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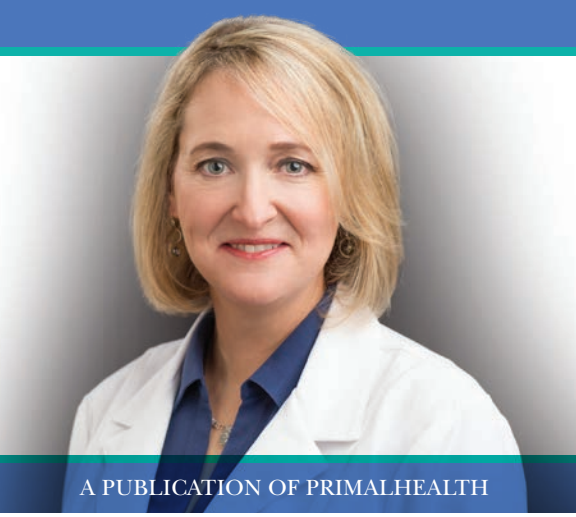

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CONTENTS

Mold: The Hidden Trigger of More Than 40 Ailments

Mold in our homes, offices, and schools is a growing problem, and it's making more and more people sick. Find out if it's putting your health at risk, and what to do about it.

I'm seeing a lot of patients with mysterious symptoms, from headaches and joint pain to sleep difficulties and memory lapses that seem like early-onset Alzheimer's — but, thankfully, are not. Mold is a root cause or contributor to so many ailments — especially dementia-like symptoms — that I want you to have the latest information on the subject.

Mold can be an obvious, visible problem, or maybe the musty smell becomes too disgusting to ignore. But it can also be hidden, which makes it even more hazardous. All these situations can lead to debilitating conditions.

I'm also seeing more headlines about the consequences of being in a moldy building. For example, a military family was awarded $2 million in damages after experiencing health problems as a result of living in mold-contaminated housing managed by a private company. (As you might expect, the management company appealed the verdict.)

Family members' symptoms included congestion, wheezing, dizziness, fatigue, itching, headaches, diarrhea, and vomiting. And these didn't resolve with visits to multiple doctors — until the family moved out of the contaminated house.

Schools, posts offices, college dorms, a hospital surgical wing, and other public buildings in various parts of the country have been closed for mold removal after occupants complained or got sick. This isn't surprising, given that a study by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that as many as 85 percent of public and commercial office buildings have had water damage in the past and nearly half had current leaks, setting the stage for mold growth.[1]

Mold in Homes

If you live in an area that's ever been flooded — even years ago — there's a good chance that repairs were not done correctly. Although things may

look fine, hidden mold toxins could be contaminating your home. But it doesn't take a flood to produce toxic mold.

A study led by researchers from the National Institutes of Health tested dust from nearly 7,000 American bedrooms for mold and other allergens and found that more than 7 in 10 bedrooms had significant levels of one or more of these.[2] And the study tested levels of only one species of mold — there are many others.

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Even the International Space Station has a nagging mold problem. Research presented at the 2019 Astrobiology Science Conference in Bellevue, Wash., shows that two types of common mold (*Aspergillus* and *Penicillium*) are so hardy that they can survive x-ray exposure at 200 times the dose that would kill a human. They may also survive on the outside walls of spacecraft.[3]

Is Mold Really Harmful?

Many of my patients are puzzled when I bring up the subject. "What's wrong with mold?" I'm often asked. "And why worry about it now; it's been around forever."

It's true that mold has a long history, but that doesn't mean it can't hurt you when it grows in your home or work environment. In fact, the Old Testament refers to it as "defiling mold," and describes how to deal with it. The instructions include removing moldy sections of the walls of a house and, if the structure is too contaminated, demolishing it and disposing of the debris outside the town.[4]

Today, mold may be "killed" with chemicals, but guess what? That makes things much worse — I'll describe why in a moment.

The widely accepted health effects of mold are just the tip of the iceberg, but for the record, these are medically acknowledged symptoms: a stuffy nose, an irritated throat, coughing, wheezing, eye irritation, or skin irritation.

It's also recognized that exposure to mold can trigger or worsen allergies and asthma;[5] in people who have chronic lung disease or a compromised immune system, it can cause serious lung infections.[6] But these aren't the only dangers.

Why One in Four People Suffer from More Debilitating Symptoms

Beyond the mostly respiratory effects, there's growing recognition of a debilitating medical condition triggered by exposure to mold: Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome, or CIRS for short.

About one in four people are genetically predisposed to react this way to mold, and the symptoms can be a combination of many, many different things with no clear connection.

Most doctors don't know about CIRS, and it isn't in any official medical guidelines — yet. But cutting-edge health practitioners are helping patients to recover from conditions that have defied medical treatment for years. There's a list of possible manifestations on the next page.

The existence of CIRS is questioned by some experts, and in one sense, this isn't surprising. Western medicine pigeonholes symptoms, and patients see different specialists who don't talk to each other.

Skin problem? See a dermatologist. Eye problem? See an ophthalmologist. Heartburn? See a gastroenterologist. Patients can be bounced from one specialist to another like a ping-pong ball.

There is a place for specialists, but when multiple ailments don't neatly fit into the domain of one practitioner, no one looks at the whole person and root causes of the ailments.

One of the telltale signs of CIRS is that patients have seen many different specialists. When I first meet with a new patient who has been to a dozen different specialists with no relief, I start investigating possible CIRS. By the way, when I say, "a dozen different specialists," I'm not exaggerating — some people have seen more.

Disbelief Blocks Relief

Another reason why CIRS is sometimes viewed with skepticism is sheer disbelief that mold could cause significant health problems. Apart from being unsightly and smelly, mold is all-too-often viewed as a benign substance — partially because not everyone has the same reaction to it. And disbelief can prevent relief.

Symptoms of Severe Mold Sensitivity: Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS)

For people who are genetically predisposed, exposure to mold can lead to CIRS: a combination of seemingly mysterious symptoms that defy diagnosis and treatment. Patients suffering from the condition have symptoms that fall into multiple categories below.

Categories of Symptoms

1. Fatigue
2. Weakness, difficulty assimilating new knowledge, aches, headache, light sensitivity
3. Memory problems, difficulty finding words
4. Difficulty concentrating
5. Joint pain, stiffness in the morning, cramps
6. Unusual skin sensations, tingling
7. Shortness of breath, sinus congestion
8. Cough, excessive thirst, confusion
9. Appetite swings, difficulty regulating body temperature, increased urinary frequency
10. Red eyes, blurred vision, night sweats, mood swings, pain that feels like an ice pick
11. Abdominal pain, heartburn, diarrhea, numbness
12. Tearing of the eyes, disorientation, metallic taste
13. Static shocks, vertigo

Other Possible Symptoms

Often, one or more of these other symptoms are also present in cases of CIRS:

1. Asthma
2. Clotting and bleeding issues, such as spontaneous nosebleeds, excessive clotting in women's periods, macular degeneration, heart attacks, strokes, mini strokes, and deep vein thrombosis (blood clots in the lower leg or thigh)
3. Diagnosis of chronic fatigue syndrome or fibromyalgia
4. Hand tremor
5. Low testosterone in both men and women
6. Migraines that last more than 24 hours and don't respond to medications
7. Seizures
8. Sleep issues
9. Weight gain that happens quickly and then weight is very difficult to lose

No single symptom above is an indication of CIRS — a combination is the hallmark of the condition.

The one-in-four people who are genetically very sensitive to it can develop severe symptoms from exposure. But because others in the same environment don't react the same way, they may resist the idea that mold is the culprit.

Lab tests (which I'll describe in a moment) can detect two important things: who is genetically super-sensitive to mold and whether their home is contaminated and making them sick. But even then, I find that some of my patients can find it hard to believe until they understand how it works.

Disbelief by those close to them can be another barrier to relief. One of my mold-sensitive patients is living apart from her husband, not because she wants to leave or divorce him, but because he refuses to remove visible mold in their home.

Once this lady understood that mold was making her sick, she moved into an apartment that wasn't contaminated with mold and started regaining her health. Now, when she briefly visits her husband in their home, she wears a mask. Meanwhile, her husband is waiting for the mold to dry — which will make the house even more toxic.

Why Mold Is Dangerous

When I talk about mold, I'm really talking about a "soup" of toxic substances. Different types of mold grow in a moist environment along with bacteria. The surface on which they're growing — building materials, paper, fabric, and anything else that can become moldy — provides food.

What we see as "mold" is

really a collection of many tiny organism. They exist as spores that float in the air and settle in moist areas where they can grow. Inhaling mold spores is known to cause respiratory ailments. In addition, there are other forms of mold that can cause or contribute to the long list of maladies in CIRS.

3 Hazardous Substances

For mold-sensitive people, problems are triggered by spores and even more so by three other substances: Bacteria that grows alongside mold, toxins produced by mold, and microscopic fragments of dried, dead mold.

Here's what happens: Spores of various types of mold land in a moist area. All the different types of mold and bacteria compete for the food and water, and they emit toxins as weapons to fight each other for survival.

Once mold dies, by drying out or being killed off by chemicals used by many mold-remediation contractors, it breaks up into more toxic, microscopic fragments that can persist long after mold is "gone." One mold spore breaks up into 400–500 fragments.

Bacteria, toxins emitted by mold when it's alive, and tiny fragments of dried mold trigger many symptoms in sensitive people. These particles are much smaller than mold spores and aren't detected by some of the common tests for mold in a building.

Why Tiny Particles Are Harmful

Mold spores, like pollen spores that cause hay fever, can make many people cough or sneeze or get congested. When you inhale spores, your respiratory system generally recognizes them as irritants that need to be eliminated, and the coughing or sneezing is a natural way to get rid of them.

Mold "soup" particles — toxins, fragments, and bacteria — also irritate your respiratory system, but they are so small that they can be inhaled deep into your lungs.[7]

Once the "soup" of tiny particles penetrates, it does two things: Your body recognizes it as an invasion, and the immune system creates inflammation as it tries to fight off the invader. At the same time, these particles attack mitochondria, which are microscopic parts of every cell that generate energy.

When mitochondria can't function normally, cells can't produce energy in the normal way; therefore, fatigue is the top symptom of mold toxicity. Inflammation can trigger an endless array of symptoms in many parts of the body.

Why Mold Is a Growing Health Problem

Mold grows quickly in moist areas — if water is present for 24–48 hours. And every home has at least occasional leaks that aren't immediately fixed. On top of that, condensation from showers and dryers that aren't vented to the outdoors can lead to mold growth.

You might think that older homes are more susceptible, but mold is an equal opportunity invader. Building materials and methods used in recent decades predispose newer buildings to water damage.

During construction, homes are wrapped in materials designed to keep air and water out and let water vapor escape. The purpose is to prevent rot and mold in walls, protect against wind and

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,™ 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.*

rain that can seep through the exterior cladding, and to improve the efficiency of insulation and reduce heating and cooling costs.

While this sounds good, some wraps have microscopic perforations for ventilation, which can allow water to seep in. Even if a wrap is designed to work perfectly, its installation may not be perfect. For example, a rainy day during construction could cause some minor water damage to a part of the structure, which is then sealed off under a wrapping material, allowing mold to grow and remain hidden.

Manufactured wood products, such as particleboard, are popular alternatives to timber or plywood because they cost less. However, manufactured woods are more porous and more prone to soaking up water and allowing mold growth. Drywall is another material that provides good food for mold.

Sloppy construction, remodeling, or repairs are all ways that homes become predisposed to mold. Examples include improperly installed windows or window flashing, loose roof tiles, or incorrectly installed siding.

The Most Mold-Prone Parts of a Home

In addition to showers, common places for water to damage a home and cause mold growth are the heating and air conditioning system, or a swamp cooler, and in basements and crawl spaces. Where homes are in a climate that has extremely hot or cold temperatures, heating or cooling can cause condensation on windows. The water can drip down onto windowsills and lead to mold growth. While the amount of water may seem relatively small, the fact that it happens repeatedly makes it a mold-friendly breeding ground.

The humidity of your home can also trigger mold, which starts growing at 60-percent humidity. I recommend keeping the humidity level inside your house no higher than 50 percent. For more places to check for mold, see *Where to Check for Mold at Home* on the next page.

Who Should Steer Clear of Mold?

The short answer is everyone. If you have allergies, recurring sinusitis, a recurring or persistent cough, or other respiratory ailments, avoiding mold may bring some relief. If you consider yourself healthy, staying out of moldy environments can help you stay that way. And if you have nagging symptoms that aren't diagnosable illnesses but make your life less than ideal, I also recommend getting rid of any mold in your environment and being vigilant to keep it out of your home in the future.

That said, how do you know if you or someone you care about is among the one-in-four who are super-sensitive to mold? You can get tested to see if you have the genes that predispose people to mold-related illnesses.

Vital Mold Facts

- Mold will form when water is present for 24–48 hours.
- There are dozens of different types of mold that will grow in moist areas of buildings; 5 of these are known to be toxic.
- Once mold has dried, a single mold spore breaks up into 400 to 500 microscopic, toxic fragments.
- Mold fragments can be more dangerous than mold spores, because they lodge more deeply into lungs and can lead to a stronger immune response than the original spores, triggering many more symptoms.
- Spraying chemicals on mold to dry it out or "kill" it will break it up into millions of toxic fragments that can cause even more health problems than the original mold.
- Toxic mold fragments are typically not detected by routine testing of air for mold in homes.
- When mold remediation contractors get rid of water-damaged, moldy parts of a structure, they often overlook mold fragments, which can continue to cause health problems.
- If an area of a building was water-damaged sometime in the past, became moldy, and then the mold dried, it could still contain mold fragments that cause health problems for mold-sensitive people. This can happen even if the water damage occurred a long time ago.
- Mold can start to grow without any leaks or visible water damage, if the humidity in a building is 60% or higher. Keep humidity no higher than 50%.

Where to Check for Mold at Home

Seeing or smelling mold are obvious signs of a mold problem, but it isn't always that obvious. These are places to check in your existing home, or if you're planning to move into a new one.

- Look for any visible leaks.
- Check under each sink for discoloration or water damage.
- Look at each window for discoloration on the sills, or in the paint around the windows.
- Check each door for discoloration of the doorframe, especially at the floor level.
- Check around each toilet for evidence of water damage.
- Check around the HVAC system and water heater for any staining, indicating water damage.
- Look at the vent in each room for evidence of mold. Shine a flashlight in if possible.
- Check the intakes for the HVAC system. If possible, remove the outer screen, and shine a flashlight in as far as you can to check if you can see mold
- Check the basement for any moisture or staining indicating past water damage.
- Dryers need to be vented to the outside.
- Look behind the dishwasher and refrigerator and check for water damage or staining.
- Check the attic for staining of the insulation, indicating water damage.

Keep in mind that if water damage in the past produced mold growth — even if the damaged area is now dry — each mold spore breaks down into 400–500 microscopic fragments that are toxic and can cause illness.

The Test for Mold Sensitivity

This test looks at certain human leukocyte antigen (HLA) genes, which influence how your immune system reacts to mold-related toxins. This type of genetic test is traditionally used to test organ donors for compatibility, but it can also detect mold-sensitive genes.

There is more than one type of HLA test. This is the one you want to detect mold sensitivity: HLA DR1/3/4/5, DQ Intermediate Resolution.

You can order the test directly from True Health Labs at www.truehealthlabs.com. In the search box, enter the name of the test: HLA DR1/3/4/5, DQ Intermediate Resolution. Or, you can go directly this link: www.truehealthlabs.com/HLA-DR1-3-4-5-DQ-Intermediate-Resolution-p/lc_167120.htm. This is easiest to do if you're reading a digital version of this newsletter.

Understanding the Results

Once you have the test results, this link will help you to understand what they mean: www.myhousemakesmesick.com/hlacalc/. It asks you to input numbers from your test results, and then calculates your degree of sensitivity to mold.

The test costs about $300, and I have no way to tell if your insurance will cover it. I'm not suggesting everyone get the test. However, if you're like my patients who have seen many, many specialists for different debilitating symptoms that defy diagnosis or treatment, it might help you identify a way to end the suffering.

How to Test Your Home

In addition to looking for mold, you can test your home for mold and mold fragments that cause health problems. The test I recommend looks for the presence of the top five toxic molds and their byproducts. It uses samples of dust from your home that are analyzed in a lab.

This test — called HERTSMI-2 — detects DNA of mold. It's the only type of test that shows whether there are mold fragments.

To get the test, go to www.envirobiomics.com, the "shop" section, and choose HERTSMI-2. There are a few different options and prices. Choose the default "Swiffer Kit" version with a turnaround time of 7 days, with the lowest price of $130.

If you're reading this in a digital format, here's the direct link to the test: www.envirobiomics.com/product/hertsmi-2/.

You will receive a test kit and instructions for taking and sending in dust samples. The results will assign a score to your dust. Under 10 is considered safe for people who are suffering from mold toxicity.

Testing is not a substitute for inspecting your home. It's most helpful when you suspect mold is hidden or want to verify that it's all been removed.

Air Filters

If you suspect or know you have a mold problem but can't immediately tackle the whole project, get an air filter. It is *not* a replacement for removing mold, but the right type of filter will reduce the amount of mold fragments and toxins in your air.

Your air filter should have

two filters: charcoal for odor and noxious air and a HEPA filter for mold spores and fragments. Two good brands are Air Oasis and Air Doctor.

How to Safely Get Rid of Mold

If you don't remove mold correctly, it can become even more toxic than it was just sitting there. To be clear, I am *not* recommending that you ignore mold — ever! But you must remove it properly.

If mold grows on a hard surface that isn't porous, such as ceramic tile or solid wood, it can be wiped off. But any material that absorbs moisture — such as drywall, carpet, manufactured wood, paper, drapes, upholstered furniture, and ceiling tiles — also absorbs mold, mold fragments, and toxins. It's impossible to get rid of the mold and toxins without physically getting rid of that material.

Am I talking about literally removing a moldy portion of a cupboard or wall or windowsill and replacing it? Yes! This may be a daunting prospect, but it's the only way to truly and safely remove mold.

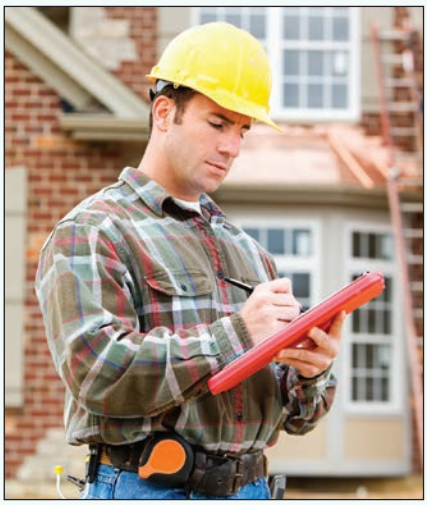
Hiring Professionals: Pitfalls to Avoid

If you have health problems that are being triggered or worsened by mold, it makes sense to take an aggressive approach to get rid of it. Mold inspectors and mold remediation contractors are two types of professionals who can help you. Each perform specialized tasks, and it's important to choose competent professionals.

One telltale sign to avoid: If a mold inspector or any mold remediation contractor talks about "killing" mold with a spray, rather than removing and replacing mold-affected materials or parts of the structure, stop right there and find someone else. "Killing" mold creates bigger problems by creating microscopic fragments that make people sick.

What to Look for in a Mold Inspector

Many people think home inspectors — the kind who check the structure when you're buying a home — are the same as mold inspectors. This is not the case.



While home inspectors will note any visible mold they happen to see, they are not looking for it. Mold inspectors understand where to look and will do so, in the places where mold is likely to hide as well as for obvious, exposed moldy areas. They will also perform various tests that a regular home inspector is not equipped to do.

If you're going to hire a mold inspector, check if your state requires mold inspectors to be licensed, and choose a licensed one. And, avoid inspectors from companies that also do mold remediation — you want an independent professional to assess the damage.

Here are some important things that a competent mold inspector should do:

- Thoroughly discuss your concerns and ask you about the history of water damage in the home.
- Conduct a thorough visual inspection of the entire home. For a 2,000-square-foot home, this should take about 1–2 hours but can take longer if you ask a lot of questions or there are a lot of issues in the home.
- Inspect all areas of the home, using a flashlight in dark spaces, including attics, crawlspaces, HVAC vents and any air handler, under sinks, and around the exterior of the home. In some locations, laws require that HVAC inspections are done by an HVAC contractor.
- Use a moisture meter to measure moisture in building materials, to see if moisture levels are high enough for mold growth that would otherwise not be detectable.
- Use a humidity meter — a hygrometer — to measure moisture levels in the air.
- Take samples of air (spore traps) and samples of dust on surfaces (with a tape, swab, or swipe). These tests are essential but don't replace visual inspection.
- Take photos of moldy areas and related meter readings and write a detailed report that includes the photos. For example, if the moisture meter shows high moisture levels in a wall under a window, the inspector should take a picture of the moisture meter's reading with it touching the wall. This report is the initial "prescription" for remediation.

A more advanced mold inspector will use additional tools such as an infrared camera, a VOC meter, and a fine particle counter.

The cost of a mold inspection varies around the country, but is usually between $400 and $700.

What Is Mold Remediation?

"Remediation" in this sense means getting rid of mold. The first step is making sure that any leaks have been fixed; otherwise, mold will continue to grow.

When choosing a mold remediation company, you want one that removes both mold and "small particles." Those are the fragments and toxins I described earlier that lodge deep into lungs and cause immune-system reactions and inflammation that make and keep people sick. Not all mold remediators are equipped to remove small particles.

After any leaks are fixed, these steps should be included in the remediation process: Physically removing and replacing moldy parts of a home, such as a piece of moldy drywall. And then there is a step that involves spraying or "fogging."

This spraying is done *after* all the mold has been removed and is not the same as spraying mold to kill it — which should never be done. The after-mold-removal type of spraying is done to remove microscopic mold fragments and toxins that continue to float in the air.

Such tiny fragments are too light to settle on surfaces. The right type of spray — with a substance such as Aerosolver (www.aerosolver.com) — will enable them to settle, and then they can be wiped off or vacuumed. Clean-up should always be done with a vacuum that has a HEPA filter, which is designed to pick up tiny particles.

Beware of Moldy Personal Belongings

In addition to removing mold, it's vital to either clean or replace personal belongings that became moldy. Contaminated mattresses, bedroom pillows, upholstered furniture, and window coverings made of textiles usually must be replaced, but bedding can be washed.

Clothing with actual mold on it needs to be thrown away, but if it was just in the environment, it can be washed with normal laundry detergent with some added borax.

Moldy books, photos, memorabilia made of porous materials, and ceramic objects that aren't glazed usually need to be disposed of if you're a mold-sensitive person. If these have sentimental value, I suggest putting them away in airtight containers and determining what can be saved at a later time.

A Final Word

You can keep your home healthy by keeping humidity no higher than 50 percent and getting any leaks fixed right away. And if you suspect or know that you have mold, get it removed.

Many of the mold-related symptoms I've described can have other causes. If you feel exhausted, for example, I'm not assuming that you have a mold problem. If you also have multiple symptoms described on page 3, you might, but many things can sap your energy. I suggest you check out *Related to This Topic* for earlier issues of this newsletter that address some of the most common ailments that may or may not be related to mold.

If you suspect that you are suffering from CIRS, removing the mold is the first step. Some people recover by doing just that. But others also need personalized treatment by a health professional who understands the condition.

Whether you're currently healthy or not, I hope I've given you an understanding of why mold is not something you want to live with, and ways to avoid it.

Related to This Topic

These are some earlier issues of this newsletter that address related topics:

Related Topic	Volume	Issue	Title
Fatigue	1	7	The 21-Day Energy Restoration Plan
Sleep	2	2	The 10-Minute Sleep Solution
Joint Pain	2	5	The 90-Day Program to Relieve Arthritis
Headaches	2	6	Drug-Free Headache Remedies That Really Work

Access these online by logging in to www.NaturalHealthConnections.com.

1 United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Moisture Control Guidance for Building Design, Construction and Maintenance."

2 Salo, P.M., et al. "Bedroom allergen exposures in US households." J Allergy Clin Immunol. 2018 May;141(5):1870-1879.e14.

3 Cortesão, M., et al. "502-5 Fungal spore resistance to space radiation." 2019 Astrobiology Science Conference (AbSciCon). June 24-28, 2019.

4 Leviticus 14:33. New International Version (NIV). https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14&version=NIV

5 Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Assessment of Asthma and Indoor Air. "Clearing the Air: Asthma and Indoor Air Exposures." Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2000.

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In another study, healthy people taking UC-II were able to exercise longer before experiencing pain than the placebo group and significantly improved range of motion.[14]

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(12) Pietrzkowski, Z et al, Clin Interv Aging, 2014 (13) Lugo, JP et al. Nutrition Journal, Vol 15, No. 1 Jan 2016 (14) Lugo, JP, et al. J Int Soc Sports Nutr 2013 Oct

Meat Confusion Clarified

Some recent headlines about meat may well have left you confused, so I'd like to shed some light on the subject. Many experts have been recommending eating less red and processed meat for years, but a new study that seems to contradict this advice has caused quite a stir in nutritional circles.

The headlines have been something like this: "No need to cut back on meat," and the authors of the study (14 scientists from multiple countries, led by a Canadian) have received a lot of criticism. What's happening here?

To put this into perspective, the controversial new study is *not* saying "eat more meat." Rather, the study — which analyzed results of many earlier trials that altogether tracked millions of people — found that there was no meaningful association between eating three fewer servings per week and the risk for heart disease, diabetes, or cancer.[1]

Based on this data, the authors concluded that there's no need for experts to tell people to eat less meat than they currently do. They also noted that for most meat eaters, cutting back would be quite difficult, and the health benefits don't justify telling people to do so.

What Should You Do?

I'm not a proponent of filling your plate with meat, but it can certainly be part of a healthy diet. I recommend eating more vegetables that aren't starchy (not a lot of potatoes or corn, for example), and some meat.

Red meat is nutrient-dense. And, the most nutritious cuts are the least expensive ones, with bones and connective tissue. Slow cook them until they're tender. Unlike pure muscle meat, such cuts contain collagen to keep joints and skin supple.

Equally important, our conventionally raised meat contains inflammatory fat and hormones, antibiotics, and pesticides. To avoid these, try to choose meat that's grass-fed, organic, or both. Grass-fed meat contains healthy, anti-inflammatory fat.

I hope this helps to clarify the issue. The real problem with most diets is too many sugars and carbohydrates from grains, potatoes, and corn. I cover this in more detail in Volume 1, Issue 8, of this newsletter: *The Guide to Healthy Eating*.

Did You Know?

In the typical American diet, 42 percent of daily calories come from refined grains, sugars, and starchy vegetables — carbohydrates that are, nutritionally speaking, low in quality.[2] They pack a lot of calories that don't contribute to your health and well-being and lead you down the path to diabetes and heart disease.

Feeling Optimistic? It's Good for Your Heart

If you've ever wondered if your outlook on life affects your health, here's a clue: Angina, strokes, heart attacks, and deaths from these are all less likely among people who are optimistic, according to an analysis of 15 medical studies with a total of nearly 230,000 people.

The research, by the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City, looked at people's views about their future, and how these correlated with their health. Examples of an optimistic perspective would be "In uncertain times I usually expect the best," or "I am always optimistic about my future," whereas a pessimistic one would be "I hardly expect things to go my way."[3]

If your own perspective needs a boost, here are some common-sense things to try:

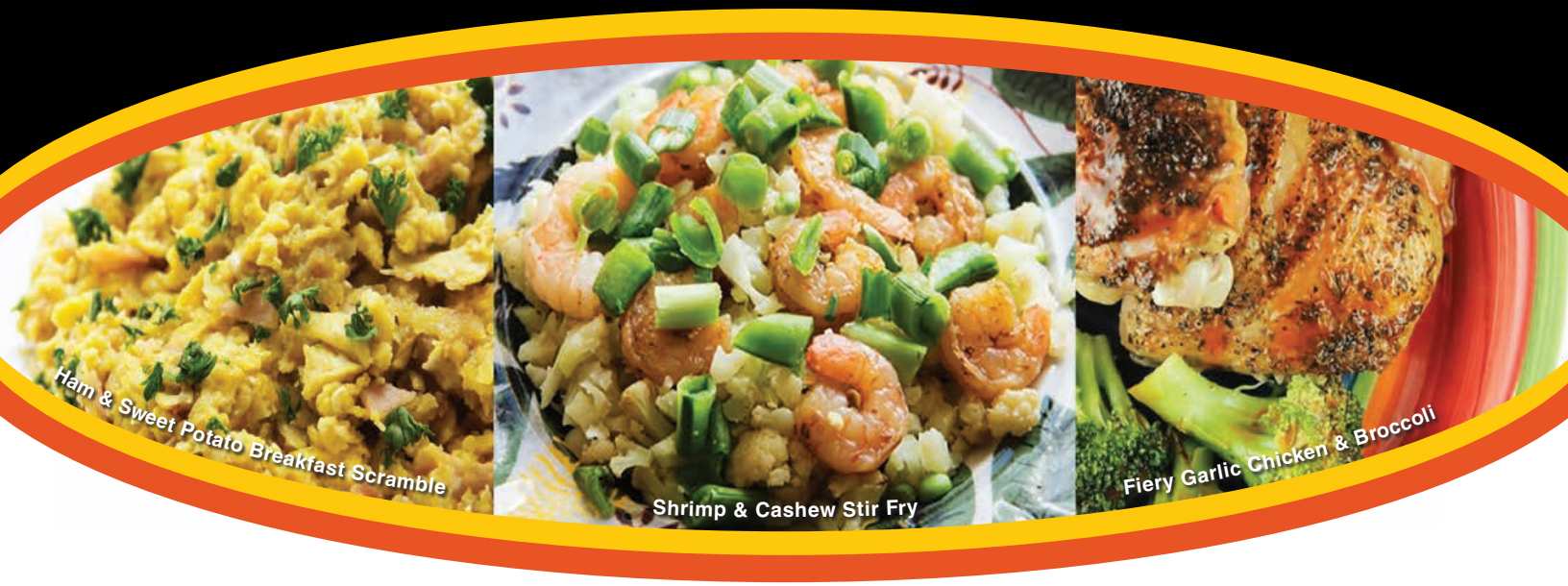
- Turn off the news, or at least pay less attention to it.
- Spend more time with people whose company you enjoy.
- Catch up with old friends.
- Take time to do something you enjoy.

Each of us is unique when it comes to enjoyable activities. Maybe you have a favorite hobby, enjoy playing games or watching sports, like to read novels, crave taking a walk in a scenic area, or just want to have a long, relaxing bath.

1 Johnston, B.C., et al. "Unprocessed Red Meat and Processed Meat Consumption: Dietary Guideline Recommendations From the Nutritional Recommendations (NutriRECS) Consortium." Ann Intern Med. 2019 Oct 1. doi: 10.7326/M19-1621. [Epub ahead of print] 2 Shan, Z., et a l. "Trends in Dietary Carbohydrate, Protein, and Fat Intake and Diet Quality Among US Adults, 1999-2016." JAMA. 2019 Sep 24;322(12):1178-1187. 3 Rozanski, A., et al. "Association of Optimism With Cardiovascular Events and All-Cause Mortality: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis." JAMA Netw Open. 2019 Sep 4;2(9):e1912200.

The Most Thrilling Way to Eat Healthy!

Feel your taste buds come alive…



If you like eating healthy, but hate bland and boring foods, you'll be excited to hear this…

For dinner tonight, you could be eating fiery garlic chicken and broccoli…and then wake up tomorrow to a delicious ham and sweet potato breakfast scramble…only to pack a scrumptious lunch of shrimp and cashew stir fry.

These meals are **delicious** and **nutritious**, and most important, they're **"perfect"** for healthy blood sugar and healthy blood pressure.

You see, we hired a professional nutrition planner with a degree in culinary arts to create hundreds of complete meal plans. And all of them **adhere to the healthy eating formula** of 65% healthy fats, 25% protein, and 10% carbohydrates.

We call it **Perfect Meal Plans** because they take the guesswork out of healthy eating.

This inexpensive service provides weekly meal plans that include recipes, shopping lists, and online support. You don't need to be a good cook. You don't need any special tools. Just follow the weekly meal plan, and you'll soon be losing weight, sleeping better, have more energy and living a healthier life.

Jack from Columbus, Ohio says:

"In the last year, I've lost about 33 pounds, my A1C dropped 0.9 points, and my blood pressure is now running in the 106/68 range. My doctor was very surprised at my results and said they were the best he had ever seen with me (and that's looking back ten years!). I'm excited about this program and plan on continuing it!"

And Katherine from Mobile, Alabama reports:

"Now I don't have to worry about creating nutritious combinations for my meals, plus I'm saving time every day. I definitely recommend ***Perfect Meal Plans*** *to anyone who wants to save time and eat healthy!"*

With **Perfect Meal Plans**, it's like having your own nutritionist on call 24/7. So, why eat boring meals, when you can eat like kings and queens—and still get the healthy results you want?

And here's the best part! You get tasty, health-improving **Perfect Meal Plans** sent to your email inbox for the low price of just $9.95. The meals are easy to prepare, they're delicious, and they're perfect for your health. Order today!

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Q&A

Q: Your 90-day program to relieve arthritis says to take 4 grams of fish oil, which is 4,000 milligrams daily. Sounds like a lot. Should the amount be reduced depending on your diet? Would 4 grams of krill oil be the same? *— Mac M*

A: If we were talking about taking fish oil to maintain good health, then I would recommend only 1 gram of fish oil daily. Even better, skip the supplement and routinely eat fatty fish that's low in mercury and rich in anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats, such as salmon, herring, mackerel, and sardines, a few times a week. But dealing with arthritis is a different situation.

The presence of arthritis indicates that chronic inflammation is out of control — that's why arthritic joints hurt. Calming the inflammation is a major goal of my program (see Volume 2, Issue 5, of this newsletter: *The 90-Day Program to Relieve Arthritis*).

Fish oil provides omega-3 fats that are anti-inflammatory, and taking 4 grams daily is designed to boost your body's ability to gain control of the pain-promoting inflammation. More specifically, the omega-3 fats in fish oil are building blocks of resolvins, healing substances made by your body that reduce inflammation and naturally relieve pain.

The ideal diet would not only contain ample omega-3 fats; it would also be low in inflammatory foods, such as sugars, starchy carbohydrates, refined vegetable oils, and packaged and processed foods in general. These are all things I recommend as part of my program, along with adequate sleep and exercise.

Krill oil is another source of omega-3 fats. However, its exact composition is not identical to fish oil, and due to conflicting results of scientific studies, no one can definitely say what a comparable dosage might be.

Your question about diet is spot on. Omega-3 fats, like other nutrients, are absorbed more efficiently from food; if you eat fish on a given day, you wouldn't need as much fish oil.

As you know, fish in their natural state don't have nutrition labels, but these are some estimates of omega-3 content in a 3-ounce serving: 1.5 grams in fresh, cooked Atlantic or King salmon, herring, or mackerel; 1–1.5 grams in canned salmon or mackerel; and 0.5–1 gram in canned sardines.

Q: I know that I shouldn't be drinking soda, but I really like cold drinks with some sweetness. Is fruit juice without any added sugar a healthier option? *— Debbie J.*

A: Fruit juice does contain nutrients that you won't find in soda, especially if it's fresh squeezed. However, fruit juice is still a source of concentrated sugar that is not a good choice for most people.

In your body, sugar from fruit or soda works in the same way. It raises blood sugar and insulin, and over time it can contribute

to diabetes, high blood pressure, weight gain, and heart disease.

Studies have proved this point multiple times. For example, a recent study by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that drinking an extra 4 ounces (a half-cup) daily of any sweet drink — including 100-percent fruit juice — increased diabetes risk by 16 percent over a 4-year period. Drinks with artificial sweeteners didn't fare any better.

Plain or carbonated water, tea, or coffee are good substitutes. For sweetness, you can add a little stevia, a natural, sugar-free sweetener that doesn't cause problems with blood sugar.

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.