

# Alternatives<sup>®</sup>

## FOR THE HEALTH-CONSCIOUS INDIVIDUAL

January 2004

Volume 10, No. 7



Dr. David G. Williams  
Several months ago, I discussed the theory behind flu shots and how the chances of being immunized against the proper strain was pretty much a crapshoot. Each year, scientists try to guess which top three strains of the flu virus are most likely to cause problems during the upcoming year. These are then combined into the flu vaccine.

By now, you're probably aware that the flu "bug" this winter is a nasty one, and everyone still is being urged to get their flu shot. You may also know that the virus causing this particularly virulent form of flu isn't part of this year's vaccine. In other words, those who got the vaccine are likely no better off than those who didn't. In fact, they could be even worse off with the unnecessary additional stress to their immune system. Ultimately, it is your immune system that is going to have to deal with any viruses or other pathogens anyway.

In previous issues I've discussed numerous ways to help boost your immune system. Keep in mind that supplements are only one tool. Proper bowel flora, adequate rest, and lots of water, sunshine, and fresh air can be just as important.

Years ago, a couple of companies were marketing devices similar to weak hair dryers to treat colds and flu. The theory and some research indicated that the heated air, when inhaled, destroyed or inactivated viruses in the upper respiratory tract. A couple of companies were even trying to get Food and Drug Administration approval to sell their devices as cold and flu treatments. Although I thought there was merit in such products, apparently the public was not convinced.

Regardless of the type of flu or cold bug, there are natural therapies that can help combat the

## Flu Shot Fever

problem. Three of my favorites actually deactivate the pathogen or cause it to mutate into a less virulent form. They are eucalyptus oil, elderberry extract (Elderberry Advantage or Sambucol), and the saline/xylitol nasal wash Xlear. Eucalyptus oil has a proven track record over several decades, and once enough people experience the benefits of elderberry extract and Xlear, I have no doubt they will be around a long time, too. I've written extensively about each of these products and exactly how they can be used (*Eucalyptus oil: March 2002, Vol. 9, No. 9; elderberry extract: November 1995, Vol. 6, No. 5; Xlear: November 2000, Vol. 8, No. 17*). If you still suffer from flu or colds or worry about whether to get a flu shot each year, you can set your mind at ease by taking advantage of these very effective, natural solutions.

## Need to Gain Weight? Try Dieting

Now that the new year is here, many people will undoubtedly be making resolutions to eliminate bad habits, improve their health, and lose extra pounds. If you're among that group, I hope any changes you decide to

(Continued on back page)



### In This Issue

Flu Shot Fever. . . . .	49
Need to Gain Weight? Try Dieting. . . . .	49
News to Use: Honey . . . . .	50
News to Use: Propolis . . . . .	53

*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



## NEWS TO USE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### A Honey of a Health Solution

MAHARASHTRA, INDIA—After writing this newsletter for almost 20 years, I'm still amazed at the number of people who continue to suffer (and even die) from problems that can be remedied naturally. A prime example occurred after the Oct. 12, 2002 bombing of two nightclubs in Bali. To Australians, this was their 9/11 disaster. A total of 202 people were killed, and more than 400 were injured. Since Bali is a favorite vacation spot of Australians, many of those killed and injured were Australians. Many of the injuries were severe burns.

Burns are always one of the most difficult problems to treat. Burn wounds are the perfect breeding and feeding grounds for many organisms. Burn wounds can easily become infected, and the infection often spreads rapidly into the bloodstream, which can kill the victim. What complicated matters even more was the fact that immediately after the bombings many of the victims were placed in a swimming pool in an effort to limit the burn damage. After a short time the pool water reportedly looked like "soup." What resulted was a nightmare, to say the least.

I recently spoke with doctors from the Royal Perth Hospital in western Australia where the greatest number of severely burned patients were transferred. It was the closest Australian medical center with a burn unit. Doctors soon discovered that 83 percent of the burn patients were infected with antibiotic-resistant organisms. Most were infected with numerous strains. The most difficult bacteria strain to manage was *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Even though some of the strongest anti-infectious pharmaceuticals were used on these patients, some died.

### Do You Know Where Your Honey Jar Is?

Although it might sound ridiculous, honey probably could have helped avert many of the problems and deaths of these burn patients.

I've reported on the benefits of using honey for burns and open wounds in the past. Do you have a quart jar on hand for emergencies? Obviously, the Balinese doctors who initially treated the burn patients didn't. And, even after hundreds of years of success and research studies to support its use, you'd be hard pressed to find honey in any ambulance, fire truck, emergency room, hospital, or doctor's office. It's nothing short of amazing. I certainly hope you're sharp enough to have it in your pantry.

If you happen to be hospitalized for severe burns at the Miraj and General Hospital in Sangli, Maharashtra,

India, you may be lucky enough to have your wounds treated with honey. Several recent studies at this hospital have shown just how effective honey can be.

One study evaluated the effects of using unheated raw, local honey on nine different pathogenic organisms found in burn wounds. One was *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. When cultured, none of the organisms was able to survive a 30-percent concentration of the honey.

Another study found that honey was effective against 17 different strains of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* even at concentrations as low as 10 percent. (*J Burn Care Rehabil* 02;23(6):366-70)

In another, somewhat similar study, doctors compared the effects of raw, unheated honey to numerous antibiotics on 28 different strains of pathogenic, multi-drug resistant bacteria associated with burns. *Only three of the strains were inhibited at all by any of the eleven antibiotics; every single one of the 28 strains was inhibited by a 25-percent concentration of honey.* Plain, simple, raw honey worked. When compared head to head with honey, eleven of the most potent antibiotic drugs available failed miserably (ampicillin, chloramphenicol, erythromycin, kanamycin, penicillin, streptomycin, tetracycline, gentamicin, amoxicillin, ciprofloxacin, norfloxacin). (*Ann Burns Fire Disaster* 03;16(2)) (*Ann Burns Fire Disaster* 01;14(1)) (*Ann Burns Fire Disaster-Pending Publication*)

Extensive studies by Dr. Subrahmanyam of India have shown that when burn patients were treated with honey, 91 percent were infection-free within seven days compared to only 7 percent using the standard silver sulfadiazine. In another group of 46 burn victims, 87 percent of honey-treated burn wounds were healed within 15 days, compared to only 7 percent of those treated with polyurethane film, and twice as many of the polyurethane film-covered wounds became infected as those treated with honey. The burn wounds of patients treated with amniotic membranes took an average of 17.5 days to heal, compared to only 9.4 days with honey. Additionally, scarring occurred in only 8 percent of the honey-treated patients, compared to 16.6 percent of those using the amniotic membrane. (*Brit J Surg* 91;78:497-498) (*Brit J Plastic Surg* 93;46(4):322-323) (*Burns* 94;20(4):331-334)

Honey is undoubtedly one of nature's most miraculous dressings for open wounds, ulcers, and burns. In addition to its powerful antibiotic activity, honey also:

- Forms a highly viscous barrier that prevents bacterial penetration and colonization of the wound surface.
- Increases local circulation to the wound.
- Stimulates the re-growth of damaged tissue, new

## NEWS (CONTINUED)

capillary vessels, and the growth of fibroblasts and collagen fibers, which are necessary for the formation of new connective tissue.

- Reduces swelling around the wound through its anti-inflammatory action, by drawing leaking lymph fluid and debris out of the wound, and by reducing the amount of exudate being formed.
- Allows wounds to heal more quickly since it doesn't stick to the underlying tissues and tear away newly formed tissue the way other forms of treatment do when the dressing is changed.
- Results in no or significantly less scarring compared with current conventional treatments.

Honey has to be one of the most underutilized therapeutic tools for treating burns, ulcers, and wounds. Research shows it has been used successfully to treat all types of wounds, including:

- Amputations
- Bed sores
- Leg ulcers (diabetic foot and leg ulcers, varicose ulcers, leprosy ulcers, sickle cell ulcers, etc.)
- Malignant ulcers
- Fistulas
- Cracked nipples
- Surgical wounds
- Gunshot and trauma induced wounds, including those to the skull and abdomen
- Cuts, abrasions, and puncture wounds

Best of all, honey is so easy to use. For deeper wounds and abscesses, honey is generally used to fill the cavity after it has been cleaned. On smaller wounds and on larger ones that have been filled with honey, a top dressing is applied. This is done using approximately 1 ounce of honey on a 4-inch square dressing pad. The pad is then applied directly to the wound. A second, dry dressing is placed on top of the first dressing and secured with adhesive tape.

Changing the dressing once daily is usually all that is required. If the wound initially produces a large amount of exudate, then more frequent changes may be necessary. Once no exudate is being produced, the

honey dressing may only need to be changed once every five days to a week.

Even under the best circumstances, burns can be one of the most difficult types of injuries to treat successfully. During periods of crisis, when professional emergency care and supplies are limited or unavailable, the situation is even worse. That's exactly why you should have a supply of honey on hand. In this day and age, our risk of exposure to radiation, contact with caustic chemicals, or proximity to an explosion or fire has increased significantly. While the first order of business is to avoid these scenarios as best we can, we should also be prepared for the unexpected.

A jar of honey is also something you may want to pack if you're ever going into the hospital for surgery. Life-threatening, drug-resistant bacterial infection of surgical wounds seems to be more and more of a problem.

Honey is inexpensive, readily available and one of the best-tasting burn and wound remedies I know of. It's foolish not to have a couple of bottles in your pantry. The gauze dressing pads will probably cost you more than the honey. (Keep in mind that some of the best and least expensive dressing pads are panty liners and sanitary napkins. Many brands now have adhesive backing, which makes them even more convenient.)

### ***Lethal to Microbes on Multiple Levels***

There are a couple of things you need to know about the use of honey. Honey's antimicrobial activity is due to several factors. Honey is what you'd call a super-saturated sugar solution. In chemistry terms, it has what is called a very high osmolarity. When it comes into contact with microbes it "sucks" the water from their cells and destroys them. The same thing happens with sugar dressings on wounds. It draws the water from inside the bacteria cells and kills them through dehydration. Unlike sugar, however, honey has several other characteristics that are lethal to various microbes.



### **ALTERNATIVES®**

ISSN# 0893-5025. Published monthly for \$69.99/yr. by Mountain Home Publishing at 7811 Montrose Road, Potomac, MD 20854. Editorial Office: 7811

Montrose Road, Potomac, MD 20854. Periodicals postage paid at Rockville, MD and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Alternatives*, PO Box 2050, Forrester Center, WV 25438. Copyright © 2004 All rights reserved. Photocopying or reproduction is strictly prohibited without permission from the publisher.

**Author: Dr. David Williams; Publisher: Glynnis Mileikowsky, Editor: Meg de Guzman**

The approaches described in this newsletter are not offered as cures, prescriptions, diagnoses, or a means of diagnoses 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, a division of Doctors' Preferred, Inc. and subsidiary of Phillips Health, developing his unique formulations that supply many of the hard-to-find nutrients he recommends. Dr. Williams is compensated by Doctors' Preferred, Inc. on the sales of these nutritional supplements and health products, which allows him to continue devoting his life to worldwide research and the development of innovative, effective health solutions.



## NEWS (CONTINUED)

Honey is somewhat acidic. On the pH scale, with 0.0 being the most acidic, 7.0 neutral, and 14.0 alkaline, the pH of honey ranges from about 3.2 to 4.5. Honey's acidic nature helps destroy certain microbes.

Honey also has the unique ability to produce hydrogen peroxide (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>). As I'm sure you know, hydrogen peroxide can kill pathogens on contact. Honey doesn't actually contain hydrogen peroxide but instead produces it through a chemical reaction when conditions are just right. First, the pH of the honey must rise to between 5.5 and 8.0. Second, a small amount of sodium (or salt) must be added to the mix. This is exactly what happens when honey comes into contact with human skin or a wound. The glucose or sugar molecule in honey starts to break down and produce hydrogen peroxide.

If you've ever tried to store hydrogen peroxide, you know how unstable it is and how easily it loses its effectiveness over time. Honey remains stable for long periods, however, and retains its ability to produce bacteria-killing hydrogen peroxide upon demand. Honey also contains dozens of other antioxidants, minerals, enzymes, amino acids, fats, and compounds that aren't yet fully understood but which aid in the elimination of microbes and speed healing.

Although microbes can't grow in honey, it, like every other raw food on the planet, contains spores. Spores are everywhere in nature, and our bodies are well equipped to handle them. Botulism spores have been found in some honey, as well as on other raw foods. When this was first announced there was a lot of negative publicity about the potential dangers of honey. The whole situation was blown completely out of proportion, and unfortunately some in the public and the medical community were frightened out of using honey medicinally or even as a food. Our immune system develops methods for dealing with these botulism spores, but it generally takes the first 12 months of life to do so. For this reason, giving honey and raw foods to infants less than a year old isn't recommended. Some even suggest that honey not be given to children under the age of two. Obviously, there would be no problem with using honey on wounds or burns at any age.

### ***Let Taste Be Your Guide***

Generally, the darker the honey, the higher its antioxidant activity. While most people seem to prefer the taste of the lighter-colored honeys, those seem to exhibit less antibacterial activity. Manuka honey from New Zealand appears to have some of the strongest antibacterial activity. Some Manuka honeys are now rated for their Unique Manuka Factor (UMF) and are

sold for medicinal purposes. Honeys with high UMFs can sell for ten times the amount of regular honey. Keep in mind, however, that the research has shown that the activity of even the worst microbes was halted with 25-percent and 30-percent solutions of regular honey, so it appears that any form of raw, unheated honey is very effective.

Personally, I suggest keeping a supply of whatever kind of raw, unheated honey tastes the best to you. That certainly makes it more pleasant to rotate your stock. I rotate my honey stock by combining it with natural peanut butter and slices of banana on a toasted English muffin.

Although honey has an extremely long shelf life, try to get the freshest honey possible. One study seems to indicate that, over time, honey does lose some of its healing power. This is probably related not only to its age but also how it is stored.

To minimize factors that could affect honey's healing powers, it would be best to store it in a dark, cool place. Honey does occasionally granulate. This doesn't affect the taste or its healing properties, however. The optimum temperature for granulation seems to be between 55 and 57 degrees F. If you keep it cooler or warmer than this, granulation won't be a problem.

Most people realize that the granulation or crystallization process can be reversed by heating the honey to between 140 and 160 degrees F. I don't recommend exceeding 160 degrees F, as higher temperatures and prolonged heat have been shown to adversely effect both the flavor and the antimicrobial activity of honey. Generally, placing a granulated honey jar in a bowl of hot water at the above temperatures for about 30 minutes will do the trick. I haven't seen any specific studies about the effects of microwaving granulated honey, but my gut feeling tells me it probably isn't the best way of dealing with the problem.

If you scan the literature you'll find all types of anecdotal reports on the healing effects of honey. Many, however, aren't supported by any research data and seem somewhat questionable. I've read reports of cataracts being cured in a few weeks after a drop of honey was placed in the eye at bedtime, and of hepatitis being cured by taking honey internally. There are some early studies from Europe in which honey was used successfully as a topical eye ointment to treat conjunctivitis and other forms of inflammation. I haven't seen anything on the treatment of cataracts, however.

If you don't use honey, I suggest you give it a try. It's a wonderful product that fits in with a healthy

## NEWS (CONTINUED)

lifestyle. Instead of the heated, filtered varieties found in your grocery store, try the local, raw, unheated products generally found at health food stores, country fairs, fruit markets, etc. There are hundreds of different types, and just as many wonderful flavors to savor. If you can't find a raw honey you like locally, you may be interested in unheated, unprocessed, unfiltered, raw Tupelo tree honey from The Savannah Bee Company. A pack of two 5-ounce jars is available for \$12.99 plus s/h from Mountain Home Solutions. Call 800-211-8562 and ask for item HNYK, code 31213E.

### The Buzz About Bee Venom and Propolis

CAIRO, EGYPT—Honey isn't the only miraculous bee product. In past issues I've discussed bee pollen, royal jelly, propolis, and even bee venom. There's some exciting new research on these last two items that you probably won't be reading about anywhere else.

At the annual meeting of the American Society of Reproductive Medicine in San Antonio a couple of months ago, Dr. Ali with the Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt, shared some very interesting findings. Dr. Ali and his group injected small doses of bee sting venom into seven women who had been unable to become pregnant through in-vitro fertilization (IVF). The injections were given two weeks prior to the embryo transplant. The women had previously undergone between three and six attempts at IVF unsuccessfully. On the very next attempt, four of the seven women became pregnant.

Dr. Ali isn't exactly sure how the bee sting venom works, but it's possible that it stops a woman's immune system from rejecting the newly transplanted embryo. This same mechanism helps explain how injections of bee sting venom or bee sting therapy help "calm" the activity of the immune system in autoimmune diseases like multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis. (Contact the American Apitherapy Society for more information about bee venom treatment; phone 914-725-7944 or visit their Web site, [www.apitherapy.org](http://www.apitherapy.org).)

### Propolis Promotes Pregnancy

Dr. Ali has also been working with propolis, the natural antimicrobial compound made by bees. Propolis, as you may recall, is the resinous compound that bees make and use to seal their hives. It keeps their hive free from fungus, harmful bacteria, and viruses.

If a mouse or other animal makes its way into the hive, the bees quickly kill it by stinging it to death.

Removing it from the hive is another matter. They obviously can't carry it out so they encase or mummify it with propolis. This stops its decay and the formation of harmful bacteria and other pathogens that could destroy the hive. It is truly a miracle product, but for some unknown reason, very few people in the U.S. understand its worth or take advantage of its enormous benefits.

Dr. Ali recently tested the effects of propolis on 40 female patients with infertility associated with endometriosis. Each of the women was known to be infertile for the previous two years. Half the women were given 500 mg of propolis twice daily (for a total of 1,000 mg, or 1 gram, a day), and half were given a placebo. The patients were evaluated for nine months.

At the end of the nine-month period, 12 of the 20 women taking the propolis became pregnant, compared to only four in the placebo group. There were no reported side effects from the propolis. (*ASRM 03 Annual Meeting: Abstract 0-89 Presented Oct.13, 2003*)

Numerous studies have demonstrated various properties of propolis that might be responsible in helping infertility problems associated with endometriosis. Propolis is known to inhibit vascular endothelial growth and exert a strong anti-inflammatory effect.

### It's the Bees' Knees of "Anti-Dotes"

Like many other natural compounds I run across, there seems to be very little research being done on propolis in the U.S. I can assure you that's not the case in other parts of the world. What I've uncovered lately only further supports my personal commitment to continue taking propolis on a daily basis.

**Antiviral Activity.** More and more studies continue to prove that propolis has strong antibiotic, antifungal, antiviral, and anti-inflammatory properties. A research team in Israel has shown that propolis is protective against the herpes simplex viruses not only in the laboratory but in living organisms as well. The most positive results showed that when a propolis extract of just 5 percent was given either before or at the time of exposure to these viruses, it stopped the appearance and development of any symptoms. And even when it was given up to two hours after exposure it gave 80 to 85 percent protection. (*Isr Med Assoc J* 02;4(11 Suppl):923-7)

**Anti-Tumor Activity.** In Egypt, where propolis has a long history of use, studies have shown it has strong anti-tumor activity. When animals were given 160 mg per every kilogram (2.2 pounds) of body weight, propolis stopped cancer tumor formation. In animals that had

## NEWS (CONTINUED)

already been induced with tumors, propolis was able to help dramatically shrink those tumors. (*Clin Chim Acta* 03;338(1-2):11-6)

A similar study recently performed in Croatia found the same thing. (*J Ethnopharmacol* 03;84(2-3):265-73)

At least three different compounds have been isolated from propolis that specifically work as anti-cancer agents. (*Bio Pharm Bull* 03;265(7):1057-9)

**Anti-Asthma Properties.** Egyptian researchers have also found that both the severity and number of asthma attacks could be reduced significantly with a propolis extract.

Forty-six asthma patients ages 19 to 52 were given either a placebo or propolis daily, and their conditions were monitored for two months. All patients were also on oral theophylline but not taking oral or inhaled steroids or other medications. During the two-month period there was no change in the placebo group. Asthma attacks in the group taking the propolis decreased in severity and number. Those individuals went from an average of 2.5 attacks per week to only 1.0 per week. There were no side effects.

This is consistent with other studies, which demonstrate that propolis inhibits the contraction of the trachea or windpipe when histamine is released due to an allergen or an allergic reaction. (*Fundam Clin Pharmacol* 03;17(1):93-102) (*J Pharmacol Sci* 03;93(3):307-13)

**Reperfusion Aid.** It has been common knowledge for some time that many individuals who undergo surgery subsequently experience a loss of memory or trouble focusing attention. I've noticed this is particularly a problem in those who undergo open heart or brain surgery, but it can happen with any surgery.

No one fully understands what happens, but it appears that the amount of time a patient is under anesthesia isn't a factor. With heart and brain surgery, much of the problem seems to stem from the blood flow being re-introduced after it has been cut off for a period of time. The reperfusion, or blood flow resumption, has been shown to be associated with the rapid influx of oxygen-derived free radicals, which can damage unprotected fats and fat cells in the brain, resulting in injury.

Recent research studies performed in Turkey have demonstrated that propolis can protect the brain from such injuries. Its strong antioxidant characteristics were shown to be even more protective than vitamin E.

Propolis is certainly one supplement you would want to take prior to any surgery that involves anesthesia,

especially one that involves reperfusion, such as heart or brain surgery. Unfortunately, most of these procedures are done on an emergency basis, so we don't always have the opportunity to change our diet and supplement program in advance. If that's not a good enough reason to take propolis on a regular basis, there's more. (*Cell Biochem Funct* 03;21(3):283-9)

**Anti-Aging Elements.** Chinese researchers found that when propolis was given to older mice, they fatigued less easily and had more endurance, even with a lack of oxygen. It also boosted their immune systems. In mice with high cholesterol and blood fat levels, it lowered the "harmful" forms of cholesterol and fats without interfering with the more beneficial forms. (*Zhong Yao Cai* 00;23(6):346-8)

**Anti-Arthritis Activity.** The Italians have shown that propolis's anti-inflammatory properties are actually better at preventing alterations in the structure of joint cartilage than nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as indomethacin (sold as Indochron E-R and Indocin). (*Life Sci* 03;73(8):1027-35)

## Unsung Liver Defender

Another study that should have made worldwide headlines but obviously didn't, found that taking propolis could help protect against liver damage caused by acetaminophen (Tylenol). (*Phytother Res* 03;17(3):250-3) Tylenol is the No. 1-selling painkiller in the U.S. More than 8 billion pills are sold each year, and more than 200 products contain acetaminophen. It's in everything from cold and flu medicines to prescription narcotics. Nyquil contains 500 mg per dose, and the prescription painkiller Vicodin contains 500 mg, 650 mg, or 700 mg, depending on the tablet.

Acetaminophen is also the leading cause of acute liver failure in the U.S. and the United Kingdom. Overdosing on acetaminophen depletes the amino acid glutathione and overwhelms its ability to continue detoxifying the drug. Pre-treating animals with propolis by one or two days dramatically decreased the toxic activity associated with acetaminophen.

## Taking Toxicity to World-Class Levels

There's an ever-growing issue of tissue toxicity these days. Our exposure to environmental toxins is greater now than in any time in history. In one recent study, 49 different chemical toxins were tested for in 155 volunteers. None of the volunteers was toxin-free. All but one were contaminated with pesticides like DDT and non-degradable chemicals like polychlorinated

## NEWS (CONTINUED)

biphenyls (PCBs), and one volunteer had all 49 different chemicals present.

Many European countries have banned chemicals commonly used in this country. In Europe, a chemical must be proven to be safe before it is allowed on the market. Under U.S. law, proof is required that a chemical actually causes harm or risk before it is banned for sale. This explains why there are so many chemicals in our environment and our bodies at this time. Some of the chemicals present were banned or highly restricted decades ago, but since they don't break down or they remain stored in the fatty tissues of the body, they may remain there almost indefinitely.

Just recently researchers have found extremely high levels of flame retardants in U.S. citizens. The use of these chemicals has become widespread. They are used in textiles, building products, computers, televisions, sofas, and dozens of other products. It is now believed that the general public has the same levels of flame retardants in their blood as someone who actually worked with flame retardants in industry.

One flame retardant, PBDE, has been showing up in very high amounts in breast milk. In a small study by the Environmental Working Group, the breast milk from 20 women from across the U.S. was tested for fire retardants. The women were from Los Angeles, Evergreen, Colo., and Washington, D.C. The average level of bromine-based fire retardants in these first-time mothers was 75 times the average found in a recent study of European women. Milk from two of the mothers contained the highest levels ever reported in the U.S. Several of the mothers had levels that were among the highest ever detected worldwide. Swedish scientists say that levels of PBDE in breast milk worldwide have increased 40-fold since 1972.

At this point no one knows how dangerous these chemicals are or what their long-term effects are. What's certain is that the contamination problem will get worse before it gets any better. There's no way the majority of these chemicals will be banned, and even if that happened, they would remain in our bodies and our environment for decades.

There are a few ways to detoxify the body, and I've covered some of those in the past and will explain more in the future. In the meantime, it's important to make sure that your food and water supply is uncontaminated. I've always been a very strong advocate of pure drinking water. Unless you know your water is pure and uncontaminated, I strongly recommend drinking distilled water. These chemicals always eventually end

up in the water, and besides the air you breathe, water is the only substance that goes into your system every single day of your life.

In addition, it's important to regularly supplement your diet with nutrients, vitamins, minerals and other compounds, such as propolis, that can exert a protective effect to your nervous system. I'm convinced that the increase we're seeing in diseases like ALS, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's is related to neurotoxin exposure, and the regular use of antioxidants, specifically supplements like glutathione and propolis, can help prevent, or at least delay, these problems.

This is why I have always included compounds such as bee pollen, royal jelly, ginger, turmeric, spirulina, ginseng, green tea extract, astragalus, quercetin, garlic, N-acetyl cysteine, etc. in the supplements I formulate. And that's why I've also recommended taking things like propolis on a regular basis.

If your health food store doesn't carry propolis, there are many good mail-order sources. I generally get mine from CC Pollen Co. (phone 800-875-0096, [www.ccpollen.com](http://www.ccpollen.com)). Mention you're an *Alternatives* subscriber when you contact them, and you'll receive a 10 percent discount on your first purchase.

Propolis is considered nontoxic. Recommended maintenance dosages are generally 500–1,000 mg per day. As seen in the above studies, some therapeutic dosages are even higher, but even at those levels, there were no reported side effects. Although I've rarely seen it, some people seem to be allergic to bee products, so it might be wise to start with small doses of propolis at first to see if you experience any problem.

### ***What Beekeepers Have Known for Decades***

Propolis is an age-old miracle. Past cultures have enjoyed its benefits, but even then, most people were more familiar with bee pollen and royal jelly. The availability of propolis was limited mainly to beekeepers and those they were close to.

I've had numerous contacts with long-time beekeepers over the last 25 years or so, and I've never heard of any of them suffering from Alzheimer's or other severe neurological diseases. The power of propolis hasn't been overlooked by beekeepers, and it was certainly known to the early Egyptians. They quickly realized just how useful and potent it was, and used it for mummification. It has to be potent to fend off the decay and microbial assault that mummies are subjected to for thousands of years. If anything has withstood the test of time, it's certainly propolis.



(Continued from page 49)

make will be sensible ones and not just the newest weight-loss program or fad diet. The results from most diet fads can be compared to the ups and downs of a roller coaster. At first your weight may drop rather quickly. As time passes, not only does it become more difficult to stay on a "diet," but your body's metabolism also begins to adjust, and you actually regain more weight than before. Fad diets, like the peaks and valleys of a roller coaster, come and go rather quickly, and there always seems to be a bigger and better one just around the corner.

For decades, studies have shown that the results from weight-loss diets aren't sustainable over the long term for the large majority of those who try them. In fact, the sooner in life individuals begin to diet, the worse their weight problem generally becomes. While the research proves this point, it obviously isn't being conveyed to the general public.

One recent study involved 8,203 girls and 6,769 boys between the ages of nine and 14. Their dietary habits and weight were monitored from 1996 until 1999. At the beginning of the study, 25 percent of the girls and 13.8 percent of the boys were already classified as "infrequent" dieters, and 4.5 percent of the girls and 2.2 percent of the boys were "frequent" dieters. As the study progressed, the percentage of dieters increased.

Researchers discovered that, during this short time, dieters actually gained more weight per year than non-dieters. This occurred even though the surveys indicated the dieters were more active and ingested fewer calories than the non-dieters. This same phenomenon occurs in adult dieters. Not only does dieting slow metabolism, it usually results in binge eating, both of which contribute to long-term weight gain. (*Pediatrics* 03;112(4):900-906)

Even when a diet is initially successful, the long-term results can be very disappointing. At least 95 percent of those who lose weight on these diets can't keep it off permanently. If you think

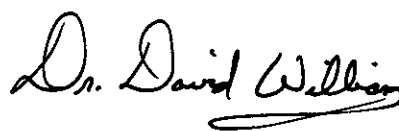
these statistics seem too high, then take a look around you. Try to find someone who has lost a significant amount of weight and has been able to keep it off through dieting alone.

It obviously takes a lot of will power, determination, effort, and often money to go on any weight-loss diet. The primary lure of these diets seems to be the promise of losing weight quickly. Marketers know it is far easier to sell someone on easy, quick weight loss than on slower, permanent weight loss.

While you're still shouldering the guilt from the holiday binge, don't succumb to the temptation to step back on the dieting roller coaster. Instead, make the kinds of changes in your diet and lifestyle that you can stick with forever. Eliminate the refined sugars, sweets, and simple carbohydrates from your diet. Increase your vegetable and fruit intake. Cut back as much as possible on prepared foods, and include more raw foods. If you have a juicer, use it. As natural health pioneer Adelle Davis used to advise, "Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and dinner like a pauper." Get away from the television and start walking, weight lifting, bicycling, swimming, jogging, and moving more. Find an outdoor hobby. It doesn't matter if it's hiking, bird watching, gardening, or playing marbles. Make a point to spend more time outside.

If you're going to go to all the trouble to make changes in your life, at least make changes that can have a permanent effect on your health.

Take care,



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](mailto:mailbox@drdavidwilliams.com)
- For Customer Service matters such as address changes, call 1-800-527-3044 or write to [custsvc@drdavidwilliams.com](mailto:custsvc@drdavidwilliams.com)
- To get important information between issues, sign up for email dispatches at [drdavidwilliams.com](http://drdavidwilliams.com)
- To order nutritional supplements from Mountain Home Nutritionals, call 1-800-888-1415 or visit [drdavidwilliams.com](http://drdavidwilliams.com)
- To order back issues or reports, call 1-800-718-8293
- To sign a friend up for *Alternatives*, call 1-800-219-8591