

# ALTERNATIVES™

*For The Health Conscious Individual*

You will observe with concern how long a useful truth may be known and exist, before it is generally received and practiced on. ~ Benjamin Franklin

Mountain Home Publishing  
ISSN# 0893-5025  
USPS# 0002-969

Vol. 8, No. 8  
February 2000



Dr. David G. Williams

## HOW YOU CAN AVOID THE COMING HEALTH CRISIS

Although I'm not much of a trend follower, I am certainly an avid trend watcher, especially when it comes to health matters. After a few decades of trend watching, I've learned what a powerful and useful tool trends can be in predicting the future. You don't need a crystal ball, and you don't need to be a genius (or I wouldn't have a chance). But by stepping back, taking an objective view of what people are doing, and using a little common sense, you can see how present actions will affect future conditions. It's like the old saying goes, you reap what you sow. In the health field, this means that present dietary and lifestyle habits determine future health.

One of the more recent fads involves high protein/low carbohydrate diets. These diets are a quick, easy way to lose weight. But on the downside, the weight you lose is tough to keep off. A weight attained by eliminating a food group from your diet (in this case carbohydrates) is hard to maintain. For one thing, you'll find it difficult to stick to such a diet. But you'll also find that once you deviate from an unbalanced diet even a little bit, your body quickly stocks up on the nutrients it's been miss-

ing and you'll put on weight fast. Even worse, you might have problems with kidney damage or heart disease in the future. Still, the proponents of high protein diets continue to promote them—not only as the ultimate weight-loss tool, but also as the best method to regain lost health and prevent all kinds of different diseases.

In an overweight society that consumes far too many carbohydrates, it's not hard to sell the

### IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

<b>HOW YOU CAN AVOID THE COMING HEALTH CRISIS</b> .....	<b>57</b>
What's Your Fatty Acid Ratio? .....	58
Why We're Eating Too Many 6s... ..	58
...And Too Few 3s .....	58
The Future This Trend Will Give Us .....	59
The Deadly Effects of Inflammation .....	59
From Cholesterol-Lowering Drugs to Anti-Inflammatory Drugs .....	59
Balance Your Diet Easily and Inexpensively . . .	60
The Other Benefits of Flax .....	61
Flax for the Long Haul .....	61
<b>NEWS TO USE FROM AROUND THE WORLD</b>	
New Digs for CerBurg .....	62
Cheap Fat Burners .....	62
<b>MAILBOX</b>	
Iodine for Severe Rib Pain .....	62
<b>DON'T SAY "NO" TO NUTS</b> .....	<b>63</b>
Not-So-Tiny Time Pills .....	63
A Nearly Perfect Food .....	64
Recipes and Even Drinks Using Nuts .....	64
Accentuate the Positive. ....	64

---

public on the idea that high protein diets are the way to go. At the same time, another part of the population, believing that fat is the root of all evil, has eliminated virtually all fats from their diet.

Such trends come and go. For a couple of decades, being skinny and tanned might be the picture of health. At another time, the trend will be voluptuous and fair-skinned. However, the truth of the matter remains the same. Your body hasn't really evolved much since the beginning. To remain healthy or regain health, it needs fresh air, clean water, sunshine, exercise, and a *balance* of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats.

Remember not to get caught up in any trend that emphasizes one diet extreme or another. Instead, keep your eye on the big picture. The trends that are much more important over time are those that affect our food and water supplies. If you can keep an eye on such trends, you can adapt your own diet whenever you need to. And these adaptations will have a profound effect on both the quality and length of your life. A good place to start is to balance your dietary intake of fatty acids.

### What's Your Fatty Acid Ratio?

On several occasions in the past I've discussed the importance of including the right kinds of fat in your diet. If you haven't been following my recommendations in this area, you might be in for some unpleasant future surprises. Over the last few years, a horrifying picture has begun to emerge that indicates the general public is needlessly suffering from a long list of debilitating and life-threatening health problems. These problems can be avoided or remedied with some relatively simple diet changes. Unfortunately, most people will probably learn about these solutions too late.

The solutions involve simply balancing an important part of our diet. You see, our diet has changed radically over the past several decades. The diet of our ancestors included a good balance of essential fatty acids (EFAs), particularly omega-3 fatty acids (like those in flax oil and fish) and omega-6 fatty acids (like those in safflower, sunflower, canola, soybean, corn, hemp, pumpkin and sesame seeds, nuts, and oils). These fatty acids are called "essential" because our bodies can't make them. We must get them from our food.

Another family of fatty acids are the omega-9s, which are the monounsaturated fats like those in olives and olive oils. They are considered to be "neutral" in the sense that they don't cause an

imbalance of other fatty acids. This neutral quality is what makes foods rich in omega-9 fatty acids, like cold-pressed virgin olive oil, avocados, walnuts, pecans, peanuts, almonds, filberts, macadamias, and cashews so good for your overall health.

Because they are not neutral, however, omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids must be eaten in a relatively fixed ratio. The ratio of omega-6 fatty acids to omega-3 fatty acids in our ancestors' diet was typically a healthy four to one (4:1). Today that ratio is anywhere from 20:1 to 25:1. There are several reasons this shift has occurred.

### Why We're Eating Too Many 6s...

One of the primary reasons is the 20th century introduction of vegetable oils to our diet. This change has been so far-reaching that now practically every fried food and snack food available has been cooked in soybean, corn, sunflower, safflower, or canola oil. (To make matters worse, these oils are usually hydrogenated—a process that can eventually produce nerve tissue and cardiovascular damage, and even cancer.) Most salad dressings contain omega-6-rich oils because omega-3-rich oils are five times more sensitive to destruction and breakdown. The upshot is that practically every time you eat commercially prepared foods you increase your intake of omega-6 EFAs.

Another food that contributes to our overconsumption of omega-6 EFAs is meat. Our ancestors ate livestock that grazed mainly on grass and other plant foods. Besides being more lean, the meat from such animals has up to five times as much omega-3 fatty acid content as the meat from feedlot and cage-raised animals. Today most beef, chicken, and pigs are fed mainly corn and corn-oil diets, which are high in omega-6 EFAs.

### ...And Too Few 3s

While omega-6 fatty acids have increased in the diet, omega-3 fatty acids have declined. Omega-3-rich foods like eggs have fallen out of favor in the last couple of decades. Many of the most popular seafoods (such as salmon, trout, catfish, shrimp, and others) are now being farmed, which dramatically lowers their omega-3 EFA content. Instead of a normal diet of omega-3-rich components such as minnows, dill, algae, or insects, these fish are eating omega-6-rich grains and grain byproducts.

The problem gets worse. With the decline in popularity of breast-feeding, omega-3 deficiencies can literally begin at birth. I recently reported on

an EFA found in breast milk called Docosahexaenoid Acid (DHA). Researchers have established a strong correlation between DHA deficiency and the shocking increase in children now being diagnosed with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). (*Publisher's note: See the September 1999 issue for complete details.*)

Over-the-counter and pharmaceutical medications are another often overlooked factor that contributes to the imbalance of fatty acids. Seemingly harmless medications like aspirin disrupt the enzyme process that converts EFAs into hormone-like substances called prostaglandins.

## The Future This Trend Will Give Us

Taken together, these factors are overwhelming. Even if you eat the healthiest, cleanest diet possible, your ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids will probably still be greater than 4:1. Of course, most people are far from that ideal. And we're beginning to see the results of this problem. Although most physicians are oblivious to the fact, some very common and serious health problems can now be directly linked to a shortage of omega-3 fatty acids in the diet. A short list of some of the more common problems includes the following:

- Joint pain, inflammation, and rheumatoid arthritis
- Food or airborne allergies
- Asthma
- Heart disease
- Kidney stones
- Depression
- Multiple sclerosis
- Weakened immune system

*If you haven't restored a healthy balance of EFAs in your diet, you face a greatly increased risk of suffering from one or more of these problems.*

## The Deadly Effects of Inflammation

Inflammation is one of the factors underlying many of the above complaints, and fatty acids

are a factor in inflammation. At the risk of oversimplifying matters, you can think of omega-6 fatty acids as promoting inflammation and omega-3 fatty acids as retarding it. (In reality, both of these fatty acids play many roles and both are essential for good health. It's not that one is good and the other is bad. Problems begin to occur only when they get out of balance.)

Inflammation of tissues can be triggered when arachidonic acid is converted to prostaglandin E<sub>2</sub>, and during the production of immunoglobulin (Ig) 2. Omega-6 fatty acids promote both of these processes, while omega-3 fatty acids inhibit them. Thus, if you consume more omega-6 fatty acids than omega-3 fatty acids, you're susceptible to inflammation conditions like those mentioned above.

The exact nature of a problem depends on where inflammation runs unchecked. For example, an inflammation of the intestinal wall breaks down the protective mucus coating and allows larger-than-normal, undigested proteins to enter the bloodstream. This process triggers a reaction from the immune system, resulting in an allergic response to the food involved. Similarly, an overabundance of inflammatory chemicals in the bronchial tubes results in constriction, impeded airflow, and possibly asthma.

Inflammation in the joints can cause the pain that often occurs as we start to get older. Patients with rheumatoid arthritis frequently find tremendous relief when they take fish oil rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Unfortunately, by the time most of these individuals learn about flax and fish oil, many of their joint surfaces have been destroyed by the inflammation. Complete healing of such joints is difficult, if not impossible.

## From Cholesterol-Lowering Drugs to Anti-Inflammatory Drugs?

The incidence of health problems caused by inflammation has skyrocketed, and the list of related problems seems to be growing longer every day. Heart researchers have now shown that indi-

ALTERNATIVES™ Published monthly for \$69.95/yr. by Mountain Home Publishing at 1201 Seven Locks Rd., Rockville, MD 20854. Editorial office: P.O. Box 829, Ingram, TX 78025. Periodicals postage paid at Rockville, MD and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Alternatives, 1201 Seven Locks Rd., Rockville, MD 20854. Copyright © 2000 All rights reserved. Photocopying or reproduction is strictly prohibited without permission from the publisher.

**Author:** Dr. David G. Williams

**Executive Editor:** Erica Bullard

**Editor:** Robert Kroening

The approaches described in this newsletter are not offered as cures, prescriptions, diagnoses, or a means of diagnosis to different conditions. The author and publisher assume no responsibility in the correct or incorrect use of this information, and no attempt should be made to use any of this information as a form of treatment without the approval and guidance of your doctor. Dr. Williams works closely with Mountain Home Nutritionals, the supplement service that manufactures his unique formulations and supplies many of the hard-to-find nutrients he recommends. The compensation he receives allows him to continue devoting his life to worldwide research and the development of innovative, effective health solutions.

---

viduals whose immune systems produce too many inflammatory chemicals or an insufficient amount of anti-inflammatory chemicals develop plaques in their arteries. (*Circulation Research* 85:1.) Based on these findings, the researchers have proposed that anti-inflammatory drugs could be the way to prevent heart disease.

Now that many medical authorities are finally beginning to admit that reducing cholesterol isn't the answer to stopping heart disease, conquering inflammation seems to be the next red herring. Pharmaceutical companies obviously love the idea. To them, having everybody on medication for life starting at age 15 or 20 sounds like a great idea.

When you take into account the long-term changes to our diet, though, you can see that anti-inflammatory drugs treat only a symptom and not the underlying problem. The real problem stems from the inability to block inflammation due to a shortage of omega-3 fatty acids. Therefore, the proper solution must provide more dietary omega-3 acids to prevent inflammation from getting started.

Let's take another look at the study I mentioned a moment ago. The scientists studied animals that were genetically unable to produce an anti-inflammatory chemical normally secreted inside arterial plaques. These animals were placed in a sterile environment and fed a diet rich in fat and cholesterol. When compared to mice who could produce the anti-inflammatory chemical, the subject mice produced plaques three times as large. However, when the experimental animals were placed in a non-sterile environment containing bacteria and pollutants, they produced plaques thirty times larger.

Based on studies similar to this one, some scientists have suggested that bacteria are the cause of cardiovascular disease. Predictably, they suggest that antibiotics are the cure. In the next few years, you can expect to see dozens of new studies conclude that bacteria and viruses cause things like stomach, liver, skin, colon, cervical, nasopharyngeal and oral cancer, lymphoma, stroke, multiple sclerosis, asthma, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia, depression, obesity, and even homosexual orientation.

The idea that bacteria and other pathogens are the sole cause of disease discounts the fact that not everyone exposed to a "bug" develops the associated disease. In many cases, a disease develops without any indication of bacteria or pathogens. The fact that the above diseases have begun to increase only since our diets have changed should

sound an alarm somewhere.

The fact of the matter is that pathogens are probably only one of the many "triggers" that start the inflammation process associated with many of these diseases. Stress hormones, pollutants, free radicals, toxins, and many other factors can also trigger the inflammation process. Isolating bacteria as the only culprit totally overlooks these factors. Obviously, minimizing your exposure to bacteria (and these other factors) will probably lessen the problem, but helping your body fight inflammation is the ultimate answer. And improving your fatty acid ratio is an important step in this process.

## Balance Your Diet Easily and Inexpensively

When it comes to correcting your fatty acid ratio, I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that this problem has a fairly simple solution. The bad news is that the solution does not work overnight.

You can easily supplement your diet with omega-3 fatty acids. The two most readily available sources are fish and flax. As I mentioned earlier, most available fish now contain less omega-3 fatty acids since they are being farmed. Also, fish oil is expensive to take on a regular basis and some people find it troublesome to digest. For these reasons, flax and flax oil are what I recommend you use. (Nuts are another great source of all fatty acids, which I'll talk more about on page 61.)

I have discussed and recommended the use of flaxseeds and oils many times in the past. I hope each of you is religiously taking at least one tablespoon of flax oil daily based on these recommendations. If you're not, I urge you to start now. After carefully following and researching the trends I've discussed in this issue, I feel it's imperative that you immediately begin correcting the omega fatty acid ratio in your diet.

As I wrote in detail in the March 1997 and September 1994 issues, flax and flax oils are useful in the treatment and prevention of a host of diseases. They have several properties that re-searchers have shown to be beneficial in the treatment of high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol and triglycerides, and atherosclerosis. (*Prostaglandins Lekot Essent Fatty Acids* 96;54(6):451-5)

Flax is also highly beneficial in the prevention and treatment of blood sugar problems, breast cancer, kidney disease, and intestinal problems. Just make sure you get a fresh product so you won't have to worry about oxidation of the beneficial omega-3s. Your local health store should have

unground flax seeds on hand, or you can try to order them from Under the Sun Natural Foods, 130 West 25th Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, 410-467-0506. (Under the Sun appears to be in the middle of a move from Tennessee to Maryland as I write this, and is between operational phone numbers. The above phone number is the new one for the company, and I'm hoping it'll be active by the time you receive this.) For flax oil, I recommend you contact Flora, 805 E. Badger Road, Lynden, WA 98264, 800-446-2110.

The two issues of *ALTERNATIVES* I mentioned a moment ago should answer almost any question you have on the topic of flax. If you don't have these issues, you can purchase them by calling 800-527-3044.

Since flax oil is the most convenient way to enjoy the benefits of flax, many of you will probably use it rather than grinding the seeds each day. If you do use the oil, I recommend the following daily doses based on body weight.

35 pounds or under	1 teaspoon
36 to 69 pounds	2 teaspoons
70 to 105 pounds	1 tablespoons
Women	1 to 2 tablespoons
Men	2 to 3 tablespoons

If you choose to use flaxseeds instead of flax oil, keep in mind that a tablespoon of seeds yields about a teaspoon of oil. Be sure to grind the seeds first or they will pass through your digestive system intact and take their benefits with them. I use a small handheld coffee grinder for this purpose. It's inexpensive and effective, and is also good for grinding small amounts of other seeds or nuts. Grind only enough for one use. When the oil in ground flaxseed is exposed to air, it oxidizes quickly and becomes rancid.

One other thing you need to keep in mind. If you have difficulty digesting fats (as many individuals do) or your gallbladder has been removed, you will need to take a digestive supplement containing bile salts to help assimilate the fatty acids.

There are a few good products available to help you with this problem. Standard Process Products has an excellent product called Cholacol, and Nutri-Dyn has a similar product called Lipocomplex. If you call 800-848-5061, Standard Process will refer you to a doctor in your area who will determine if you're a candidate for Cholacol. The product Lipocomplex can be purchased by calling Progressive Labs, 1701 W. Walnut Hill Lane,

Irving, TX 75038 at 800-527-9512. Mention that you're an *ALTERNATIVES* reader, and Progressive Labs will give you a 25 percent discount.

Lastly, if you want to know what to do if you've had your gallbladder removed, you can purchase my audio tape titled "Liver and Gallbladder" by calling 800-527-3044.

## The Other Benefits of Flax

Once you begin taking flax, you may begin to see a difference in the smoothness and moistness of your skin. You may experience more energy. And contrary to what you might think, this amount of flax oil won't make you fat or cause you to gain weight. *In fact, the omega-3 fatty acids in flax oil actually help you lose weight.*

Omega-3 fatty acids can *increase* your metabolic rate and make you burn fats more quickly. They can also increase energy production, facilitate oxygen transfer, lower blood pressure, and decrease the stickiness of your blood platelets. If you want to lose weight, begin with three tablespoons of flax oil daily and continue this dose for several months—until you've lost the weight you desire or your weight stabilizes. Then cut back to one to two tablespoons a day.

## Flax for the Long Haul

I feel strongly that my job with *ALTERNATIVES* is not just to bring you cures, but also simple techniques you can use to prevent problems from occurring in the first place. The regular use of flax is one such technique. I personally take flax oil each and every morning. After carefully analyzing the dramatic changes that have taken place in our food supply, I think that this practice is necessary for retaining or restoring health.

However, don't expect miracles overnight. Restoring your EFA ratio could take six months or more. Fats and fat-soluble supplements take longer to saturate your tissues than water-based supplements (like vitamin C and most minerals). The beneficial fatty acids must gradually replace the unhealthy fatty acids, toxins, and other components in your cell walls.

You'll find that the time and effort you invest are well spent. Taking flax oil regularly will improve your overall health and prevent inflammation and dozens of associated diseases. In simple terms, it's cheap insurance that pays constant dividends. When it comes to your health, it's some of the best insurance you can buy.

## NEWS TO USE FROM THE WORLD

### NEW DIGS FOR CERBURG

SOUTH DAYTONA, FLORIDA—One of the special reports I sent you when you subscribed to *ALTERNATIVES* was about a “magic powder” that unclogs your arteries. Called ProFibe, this product consists of grapefruit pectin and guar gum.

As the report shows, ProFibe has proved to be extremely effective at preventing and even reversing atherosclerosis. Human studies have shown that ProFibe can reduce LDL, or “bad,” cholesterol levels and reverse the accumulation of plaque on arterial walls. For those of you taking cholesterol-lowering drugs or considering bypass surgery, ProFibe could be an important alternative.

If you’ve been using this product or thinking of trying it out, you’ll want to know that its maker, CerBurg Products, Ltd., has moved. The company’s new address is 2040 S. Ridgewood Ave., S. Daytona, FL 32119-8437, and its phone number is 904-761-8100.

### CHEAP FAT BURNERS

FRIBOURG, SWITZERLAND—Researchers at the University of Fribourg recently informed us that a flavonoid in green tea helps increase the the body’s metabolic rate and burn fat. On days when 10 men were given two capsules containing a total of 90 mg of green tea extract [epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG)] with each meal, they burned 4 percent more energy (80 calories) than on the days they didn’t receive the capsules. What made the study even more interesting was the fact that there were no other changes made in the men’s lifestyle or eating habits. Also interesting, the tea extract caused the body to burn fat calories instead of protein or carbohydrates. (*Am J Clin Nutr*, Dec. 99)

Additional research has shown that fish oil and other omega-3-rich foods will increase metabolism, as will the capsicum from chili peppers. The fact that these foods safely increase energy levels and remove fat molecules is reason enough to include them in your diet.



### MAILBOX

**Question:** I recently had my ribs x-rayed, thinking some must be broken due to my pain. The doctor said that I have no broken ribs, but that I have costochondritis. He prescribed medication, saying this was all that could be done and it would take two to three months to heal. I can’t tell that it has improved at all. I’m in pain most of the time, especially when I sit. Do you know anything at all that might improve my problem?

Marcelline J.  
Apopka, FL

**Answer:** Costochondritis refers to inflammation of the area where the cartilage at the end of the ribs joins the breastbone or sternum.

It seems that very few doctors know how to effectively treat the problem. It is often misdiagnosed as arthritis and treated with painkillers or anti-inflammatory medication. More often than not costochondritis is a result of an iodine deficiency. Treating the problem without adding iodine to your diet will rarely resolve the problem.

In the November 1999 and February 1999 issues of *ALTERNATIVES*, I discussed in detail how iodine deficiencies are becoming more and more common in our society. Fatigue, obesity, memory loss, depression, and costochondritis are just a few of the many symptoms associated with the problem.

Anyone who has ever experienced costochondritis quickly understands just how frustrating the problem can be. Every time you take a breath the rib cage expands and the joint between the ribs

---

and the sternum moves, creating severe pain. Any twisting or bending motion of the torso creates the same excruciating pain. The sensation is like having several ribs broken at the same time.

There are numerous iodine supplements that you can use to effectively get rid of the pain. Kelp tablets are inexpensive and readily available at most health foods stores. I particularly like a liquid iodine product called Iosol from TPCS Distributors. You can get Iosol at most larger health food stores, or you can order it from Mountain Home Nutritionals at 800-888-1415, ext. A048-E. It's not uncommon to immediately experience a 25 percent decrease in palpable pain from costochondritis after

taking 2 or 3 drops of Iosol.

In severe cases of costochondritis, I would suggest taking 3 drops of Iosol daily (one in the morning, one midday, and one in the evening) for a week to ten days. Then decrease the dosage to one or two drops a day until the pain subsides.

It also helps to include more iodine-rich foods in the diet but once you've become deficient in the iodine it's difficult to replenish your reserves strictly through dietary sources. That's why I always recommend a supplement.

It would also be wise to check your thyroid activity since costochondritis can obviously be associated with an underactive thyroid gland.

---

## DON'T SAY "NO" TO NUTS

In spite of the weather, I always enjoy this time of year. One of the primary reasons is that grocery stores always seem to stock large, open displays of various types of nuts. I traditionally stock up on these healthy treats with bags full of walnuts, pecans, almonds, hazelnuts, and Brazil nuts. Invariably, when someone sees me eating these nuts, they tell me that nuts will make me fat. Most people assume that since nuts are high in fat, they must be unhealthy or they make you fat. Both of these assumptions are wrong.

Research has shown over and over again that by simply eating nuts you can improve your blood-lipid profiles (cholesterol and triglyceride levels), significantly reduce your risk of heart disease, and lose weight. Nuts are one of nature's best kept secrets.

Many of their benefits come from their rich EFA content, particularly the omega-6 fatty acids and the omega-9 monounsaturated fatty acids (like olive oil). Assuming that you're taking adequate amounts of omega-3 flax oil each day to counterbalance the omega-6 fats in the nuts, you should enjoy plenty of nuts in your diet.

### Not-So-Tiny Time Pills

Nuts release oils in a way that makes them behave differently than oils that have been extracted. Paul Davis and his colleagues at the University of California have recently discovered that the body's absorption and processing of extracted nut oils is the same as any other oil or fat. However, when nuts are consumed, the oil from the nut enters the bloodstream slower, peaks about an hour later, and is rapidly flushed out of the bloodstream. This char-

acteristic is important because the longer digested fat circulates in the bloodstream, the greater the risk of developing heart disease. Nuts are like "time release" pills of beneficial fatty acids. This recent finding helps explain how adding nuts to your regular diet can help drop cholesterol levels.

In another recent study, researchers compared the cholesterol-lowering effects of adding either nuts or olive oil to one's regular diet. The study involved three groups of 15 individuals who each had cholesterol counts of over 250 mg/dl. The diet of the first group was rich in olive oil, the second in almonds, and the third in high-fat dairy products. Adding these high-fat foods to the groups' diets increased their total fat calories by two to eight percent over their diets before the study. The olive oil group and dairy products groups got 35 percent of their total calories from fat; the almond group got 39 percent of its total calories from fat. Keep in mind that any diet with over 30 percent of its calories coming from fat is considered a high fat diet.

At the end of only five weeks, total blood cholesterol levels dropped 4 percent in the olive oil group, 11 percent in the almond group, and rose 5 percent in the dairy product group. LDL "bad" cholesterol dropped 8 percent in the olive oil group, 17 percent in the almond group, and climbed 2 percent in the dairy group. (*J Am Coll Nutr* 98;17(3):285-90)

Clearly, almonds, which contain about 65 percent omega-9 fatty acids, exhibited the greatest influence on blood cholesterol levels. Other nuts such as hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios, and macadamias are also great sources for this form of "time release" omega-9 fatty acids. Between 55 and 83

percent of their fats are of the omega-9 variety. Even half the fat in peanuts (though technically a legume, not a nut) are of this same basic variety.

## A Nearly Perfect Food

The above study illustrates how harmful cholesterol levels can be lowered simply by increasing the right kinds of fats in the diet. Other ongoing studies have shown that individuals can lose weight and live longer using basically the same techniques. (*Am J Clin Nutr* 99;70(3Suppl):500S-503S, *Sci News* 98;154(21):328-330)

To obtain results like those in the study, you need roughly three ounces of nuts a day—though less can still be helpful. A handful weighs roughly an ounce. In the ongoing Nurses' Health Study, researchers have been studying the long-term effects of diet and health on 86,000 women since 1980. The researchers found that women who regularly ate as little as five ounces of nuts a week were only 65 percent as likely to have a heart attack as women who ate nuts only rarely. (*Brit Med J* 98;317(7169):1341-5)

As with many of the wonders of nature, no one fully understands exactly how nuts provide such remarkable benefits. My guess is that all of the synergistic components in nuts are the secret.

Not only are nuts the perfect storehouse for highly unstable essential fatty acids, they are one of the best sources for natural vitamin E. They are also a relatively good source for minerals like magnesium and potassium, and contain the amino acid arginine, which the body uses to make nitric oxide. Nitric oxide (NO) improves blood flow to the heart muscle in times of low oxygen levels and also acts as a powerful antioxidant. (*Publisher's note: For the whole story on L-arginine and its conversion to NO please refer to the November 1994 issue, Vol. 5, No. 17.*)

Ounce for ounce, it would be hard to find a food more powerful than nuts to help protect your

health. Adding flax oil and flax seeds to your diet, along with a regular handful of nuts, will go a long way toward helping to make you heart attack- and stroke-proof. And if you've been looking for a simple, foolproof way to boost your energy and shed a few pounds, you need look no further.

## Recipes and Even Drinks Using Nuts

If you need some help getting started, I would suggest getting a copy of the book, *Not Milk...Nut Milks!* by Candia Lea Cole (Woodbridge Press, P.O. Box 209, Santa Barbara, CA 93102, 800-237-6053). The book costs \$9.95 plus \$1.13 postage, but the publisher has agreed to discount the book price 20 percent if you identify yourself as an *ALTERNATIVES* reader. Ms. Cole provides very simple instructions and recipes for making 40 different delicious flaxseed and nut-based drinks using a common blender. They're easy to make and even better to drink!

## Accentuate the Positive

These days, just about all you hear in the nutritional and health press is how one food or another is bad for you. Don't eat this, never touch that, and on and on. It's nice to know that there are some foods that are not only healthy, but really good tasting, too.

I don't know about you, but after so many years of hearing what *not* to do from Mom and Uncle Sam, I'd much rather hear about what I *can* do. So, while you're getting ready to watch the Superbowl this year, feel free to sit down with a beer and some nuts. Since the Cowboys won't be playing, at least you'll have *something* to cheer about.



## We Hope To Hear From You!

Dr. Williams greatly appreciates hearing from you, and gears his research to the concerns you express to him in your letters. Of course, practical and ethical constraints prevent him from answering personal medical questions by mail or email, but he'll answer as many letters in the Mailbox section of *ALTERNATIVES* as he can. For our part, we'll do our best to direct

you to his issues, reports, and products related to the subject of your interest.

Here's how you can reach us:

- To send in Mailbox questions or Health Hints, write to **P.O. Box 829, Ingram, TX 78025** or **mailbox@drdavidwilliams.com**
- For customer service matters or address changes, call

**800-527-3044** or write to **custsvc@drdavidwilliams.com**

- To order back issues or reports, call **800-718-8293**
- To sign a friend up for *Alternatives*, call **800-219-8591**

Let us hear from you soon!

—The *ALTERNATIVES* Customer Service Team