

Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



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The Anti-Cancer Lifestyle: Prevention News

The most important things to do — or not do — to reduce your odds of developing cancer, including the top foods that deliver protective, anti-cancer nutrients.



There have been some new developments related to cancer prevention since I last covered the topic just two months ago (in the July 2024 issue of this newsletter). The FDA approved a new blood test for colorectal cancer. And a new study about preventing cancer produced some dramatic headlines that, as usual, did not tell the whole story.

The study concluded that 40 percent of cancer cases and nearly half of all cancer deaths could be prevented by changing lifestyle habits.¹ This conclusion was based on a lot of data — more than 1.7 million cases of cancer. I've summarized the key points identified by the study on the next page in *Cancer Risk Factors*.

However, despite the tremendous amount of information analyzed by the study's nine authors, who are affiliated with the American Cancer Society and several leading medical schools, there's an elephant in the room that they overlooked.

That elephant is blood sugar. More than a century ago, a German scientist named Otto Warburg discovered that blood sugar drives growth of most cancer cells. This mechanism became known as the Warburg effect.²

Although Warburg's discovery was briefly considered a breakthrough in the scientific world, it was then ignored for decades. But in the last ten years or so, there have been some new developments: More research is confirming the Warburg effect. In fact, studies have shown that elevated blood sugar is a driver of between 70 and 80 percent of cancers.³

I'm not saying that high blood sugar is the only risk factor for cancer — it isn't — but it's a significant one that affects most adults. I'll explain how it works in more detail

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE:
How To Stay Mentally
Sharp for Years To Come**

in a moment, but basically, it stems from eating too many carbs — sugars and starches.

The authors of the recent study overlooked this data. Why, I don't know. But I do know that at least some health professionals in the cancer world are familiar with the blood sugar–cancer connection, yet we don't hear about it. Why?

I don't have a magic answer, but I did have a personal experience that helped me to understand, at least partially, what goes on.

Dr. Marlene's
NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

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Why Blood Sugar Is Overlooked

I was taking a course about nutrition and cancer at one of the top cancer centers in the U.S. This was continuing education, far from my first course in the subject. I was already credentialed in nutrition, at the same level as the nutritionist who was teaching the course.

Before I go on with the story, I want to put it into context. It's well known that diabetes increases risk for cancer. For example, diabetes more than triples risk for liver cancer, more than doubles risk for pancreatic cancer, and nearly

doubles risk for uterine cancer.⁴ And even without diabetes, elevated blood sugar is part of a mechanism that raises risk.

Back to my story. As the lecture progressed, I was waiting to hear about blood sugar — but it wasn't mentioned. During a question-and-answer period in the later part of the class, I diplomatically asked, "Are you asking patients to restrict sugar or carbohydrates to manage blood sugar?" The answer surprised me: "No, not really."

I didn't want to put the instructor on the spot in front of the whole class, so I didn't question her further at that point. But after the

Cancer Risk Factors

According to a recent study of more than 1.7 million cancer cases, the life-style factors below, if corrected, would prevent 40 percent of cancer cases among American adults and nearly half of all cancer deaths:

- Smoking cigarettes
- Being overweight or obese
- Consuming alcoholic drinks
- Being exposed to ultraviolet radiation from the sun
- Being physically inactive
- Eating red and processed meat (see below)
- Not eating enough vegetables and fruits
- Not getting enough fiber and calcium
- Being exposed to secondhand smoke
- Untreated infections linked to certain cancers (see below)

About Meat

While there is good evidence that commercially processed meats — cold cuts in supermarkets, for example

— increase risk for some cancers, it isn't clear why. It could be because of additives and industrial processing methods, rather than the underlying meat. Cold cuts without such additives are available in natural food stores and some regular supermarkets.

When it comes to red meat in general, it depends upon how the animals were raised. Most of today's meat contains inflammatory fats because cows are fed corn and antibiotics, rather than being allowed to eat grass on pastures, as nature designed them to do.

Red meat can be a healthy food if it's produced and cooked the right way. I encourage you to check out an earlier issue of this newsletter about meat, listed in *Related to This Topic* on page 5.

Infections

Infections with Epstein-Barr, H. pylori, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, human herpes virus-8 (also called Kaposi sarcoma herpesvirus), human immunodeficiency virus, and human papillomavirus raise risk for certain cancers.

How Much Sugar Do We Eat?

The average American eats or drinks 34 teaspoons of sugars per day. This adds up to about 100 pounds of sugar per person per year.

In 1822, the amount of sugar an average American ate in 5 days is equivalent to one of today's 12-ounce sodas. Now, we consume that much sugar in 7 hours, on average.

Source: USDA Agricultural Research Service.



class, I went up to her and asked why restricting sugars and starches wasn't mentioned to patients. And this answer surprised me even more: "Honestly, because it's actually very difficult to do."

Really? Would a surgeon say, "Oh, I can't do that surgery because it's very difficult to do"? Of course not. That's why surgeons spend years learning their specialty. But it's acceptable for a highly trained nutritionist — at a leading cancer center — to fail to mention that a diet that elevates blood sugar increases cancer risk? Because restricting carbs is difficult to do? This is so wrong!

It is quite realistic to adopt a practical low-carb diet that works on an ongoing basis. There are free apps to help you plan changes to your diet, as well as how-to books, cookbooks, recipes online, and other sources. My books and this newsletter are some examples. (See *Related to This Topic* on page 5 for details about my diet in earlier newsletter issues.) Many readers have successfully switched to my low-carb style of eating and have significantly improved their health.

A Key Diet-Cancer Mechanism

Earlier issues of this newsletter have described this mechanism, but I'll recap it here. In a nutshell, the combination of high insulin and high blood sugar raises risk for cancer.

When we eat sugars and starches, they are broken down in the digestive tract, and blood sugar enters the bloodstream. Insulin is then released to enable the blood sugar to be absorbed by cells and used to produce energy.

Initially, when there is excess blood sugar — because of too many carbs in a diet — more insulin needs to be produced. If this pattern repeats, insulin eventually stays elevated. High insulin is inflammatory, and it's a growth factor that can contribute to the development of cancer cells.

As excess carbs are eaten longer-term, blood sugar becomes elevated because even extra insulin can no longer control it. Then, the elevated blood sugar becomes another risk factor for cancer.

Cancer cells have a huge appetite for blood sugar, much more than healthy cells. With excess blood sugar, there's more food for cancer cells, so it's easier for them to grow. This mechanism is visible on PET scans.

Now, let's look at how to prevent this situation or, if it's already happened, how to reverse it.

Protective Foods

In addition to a low-carb diet, I recommend eating foods that are known to be protective against cancer. I've listed them below.

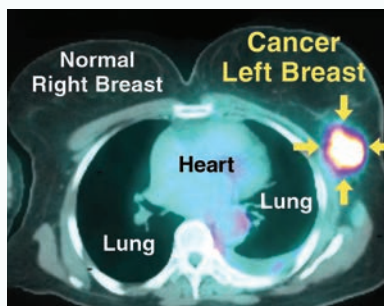
Cruciferous and allium vegetables contain different combinations of anti-cancer nutrients. Vegetables also provide fiber, another anti-cancer nutrient that is lacking in most American diets.

Vegetables can be roasted, incorporated into various recipes, or simply steamed and eaten as sides with some extra virgin olive oil or butter and seasonings of your choice.

Cruciferous vegetables: The name comes from their flowers, which have four petals that make the shape of a cross. Cruciferous vegetables include arugula, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, kale, radish, turnip, and watercress. Eat one or more of these three-to-five times per week, or more often.

Allium vegetables: This is the onion family. In addition to all types of onions, it includes

How PET Scans Show Cancer



PET (positron emission tomography) scans can detect cancer because cancer cells use much more blood sugar than healthy cells. Before a PET scan is done, the patient receives an injection of a radioactive tracer that is a type of sugar. Then, cancerous areas show up as bright areas on the scan because that's where the sugar is concentrated.

garlic, leeks, chives, scallions, and shallots. Eat one or more of these three-to-five times per week, or more often.

Fish: Aim to eat oily fish, which contain healthy anti-inflammatory omega-3 fat, such as salmon, herring, sardines, or mackerel, at least twice a week. If you don't eat any of these that often, take 1,000 mg of a fish oil supplement daily.

Liver: This is a true natural superfood. Compared to the muscle meat we regularly eat, liver contains over 1,000 times more vitamin A, 60 times more vitamin B12, 19 times more vitamin D, and 3 times more iron.

Seaweed: This is a top source of iodine, which is essential for thyroid function and helps to protect against breast, stomach, and possibly other cancers.⁵ I recommend having a small packet

of seaweed snacks on most days. However, don't eat seaweed or take iodine supplements if you have thyroid disease, unless it's part of a regimen from your health practitioner.

Fermented foods: These provide beneficial bacteria that are necessary to help maintain a healthy gut, which helps to keep your immune system working well to protect against cancer and other ills. I favor fermented vegetables, such as cultured sauerkraut, pickles, kimchi, or any other type of naturally picked vegetables. Yogurt with live cultures (full-fat, unflavored, without chemical additives) is another option.

Bone broth: Made the traditional way, by simmering bones and bits of vegetables for flavor, bone broth is soothing and helps to reduce inflammation. It also provides minerals, such as calcium and

New Colon Cancer Test

The FDA recently approved a blood test to screen for colon cancer in adults aged 45 and older who are at average risk for the disease. A blood sample is drawn in a doctor's office and sent to a lab for analysis. This is an alternative to at-home stool tests. If there is a positive result on either of these tests, a colonoscopy should be done.

The blood and stool tests are not as accurate as a colonoscopy. A colonoscopy, while more invasive, also has another advantage: If it finds precancerous polyps, these can be removed at the same time. The blood and stool tests can't do this.

Medicare will pay for the new blood test every three years. Other insurance plans should also cover it.

magnesium, in a form that is easily absorbed and used by your body.

For enhanced circulation:

These are very helpful: purple fruits and vegetables, beets, celery, leafy greens, green tea, chocolate with 85 percent or more cacao, and fresh herbs and spices, such as:

- Basil
- Rosemary
- Parsley
- Ginger
- Cinnamon
- Garlic
- Turmeric
- Cardamom
- Chili
- Cayenne pepper

Overall, a protective diet consists mainly of fresh foods prepared from scratch, rather than foods from packages, takeout counters, or restaurants. This way, you avoid inflammatory vegetable oils and industrial ingredients that don't resemble real foods found in nature.

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.



I realize it's unrealistic to avoid all packaged food. But do avoid low-fat or non-fat versions of any type of foods. These are generally higher in carbs because they use more sugar to compensate for lack of flavor. And because they lack fat, they aren't as satisfying, so you end up eating more and getting hungry sooner.

Supplements

It's impossible to eat a perfect diet. Even if you made perfect choices or ate organic foods, they are not as nutritious as they were many years ago. This is because the soil in which they grow has been depleted of nutrients.

A multivitamin, taken daily, fills the gaps. Look for a product that contains up to 100% Daily Value (%DV) of all the essential vitamins plus a list of minerals, including trace minerals such as zinc, copper, chromium, selenium, and others.

As I noted above, if you don't eat oily fish twice per week, take

1,000 mg of fish oil daily. And for extra cancer protection, consider supplements of resveratrol, which is a beneficial ingredient found in red wine. Take one serving per day.

Other Risk Factors

The recent study on lifestyle habits is not the first one to note that smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke increase risk for cancer. Both should be avoided.

Other toxins also increase risk. We have air pollution from vehicles and industrial emissions. These are difficult to avoid, but you can take steps to reduce your exposure. For example, if you go for walks or jogs, choose routes that aren't near heavy traffic or factories. Instead, aim for green spaces.

There's also smoke from wildfires in many areas and, occasionally, dust storms. When these occur, stay indoors as much as possible. If the smoke or dust is heavy in the air and you must go outdoors, wear a mask.

Too much exposure to the sun is another risk factor. During times of peak sun, wear light clothing and use sunscreen for protection. For outdoor exercise or excursions in hot weather, early morning and evening hours are best.

Lack of physical activity is another important risk factor. It's best to approach this in two ways: Incorporate a regular form of exercise into your routine, including movement that gets your heart pumping and some resistance training. And try to avoid sitting for long periods. Get up and walk around or stretch periodically, run an errand, tidy up around the house, and make it a habit to walk around when you talk on the phone.

A Final Word

I've covered a lot of ground and it's difficult to change a lot of things at once. So, here's my advice: Start by looking at your diet and find something you can improve. For example, if you typically eat fries as a side dish, substitute some vegetables, starting with the ones at the top of the *Protective Foods* list on page 3. Once you're used to that, pick another item on that list, and so on.


Gradual changes can become new, healthier habits. And each one is a step to a healthier you.

Related to This Topic

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

Related Topic	Volume	Issue	Title
A Healthy Diet	7	1	My Low-Carb Diet — Fine-Tuned
Cancer Tests and Prevention Basics	7	7	Cancer Prevention: The Latest Evidence
Red Meat	3	2	The Diabetic's Guide to Eating Meat
Calcium	7	5	How Much Calcium Do You Need? (page 8)
Fiber	4	7	Most Diets Lack Fiber — How to Get Enough (page 9)
Liver	1	2	Liver: Nature's Superfood (page 7)
How to Avoid Toxins	1	7	The 21-Day Energy Restoration Plan

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



1 Islami, F., et al. "Proportion and number of cancer cases and deaths attributable to potentially modifiable risk factors in the United States, 2019." *CA Cancer J Clin*. 2024 Jul 11.

2 Liberti, M.V., et al. "The Warburg Effect: How Does it Benefit Cancer Cells?" *Trends Biochem Sci*. 2016 Mar;41(3):211-218.

3 Vaupel, P., et al. "Revisiting the Warburg effect: historical dogma versus current understanding." *J Physiol*. 2021 Mar;599(6):1745-1757.

4 Bjornsdottir, H.H., et al. "A national observation study of cancer incidence and mortality risks in type 2 diabetes compared to the background population over time." *Sci Rep*. 2020 Oct 15;10(1):17376.

5 Kaczor, T. "Iodine and Cancer." *Natural Medicine Journal*. 2014 June 1.

Carb Counting Clarified

I've been asked various questions about the way I recommend counting carbs. And honestly, I'm not surprised. So, I'd like to give you some background about why I recommend counting carbs the way I do: only in certain foods. I believe it will answer a variety of questions I've received.

Low-carb diets usually recommend counting carbs — and sometimes, net carbs — in *all* foods and beverages. This is tedious. It dissuades many people from trying to reduce the carbs in their diet. Or they do it for a while but can't sustain the effort.

Counting net carbs is another popular part of many low-carb diets, and there is a problem with this, too. Net carbs are calculated this way: Take the total carbs in a food and subtract the fiber content of that food.

In this scenario, the carb content of a food can be quite high, but subtracting the fiber content makes it seem as though it's lower. The idea is that because fiber slows down digestion of food, the carbs will be converted more slowly to blood sugar. As a result, the thinking goes, the presence of fiber will reduce the impact of the carbs and blood sugar will not rise as much.

There are two problems with this. The idea that fiber will reduce the effect of the carbs often makes people feel they can eat more. And even if that doesn't happen, counting net carbs doesn't always work in the real world.

I've had many patients who, before seeing me, had faithfully been counting net carbs for a long time and were still having trouble controlling their blood sugar, blood pressure, weight, or all of the above. When they adopted my approach, they made real progress.

In addition, counting net carbs in all foods is also tedious. Not too many people are likely to continue doing this in the long term.

The good news is that you don't have to follow either of these approaches. You can use the simpler method I developed.

History Snapshot

It may seem as though low-carb diets are a new idea. Perhaps you remember when Dr. Atkins' diet became popular; we didn't hear much about carbs before that. But the history goes back further.

Weight-loss benefits of reducing carbs were first described 200 years ago by Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, a French lawyer who wrote a book about fine dining. Interestingly, he promoted the idea of eating less food that is high in starch — but not every single source of carbs. The idea didn't gain traction.¹

Then, in 1863, a pamphlet about how to lose weight by reducing carbs — especially starchy and sugary foods — gained popularity. It was written by William Banting, an undertaker to English royalty who is often called “the father of low-carb diets.” Today, we would call him an “influencer.”



Banting produced his pamphlet, *Letter on Corpulence, Addressed to the Public*, because he had struggled with obesity for most of his life. After many failed attempts to lose weight, he had finally succeeded by restricting carbs, and he felt compelled to share his experience and knowledge. He wanted to help others who were struggling with obesity.

After he printed, advertised, and distributed the pamphlet, it was so popular that he had to keep printing new editions. It was the diet best-seller of its time.

Here's an excerpt from Banting's introduction:

Corpulence

Of all the parasites that affect humanity I do not know of, nor can I imagine, any more distressing than that of Obesity, and, having just emerged from a very long probation in this affliction, I am desirous of circulating my humble knowledge and experience for the benefit of my fellow man, with an earnest hope it may lead to the same comfort and happiness I now feel under the extraordinary change, which might almost be termed miraculous had it not been accomplished by the most simple common-sense means.

— William Banting

Excerpted from *Letter on Corpulence, Addressed to the Public*, originally published in 1863. To read the complete pamphlet, visit: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/j.1550-8528.1993.tb00605.x>

1 Strandberg, T. “Roots of the Atkins Diet.” *BMJ*. 2005 Jan 15;330(7483):132. 2 Pavlidou, E., et al. “Clinical Evidence of Low-Carbohydrate Diets against Obesity and Diabetes Mellitus.” *Metabolites*. 2023 Feb 6;13(2):240.

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If your knees, hips or joints are aching, chances are good it's due to too much inflammation.

Now, you can get rapid relief with a unique, highly targeted form of **Boron** called FruiteX-B®. This patented ingredient is nature-identical to the boron found in fruits, vegetables and certain beans.



Now, get better relief than from glucosamine and chondroitin.

In double blind clinical study, 60 people with knee discomfort got 220 mg of FruiteX-B® boron or a placebo daily for 14 days.

The results? Those taking the unique Boron got relief in as little as 7 days, with less joint discomfort, reduced stiffness and improved flexibility, mobility and range of motion.¹²

Why such soothing comfort?

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Plus, this unique formula includes a patented

collagen ingredient called **UC-II® collagen**, which has been shown to “reprogram” a faulty immune response that can cause activity-related joint pain.

In one study, people suffering from moderate to severe pain due to exercise took 40 mg of UC-II collagen or 1500 mg of glucosamine and 1200 mg of chondroitin. Overall, people taking UC-II improved on the WOMAC pain scale by 39% which was 19% better than glucosamine-chondroitin.¹³

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

TriFlexarin® also includes selenium to reduce joint tenderness and a blend of ginger, turmeric and boswellia serrata to reduce occasional joint swelling and inflammation.

“**TriFlexarin**® is great. You feel relief quickly after taking it. I highly recommend it.”

—Georgianna



“I had pain at the gym, pain while sitting, pain while sleeping. **TriFlexarin**® works for me. The other night I was out to dinner and realized I was pain-free.”

—J. Sanders, CA



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Carb Counting Clarified (continued)

Why Reduce Carbs?

Before I dive into the specifics of my low-carb approach, I want to review a quick snapshot of the benefits: A low-carb diet can enhance health because it reduces peaks in blood sugar and insulin after we eat. As a result, blood sugar and insulin remain more stable. This provides more constant physical and mental energy, reduces cravings, and prevents ravenous hunger by the next meal or snack. Such hunger makes it difficult, if not impossible, to make healthy food choices.

A healthy low-carb diet can work almost like magic to prevent type 2 diabetes and possibly reverse it. It also helps to lower blood pressure, chronic inflammation, and excess weight, and to enhance overall health.

One major reason for such broad effects is that a low-carb diet keeps insulin at lower levels. When insulin is high, it promotes fat storage and inflammation. High insulin also leads to belly fat, which further generates inflammation that underlies virtually anything that can go wrong with the human body.

Despite all the history and plenty of science to support a low-carb approach,² it is rarely used or even discussed in today's healthcare. But it works. Now, let's look at my simpler approach.

Why Not Count *All* Carbs?

Other than meat, fish, and pure fat, all foods contain some carbs, even lettuce. However, lettuce contains

such a tiny amount of carbs — 1 gram in 1–2 cups — that the amount is insignificant.

No one gains weight or develops type 2 diabetes because they're eating too much lettuce. So, why would you count carbs in lettuce? It would just be an unnecessary distraction that doesn't produce benefits, while making it more difficult to follow such an approach. The same applies to most other vegetables (I've listed the exceptions in *Carbs to Count* below).

On the other hand, foods made with any of type grain, including whole grain, are a different story. A cup of cereal can contain between 25 and 55 grams of carbs,

and sometimes more. A medium bagel packs about 50 grams of carbs — the equivalent of 50–100 cups of lettuce.

Do you get the idea? Some foods are more dense sources of carbohydrates than others. Dense sources can provide a lot of carbs in a relatively small amount of food, which makes it easy to overeat.

Bottom line, limiting only the *dense* sources or carbs, instead of all sources, produces the benefits in a way that is much easier and more realistic to follow as a routine way of eating. And it enables you to still eat your favorite foods, as long as you don't overindulge in the carbs that count.

Carbs to Count

My low-carb approach has only four rules:

1. Count carbs *only* from these categories of foods, and limit your daily total of these to 60 grams:
 - Grains and any food made with grains.
 - Snacks, including all types of chips, pretzels, popcorn, candy, and any other snack that contains grain or sugar.
 - Fruit — fresh, frozen, or canned.
 - Starchy vegetables and legumes, including potatoes, beans, and corn.
 - Drinks that contain either natural sugar, such as fruit and vegetable juices and milk, or added sugar of any type, including honey, agave syrup, and high fructose corn syrup.
2. From the foods listed above, consume no more than 30 grams of carbs at one time, in a meal or snack
3. Eat every 3 hours or before you're hungry.
4. Eat some fat with every meal and snack.



There's a more detailed description of the foods to count in Volume 7, Issue 1, of this newsletter: *My Low-Carb Diet — Fine-Tuned*.

HOW TO STOP NERVE DISCOMFORT

and Get Normal Feeling in Your Hands and Feet Again



Are you annoyed by occasional nerve discomfort? That's putting it mildly. It's probably driving you crazy – making simple tasks difficult and preventing you from enjoying life.

Well, here's good news, even if you've tried everything and are ready to give up...

The only way to silence nerve discomfort is to actually nourish and repair your nerve network. How? By giving your nerves the exact nutrients they need to thrive.

If you're a gardener, you're no doubt familiar with a product called *Miracle-Gro*®. It provides the precise nutrients that plants need to thrive. And to gardeners who see their plants come alive and stay healthy, it does seem like a miracle.

It's the same for your nerves. If you're suffering occasional nerve discomfort, you need specific nutrients that can bring your network back to good health. Restore that normal feeling. And make life enjoyable again.

How? That's easy. Use Primal Labs' **Advanced Nerve Support**.

Advanced Nerve Support contains a special form of vitamin B1 called Benfotiamine. Studies show **Benfotiamine helped patients feel greater "touch" sensory perception, and a lower level of nerve discomfort.**

Advanced Nerve Support also contains vitamins B6 and B12. **Vitamin B6** ensures the messengers along your nerve network – your neurotransmitters – can communicate properly. Here's how...

Vitamin B6 helps sooth tender nerves by helping them maintain healthy coverings. You see, your nerves are covered by a special material called the myelin sheath. It's like the insulation on electrical wires. If this insulation gets frayed or broken, the signals to the brain will be garbled.

That's when normal sensation is compromised and the feeling can be off, or even the opposite of what it should be. The result is discomfort.

Vitamin B12 aids in the normal repair of the myelin sheath. And it also nourishes the precious nerve fibers inside the sheath. Studies show B12 increases nerve regeneration, while reducing ectopic nerve firings – those acute, random sensations that seem to have no source.

When you combine B-12 with Benfotiamine and vitamin B6, *it's like Miracle-Gro® for your nerves*, helping to bring about rejuvenation and soothing relief. **Advanced Nerve Support** also contains **Acetyl-L-carnitine and Alpha Lipoic Acid** – two more nutrients that nerves need for healthy function.

Studies show that Acetyl-L-Carnitine "promotes a healthy nervous system and normal nerve response." And Alpha Lipoic Acid, taken daily, may significantly reduce nerve discomfort in as little as 3 weeks.

As you can see, **Advanced Nerve Support** has everything you need to soothe your nerves and restore normal feeling.

Advanced Nerve Support contains no egg, milk, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, soy, wheat, gluten, sugar or preservatives.

Ready for relief? Good, because right now you can get 15% off any size order of **Advanced Nerve Support**. Simply visit the URL below to lock in your special savings.

Don't wait. Order now.
Your nerves will be glad you did!



Visit PrimalSpecials.com/Nerve
to Save 15% on your order

How Long Do We Live?

You may have heard in the news that among the high-income, English-speaking countries of the world, the U.S. has the lowest life expectancy. But looking beyond the headlines, there's a hopeful part to this story.

Researchers from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, and The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, analyzed data from between 1990 and 2019. The other countries in the study were the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand.¹

The study found that Australians lived longest. The U.S. ranked last. The difference: Compared to the U.S., Australian women lived, on average, 4 more years and men lived 5 more years. However, within the U.S., life expectancy differed significantly among states, by about 10 years.

Lifespan Factors

One major reason for our low ranking, according to the researchers, is that younger people in this country die at higher rates from causes that are largely preventable: drug overdoses, car accidents, and homicide.

Equally important, our death rates from cardiovascular disease are high among older Americans. Since it's known that such disease is related to an unhealthy diet,

lack of physical activity, obesity, and stress — all of which can be corrected — there is an opportunity to improve and extend lives. That's the hopeful part.

Keep in mind that averages cannot predict how long an individual may live.



More Americans Are Living to 100+

According to the U.S. Census Bureau:

- The number of centenarians in the U.S. has nearly tripled since 1990, from 37,000 to 101,000 in 2024.
- That number is projected to more than quadruple to 422,000 by 2054.
- This year, 78 percent of centenarians are women and 22 percent are men.
- It's estimated that in 30 years, the proportion of men will increase to 32 percent, with women making up 68 percent of those ages 100 and older.
- With the current numbers, there are enough centenarians in this country to make up the entire population of any one of these cities: Davenport, Iowa; Hesperia, Calif.; Suffolk, Va.; New Bedford, Mass.; or Yuma, Ariz.

The Power of Arts and Crafts

A new study shows that any type of creative arts and crafts can enhance overall wellbeing. Researchers analyzed data from more than 7,000 people in the United Kingdom and found that arts and crafts make people happier and more satisfied with their lives and give them a stronger sense that life is worthwhile.²

These are examples of creative activities that were beneficial:

- Painting
- Decorating

- Drawing
- Printmaking
- Sculpture
- Photography as an artistic activity (not family or holiday snapshots)
- Making films or videos as an artistic activity (not family or holiday videos)
- Creating original artworks or animation on a computer
- Sewing
- Embroidery
- Crocheting
- Knitting



- Woodworking with a lathe
- Wood carving
- Making furniture
- Calligraphy
- Pottery
- Making jewelry for yourself



While some creative arts require some equipment, others are simple to try. To draw, all you need is a pencil or pen and paper. If you have a phone or camera, the possibilities for artistic photos or videos are unlimited.

1 Wilkie, R.Z., et al. "Life expectancy and geographic variation in mortality: an observational comparison study of six high-income Anglophone countries." *BMJ Open*. 2024 Aug 13;14(7):e079365.
2 Keyes, H., et al. "Creating arts and crafting positively predicts subjective wellbeing." *Front. Public Health* 2024 Aug 15.

A Natural Medicine Chest

Depending on where you live, summer may seem never-ending — an unlikely time to think about winter colds and flu. But the cold and flu season usually starts in October, so September is a good time to prepare.

Natural remedies work best when taken at the very first sign of any symptom, whether it's a sore throat, a bit of nasal congestion, or a slight achiness. And you may start feeling that something is beginning to develop at inconvenient times — during the night or when you wake up in the morning.

That's when you need a well-stocked natural medicine chest. These are some essentials to keep on hand — before you need them:

Nasal spray: I've been recommending saline nasal sprays, such as NeilMed, for years. And a recent study added to the evidence that they are effective in washing out viruses and bacteria from the nose and throat, which helps to prevent them from replicating.¹

The biggest mistakes people make with these are not using them soon enough after a symptom appears, and not using them often enough — several times a day, up to six times. You can buy a nasal

spray in any drugstore, brick and mortar or online.

Zinc lozenges: When dissolved in your mouth, these are another way to slow viruses from replicating and making you sick. Studies have found that zinc lozenges shortened the duration of a cold by 28 to 49 percent.² Like nasal sprays, zinc lozenges are easy to find in drug stores.

Andrographis: The herb has been used as a remedy for various ailments for centuries. More recent studies show that it fights viruses, bacteria, and inflammation and helps you beat colds and flu or reduce the time it takes to get over an infection.³

A tincture is more quickly absorbed than pills, but if you hate tinctures, get pills. And take a serving several times a day. Andrographis is not as widely available as other herbs in physical stores but is easy to find online.

Echinacea: The herb prevents flu viruses from replicating and enhances your immune system's native ability to protect you.⁴ A good-quality tincture should make your tongue

tingle. If you prefer pills, break open a capsule and see if it does that to your tongue. If not, try another product.

Always do the tongue-tingle test because it's the only way to tell that you have a good-quality, effective product.

During cold and flu season, I recommend taking echinacea while you're healthy, for prevention. This way, it builds up in your system, shoring up your defenses against seasonal bugs. And if you do get sick, it will speed up recovery.

You can also boost your resistance to seasonal bugs by getting enough sleep, managing stress, and getting some moderate exercise. Intense exercise can reduce your natural defenses, but exercise that makes you feel calmer and less stressed helps your immune system to work better.

1 Little, P., et al. "Nasal sprays and behavioural interventions compared with usual care for acute respiratory illness in primary care: a randomised, controlled, open-label, parallel-group trial." *Lancet Respir Med*. 2024 Aug;12(8):619-632.

2 Hemilä, H. "Zinc lozenges and the common cold: a meta-analysis comparing zinc acetate and zinc gluconate, and the role of zinc dosage." *JRSM Open*. 2017 May 2;8(5):2054270417694291. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28515951/>

3 Okhuarobo, A., et al. "Harnessing the medicinal properties of *Andrographis paniculata* for diseases and beyond: a review of its phytochemistry and pharmacology." *Asian Pac J Trop Dis*. 2014 Jun;4(3):213-222.

4 Pleschka, S., et al. "Anti-viral properties and mode of action of standardized Echinacea purpurea extract against highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (H5N1, H7N7) and swine-origin H1N1 (S-OIV)." *Virology*. 2009 Nov 13;619:197.



Best Ways to Commute

People who walk or bike to work are healthier than those who drive or use public transit, according to a Scottish study of more than 82,000 people. Both biking and walking to work reduced risk of hospitalization, heart disease, and odds of needing a prescription for heart disease or mental health by anywhere from 10 to 30 percent.

Among those biking to work, risk of death was 47 percent lower, and cancer risk was 51 percent lower.⁵

We can all be more active by walking or biking to run errands, go shopping, or go out with friends. Driving isn't the only way to travel.



5 Friel, C., et al. "Health benefits of pedestrian and cyclist commuting: evidence from the Scottish Longitudinal Study." *BMJ Public Health* 2024;2:e001295.

Q&A

Q: Should I take bile salts? I sometimes get gas and bloating and am wondering if they would help. If so, how should I use them? — Andy H.

A: It's possible that bile salts can help, depending on what's causing the gas and bloating. But they aren't the first remedy I would reach for.



I usually like to start working on most digestive issues in this sequence:

- First, remove any troublesome foods, which vary from one person to another. Not everyone has a troublesome food or food ingredient that causes problems, but many people do. Most often, it's gluten or dairy. If this is the case, abstaining from that food may resolve the issue.
- Second, I like to make sure that there is adequate stomach acid. Although marketing of heartburn drugs portrays stomach acid as a villain, this is not the case. Lack of sufficient stomach acid is a common problem and a major trigger of heartburn.

Stomach acid breaks down proteins in the stomach, helps to create a good environment for healthy bacteria in our gut, and stimulates the pancreas and gallbladder. When things are working well, the pancreas secretes suf-

ficient enzymes to break down different types of food, and the gallbladder secretes enough bile to break down fats. Stomach acid also helps to move food through the entire digestive tract and supports regular bowel movements.

Bottom line, enough stomach acid is essential for good digestion. But levels of stomach acid typically drop as we get older. So, I recommend taking a supplement that helps to restore healthy levels: betaine HCL with pepsin. Take it just before each meal.

Bile salts can help if the gallbladder is not producing enough bile, and the problem is difficulty digesting fats. I would start by addressing the two points above. If gas and bloating continue, take a supplement of bile salts with each meal. Sometimes, supplements of pancreatic enzymes — also labelled as digestive enzymes — can also be helpful.

Q: Does food get altered when it's heated? For example, does it make a difference if nuts are raw or roasted, or if vegetables are cooked instead of raw? I don't like raw vegetables and am wondering if it is okay to just eat them cooked. — Pam R.

A: Yes, food is altered by cooking. But that doesn't mean



cooking is bad. In some vegetables, cooking may increase levels of vitamin E. Microwaving vegetables may preserve more vitamin C than boiling them. And, as you might expect, cooking depletes

some nutrients. But it also makes vegetables and other foods easier to digest, brings out flavor, and enhances taste and texture.

Cooking methods also matter. Deep frying and grilling with high, dry heat are the least healthy because they generate some harmful chemicals during the cooking process. Healthy ways to cook vegetables include boiling, steaming, microwaving, pressure cooking, stir frying, roasting with some fat or liquid (not dry), and sautéing. Heat breaks down tough fibers, brings out flavor, and makes the texture of vegetables more appealing.

Nuts can be eaten raw or roasted. Some protein sources, such as steak tartar, sushi, and eggnog, work well when eaten raw, but other meats, such as pork and chicken, must be cooked for safety.

The important thing is to eat a variety of vegetables. Most cooking methods work well, and I encourage you to use them. And try adding flavor with fresh herbs and spices.

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.