

Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

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The 21-Day Energy Restoration Plan

Hidden toxins in food are sabotaging your energy and health, but a simple plan can stop the damage and rejuvenate your vitality.

“I just don’t have enough energy to do all the things I want to do.” Do you ever feel that way? So many of my new patients do, and they mistakenly assume it’s an inevitable sign of aging. Age is not the culprit.

In fact, lack of energy is the most common symptom of your body being overloaded with toxins, and food is the most important source of this overload. Feeling sluggish in the morning, craving sugar, having digestive or skin problems, or gaining weight for no apparent reason may be other signs.

In a truly healthy state, your body is like a pristine new car that is built to use premium fuel. Like all cars, it requires oil changes, occasional replacement of air filters, and other routine maintenance. If you give it low-grade gas and skip the maintenance, the engine is going to get sludgy and will run below its peak power.

This is much like feeling “okay.” But it’s not the same as being on top of your game.

As more sludge builds up, the car will eventually sputter and break down, and the repairs will cost much more than high-grade gas and the proper maintenance.

Much like the sludge in that car engine, toxins gradually break down your body’s energy production systems. The human body has about 30 trillion cells, and each one contains microscopic energy-generating engines called mitochondria. The heart has more mitochondria per cell than any other tissue, because it takes a lot of energy to keep pumping blood to keep you alive. Toxins poison those tiny engines.¹

Your energy might be sagging just a little, and if you’ve been using premium fuel most of the time, it won’t take much to restore peak power. But if you’ve been a habitual user of the low-grade stuff and need a big energy boost, it will take more effort to detoxify your system.

An effective detoxification program can bring about a dramatic



resurgence of mental and physical energy, clearer eyes, clearer skin, and other improvements. One of my patients looked so much younger after doing my program that her co-workers were convinced she'd had Botox injections. She hadn't had Botox or any other cosmetic treatment.

Food is the vital tool to reduce your intake of toxins, clean out toxic sludge, and keep your engine humming on a day-to-day basis. However, you can reduce your exposure even more by switching to non-toxic versions of soaps and household cleaning products; skincare products, including cleansers, moisturizers, serums, and cosmetics; shampoos and hair conditioners; and air fresheners and scented home products, such as candles.

Did You Know?

More than 80,000 chemicals are used in the United States, and most have not been adequately tested for their effects on human health.

How Energy-Boosting Detoxification Works

When I mention the idea of detoxification, patients often get concerned because they assume it means fasting or living on juices. It doesn't. Although fasting can be beneficial for some people, it can also make you feel worse or even get sick instead of enhancing your energy.

Some of the toxins we're exposed to get eliminated on a daily basis, while others get stored in our bodies. If you go on a fast, stored toxins are suddenly

released, and if your body is not able to eliminate them efficiently, you can feel terrible.

Technically, there are two phases to detoxification: stored toxins are released in phase 1, and then eliminated in phase 2. You can avoid

unpleasant symptoms with some preparation, first by improving your ability to eliminate toxins, and then by taking steps to dislodge and get rid of those that are stored.

Another, more gradual approach is to simply clean up your diet so

Chemical Energy Robber Linked to 20 Diseases

While all toxins interfere with our ability to generate energy, glyphosate weed killer, found in many processed foods, also does much more serious damage. Extensive research, by a group of scientists from the United States and Germany, found that it damages DNA, disrupts the balance of hormones and gut bacteria, causes mutations that lead to cancer, and is linked to these diseases:⁵

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Acute Kidney Failure | 7. End Stage Renal Disease | 13. Multiple Sclerosis |
| 2. Alzheimer's | 8. Hypertension | 14. Myeloid Leukemia |
| 3. Autism | 9. Inflammatory Bowel Disease | 15. Obesity |
| 4. Bladder Cancer | 10. Intestinal Infections | 16. Pancreatic Cancer |
| 5. Cholesterol and Triglyceride Disorders | 11. Kidney Cancer | 17. Parkinson's |
| 6. Diabetes | 12. Liver Cancer | 18. Senile Dementia |
| | | 19. Stroke |
| | | 20. Thyroid Cancer |

Facts about Glyphosate

There is little testing of glyphosate residues in people and in the animals whose meat and milk we eat. However, when researchers in Germany tested for residues, here's what they found:⁶

Chronically ill people had significantly higher levels of glyphosate residues, compared to those who were healthy.

People with the highest levels of glyphosate residues in their bodies ate conventionally produced food, including vegetables, grains, dairy products, and meat.

People who ate mostly organic food had significantly lower levels of glyphosate.

Glyphosate has these characteristics:

- It accumulates in food and can't be washed off.
- It isn't destroyed by cooking.
- It stays stable in food for a year or more, even if the food is frozen, dried, or processed.
- In animals, glyphosate accumulates in muscle (the meat we eat), liver, kidney, intestines, spleen, and bones.
- In agricultural areas, it accumulates in soil, water, and air.
- When glyphosate is used near organic farms, it can contaminate crops and animals that are eating organic feed. But even then, levels of glyphosate in organic food are much lower than in conventionally produced food.

The German researchers concluded: "The presence of glyphosate residues in both humans and animals could haul the entire population towards numerous health hazards."

that you aren't continually eating a lot of harmful chemicals. That alone can improve your energy and deliver bonus benefits by reducing your risk for many diseases.

Bonus Benefits of a Low-Pesticide Diet

In France, researchers studied nearly 69,000 adults for over 4 years, and found that people who ate organic food most of the time had a 25-percent lower risk of cancer, compared to those who never ate organic food.² Conventionally grown fruits and vegetables were major pesticide sources. Soy, legumes, grains, breads, and cereals were others.

In another study, they found that people who eat mostly organic fruits, vegetables, and grains have much less risk for diabetes.³

Must You Eat Only Organic Food?

While there's no doubt that your energy production and overall health would benefit if all your food were organic, I know this isn't a practical solution. Organic

food costs more and isn't always available, despite its increasing popularity. According to the Organic Trade Association, just over 5 percent of the food sold in this country is organic — a tiny slice.

So, what do you do? First, you can identify the major sources of pesticides in your diet and decide which foods are worth buying organic. For example, conventionally grown strawberries and spinach have high levels of pesticides (see page 5 for more details), so organic ones are a good investment.

Second, it's helpful to understand food labels. Besides organic, other labels I'll describe in a moment can indicate a lower level of toxins. When you're armed with information, it's more realistic to choose less-toxic options that will give you more energy.

Why Learn about Toxins

The foundation of my 21-day energy restoration program is eating fresh instead of processed food — nothing from a bag, box, or can. This is a difficult step for many people, even though it's temporary and doesn't mean you go hungry. Knowing the health effects of common toxins can help you understand why this is such an important part of my program.

Toxic Weed Killer Zaps Energy

The world's most widely used weed killer is another energy zapper, and it's in thousands of processed food products. The brand name is Roundup, but it's often referred to as glyphosate, the active chemical in the product.

Researchers at Wake Forest

University in Winston-Salem, N.C., found that glyphosate interferes with the heart's ability to generate energy, disrupts hormones, kills liver cells (which we need to eliminate toxins), and is linked to higher risk for over a dozen diseases.⁴ Many studies have documented that residues of glyphosate persist in food.

Glyphosate is so toxic that conventional soy and corn, which are sprayed with it several times during their growing seasons, had to

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Good Habits to Enhance Energy

In addition to eating the right foods and getting rid of toxins, these are some other ways to improve and maintain healthy energy levels:

- Get enough sleep
- Get some regular exercise
- Get some sunshine, regardless of the temperature
- Spend time with people you like
- Manage your schedule so that it isn't overbooked

be genetically modified to withstand its toxicity. Wheat and other crops are sprayed with it a week before they ripen, to speed up the drying process. The chemical can also be found in conventionally raised poultry, meat, and milk, because it's sprayed on animal feed.

Glyphosate isn't used on organic crops. Common conventionally grown foods that contain the toxin include these:

- Soy foods and ingredients, such as soybean oil, soy protein, and soy flour
- Corn ingredients, such as corn oil, corn meal, and corn syrups
- Wheat
- Barley
- Rice

How to Slash Pesticide Levels by 89% in One Week

In some cases, a change in diet can quickly make a difference in energy levels. Eating mostly organic food for just one week can dramatically reduce levels of pesticides in your body. It may be hard to believe, but that's what researchers in Australia found when they ran an experiment on 13 adults.

Levels of pesticides were tested after participants ate a diet of 80-percent conventional (not organic) food for 7 days. And then, the same people ate a diet that was 80-percent organic for the following 7 days. Tests showed that their pesticide levels, after just one week of eating mostly organic food, dropped by 89 percent. Earlier studies have found similar results in children.

- Other grains
- Beans
- Peas
- Seeds
- Sugar cane
- Sweet potatoes

Some foods that are not organic are labelled or certified "Non-GMO," or may be certified or labelled "Glyphosate-Free." Where these are an option, they can be a better choice than conventionally produced foods.

What "Organic" Means

Organic food is especially valuable for energy production because it's produced without the toxins I've been talking about. Use of the term "organic," or "certified organic," is strictly regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The certification process is complex and stringent, which is one reason why organic food costs

more. For example, soil must be free of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides for three years before organic food is cultivated. If an animal that is being raised organically gets sick and must be treated with antibiotics, its meat or milk no longer qualifies as "organic."

"Natural" Can Be Misleading

Although widely used, "natural" is not clearly defined or regulated. The FDA views it as a food without artificial additives. With this limited definition, a food might be called "natural" even if it's genetically modified or contains residues of pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics, or synthetic hormones given to cattle, because those substances are not considered to be food additives. Look for more detailed information on labels. For example, a "natural" meat label might say that animals were raised without antibiotics — a better option than meat with antibiotics.

About Dr. Marlene

Dr. Marlene Merritt's passion for natural medicine is fueled by her drive to help others, and her own experience of overcoming a debilitating heart condition, diagnosed at the age of 20. A competitive cross-country cyclist at the time, she suddenly began experiencing severe chest pains. Forced to quit the sport, she suffered from extreme fatigue and constant pain for another 15 years, despite doing everything that conventional, Western medical doctors told her to do.

And then, the tide turned. A physician trained in naturopathic healing recommended a whole-food vitamin E supplement. A week after starting the supplement regimen, her energy began to return, and the pain began to disappear.

Dr. Marlene is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, has a Master's in Nutrition, and is an Applied Clinical Nutritionist. She is Board Certified in Bariatric Counseling, and certified in the Bredesen MEND Protocol,TM a groundbreaking method of reversing Alzheimer's disease. She sees patients at the Merritt Wellness Centers in Austin, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, trains health practitioners nationwide, and is the author of *Smart Blood Sugar* and *The Blood Pressure Solution*.



Important Labels on Meat and Dairy Products

On foods that are not organic, these descriptions are not regulated but do indicate less toxic, better-quality food.

Grassfed beef: Grassfed cattle don't eat toxic feed, and the fat in the meat is healthier.

Pasture-raised or free-range chickens or eggs: These are usually good choices.

No antibiotics: Animals raised without antibiotics may still be eating toxic feed, but their meat and milk is better than the same foods with antibiotics.

No rbST: Seen on some dairy products, it means cows weren't given rbST, a synthetic hormone.

Did You Know?

A man dying of cancer, who had used glyphosate weed killer extensively on his job as a groundskeeper, was awarded \$78 million in damages by a California court. The case did not prove that the chemical caused the cancer, but the judge ruled that Monsanto, the manufacturer of glyphosate, withheld information about its potential risks. The company, which is facing more than 8,700 lawsuits related to glyphosate, is appealing the verdict.⁷

Energy Restoration Plan Basics

Eliminating toxins can revitalize energy production on the most basic level, in every cell. Instead of poisoning energy-producing

mitochondria in the heart and all other cells, you can harness your body's built-in detoxification system. However, that system can't do its job without the right fuel.

Most processed food, meaning anything in a package or can, contains a variety of pesticides, weed killers, and artificial additives, but lacks the nutrients that enable you to effectively eliminate these chemicals. In other words, processed food is working against you. Caffeine, alcohol, sugar, other sweeteners, and deep-fried foods also add more toxins and make it difficult for your body to detoxify.

You can reverse this effect by trading packaged foods for fresh ones and skipping the other offenders I just mentioned. And, there are specific nutrients that enhance your internal detoxification system.

Top 3 Nutrients

In addition to a diet of fresh foods, with plenty of vegetables, these nutrients are especially important for healthy detoxification:⁸

- Sulfur, found in cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, and allium vegetables such as onions and garlic.
- EGCG, the key ingredient in green tea.
- Curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric, the curry spice, which is available in supplements.

These three nutrients turn on a protein, called Nrf2, that is a master regulator of your internal antioxidants and protective mechanisms. Nrf2 turns on

glutathione,⁹ your top internal antioxidant, which plays a central role in eliminating toxic chemicals and waste products that are a byproduct of normal life.

How to Shop for Organic Fruits and Vegetables

Eating organic produce is ideal for energy production and your overall health, but it isn't always possible. If you know which fruits and vegetables contain the most pesticides, you can make it a priority to buy organic versions of those.

Every year, the non-profit Environmental Working Group (EWG) ranks pesticide levels in common fruits and vegetables and publishes *EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce*. You can get the guide at www.ewg.org.

For quick reference, these are the fruits and vegetables with the highest pesticide load, which EWG calls *The Dirty Dozen*. It's especially important to buy organic versions of these to help reduce your pesticide intake.

The Dirty Dozen

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Strawberries | 8. Pears |
| 2. Spinach | 9. Tomatoes |
| 3. Nectarines | 10. Celery |
| 4. Apples | 11. Potatoes |
| 5. Grapes | 12. Sweet Bell Peppers |
| 6. Peaches | |
| 7. Cherries | |

Get the Healthy Living App

EWG offers a free app, *EWG's Healthy Living*, which you can use on your smartphone to see health and safety ratings of more than 120,000 foods and other consumer products. You can get the app from www.ewg.org/apps.

Vital Supporting Nutrients

Glutathione is not found in any food, and you can't get it from supplements; your body must make it. To do so, you need three amino acids found in protein: glycine, cysteine, and glutamine. Non-denatured whey protein is an especially beneficial source of these amino acids, because it delivers them in a form that is very easy to absorb. Pea and rice proteins are vegan alternatives.

Milk thistle, an herb that is known for supporting liver function, enhances natural glutathione production and detoxification. In addition, physical exercise helps with detoxification by improving circulation. I recommend all these foods and supplements during a detoxification program.

The 21-Day Energy Plan

To get rid of toxins that are robbing your energy, the first week prepares your body to be able to eliminate toxins. During the next two weeks, eating a diet of fresh food, including cleansing vegetables, and taking the right supplements will root out and remove toxic sludge that is blocking energy production.

Week 1: Drink 8 to 10 glasses of filtered water each day. Don't drink coffee or other caffeinated drinks, or decaf versions, as these contain traces of caffeine. There is one exception: do drink green tea. It contains some caffeine but is also rich in detoxifying nutrients.

It's vital that you have a bowel movement each day. If this isn't happening, the water can help. In addition, eat plenty of

fresh vegetables, raw or cooked but not fried, for nutrients and fiber. If needed, take some fiber supplements or drink Smooth Move herbal tea.

Three times during the week, do some exercise that works up a sweat for about 10 minutes. If you can't do intense exercise, do what you can in a warm room or spend 10 minutes in a sauna.

Weeks 2 and 3: Continue to follow the Week 1 regimen and eliminate these:

- Processed foods — anything that comes in a bag, box, or can.
- Alcohol.
- Sugar and other sweeteners except stevia, a naturally sugar-free, non-toxic sweetener.
- Deep-fried foods.

Each week, do these 4 things:

- Eat 5 to 7 servings per week of cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli.
- Eat 3 to 5 servings per week of onions or garlic (1 to 2 cloves is one serving of garlic).
- Take supplements of curcumin and milk thistle daily, double the dose recommended on the product label.
- Get the right protein each day.

The Right Protein: Choose a non-denatured whey protein powder that is designed to be a meal replacement, such as Primal Labs Smash-It! Add a powdered supplement of concentrated green foods, such as barley grass, wheat grass, and alfalfa, for more nutritional support. Amazing Grass Green Superfood is an example.

Mix both powders together with water. Have this protein drink for breakfast, and again if you need a snack mid-afternoon. If you prefer not to eat animal products, a pea or rice protein powder or a mixture of the two can substitute for whey.

What to Keep in Mind

I'm not suggesting that you stop eating meals at your usual times. Just stick with real, fresh food — no bags, no boxes, no cans. If you usually avoid dairy, gluten, or another ingredient, keep doing that. If you need more than a protein shake in the morning, eat something that isn't in a package. This may be challenging, but it's jump-starting a new and improved way of functioning.

This energy plan lasts only 21 days, but you can continue it for a few more days, if you're getting good results and feel that extending it would be helpful. Once you're done, I encourage you to make your usual diet as non-toxic as possible to keep your energy engines humming.

1 Meyer, J.N., et al. "Mitochondrial Toxicity." *Toxicol Sci.* 2018 Mar; 162(1): 15–23.

2 Baudry, J., et al. "Association of Frequency of Organic Food Consumption With Cancer Risk. Findings from the NutriNet-Santé Prospective Cohort Study." *JAMA Internal Medicine.* Published online October 22, 2018. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2018.4357.

3 Baudry, J., et al. "Association between organic food consumption and metabolic syndrome: cross-sectional results from the NutriNet-Santé study." *Eur J Nutr.* 2018 Oct;57(7):2477-2488.

4 Forsythe, S.D., et al. "Environmental Toxin Screening Using Human-Derived 3D Bioengineered Liver and Cardiac Organoids." *Front Public Health.* 2018 Apr 16;6:103.

5 Swanson, N.L., et al. "Genetically engineered crops, glyphosate and the deterioration of health in the United States of America." *Journal of Organic Systems.* Vol.9 No.2 (2014).

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7 Reuters. "Groundskeeper in Bayer in U.S. weed-killer case accepts reduced award." October 31, 2018.

8 Rountree, R. "Roundoc Rx: Aging Well: Part 2— Interventions That Affect the Aging Process." *Alternative and Complementary Therapies.* 2010 16(5):259-264.

9 Ma, Q. "Role of Nrf2 in Oxidative Stress and Toxicity." *Annu Rev Pharmacol Toxicol.* 2013; 53: 401–426.

The Secret to Effective Aerobic Exercise



Out of our 23,000 genes, exercise positively impacts nearly 5,000 of them. Exercise is essential to prevent accelerated aging, weight gain, diabetes, heart disease, brain degeneration, and other ills. Yet many people don't exercise or do it incorrectly.

If you do what I call “chronic cardio” — spend an hour a day on a treadmill, for example, walk 3 miles every day at the same pace, or just swim laps — you're training your body to gain weight. Shocked? Most people are.

How to Do It the Right Way

Instead of chronic cardio, doing short spurts of high-intensity exercise takes less time and produces significantly greater benefits. The easiest way to measure intensity is what researchers call “perceived exertion,” meaning your own perception of how hard you're working. For example, the fastest you could walk or run is a 10 and standing still is a 1. You gauge where you are on that scale.

Here are a couple of studies that explain different ways of doing high-intensity exercise.

30 Minutes, 3 Times per Week

In one study,¹ middle-aged and older people walked for 3 minutes at an intensity of 6–7 out of 10, and then gently strolled for 3 minutes. They repeated this sequence five times, several times a week — not even every day.

The people in this study saw a huge difference in their blood pressure, aerobic fitness, and leg strength. Equally important, several years later, most of the study subjects were still doing the workout because it was easy, they saw results, and their benefits kept getting better and better.

8–12 Minutes before Meals

Another study² enrolled people with high blood sugar and proved that if they did a little intense exercise before eating, their blood sugar was lower all day and even 24 hours later. Such a benefit goes a long way in preventing weight gain and other chronic conditions that plague too many older people.

This was the exercise routine before each meal: One minute of hard walking and then one minute of easy strolling, repeated 4 to 6 times. The minute of hard walking could be replaced by one minute of upper-body exercises with resistance bands.

Types of Exercise

You can apply the principle of alternating intense and slow

movement to any type of activity, including walking or running outdoors or on a treadmill, cycling on a stationary or real bike, using an elliptical trainer, or swimming.

It's also vital to do resistance or weight training that strengthens all the muscles in your body. Yoga or other classes at a gym are one option, or find workouts online at a free site such as www.fitnessblender.com/videos.

How to Stay Motivated

Tracking your progress can help you stay motivated. The easiest way is with a fitness tracker, such as a Fitbit, Apple Watch, or similar wearable gadget. In addition to monitoring workouts, you can set up reminders to move more during the day and keep track of the number of steps you've taken in your daily activities. It's good incentive to go for an extra short walk, take stairs instead of an elevator, or take the dog for a longer walk. Then again, you could just dance to your favorite music in your living room. All movement counts.

These are some of the noticeable benefits you can expect:

- A better mood
- Less anxiety
- Less stress
- A better memory
- Sharper thinking
- More energy
- Better sleep
- More confidence
- More flexible joints
- Fewer aches and pains
- Better balance
- Improved physical strength
- Healthier skin

¹ Nemoto, K., et al. “Effects of high-intensity interval walking training on physical fitness and blood pressure in middle-aged and older people.” *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2007 Jul;82(7):803-11.

² Francois, M.E., et al. “Exercise snacks' before meals: a novel strategy to improve glycaemic control in individuals with insulin resistance.” *Diabetologia.* 2014 Jul;57(7):1437-45.

5 Surprising Benefits of Cold Weather

Colds and flu may be rampant during winter months, but cold weather also delivers some health perks, such as these:

- Cold temperatures can help you burn more calories, because your body uses energy to generate heat, especially if you're outdoors.
- Cold is anti-inflammatory, just like ice packs on an injury, and can make joints and other tissues less puffy or swollen.
- Pollen counts are virtually non-existent in winter, so outdoor allergies won't flare up.
- Going outdoors in cold weather can help you think more clearly.
- Cooler temperatures and darker mornings can help you sleep better.

If you live in an extremely cold climate, there may be occasional days when you really need to stay indoors. But otherwise, bundling up and taking a walk in brisk weather can give you a physical and mental boost.

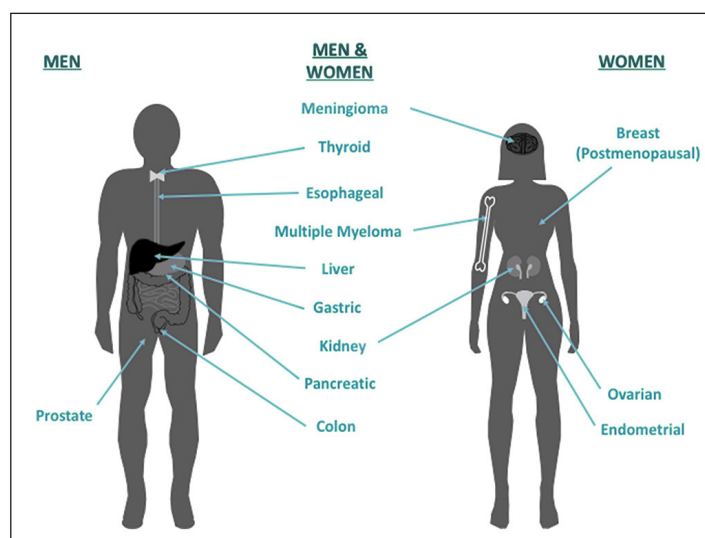


Diet Can Prevent One-Third of Cancers

A recent summary of research, published by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, noted that about one-third of cancers are preventable by diet.¹ Obesity plays a major role because it changes various metabolic processes, generates inflammation, and promotes growth of abnormal cells. But that's not all.

Earlier research shows that elevated insulin, the hormone your body makes when you eat sugar and starch, promotes growth of tumors. In other words, if you routinely eat a lot of sugary and starchy foods, they can contribute not only to weight gain but also to higher cancer risk.

Although numerous diets can lead to weight loss, not all of them are equally effective in keeping insulin at healthy levels. I favor eating plenty of fresh vegetables, moderate protein, healthy fats, and limited carbohydrates. More specifically, I recommend consuming no more than 60 grams daily of carbohydrates from a specific list of foods: baked and other grain foods, fruit juices, soda, milk, alcoholic beverages, fruit, beans, potatoes, corn, and desserts. In any one meal or snack, I recommend no more than 30



Obesity is associated with increased risk of developing and dying from the 13 cancers illustrated above.

grams of carbohydrates from this list.

You can eat plenty of food this way because there's no need to count carbs in foods that are not included on my list, such as most vegetables, eggs, meat, and fish. In addition, no foods are excluded. You can still eat fruit, grains, and even desserts, in small quantities. My patients have found this to be an effective and sustainable way to control insulin levels, lose weight, and keep it off.

¹ Smith, L.A., et al. "Translating Mechanism-Based Strategies to Break the Obesity-Cancer Link: A Narrative Review." J Acad Nutr Diet. 2018 Apr;118(4):652-667.

Why Artificial Sweeteners Are Harmful

A study of artificial low-calorie sweeteners has found that they disrupt the balance of bacteria in the gut and interfere with the normal metabolism of blood sugar,¹ which could put you on a faster road to diabetes. Healthy gut bacteria are essential for maintaining your immune defenses against infections and staying healthy overall.

Researchers in Australia tested popular chemical sweeteners that are used in many diet drinks and foods, in a group of 29 healthy people. Those in the study were not overweight and had an average age of 30. Consuming the sweeteners for just two weeks decreased beneficial gut bacteria and increased harmful ones, making the digestive systems of these healthy young people much like those of unwell individuals. In addition, their natural ability to regulate blood sugar worsened.

I've always cautioned against artificial sweeteners. To avoid sugar overload, you can use stevia, xylitol, or monk fruit. These are natural substances that don't cause health problems.

Best Protein for Senior Muscles

We lose some muscle as we age, and this happens more quickly if

we aren't physically active. When seniors become ill or hospitalized, their movement is restricted, and muscle loss speeds up. This makes them weaker and creates balance problems that can make it difficult to do everyday tasks. But whey protein can help.

Researchers in Canada tested two types of protein powder, whey and collagen peptides, in a group of healthy seniors whose movement was restricted to mimic a hospital stay. After the inactive period, they resumed their normal activities and took either whey or collagen for a week. Those taking whey rebuilt more muscle than those taking collagen.³

If you decide to try whey protein, I suggest comparing Nutrition Facts on labels of different products and choosing one that contains the least amount of sugar and carbohydrates. Many are sweetened with stevia, which is a good option for sugar-free sweetness.

Statin Users: **Alert!**

It's well known that cholesterol-lowering statin drugs deplete CoQ10 (short for coenzyme Q10), a nutrient that is essential for healthy heart function and production of energy in all cells. Its depletion likely contributes to side effects of the drugs, such as muscle weakness. Nutritionally savvy health professionals have known this for some time and many have recommended CoQ10 supplements for their patients, but not all cardiologists or other doctors do so.

Now, a review of 12 clinical trials, with a total of 575 patients taking statins, has demonstrated that taking CoQ10 supplements reduces the drugs' side effects, including muscle pain, muscle weakness, muscle fatigue, and cramping.² Hopefully, more physicians will become aware of the evidence, and will tell their patients to take CoQ10 supplements to prevent or reduce statin side effects.

More Talking = Slower Walking

Walking and texting or reading things on a phone obviously distracts and slows a person down. But talking on the phone can have a similar effect. A Canadian study found that people take fewer, shorter steps when doing any of these, and so they walk more slowly.⁴ If you want more benefits from a walk, stay off the phone, be aware of your environment, and put more energy into moving.



Did You Know?

By the time you're 50, you've probably walked about 75,000 miles. That's like walking around Earth three times.

1 Young, R., et al. Presentation at the European Association for the Study of Diabetes Annual Meeting, 2018. 2 Qu, H., et al. "Effects of Coenzyme Q10 on Statin-Induced Myopathy: An Updated Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials." J Am Heart Assoc. 2018 Oct 2;7(19):e009835. 3 Oikawa, S.Y., et al. "A randomized controlled trial of the impact of protein supplementation on leg lean mass and integrated muscle protein synthesis during inactivity and energy restriction in older persons." The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2018 Oct 4. 4 Alsaleh, R., et al. "Assessing the Effect of Pedestrians' Use of Cell Phones on Their Walking Behavior: A Study Based on Automated Video Analysis." Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board. June 13, 2018.

Q&A

Q: I think I'm pretty healthy, but I often feel gassy after a meal and I've been struggling with my weight. Could dairy be the problem? — Emily K.

A: Gas is one common symptom of dairy intolerance, and congestion is another. Some people are so used to some degree of congestion that it seems normal — until it clears up. Some other symptoms may include bloating, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, and nausea. I've also seen joint pain lessen or disappear when dairy was eliminated, but that doesn't mean dairy triggers all joint pain, as reactions differ from one person to another.

As far as weight struggles, dairy intolerance could play an indirect role by increasing overall inflammation in your body and acting as an internal source of stress. Both inflammation and stress contribute to weight gain. However, I don't know if this is occurring in your case.

Here's how to tell if dairy is a problem for you: Stop eating all sources of dairy for a week or two and see how you feel. During this elimination period, it's important not to cheat because if you are intolerant, it can take your body a while to calm down from any reaction. If you cheat, you need to start over.

If you notice an improvement, try re-introducing a small amount of dairy foods and see if your original

symptoms recur. Some people can tolerate small amounts of dairy, while larger amounts trigger symptoms; each person's tolerance level is different. In addition, not all types of dairy foods necessarily cause the same reaction.

Some people do well when eating good-quality yogurt — the kind with live bacteria listed on the label — but they can't tolerate milk. Compared to milk, yogurt contains less lactose, the sugar that's naturally present in milk and is a common problematic ingredient. There's even less lactose in aged cheeses, which are generally the hard cheeses rather than spreadable ones. The most important thing is to understand your personal response to dairy and choose foods that work well for you.

Q: A friend of mine has been raving about alkaline water. Is alkaline water the best kind?

— Zack H.

A: I'm glad you asked, because alkaline water is becoming more popular. I don't recommend it because it could cause digestive problems by reducing stomach acid. Gas, indigestion, a sour stomach, heartburn, and other problems can be the result.

I know this flies in the face of conventional wisdom, but too little stomach acid — rather than too much — is a common problem. Your digestive system needs stomach acid to make digestive enzymes that break down food.

A few years ago, a lab study found that alkaline water inactivates pepsin, a key enzyme that breaks down protein. The

water can have a similar effect on other digestive enzymes and bile, which is necessary to digest fat. And then, partially digested food and stomach juices can linger in the stomach and cause heartburn or other distress.

You also need stomach acid to extract essential vitamins and minerals from food. Older people often have nutritional deficiencies because levels of stomach acid decline with age, reducing absorption of nutrients from food and supplements. If you'd like to know more about this, I encourage you to check out a more detailed article about stomach acid in the previous issue of this newsletter (Volume 1, Issue 6).

As far as your body's overall balance of acidity and alkalinity, it can become less than optimal if you lack essential minerals. The best way to get your minerals is by eating plenty of vegetables every day.

Do you have a question for Dr. Marlene?

Send your health-related questions to drmarlene@naturalhealthconnections.com. Please include your first name and the initial of your last name. Although she cannot answer each question directly, Dr. Marlene will select a few in each newsletter and will address other questions and concerns in articles in future issues. Answers are intended for educational purposes only and should not be viewed as medical advice. If you need help with your subscription or have questions about Primal Health supplements, email support@primalhealthlp.com or call 877-300-7849.