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Foods and Supplements  
for Healthy Joints

**The right foods and supplements, along with a few lifestyle tricks, will help to keep your joints flexible, pain-free, and strong.**



One of my patients, an avid tennis player in his 40s, came to me in despair over his incurable case of tennis elbow. He had sought out several highly regarded specialists and had followed all their advice — to no avail.

Tennis was an important part of his social life, plus it kept him in great shape, and he was good at it. In recent years, he had won several local amateur tennis tournaments and it seemed that the older he got, the better he played in his age group — until now.

Putting on my detective hat, I gathered information about his medical history, diet, and lifestyle, and ran some tests that he had not previously received. And all that sleuthing identified a trigger that completely surprised him: he was gluten intolerant.

At first, he couldn't believe that this could be the case, especially since all the specialists had not even considered it. But after eliminating gluten from his diet, the tennis elbow disappeared and he was back on the court

— pain-free and happier than ever.

In telling you this story, I'm not suggesting that all joint problems stem from gluten intolerance. They don't, although gluten can be a trigger or a contributing factor (and I'll explain why in a moment). Rather, I'm sharing this patient's story because it goes to show that when you find the right reason for a joint problem, the relief can seem miraculous.

Joints can stiffen or become achy for different reasons. If you don't move much in your everyday life, for example, circulation decreases and your joints don't get blood flow and nutrients they need to stay flexible. Maybe your diet lacks nutrients that keep your joints supple, such as collagen. Maybe inflammation is a problem. Or it could be a combination of factors.

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE:**  
**How to Achieve and**  
**Maintain Healthy Bones**

In last month's newsletter, I covered misalignment that leads to the most common types of joint pain. Misalignment most often develops because some muscles supporting a joint are weak while others are too tight, as a result of the way we sit and move — or don't move — in our everyday lives. I also covered the remedies, such as simple exercises you can do at home to strengthen or stretch key muscles, and ways to relax muscle spasms with a tennis ball.

Dr. Marlene's  
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If you haven't read the March issue, I encourage you to take a look at it (see *Related to This Topic* on page 5).

This month, I'm going to cover how foods can influence your joints, for better or worse, and supplements that can correct and prevent problems.

## Food Sensitivities and Joints

Were you surprised that my patient's tennis elbow resolved when he eliminated gluten? He isn't the only one who was suffering from a debilitating joint problem as a result of a food sensitivity.

Another of my patients had seemingly incurable rheumatoid arthritis and high blood pressure, and was exhausted all the time, despite taking the medications doctors had prescribed. When she stopped eating gluten and dairy, her symptoms slowly started to resolve. It took a while, but eventually she completely recovered and was drug-free.

This lady had been suffering from arthritis for many years and had been told that there was no cure — only "management" of the symptoms with drugs. As she gradually improved with the right diet, she worked with her doctor to reduce medication dosages. And was he surprised at her progress and eventual full recovery!

I am not saying that everyone with a joint problem has a food sensitivity — that isn't true. However, the two situations I described are not isolated incidents, so it's something to be aware of.

## The Food-Joint Connection

Why can food sensitivities wreak so much havoc on joints? Because

they trigger inflammation, and the inflammation causes pain and damage.

What I'm calling a food "sensitivity" is not a food allergy that can instantly cause itching, swelling, sneezing, or a life-threatening inability to breathe. Rather, it's a more subtle reaction of the immune system.<sup>1</sup>

With a food sensitivity, the food-joint connection is usually not obvious, because there can be a time lag between when you eat a food and when your body starts to react. And since we eat many foods in the course of a day, it's hard to pinpoint which one may be the culprit.

I've listed *The Top 5 Offending Foods* on page 3. If you suspect any of these may be problematic for you, eliminate that one from your diet for a couple weeks. If that food is causing a reaction, it takes time for your body to calm down, but you will notice a difference, possibly in a few days. The symptoms are often more noticeable when you reintroduce an offending food after abstaining from it.

## More Ways Food Influences Joints

While food sensitivities are possible triggers of inflammation in joints, they don't affect everyone. More often, the type of diet you eat makes a significant difference because it can either promote or calm inflammation. These are two major diet traits that determine the direction:

**Too many carbs:** A high-carb diet — the typical American diet, unfortunately — triggers inflammation.<sup>2</sup> This happens because eating a lot of carbs leads to elevated levels of

insulin, and insulin is inflammatory.

In contrast, eating a low-carb diet keeps insulin and inflammation at lower levels. The low-carb approach I recommend is practical and proven. I've covered this in detail in earlier newsletter issues, listed in *Related to This Topic* on page 5. And on page 8 of this issue, I describe ways to

overcome challenges that some readers have experienced.

**The wrong types of fat:** Most American diets contain too much inflammatory fat. There's a myth about all saturated fats being bad and all oils — liquid fats — being healthy.

In fact, most of the oils — such as canola, corn, safflower, soybean,

and vegetable oils that are now widely used for cooking and in many packaged and prepared foods — are inflammatory.<sup>3</sup> They are refined with high heat and chemicals, and these processes turn them into inflammatory substances.

As you may know, extra virgin olive oil is anti-inflammatory. Avocado oil and peanut oil can also provide healthy fats and are not inflammatory. All these are good sources of fat. Olive and avocado oils work well in salad dressings, drizzled on vegetables, and for cooking. Peanut oil works well for cooking.

When it comes to saturated fats, most people are surprised to learn that we need them. Saturated fats are solid at room temperature, whereas oils are liquid. We need a combination of solid and liquid fats to support all the various structures, such as cell membranes, in our bodies.

Good saturated fats include all those from animals, in meat, dairy if you tolerate it, and butter (see *A Special Feature of Butter* on this page). Preferably, these fats should come from animals that are raised organically or grassfed, without antibiotics or hormones. Coconut oil is a good plant source of saturated fat.

Fish and fish oil also provide anti-inflammatory fat. But beware: You won't get the full benefits of these if the other fats in your diet are inflammatory, as the two types will be working against each other.

## Other Triggers of Inflammation

Even with a perfect diet, there are a few other things that can trigger or contribute to chronic inflammation. If these aren't addressed, they

## The Top 5 Offending Foods

Food sensitivities can trigger or contribute to joint pain. Below, I've listed the most common offenders in order of prevalence; gluten is the most common, followed by dairy and then the others.

- 1. Gluten:** Found in wheat, barley, and rye, gluten is in pasta, baked goods, cereals, and nutrition bars, and it's often used as a food additive in meatballs, meatloaf, some burgers, sausage, soups, sauces, and other foods.



- 2. Dairy:** Milk, cream, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, and any other food made with milk or cream. See my note about butter, below.



- 3. Eggs:** Whole eggs, liquid or powdered eggs or egg whites, and any foods made with eggs.



- 4. Soy:** Edamame is another name for whole soybeans, which can be cooked and eaten



whole. But most soy is in processed foods, such as tofu, soy milk, many meat alternatives, and as an ingredient in many packaged foods, including soy flour in baked goods.

- 5. Corn:** Sources include corn tortillas, corn chips, popcorn, corn bread, corn on the cob, and canned or frozen corn kernels or creamed corn. Corn or corn flour may also be added to various processed foods.



### A Special Feature of Butter

Although butter is made from cream, it may not cause a reaction in people who are generally sensitive to dairy. Milk and cream contain both fat and protein. Casein, a milk protein, is the typical trigger of sensitivities; the fat is not a trigger. Because butter is nearly 100 percent pure fat, it doesn't usually produce a reaction.



If you are sensitive to dairy and don't want to risk a reaction to butter, try clarified butter — also called ghee. It's made by melting the butter and filtering out any traces of protein. That way, the butter is pure fat, without any proteins that could possibly cause a reaction. You can buy ghee in many stores that sell dairy products.

### More Information

I cover these foods in more detail in earlier newsletter issues, listed in *Related to This Topic* on page 5.



can perpetuate joint problems and block benefits of supplements and anti-inflammatory foods.

**Infections:** Many people live with chronic, low-grade infections, and these stimulate chronic inflammation.<sup>4</sup> The most common ones are dental infections, urinary tract infections, and sinus infections. They must be treated.

**Lack of physical activity:** This, too, can contribute to inflammation, and it can always be remedied. If joint pain makes walking difficult, for example, try some chair yoga and exercises in a pool. Many community centers and health clubs have water exercise classes.

**Lack of sleep:** Lack of sleep is another inflammation booster.<sup>5</sup> Do whatever is needed to get proper rest, whether that means turning off screens earlier, blocking light from bedroom windows, or getting

a CPAP machine if you suffer from sleep apnea.

**Chronic stress:** Our stress response includes elevation of cortisol, the fight-or-flight hormone. This mechanism is designed to help us overcome short-term, acute stress, such as running away from a dangerous wild animal long ago. It works well in such situations.

Today's challenges are different. We are often continually or repeatedly stressed by everyday occurrences, such as traffic, relationships, finances, or work situations, and levels of cortisol can stay elevated. And this leads to chronic inflammation.<sup>6</sup> If this is a problem, the only way to deal with it is to learn to better manage the stress.

Now, it's time to look at some supplements that can help to heal your joints and keep them in good shape.

## Collagen Feeds Joints

Collagen is an essential nutrient for healthy joints, but it's sadly lacking in our diets. The word "collagen" comes from *kólla*, the Greek word for glue, because it acts like a natural glue in our bodies. More precisely, it's a building block of connective tissue in our joints and everywhere else in the human body — in arteries, skin, and organs, for example.

One of the reasons that skin becomes less supple and firm as we get older is because we lose collagen. It's an obvious change that we can see on the outside.

Internally, loss of collagen degrades support structures. We can't see the effects inside our bodies but we can feel them in our joints as they become less supple and less resilient. The solution is to get more collagen in our diets.

Once upon a time, we used to get collagen from the gristly parts of meat, which were simmered for a long time to soften up the tough tissues around the joints of animals, giving the collagen a soft texture and rich taste. But we don't do that anymore.

We now eat pure muscle meat, which doesn't contain collagen. There are rare exceptions, such as short ribs that are slow cooked in a broth that develops a rich flavor. You might find these in some high-end restaurants but they are hardly popular dishes. And to routinely get enough collagen, you would need to eat these types of dishes all the time.

There is a simple solution: powdered collagen supplements. These are easy to find online or in any store that sells supplements.

### About Dr. Marlene

Dr. Marlene Merritt's passion for natural medicine is fueled by her drive to help others and by her own experience of overcoming a debilitating heart condition, diagnosed at the age of 20.

A competitive cyclist at the time, she suddenly began experiencing severe chest pains. Forced to quit the sport, she suffered from fatigue and chest 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 degree and is board-certified in Nutrition, and is board-certified in Functional Medicine. She is certified in the Bredesen MEND Protocol™, a groundbreaking method of addressing Alzheimer's disease, and is a Proficiency Diplomate in the Shoemaker CIRS protocol for treatment of mold-related illness. She is the author of *Smart Blood Sugar* and *The Blood Pressure Solution*, and co-author of *The Perfect Sleep Solution*. After 31 years in private clinical practice, she now focuses on writing and educating health professionals and consumers to reach more people and positively impact their health.



How to Choose and Use Collagen Supplements

When choosing a collagen powder, I recommend one that’s described as “collagen peptides,” “hydrolyzed collagen,” or “collagen hydrolysate.” Studies have shown that this type of collagen can reach joint tissues and has a protective effect.<sup>7</sup>

Collagen is a type of protein. All proteins are made of amino acids. The digestive system breaks down protein in food into amino acids, and only then can you use the protein to maintain and repair tissues throughout your body.

The collagen in supplements is extracted from animals. In the products with the descriptions I mentioned above, collagen is partially broken down to make it easier for your body to absorb and use. In other words, they all contain the same type of absorbable collagen, described in different words.

I know, these descriptions can be

confusing. So that you aren’t left wondering, here’s what the different terms mean:

**Peptides:** These are chains of amino acids — building blocks of protein. Collagen peptides are easier to digest than collagen in its natural form in food.

**Hydrolyzed collagen:** This is collagen that has gone through a process of being hydrolyzed, which means broken down into peptides.

**Collagen hydrolysate:** This is just another way of saying that the collagen has been hydrolyzed.

Bottom line: pick a collagen powder that’s labeled in any one of the above three ways, and have one or more servings each day.

By itself, collagen powder is tasteless, which makes it versatile. Depending on the product, you can mix it in cold or hot drinks, soups, sauces, or bone broth. If you

usually have a protein powder in a drink in the morning, this isn’t the same as a collagen supplement. It’s a good idea to add some collagen powder to your usual protein drink. That’s what I do.

Some collagen products are flavored, with added ingredients such as stevia or other sweeteners. These are designed to be mixed with water and consumed as a beverage. The best collagen product for you is one that you will use on a regular basis. In addition to helping your joints, it’s also good for your skin, hair and nails.

Glucosamine and Chondroitin

Glucosamine and chondroitin are building blocks of tissues in joints. Chondroitin is an important component in cartilage, and glucosamine is in multiple parts of a joint, including ligaments, tendons, and synovial fluid that

Related to This Topic

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

Related Topic	Volume	Issue	Title
Joint Misalignment	7	3	Lasting Relief for Achy Joints
A Healthy Low-Carb Diet	7	1	My Low-Carb Diet — Fine-Tuned
Gluten	2	3	How Gluten Can Cause More Than 30 Health Conditions
Food Sensitivities	4	12	Food Sensitivities: Hidden Triggers of Many Health Conditions
Infections	6	8	Bacterial Infections: How to Treat and Prevent Them
Sleep	5	4	Restful Sleep: How to Get Enough
Stress	4	6	How to Conquer Hidden Stress (page 8)
Inflammation	4	4	How to Calm Harmful Inflammation
Collagen	4	5	Collagen: How It Helps You Stay Young, Strong, and Pain-Free
Arthritis	2	5	The 90-Day Program to Relieve Arthritis
Shoes	4	6	Best Shoes to Reduce Knee Pain (page 9)
Joint Replacement	5	2	Joint Replacement: Who Needs One? (page 8)

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



keeps joints lubricated and flexible.

Studies have shown that taking one or both of these substances in supplements can help to reduce joint discomfort and pain, and protect and repair joint tissues.

An Australian study of more than 600 people with knee pain due to osteoarthritis found that the supplements reduced pain and slowed narrowing of the space in knee joints, which means it slowed joint deterioration. Participants took 1,500 mg of glucosamine sulfate and 800 mg of chondroitin sulfate daily for two years.<sup>8</sup>

Some of my patients have benefitted by taking one or both of these. In Europe, some medical societies recommend these supplements as a usual part of treatment for osteoarthritis.<sup>9</sup>

Glucosamine and chondroitin are often combined in joint formulas. If you decide to try these, make sure to take the sulfate form, as other forms have not always produced the same benefits.

## MSM Supplements

MSM (short for methylsulfonylmethane) is naturally present in the human body and is found in small quantities in some foods. When taken in supplements, several studies

have found that MSM can relieve inflammation, pain, and swelling in joints.<sup>10</sup> One recent study tested MSM on 88 people with knee osteoarthritis and found that taking 2,000 mg daily for 12 weeks reduced mild pain and improved knee function.<sup>11</sup>

Earlier, researchers tested the supplement in a group of 22 healthy runners. Participants took 3,000 mg of MSM for 21 days before and 2 days after a half marathon. Tests showed that by taking the supplement, they experienced less joint and muscle pain after the race.<sup>12</sup>

Although MSM can enhance joint health when taken alone, it may work better when taken with glucosamine and chondroitin, and some products combine these three joint ingredients. MSM is also available in creams for topical use.

## Other Helpful Supplements

Many nutrients help to control inflammation, including vitamin D and fish oil. My usual recommendation for vitamin D is to take 125 mcg (5,000 IU) daily along with a daily serving of vitamin K2. Vitamin D increases calcium absorption and K2 directs the calcium to bones, rather than letting it be deposited in arteries. For fish oil, I suggest taking 1,000 mg daily.

Herbs that can reduce inflammation include curcumin and Boswellia. Unless you're working with a health professional who recommends a higher dose, I recommend taking one serving daily.

## A Final Word

I've covered the most common foods that can help or harm your joints, life habits and situations that generate harmful chronic inflam-

mation, and supplements. That's a lot! So, here's where I suggest you start: Add a collagen powder supplement to your daily routine.

If you have an infection, get it treated as a top priority. If you have a joint that has deteriorated beyond repair and you know you need surgery, that's what will bring relief.

Otherwise, the second step is to look over all the other points I've talked about and pick one that you can adopt. Once you've incorporated that one into your routine, pick another point and work on that. Following these steps will help to resolve joint problems or, if you're in good shape, will help keep your joints flexible and strong for all the years ahead.

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5 Dzierzewski, J.M., et al. "Sleep Inconsistency and Markers of Inflammation." Front Neurol. 2020 Sep 16;11:1042.

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11 Toguchi, A., et al. "Methylsulfonylmethane Improves Knee Quality of Life in Participants with Mild Knee Pain: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Trial." Nutrients. 2023 Jun 30;15(13):2995.

12 Withee, E.D., et al. "Effects of Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) on exercise-induced oxidative stress, muscle damage, and pain following a half-marathon: a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled trial." J Int Soc Sports Nutr. 2017 Jul 21;14:24.

## Joint Supplement Snapshot

These are effective daily amounts of each supplement:

- Hydrolyzed Collagen Powder: 5 to 20 grams
- Glucosamine Sulfate: 1,500 mg
- Chondroitin Sulfate: 800 mg
- MSM: 2,000 to 3,000 mg or more



# Say “Good Bye” to those Senior Moments

## PREVENT, STOP, AND REVERSE MEMORY LOSS & DEMENTIA FOR LIFE!

“Within two weeks my memory came back, and the confusion I had experienced went away. It was a miracle.”

— Cathy D. Carson City, NV

**Do you turn to jelly when you try to remember someone's name... someone you've known for a long time? Maybe it's suddenly asking yourself, 'WHERE AM I?' when you're at a store... or you have to take a few extra moments to add 100 to 75.**

Perhaps you're suddenly feeling bored when you're the most excited person on the planet. Are you repeating yourself like a broken record? Maybe you don't seem like your normal super-focused self.

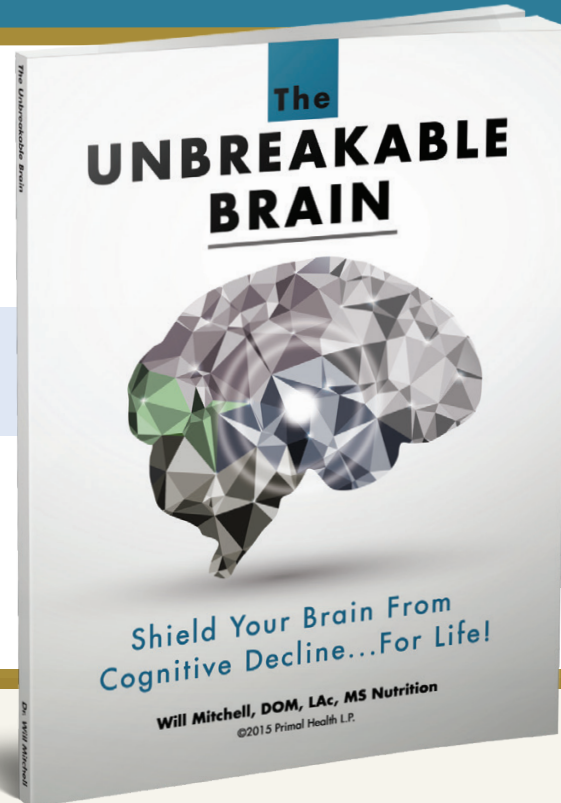
Yes—these are senior moments...and they are the first signs of dementia. The Alzheimer's Association recently admitted it, “Memory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of dementia.”

How long will these “senior moments” continue? If you think memory loss will “go away” like a bad case of the flu... think again. They won't... unless you start taking some simple steps.

That is why world-renowned brain expert Dr. Will Mitchell has recently released his best-selling book, **The Unbreakable Brain**. This simple, but powerful 121-page book gives you a 28-day plan for brain health you can start right away. The plan gives you 7 powerful strategies you can easily adopt, and in the next 4 weeks, you'll be able to...

- Protect your brain
- Keep your mind razor-sharp for as long as you live
- And keep your independence by not spending your final days in a facility.

Here's what Cathy D. from Carson City, NV wrote to Dr. Mitchell after reading **The Unbreakable Brain**, “Within two weeks my memory came back, and the confusion I had experienced went away. It was a miracle.”



Yes—in just 2 week's Cathy's memory was back! Its results like this that have made **The Unbreakable Brain** a national best-seller. It's even popular in the medical community. Beverly C. from West



Renowned Health  
Expert, Dr. Will Mitchell

Des Moines, IA wrote to say, “I took your book to my doctor's office, and he knew of it and said it was one of the best. My doctor is on board with this plan.”

Dr. Will Mitchell put everything you need to prevent and even fight dementia in this easy-to-read book. In addition to his 28-day plan to a sharper brain, you'll also find...

- 1 simple trick to finding the true cause of your memory loss—and how to fix it...
- 14 prescription drugs that kill your memory...
- 5 things your brain needs every day to super-boost memory...
- Complete list of inexpensive nutritional supplements that revive the brain...
- At-home test that reveals if you'll get full-blown dementia...

Over 180,000 copies **The Unbreakable Brain** have already been sold to folks like Dorothy from Shelton, WA. who said, “I am delighted with my results, and I would highly recommend this book to anyone struggling with memory problems as they age.”

**Get your copy of The Unbreakable Brain today and protect your brain in just 28-days!**

**Get The Unbreakable Brain for Just \$27!**  
**[www.SimpleBrainFix.com/NHC2](http://www.SimpleBrainFix.com/NHC2)**

# Lowering Blood Sugar: What to Expect

I recently had an interesting question from a reader; I'll call him George — not his real name. By following my low-carb recommendations, George easily lost 11 pounds, dropping from 200 to 189. But he is dismayed because his A1C level has remained at 6% and he wonders why.

This immediately raised some questions in my mind — questions I would ask George if he were a patient of mine. And I thought it would be helpful to share some of this imaginary conversation with you.

## How long has your A1C been elevated?

Prediabetes and type 2 diabetes don't develop overnight. The cycle typically starts with blood sugar becoming more erratic: higher peaks after eating followed by lower drops. This rollercoaster pattern eventually progresses to levels of blood sugar that are chronically elevated — a little at first — which is classified as prediabetes. Then, levels rise even higher to a diabetic level.

This process generally takes decades, and it causes internal damage along the way. The longer A1C has been elevated, the more damage has been done, and the longer it takes to reverse the process.

Fortunately, it doesn't take decades to restore healthier function. But it generally takes a couple of months — or more — before there is a drop in A1C.

## How long have you been eating a low-carb diet?

I don't know how long George has been following my diet recommendations or how much time elapsed between the two A1C tests that showed no change. This matters.

A1C measures the average blood-sugar level during the past three months, so it takes time for improvements to show up on the test. Imagine this: If average blood sugar were rising for a month or two, and then you started a low-carb diet and A1C began to drop, the average might show no change. But without a change in diet, the A1C would have been even higher.

As you might imagine, individual responses vary. Meanwhile, weight loss can happen more quickly.

## How much weight do you need to lose, and how is it distributed?

Studies show that in people who are overweight, losing at least 5–7% of body weight and getting regular exercise helps to prevent diabetes from developing. I don't know how tall George is, so I don't know if an 11-pound weight loss means that he has achieved a healthy weight. And I don't know if he gets any exercise.

The distribution of weight is at least as important, even for someone who is not technically overweight. Abdominal fat is inflammatory and contributes to diabetes in both overweight and thin people.

A healthy waist size should be less than half an individual's height. For example, someone who is 72 inches tall should have a waistline no more than 36 inches. A low-carb diet will help to shrink a waist.

## How well are you managing carbs in your diet?

As you may know, I recommend limiting carbs from certain types of foods — such as grains, sweet drinks, and the other top sources of carb overload in the American diet — to 60 grams daily. (For the complete list, check Volume 7, Issue 1, of this newsletter: *My Low-Carb Diet — Fine-Tuned*.)

When George sent me his question, he mentioned that he was limiting such carbs to 65 grams daily — not to the recommended 60 grams. While this may seem like a small difference, it makes me wonder whether there are overlooked carbs in George's diet that are slowing or blocking his progress.

## Other Points I Would Check

Lack of exercise and too much stress can block progress, even with a good diet. Adopting an exercise routine and managing stress in one's life are two essential components of getting and keeping blood sugar at a healthy level.

## What A1C Results Mean

A1C Result	Status
Below 5.5%	Optimal
Below 5.7%	Normal
5.7% to 6.4%	Prediabetes
6.5% or above	Diabetes



# 70-Year-Old Man Feasts on Pasta, Cheese, Bread, and Wine...

...and wakes up with a normal blood sugar reading of 84!

After getting “the lecture” from his doctor, 70-year old Bob Bianchi finally decided to eat better to help control his blood sugar. And while he wasn’t happy about it, he’d been doing pretty well...

Then recently, Bob’s son wanted him to celebrate his birthday together at a favorite Italian restaurant. How could Bob turn him down? “I’m just gonna take a night off and go for broke,” Bob decided.

And boy did Bob *feast*. He ordered the linguini with shrimp, layered in gooey mozzarella cheese and buried under heaps of sauce. Add in some bread and red wine, and it was heavenly!

So when Bob went to test his blood sugar the next morning, he was ready for bad news. But when the numbers popped up on the screen, he couldn’t believe it... His fasting blood sugar **was a mere 84** — smack dab in the middle of the normal range!

How the heck could this happen? Well, Bob had been eating sensibly most of the time, following his doctor’s orders. And he’d also been protecting his blood sugar by taking **GlucoBurn** from Primal Labs, a leader in nutritional supplements.

In fact, after just two days of taking Primal Labs’ **GlucoBurn**, Bob was shocked to see his morning fasting numbers at 63!

**GlucoBurn** is an easy-to-swallow gel cap containing four powerful nutrients to help with blood sugar control:

- 1 **White Mulberry Leaf Extract (the “Sugar Blocker”):** Prevents carbohydrates from getting broken down into sugar, so they never make it to your bloodstream.
- 2 **Banaba Leaf Extract:** Acts like an insulin copycat because it mimics the way insulin works at the cellular level. This allows your body to burn more sugar.

3 **ALA (Alpha Lipoic Acid):** Deep inside the energy factories in your cells, ALA helps break down sugars and amino acids into raw fuel — giving you more energy.

4 **Gymnema Sylvestre (the “Sugar Destroyer”):** This powerful nutrient slows down the digestion of carbs and sugar, making it harder for glucose to reach your bloodstream.

## Here’s How GlucoBurn Works:

Just take one capsule with each meal. You’ll receive an optimal dose of the pure form of all four nutrients. Their effectiveness is supported by over 25 scientific research studies, including 11 randomized controlled trials, the gold standard of scientific research.

These clinical findings show that the four ingredients in **GlucoBurn**:

- ✓ Support **healthy blood sugar metabolism**
- ✓ **Reduce blood sugar spikes** after meals
- ✓ Support **healthy fasting blood sugar** levels
- ✓ Support **healthy HbA1c** levels
- ✓ **Stimulate insulin** release
- ✓ **Mimic** naturally occurring insulin

**YES!** You can do all these things with **GlucoBurn**. With blood sugar in the normal range, you’ll also enjoy better concentration, more energy, and a brighter mood. Put **GlucoBurn** to the test, and you’ll be convinced.



Get GlucoBurn Today!  
**GlucoBurn.com/NHC3**

For Faster Service, call 1-888-309-0629 Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST • Saturday-Sunday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST

# Spring Cleaning and Decluttering Benefits

Spring cleaning is becoming more popular, according to a recent survey by the American Cleaning Institute. In fact, 80 percent of Americans would rather spring clean than do their taxes, despite the fact that cleaning hard-to-reach, filthy spaces — such as underneath furniture and appliances and in basements — are dreaded tasks. Fortunately, there are ways to get more benefits from your efforts.

## Get Rid of Clutter

Clutter can be stressful. One study found that women who think their homes are cluttered and disorganized have higher levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, and a more depressed mood. On the other hand, those who consider their home to be a relaxing, restorative environment experience less stress and a better mood.<sup>1</sup>

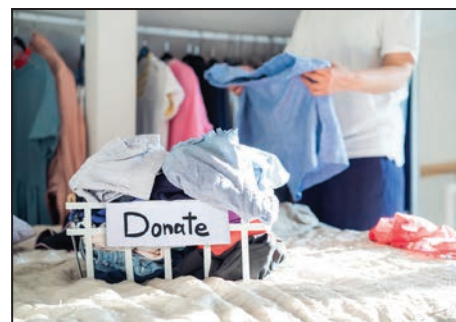
Other studies show that a space that seems cluttered and messy can be a source of distraction, anxiety, and even feelings of being over-

whelmed. It's what scientists call "cognitive overload," where too many things in a chaotic environment are competing for your attention.<sup>2</sup> Being in a disorganized environment also makes unhealthy snacks more appealing. On the plus side, some degree of mess may foster creativity.<sup>3</sup>

I'm not suggesting that you become fanatical about perfectly organizing every inch of your home; it's possible to go overboard. You know when there's too much clutter or mess around you, and the important thing is to have a space that feels right for you. If you start by doing some decluttering, it can simplify the cleaning process.

## Avoid Toxins

Try to use nontoxic products without added fragrance, as "fragrance" typically contains a whole host of chemicals that aren't listed on labels. If you like scented products, look for ones with essential oils. It may be helpful to check the



nonprofit Environmental Working Group's database of nontoxic household cleaners at <https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/>.

Open windows and doors to ventilate your space instead of using air fresheners that contain chemicals to mask unpleasant odors. And if you're sensitive to dust, wear a mask when tackling areas that are especially dusty.

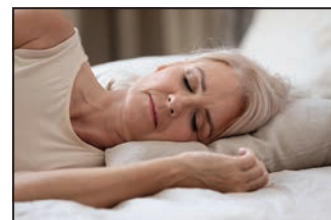
## Be Realistic

Making a plan and doing your spring cleaning in stages can be less stressful and less exhausting than trying to do too much at once. Think of it as a marathon, with rest stops along the way, rather than a sprint. And aim to enhance your home in a way that matters to you, rather than trying to achieve some impossible standard depicted in magazines or on social media.

# The Sleep-Diabetes Connection

If you've been reading this newsletter for a while, you know that I often emphasize the need for adequate sleep. Now, new research adds to the evidence. The latest study tracked more than 247,000 people in the United Kingdom for an average of 12 years. It found that risk of developing type 2 diabetes was significantly higher among those who habitually slept less than 6 hours per night, compared with those who slept 7 to 8 hours.<sup>4</sup>

Here's another important point: The risk was not reduced by eating a healthy diet among people who did not sleep enough. If you routinely don't get enough sleep, please don't take this to mean that your diet doesn't matter — it does. But do take steps to improve your sleep. (I give specific tips in Volume 5, Issue 4, of this newsletter: *Restful Sleep: How to Get Enough*.)



1 Saxbe, D.E., et al. "No place like home: home tours correlate with daily patterns of mood and cortisol." *Pers Soc Psychol Bull.* 2010 Jan;36(1):71-81. 2 Penney, E. "Why Household Mess Triggers Stress and Anxiety." *Neuroscience News.* 2023 Sept 4. 3 Vohs, K.D., et al. "Physical order produces healthy choices, generosity, and conventionality, whereas disorder produces creativity." *Psychol Sci.* 2013 Sep;24(9):1860-7. 4 Nôga, D.A., et al. "Habitual Short Sleep Duration, Diet, and Development of Type 2 Diabetes in Adults." *JAMA Netw Open.* 2024;7(3):e241147.

# Ultra-Processed Foods: The Latest Research

This isn't the first time I'm talking to you about ultra-processed foods and probably won't be the last, because these types of foods are really unhealthy. Yet, they make up 58 percent of American diets.

In case you're wondering what makes a food "ultra-processed," it's the inclusion of unnatural ingredients that your body is not designed to use. These include chemicals such as artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives, and that's not all.

Other ingredients may exist in nature but they are so drastically altered by industrial methods that they no longer resemble their source. For example, corn is a real food. But high fructose corn syrup doesn't look anything like it.

There are hundreds of ingredients in the ultra-processed world. Among them are industrial sweeteners such as glucose, fructose, and

maltodextrin, and there are hydrogenated oils, emulsifiers, texturizers, and protein isolates.

Australian researchers recently analyzed dozens of earlier studies and found that ultra-processed food is detrimental to our health in many ways. I've summarized these in the *Ultra-Processed Health Risks* chart on this page.<sup>1</sup>

## What to Do

Take the time to check ingredients on food labels — it takes just a moment. And follow a simple rule of thumb: If you can't find an ingredient in a home cook's kitchen or your grandmother's recipes, it's likely ultra-processed — avoid it. There are plenty of convenient options that are not ultra-processed, such as frozen, canned, or bagged vegetables and meats without the harmful additives.

# Pets Connect People



Loneliness is a growing problem, and it's bad for your health — much like being physically inactive. It raises risks for dementia, heart disease, stroke, depression, anxiety, and death. Having a pet can reduce loneliness, help people to get to know their neighbors, and build new friendships. And some of those new friendships can be quite surprising, according to a new report.<sup>2</sup>

## The Power of Pets

A survey of 1,000 North American pet owners found this:

- 80% meet neighbors through their pets.
- Over 70% have formed new friendships, including unexpected ones with people from a different culture, generation, or background, because of mutual feelings about their pets.
- Because of their pet, 83% have communicated with people they would otherwise never talk to.
- 90% believe that pets foster a stronger sense of community.

Studies have also found that the bond between people and their pets can help to lower blood pressure and triglycerides, reduce anxiety, enhance mental function, and even relieve symptoms of PTSD. And having a pet may motivate you to get outdoors and be more active.

If you want a pet, there are many animals waiting to be adopted.

## Ultra-Processed Health Risks

The more ultra-processed foods in a diet, the higher the odds of these:

### Risk factors:

- Elevated blood sugar
- Inflammatory belly fat
- Overweight
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- High triglycerides
- Low "good" HDL cholesterol

### Incidence of:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- Stroke

- Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease

- Breast cancer
- Central nervous system tumors
- Leukemia
- Colorectal cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Prostate cancer

### Mental health issues:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sleep problems

- Other mental disorders

### Respiratory conditions:

- Asthma
- Wheezing

### Digestive conditions:

- Crohn's disease
- Ulcerative colitis

### Earlier death due to:

- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Stroke

1 Lane, M.M., et al. "Ultra-processed food exposure and adverse health outcomes: umbrella review of epidemiological meta-analyses." *BMJ*. 2024 Feb 28;384:e077310. 2 Mars. "Pets Connect Us." <https://www.bettercitiesforpets.com/resource/2023-report/>



# Q&A

**Q: If I follow your recommendations for lowering blood pressure, how long before I see a change?**

— Donna B.

**A:** It depends upon what is triggering the high blood pressure and how quickly that cause gets corrected. I'll give you some examples of situations I've often encountered with my patients.

A high-carb diet is known to elevate blood sugar but, as you know, it is also a very common trigger of high blood pressure. If an overload of carbs is causing elevated blood pressure and you start routinely eating a low-carb diet, you might see blood pressure starting to drop in a month, but it may take longer. It depends on how high the blood sugar was before the diet change.

The higher the levels of blood sugar, the longer it takes to see changes in blood pressure after starting to reduce carbs. A1C indicates average blood sugar during the past three months. If A1C was 6%, for example, it's easier to get the blood pressure down than if A1C was at 8% or 10%, or even higher.

As a reference point, here's what I suggest when you transition to a low-carb diet: Monitor your blood sugar and blood pressure for two months. If both your blood sugar and blood pressure are not going down, I would make sure that the carbs are really being controlled in your diet. If excess carbs are sneaking in or you indulge in a big piece of cake or a plateful of pasta

every few days, this will sabotage your efforts.

Another possible scenario is this: Your blood sugar starts dropping but your blood pressure doesn't budge. In this case, something else is contributing to your high blood pressure. Keep eating a low-carb diet and look for an additional cause.

One common blood-pressure trigger is an infected tooth or gum disease. These cause inflammation, which keeps blood pressure elevated. Untreated urinary tract or sinus infections work the same way. In these situations, the infection must be treated. Then, the inflammation needs to calm down, which could take a few weeks or longer. Once that happens, your low-carb diet will start to lower blood pressure.

The same holds true if you're recovering from surgery, an injury, or an illness. If you have the flu, for example, the worst part of it may be over in a few days. But there's a lingering effect from inflammation related to the condition, and it takes your body a while to completely get over it. Taking a supplement that calms inflammation, such as fish oil, can be helpful.

Stress is another possible cause, but the source of it is not always obvious. I offer some tips on what to do on page 8 of Volume 4, Issue 6, of this newsletter: *How to Conquer Hidden Stress*.

Last but not least, if you're working on lowering blood pressure, I recommend checking it at home every few days and keeping a record. The stress of being in a doctor's office can lead to an artificially high blood-pressure reading.

**Q: I recently read that eating yogurt reduces risk for diabetes. Is this true? — John H.**

**A:** There is some evidence that people who regularly include yogurt in their diet face less risk for type 2 diabetes. But this doesn't mean that adding yogurt to an unhealthy, high-carb diet will magically prevent diabetes — it won't.

Studies show an association between yogurt and diabetes, rather than a cause. We don't know how much lifestyle habits or other foods in the diets of study participants also influenced diabetes risk.

I do recommend fermented foods such as yogurt. They help to maintain a healthy gut, which helps to manage blood sugar. But beware of yogurts with added fruit or other flavoring, as they are very high in sugar. If you like, you can add fresh berries to plain yogurt. A quarter-cup of blueberries contains about 5 grams of carbs, whereas flavored yogurts contain up to 30 grams of carbs per serving.

## 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.