

Alternatives[®]

FOR THE HEALTH-CONSCIOUS INDIVIDUAL

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Dr. David G. Williams Over the last few months it seems like a lot of research data have come to light supporting many of the ideas I've been trying to get across for years. It would be nice if in a country like ours vital health information like this would make the headline news so everyone would benefit. Unfortunately, this is never the case. If you want to learn about these studies you generally have to read one of the publications devoted to health, such as *Alternatives*. And although we may live in one of the most literate countries in the world, it seems each generation reads less and less. And when it comes to keeping abreast of the latest developments, those who are too lazy to read really have no advantage over those who can't read. As a subscriber, you obviously don't fall into that category. And, as such, you have the tools to help preserve your health years before the general public even has a clue of what's happening.

Several years ago the food industry began using the sweetener high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Many in the health industry praised the use of fructose, saying it didn't cause the rapid swings in blood sugar like common sugar. One of the "benefits" of HFCS—that it doesn't stimulate the release of insulin—may be just another of its problems. The release of insulin is one of the signals the body uses to monitor food intake and body weight.

Researchers at Louisiana State University and the University of North Carolina now report that HFCS consumption has increased 1,000 percent between 1970 and 1990, "far exceeding the changes in intake of any other food or food group." It now represents 40 percent of caloric sweeteners added to foods and beverages and is the primary sweetener now added to soft drinks. And data from the Department of Agriculture links the

Cancer in a Can

rise in obesity and type 2 diabetes directly to the increase in HFCS.

I warned *Alternatives* readers as long ago as 1990 (Vol. 3, No. 14) about its dangers, and predicted it would lead to an increase in diabetes, heart disease, stroke, premature aging, gout attacks, and other problems. Avoid HFCS like the plague it is.

Also keep in mind that soft drinks aren't as harmless as they may seem. In addition to their HFCS sweetener, you have the acid problem. I've explained the connection between soft drink consumption and bone loss problems such as osteoporosis. And I just recently learned from the Digestive Disease Week meeting in New Orleans that soft drink consumption may be linked to the increase in esophageal cancer that has been occurring in this country over the last 30 years.

Since most cancers are linked to what we eat and drink, researchers began looking for major dietary changes over the last 50 years and found that during this time soft drink consumption has increased by more than 450 percent.



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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

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In 1946 average soft drink consumption per person in this country was 10.8 gallons. In 2000 that increased to 49.2 gallons. (And since I don't drink soft drinks, someone is probably drinking double that amount.) During this same period, esophageal cancer has risen by 570 percent and is still rising.

The researchers then compared these trends worldwide and found that esophageal cancer has increased only in those countries where soft drink consumption has also increased. Countries with annual consumption below 10 gallons per person (India, Eastern Europe, the Far East) haven't seen any increase. Countries with increasing consumption (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Western Europe) all have corresponding increasing rates of esophageal cancer.

This kind of study certainly doesn't prove that soft drinks cause esophageal cancer, because a lot of other factors have changed during the last 30 to 50 years. Now that researchers are watching this closely, however, a more definitive answer might be forthcoming. The explanation of how soft drink consumption might increase esophageal cancer is very plausible and has to do with increased acid exposure.

Carbonated soft drinks cause distension of the stomach and can trigger reflux of stomach acid into the lower part of the esophagus. Whereas drinking a cup of water will only distend the stomach by a cup, drinking a cup of carbonated soda can distend it twice that amount. Research by Dr. Mohandas Mallath, head of the digestive diseases department at Tata Memorial Hospital in India, sheds some very interesting light on the subject.

Dr. Mallath has found that consumption of 350 mL (about one 12-oz. can) of carbonated soft drink a day results in 53.5 minutes of acid exposure, and 53 gallons of soft drinks a year (less than one of those oversized 20-oz. bottles

a day) would subject the esophagus to an additional 32,100 minutes of acid exposure.

Dr. Mallath didn't discuss the problem of gastric reflux in his presentation. However, from his findings it would make sense that carbonated soft drinks are also contributing to or causing the dramatic increase in this problem we've been seeing in this country.

Spice Up Your Morning

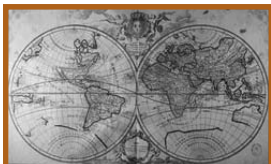
In a recent issue (Vol. 10, No. 2), I discussed the benefits of increasing your use of the herb cilantro (also known as coriander), as a way to remove toxic metals such as mercury from your body.

There's now another good reason to use cilantro. New research indicates that a compound in cilantro can also kill the bacteria *Salmonella choleraesuis*, commonly associated with food poisoning resulting in severe illness or even death.

Isao Kubo, a chemist at the University of California, found that a compound from fresh cilantro leaves called dodecenal was responsible for the strong antibacterial properties associated with some Mexican salsas. When dodecenal was isolated and tested in the laboratory, it was found to be twice as effective as the antibiotic drug gentamicin in killing *Salmonella* bacteria. This gives further credibility to the phrase, "when in Rome, do as the Romans do." Eating the local salsas may be what helps protect Mexican residents from *Salmonella*-contaminated foods, while visitors often suffer from a severe case of "turista."

Oftentimes it seems like it takes decades for science to discover what local populations or cultures have known for centuries. Including various spices and herbs native to an area in the diet may have evolved as a way to protect the health of residents. More and more research is beginning to confirm

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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 TO USE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Exercise Doesn't Have to Be That Complicated

CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS—Many people never get started on a regular exercise program because either they don't know what they should be doing or "gearing up" for the right activity seems like too much trouble. New research has found that simply walking every 2 or 3 days can make a very dramatic difference in helping to maintain normal brain function and the development of new brain cells. If you're looking to preserve your mental capabilities and your ability to live independently, then walking could be the answer.

In two separate studies, researchers found that after several months of regular walking, older adults showed an increase in blood flow to the brain, which resulted in improved learning, memory, and attention ability. (*Proc Natl Acad Sci* 04;101(9):3316-21) (*Brain Behav Immun* 04;18(3):214-20)

Participants in the studies gradually built up to walking at a moderate pace, three times a week for 45 minutes each. At the end of 6 months, their brain activity was similar to that of highly fit seniors. Another group who limited their activity to stretching and toning exercises showed very little, if any, improvement in their brain activity.

The results of the above studies were so profound that research is now underway to determine if this simple walking routine will improve driving skills in the elderly. I suspect it will.

Don't be intimidated or get confused about all the various exercise programs being touted today. Most of these are passing fads anyway. If you don't participate in a regular exercise program, then it's time to start walking.

A Different Kind of Ulcer

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—Pressure ulcers can be a very serious problem for hospital and/or bedridden individuals. The problem occurs when pressure compresses the skin and underlying tissues and impedes blood circulation to an area. All types of apparatus have been developed to help eliminate the problem; most of them are quite expensive, which limits their use. In Australia, they've found a relatively inexpensive way to cut the number of pressure ulcers in half among hospital patients.

Damien Jolley, a professor at Deakin University, has been studying the effectiveness of having patients lie on sheepskin as an overlay on top of their regular bedding. Sheepskin has a dense, high, wool pile, which provides a soft protective cushion. Jolley and his colleagues studied 441 patients whose hospital stay lasted more than two days and who had an increased risk of developing

pressure ulcers. Only part of the group received the sheepskins.

Fifty-eight patients developed either stage 1 or stage 2 ulcers. Of those patients, 21 slept on the sheepskins. Overall, the sheepskins resulted in a 46 percent reduction of stage 2 ulcers.

Sheepskins can be a relatively inexpensive way to help prevent pressure ulcers for someone bedridden at home. The researchers in this report stated that they were quite durable and could withstand numerous washings at 176 degrees F (80 degrees C).

I've seen large, quality sheepskins at warehouse superstores for about \$130. I'm sure there are other sources on the Internet or around the country with similar prices.

Hands-On Blood Pressure Fix

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA—A research kinesiologist has discovered a novel method which you can use to help lower your blood pressure.

Dr. Neil McCartney at McMaster University found that isometric hand exercise can significantly lower systolic blood pressure in older patients.

Dr. McCartney's study involved 18 patients, average age of 67.5, with chronic high blood pressure. Most of the patients had been on high blood pressure medication for an average of 9 years, and their blood pressures had leveled out at about 140 mm Hg systolic and 85 mm Hg diastolic. Half performed the exercise and the other half did not.

Using a gripping device that could measure 30 percent of each individual's maximum grip, subjects applied continuous pressure for one minute and then relaxed for a minute, then held the pressure again continuously for one minute. This sequence was repeated four times, three days a week, for ten weeks.

At the end of ten weeks, those performing the exercise experienced an average 19 mm Hg drop in systolic blood pressure compared to no drop in those not doing the exercise. A 19-point drop in blood pressure after such a simple exercise is amazing. Remember, these are individuals who had already been using medication to lower their blood pressure for an average of nine years. (*Med Sci Sport Exerc* 03;35(2):251-6)

The only difficulty I see with performing this exercise at home would be determining and maintaining only 30 percent of your maximum grip. The researchers utilized what is called a hand dynamometer. It can be used to measure your grip strength, and can also be used to do the above exercise. Just squeeze it as

NEWS (CONTINUED)

hard as you can, note that pressure, then multiply that number by 0.30 to get your target pressure.

Unfortunately, devices like these can cost more than \$200. A dynamometer of this type can be purchased on the Internet from www.wisdomking.com. One of the least expensive hydraulic models is made by Baseline and measures up to 200 pounds of pressure, which is more than adequate unless you're a professional arm wrestler, etc. Wisdomking offers a \$10 discount on model 12-0255 if you include code M157RXYV when you order. They don't take orders over the phone, but if you have questions you can call them at 877-931-9693. Their mail-order address is 2410 Cades Way, Unit B, Vista, California 92081.

A less-expensive option than a hand dynamometer would be to purchase an inexpensive pair of those spring-type hand grip strengtheners from an athletic store. Just make sure the spring is stronger than you can compress since you want to try and maintain a pressure of 30 percent of your grip strength for one minute. This type of grip strengthener can be purchased for less than \$10. I need to mention that rubber balls, etc. probably won't work. To be effective, your grip must be fairly sustained and intense. An even better device is called the 6 Spring HandGrip Strengthener. It has 6 different springs that can be added or removed to vary the tension. It sells for \$13 from www.sportsunlimited.com. You can call them at 800-696-6368.

Just exactly how this exercise reduces blood pressure isn't yet fully understood. Dr. McCartney is using ultra Doppler sound waves to evaluate the arteries during the exercise, and has found that it apparently somehow activates the parasympathetic nervous system (the "rest and digest" part of your nervous system) which decreases the heart rate and blood pressure. It also appears that the exercise may improve endothelial function. As we age, our arteries tend to become more rigid, and the endothelial cells that line the arteries release less nitric oxide (NO), a compound which helps relax and dilate the blood vessels. Regardless of how this very simple exercise works, it's an easy, almost fun way to help lower high blood pressure. If you need to drop your blood pressure, give it a try.

Since I'm on the subject of grip strength, I'm sure there are many people who might be hesitant or unable to do this exercise due to the problem of carpal tunnel syndrome. This involves inflammation of tendons and nerve irritation within the small bony and fibrous tunnel of the wrist. I've written about this problem in the past (Vol. 1, No. 21), and in addition to increasing your vitamin B6 intake (to between 50 and 150 milligrams a day) and seeing a chiropractor who can adjust any misaligned bones in the wrist, strengthening your forearm and grip will help keep the problem

from recurring. Another great tool for arm and grip strengthening is a gyroscopic ball. The original brand was called the Dynabee (or Therabee) and another version is the DynaFlex Gyro Ball. Look for one in your local athletic goods store, because you may have to have someone demonstrate how they work before you buy one. They can do wonders for getting rid of wrist pain and strengthening your grip and forearm. (I wouldn't recommend them for use in reducing blood pressure however. It's a different mechanism, so I have no idea if they'd give you the same effect.)

Antibiotics and Allergies

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA—Recently I reported the latest connection between antibiotic use and the increased risk of breast cancer. Based on various reports from a meeting of the American Society for Microbiology, it now appears that antibiotic use may also be responsible for the dramatic increase in allergies and asthma that we've been seeing in children over the last 40 years.

In an earlier report, I discussed how a research team in Detroit monitored 500 children for seven years and discovered that those children given antibiotics before the age of 6 months were two times as likely to develop allergic asthma. Those given the stronger broad-spectrum antibiotics were nine times more likely to develop the problem.

Professor Gary Huffnagle, with the University of Michigan, has now shown in experiments what I've been saying all along. His research has now confirmed that upsetting the bacterial intestinal flora greatly increases the risk of an allergic response.

Mice were treated for only five days with an antibiotic and then exposed to the yeast *Candida albicans*. The yeast quickly set up house in the animals' lower bowels. When the animals were then exposed to the same fungal spores, via their nose, that cause allergies in humans, the allergic immune response was far greater than in those mice that weren't given antibiotics.

The professor also exposed the mice to ovalbumin, the egg protein commonly used in allergy testing. The result was shocking. Professor Huffnagle described the lungs' lining as "shredded, absolutely shredded" and added that, "I'm sure they can't breathe."

As I've explained many times, the flora in your lower bowel is a major part of your immune system. When you disrupt it with antibiotics, pathogens of all types can quickly colonize in your gut and can wreak havoc. *If you must take antibiotics (in most cases natural remedies will work instead) then it's imperative that you load up on fermented foods such as yogurt, and supplemental probiotics.*

NEWS (CONTINUED)

Most people (the public and doctors alike) still think that probiotics may be beneficial for food-type allergies, but they fail to make the connection between beneficial bacterial flora in the bowel and airborne allergens and pathogens. As Professor Huffnagle correctly pointed out, "everything you inhale, you also swallow."

If you suffer from allergies, either from food or airborne pollutants, make sure you re-establish your gut flora with fermented foods and probiotics. In many cases, this alone will solve the problem. I have no doubt that keeping the flora in the intestinal tract intact can be the difference between life and death in many situations. It probably explains why some people are able to survive while others perish when exposed to various biological agents, flu viruses, bacteria, and other pathogens. Antibiotics are not harmless remedies to be used indiscriminately.

PSA Is a Pretty Silly Argument

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA—In the August 1992 issue (Vol. 4, No. 14), I wrote about a new test for prostate cancer called the PSA test (prostate specific antigen). If you have a copy of that issue I would ask that you pull it out and read it again now. The article was titled "The Next Billion Dollar Scam."

I explained how PSA is not a reliable test for prostate cancer, but how it would soon be adopted anyway as the gold standard for diagnosing the disease. When I wrote the letter, I received dozens of irate letters from urologists, oncologists, and others saying I was misleading readers. I can assure you that wasn't the case. Since that time, thousands of men have undoubtedly had unnecessary biopsies or removal of their prostate glands, and as a result suffered hormone problems, distress, anxiety, sexual dysfunction, and even an early death.

Dr. Thomas Stamey of Stanford University, one of the strongest advocates of PSA testing initially, recently spoke of its shortcomings at the American Urological Association conference.

Dr. Stamey now says that PSA is no longer a useful or reliable marker for detecting prostate cancer. Very often it is simply a sign of an enlarged prostate gland, which happens to be common in the large majority of elderly men.

His findings were based on his own experience, plus his careful evaluation of the medical records of 1,317 men who had radical prostatectomies during the past 20 years. His lab at Stanford re-examined every prostate that had been removed since 1983 and compared the size of the cancer with the blood PSA levels. In the early years, prostate screening was not

such a widespread or popular procedure. When the screening began, there were obviously more cancers detected and the PSA values appeared to be more relevant. Dr. Stamey found that 15 to 20 years ago PSA was related to prostate cancer about 60 percent of the time, but during the most recent 5-year period (1999 through 2003) an elevated PSA level related to cancer only 2 percent of the time. This means that 98 percent of the time an elevated PSA level today is only related to prostate size, benign enlargement of the prostate. Regardless of this fact, an elevated PSA has now become the main reason for prostate biopsy in this country.

The public has the misperception that if you have an elevated PSA level you have prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is being over-diagnosed and over-treated because of this misconception. Rather surprisingly, Dr. Stamey presented his findings about the same time revised guidelines were issued concerning PSA levels and biopsies. New guidelines by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network call for starting PSA prostate screening tests at age 40 and performing a biopsy if the PSA level exceeds 2.5 ng/mL. The previous recommendations were age 50 and PSA level of over 4 ng/mL before a biopsy was performed.

Dr. Stamey stated in his presentation, "We have been so thorough and effective in screening for prostate cancer over this 20-year period that PSA no longer has a relationship to prostate cancer. Because we all develop the cancer, we're now removing prostates from men whose cancer is so small that they do not need the procedure. We're finding all these little cancers that are never going to be a danger to the patient. *In smaller cancers, the PSA test is not relevant anymore; you might as well biopsy a man because he has blue eyes.*"

PSA is a glycoprotein that is secreted by normal prostate glands. Its blood levels will increase if the gland enlarges, even if due to a non-cancerous condition. Many doctors fail to explain this adequately to their patients but instead insist on a biopsy. Until a better, more reliable test is available, Dr. Stamey recommends that patients and doctors rely on a digital rectal exam (i.e., a lubricated, gloved finger) and a thorough history to monitor prostate health.

I thought I received a lot of irate letters and calls after my article in 1992. I can only imagine the flak Dr. Stamey is receiving. It takes a lot of courage for him to release this information and to honestly state that, "I removed a few hundred prostates that I wish I hadn't." If there was more of such honesty in medical research today, a lot less suffering would take place and a lot more healing could take place.

HEALTH HINTS FROM READERS



I was reading an older medical journal several years ago when I came across a remedy for getting rid of warts. I have since used it on myself and dozens of my patients and it has never failed to work. Maybe you can pass it along to other subscribers. Keep up the good work.

Take a small amount of petroleum jelly and mix in as much salt as you can. Place this directly on the wart every night and morning and cover it with a BandAid. It may take a week or a little longer for the wart to fall off but it is far less irritating than using an aspirin as you've suggested.

Dr. K. M., Bountiful, Utah

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the enormous benefits of including more herbs and spices in your diet. Cinnamon, turmeric, garlic, and cilantro are just a few of the many we've talked about lately. They are all very plentiful, inexpensive, and effective in helping maintain your health. If you overlook these items as "supplements" simply because they may seem "low tech," I think you'll regret it in the years to come.

Shake It Up, Baby

I recently reported on the enormous blood-sugar handling capabilities of cinnamon. It's something I include every day in my morning protein shake and suggest you do the same. (I don't use the shake as a substitute for a good daily multivitamin, but it is a tasty way to get the benefit of herbs and spices.)

While writing this, I just received additional unpublished research data about another ingredient I include in my daily shake. Creatine, which has primarily been associated with maintaining and building muscle, appears to also protect the brain from damage in the event of a stroke. Research has previously shown creatine to be protective in cases of ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease), Huntington's disease, Parkinson's, and traumatic brain injury, but this is the first study to indicate it can help prevent damage from stroke.

Researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital found that mice fed creatine for a month beforehand experienced 56 percent less stroke damage than mice not given creatine. It's important to note that mice given the creatine for only a week before the stroke didn't experience the same benefits. Creatine is something that needs to be taken on a regular, daily basis to achieve the optimal benefits. I recommend 5 grams a day. You can find it at

your local GNC, or from www.bodybuilding.com, 877-991-3411. (*J Neurosci* 04;24(26):5909-12)

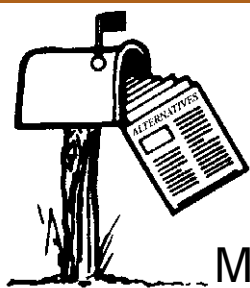
Stroke has become the third leading cause of death in this country, with over 700,000 individuals suffering a stroke this year alone. Millions more, who survive the ordeal, are forced to live with functional limitations and disabilities in its aftermath. Creatine can be a very powerful, safe tool in preventing such damage. Based on this latest research, creatine should be as highly valued for preventing stroke damage as aspirin is perceived to be for heart attacks. Unfortunately, I doubt this will happen. It will probably take another decade or two before it gets the "blessing" of organized medicine. If you're at risk for stroke, creatine is definitely something you should be taking on a daily basis. Although I don't fall into that category, I will continue to include creatine in my program, not only for its neuroprotective effects, but for its muscle-sparing effects as well.

More Plusses for Curcumin

While I'm not sure how turmeric would taste in a shake, the positive research on curcumin, one of its major components, continues to grow almost daily. Just recently it was found that curcumin was effective at correcting cystic fibrosis defects in mice. Dramatic results were achieved when 45 milligrams of curcumin per kilogram of body weight were given to mice for a period of only 3 days. (The dosage level in the above study was chosen because similar doses have been shown to be well-tolerated in humans. This would be equivalent to just over 3 grams for someone weighing 150 pounds.) (*Science* 04;304:600-2)

The same genetic defect associated with cystic fibrosis also made these mice susceptible to gastrointestinal obstruction, which oftentimes resulted in their deaths. The researchers found that in a

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MAILBOX

Question: I've searched all of my back issues of *Alternatives* and I can't seem to find many suggestions concerning products that can help re-grow hair. I've been taking all the recommended nutritional supplements for hair growth (inositol, zinc, B vitamins, etc.), but without much luck. I'd be willing to try most anything if you think it could work. I even tried the essential oils you wrote about and saw some improvement but obviously could use more. Any suggestions?

J.T.
Orlando, Florida

Answer: Making recommendations of hair-restoration products is about as confusing as walking in a maze. It's not something I feel comfortable about. Although I know there's a huge interest, and I'm always looking for baldness remedies, there haven't been many products I could recommend trying.

The most common form of hair loss, male-pattern baldness, affects over 33 million men in this country alone. A market this large definitely brings out the scam artists hawking all types of products. And, as such, there are some pretty outrageous claims being made for hair restoration products, but very few of the claims are backed up with any viable research. Also, I don't think any one product would ever work for everyone. There are simply too many variables as to why one loses one's hair. Heredity seems to play a major role.

Keep in mind that most hair loss is hormone-related and very often genetic. (For women with thinning hair, the process is usually not the same. A few women are affected by male-pattern hair loss, but most often it's a generalized thinning that

is due to a different hormone pathway.) Enzymes convert the hormone testosterone into another hormone called dihydrotestosterone (DHT). DHT causes the deterioration of your hair follicles, resulting in hair loss. Oftentimes the hair loss can be slowed or stopped by blocking the conversion of testosterone to DHT. DHT has also been implicated in the enlargement of the prostate gland as men get older. It accumulates in the prostate gland and encourages prostate cell growth. Research has shown that men who don't produce DHT don't develop enlarged prostates. Consequently, several products that help prostate conditions may also be of help in reducing hair loss. One of the most popular of these is saw palmetto.

Saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) works by blocking the formation of DHT. Research has shown that, in about 60 percent of the cases, taking 320 milligrams a day of saw palmetto extract can result in hair growth. (*J Altern Complement Med* 02;(8):143-52)

The same may be true with the herb pygeum (*Pygeum africanum*). It also blocks the conversion of testosterone to DHT. And while most of the research for this herb has been focused on prostate treatment, it would be reasonable to assume that taking 160 milligrams to 320 milligrams a day of pygeum could also help with hair restoration.

Obviously a good multi-vitamin/mineral should be part of your plan. Studies have shown that low iron levels and even a B12 deficiency can contribute to premature hair loss. And you might want to add a gram (1,000 milligrams) a day of the amino acid lysine. A lack of lysine has also been implicated in the loss of hair.

Having said all that, one of the first things I'd look for in a hair restoration product would be a good guarantee. Even the best ones only claim to work about half the time, so a legitimate company should be willing to refund your money if it doesn't work for you.

One product that has both some positive clinical research and a partial guarantee is something called HairPrime. (*J Dermatol Treat* 96;7:159-62) The program consists of shampoo, lotion, "scalp primer," and a nutritional supplement.

Fortunately, I still have all my hair (it's changed color considerably, however) so I don't have any personal experience with the product. I have spoken to several people who have tried it, however, and the positive results and comments seem to be about equal to those who weren't satisfied or didn't see results.

The company that sells HairPrime is called Universal Biologics and is located at 1006 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California 94109. They can be reached by calling 800-568-4247 or through their Web site, www.unbio.com. The product is expensive (\$575 for a year's supply) and if it doesn't work after using it for a year they'll return half your money.

This is not a product that I *highly* recommend, but again it is one that has some basic research and would be worth checking into. I should say that I wouldn't expect to regain a luscious, thick, full head of hair from any hair-restoration product. The best I've seen occur in any case is some partial regrowth and maybe some thickening in areas.

One of the products that recently caught my attention for hair-restoration is called the HairMax LaserComb. It's a hair brush that shines penetrating laser light into the scalp as you brush your hair. I've researched the beneficial effects of lasers in the past and see how this product could have some merit. There was one published study that showed some fairly significant changes in both the amount of hair and the hair strength. (*Int J Cosmet Surg Aesthet Dermatol* 03;5:113-7)

This product is also very expensive: \$645, but there's a \$50 discount if you mention Dr. David Williams when you call the manufacturer, Lexington International, at 866-527-3726. It does carry a 12 week guar-

MAILBOX *(continued)*

antee for 90 percent of the cost. Based on the guarantee alone I would probably suggest trying this product before the HairPrime system. Their address is 2650 North Military Trail, Suite 360, Boca Raton, Florida 33431, and their Web site is www.lasercomb.net.

Question: Perhaps you could help me. I've been taking many of your products and suggestions "to heart" and I've noticed very dramatic improvements. I continue to have bouts of angina pain, however, even though I've increased my intake of vitamin E, coenzyme Q10, hawthorn berry, B6 and others. It's much better and I'm sure it will improve with time, but could you make any additional suggestions that might help? My doctor has been very good about monitoring and following my progress and

is open to me trying new things so that won't be a problem.

Elisa C, Los Angeles, California

Answer: Angina is a common problem, which I've written about before (particularly Vol. 4, No. 21, and Vol 9, No. 21). In some of the more stubborn cases of angina I've had very good results using the Indian herb *Terminalia arjuna*, commonly known as arjuna in Ayurvedic medicine.

Arjuna is used as a general heart tonic and may lower your blood pressure, so be aware of that particularly if you're taking high blood pressure medication. It also reduces the "stickiness" of blood platelets so it may increase clotting time. (*Bull Indian Inst Hist Med Hyderabad* 96;(1-2):1-10)

The particular brand I like is Himalaya Herbs, which can be found in many larger health food

stores. If you can't find it locally, you can order it through the mail or from the Internet. One supplier is called Herbal-Provider at 1105 Forest Haven Blvd., Edison, New Jersey 08817. They can be reached at 800-845-3841 or on the Internet at www.herbal-provider.com.

The product comes in 250-milligram capsules, and two capsules a day, one taken with two different meals, will normally do the trick. A month's supply is about \$10, which is a small price these days to get rid of angina pain.

Arjuna has also been found to be helpful in lowering LDL cholesterol levels while increasing HDL levels. In addition to reducing high blood pressure, it has also been used successfully in treating congestive heart failure. (*BMC Complement Altern Med* 03;3(1):5) (*J Assoc Physicians India* 94;42(4):287-9)

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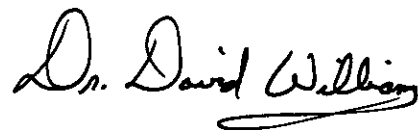
group of ten untreated mice, six died from gastrointestinal obstruction, whereas only one mouse treated with curcumin died that way.

Curcumin may also prove to be effective in the prevention of Alzheimer's disease, which has recently received a great deal of attention due to the passing of President Ronald Reagan.

One of the characteristics of Alzheimer's is the formation of plaques in the brain tissue. The principal constituent of these plaques is the amyloid-beta protein molecule. It is thought to be formed due to oxidation damage from free radicals. Amyloid-beta not only causes more free radical production, it is also a neurotoxin that destroys nerve cells. In the search for compounds that protect against

amyloid-beta damage, curcumin now appears to be one of the safer and more potent contenders. Based on the data so far, researchers have reported that curcumin is not only very safe, it also appears to be very helpful in both treating and preventing Alzheimer's disease. If your multi-vitamin/mineral doesn't contain turmeric or curcumin, then it's definitely something I would advise including in your diet and/or adding to your daily supplement regimen. (*J Neurosci* 01;21(21):8370-7) (*Neurobiol Aging* 01;22(6):993-1005)

Take Care,



If you have questions or comments for Dr. Williams, please send them to the mail or e-mail addresses listed to the right. Of course, practical and ethical constraints prevent him from answering personal medical questions by mail or e-mail, 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:

- For Customer Service matters such as address changes, call 800-527-3044 or write to custsvce@drdavidwilliams.com.
- To order nutritional supplements from Mountain Home Nutritionals (MHN), call 800-888-1415 or visit drdavidwilliams.com.
- If you are a licensed health professional and would like to learn how to begin reselling MHN supplements to your patients, please send an e-mail to practitionerinquiries@davidwilliamsmail.com.
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