

Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



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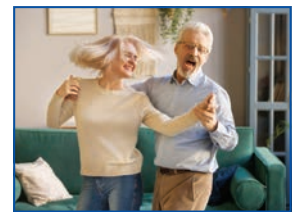
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The Gateway to Better Health in 7 Days

Can 7 days really make a difference in your health? Does it sound too good to be true? Happily, it isn't.



Years ago, I developed a specific 7-day plan that really does make a noticeable difference. I think of it as a gateway to better health because it puts you firmly on the road to lasting good health.

Here's what I've told every patient that I've introduced to this plan: Try it for 7 days and see what happens. And in 7 days, I guarantee you're going to see a difference.

And they always do. I've never had anyone who adopted the plan and didn't see a noticeable improvement by the end of one week. Blood sugar quickly starts to move into a healthier range, and other, noticeable improvements show up in different ways for different people.

For my patients, it's been an eye-opener to see how much better they could feel in such a short period of time — after feeling poorly, in one way or another, for a long time.

I'll describe the plan in a moment, but first, I want to share some of my patients' experiences.

Some noticed they were getting deeper sleep within a few days. One woman, who was a serious cyclist but ate a poor diet, lost 10 pounds in that first week.

Some of her friends downplayed the effect with comments such as, “Oh, you only lost water weight.” Yes, most of such quick weight loss is water, but here's my reaction: Why would you want to carry all that extra water weight?

A 10-pound weight loss definitely isn't typical; no other patient of mine has ever lost that much weight in a week. And I'm certainly not saying that should be your goal. But this lady was holding onto a lot of excess fluid, and her experience demonstrates how quickly things can change.

I also want to tell you about some signs all is not well but that may be missed by a doctor or just accepted

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE:
Insulin: Why It's Vital
To Control It**

as “that’s the way it is.” And people often think “of course I’m tired because (fill in the blank).” It’s easy to rationalize why they don’t have enough energy, but those explanations don’t resolve anything.

What Medicine Misses

One man came to see me after his doctor looked at the results of his blood tests and told him everything was fine. Despite such reassurance, the patient suspected that all was

not well with his blood sugar.

He shared the results with me and I agreed. While he didn’t have type 2 diabetes — yet — he was prediabetic. His blood sugar was elevated to a degree that showed increased risk for diabetes but it wasn’t high enough to be classified as the disease.

This wasn’t the first time that I’ve seen this, and it always amazes me when doctors ignore it. I’m not saying that all doctors ignore prediabetes; they don’t. But some do.

Among those with prediabetes, 70 percent will develop type 2 diabetes.¹ And today’s healthcare system doesn’t pay attention to the fact that reducing excess carbs prevents type 2 diabetes.²

The chart below shows how different levels of blood sugar are classified. In the case of A1c, the point at which type 2 diabetes is diagnosed (6.5%) is also the point where complications, such as eye and kidney damage and peripheral neuropathy, can begin to develop.

The chart also includes optimal levels of blood sugar, which are lower than “normal.” The average

state of health in this country is not ideal, and neither are many “normal” test results.

My patient with prediabetes was thrilled to get my 7-day plan, because he knew that he needed to do something. Within that first week, he was pleasantly surprised to find that he was no longer tired, as he had been much of the time. He also slept better and noticed that he didn’t get carb cravings any more.

After the first week, he continued to follow a low-carb way of eating per the plan. His blood sugar soon dropped into a normal range, and then into an optimal range.

The Busy Life Myth

One of my patients was a pastry chef. When she came to see me, she looked healthy to the casual observer, and she wasn’t overweight. But she was tired all the time and had terrible headaches.

You might suspect she was eating too many pastries, but that wasn’t the case. In addition to running her pastry shop, she had two young children. Rather than eating regular meals, she would

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Prediabetes and Diabetes Tests



Below are the medical thresholds for prediabetes, type 2 diabetes, and normal levels of blood sugar. “Normal” levels are considered to be healthy in today’s healthcare system, but they are not ideal.

Optimal levels, which I’ve included, are the ones to aim for, as they are a truer indicator of good health.

State of Health	Fasting Glucose (blood-sugar level at that time)	A1c (average blood-sugar level during the past 3 months)
Type 2 Diabetes	126 mg/dL or higher	6.5% or higher
Prediabetes	100–125 mg/dL	5.7–6.4%
Normal	Below 100 mg/dL	Below 5.7%
Optimal	85–92 mg/dL	Below 5.5%

eat whatever her kids were eating, on an irregular schedule. And she wasn't getting proper nutrition.

When she adopted my 7-day plan, her energy bounced back and her headaches disappeared. I also suggested that she use her power for good, to make lower-carb desserts.

Soon after, it was Thanksgiving and she took my suggestion to heart. When her family got together for the traditional meal, she made pumpkin pies two ways: one with sugar, as usual, and the other as a lower-carb version with xylitol instead of sugar. But she didn't tell anyone.

After the Thanksgiving dinner, she asked her guests which pie they preferred. They all chose the one with xylitol. When she told them it contained no sugar, they wouldn't believe it, and still don't.

I've met so many people who believe they lack energy because they lead busy lives, or that an afternoon energy slump and foggy brain are inevitable. But things change once they start eating well.

The Athlete's Trap

As long as I can remember, athletes have been told that they need extra carbs for energy, and nutrition bars and sugary energy drinks are popular sources. I believed this, too, years ago, when I was a competitive cyclist.

That was before I was trained in nutrition. And I struggled with energy, even though I diligently followed the prevailing (misguided) advice. I truly thought I was doing the right thing.

One of my athletic patients was referred to me by her trainer because she had been complaining, for some time, that she had no

energy in the afternoons and had a lot of carb cravings.

As well as eating a lot of carbs, she was eating low-fat food. She strenuously resisted my approach of reducing carbs and increasing fat, even though her own approach was not working. But eventually, she conceded that there was no harm in trying my plan for a week.

As I expected, she started to have more energy and the carb cravings began to fade away. Unable to deny the improvement she was experiencing, she continued to eat a low-carb diet and enjoy more energy.

“Healthy” People

When blood tests show abnormalities — elevated blood sugar or other markers — they illustrate that something is awry. But I've also had plenty of patients with normal test results who looked and seemed healthy.

They aren't overweight or in chronic pain, and don't appear to suffer from anything else. Yet, their diet is preventing them from realizing truly good health.

Their number-one complaint is fatigue: not enough energy. They have a hard time getting up in the morning. They have sugar cravings or carb cravings, and they're struggling to stay alert in the middle of the afternoon.³

They may get headaches or just feel poorly, even though there isn't anything wrong with them from a medical perspective. Other symptoms may include feeling sleepy after meals, mental fog, irritability between meals, intestinal bloating or gas, weight gain around the middle, or difficulty losing weight.

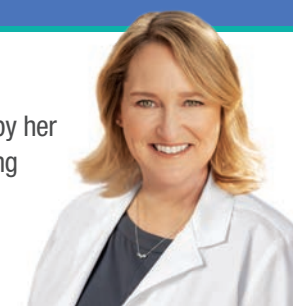
This isn't age-related. I've had teenagers who were tired and couldn't focus. They would eat candy to try to perk themselves up, and then they'd get tired again.

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.



All these are signs of overeating carbs — at any age. Studies have also shown that carb overload⁴ and unstable blood sugar⁵ are linked to depression and anxiety.

When this happens, people don't usually connect it to their diet. But the fact is, the way they're eating is creating trouble for them.

When someone comes to see me because they're tired, one of my first questions is, "What did you have for breakfast?" Most often, it's cereal or no breakfast at all. That tells me that they won't have stable energy during the rest of their day.

The answer lies in not only what you eat — not too many carbs

and enough fat and other nutrients — but also in how often you eat. When energy and carb cravings are problems, eating often enough is part of the solution.

Now, it's time to look at how you can try my plan.

How the 7-Day Plan Works

The only types of food that don't contain carbs are meat, fish, seafood, and pure fats: butter, olive oil, and coconut oil are some examples. Everything else, including all vegetables, fruits, grains, and all other plant foods contain some carbs.

My plan is not a no-carb diet. It differs from many other low-carb diets because I don't recommend limiting all carbs — only certain categories of carbs that are the top sources of carb overload.

In *Carbs To Count* on this page, I've listed the most important sources of carbs. When following the plan, count carbs only in those foods.

Although all vegetables contain some carbs, most are not major sources of carbs. Other than starchy vegetables, such as potatoes, corn, and winter squash, they don't lead to carb overload, and they contain essential vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.

Feel free to eat as many non-starchy vegetables as you like. And be sure to eat at least a few different ones each day.

What To Do Each Day

These are the essential steps to take on each of the 7 days. Eating this way keeps blood sugar and energy stable, prevents carb cravings, eliminates brain fog, and provides ample nutrients.

- Eat every 3 hours, even if you don't feel hungry. This keeps

blood sugar and energy stable.

- Always eat breakfast.
- Never skip a meal.
- Include protein and some fat in every meal and snack. Fat is vital, as it controls your hunger.
- Count carbs in the foods listed in *Carbs To Count* and consume no more than 60 grams of carbs from that list per day.
- Don't eat more than 30 grams of carbs from the list in any one meal or snack. Spread your carbs out through the day.

If you start following the plan and then overdo carbs one day, don't panic. The next day, be sure to keep your carbs below the amounts I've listed above.

Preparing for the Week

My intent is not to leave you deprived or hungry. Rather, it's to replace sources of carb overload with healthy foods that will give you stable energy throughout the day. And this does require some planning.

In the *Shopping List* on page 5, I've listed many options for foods to eat. It also helps to have foods on hand for snacks that give you stable energy and satisfy hunger.

Some good options to have readily available include:

- Celery with cream cheese.
- Hard-boiled eggs.
- Beef jerky (nitrate-free).
- Roll-ups of sliced meat and cheese.
- A small container of chicken or tuna salad.
- Plain or Greek unflavored yogurt.
- Hard cheese: any type you enjoy.

Carbs To Count

Count carbs only in these categories of foods:

- Bread
- Crackers
- Cereal
- Bran
- Snack and breakfast bars
- Oatmeal
- Candy
- Pretzels
- Chips (potato and corn)
- Baked goods
- Pastries
- Cookies and cakes
- Pasta
- Fruit
- Fruit juices
- Energy drinks
- Soda
- Alcoholic drinks
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Sweet potatoes and yams
- Winter squash
- Corn
- Popcorn
- Beans
- Flavored yogurt
- Any food with added sugar, high fructose corn syrup, or agave

- Sliced cucumbers, zucchini, sweet peppers, or cherry tomatoes. Eat these with a small piece of cheese or some hummus.
- Peanut butter or any other nut butter without added sugar. Single-serve packets are easy to carry around.
- Nuts or seeds (a serving is a small handful).

For a quick snack, some of my patients dissolve one spoonful of coconut oil in hot coffee. Coconut oil is easily used to produce energy and can make you feel as though you ate something very satisfying.

If you like to sweeten coffee or tea, I recommend stevia in place of sugar. Liquid stevia comes in many flavors and can make your drink seem quite luxurious without adding carbs. It can be used with hot or cold drinks.

If you hate the taste of stevia, you could add one teaspoon of sugar (4 grams of carbs) to your drink. And be sure to include those carbs in your daily 60-gram quota.

If you've been putting nonfat, low-fat, or whole milk in your tea or coffee and you aren't sensitive to dairy, switch to half-and-half. It has more fat, which is more satisfying, and has fewer carbs.

What About “Low-Carb” Packaged Foods

There are foods labeled as “keto” that can work. But packaged foods labeled “low-carb” can be problematic because they often tout low counts of “net carbs,” meaning total carbs minus fiber. Many of my patients have not been able to lower blood sugar or lose weight by counting net carbs. Count only total carbs.

How To Start

Before beginning my 7-day plan, take an inventory of how many carbs from the *Carbs To Count* list on page 4 are in your usual

diet. Do this for a few days to see how far off you are from the plan. It may mean that you need to make big changes, such as eating vegetables and eggs, fish, or

Shopping List

Make a list and do your shopping before you start your 7-day plan. I'm not suggesting that you buy everything listed below; these are options.



Vegetables

Stock up on a variety of non-starchy vegetables (other than the ones on the list on page 4). You can eat as much of these as you like.

They can be raw, in salads or dipped in hummus, grilled, sautéed in butter, or steamed or microwaved and then drizzled with olive oil. Always season them, at least with salt and pepper, and add any other spices you like. They should be tasty.

Protein

This is not a high-protein diet, but protein is an essential nutrient. Options include:

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Beef | • Sandwich meat (nitrate-free) | • Eggs | • Nuts and seeds |
| • Chicken | | • Unflavored plain or Greek yogurt | • Peanut butter |
| • Turkey | • Fish | • Cheese | • Other nut butters |
| • Pork | • Shellfish | | |
| • Bacon | | | |

Healthy Fats

Fat, which is naturally found in the proteins listed above, is essential in each meal and snack to help keep energy stable and satisfy hunger. Other good sources include:

- Avocado in salads, as a side dish, or with celery or another vegetable as a snack.
- Butter for cooking and for adding to steamed vegetables.
- Extra virgin olive oil for making salad dressing, grilling vegetables, or drizzling on steamed vegetables.
- Coconut oil for cooking. If you don't like the taste of coconut oil, refined versions are tasteless. Choose an organic refined coconut oil, as non-organic ones are refined using chemicals.

Bread Alternatives

If you're used to eating a sandwich for lunch or taking one on-the-go for portable meals, there are some simple alternatives. Wrap your usual filling in a lettuce leaf or “cup.” And eat it just as you would eat your sandwich. You can do it with sliced meats and cheeses, or chicken or tuna salads.

Another option is to make a big salad, or chop up cooked vegetables, and add chopped meat, pieces of fish or seafood, cheese, and/or a chopped hard-boiled egg. Think of these as “bowls,” which have become a popular category of take-out options. Put portable meals in a glass dish with a secure lid.

meat for breakfast instead of toast or cereal. If it seems daunting, remember, you're trying it for just one week to see how you feel.

An easy way to track your carbs is to use a small notebook. Each time you eat or drink anything, including meals, intentional snacks, the occasional few bites of something, and everything you drink, write down what it is and the quantity. Next to any item listed in *Carbs To Count* on page 4, write down the grams of total carbs in the quantity you ate.

For any food that comes in a package, total carbs will be listed in the Nutrition Facts. Some restaurants also provide this data. For anything else, you can use a website or app to get carb content of each food and drink.

Tracking Carbs

One useful site is www.calorieking.com. It has a search tool that provides carb content, and there are free apps that do the same on your iPhone or Android phone. Be sure to get the basic CalorieKing app, not one that is designed for weight loss, which is more complicated to use and emphasizes calories rather than carbs. Counting calories is *not* part of the 7-day plan.

As an alternative to using a notebook, you can record your food on your phone. iPhones have the Notes app, and Android phones have Google Keep or similar apps. You can either type your food information or dictate it, and the apps should be able to transcribe what you said.

Whether you prefer a paper or digital record, you need to add up the carbs from the *Carbs To Count* list at the end of the day.

During the few days that you're taking an inventory, please do not try to change your diet in any way. Just eat and drink as you usually do. The whole point is for you to

Balsamic Breakfast Salad

For anyone whose usual breakfast has been cereal, toast, or breakfast bars, shifting to a low-carb dish can be especially challenging. This is a breakfast that many of my patients have enjoyed.



Makes 1–2 servings

Salad Ingredients:

- 2 cups spinach leaves
- 1½ tablespoons Balsamic Dressing (recipe below)
- ½ cup cherry or grape tomatoes
- 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped
- 2 slices Canadian bacon, cooked in a grill pan and sliced into ribbons
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves

Balsamic Dressing ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a bowl, whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, and mustard. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place the spinach in a bowl, add balsamic dressing and tomatoes, and toss. Top with the egg, Canadian bacon, and parsley leaves.

This salad can also make a good lunch. And the same dressing works well on any salad, for any meal.

Salads can include any non-starchy vegetables, including a mix of greens and other chopped vegetables, raw or cooked, and any type of meat or fish.

see the carbs in your usual diet.

Although there are many websites and apps that track food and nutritional info for you, they are not necessary for my 7-day plan and can add unnecessary complexity. If you already use a food-tracking app that you like, be sure to track and count carbs only from the foods and drinks that are on the list of *Carbs To Count*.

Eating Out

If you expect to eat out during your 7-day plan, it's a good idea to look online at the menus of restaurants where you expect to eat, and see which items would fit best with your 7-day plan. Some restaurants will fit the plan better than others.

Dipping into the bread basket is not likely to work well. Theoretically, you could have a small piece of bread with butter. The problem is, many people can't stop there. But you don't have to deprive yourself.

Instead of the bread, look at appetizers and see if there's something lower-carb that you would enjoy instead. For the main dish, try to order non-starchy vegetables and meat or fish without batters or breading, as those make it easy to overeat carbs.

This doesn't mean that you can't eat any of the items on the *Carbs To Count* list on page 4. You can. For example, instead of eating a burger without a bun, you may decide to "spend" a chunk of your daily 60-gram carb allowance on a bun.

A burger bun may have between 20 and 25 grams of carbs. But fries? A typical medium serving has about twice as many grams of carbs.

You have choices. Just make sure to keep those carbs under 30 grams

for a meal, and count them toward your daily total of 60 grams.

Many restaurants list calories of different dishes, but they don't usually list carbs. Having an app on your phone to check carb content can help you make smarter choices and stay on track. After all, it's only for one week.

Monitoring Blood Sugar

For anyone who is prediabetic or has type 2 diabetes, I highly recommend using a continuous glucose monitor (CGM). A sensor, usually worn on the back of the upper arm, tracks your blood sugar throughout the day and night. You don't have to take it off when you shower.

The sensor communicates with an app on your phone. You can check your blood sugar any time without having to prick a finger, and the app keeps a record of your readings.

Although we know that carbs raise blood sugar, individual reactions to different high-carb foods vary.⁶ A CGM can show you how *you* react, which is what matters. This insight can help you make the

best choices and stay motivated.

A CGM will also show you how you react to exercise — going for a walk, for example, or doing other exercise. And you will see how sleep, stress, and other situations in your life influence blood sugar. The right food lays a foundation, but those other factors also play a role.

After 7 Days

Although following this plan may mean making major changes in your diet, I've found that most people can realistically do it for one week. And after experiencing noticeable improvement, every one of my patients who has followed the plan has chosen to continue with the type of low-carb diet I recommend.

But then, something inevitably disrupts their best laid plans. They go out for a special-occasion dinner or on a trip. Or something comes up at work and they don't get around to buying groceries, so they end up eating take-out that's loaded with carbs. And they inevitably notice that they don't feel as good.

There's no need to become alarmed or give up. Pick up where you left off. If a new schedule is the problem, take a moment to work out how to get back on track.

What matters most is what you do in the long term. A temporary setback doesn't negate what you've already done.

A Final Word

One of the added benefits of my 7-day plan is that having more energy makes it easier to be more physically active. And that's another, complementary path to better health.

In this issue, I've given you a sense of what can be achieved in one week, and a snapshot of how to do it. There is more detailed information about my low-carb diet in earlier issues of this newsletter, listed on this page.

Start with what's in this issue. And if, like my patients, you experience a difference and want to keep eating in a low-carb way, do take a look at those earlier issues.

As I said in the beginning, it may be hard to believe that one week can bring about a significant improvement. But it can!

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
Healthy Fats	4	11	Healthy Fats: Deadly Myths and Life-Saving Facts
Healthy Meat	3	2	The Diabetic's Guide to Eating Meat
Healthy Carbs	3	6	The Diabetic's Guide to Eating Carbs
Continuous Glucose Monitors	7	10	Technology for Managing Blood Sugar (page 9)
Diabetes	6	12	Diabetes Drugs and Supplements: Your Top Questions Answered

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



- 1 Tabák, A.G., et al. "Prediabetes: A high-risk state for developing diabetes." *Lancet*. 2012 Jun 9;379(9833): 2279–2290.
- 2 Maki, K.C., et al. "Dietary substitutions for refined carbohydrate that show promise for reducing risk of type 2 diabetes in men and women." *J Nutr*. 2015 Jan;145(1): 159S-163S.
- 3 Mantantzis, K., et al. "Sugar rush or sugar crash? A meta-analysis of carbohydrate effects on mood." *Neurosci Biobehav Rev*. 2019 Jun;101:45-67.
- 4 Knüppel, A., et al. "Sugar intake from sweet food and beverages, common mental disorder and depression: prospective findings from the Whitehall II study." *Sci Rep*. 2017 Jul 27;7(1):6287.
- 5 Penckofer, S., et al. "Does glycemic variability impact mood and quality of life? *Diabetes Technol Ther*. 2012 Apr;14(4):303-10.
- 6 Wu, Y., et al. "Individual variations in glycemic responses to carbohydrates and underlying metabolic physiology." *Nat Med*. 2025 Jun 4. doi: 10.1038/s41591-025-03719-2.

Why B Vitamins Are Essential

B vitamins are used in every cell to carry on basic functions of life. They work with enzymes in our bodies to generate energy from carbs and fat, to break down and use protein, to make red blood cells, and to maintain a healthy brain and nervous system. When there's a shortfall, lack of energy is a common symptom.¹

We need to get B vitamins from food every day because other than B12 (which is stored in the liver), they are not stored in the body.

Benefit Highlights

Studies have found that B vitamins influence our risk for today's common health conditions, including:

Type 2 Diabetes: Lack of B vitamins has been linked to diabetes and nerve damage from the disease. B vitamins contribute to healthy levels of blood sugar and help protect nerve cells. Metformin, the most common diabetes drug, lowers levels of vitamins B9 and B12.²

Heart Disease: Homocysteine is a naturally occurring substance in the blood; when elevated, it increases risks for heart disease. Folic acid is known for reducing homocysteine. A review of 16 studies found that folic acid is more effective when combined with vitamins B6 and B12.³ I recommend getting these in a B complex supplement.

Mental Decline: High homocysteine is also linked to mental decline. A review of 95 studies with a total of more than 46,000 participants found that B vitamins can improve mental function. Among healthy people over age 50, folic acid lowered risk for dementia.⁴

Nerve and Skin Conditions: Studies have also shown that inadequate B vitamins can contribute to nerve problems, such as numbness and tingling in the extremities, and dermatitis: various manifestations of skin inflammation such as redness, itching, and dryness.⁵

How to Get Enough

As well as eating foods that contain B vitamins, take a supplement for nutritional insurance — in a multivitamin or B complex. 100% of Daily Value (%DV) is usually enough, except for B12.

B12 is found only in animal foods, so vegans must take a B12 supplement. Older people and those with poor digestion are at risk of a B12 deficiency, and may need higher doses. A severe deficiency of B12 can lead to symptoms that mimic dementia.

1 Depeint, F., et al. "Mitochondrial function and toxicity: role of the B vitamin family on mitochondrial energy metabolism." *Chem Biol Interact.* 2006 Oct 27;163(1-2):94-112.

2 Raghuvanshi, D.S., et al. "Relationship Between Vitamins and Diabetes." *Cureus.* 2023 Mar 28;15(3):e36815.

3 Liu, C., et al. "Effect of Nutritional Supplements for Reducing Homocysteine Levels in Healthy Adults: A Systematic Review and Network Meta-Analysis of Randomized Trials." *Nutr Rev.* 2025 Jul 1;83(7):e1533-e1543.

4 Wang, Z., et al. "B vitamins and prevention of cognitive decline and incident dementia: a systematic review and meta-analysis." *Nutr Rev.* 2022 Mar 10;80(4):931-949.

5 Hanna, M., et al. "B Vitamins: Functions and Uses in Medicine." *Perm J.* 2022 Jun 17;26(2):89-97.

The 8 B Vitamins and Their Food Sources

On supplement labels, B vitamins may be listed only by name or by name and number:

- B1 (thiamin)
- B2 (riboflavin)
- B3 (niacin)
- B5 (pantothenic acid)
- B6 (pyridoxine)
- B7 (biotin)
- B9 (folate [folic acid])
- B12 (cobalamin)

As an alternative to supplement pills, nutritional yeast is a top source of B vitamins that can be added to beverages or sprinkled on foods.

The cheesy, nutty flavor of nutritional yeast has made it a popular vegan ingredient to flavor foods like pasta, salads, or roasted vegetables. It's also used to give vegan soups, sauces, or salad dressings a cheesy flavor.

Foods that naturally contain B vitamins include:

- Liver (top source)
- Beef and pork
- Chicken and turkey
- Fish and seafood
- Eggs
- Dairy products
- Beans
- Dark green leafy vegetables

Whole grains are also natural sources of B vitamins. Processed cereals and other foods made with refined grains may be fortified with B vitamins. When foods are fortified, the B vitamins are the same as B vitamins in supplements.

Because cereals and grains — whole or refined — are major sources of carb overload, I don't recommend relying on these for your B vitamins.

Is your memory getting worse?

If you're over 50, chances are your brain isn't functioning like it did in your younger years.

This isn't surprising. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control warns that over 16 million Americans now live with cognitive impairment. This includes not only memory problems, but also difficulty in learning new things, concentrating, and making important decisions.

Unfortunately, age is the greatest risk factor for cognitive impairment. By age 65, 40% of folks in the U.S. have age-associated memory issues. So as the years go by, it wouldn't be unusual for you to forget things. Or notice how difficult it is to stay focused during a conversation or TV program.

But I have good news. It doesn't have to be that way...

Primal Labs is proud to introduce **CogniForce**, a ground-breaking nutritional supplement for optimal brain support.

CogniForce is an easy-to-swallow gel cap containing 10 powerful nutrients to help you improve cognitive function, memory, and brain health:

- ✓ **Ginkgo:** Improves blood flow to the brain. This supports memory, mood, and focus — and exerts a positive effect on the brain's processing speed to help avoid "senior moments."
- ✓ **L-theanine:** This amino acid stimulates brain neurotransmitters to boost concentration and mood — and promote relaxation.
- ✓ **Acetyl-L-carnitine:** Research shows this amino acid can significantly improve memory and focus — and lift you out of those occasional "blue moods."
- ✓ **The B vitamins riboflavin, vitamin B6, folate, and B12:** Studies show these crucial vitamins help prevent the brain shrinkage many people experience as they grow older.
- ✓ **Sensoril®:** This patented extract of the ancient Ayurvedic herb ashwagandha helps lower cortisol — the stress hormone.

✓ **L-tyrosine:** Another amino acid crucial for production of brain neurotransmitters involved in memory and cognition.

✓ **Bioperine®:** Patented extract of black pepper fruit helps improve absorption of nutrients.

Today, people from all walks of life are protecting their brains with **CogniForce**. Here's what a few of them had to say:

"I have been taking **CogniForce** for about 5 weeks now. I noticed a positive result fairly early. I am feeling more alert and better able to handle tedious work that used to overwhelm me."

— Lee Miller from Austin, TX

"I started taking **CogniForce** fifty-two days ago, and my own forgetfulness has slowed down."

— Hayley Burns from Richmond, VA

"I've been taking **CogniForce** just a little over a month now, and it has helped me improve my thinking and mood swings."

— Barbara Sherwood from Leesburg, FL

If you want to maintain your memory and protect your brain into your 60s, 70s, 80s and beyond... the time to do it is NOW. Join thousands of satisfied users experiencing the brain-boosting effects of **CogniForce**.

We're so confident in the brain and memory-supporting power of **CogniForce**, we offer a 60-day **RISK-FREE** 100% money-back guarantee. You have nothing to lose.

Don't lose your precious memories... get your own bottle of **CogniForce** today — experience life with a sharper, quicker, and more focused brain!



Order Your Bottle Today!

GetCogniForce.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

Cool Summer Drinks Without Carbs

On hot summer days, cool drinks are especially appealing, but it's easy to consume too many carbs in chilled sugary sodas or other sweet drinks. Rather than depriving yourself or giving in and overindulging in high-carb fare, try some of these delicious low-carb options on the rocks.

If you prefer a sweet drink, add a drop of liquid stevia, with or without flavoring. But first, I suggest trying these drinks unsweetened, in case you like them that way. If you do add stevia, do so sparingly, as it's very sweet.

Flavored sparkling water:

Flavoring can turn basic sparkling water into a delicious cool drink, but adding a spritz of fresh lemon or lime is not the only option. For more variety, try a flavoring extract such as lemon, vanilla, cherry, orange, or others. These contain no sugar, calories, or carbs. I recommend alcohol-free versions, easily found in natural supermarkets. The same ingredients work in flat water, which should be filtered.

Iced teas: Options include black or green teas, with or without caffeine, or many varieties of herbal teas that are naturally caffeine-free. Brewing black and green teas in cold water takes longer than in hot water but produces a milder flavor. To get the full flavor of herbal teas, brew in hot water before cooling. A spritz of lemon can add some zing.



Iced Coffees: These can be regular or decaf. Different coffees have different tastes, and some coffee beans are flavored, without sugar.

For a special treat, add a tablespoon of heavy cream, whipped or not, or a whipped nondairy creamer without added sugar. These contain negligible carbs (a fraction of a gram per tablespoon) and make a rich treat.

All these make delicious, refreshing chilled drinks without carbs. Zero-carb beer, with or without alcohol, is another option.

Choosing a Fitness Class

Have you tried going to a fitness class but felt like you didn't belong or couldn't keep up? A recent study looked at what makes a class work well for older adults, and it identified some key characteristics. Perhaps surprisingly, what made people continue or drop out didn't depend on the type of exercise.

These were the characteristics that made class attendees want to keep coming back:¹

- A caring environment where participants felt welcomed, respected, and emotionally supported.
- A focus on learning and personal progress, rather than competition or comparison with others.
- Recognizing each individual's effort rather than expecting them to meet a specific level.
- Options to perform movements at a lower or higher level of difficulty or intensity.
- Helping each individual to feel more competent in performing movements.

- Offering ways to connect with others, by getting to know each person by name, including partner drills, or encouraging optional after-class conversations.



In other words, a caring, motivational atmosphere encourages people to become regulars. It doesn't matter whether a class focuses on strength training, aerobic exercise, balance, yoga, or water exercise. You should feel better at the end, physically and mentally, than when you walked in the door.

Keep in mind that a single class may not provide all the types of movement you need, such as aerobic, strength, flexibility, and balance training. But some classes target multiple goals.

A class that works for you is a good way to get moving or add variety to an exercise routine. And in an indoor class, you can exercise in a cool environment when the weather is uncomfortably hot.

¹ Jo, S. et al. "Impact of Caring and Task-Involving Climates in Older Adults' Group Fitness Class Experiences." *Kahperd Spring Journal*. 2025. Volume 97.

Micronutrient rejuvenates stiff joints in just 7 days



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?

Because this special form of boron supports a normal inflammatory response by reducing the inflammation marker, C-reactive protein.

Now, this same clinically-tested dosage of FruiteX-B® is yours in the powerful *TriFlexarin*® formula.

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



Soothe and rejuvenate your stiff joints in just 7 days—get your bottle of *TriFlexarin*® today!

Order Your Bottle Today!

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Q&A

Q: I regularly rode my bike but stopped after a spill because of poor balance. I still go to the gym but I know my balance isn't what it was, even when I'm just walking. What can I do? — Randy J.

A: While riding a bicycle is something people can do at all ages, I understand how a balance issue can stop you. And it definitely should be addressed — you don't want more falls.

Balance problems can have different underlying causes and are best treated when the cause is identified. But there's also an underlying problem with balance that rarely gets addressed: lack of training.

When we begin to walk as toddlers, we put one leg in front and fall into that leg. All the weight transfers from the back to the front. And we keep walking that way, with all the weight transferring onto the front leg with each step. If the leg lands on an unsteady surface, there's no way to catch or steady ourselves, so a fall can easily occur.

Good balance engages three things: our eyes, our ears, and proprioception, which is perception or awareness of the position and movement of your body. When high divers do flips in the air, their proprioception helps them to know where they are at all times on the way down, and to land in the right position, in the right spot in the pool.

Balance is a skill — one that most of us have never developed very well because we haven't had the right training. But it's never too late to start.

I suggest that you try tai chi classes. Studies have shown that it improves balance.

The slow, flowing movements in tai chi train you to be more aware of where your body is in space, how it's moving, and how to control it without straining or tensing. Tai chi also reduces stress. Dance training can also develop those skills, but not all forms of dance will be the right starting point for anyone having difficulty with balance.

I cover balance in more detail, along with balance exercises, in an earlier newsletter: Volume 5, Issue 5, *How to Improve Balance and Prevent Falls*.

Another factor that can upset balance is slowed reaction time. This can happen because of poor vision, poor hearing, or lack of focus.

Medically speaking, problems with vision or the inner ear, as well as neurological issues, are conditions that can be checked. Dizziness or lightheadedness when standing from a sitting or lying position can be caused by a sudden drop in blood pressure. For diabetics who use insulin, dizziness or shakiness can be a sign of blood sugar that is too low.

Q: Can diet and exercise destroy fat cells, or do you keep your fat cells forever? — Amelia B.

A: The number of fat cells increases during childhood and adolescence. And then, the number of fat

cells generally remains constant, unless a person gains a lot of weight. Then, the number of fat cells may increase.

While diet and exercise can shrink fat cells, they can't destroy them. Studies show that this holds true regardless of body weight.

About 10 percent of fat cells naturally die off and are replaced, as a normal process. In obese people, this cycle happens more quickly, but the number of cells doesn't change.

Liposuction surgically removes fat cells. Nonsurgical treatments include controlled heat from a laser (such as SculpSure), extreme cold (such as ColdSculpting), ultrasound (such as UltraShape), or an injectable (such as Kybella, specifically to reduce a double chin). As with any treatment, these all have risks as well as benefits.

None of these treatments is intended to produce significant weight loss, only to contour a human body by removing fat in specific areas.

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.