using these individual B vitamins long term, make sure to also supplement a 50 mg B-complex for a balance of all the B vitamins.

Protease enzymes reduce inflammation. Take 1 to 2 capsules twice daily between meals or as directed on the container.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms in this section. For acute back pain, take a 30C potency four times daily. For chronic back pain, take twice daily for two

weeks to see if there are any positive improvements. After you notice results, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Aesculus is for lower back or sacral pain that is worse when you are sitting. The pain often radiates into the right hip.

Arnica (*Arnica montana*) is for an injury that leaves your back feeling bruised and sore and is helpful if you have difficulty moving around.

Bryonia (*Bryonia alba*) is for lower back pain and stiffness that feel worse with any movement and in cold, dry weather, and that feels better when the area is rubbed.

Calcarea Carbonica is for chronic lower back pain and weakness in overweight individuals who also are chilly. Symptoms are worse in the cold and in dampness.

Cimicifuga Racemosa is for a stiff and aching neck and back. Muscles feel bruised, but feel better with warmth. Also, it is used for menstrual cramps with lower back pain radiating to the thighs.

Ignatia (*Ignatia amara*) is for back spasms and cramping as the result of emotional stress.

Magnesia Phosphorica is for a muscle spasm in the back that feels better from warmth.

Nux Vomica (*Strychnos nux vomica*) is for back spasms and cramping, especially in the lower back. The person may also have constipation and feel chilly and irritable. The symptoms are worse from cold and feel better with warmth.

Rhus Toxicodendron is for a stiff lower back that is worse in the cold and the damp and feels better with movement. It is specific for a sprained back muscle or ligaments.

Ruta Graveolens is for pain near the neck or for lower back pain. The area of the injury feels lame, and the pain is worse at night. This remedy is useful for back sprains and strains.

Acupressure

Acupressure relieves back pain by stimulating blood flow, unblocking energy, and strengthening the internal organs. Some of the following points may be quite tender; if so, use a very light, continuous touch, instead of heavy pressure. In cases of severe pain or true disc damage, always consult a doctor before working these points. For more information about pressure points and administering treatment, see pages 668–675.

- For lower back pain, work Bladder 25, 31, and 40.
- Bladder 20 is the point for pain in the middle back.
- Upper back pain can be eased by using Gallbladder 20 and Governing Vessel 14.
- For back pain accompanied or caused by tension, use Bladder 48.
- If you have arthritis as well as back pain, Bladder 54 is a good choice.

Bodywork

Complementary therapy for back pain should usually include some kind of bodywork. You may want to try several of the following methods until you find the combination that works best for you. For a thorough evaluation, check with an osteopathic doctor, a naturopathic doctor, a chiropractor, or a medical doctor. Then a course of treatment can be recommended.

Massage

Most people know instinctively that massage will relieve their back pain and tension, but many are held back by their inability to travel to a massage therapist or by fear of making the pain worse. Massage is so effective, it's worth taking extra steps to overcome any obstacles to treatment. Check around to find a licensed, experienced professional who knows how to work with different kinds of back pain. He or she may also be willing to come to your house if you're immobilized.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the spine, the hips, and the tailbone area, all of which exist at the base of the heel.

Hydrotherapy

Hot water therapies are popular ways to treat backache and release stress. Although their relief is usually temporary, they feel wonderfully soothing and can get you mobile enough to receive other therapies.

To release spasms and tension, soak in a warm bath (90 to 100 degrees F). For an extra soothing effect, add any of the essential oils recommended under Aromatherapy in this section, or try a little mustard or ginger.

A hot water bottle is an old-fashioned remedy for back spasms, and it still works.

Constitutional hydrotherapy is helpful. See the Hydrotherapy section for directions.

Other Bodywork Recommendations

For chronic or severe pain, a visit to a chiropractor or an osteopath is highly recommended. He or she will correct postural problems and manipulate your spine so that your body is balanced and aligned.

Pay attention to your posture. Stand up straight, with your pelvis tucked in. When seated, keep your back erect and your feet flat on the floor. If you have serious back problems, try postural methods such as Hellerwork or the Alexander technique, which seek to retrain the body so that it moves naturally, correctly, and painlessly. Contact a specialist for instruction.

Throw out your high heels. Most footwear companies now make beautiful shoes that aren't hard on your feet and back.

If you feel stiffness and pain in the middle of the night and in the morning, but not during the rest of the day, your mattress may be the culprit. Find one that's firm and

The following exercise will often relieve lower back pain:

1. Take your shoes off and stand against a wall so that your heels touch it.
 2. Now adjust your posture so that your buttocks and shoulders also touch the wall.
 3. Imagine that you are straightening the curvature of your spine, and try to make your entire back press flat against the wall. Take the stretch as far as you comfortably can, and hold it for twenty to thirty seconds.
-

supportive. In addition, you should sleep on your side, with your knees bent. Placing a pillow between your knees may make you more comfortable.

Unless your health-care provider recommends this, it is best to avoid bed rest with a back injury. Studies show that it often slows down recovery.

Aromatherapy

- A massage with ginger, black pepper, or peppermint oils will help warm up muscles and dissolve cramps.
- To help relieve stress, try some of the many oils that have relaxing properties. Add geranium, jasmine, or lavender to a hot bath, or if you suffer from chronic tension, use a diffuser or a candle to release the scent throughout a room for long periods of time (just make sure you don't leave the flame unattended).
- If you tend to breathe shallowly in a crisis, use frankincense to encourage deep, relaxing breaths. Hold the vial directly under your nose and inhale.

Stress Reduction

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Many people with back problems find that yoga eases their pain. Yoga releases emotional stress, as well as the physical tension that often deposits itself in the back; it also strengthens the spine and improves all-over flexibility. If you have or have had severe pain, take a class with an instructor who knows how to handle your condition.

If you have severe or chronic back pain, look into biofeedback. EMG biofeedback will help you identify just when you tense up your back muscles and will show you how to release them.

Many of the techniques mentioned throughout this section, such as massage, hot baths, and herbal treatments, treat stress as well as pain. Keep them in mind, and employ the ones you like best on a regular basis.

Bach Flower Remedies

Consult the chart on pages 648–650 to find the appropriate flower remedy for your individual personality. Following are some suggestions. Once you've selected the remedy that's right for you, place 10 drops of it under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

If you suffer from recurring attacks of pain, keep some Rescue Remedy on hand. Try taking it when you feel a strong emotional or physical crisis coming on, as it may prevent your back from seizing up.

Beech is for hard-driving perfectionists who are highly critical of others.

If you are a quick, efficient thinker who is irritated by slower people, Impatiens will help. It is especially effective when a deadline or a high-pressure event draws near.

If you deny yourself pleasures because of your single-minded pursuit of a goal, take Rock Water.

Other Recommendations

Regular exercise is the best way to prevent and treat back pain. While acute attacks may keep you in bed for a day or two, you should plan to get moving again as soon as possible. Gentle, nonjarring exercises such as walking, swimming, and cycling (with your back straight), are excellent choices. Whatever you do, do it consistently. Inactivity on the weekdays, punctuated by rigorous workouts on Saturday or Sunday, will only set your back up for injury.

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Bad Breath (Halitosis)

If you've ever eaten garlic or onions—or stood next to someone who has—you know that certain foods reliably produce a sour or strong odor on the breath. These foods, usually ones that are pungent or spicy, contain foul-smelling sulfur compounds that are released not just into the mouth but into the bloodstream and the lungs as well. Even if you brush and gargle, you'll continue to exhale the sulfur with every breath until the food is fully metabolized, a process that can take up to twenty-four hours. This kind of food-induced bad breath can sometimes be socially troubling (especially if your companions have not eaten the same sulfur-producing food that you have), but it is in no way a health threat. If you enjoy eating spicy, strong food, complementary medicine offers some effective ways to mask the temporarily offensive result.

Persistent bad breath, on the other hand, is medically known as halitosis and is a symptom of an underlying problem. Many cases are warning signs of insufficient oral hygiene. If you do not clean your teeth after eating, bacteria will feed on the food particles left in your mouth and emit sulfur as a digestive by-product. Eventually, these bacteria will cause tooth decay and gum disease, disorders that, in turn, lead to even worse-smelling breath.

If regular brushing and flossing don't improve chronic bad breath, it's quite possible that you are suffering from a toxic body system. An improper diet and a poorly functioning digestive system can lead to the accumulation of toxins, which is reflected in bad breath. If you are constipated (as are many people who follow poor diets) and cannot eliminate the poisons via your bowels, the body may try to expel some of them every time you breathe out. A cleansing program, followed by dietary changes, should help get rid of the toxins and, with them, the cause of bad breath.

Also, undetected infections of the throat such as tonsillitis, as well as sinusitis can be the underlying cause of foul breath. These conditions may be the result of food or environmental allergens causing mucus formation and postnasal drip. Along these lines are chronic root canal infections, as well as teeth and mercury fillings that are decaying. The repeated use of antibiotics can wipe out the good flora in your mouth, which leads to the overgrowth of bad bacteria that cause bad breath.

Smoking is another obvious method of poisoning your body, and the best way to clear up the breath it causes is to give up the habit.

In rare cases, halitosis is a symptom of a serious disease. If the suggestions listed here don't improve your breath, consult a holistic dentist first and then a doctor, if

necessary. It is possible that you have a dental disorder or even a disease of the kidneys or the liver. Take chronic bad breath seriously, but do exercise some common sense. Our society places an unnaturally high priority on eliminating body odors, and many dentists have noted that otherwise healthy patients can become convinced their breath is offensive, when in fact it is perfectly normal. If your close friends and health professionals assure you that your breath is fine, it's probably wisest to trust them.

SYMPTOMS

- Unpleasant odor on the breath

ROOT CAUSES

- Pungent or spicy foods (especially root canals), throat, or sinuses
- Inadequate dental hygiene
- Poor diet
- Constipation
- Smoking
- Tooth decay
- Gum disease
- Chronic infection in the mouth
- Decaying mercury fillings
- Flora imbalance in the mouth and the respiratory tract
- Liver failure
- Kidney disease
- Diabetes

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Base your meals on healthful sources of fiber. Whole grains, raw or lightly cooked fruits and vegetables, beans, and raw nuts and seeds will all improve your digestive system's ability to process food and expel toxins.

Drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours. You'll keep your digestive system regular and help eliminate poisons.

If you go to a diner or an old-fashioned restaurant, you may notice that a sprig of parsley accompanies your meal. The parsley is meant to be more than a garnish; it's a traditional breath freshener that really works. Parsley is high in chlorophyll, an agent that neutralizes odor in the bloodstream and the lungs. Other good sources of chlorophyll include green vegetables, watercress, and alfalfa. If you know you're going to eat a type of food that causes bad breath, you may want to incorporate some of these greens into your meal.

Vitamins A and C are necessary for good dental health. For vitamin A, consume green or orange vegetables like carrots, kale, squash, sweet potatoes, and spinach. Eat citrus fruits for vitamin C.

Cultured products, especially live unsweetened yogurt, will encourage healthy bacteria to grow in the intestines and will improve digestion.

Food to Avoid

- Avoid foods that take a long time to travel through the digestive system. Red meat, fried food, and processed food all linger in the system and cause both constipation and halitosis.

- Mucus slows waste matter in its passage through the intestines. Cut down on mucus-forming foods like dairy products, refined flours, chocolate, and bananas.
- Avoid foods that are high in refined sugar, which leads to tooth decay. Be especially wary of sticky treats like caramels or hard candies, which can lodge themselves between your teeth and attract oral bacteria.
- Foods that are most likely to cause temporary bad breath include garlic, onions, strong cheese, cured meats, and anchovies. If the resulting odor bothers you, limit or stop your consumption of these items.

Detoxification

To get rid of undigested food, go on a three-day juice fast. Emphasize green drinks during your fast, and go easy on juices made with sweet fruits. If you're constipated, add 1 tablespoon of ground flaxseeds to your drinks for fiber.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Bad Breath

Super Prescription #1 Chlorophyll

Take a teaspoonful of liquid chlorophyll after meals. Chlorella, alfalfa, and spirulina are also rich sources. Take as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #2 Xylitol

Use 4 to 12 grams of xylitol in natural gums, mints, toothpastes, or as a mouth rinse. This natural sweetener prevents the bacteria that cause bad breath from sticking to the mucosa of your mouth and teeth.

Super Prescription #3 Parsley

Take 5 drops of a liquid parsley extract after each meal to freshen your breath.

Super Prescription #4 Probiotic

Take a product containing at least 4 billion organisms. Mix it into water, swish it in your mouth, and swallow. It contains friendly bacteria that prevent the build-up of bacteria that cause bad breath, and it improves digestive function and elimination.

Super Prescription #5 Enzymes

Take a full-range enzyme with each meal to enhance the breakdown and the absorption of food.

Super Prescription #6 Bitter herbs

Take a digestion formula that contains bitter herbs, such as gentian, to improve overall digestive function. Take as directed on the container at beginning of each meal.

Super Prescription #7 Milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*)

If you are frequently constipated, you probably need to detoxify your liver. Cleanse it with milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*) extract. Choose a product standardized to 70 to 80 percent silymarin, and take 200 to 250 mg twice a day.

General Recommendations

Coenzyme Q10 is for people with active gum disease. Take 200 mg daily.

Cooled rosemary and peppermint tea makes a highly effective mouthwash.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms. Take a 6x, 12x, 6C, or 30C potency twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive results. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return.

Mercurius Solubilis is for offensive breath caused by tooth decay and accompanied by a yellow coating on the tongue and excessive salivation.

Nux Vomica (*Strychnos nux vomica*) is helpful if you have bad breath after drinking alcohol or have a history of constipation and/or heartburn.

Pulsatilla (*Pulsatilla pratensis*) is for sour breath caused by eating too much fatty food.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- You can reduce the frequency of constipation by strengthening your colon. Use Large Intestine 11 to achieve this goal.
- Stomach 36 tones your digestive system.

Aromatherapy

Essential oils are much more effective than commercial mouthwashes are at eliminating oral bacteria and neutralizing bad breath. To make your own mouthwash, add a few drops of peppermint or eucalyptus oil to clean water.

Other Recommendations

- Brush after every meal, and floss your teeth before you go to bed. Many people who are assiduous brushers neglect flossing, but this step is vital to keep food particles out of the spaces between the teeth.
- Avoid toothpastes that are full of chemicals and artificial sweeteners. Natural toothpaste is now available at many drugstores, as well as at health food stores. You can also make your own with baking soda and hydrogen peroxide. Just before you brush, combine the two ingredients until they form a paste with a consistency that's to your liking. You should make a fresh mixture each time you brush your teeth.
- Commercial mouthwashes are just as bad as most toothpastes. They irritate the soft tissues of the mouth and can actually encourage bacterial growth. Instead, use a homemade mouthwash of water and essential oils, as previously recommended.
- Even if you keep your teeth scrupulously clean, see your holistic dentist for regular check-ups. He or she can remove plaque and other buildup that you may not be able to reach and will also check for any early signs of decay.

Bee Stings

When a bumblebee or a honeybee attacks, it leaves its stinger and attached venom sac in the skin. In most cases, the sting creates only slight pain, swelling, and irritation. It is more of a nuisance than a concern. However, look for signs of an allergic

reaction, such as swollen eyelids or hands, difficulty breathing or wheezing, dizziness, fainting, nausea, vomiting, and the appearance of a hive-like rash. For these symptoms, go immediately to the emergency room or your doctor's office. The bee sting can be fatal in people who are allergic to its venom.

Other insects, including fire ants, paper wasps, hornets and yellow jackets, are capable of stinging, but they do not leave stingers in their victims.

Tips for Avoiding a Bee Sting

1. Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing.
2. Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants. Don't wear cologne or perfume. Avoid bananas and banana-scented toiletries.
3. Wear clean clothing and bathe daily. Sweat angers bees.
4. Cover the body as much as possible with clothing.
5. Avoid flowering plants.
6. Check for new nests during the warmer hours of the day during July, August, and September. Bees are very active then.
7. Keep outside areas clean. Social wasps thrive in places where humans discard food, so clean up picnic tables, grills, and other outdoor eating areas.
8. If a single stinging insect is flying around, remain still or lie face down on the ground. The face is the most likely place for a bee or a wasp to sting. Swinging or swatting at an insect may cause it to sting.
9. If you are attacked by several stinging insects at the same time, run to get away from them. Bees release a chemical when they sting. This alerts other bees to the intruder. More bees often follow. Go indoors. Outdoors, a shaded area is better than an open area to get away from the insects.
10. If a bee comes inside your vehicle, stop the car slowly, and open all the windows.

What to Do If Someone Is Stung

1. Have someone stay with the victim to be sure that the person does not have an allergic reaction.
2. Wash the site with soap and water.
3. The stinger can be removed by wiping a four-inch gauze pad over the area or by scraping a fingernail or a credit card over the area. Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers. It will cause more venom to go into the skin and will injure the muscle.
4. Apply ice to reduce the swelling.
5. Do not scratch the sting. This will cause the site to swell and itch more and will increase the chance of infection.
6. If the victim is having a severe allergic reaction, seek emergency medical attention.
7. Epinephrine is given by injection to stop allergic reactions.

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Consume foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids that promote skin healing and reduce inflammation, such as fish (salmon, cod, mackerel). Ground flaxseeds, avocados, and wheat germ are also recommended.

Eat green, orange, and yellow vegetables at every meal. These foods are packed with vitamins A and C, which will speed your skin's recovery from the inflammation.

Food to Avoid

Sugar worsens the inflammatory response. Stay away from refined sugar products, including cookies, cakes, sweet baked goods, and sodas, and eat naturally occurring sugars, such as those found in fruit, in moderation.

R_x Super Seven Prescriptions—Bee Stings

Please note that these therapies do not replace conventional therapy for people who are having a severe allergic reaction to a bee sting.

Super Prescription #1 Homeopathic Apis (*Apis mellifica*)

Take a 30C potency every thirty minutes to reduce swelling and pain. The stinging or burning pain, along with great swelling, is reduced with cold applications.

Super Prescription #2 Homeopathic Carboic Acid (Carbolicum Acidum)

Take a 30C potency every five minutes to reduce severe reactions to a bee sting, while waiting to get conventional therapy with an epinephrine injection.

Super Prescription #3 Homeopathic Ledum (Ledum Palustre)

Take a 30C potency every thirty minutes to reduce swelling and pain. The person has a bruising pain that feels better with cold applications.

Super Prescription #4 Vitamin C with bioflavonoids

Take 1,000 mg three times daily to reduce swelling and inflammation. *Note:* Reduce the dosage if loose stools occur.

Super Prescription #5 Super green food supplement

Take a super green food product, such as spirulina, chlorella, or a combination of greens, to reduce the inflammatory response. Take as directed on the container.

Super Prescription #6 Bach Flower Rescue Remedy

This decreases anxiety and emotional upset. Take 10 drops four times daily.

Super Prescription #7 Quercetin

Take 500 mg three times daily. This flavonoid reduces inflammation of the skin.

Bladder Infection (Cystitis)

The uncomfortable and irritating symptoms of a bladder infection send American women to their doctors 6 to 9 million times every year. Most of these women will be treated with a course of antibiotics, a strategy that kills the current infection but that

leaves the bladder vulnerable to a future bacterial invasion. As a result, most of the women who see a doctor about a bladder infection will return; 10 to 20 percent of all women experience a bladder infection at least once over a twelve-month period.

When the bladder is infected, usually by bacteria, its interior walls become inflamed. This inflammation, medically known as cystitis, leads to a frequent and urgent need to urinate, although the urine produced may be scanty, and the bladder may not feel completely empty. There is usually pain or burning upon urination, and there may be cramping in the abdomen or the lower back, and fever.

Women suffer from bladder infections far more frequently than men do, mainly because of the female anatomy. In women, the urethra—the tube that conducts urine away from the bladder and out of the body—is very short, and its opening is in close proximity to both the anus and the vagina. It's relatively easy for vaginal or intestinal bacteria to travel to the opening to the urethra, make their way up the tube, and infect the bladder. Although bacteria are the cause of most infections, several other conditions put women at risk for this disorder. Frequent use of antibiotics is one of the most prevalent, since these medications destroy the “good” bacteria needed to fight infections. Anything else that weakens the immune system, such as stress or a poor diet, increases the likelihood of an infection. Pregnancy, sexual intercourse, and injury to the area are associated with a higher risk. Hormone imbalances can also contribute to an increased susceptibility. Menopause is a time when many women first start to experience bladder infections.

Most bladder infections respond well to home care that treats the symptoms, while strengthening the immune system. You should still consult a doctor, however, as there is a possibility that the infection can spread to the kidneys. Your physician should monitor your progress and make sure the infection isn't traveling upward. And if you have recurring infections, your doctor should examine you for a structural abnormality in the urethra or the bladder that prevents urine from flowing properly. Should your doctor want to prescribe antibiotics, explain to him or her your desire for more conservative treatment and ask whether antibiotics are really necessary. (In some cases, they're needed to prevent a kidney infection.) If you are a man with a bladder infection, you may have a more serious condition. For more information, see the sections on prostate problems in this book.

SYMPTOMS

- Pain or burning upon urination
- Frequent need to urinate
- Scanty flow or dribbling
- Cramps in abdomen or lower back
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fever

ROOT CAUSES

- Vaginal or intestinal bacteria, usually *E. coli*
- Frequent use of antibiotics
- Stress
- Poor diet and food allergies
- Pregnancy
- Sexual intercourse
- Injury
- Use of a diaphragm for contraception
- Structural abnormality
- Hormonal imbalance

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Make sure that you're getting all the nutrients you need. Plan well-rounded, wholesome meals, made with basic foods that you prepare yourself.

One of the best strategies for fighting a bladder infection is to increase your urine output. Drink as much clean water as you can stand. Try for one 6- to 8-ounce glass every waking hour.

Cranberry juice has long been a folk remedy for bladder infections, and now science helps us understand why: it appears that cranberry juice keeps bacteria from clinging to the linings of the bladder and the urethra. You can find unsweetened cranberry juice at most health food stores and many supermarkets. Drink several glasses of it a day.

Natural diuretics will help flush out the infection. Eat plenty of watermelon, celery, or parsley, or use them to make fresh juices.

Add some garlic to clear soups or other meals. It's a potent infection-fighter.

If you must take antibiotics, eat a cup of unsweetened live yogurt or another cultured product every day. These foods help return "good" bacteria to your body.

Food to Avoid

Sugar depresses the immune system and encourages the growth of bacteria.

Avoid all refined sugars (including those in alcohol) while you're battling the infection, and restrict them once you've recovered.

During the course of the infection, stay away from salty, spicy, processed, or refined foods, as well as caffeine. All of these substances will further aggravate the problem.

Food allergies can cause recurring bladder infections. See the Food Allergies section and the accompanying elimination diet to determine whether a food is at the heart of your problem.

Many women who are frequent consumers of sodas (both sugary and diet) experience recurring bladder infections. Sodas, whether made from natural or artificial sweeteners, are never a good idea; if you are troubled by bladder infections, you now have another compelling reason to avoid sodas.

Detoxification

A three-day juice fast is a strong weapon against recurring infections. Concentrate on vegetable juices, rather than on fruit juices, at this time, since you want to avoid too much sugar. When you drink fruit juice, dilute it with clean water.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Bladder Infection

Super Prescription #1 Uva ursi

Take a standardized capsule containing 250 mg of arbutin or 5 ml of the tincture form four times daily. Arbutin is a constituent in uva ursi that is converted in the body to a chemical called hydroquinone, which destroys bacteria.

Super Prescription #2 D-mannose

Take 500 mg four times daily. This substance prevents bacteria from being able to attach to the urinary tract and the bladder wall.

Super Prescription #3 Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms under Homeopathy in this section. For acute bladder infection, take a 30C potency four times daily. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Super Prescription #4 Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*) and goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*)

Take 500 mg of the capsule form or 4 ml of the tincture four times daily. These herbs enhance immune function to combat infection.

Super Prescription #5 Cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*) extract

Take 400 to 500 mg twice daily of cranberry extract capsules. Cranberry prevents bacteria from adhering to the bladder wall. This herb is best used for the prevention of urinary tract infections but can also be used as part of a comprehensive protocol for acute infection.

Super Prescription #6 Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

Take 500 mg of the capsule or 2 ml of the tincture four times daily. This herb has a long history of use for urinary tract infections.

Super Prescription #7 Vitamin C

Take 1,000 mg four to five times daily. Vitamin C enhances immune function, inhibits the growth of *E. coli*, and makes the urine more acidic so that bacteria cannot grow as easily.

General Recommendations

Oregano oil (*Origanum vulgare*) has powerful antibacterial and antiviral effects. Take 500 mg of the capsule form four times daily or as directed on the container.

Vitamin A enhances immune function. Take 25,000 to 50,000 IU daily for one week. Do not use if you are pregnant.

Probiotic contains friendly bacteria that prevent the overgrowth of harmful bacteria. It is especially important to take if you are using antibiotics. Take it at a separate time during the day, and continue use for two months. Take a product containing at least 4 billion organisms daily.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms in this section. For acute bladder infection, take a 30C potency four to six times daily. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Aconitum Napellus is helpful for the very first two hours of a bladder infection. Urination feels hot, and the person feels anxious. A fever comes on quickly.

Apis (*Apis mellifica*) is good for sharp, stinging pains that feel better with cold compresses or cool drinks and feel worse with warm applications (such as a warm bath). There are often only small amounts of urine passed.

Belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*) is for burning in the urethra, with a feeling of great urgency and with bladder spasm. A high fever comes on quickly.

Cantharis is the homeopathic remedy of choice for bladder infections. Use it if you have a strong urge but produce very little urine. You may have burning and cutting

A study reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that regular consumption of cranberry juice (10 ounces a day) significantly reduced the amount of bacteria and pus in the urine of elderly women. Another study found that cranberry capsule extract (400 mg twice daily) for three months significantly reduced the recurrence of urinary tract infections in women ages eighteen to forty-five who had a history of reoccurring infections.

pain upon urination, as well as cramps in your abdomen and lower back. Small tinges of blood may be present.

Mercurius Corrosivus is helpful when blood and pus are in the urine. The person feels great burning pains and spasm in the bladder.

Nux Vomica (*Strychnos nux vomica*) helps when there is a constant urge to urinate, with only small amounts being passed. The person feels chilly and irritable. Symptoms are better with warmth (a warm bath).

Sarsaparilla can be taken when there is burning pain at the end of urination. The person seems to urinate only when standing and not sitting.

Staphysagria is for the burning pains of a bladder infection that come on after sexual intercourse. It is also used for bladder infections that result from the use of a catheter.

Bodywork

Reflexology

Reflexology is helpful to prevent bladder infections, and you should see improvement after two or three treatments. For information about reflexology areas and how to work them, see pages 686–687.

Work the areas corresponding to the bladder, the kidneys, and the ureters.

Hydrotherapy

A hot sitz bath is a comforting and powerful therapy for bladder infections. Take it once or twice a day until you are healed. Add vinegar or garlic oil for an even stronger effect.

Constitutional hydrotherapy can also be used for an acute bladder infection.

Aromatherapy

- Bergamot, chamomile, and lavender all have gentle antiseptic qualities. Use them in a sitz bath. If you prefer, a regular hot bath is still an effective delivery system for these oils.
- Tea tree oil (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) is a potent infection-fighter that also stimulates the immune system. It can be irritating to some people, so add just a few drops to a bath for your first use. If you do not have a reaction, you can add a few more.
- If you need to relieve stress, several oils can help you. See page 658 for information on oils. Here are some good ones to get you started: lavender, jasmine, rose, geranium, and bergamot.

Stress Reduction

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Stress depletes the immune system and leaves you vulnerable to recurring infections. If you need to reduce the level of stress in your life, experiment with the different techniques described in the Exercise and Stress Reduction chapter until you find the ones that are best for you.

Bach Flower Remedies

The chart on pages 648–650 will help you determine the flower remedy best suited to your personality. Select the appropriate remedy, and place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

Crab Apple is a good choice if bladder infections make you feel impure or unclean.

Other Recommendations

- Always empty your bladder when you feel the need. Delaying urination sets the stage for an infection.
- Empty your bladder prior to and, if possible, after sexual intercourse to reduce the likelihood of infection. It's a good idea for women to drink a big glass of water before and after intercourse.
- After swimming, immediately change out of your wet bathing suit and into dry clothes. Damp conditions are a breeding ground for bacteria.
- If you're prone to bladder infections, wear cotton underwear that lets the genital area breathe.
- After going to the toilet, always wipe from front to back. This reduces the chances that intestinal bacteria will travel to the urethra.
- Avoid products that may irritate the urethra or the vagina. Do not use powders, sanitary napkins, or tampons that are scented.
- A hot compress is very soothing to an irritated urinary tract. Lie down somewhere comfortable, and place the compress on your lower abdomen.
- For bladder infections that occur around menses or that began with menopausal changes, hormone balancing is likely the issue. See the chapters that correspond to your situation, such as PMS and Menopause.

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Blood Pressure, High

As blood circulates through the body, it presses against the walls of the arteries. The force of this action is called blood pressure. When the pressure is too high, the arterial walls become distorted—they may narrow or thicken—and an extra burden of stress is placed on the heart.

Blood pressure may temporarily rise from exercise, stress, and emotions ranging from joy to anger. Usually, the pressure returns to normal once the situation has passed. In many people, however, blood pressure is high all the time. More than 50 million Americans have high blood pressure (also known as hypertension), including almost half of those over the age of sixty-five. The disorder can lead to very serious conditions, including stroke, heart disease, diabetes, eye damage, and kidney problems, so it is considered one of the country's leading health problems.

Sometimes there are symptoms of high blood pressure. You may have unexplained headaches, nosebleeds, or spells of dizziness or sweating. But most of the time high blood pressure is completely asymptomatic, so it's vital that you have it checked

regularly. The disorder can strike anyone at any age, but it is most common among the elderly, African Americans, and people of all races living in the southeastern United States. If you fall into any of these risk categories, or if you have a family history of hypertension, you should be doubly sure to have routine checks and to take preventative measures.

About 90 percent of all cases of high blood pressure are called primary or essential hypertension, meaning that there is no underlying disease and no obvious cause. Most likely, a cluster of lifestyle factors is to blame: diet, lack of exercise, stress, and smoking have all been linked to an increase in blood pressure. If another disease or condition, such as cardiovascular disease or kidney, adrenal, or thyroid disorders causes the problem, it is called secondary hypertension. A very small percentage of people suffer from malignant hypertension, in which blood pressure can suddenly soar to extremely dangerous levels.

Essential hypertension can often be controlled with home treatment, but if you have any kind of high blood pressure, you must be under the care of a doctor. Talk to him or her about the strategies you want to employ for wellness.

SYMPTOMS

High blood pressure does not usually produce symptoms. If, however, you experience any of the following, see a doctor:

- Recurring headaches
- Dizziness
- Unexplained sweating
- Nosebleeds
- Visual disturbances
- Shortness of breath
- Flushed cheeks
- Ringing in the ears

ROOT CAUSES

- A diet that's high in fat, sugar, and/or salt
- Use of alcohol or caffeine and other stimulants
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Inactivity
- Pregnancy or birth-control pills
- Underlying medical disorders
- Heavy-metal poisoning

Testing Techniques

The following tests help assess possible metabolic reasons for high blood pressure:

- Vitamin and mineral analysis—blood or urine
- Food allergy testing—blood or electrodermal
- Toxic metals (lead, cadmium, etc.)—hair or urine

TREATMENT

Diet

The Western diet has a lot to do with hypertension. Following the suggestions here will make a real difference in your blood pressure and your overall wellness.

When you have your blood pressure checked, the doctor or the nurse usually tells you the two numbers of your reading and whether you have cause for concern. But most health-care professionals don't take the time to explain exactly what those numbers mean. Since this is one of the most important medical tests people receive on a regular basis, here's a quick analysis.

The first number is called the systolic pressure. It is measured when the heart beats and indicates the highest amount of pressure against the arterial walls. Between heartbeats, the heart is at rest and pressure drops to its lowest level. This low reading is called the diastolic pressure.

Sample blood pressure reading of
120/80

systolic pressure = 120

diastolic pressure = 80

Blood pressure varies with age and fluctuates many times over the course of a day; it often rises in a doctor's office, when many people feel nervous or tense. Blood pressure should be taken when you are calm and unstressed, and it is best to average a total of three readings, taken on different days. The consensus is that for most healthy adults, 120/80 is normal.

Readings are broken down into several categories:

Normal: 110–130/70–85

High normal: 130–139/85–89

Mild hypertension: 140–159/90–99

Moderate hypertension:

160–179/100–109

Severe hypertension: 180 or
higher/110 or higher

Recommended Food

A diet high in fiber is an excellent way to control or reverse high blood pressure. Your meals should be based around fresh, raw vegetables; soy products; whole grains, like oats; beans; nuts; and seeds.

Dehydration increases the risk of hypertension, so drink a glass of clean water every two waking hours.

As you lower your intake of salt, you must also increase your consumption of potassium. A combination of excess sodium and a deficiency in potassium has been found in many people with hypertension. Good sources of potassium include apples, asparagus, cabbage, oranges, tomatoes, bananas, kelp (*Ascophyllum nodosum*), and alfalfa.

Apples are superfoods for people with high blood pressure. Not only do they have high levels of potassium, they're also a good source of pectin, which is an excellent type of soluble fiber.

Onions, garlic, and parsley have been shown to bring down blood pressure. They also add flavor to vegetarian meals, so take advantage of their healing properties daily.

Celery has been shown in animal studies to reduce blood pressure. Consume up to four stalks a day.

Food to Avoid

People with high blood pressure generally benefit from restricting their intake of salt. Salt contains sodium, which causes water retention and increases the pressure inside the arteries. It is not enough to simply stop using table salt; you must also cut out all processed and packaged foods, as well as smoked meats and cheeses, as they are loaded with sodium.

Avoid the use of the herbs ephedra (*Ma huang*), Chinese ginseng (*Panax ginseng*), and large amounts of licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), as they may increase blood pressure.

- Saturated, hydrogenated, and partially hydrogenated fats cause high blood pressure and place a terrible burden on your arteries and heart. Eliminate animal products, margarine, butter, shortening, and refined vegetable oils.
- Sugar is linked to hypertension. If you do not eat packaged or processed foods, you will eliminate the largest sources of added sugar from your diet, but you should also avoid sugary baked goods and limit your intake of foods that are sweetened naturally.
- Overindulgence in caffeine is a cause of high blood pressure. Cut back on your intake of coffee, colas, chocolate, and caffeinated teas.
- Allow yourself no more than one alcoholic beverage a day.

Detoxification

Do a one- to three-day juice fast every month. Drink a wide variety of juices to support your fast, including those made from apples, bok choy, carrots, onions, leafy greens, apricots, cranberries, cantaloupe, papayas, and red grapes.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—High Blood Pressure

Super Prescription #1 Hawthorn (*Crataegus oxycantha*)

Take 250 mg of a standardized extract three times daily. This herb dilates the artery walls and decreases blood pressure.

Super Prescription #2 Calcium and magnesium

These minerals have been shown in studies to lower blood pressure. Take a combination of 500 mg of calcium and 250 mg of magnesium twice daily.

Super Prescription #3 Coenzyme Q10

Studies show that this nutrient reduces blood pressure. Take 100 mg two to three times daily.

Super Prescription #4 Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

Several studies confirm garlic's ability to lower blood pressure. Take 600 mg twice daily of an aged garlic extract.

Super Prescription #5 Fish oil

Fish oil reduces blood pressure when taken on a long-term basis. Take 3,000 mg three times daily.

Super Prescription #6 Potassium

This mineral has been shown in repeated studies to lower blood pressure. Take as part of a salt-substitute product. Otherwise, use up to 2,000 mg under the supervision of a doctor. Do not use if you are taking a potassium-sparing diuretic medication or have kidney disease or serious heart disease.

Super Prescription #7 Vitamin C

Vitamin C has mild blood-lowering effects and helps the body detoxify toxic metals, such as lead, which contribute to high blood pressure. Take 1,000 to 2,000 mg daily.

A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study of seventy-four people with type 2 diabetes found that 100 mg of coenzyme Q10 taken twice daily significantly lowered blood pressure over a period of twelve weeks. Other studies have also found CoQ10 blood pressure-lowering benefits.

General Recommendations

Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*) relaxes the nerves and is helpful for blood pressure that increases with stress. Take 250 mg or 0.5 ml two to three times daily.

Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) is a strong nerve relaxer and may indirectly lower blood pressure. Take 300 mg or 0.5 to 1.0 ml two to three times daily.

Chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*) and oatstraw (*Avena sativa*) are great herbal nerve relaxers. They can be taken as a tea throughout the day.

Taurine is an amino acid shown in research to lower blood pressure in humans and animals. Take up to 6 grams daily between meals.

Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) extract should be taken in 500-mg doses three times daily for a blood pressure–lowering effect.

Dandelion leaf (*Taraxacum officinale*) acts as a gentle, natural diuretic to lower blood pressure. Take 300 mg of the capsule form or 2 ml three times daily.

Homeopathy

Argentum Nitricum is for elevated blood pressure that occurs with anxiety. Symptoms often come on from a stressful event or “stage fright.” The person is usually very warm and has strong salt and sweet cravings.

Belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*) is for high blood pressure that comes on suddenly. The person has a flushed face and dilated pupils and feels a great deal of heat, although the hands and the feet are cold. Pounding headaches may occur, and the person is sensitive to light.

Glonoinum may be helpful for high blood pressure that’s accompanied by a bursting headache and a flushed face. The person is worse from the heat and sun exposure or from consuming alcohol.

Lachesis is for a person who is very intense, who feels suspiciousness and jealous, and who is very talkative. The person feels warm and is intolerant of anything touching the neck.

Natrum Muriaticum is for high blood pressure that begins after an emotional upset. The person desires to be alone and often experiences headaches, heart palpitations, and insomnia. There is a strong craving for salt, a great thirst, and an aversion to being in the sun.

Nux Vomica (*Strychnos nux vomica*) is for high blood pressure that occurs from the effects of stress. The person feels irritable and impatient and has a strong desire for stimulants such as coffee, as well as alcohol. The person is usually chilly and is prone to constipation.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- Bladder 38 simultaneously lowers blood pressure and relieves nervous tension.
- If you tend to get heart palpitations when you’re agitated, take some time out of a tense situation to work Pericardium 6. This spot is located at your wrist, so it’s easy to use even in a public place like the office.
- People who feel chest tension when they’re upset or worried should use Conception Vessel 17.
- Encourage circulation to your heart and chest by working Heart 3 and 7.

Bodywork

Massage

Massage can be of great help to people with high blood pressure. It regulates the body’s rhythms, improves circulation, and promotes relaxation, so make a regular appointment with a good therapist, if possible.

If stress makes your chest feel tight and full, try a neck massage to relieve tension and steady your heartbeat. You can do this yourself or have a loved one do it for you.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the areas corresponding to the thyroid, the kidneys, the solar plexus, and the pituitary and adrenal glands.

Hydrotherapy

Do not use saunas. The hot steam can make your blood pressure rise to dangerous levels.

Other Bodywork Recommendations

Acupuncture is helpful for high blood pressure, especially when the underlying cause is stress.

Osteopathic and craniosacral therapy can help normalize circulation.

Aromatherapy

Take advantage of the soothing effects of essential oils. Many oils will help you relax, but lavender, marjoram, and ylang ylang are those most often used to calm the body and bring down blood pressure. You can use them in any preparation that suits you.

When used in a massage, juniper oil will help break down fatty deposits in your arteries and elsewhere in your body.

Stress Reduction

General Stress-Reduction Therapies

Meditation is a cheap, portable technique that you can use anywhere for a calming effect. You can practice meditation on a regular basis in a quiet room at home. If you feel your blood pressure rise while sitting at a stoplight, during a meeting, or while waiting up for your teenager to come home, you can easily spend a few moments paying attention to your breath. Meditative breathing won't stop the stress, but it can help you take a few steps back and view the problem with detachment.

Stress can make your body constrict its blood vessels, making it harder for blood to get through and thus raising your blood pressure. Biofeedback, however, can help you identify when you constrict your blood vessels, and it can train you to relax them.

Bach Flower Remedies

Select the appropriate remedy, and place 10 drops under your tongue. Hold the drops in place for thirty seconds and swallow. Use as often as needed.

When you feel panicked, upset, angry, or stressed in any way, take Rescue Remedy to help yourself calm down.

If you tend to cover up insecurity with aggressive, irritable behavior, Holly will help you feel more patient and gentle.

Rock Water is for people who work very hard and blame themselves for every problem.

Oak will help people who—whether for reasons of duty, responsibility, self-sacrifice, or ambition—refuse to give up or yield. Those who will benefit from Oak tend to place themselves in high-pressure, strenuous situations.

Take Aspen if you have general anxiety or vague, unnamed fears.

Other Recommendations

- If you are obese, you must lose weight. The dietary suggestions in this section will help you take off the pounds safely, but if you'd like to learn more, see Obesity. Do not rely on stimulant diet products; they may contain additives that could make your condition worse.
- Moderate exercise is a reliable way to reduce blood pressure, but consult with your doctor before starting an exercise program. As a person with hypertension, you may have special needs that should be addressed.
- Do not smoke or expose yourself to secondhand smoke.
- If testing shows that you have high toxic metal levels (such as lead, cadmium, and mercury), work with a doctor who is knowledgeable in chelation therapy.

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Bone Fractures

A bad fall, a hard blow, an automobile collision, a sports injury, or an underlying medical condition such as osteoporosis can result in a broken bone.

When a bone breaks, it triggers not only pain, swelling, bruising, and immobility but also trauma and shock throughout the entire body. Fractures located near joints are sometimes misidentified as simply bad sprains.

There are varying degrees of fractures. Here are definitions and causes for the main types of fractures:

1. *Partial* (incomplete): The break across the bone is incomplete.
2. *Complete*: The bone is broken in two pieces.
3. *Closed* (simple): The broken bone does not protrude through the skin.
4. *Open* (compound): The broken bone protrudes through the skin.
5. *Comminuted*: The bone is splintered at the broken area and many smaller fragments of bone are found between the two main pieces.
6. *Greenstick*: This occurs only in children and is defined by having one side of the bone break and the other side just bend, often seen on the radius (forearm bone).
7. *Spiral*: A breaking force twisted the bone apart.
8. *Transverse*: This occurs at right angles to the bone.
9. *Impacted*: One fragment is forcibly driven into the other.
10. *Colles'*: This is a fracture of the distal end of the radius (wrist), and the fragment is displaced posteriorly (behind).
11. *Pott's*: This is a fracture of the distal (lower portion of leg) end of the fibula, with serious injury of the distal tibia articulation.

12. *Nondisplaced*: The correct anatomical alignment of the bone is maintained.
13. *Displaced*: The correct anatomical alignment of the bone is not maintained.
14. *Stress*: This is a partial fracture, resulting from the inability of the bone to withstand repeated stresses (such as doing aerobics on hard surfaces or running long distances for prolonged periods of time). Almost one-fourth of stress fractures occur in the fibula.
15. *Pathologic*: This fracture is a result of normal stress on a weakened bone. It occurs in such diseases as osteoporosis, neoplasia, osteomyelitis, and osteomalacia.

If you have had an accident where you may have broken a bone, it is important to get immediate medical attention. For a more serious injury and if you have someone to help you, try to stay immobilized until medical personnel assess and move you. Otherwise, if you must move, it is important to have the fracture site immobilized with splinting materials. Even magazines or a towel can be used.

Once your fracture has been assessed and immobilized by medical personnel, it is very helpful to utilize the natural therapies in this chapter. They can help to speed healing of the fracture and can reduce pain and swelling. Remember, our bones are living tissues that have the ability to repair themselves when damaged. They must be given the correct nutrients to do so. Many vitamins and minerals are required for healthy bones. Calcium is the obvious one, but magnesium; boron; silicon; strontium; vitamins D, C, and K; and others play important roles in bone metabolism.

SYMPTOMS

- Bone pain
- Swelling
- Bleeding

ROOT CAUSES

- Fall or injury
- Osteoporosis

TREATMENT

Diet

Recommended Food

Eat foods that are high in calcium and the other nutrients needed for calcium's assimilation. Sea vegetables, green leafy vegetables (except spinach), soybeans, nuts, molasses, salmon, oysters, sardines (with the bones), broccoli, and unsweetened cultured yogurt are all good sources.

Green vegetables, such as collard greens, kale, romaine lettuce, and others, are important for their vitamin K content, which helps with bone formation.

Fermented soy products, such as tofu and miso, are good for the bones.

Essential fatty acids found in walnuts, almonds, flaxseeds, and fish are important for healthy bones.

Food to Avoid

Eliminate sugar, refined grains, and soda pop drinks from your diet, as they contribute to bone loss.

Testing Techniques

The following tests help assess possible reasons for people whose bones fracture easily:

- Hormone testing (thyroid, DHEA, cortisol, testosterone, IGF-1, estrogen, progesterone)—saliva, blood, or urine
- Intestinal permeability—urine
- Vitamin and mineral analysis (especially magnesium, calcium, vitamin K, vitamin D)—blood, hair
- Toxic metals—urine or hair
- Digestive function and microbe/parasite/candida testing—stool analysis
- Food and environmental allergies/sensitivities—blood, electrodermal
- Bone resorption (pyridinium and deoxypyridinium)—urine

High salt intake is linked to bone loss. Do not eat processed foods, which are usually loaded with salt, and never add conventional table salt to your meals.

Moderate your use of caffeine and alcohol, as they contribute to bone loss.

Rx Super Seven Prescriptions—Bone Fracture

Super Prescription #1 Homeopathic Symphytum (*Symphytum officinale*)

Take a 30C potency four times daily for two weeks. Symphytum is a specific remedy for healing bones and reducing fracture pain more quickly. Make sure to use Symphytum only after the fracture has been set, as it rapidly speeds knitting of the bone.

Super Prescription #2 Calcium

Take 500 to 600 mg twice daily in divided doses of well-absorbed calcium complexes, such as citrate, citrate-malate, chelate, or hydroxyapatite. Calcium is the main mineral that bone is composed of.

Super Prescription #3 Magnesium

Take 250 to 350 mg twice daily in divided doses. Magnesium is required for proper calcium metabolism and bone formation. Some researchers feel that it is as important as calcium. *Note:* Reduce the dosage if loose stools occur.

Super Prescription #4 Vitamin D

Take 800 IU daily for one month and then 400 IU daily. This vitamin improves intestinal calcium absorption and reduces the urinary excretion of calcium.

Super Prescription #5 Vitamin K

Take 5 mg daily for one month and then 100 to 500 mcg daily to finish bone healing. Vitamin K is needed to form the protein osteocalcin, a substance that attracts calcium into the bone matrix. Low levels of vitamin K are associated with osteoporosis and fractures. *Note:* Do not use if you are taking blood-thinning medications.

Super Prescription #6 High-potency multivitamin

This provides a base of the nutrients required for healthy bones. Take as directed on the container.

A study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* reported that a low intake of vitamin K was associated with an increased risk of hip fracture. The data from the study came from the review of the diets of over 72,000 women. Studies have also shown that vitamin K supplementation improves bone density.

Super Prescription #7 Essential fatty acids

Take 4 grams of fish oil daily, along with 3,000 mg of evening primrose oil. Studies show that these essential fatty acids improve calcium absorption and deposition into the bone.

General Recommendations

Boron is a mineral that activates vitamin D for effective calcium metabolism. Take 3 to 5 mg daily.

Vitamin C is used to manufacture collagen, an important component of bones. Take 500 to 1,000 mg twice daily.

Silicon is a mineral that is involved in calcification and making collagen. Take 50 to 200 mg daily.

Zinc is required for enzymatic reactions that build bone. Take a daily total of 30 mg, along with 2 to 3 mg of copper.

Manganese helps with bone calcification. Take 15 to 30 mg daily.

A greens formula that contains super green foods, such as chlorella, spirulina, and others, has an alkalizing effect and is rich in minerals. Take as directed on the container.

Soy protein powder has been shown to protect against bone loss. Take 40 grams daily; this amount contains 90 mg of isoflavones.

Strontium is a nutrient that was shown to be helpful in increasing bone density when combined with calcium. Take 340 to 680 mg daily.

Homeopathy

Pick the remedy that best matches your symptoms in this section. For acute fracture pain, take a 30C potency four times daily. For chronic fracture pain, take a 6x, 12x, 6C, 12C, or 30C potency twice daily for two weeks to see if there are any positive results. After you notice improvement, stop taking the remedy, unless symptoms return. Consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is advised.

Aconitum Napellus is used when people are in shock from a trauma. They are restless and fearful. *Aconitum* will help calm them down as you seek medical attention.

Arnica (Arnica montana) is the first remedy to give immediately after a fracture has occurred. This will help reduce pain, shock, and swelling. Give the highest potency available. Most health food stores carry a 30C potency; take it four times daily for two days.

Bryonia (Bryonia alba) is to be given during the first week of a fracture, when the slightest movement aggravates the pain. The person exhibits great irritability from the pain. *Bryonia* can be alternated with homeopathic *Symphytum (Symphytum officinale)*.

Calcarea Carbonica is a remedy for people with signs of calcium imbalance, such as a slow-healing fracture, osteoporosis, aching bones, muscle cramps, and swollen joints. People requiring this remedy are generally chilly and flabby and feel worse in the cold and the dampness. They are easily fatigued and get overwhelmed. There is a craving for sweets, milk, and eggs.

Calcarea Phosphorica is a good remedy for fractures that are slow to heal. This remedy stimulates bone building.

Hypericum (Hypericum perforatum) is for crushing injuries that result in nerve damage. There are sharp, shooting pains. It is especially good for fractures of the coccyx (tailbone).

Phosphorus is a remedy for weak bones or fractures that heal slowly. People requiring this remedy tend to be tall and thin. There is a strong craving for ice-cold drinks. The person tends to be very social and suggestible.

Silica (*Silicea*) is for people who have poor bone density and tend to be very thin. People who need this remedy are often nervous, easily fatigued, and chilly and have low resistance to infection.

Symphytum (*Symphytum officinale*) is a specific remedy for healing and reducing fracture pain more quickly. Make sure to use it after a bone has been set.

Acupressure

See pages 668–675 for information about pressure points and administering treatment.

- To increase your ability to absorb nutrients (including calcium), work Stomach 36. With regular practice, your digestion will improve, and you'll find that you have more energy than before.
- If you have pain, work Large Intestine 4. Do not use this point if you are pregnant.

Bodywork

Massage

Massage is a good wellness measure after the fracture has been set, to encourage blood flow and healing.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is recommended to help relieve the pain and the swelling from a fracture.

Magnet Therapy

Magnets can be used by a knowledgeable practitioner to reduce fracture pain and stimulate healing.

Reflexology

See pages 686–687 for information about reflexology areas and how to work them.

Work the areas corresponding to the area of injury.

Aromatherapy

Black pepper and rosemary both have warming qualities that soothe aching bones and joints. Use them in a massage, a lotion, or a bath.

Hydrotherapy

Alternate hot and cold towels over the opposite body part affected. For example, if the left arm is broken, alternate a hot towel (two minutes) with a cold towel (two minutes) over the right arm, repeat three times, and perform twice daily. There is a reflex action whereby circulation will be increased in the opposite body part, which increases nutrition to the healing bone.

Bach Flower Remedies

Rescue Remedy is a good choice for the shock and the emotional stress brought on by a fracture. Take 10 drops twice daily.

Other Recommendations

- Start doing a regular weight-bearing exercise once you have been instructed to by your doctor, as it stimulates bone healing.
- Don't smoke or expose yourself to secondhand smoke. Smoking makes bones brittle and weak.

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Bronchitis

Acute bronchitis is the deep, wet, or dry cough that comes on and lingers after an infection, such as a cold, sinusitis, or the flu. The cough, which may start out dry and then turn productive, is the body's way of expelling infected mucus (phlegm) from the lungs. An episode of bronchitis may last for one to two weeks, and because a virus usually causes it, antibiotics may not be helpful. The best treatment is usually rest, combined with immune-enhancing natural therapies, as well as symptomatic therapy to calm the cough and promote removal of the mucus.

Chronic bronchitis develops in the continual presence of irritants, usually tobacco smoke, but also environmental allergies and damp, foggy weather; it sometimes results from food allergies. It often begins as a protracted case of acute bronchitis that returns every few months and, if the irritants are not removed, will develop into a constant cough, often accompanied by breathlessness and sometimes wheezing. The weakened condition of the lungs leaves the body vulnerable to infections like acute bronchitis, pneumonia, and emphysema. In its advanced stage, even minor colds can grow into deadly diseases. The best treatment is to eliminate the irritants that caused the condition. This is accomplished by identifying the offending allergens and removing them or reducing your body's sensitivity to them.

SYMPTOMS

Acute bronchitis

- A cough that may start out dry but that turns deep and productive, with thick clear or yellow mucus
- Usually follows a viral infection

Chronic bronchitis

- Long bouts of acute bronchitis that recur frequently
- A persistent, constant cough that's worse upon waking
- Breathlessness
- Wheezing