

Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS

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Movement Matters More Than You Think — Part Five

Doing More Isn't the Answer — Doing It Smarter Is

Why Some Organizing Can Change Everything

Over the past four weeks, we've looked at how the body adapts. We talked about how repeating the same workout makes you efficient. We looked at how muscle contraction can quickly lower blood sugar. We discussed why resistance training preserves muscle and how steady cardiovascular work strengthens the heart.

If you've been following along, you've probably noticed something.

None of these systems operate in isolation.

Your muscles, your heart, and your energy systems all respond to challenge. But they do not recover at the same speed, and they do not improve in the same way.

This is where many people get stuck — not because they aren't working hard enough, but because their effort is scattered.

You might lift weights one day, walk hard the next, throw in intervals when you feel energetic, and take a rest day only when you feel exhausted. That pattern feels productive. You're moving. You're sweating. You're doing something. Which is true. BUT...

It might be too much for your system, and it can't rebuild or recover before you challenge it again. Now your body is just surviving and possibly not even improving.



This week is about organizing what you're already doing so the work builds on itself instead of canceling itself out.

Why Mixing It Up Works Better Than Grinding Every Day

Let's start with something simple.

When you lift something heavy, your muscle fibers experience tiny amounts of stress. That stress is the signal to rebuild stronger. But you don't get stronger during the workout itself. You get stronger afterward, when your body repairs those fibers and



lays down new muscle fibers. That rebuilding process takes time — usually a day or two, depending on how hard you trained.

Now imagine this: you work your legs hard on Monday. On Tuesday, you decide to do high-intensity (maybe fast walking, or going hard uphill for 30 seconds, or sprints). On Wednesday, you decide to lift heavier weights again. By Thursday, you feel sluggish. Your legs feel heavy. You're tired, but you push through anyway because "No pain, no gain" right?!? (Not true!)

That doesn't mean you're weak. It means you haven't given your muscles enough time to rebuild before asking them to produce peak force again.

On the flip side, if every workout is moderate and predictable, your body adapts quickly. Your heart rate can stay lower at that pace. You burn fewer calories doing the same work. Your strength levels off. You maintain — but you don't improve.

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**NATURAL HEALTH
CONNECTIONS**

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So the issue isn't whether exercise works, but whether your workouts are spaced in a way so that your body can recover.

Strength training challenges muscle tissue. Steady cardiovascular training challenges your heart and circulation. Short bursts of higher intensity recruit fast-twitch fibers and increase how efficiently your cells produce energy. Each one is valuable. But each one creates a different recovery demand.

When you space them well, they build on each other. AND this doesn't have to be complicated.

It's basically like this — try not to do multiple workouts in a row that use the same muscles.

So, for example:

- **DO NOT — do cardio multiple days in a row**
- **DO NOT — do a bunch of leg strengthening exercises and then the next day do some intensity going uphill, and then the third day do more leg stuff**

The trick is to alternate all the options you have. Your options look a bit like this:

- **Strength: Legs**
- **Strength: Core**
- **Strength: Arms/Shoulders**
- **Cardio: sustained over 30 minutes+**
- **Cardio: high intensity intervals**
- **Alternatives: yoga, Tai Chi, ballroom dance class, etc.**
- **Recovery day**

Putting This Into Practice: Are Your Workouts Helping — Or Wearing You Out?

One way to think about this is to look at how a week might naturally unfold.

Let's say it's beautiful out and you go for a walk and include a few 30–60 second intervals of slightly harder walking. The next day you go to the gym and decide to do some strengthening of your arms, shoulders, and core. The following day it's raining — perfect! That can become a recovery day. The day after that you work on leg strengthening at the gym and maybe add your core again. The next day you decide to ride your bike for a while — great! If you feel like it, you can ride up a hill for a short stretch, or go a little harder for a minute and then pedal easily again, repeating that a few times.

And maybe the next day you're simply too busy to work out. That's another perfectly good opportunity for a rest day.

The idea is not to do everything every day, but to give each type of movement its own space during the week. In general, it works well to aim for each option once to three times a week. When you're doing strength exercises, your final repetitions should feel challenging enough that you have to concentrate to finish them. When you're doing steady cardio, notice when your breathing is elevated but still controlled — you can speak, but probably only in short sentences.

You might also include some higher-intensity intervals once a week if they feel appropriate for you. For myself, my rest days often come when I feel too tired to work out or when life simply gets busy — I don't have to formally plan them. Those days when you feel tired can also be great for something gentle like an easy yoga class or stretching.

When you alternate your options like this and allow space for rest days, your muscles have time to rebuild and strengthen, and your heart has time to adapt. Improvement tends to accumulate instead of stalling.

It isn't about doing more. It's about arranging what you're already doing so the pieces work together.

Before adding anything new, it can be helpful to look at your current pattern. If you do a heavy strength workout, what happens the next day? Are you asking those same muscles to produce maximum power again, or are you allowing them time to recover while another system gets challenged?

If your workouts feel harder each week instead of steadier, that may not be a sign that you need more discipline. It may simply mean your recovery window is too short.

Instead of asking, “Did I push hard enough?” try asking, “Did I give my body time to recover?”

Structure doesn't mean rigidity. It simply means giving your body enough space to respond and adapt. And that's when improvement tends to happen — when challenge and recovery are both present.

Try This Today: Mix the Effort, Not Just the Movement

Try alternating a demanding workout with something lighter the next day.

Choose one demanding workout this week and follow it with something lighter the next day instead of another high-effort session. For example, if you lift weights on Monday, make Tuesday a steady walk instead of intervals. If you do a session with harder intervals, let the following day be strength work at a controlled pace rather than another burst workout. Then notice how you feel two days later. Do you feel stronger, more stable, or less drained?

Series Wrap-Up: Movement Matters More Than You Think

Over the past several weeks, we've looked at movement from several different angles. And if there's one thing I hope has become clear, it's that exercise affects much more inside your body than most people realize.

Movement isn't just about burning calories or completing a workout. It's one of the ways your body receives information.

When you move, your body responds. Muscles adapt. Circulation improves. Cells become better at handling fuel. Over time, those signals influence how strong, stable, and resilient the body remains.

We began by looking at how the body becomes efficient at predictable movement. When something becomes familiar, it requires less effort. That's why small changes in pace, resistance, or intensity can wake the system back up.

From there, we looked at how muscle contractions influence metabolism, sometimes improving how cells handle glucose for hours after movement occurs. We also explored why preserving muscle tissue is essential for strength, balance, and long-term independence.

And finally, we talked about the heart — how sustained movement strengthens circulation and supports energy, recovery, and overall capacity.

When you step back and look at the whole picture, something interesting appears. Different types of movement train different systems in the body. Strength builds durability. Cardiovascular activity builds capacity. Variation keeps the body adapting.

The goal isn't perfection. It's simply to keep giving your body reasons to respond.

What's Next?

What You Were Never Told About Food

Next month, we'll build on the foundation you've begun creating in your body. Movement is powerful, but it's only half of the equation. If the food you eat repeatedly raises blood sugar, increases inflammation, or interferes with recovery, progress becomes harder to maintain.

In the next series, we'll look at how everyday food choices influence metabolism and long-term health—because movement and nutrition were never meant to work separately.

About Dr. Marlene

Dr. Marlene Merritt's passion for natural medicine is fueled by her drive to help others, and her own experience of overcoming a debilitating heart condition, diagnosed at the age of 20. A competitive cross-country cyclist at the time, she suddenly began experiencing severe chest pains. Forced to quit the sport, she suffered from extreme fatigue and constant pain for another 15 years, despite doing everything that conventional, Western medical doctors told her to do.

And then, the tide turned. A physician trained in naturopathic healing recommended a whole-food vitamin E supplement. A week after starting the supplement regimen, her energy began to return, and the pain began to disappear.

Dr. Marlene is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, has a Master's in Nutrition, and is an Applied Clinical Nutritionist. She is Board Certified in Bariatric Counseling, and certified in the Bredesen MEND Protocol,TM a groundbreaking method of reversing Alzheimer's disease. She sees patients at the Merritt Wellness Centers in Austin, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, trains health practitioners nationwide, and is the author of *Smart Blood Sugar* and *The Blood Pressure Solution*.



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.

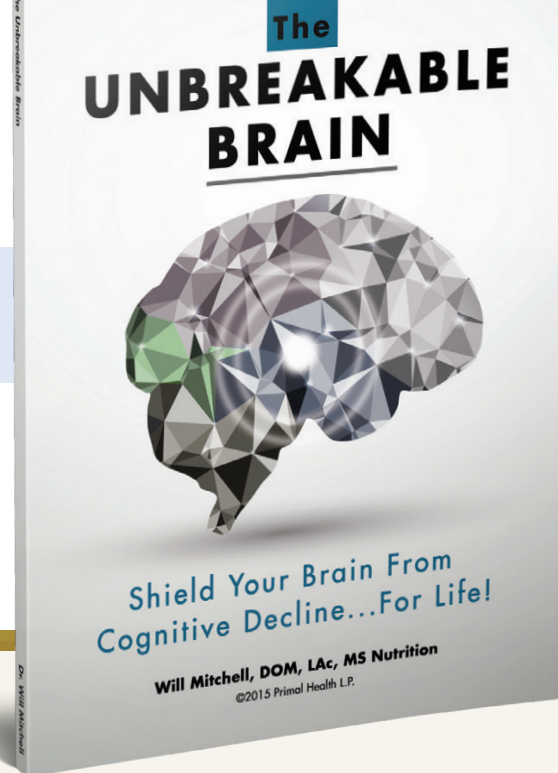
Yes—these are senior moments...and they are the first signs of dementia. The Alzheimer’s Association recently admitted it, “Memory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of dementia.”

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

Q&A

Q: Are gummy vitamins just as effective as regular supplements? — Beth K.

A: Gummy vitamins can be convenient, but they often contain added sugars, artificial colors, and lower nutrient concentrations compared to traditional capsules or tablets. Because they're designed to taste like candy, manufacturers sometimes prioritize flavor and texture over nutrient density. They may also lack certain minerals that are harder to incorporate into gummy form, such as iron, magnesium, or higher doses of calcium. For adults, capsules or tablets typically provide more complete and balanced formulations. If gummies improve consistency and make it easier for someone to remember their supplements, they can serve a purpose. However, it's important to read labels carefully and consider overall sugar intake, especially if blood sugar regulation is a concern. Over time, those added sugars can quietly add up if gummies are used daily. Convenience matters, but so does formulation quality and nutrient completeness.

Q: How does sleep affect aging? — Diana T.

A: Sleep is when the body performs many of its most important maintenance functions. During sleep, the brain consolidates memories, hormones are regulated, tissues repair, and the nervous system resets for the next day. It's essentially the body's overnight recovery and restoration period.

When sleep is consistently poor, several systems begin to shift in the wrong direction. Cortisol levels tend to rise, blood sugar regulation becomes less stable, and inflammatory signaling increases. Over time, that combination places extra strain on the cardiovascular system and can accelerate metabolic issues. Chronic sleep disruption has been associated with higher risk of weight gain, insulin resistance, and cognitive decline. It also interferes with muscle recovery, immune function, and appetite regulation, which can make maintaining strength and metabolic balance more difficult as we age. Sleep also influences brain health directly. During deeper stages of sleep, the brain clears metabolic waste products that accumulate throughout the day. When sleep is shortened or fragmented, that cleanup process becomes less efficient, which may contribute to cognitive decline over time. Protecting sleep — through consistent bedtimes, minimizing late-night eating, reducing evening screen exposure, and managing stress — supports healthy aging across multiple systems. Sleep is not optional maintenance. It's one of the most powerful recovery tools the body has.

Q: Why does my appetite increase when I'm stressed? — Dan K.

A: Stress activates cortisol, a hormone designed to help the body respond to challenges. Cortisol raises blood sugar so the body has quick energy available, and it can also stimulate appetite — particularly for carbohydrate-rich foods. Those foods provide fast fuel, which the body perceives as helpful during a stressful situation. That's why cravings during stressful periods often lean toward sweets or refined carbohydrates rather than balanced meals.

When stress becomes chronic, however, this response can start to work against you. Elevated cortisol and frequent blood sugar swings can lead to repeated cravings and increased calorie intake throughout the day.

Over time, that pattern may contribute to weight gain, especially around the abdomen. Supporting stress management, sleep, and balanced meals earlier in the day can often help reduce these stress-related cravings.

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.

