

Alternatives[®]

FOR THE HEALTH-CONSCIOUS INDIVIDUAL

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Dr. David G. Williams

The Skinny on Skin

When you receive this issue, I should be back in Australia (the country that seems to have become my unofficial second home). Since the seasons there are almost exactly opposite of those in the U.S., it will be the middle of

summer there. As in the U.S., the summertime in Australia brings warnings about excessive sun exposure and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest, if not *the* highest, incidences of skin cancer in the world. Undoubtedly, there are several reasons for this.

I believe one reason has to do with their ancestral background. The majority of white Australians are direct descendants of British citizens that settled there in the 1800s. Genetically, residents and descendants from that area of the world are generally fair-skinned and do not tolerate excessive exposure to sunlight.

Another factor is diet. Diets high in polyunsaturated fats have been associated with an increase in the risk of skin cancer. Like citizens of many other industrialized nations, Australians eat an abundance of fried foods and consume increasing amounts of trans fatty acids and polyunsaturated oils and margarine.

New research from Monash University, in Victoria, Australia, has shown that what you eat can directly influence the health of your skin. Skin damage in individuals living in Melbourne, Australia was compared to that of individuals living in rural Greece and in Sweden. It was discovered that the type of foods they consumed influenced the amount of wrinkling and damage to sun-exposed skin in older individuals from different ethnic backgrounds.

Far less skin damage and wrinkling was found in those individuals who had a higher dietary

intake of the following foods: vegetables, olive oil, fish, legumes, eggs, yogurt, nuts, olives, cherries, melons, dried fruits/prunes, apples/pears, multi-grain bread, jam, tea, and water.

Foods that were associated with more wrinkling and skin damage included: full-fat milk, red meat, potatoes, margarine, butter, soft drinks/cordials, cakes, pastries, and sugar products. (*J Am Coll Nutr* 01;20(1):71-80)

If everyone seems to be looking older these days, it may be that potatoes, in the form of french fries, are the number one vegetable consumed in the U.S. And, to help accelerate the aging process, more often than not the french fries are only part of a meal which consists of hamburger meat on buns made from white flour. Then the whole mess is washed down with some sugar-laden soda, followed by dessert.

Although the results of this research study probably won't get disseminated very widely, it's the type of information that might help change a lot of people's diets. Most



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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

people get serious about their diet only when they experience the symptoms of heart disease. But if they knew that they could avoid wrinkles and slow the aging process, they might be more inclined to make changes in their diet.

For years, we've been told to reduce the saturated fat in our diet. Unfortunately, the reduction in saturated fat has been quickly replaced by either refined carbohydrates or trans fatty acids. And both of these increase the risk of heart disease (by lowering the beneficial form of cholesterol, HDL), increase inflammation in the body, and lead to premature wrinkling and aging.

If you go to the trouble of cleaning up your diet by reducing saturated fats and the other items listed above, don't replace them with more refined carbohydrates or sugar. Instead, add more fruits and vegetables—and include foods rich in the monounsaturated fats that we now know reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease, reduce inflammation, and, as the above study indicates, prevent skin wrinkling and slow the aging process. Olive oil, olives, avocados, and walnuts are all great sources of monounsaturated oils.

I've explained several times in the past how a few ounces of walnuts each day can improve energy levels and significantly reduce heart disease without causing any additional weight gain. The same is true with avocados. In fact, some new research indicates that avocados are the richest fruit source of vitamin E, followed by the kiwi, nectarines, grapes, and then peaches. Hardly anyone ever mentions that avocados are also the best fruit source of lutein, the compound that protects against cataract formation and macular degeneration. (*Nut Week 01;31(24):7*)

Armed with this new information, I urge you to start making the dietary changes that will help prevent any additional premature wrinkling and aging of your skin. Those same dietary changes will help protect you from heart disease, and that's an additional benefit worth having.

Typhoid Mary in the Jet Age

Although the volume has decreased, I continue to get letters from readers concerned about the spread of anthrax and smallpox by terrorists. These threats, while not as great as many people initially feared, actually point out some important health considerations you should be aware of.

As I mentioned several times in the past few months, I don't think that anthrax should be a major concern. And although smallpox is extremely deadly and easily spread, I don't see that as a major threat either. The reason is that smallpox would be a double-edged sword for any terrorist who wanted to use it.

If smallpox was introduced to the U.S. population, there would certainly be problems, but our medical community could probably handle the situation better than any other country on the planet. However, like the guy with a nuclear hand grenade, the terrorists would have trouble escaping the effects of their own weapon. When the smallpox spread, as it undoubtedly would, to many of the third-world terrorist nations, it could wipe out practically their entire population. With global transportation as it is today, many of these lethal bioweapons would quickly spread disease to virtually every corner of the globe.

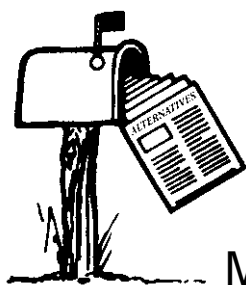
It's this disease-spreading tendency of air travel that I'd like to discuss. Even without terrorist-caused epidemics, there are certain precautions that I feel you should take if you travel either internationally or on longer domestic flights. Crashes and terrorists continue to frighten many people away from flying, but the hidden health risks associated with air travel should be more of a concern.

Traveling Disease Factories

People continue to travel even when they are sick. Dr. Jonathan Temte, with the University of Wisconsin, just released a report at the North American Primary Care Research Group meeting in Halifax, Canada showing that as many as 41 percent of all passengers traveling during the winter are carrying some kind of respiratory infection. He recently surveyed 641 air travelers and found that 7.3 percent of those questioned had a respiratory infection at the time of questioning and 35.3 percent of this group had been exposed to a person with an acute respiratory infection during the three days prior to their travel. Another 22.5 percent reported having runny noses, 14.2 percent had a cough, 8.3 percent had sore throats, and four people were traveling with temperatures of 100 degrees F or more.

Airplanes are the perfect incubators for the replication and spread of pathogens. It has long been the practice of commercial airlines to recycle the air in the passenger cabins to help

(Continued on page 70)



MAILBOX

Alternative Solutions Put a Pox on COX-2

Question: I know you don't advocate the routine use of aspirin and other NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) to prevent heart attacks or cancer, but now my doctor tells me they can help prevent Alzheimer's disease. I have Alzheimer's in my family. Can these drugs help me avoid getting the disease?

Stephanie M., Hudson, Ohio

Answer: There is some research from the Netherlands that suggests that taking an average of two anti-inflammatory pills a week could reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by as much as 75 to 80 percent. Unfortunately, you have a higher risk of dying from the side effects of regular NSAID use than you do of getting Alzheimer's disease. Regular use of NSAIDs causes stomach and intestinal bleeding and kidney damage that can be hard to correct.

In other words, giving all the elderly regular doses of NSAIDs would kill more people than it would help. These are dangerous drugs and the pharmaceutical companies know it. That's why they are currently working to develop a new class of drugs that spare the gut but still help pre-

vent Alzheimer's. This new class of drugs is known as COX-2 inhibitors. They are supposedly designed to stop inflammation while avoiding the intestinal bleeding and damage that NSAIDs cause.

COX-2 inhibitors work by inhibiting the enzyme cyclooxygenase-2, which, in turn, is responsible for creating inflammatory prostaglandins. In simple terms, when you inhibit the COX-2 enzyme, you help block the pain and inflammation associated with arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. Now this new research suggests that some of these drugs may also help prevent the body's immune cells from attacking healthy brain cells, as well as break up the amyloid plaques that form in the brains of Alzheimer's patients.

The first of these new arthritis drugs was approved in 1999 and in less than a year had prescription sales of over \$3 billion. Obviously, the pharmaceutical companies are busy trying to develop additional synthetic COX-2 inhibiting compounds and ones that stop the formation of amyloid plaques. Two new COX-2 inhibitors on the way are Bextra (valdecoxib) from Pfizer, maker of Celebrex, and Arcoxia (etoricoxib) from Merck, maker of Vioxx.

Although they are being promoted as safe alternatives to NSAIDs, one study found that synthetic COX-2 inhibitors can double the risk of suffering a cardiovascular event such as heart attack, stroke, or unstable angina. It may be possible to avoid these serious side effects if aspirin is taken along with the COX-2 inhibitors, but then you have the intestinal bleeding problem again. (*JAMA* 01;286:954-

9). When it comes to drugs, there is rarely a "free lunch." You either pay now or pay later. However, you should be aware that there are several natural compounds that already provide the same benefits as synthetic COX-2 inhibitors, without the harmful side effects.

Curcumin (the yellow pigment of the spice turmeric): There are literally hundreds of studies that have shown that turmeric is a powerful COX-2 inhibitor. Additionally, even small doses of turmeric can reduce harmful cholesterol levels, protect against cancer, and provide strong antioxidant properties. In light of this new research on Alzheimer's, you'll undoubtedly begin to see more information on the benefits of turmeric and/or curcumin. Just last month, I discussed how the routine use of turmeric could help stop the development of the amyloid plaques that form in Alzheimer's patients. This new research helps explain why India has the lowest incidence of Alzheimer's disease of any country in the world.

I believe that regular daily doses of turmeric are essential. If your multi-vitamin supplement doesn't contain turmeric, as Daily Advantage does, then I would certainly recommend that you add it to your daily supplements.

Ginger: Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is another powerful COX-2 inhibitor. Its ability to reduce the inflammation and pain of arthritis has been well documented. (*Med Hypotheses* 92;39(4):342-8) (*Pharmacology* 94;49(5):314-8)



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Green Tea: One of the components of green tea is salicylic acid. Aspirin is acetyl salicylic acid. Unlike aspirin, however, green tea contains dozens of other compounds that work together not only to inhibit the COX-2 enzyme, but also to negate any of the potential side effects that might come from long-term use of individual compounds like salicylic acid.

Oregano (carvacrol): Oregano oil has been receiving a lot of publicity lately, but I don't really recommend it. The oil contains a compound called carvacrol, which not only has strong COX-2 inhibiting capabilities, but also has been shown to have strong microbial action, particularly with fungal and yeast infections. Even so, here are the reasons I don't recommend it.

First, the carvacrol content of oregano oil can and does vary enormously. Some Mexican varieties of the oil might contain only 0.5 percent, whereas some Turkish varieties contain up to 80 percent carvacrol. The oregano oil that I've found in the marketplace hasn't been consistent.

Second, the oil can be very irritating. Used topically, it can cause allergic reactions and cause eruptions on the skin. If you use oregano oil topically, it is probably best to dilute it to as little as 2 to 5 percent with some neutral oil like olive oil.

While more and more people recommend the oral use of oregano, I have found that this causes most people gastric distress. Heartburn, reflux, cramping, and severe indigestion are just a few of the common problems I've seen associated with taking oregano oil orally.

In the future, if I find a reliable source of quality oregano oil, I'll certainly let you know. At least for now, however, it certainly isn't at the top of my list of health remedies.

Rosemary: This is another herb that has shown strong COX-2 inhibition properties. Rosemary is far more popular in Europe and the Far East.

In those areas it has routinely been used as a tonic for treating indigestion and headaches. It has strong antioxidant properties and topically has been used in all types of cosmetics and skin products. Topically, it is nonirritating.

Products and availability of rosemary are fairly limited in the U.S. at this time, but that may change as its COX-2 inhibition abilities become more widely known.

Over the next several years we'll begin to see the pharmaceutical industry market more drugs to be used to "prevent" disease. COX-2 inhibitors are a good example. The COX-2 inhibitor Celebrex and the NSAID naproxen were recently tested on patients known to already have Alzheimer's. There was no improvement in the patients. Tests are now underway using these and several other drugs in healthy elderly patients to see if they provide any degree of protection against getting the disease. It would be nice to compare drugs side-by-side against curcumin and/or ginger but I doubt that will ever happen.

If any of these drugs are successful, I'm sure it will make national headlines. Just like the widespread use of anti-cholesterol drugs, the unsuspecting public will be led to believe that the routine use of drugs is the way to *prevent* disease.

When it happens, don't get sucked into this mess. The long-term side effects of most drugs are worse than the benefits they claim to provide. There are safe, effective, natural alternatives like those that I've mentioned above. Any time you see someone recommending long-term, regular drug use to "prevent" disease, it should send up a red flag.

Rethinking Magnets

Question: I have a pain in my stomach area that just won't seem to go away. I've tried dozens of different remedies and creams, but the

pain always returns. A friend of mine gave me an article about using magnets to get rid of pain and it claims that magnets are safe, effective, and easy to use. I want to try them. What do you think?

Claude T., Miami, Florida

Answer: First of all, in many cases, magnets can help stop pain. And in the last few years, dozens of magnet products have come on the market. I've seen magnetic shoe inserts, belts, blankets, pillows, headbands, wristbands, knee wraps, and dozens of other such products. Even some doctors are starting to endorse and recommend magnet products. And while most are honest enough to say they don't understand how or why the magnets work, in the next breath they proclaim them to be harmless. That may not always be the case.

A great deal of research has been done on the biological effects of magnets. Walter Rawls Jr. and Albert Roy Davis have published several books on the subject, and have done much of the preliminary research in this field. According to their research, the effects of a magnet depend on several factors—especially on which pole is placed against the body. If you remember, all magnets have two poles, north and south.

The energy field from the north pole has a counter-clockwise rotation, while that of the south pole has a clockwise rotation. The two energy fields affect the cells in your body in totally different ways.

For example, energy from the north pole of a magnet decreases pain and inflammation, while that from the south pole increases pain and inflammation. Some products on the market fail to make that distinction. Even worse, energy from the south pole of a magnet can increase tissue growth, which is certainly something you wouldn't want to happen if there was cancerous tissue underlying the area.

Anyone who uses acupuncture will tell you that the improper use of magnets can throw your whole system out of kilter. Trying to balance the energy patterns of someone who sleeps with a magnetic blanket or uses magnets on a regular basis can be a nightmare. While the pain may subside, other problems seem to start popping up with these people. Unfortunately, even if they stop using the magnets, things don't always return to normal on their own.

I certainly think magnets have a place in healing and can be great tools. If you're going to use them, however, you need to be quite knowledgeable in their various benefits, as well as their negative aspects. Keep in mind, too, that pain is a sign that something is wrong. Blocking the pain without discovering the underlying cause isn't really the solution, it's only treating a symptom. If the smoke alarm in your house went off during the middle of the night it would be far wiser to see what caused the alarm than to simply unplug it or remove the battery. The same holds true when it comes to pain, your body's innate alarm system.

As an interesting side-note, there's a simple way you can check to see which end or side of a magnet is the north or south pole. When you hold the north pole of a magnet up to the screen of a television you'll see a swirling pattern going counter-clockwise. And, holding the south pole up to the screen will distort Oprah's face in a clockwise pattern.

If you want to use magnets for pain or healing, I would suggest getting one or more books by the two researchers mentioned above (*The Rainbow in Your Hands*, *The Magnetic Effect*, and *Magnetism and Its Effects on the Living System*).

Revisiting RLS

Question: Several members of the Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation forwarded the most recent copy of

your publication, *Alternatives for the Health Conscious Individual*. On pages 43-44 [December 2001] you incorrectly identify the causes of Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) as being poor circulation, calcium/magnesium imbalance or acid/alkalinity disturbance.

I have enclosed a copy of a recent RLS publication released by the National Institutes of Health, *Restless Legs Syndrome: Detection and Management in Primary Care* and our most recent Medical Bulletin containing 187 citations from scientific and medical experts on RLS. We would appreciate it if, in future publications, you would give your readers accurate and up-to-date information on the condition, its cases [*sic*], and recommended therapies.

The RLS Foundation cannot endorse any specific product for the treatment of restless legs syndrome (RLS) and the FDA has not yet approved any indicated drug to treat RLS.

Georgianna B.
RLS Foundation, Inc.

Answer: Thank you for the additional information on restless legs syndrome (RLS). I am always searching for new techniques and ways to treat all health problems.

However, as far as incorrectly identifying the causes of RLS, and the idea that in future publications I should give my readers accurate and up-to-date information, I have a slight bone to pick.

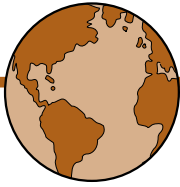
You seem to contend that your organization, with 16 individuals on the Board of Directors, 11 individuals on the Scientific Advisory Board, and another 15 individuals on the Medical Advisory Board, has all the answers concerning RLS. You also seem to be saying that a treatment can't be helpful unless the FDA has approved it. That's the kind of position my subscribers typically have a problem with. You might not be able to see it, but if people could

get help from your organization and others like it, they wouldn't need to subscribe to a newsletter. After implying that the RLS Foundation has all the answers, the final paragraph in your letter seems to say that there is no treatment or cure for RLS. I honestly believe that there are better answers than that.

In the 16 years I've written *Alternatives*, I've told its readers about effective cancer treatments that the National Cancer Institute won't tell them about. I've told them about effective treatments for heart disease that the American Heart Association is mum on. And I've told them about treatments for arthritis, Alzheimer's, and many other degenerative diseases that the AMA won't breathe a word to them about. There are a lot of genuinely helpful and even curative treatments out there that organizations like yours simply aren't telling people about. You can cite 187 scientific and medical experts, but none of them can come up with a treatment for RLS that the FDA will approve. How does that help anyone?

Obviously, there are numerous causes of RLS, and to suggest that your organization, the National Institutes of Health, or anyone else (including me) has all the correct answers or the only acceptable forms of treatment is simplistic. If the answer to stopping every case of RLS was known, I doubt I would still be getting questions about the problem from my readers. I also doubt that the RLS Foundation would exist.

The suggestions that I've outlined in *Alternatives* over the years have helped hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals overcome their problems with RLS. Nevertheless, I'm willing to learn from the materials you sent me. Are you willing to learn from mine?



News to Use from Around the World

Feeling Nauseated? Try Ginger

CHIANG MAI, THAILAND _____ Many times in the past, I've mentioned how ginger capsules can help fight nausea and vomiting. (I take a couple of ginger-root capsules an hour before and while flying in small planes or boating in the ocean. This trick has kept me from getting sick on dozens of occasions.)

Researchers have not reported such uniformly positive outcomes, though. In some studies ginger seems to work well, while in others the results are not as definite. I suspect that these mixed results are primarily related to the quality of the different ginger products and how the ginger was processed.

One recent study in Thailand showed excellent results at stopping the nausea and vomiting associated with pregnancy when using freshly processed ginger. One group of 32 women was given oral ginger at a dose of four 250 milligram capsules a day. Another group of women received a placebo. Twenty-eight of the 32 women on the ginger root experienced very significant reductions in both nausea and vomiting, while less than one-third of those on the placebo reported any improvement. (*Obstet Gynecol* 01;97:577-582)

The ginger was prepared from fresh gingerroot. It was chopped into small pieces, baked for 24 hours at 140 degrees F, ground into powder, and packed into capsules. Each woman received a capsule after each meal and at bedtime.

The beauty of using ginger to stop nausea and vomiting associated with pregnancy is that there are few, if any, side effects, and it doesn't affect the pregnancy.

The gingerroot that I've been using lately comes from Penn Herb Co. (800-523-9971). If you get mixed or marginal results from commercial products, I would suggest trying the procedure above to make your own. (You can get encapsulating equipment from Penn Herb.) Keep in mind that gingerroot powder also

works for stopping the nausea associated with chemotherapy and radiation sickness.

A Liver Transplant Alternative?

LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO _____ Dr. Burt Berkson at the Integrative Center of New Mexico, New Mexico State University, recently published a report detailing a treatment program he used to successfully treat three patients destined for liver transplant surgery. All three patients were suffering from cirrhosis of the liver, portal hypertension, and esophageal varices (easily ruptured varicose veins in the esophagus) secondary to chronic hepatitis C infections.

Since interferon and anti-viral medications are successful in only about 30 percent of cases, Dr. Berkson decided to try a triple antioxidant therapy using high doses of alpha lipoic acid, selenium, and silymarin (milk thistle extract). These natural remedies have been proven to both protect against free radical damage and viral proliferation.

Each patient was given 600 milligrams of alpha lipoic acid, 400 micrograms of selenium, and 900 milligrams of silymarin (milk thistle extract) daily in three divided doses. He reports that all responded positively to the treatment within a short period of time and none required transplant surgery. All feel fine and returned to work without any problems.

Transplant surgery isn't always successful. Often, the virus that remains in the blood infects the new liver. And when you consider how expensive, painful, and disabling transplant surgery is, being able to treat the problem with three natural antioxidants seems nothing short of a miracle. Dr. Berkson estimates that the cost of his three-antioxidant therapy is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2,000, compared to over \$300,000 for transplant surgery. (*Med Klin* 99;94Suppl3:84-9)

This is certainly one little gem you want to remember just in case someone you know faces this situation.

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improve fuel mileage. On a seven-hour flight, the same air has to be recirculated a total of about 20 times. It's easy to see how one passenger with a respiratory infection could infect an entire plane-load of passengers.

In earlier days, it might take weeks or months for certain strains of infections such as influenza to circle the globe. With air travel, it can spread literally overnight. My trip from Los Angeles to

Sydney takes only about 14 hours, and you can reach China in less time than that.

In no way do I want to discount the enormous death toll associated with the World Trade Center disaster, but it must be put in perspective against the possibilities facing us. A serious flu epidemic in this country could easily affect 20 to 30 million people and result in 10,000 to 15,000 deaths. In fact, the Spanish flu of 1918 infected

HEALTH HINTS FROM READERS



Niacinamide Works

Not too long ago I ordered all of your back issues. What a wonderful health library these have given me. I am constantly referring to this wealth of information not only for my own problems but for those of my family and friends as well.

One particular idea that has changed my life is the use of niacinamide. When I read about the work of Dr. William Kaufman (Vol. 7, No. 5) and started taking the niacinamide the way you outlined, my overall health was dramatically transformed. I can't thank you enough for providing this information or Dr. Kaufman for his fantastic discovery.

I have since shared this information about niacinamide with dozens of others and everyone so far has been helped. I wanted to let other readers know just how powerful this information is, and also tell about another pesky problem that completely disappeared after using niacinamide.

For decades I suffered on and off with mouth ulcers or canker sores. At least every month or two I would develop these sores on my lips, on my tongue, or somewhere in my mouth. I tried lysine, red algae products, and dozens of others, and while some helped, nothing seemed to keep them from returning. Once I started the niacinamide, they stopped for good. It was like a miracle. Now if I run across anyone with recurring mouth sores I tell them about niacinamide. I thought other readers could use the information also. Even if you don't take the niacinamide regularly like I do now, it can still be used to stop the problem. At the first sign of a problem take 500 milligrams four times a day. It will not only stop the sores from forming but it will clear up an existing sore in two days.

Keep up the good work and thanks for everything.

Matti A., Evanston, Illinois

Since I wrote about Dr. Kaufman's work with niacinamide,

I have had stacks of letters from subscribers who have been helped. Niacinamide is definitely one of those "dirt cheap miracles" that has been underutilized and overlooked. Also since that article, the friendly folks at Freeda Vitamins have started making a 250 milligram niacinamide tablet to make it easier to follow Dr. Kaufman's recommendations. Freeda Vitamins is located at 36 East 41st Street, New York, New York 10017 and can be contacted at 800-777-3737. Be sure you ask for niacinamide, which isn't the same as niacin. You can also get 250 milligram niacinamide tablets from Mountain Home Nutritionals, 888-888-1415 (code 10780N).

After reading about your success, I began recommending niacinamide for canker sores (lip and mouth ulcerations, "fever blisters," etc.) and the results truly have been amazing. I started quickly enough the niacinamide will stop the blister formation and the ulceration that follows. Thanks for the wonderful tip!

28 percent of the U.S. population, or roughly 30 million people, and resulted in 675,000 deaths. With the current U.S. population of 280 million, an epidemic causing proportionate casualties would result in about 80 million infections and two million deaths.

It's hard to keep records on just how widespread the problem is or could become. It takes a day or two, or even longer, between the time one is exposed to a pathogen and the time symptoms begin to appear. Further, once a plane lands, passengers continue on their journeys to only God knows where.

To help solve the problem, we need better ventilation systems in aircraft, but I don't see that happening anytime soon. It wouldn't surprise me to see the airlines handing out surgical masks if the public ever starts to realize the dangers involved. Short of surgical masks, there is a simple technique you can use to help protect yourself during long flights or in any situation

where you know you're going to be confined with other people in close quarters.

Protection at a Small Price

When it comes to fighting airborne pathogens, I'm a huge fan of the eucalyptus oil product called V-Vax. It's made from a potent variety of Australian eucalyptus and is very effective. Every half-hour to hour when traveling on longer flights, I mist a couple of squirts into a tissue and inhale the fumes several times. I make sure I utilize the proper breathing techniques I outlined last month to insure the eucalyptus mist reaches deep into my lungs. Even if you aren't planning to take any long international flights, V-Vax can be used in any situation when you're required to remain in close proximity to others, such as in churches, movie theaters, auditoriums, buses, trains, etc.

Though made from Australian eucalyptus, V-Vax can be purchased in the U.S. in some health stores, or by calling V-Vax Products, Inc. at

800-342-2044 or 773-276-5064, or writing to them at 1507 N. Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 60622. If you decide to order directly from V-Vax Products, please be patient since it is a very small company and most of its sales are to distributors and health food stores. You can also order from Health Lighting, Inc. at 800-557-5127, P.O. Box 403, Falling Waters, WV 25419.

In addition to V-Vax, I also use the nasal wash Xlear at least twice daily, before, during, and for a few days after I travel, and I always take several Herbal Throat Lozenges during my flights. (These are available from Mountain Home Nutritionals by calling 800-888-1415. Mention code number 10780N.)

With all the media and public attention on terrorists and airborne pathogens, I hope someone will have the insight to address the problems associated with airline ventilation systems. It's going to have to happen sooner or later, I just hope it doesn't require some tragic event to bring attention to the problem.

New Hope for Alzheimer's

Last month, I discussed how the ingestion of curcumin, an ingredient in curry powder, is probably one of the primary reasons that Alzheimer's disease is so rare in India. New research now suggests that alpha-lipoic acid could also be an important nutrient in the treatment of Alzheimer's.

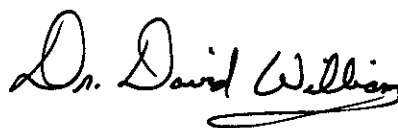
Eight men and one woman with an average age of 67, who were diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, were given 600 milligrams of alpha-lipoic acid daily for almost a year. During that time, testing revealed that their condition stabilized and they didn't experience any additional loss of cognitive function, which would otherwise have been expected. (*Arch Gerontol Geriatr* 01:32:275-282)

Not surprisingly, this study was performed in Germany where both herbs and various nutritional substances are taken more seriously in the treatment of disease. The cognitive testing and study procedures used are widely accepted worldwide. Each of the patients was evaluated using the Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Scale (ADAScog) and the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE). Even so, I suspect that this study will not receive much attention in this country. There are thousands of individuals who won't learn about this therapy until it's too late.

As horrendous and progressive as Alzheimer's disease can be, it's a shame that items such as alpha-lipoic acid, curcumin, glutathione, acetyl-carnitine, and various B-vitamins such as niacinamide and thiamine are not being recommended and used more with Alzheimer's patients.

I don't know of any drug therapy that can totally halt the progressive loss of mental function in Alzheimer's, as alpha-lipoic acid was shown to do in this study. It's a supplement that's still readily available and has no side effects. If you have a friend or loved one with the disease, please let them or their caregiver know about this natural, safe, and effective therapy. With Alzheimer's, every minute seems to count.

Take care,



P.S. If you're using your computer to communicate with friends and loved ones by email, you can also get email updates on important health information in between your monthly issues of *Alternatives*. Just go to drdavidwilliams.com to sign up for the "Free Health Email" on the right side of the page.

If you have questions or comments for Dr. Williams please send them to the mail or email addresses listed to the right. Of course, practical and ethical constraints prevent him from answering personal medical questions by mail or email, but he'll answer as many as he can in the Mailbox section of *Alternatives*. 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 61010, Potomac, MD 20859-1010 or mailbox@drdavidwilliams.com
- For Customer Service matters such as address changes, call 800-527-3044 or write to custsvc@drdavidwilliams.com
- To get important information between issues, sign up for email dispatches at drdavidwilliams.com
- To order nutritional supplements from Mountain Home Nutritionals, call 800-888-1415 or visit drdavidwilliams.com
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