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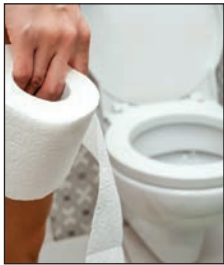
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Quick and Lasting  
Fixes for Common  
Bathroom Problems



**Bathroom habits can be too embarrassing to discuss, even with your doctor, but healthy elimination plays a vital role in keeping you healthy.**

Nighttime trips to the bathroom, having to go at awkward times, worrying about leaks, or being “plugged up” aren’t pleasant things to experience. And they can wreak havoc on your health.

Of course, being deprived of sleep contributes to weight gain, diabetes, and other health risks. Always having to be aware of the nearest bathroom can prevent you from getting out and leading a normal life. And constipation is more deadly than you — or even your doctor — might think.

Japanese researchers looked at the link between the frequency of bowel movements and deaths from atherosclerosis. Over a period of 13 years, they tracked more than 45,000 men and women between the ages of 40 and 79. Those who had a bowel movement at least once a day, rather than every two days or less often, were significantly less likely to die from heart disease or stroke.<sup>1</sup>

In this country, a study of nearly 34,000 men and 94,000 women found a link with Parkinson’s disease. Men with a bowel movement every three days, or less often, had nearly five times the risk for Parkinson’s, compared to men with at least one daily bowel movement. In the same type of comparison among women, the risk doubled.<sup>2</sup>

**What These Studies Mean**

These are “observational studies.” They show that certain things are happening at the same time. However, they don’t show that X is causing Y.

For example, one thing that isn’t clear from these studies, despite the large numbers of people that were observed, is this: Did fewer bowel movements *cause* the disease or were they a sign that a disease process was already underway or likely to develop?

The answer may be a combination of the two, along with other factors that influence health. For example, people whose bowel movements were three or four days apart may well have been straining, putting stress on their arteries. A poor diet and lack of physical activity may have led to poor health in more ways than one, and fewer bowel movements were one obvious manifestation.

That said, you'll be pleased

to know that my remedies for problematic bowel movements will also enhance your overall health. And they'll reduce your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and other lifestyle-related health problems.

Constipation, which is more than twice as likely to occur after age 60 than earlier in life,<sup>3</sup> is very common and it's the first bathroom problem I'm going to address. The remedies for it may also help some urinary problems, although those may also require additional steps that I'll describe later.

bowel habits haven't changed, even if you habitually don't have a bowel movement for days at a time. However, this doesn't mean that such infrequent bowel movements are optimum — even if they're a long-term pattern.

## Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

**Publisher** Travis Davis  
**Editorial Director** Vera Tweed  
**Art Director** Jody Levitan

For subscriptions and customer service inquiries:  
877-300-7849  
support@primalhealthlp.com

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710 Century Parkway, Allen, TX 75013

## How Often Should You Go?

I tell my patients that they should have a bowel movement every day. More than one is also fine, unless you have diarrhea or loose stools that are problematic.

From a conventional medical perspective, the thinking is somewhat different. "Normal" is a broad range, anywhere from three bowel movements a day to three bowel movements a week — referred to as the rule of "three and three."<sup>4</sup>

This rule is not based on hard science but on surveys of the population that show most people's bowel habits fall into that range, so they're "normal." If you applied the same logic to body weight — that "normal" is healthy — being overweight or obese would seem to be perfectly healthy, because most people fall into one of those categories. But we know this isn't the case because excess weight contributes to various ills, such as diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, and faster mental decline.

Doctors generally don't consider that there's anything wrong if your

## Drugs Side Effects

Many drugs have side effects that cause problems with bowel and bladder functions. Below are some examples.



### Types of drugs that can cause urinary incontinence include:

- Diuretics
- Muscle relaxants
- Sedatives
- Antihistamines

### Drugs that can cause constipation include:

- Medications for urinary incontinence
- Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen and naproxen
- Antihistamines
- Some antidepressants
- Opioids
- Some blood pressure drugs
- Some nausea medications

### Drugs that can cause diarrhea include:

- Antibiotics
- Chemotherapy drugs
- Heartburn drugs
- Over-the-counter pain medications
- Metformin for diabetes
- Drugs that suppress the immune system

If you are taking any medications and are experiencing bathroom problems, check with your pharmacist to see if those problems could be a side effect. If so, ask your doctor about alternatives.

Think about it: After you eat food and digest it, shouldn't you get rid of the waste rather than hoarding it? But frequency isn't the only potential problem. Constipation also includes bowel movements that are difficult, painful, or make you strain.

## Dangers of Straining

Straining creates pressure and can lead to hemorrhoids or pouches inside the walls of the colon that can become infected. Either one of these conditions can cause discomfort or become painful, causing more elimination difficulties.

Hemorrhoids are masses of tissue that contain enlarged blood vessels, and sometimes a blood clot inside a mass. They can develop inside or just outside the anus, sometimes for no apparent reason, but pressure is known to trigger their development.

Hemorrhoids can disappear after a few days or so, or they can last a long time. They can bleed and cause discomfort and pain.

Another common problem is this: The walls of the colon are naturally smooth, but over time, pressure can lead to small pouches — called diverticula — developing in those walls. Diverticulosis is the technical term for this condition. Most often, it develops after the age of 40; by age 85, it's estimated that two-thirds of Americans have diverticulosis.

Although the pouches don't necessarily cause symptoms, they set the stage for trouble. Because the colon wall is no longer smooth, waste can get trapped in the pouches and infection can develop — a condition known as diverticulitis. And then, symptoms

can include pain and bleeding.

Pressure can stem from straining as a result of constipation, pregnancy, repeated instances of diarrhea, or being significantly overweight.

## The Downsides of Laxatives

I've had patients who were routinely using laxatives when they first came to see me, as that was the only way they knew to avoid being chronically constipated. But this is far from optimum.

Laxatives aren't designed to be used habitually. They can irritate your intestines, deplete nutrients, lead to dehydration, and cause your own elimination system to be less responsive, making you more and more dependent on a daily laxative. Meanwhile, the underlying problem goes unresolved and gets worse.

One study looked at more than 72,000 men and women between the ages of 40 and 79. It found

that both constipation and laxative use indicated higher risk for heart disease and stroke. People who routinely used laxatives were more likely to have diabetes, mental stress, and depression, and to be physically inactive.<sup>5</sup>

Researchers found that some laxatives produce dehydration by preventing the digestive system from absorbing water. Others kill off beneficial bacteria in the gut, leading to an overgrowth of harmful bacteria that stimulate inflammation. Some can constrict blood vessels and provoke more plaque to develop in arteries.

The study also found that people with less frequent bowel movements were more likely to have high blood pressure and were more likely to die from heart disease or stroke. All in all, ongoing laxative use was a sign of underlying problems, especially atherosclerosis and diabetes.

## 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,<sup>™</sup> 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*.





## Laxative Alternatives

This research doesn't mean that occasional use of a laxative will kill you. If you need occasional help to get things moving — *occasional* being the key word — I suggest something mild like Smooth Move herbal tea. Sip it before bedtime and you should experience some relief in the morning.

You may need to do this for a few days to completely resolve the situation — but don't make it a habit. If the constipation persists, recognize that there are other steps you need to take to correct the underlying problem.

Another remedy is magnesium supplements. The mineral is essential for hundreds of normal reactions that keep your body alive and well, but it has another unique quality. If you take more magnesium than your body can absorb, it produces loose stools.

Magnesium relaxes your bowels and helps to pull water into your intestines, which bulks up stool and makes elimination easier. How much magnesium you need is really an individual amount, depending on the existing level of magnesium in your system.

I suggest starting with 200 or 300 mg daily of a magnesium supplement. If that doesn't produce an improvement, increase the amount by 100 or 200 mg the next day. If that still doesn't help, keep gradually increasing the dose until you get the result.

If you prefer not to take pills, you can take magnesium in a powder that's designed to easily dissolve in water. Natural Vitality Calm is one such product that can be added to your water bottle.

Although herbal teas and

magnesium are aids for occasional use, they aren't the first remedy to use for constipation.

## The Most Important, First Step

What I'm about to tell you may seem rather tame, given the potential consequences of difficulties with bowel movements, and many people find it hard to believe that it can make a significant difference. But it does. And it's the first thing you must do to develop healthy elimination: Drink enough water.

I'm going to talk about water in detail because it's vital — there's no substitute for it. It's so often underrated and overlooked, yet it can be a life changer.

When I bring up drinking more water, this is the biggest objection I hear from patients: "But it goes right through me, and I'm constantly running to the bathroom." There's a reason for that and there's an easy fix.

## The Right Way to Drink Water

We tend to drink filtered water, or even distilled water, for good reason. What comes out of the tap can contain various combinations of toxic chemicals, metals, or other impurities that your body is not

designed to ingest. But filtered or distilled water presents another problem: lack of minerals.

Real spring water contains small amounts of minerals, such as sodium, potassium, and magnesium. These are classified as electrolytes because they have an electrical charge that your body needs for signaling in many internal processes. Most important in this context: electrolytes balance the amount of water in your body.

If you drink plenty of water without electrolytes, it certainly will "go right through you," but the solution is very simple: Drink filtered water but add some sea salt. In addition to sodium, sea salt contains very small amounts of the other minerals that are electrolytes. Ordinary table salt doesn't contain the other minerals.

Add a little pinch of salt to a water bottle or glass — not enough to give your water a salty taste. If it's salty, you added too much. But with just a touch of sea salt, your body will be able to absorb the water you drink.

## Electrolyte Supplements

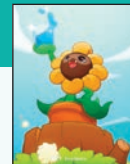
Electrolyte supplements are available as tablets or powders designed to quickly dissolve in water. These can be an occasional

### The Plant Nanny App

To easily track whether you're drinking enough water, I've found the free Plant Nanny smartphone app to be a very useful tool. You enter your needed amount of water and then record when and how much you drink. If you drink enough, a virtual plant grows and flourishes; if not, it starts to wither.

Easy recordkeeping and cute graphics make the whole process more fun and it can help to motivate you to get and stay hydrated. My patients love it.

For more information and download links, visit [www.plantnanny.app](http://www.plantnanny.app).



alternative to sea salt but there are some pitfalls to avoid when choosing one.

Many electrolyte supplements are formulated for athletes or people who do intense exercise for extended periods of time. They contain additional ingredients that you don't need, such as sugar, caffeine, or large amounts of vitamins. I don't recommend these.

I've found that sea salt is usually enough, but if you want to add an electrolyte supplement to your water, choose one without sugar, caffeine, or large quantities of other nutrients. Look for a combination of the main electrolytes — sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium — with a natural (not artificial) sugar-free sweetener such as stevia or monk fruit. Small amounts of other minerals or vitamins are fine.

Don't confuse these with supplements of "trace minerals," which are different types of mineral combinations and aren't a substitute. Key words to look for in product descriptions are "electrolytes" and "hydration."

## How Much Water Should You Drink?

Most people do well with about 64 ounces daily. To eyeball this amount, it's the equivalent of about two Big Gulp cups at 7-Eleven, or a bit more than 5 average soda cans, which hold 12 ounces per can. (I'm not suggesting that you drink Big Gulps or multiple cans of soda.)

You may also have heard this way of calculating a daily water total: half your body weight in ounces. For example, someone weighing 120 pounds would need 60 ounces. However, the amount

## Bladder and Bowel Irritants

These are some common foods and additives that can trigger bladder irritation and contribute to urgency to find a bathroom, going too often, and weak muscle control that leads to leaks:

- Alcohol
- Coffee and tea (caffeinated and decaffeinated)
- Carbonated drinks (including diet and caffeine-free versions)
- Fruit juices and fruits: grapefruit, lemon, orange, pineapple
- Apples and strawberries
- Chili peppers
- Pickles and sauerkraut
- Tomatoes and tomato products
- Processed sandwich meats, such as salami and bologna
- Soy foods and ingredients
- Corn syrup
- Honey
- Condiments: chili, horseradish, ketchup, soy sauce, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce
- Salad dressings
- Chocolate
- Artificial sweeteners
- Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- Spicy foods
- Pizza
- Indian food
- Mexican food
- Thai food

### Food Intolerances

Intolerance of gluten, grains, and dairy foods can underlie bowel and bladder problems.

### Health Conditions

High levels of blood sugar in uncontrolled diabetes draw more water into urine, making the bladder fill up faster and leading to more frequent bathroom trips. An enlarged prostate is a common cause of problems in men. Following a diet that reduces belly fat and getting regular exercise can help both conditions.

Low thyroid can cause constipation. Exposure to mold can cause constipation, diarrhea, and inflammation in the bowel and bladder.

For ways to resolve problems with gluten, diabetes, low thyroid, and mold, see *Related to This Topic* on page 6.

## The Bone Broth Cure

The combination of nutrients in bone broth is very soothing. A traditional remedy for childhood colic, bone broth calms inflammation and is a good staple to help prevent and relieve any bowel or bladder problem. But it must be real bone broth made the traditional way, simmered for hours.



of water for heavier people is too much. If you use this formula, I don't recommend drinking more than 100 ounces per day, unless you're sweating heavily from being in a sauna or doing intense physical activity.

I also get asked if other fluids count as part of your daily water intake. Some do and others don't.

Most sodas contain caffeine, which is a diuretic, and sugar, which reduces your body's ability to absorb fluids. Although the effects of these don't completely negate the effect of the fluid, I don't recommend counting caffeinated soda, tea, coffee, or other sugary or caffeinated drinks as part of your daily water intake.

Beer, wine, and other alcoholic drinks also don't count for your daily water requirement, as alcohol is dehydrating. However, if you drink these or caffeinated or sweetened drinks, you don't have to drink extra water to compensate.

These types of liquids do contribute to hydration: bone broth, soups, and drinks without

sugar, caffeine, or alcohol. You can count these as part of your daily water intake. In case you're wondering, water won't give you loose stools or diarrhea.

### When to Drink

When my patients begin to increase their water intake, they often forget to drink enough during the day and then try to catch up in the evening. And that creates another problem: having to get up during the night to go to the bathroom.

There's an easy way to avoid this: Have a glass of water right after you wake up. If you like to have morning coffee, drink it after the water. Once you're ready to start your day, fill up a large water bottle and aim to drink it up by 1 pm. And then fill it up again and aim to get to the bottom by 7 pm. And then don't drink any more.

This way, you can be hydrated without bathroom trips interfering with your sleep. I'll cover more things you can do to prevent nighttime bathroom trips in a moment. But first, there are some

other things I recommend for healthy bowel movements.

### Fiber and Regularity

We all know that fiber is essential for regularity, but not everyone gets enough. The trick is to eat plenty of vegetables that aren't starchy — don't rely on potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, or grains. Although these contain fiber, they are also high in starch, which works the same way as sugar in your body. There's too much starch and sugar in American diets, and the overabundance contributes to weight gain and diabetes.

Some top non-starchy and highly nutritious fiber sources include broccoli, turnip greens, and Brussels sprouts. Cook them and add some extra virgin olive oil and seasoning. But don't feel you need to eat only these — variety will help you enjoy your food and provide a broad range of nutrients.

Although they also contain starch, beans, peas, and lentils are rich sources of fiber, but they can be hard to digest. You can try a half-cup or less with one of your meals.

Both legumes and extra vegetables will be easier to digest if you add them gradually. And keep in mind that cooked vegetables are easier to digest than raw ones.

If you start eating more fiber and you experience gas or discomfort, there are two things that could be causing a problem: lack of stomach acid or lack of bile, both of which can be remedied.

### How Stomach Acid Helps Your Bowel


Stomach acid gets a bad rap because it's blamed for heartburn. When heartburn strikes, it feels as

## Related to This Topic

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

Related Topic	Volume	Issue	Title
Gluten Drugs	2	3	How Gluten Can Cause More Than 30 Health Conditions
Mold	2	11	Mold: The Hidden Trigger of More Than 40 Ailments
Diabetes	2	4	Type 2 Diabetes: The Road to Recovery
A Healthy Diet	1	8	The Guide to Healthy Eating
Low Thyroid	2	7	The 30-Day Thyroid Restoration Protocol
Heartburn	1	6	The 6-Minute Heartburn Remedy

Access these online by logging in to [www.NaturalHealthConnections.com](http://www.NaturalHealthConnections.com).





though there's too much stomach acid but in fact, it's low levels of stomach acid that contribute to heartburn. That's right, *low* levels.

If you aren't familiar with this concept, I cover it in more detail in Volume 1, Issue 6, of this newsletter (see *Related to This Topic* on page 6). But I'll give you a snapshot.

As we get older, our bodies become less efficient in producing stomach acid. As a result, food doesn't get efficiently broken down in the stomach, and partially digested food can sneak up your esophagus and cause heartburn.

Here's the connection to regularity: Without enough stomach acid, food lingers in the stomach because it isn't broken down properly. And this backs up the rest of the digestive process and contributes to constipation.

To augment your stomach acid, enhance digestion in the stomach, and help unblock the rest of the digestion-elimination process, you can try one of these two remedies: Drink ½ to 1 teaspoon of apple cider vinegar, mixed in a glass of water, just before or with a meal. Or, take a supplement of betaine HCl (short for hydrochloride) at the beginning of a meal. But don't take HCl if you have a peptic ulcer.

## Why Bile Is Essential

A substance produced in the gallbladder and liver, bile is essential to break down and digest fats. This alone means that sufficient bile will help your stomach to break down fatty foods and keep the whole digestive process moving along smoothly.

But there's another reason why

it's important: Bile promotes healthy peristalsis — a technical term that describes the series of muscle contractions that move food all the way through your digestive tract and move urine from the kidneys to the bladder.

Lack of bile works against you in two ways: by making it more difficult to break down fats, and by reducing the all-important sequence of muscle movements that keep you regular. Bile hasn't had a lot of attention in the conventional world of constipation treatment, but it's viewed as one of the promising areas to be explored for treatment of digestive disorders.<sup>6</sup>

If you dislike the smell of fatty food or avoid eating it because it's difficult to digest, this is one sign of low bile. Another is burping or belching, any time other than after drinking a carbonated beverage.

These remedies will help, even if you've had your gallbladder removed: Take bile salt supplements before or with meals, or eat beets and beet greens, as these stimulate bile production.

## Bladder Health Basics

There are several basic things that you can do to prevent or eliminate bladder problems such as going too often, having to go during the night, and leaks. These can include retraining your bladder so that you aren't getting signals that you need to go when your bladder isn't full; doing exercises to strengthen muscles that can prevent leaks; preventing infections; and eliminating irritation that can give you false signals that you urgently need a bathroom.

## Reducing Bladder Irritation

In addition to supporting bowel regularity, water helps to prevent urinary problems, including infections. Without enough water, urine becomes more concentrated and can lead to infections or simply irritate your bladder and urinary tract.

This is one of the main triggers of what's called "urgency incontinence," meaning the urge to go when your bladder isn't full. It's a strong sensation that you

## Checklist for a Healthy Bowel and Bladder

- Drink enough water each day, before 7 pm.
- Eat a variety of non-starchy vegetables to get enough fiber.
- If you have low stomach acid, drink apple cider vinegar in water or take betaine HCl supplements just before or with meals.
- If you have low bile, eat beets and beet greens, and if necessary, take a bile supplement.
- Follow a diet that helps you lose weight, if necessary, and to maintain a healthy weight (see *Related to This Topic* on page 6 for earlier newsletter issues).
- For an occasional aid to relieve constipation, try magnesium or Smooth Move herbal tea.



need a bathroom right away, and it can lead to leaks. It may seem surprising that water can help.

In addition to preventing irritation as a result of dehydration, water helps to prevent urinary tract infections. When you have enough water in your system, it's easier for your body to eliminate bacteria and they're less likely to move in and multiply.

Bottom line: the first step in preventing these situations is drinking enough water — with a pinch of salt to help you absorb the water. As I mentioned earlier, if you drink your day's water before 7 pm and don't have other drinks after that, you won't need to wake up for bathroom trips during the night as much, or at all.

If you suspect you have a urinary tract infection, get tested by your doctor. It's a simple urine test that checks for bacteria.

## Bladder Retraining

You can train your bladder to have bad habits, and you can reverse those habits. This is possible because the bladder is controlled by muscles that can be retrained, and research shows that it is an effective treatment.<sup>7</sup>

Bad bladder training starts with going to the bathroom when your bladder has lots of room in it. In other words, there's no real need to go, but for whatever reason, you make an attempt. For example, some people make an unnecessary bathroom trip before going into a theater to watch a movie — just in case — even though they don't have any physical urge to go. Or you wake up in the middle of the night and since you're now up, you decide to go to the bathroom, even

though you don't really need to.

This literally trains your bladder to call for a bathroom more often than needed. You get used to this and develop an urgent need to go. As a rule of thumb, if emptying your bladder doesn't take about 8 seconds or more, you generally didn't really need to go.

Reversing the process starts with waiting a bit longer than usual — maybe a few minutes at first — and then gradually increasing the delay, by few more minutes, and then a few more minutes. And skip “just in case” bathroom visits when there's no feeling of urgency.

An average time between bathroom trips to empty a bladder is 3 to 4 hours, although it does vary among individuals. The aim is to reach a point where your need for bathroom trips feels right to you and isn't interfering with your life. It may take a few weeks or a few months to achieve your goal, but it is achievable.

## Bladder Exercises

Bladder retraining can help to prevent leaks, but there's also another, time-tested way to enhance your control: Kegels, which can help both women and men.

These are exercises that strengthen the muscles in the pelvic floor that you use to control a urine stream. When those muscles contract, they close off the urethra. You can identify these muscles by consciously stopping your urine flow while you're in the bathroom.

Here's how to do the exercise: With an empty bladder, sit or lie down and tighten those muscles. Hold them tight for 3 to 5 seconds and then relax for 3 to 5 seconds.

Repeat these steps 10 times, 2 or 3 times a day.

You can also use the same muscles to prevent leaks. If you're going to sneeze or cough, for example, contract those muscles before the actual sneeze or cough spasm occurs. And, when retraining your bladder to go less often, a Kegel contraction can help you to extend the time between bathroom trips.

## Exercise in General

Last but not least, there's one other vital lifestyle habit for a healthy bowel and bladder: exercise. Physical activity keeps muscles toned, stimulates circulation, and keeps everything moving inside your body. If you don't get much exercise right now, even a little will make a difference.

## A Final Word

If you try all the things that I've described that apply to your own situation and don't get relief, check with your doctor to see if there may be an underlying condition that is affecting your bathroom difficulties. And if so, get that resolved.

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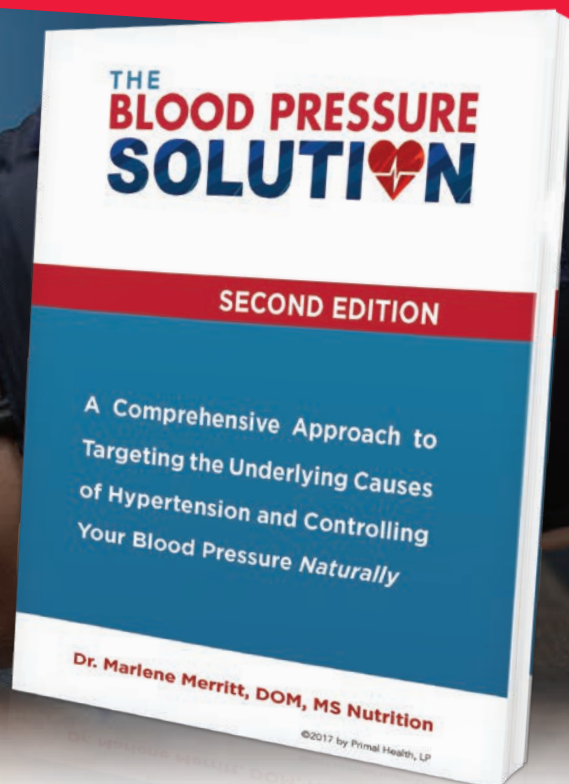
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# Get Dr. Marlene's Best-Selling Book... **Blood Pressure Solution!**



**Dr. Marlene has been sounding the alarm about dangerous blood pressure drugs for the last 15 years — and offering a safe, natural alternative.**

She has worked with hundreds of patients who were suffering high blood pressure—many were taking two, three, even four medications and going through awful side effects...

Just like Kathleen Kelly, whose ankles swelled up from the prescription blood pressure drugs she was taking. She also suffered an awful cough from using Lisinopril. By the time she read Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Blood Pressure Solution**, Kathleen's doctor had her on three blood pressure medicines combined—and her blood pressure was still high!

"My patients are always surprised to see how easy it is to use my natural Blood Pressure Solution," said Dr. Marlene. "The diet is not restrictive. Many of the foods you thought were taboo are perfectly ok—like steak is ok, butter is ok, natural sea salt is ok, even several carb foods are good. Part of the solution is to get good fats into your diet."

After reading **Blood Pressure Solution**, Kathleen made simple lifestyle changes found in the book and began to see immediate results...

***"My blood pressure came down right away...I just feel great. I'm ecstatic. I go around telling everybody I found the fountain of youth. I have much more energy now. My concentration and focus are better. I can walk around my block without getting winded anymore. I am 100% off my medication."***

Did you see that? Kathleen reports she is 100% off her medications. And so can you!

Yes! You too can be off these anti-hypertensive drugs... maintain blood pressure in the normal range... and feel good again!

Dr. Marlene Merritt's **Blood Pressure Solution** is working for people all across America. And she believes it can work for you, too. Here's how...

Dr. Marlene originally developed her unique solution for her patients at the Merritt Wellness Center in Austin, Texas. And after seeing just how successful it was for people in her own community—she decided to put her entire natural solution, with step-by-step guidance, into an easy-to-use book called, **Blood Pressure Solution**.

This is a comprehensive approach to targeting the underlying causes of hypertension and controlling your blood pressure naturally.

Dr. Marlene's book has been sweeping the country with over 330,000 copies sold in the U.S., and even 32,000 copies shipped overseas.

So, are you ready to bring your blood pressure back to the normal range? Gain more energy? Drop a few unwanted pounds? And feel better than you have in years, just as Kathleen did?

Great! Get your copy of Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Blood Pressure Solution** today! Go to the website listed below, and you'll see a complete review of the book, watch videos from people just like Kathleen and order your copy of **Blood Pressure Solution**!

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# Best Exercise to Improve Memory

All types of physical activity are good for you, but if you want to improve your memory, the way you exercise makes a difference. For years, I've been recommending intervals: alternating spurts of higher and lower intensity, such as alternating fast and slow walking, because this is more effective for all aspects of health than walking at a steady, moderate pace. So, I was pleased to see yet another study that shows the benefits of intervals — for memory, in this case.

This study was done in Canada, at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. It compared the effects of three different 12-week exercise programs among 64 older people who had been physically inactive. Their ages ranged from 60 to 88.<sup>1</sup>

One group did stretches, another did moderate aerobic exercise at a steady rate, and the third did fast-slow intervals in a similar type of aerobic exercise, such as on a treadmill or stationary bike. Each person's memory was tested before and after their exercise program.

And guess what? Seniors who were in the interval-training group had up to 30-percent better memory. But there wasn't any significant memory improvement in the other two groups — although they did experience other benefits from the activity.

## Why It Works

Your heart, arteries, and whole body get the greatest benefits from more intense physical movement, when you noticeably exert

yourself. However, it's difficult to sustain an intense pace for a long time, and it may be unsafe. By doing short bursts of intense activity, with slower-moving rest points in between, you get the benefits of intensity in a realistic and safe way.

And here's another bonus: Intense spurts are the best way to boost your natural levels of BDNF (short for brain-derived neurotrophic factor), which stimulates the growth of cells in the brain and nervous system. This counteracts the age-related breakdown of these cells.

## What to Do

With any type of fitness program, it's essential that you work at a pace that's right for you. On a treadmill, for example, one person's intense level may mean running at 6 miles per hour, while another's may mean walking at 3 miles per hour.

In the Canadian study, the high-intensity spurts lasted 4 minutes, with slower spurts in between, and each workout consisted of 4 intense segments. But there isn't



one set rule for how long intense spurts must last.

The important thing is to vary your intensity. Here are some ways to do it:

- **Walking outdoors:** Walk fast between two lamp posts and then slower between the next two, and keep repeating the pattern.
- **Walking hills:** Choose a route that goes up and down hills and you'll naturally work harder going uphill.
- **Swimming:** Alternate between swimming a fast width or length of the pool and then a slow one.

Many sports, such as tennis or badminton, have built-in intervals. And you can apply the same principle with any type of activity.

## Beware of Endless Entertainment

A survey of more than 2,000 adults, by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, has found that 80 percent of people age 45 or older have lost sleep because they stayed up "binge watching" multiple episodes of a TV show or streaming series. Between the ages of 18 and 44, 95 percent have been deprived of sleep for the same reason.<sup>2</sup>

Being able to watch episode after episode, rather than waiting until the next one airs a week later, can be addicting. But it isn't worth losing sleep over. After all, you can pick up where you left off on another day, and you'll probably enjoy it more if you're well rested.

1 Kovacevic, A., et al. "The effects of aerobic exercise intensity on memory in older adults." *Appl Physiol Nutr Metab*. 2019 Oct 30. 2 AASM. Sleep Prioritization Survey 2019.



# Digestive Discomfort, Bloating, Gas, and Stomach Rumbling **BANISHED WITH CITRUS LEAF EXTRACT**



Gastrointestinal discomfort is a common symptom for many otherwise healthy adults.

In fact, roughly 20% of the population suffers from bloating, gas and stomach rumbling that affect quality of life.

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— Diane

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— John

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# Q&A

**Q: I was recently diagnosed with prediabetes. Can cinnamon help me lower my blood sugar and is it safe to take as a supplement?** — *Nicole K.*

**A:** Cinnamon can help to reduce elevated blood sugar because it increases sensitivity to insulin, the hormone that enables you to utilize blood sugar to generate energy. This is the opposite of what's happening in prediabetes, where there's insulin resistance — decreased sensitivity to insulin.

Cinnamon also slows the breakdown of carbohydrates in the digestive tract. This means that there's a more gradual rise of blood sugar after a meal, making it easier for your body to convert it to energy. In addition, cinnamon can help dilate blood vessels, improve circulation, enhance digestion, and reduce gas and bloating.

However, not all cinnamon supplements are safe. Some types of cinnamon naturally contain high levels of coumarin, a substance that in high doses can damage the liver and possibly contribute to cancer.

One type of cinnamon — Ceylon cinnamon — is safe because it contains only traces of coumarin. But not all supplements contain Ceylon cinnamon, which may be listed on labels by its Latin names: *C. verum* or *C. zeylanicum*.

These are some other types of cinnamon that you do *not* want to take in supplements or consume in large quantities as a spice, with their Latin names: Cassia (*C.*



*cassia*, *C. aromaticum*); Indonesian or Korintji (*C. burmanni*); Saigon or Vietnamese (*C. loureiroi*).

If you decide to try cinnamon supplements, I suggest reading the Supplement Facts on labels very carefully, as some products contain a combination of Ceylon and other types, listed only by their Latin names. As an alternative to supplements, you can add one-quarter teaspoon (about 650 milligrams) of Ceylon cinnamon (the spice) to foods or drinks.

You aren't very likely to get Ceylon cinnamon in packaged foods because it costs more than other forms. Eating the other forms in small quantities isn't dangerous. But if you're going to consume larger quantities as a spice or in supplements, it should always be Ceylon — sometimes referred to as "true cinnamon."

I also suggest that you check out *Type 2 Diabetes: The Road to Recovery* in Volume 2, Issue 4, of this newsletter.

**Q: I take warfarin to thin my blood and was told to limit vitamin K. But I've read that without vitamin K2, calcium is more likely to get deposited in arteries. What can I do?** — *Andy G.*

**A:** You're correct about the role of vitamin K2. Vitamin K exists in two main forms: vitamin K1 and K2, and both interfere with blood

thinners. However, you can take two other vitamins to enhance your body's ability to use calcium in your bones rather than depositing it in arteries: vitamins A and D.

Vitamin D enhances overall absorption of calcium, and vitamin A helps to keep it out of your arteries. I recommend taking both. In supplements of vitamin A, aim for 100 percent of the Daily Value (%DV in the Supplement Facts of a label). For vitamin D, start with 2,000 IU daily for a couple of months, and then get your blood level tested and adjust the dose as needed.

Vitamin K is found chiefly in leafy green vegetables that contain other nutrients you need for overall health. Rather than abstaining from such vegetables, I suggest eating a consistent amount each day and asking your doctor to adjust the dose of your blood thinner as needed. The trick is to be consistent in the amount of leafy greens you eat.

## Do you have a question for Dr. Marlene?

Send your health-related questions to [drmarlene@naturalhealthconnections.com](mailto: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](mailto:support@primalhealthlp.com) or call 877-300-7849.