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Positive energy is within your control. It all starts with intention.

## Why We Should LOVE the SUN

Photo by Mark Barkaway

Let's face it. Lately the sun has gotten a bad rap. Many fear the sun's rays and worry about skin cancer. But most of us live in the Desert by choice and 350+ days of sunshine has something to do with it. So can we enjoy the sun?

"I think the current message that all unprotected sun exposure is bad for you is too extreme," states Michael Holick, M.D. director of the Vitamin D Research Lab at Boston University Medical Center. "The original message was that people should limit their sun exposure, not that they should avoid the sun entirely. I do believe that some unprotected exposure to the sun is important for health."

"Nobody wants to get skin cancer, but we've gone from sun worship to sun dread," states Dr. Robert S. Stern, chair of the Department of Dermatology at Harvard-affiliated Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He has coined the phrase "solar-phobes": people so concerned

about getting skin cancer that they stay inside or cover every bit of skin.

The marketing of ultra-blocking sunscreens and special sun-protective clothing plays into these fears. However, the same UVB wavelengths that these sunscreens are designed to block also do some good: They kick off the chemical and metabolic chain reaction that produces vitamin D and research now shows that many people have low vitamin D levels.<sup>1</sup>

All agree that the sun's radiation can help processes in the body work better, so let's take a look at some of the positive benefits of the sun as determined by recent medical studies.

#### Body Benefits

**Boost the immune system:** Vitamin D is essential to and can boost your immune system helping to fight off disease more effectively.<sup>2</sup>

**Lower cholesterol:** Cholesterol is converted into Vitamin D by sunlight,

therefore avoiding the sun will likewise undermine our ability to synthesize vitamin D.<sup>3</sup>

**Boost metabolism:** Sensible sun exposure can help increase metabolism, increasing the rate at which you burn calories aiding in weight loss and fitness.<sup>4</sup>

**Enhanced kidney function:** There is a high prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in those with chronic kidney disease. The Kidneys remove waste from the body, so getting proper sun exposure can help decrease the toxicity in your bloodstream.<sup>6</sup>

**Stronger skeleton:** Because of its role in helping the body to absorb calcium, getting sufficient sun exposure for the production of Vitamin D can help prevent bone disease resulting in less brittle bones.<sup>7</sup>

#### Bright Minds

**Reduce stress:** Taking some time to enjoy the sun can reduce stress aiding

Continued on page 8

## Health is a Choice

## Hard to Change Habits? Blame Your Killer Genes

By Lauren Del Sarto

Dr. Steven Gundry is a world-renowned Cardiologist/Cardiac Surgeon who pioneered infant and pediatric heart transplants and (with his partner) has performed more such transplants than any other surgeon in the world. He is the inventor of leading surgical technology and is considered one of the fathers of robotic surgery.

Gundry is also an inquisitive researcher who never stops asking 'why?' And it is this quest that changed his life when he encountered a heart diseased patient he refers to as "Big Ed." Big Ed was sent to Gundry by another physician as 'inoperable' and an angiogram confirmed the diagnosis. Six months later Ed returned weighing 45 lbs less and requesting that Gundry repeat the angiogram to see if the diet, herbs and supplements

he had been taking somehow improved the state of his blood vessels.

Gundry told Ed that "worthless supplements only made expensive urine", but agreed to repeat the angiogram. Surprisingly, Ed's blockages had shrunk by more than 50%. Gundry had never seen such a reduction. Following successful bypass surgery, he met with Ed to discuss the diet, vitamins, mineral and herbs that had transformed his body.

This experience started a personal quest for Gundry that changed his preconceived notions about the underlying cause of heart disease, cancer, obesity and other rampant diseases. Gundry himself was over-

Continued on page 18



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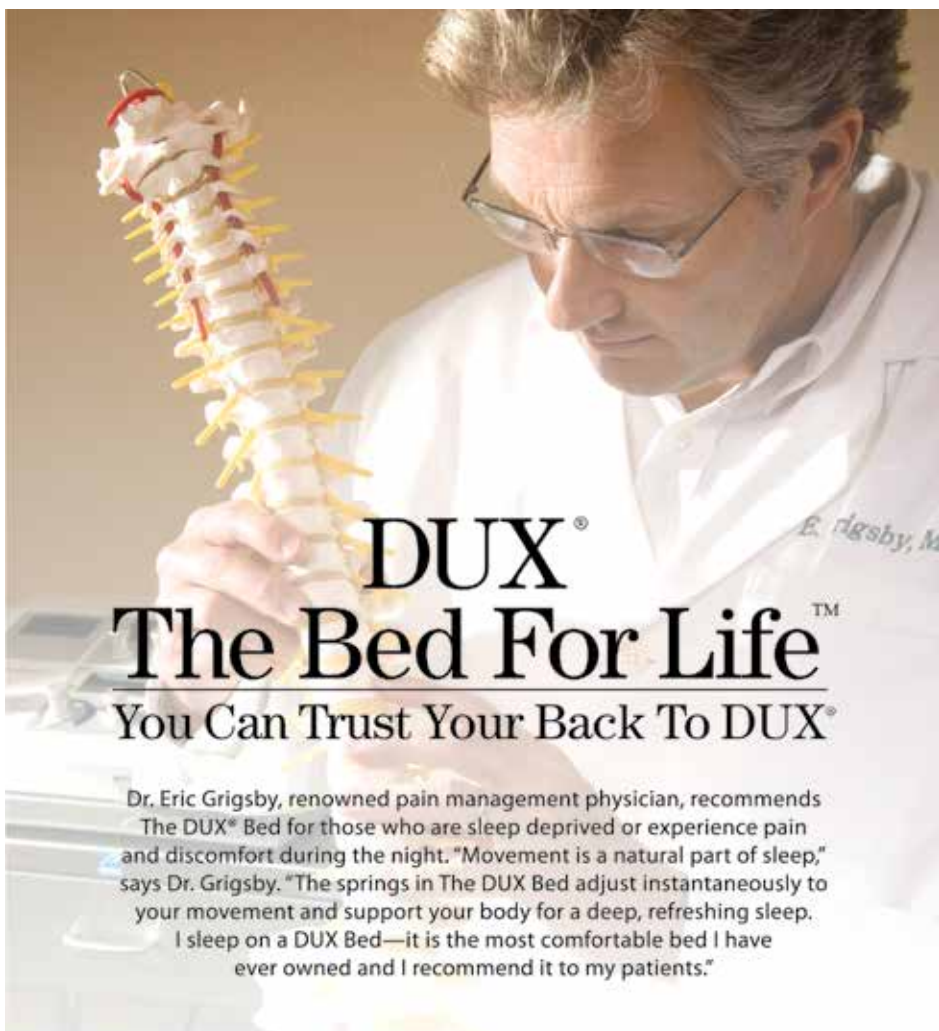
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**Desert Health**

Our local health care community continues to take big steps towards integrative medicine. Desert Regional's Comprehensive Cancer Center has opened a second location in La Quinta, working with complementary practitioners on the Valley's east end. And this month, EMC launches the Eisenhower Wellness Institute.



However, many of us are confused by the new terminology being used to explain "integration." Below we provide definitions from the National Institutes of Health to help in understanding the movement. As primary care physicians and alternative practitioners begin to open their minds and work together for the well-being of their patients, we consumers will benefit most of all.

Desert Health is proud to be the Valley's premier publication promoting integrative health. We thank you for your support and encourage your input and feedback.

Here's to your health!

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**We welcome local health related news stories:** Please submit proposed editorial via email as a Word document with a bio and hi resolution photo of the writer. All submissions are subject to approval and editing at the Publisher's discretion and may or may not be published. Article and advertising deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication.

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## "Integrative", "Alternative" & "Complementary"

### What do they mean?

You've heard these terms used frequently in regards to health care, but how are they different? The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine defines them as such:

☉ **Integrative Medicine** combines treatments from conventional medicine and complementary & alternative medicine for which there is some high-quality evidence of safety and effectiveness.

☉ **Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)** is a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not presently considered to be part of conventional medicine. The list of what is considered to be CAM changes continually, as those therapies that are proven to be safe and effective become adopted into conventional health care and as new approaches to health care emerge. CAM practices include whole medical systems, mind-body medicine, biologically based practices, manipulative and body-based practices, and energy medicine.

### What is the difference between Complementary and Alternative Medicine?

☉ **Complementary Medicine** is used together with conventional medicine. An example of a complementary therapy is using aromatherapy to help lessen a patient's discomfort following surgery.

☉ **Alternative Medicine** is used in place of conventional medicine. An example of an alternative therapy is using a special diet to treat cancer instead of undergoing surgery, radiation, or chemotherapy that has been recommended by a conventional doctor.

*The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, a division of the National Institutes of Health, is the Federal Government's lead agency for scientific research on the diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine.*





# Sleep Disorder Breathing: Possible Cause of Morning Headaches, Night Sweats and Erectile Dysfunction

By Leonard J. Feld, D.D.S.

There are several interesting symptoms associated with sleep disorder breathing besides the more commonly heard complaints of snoring (approximately 100 million Americans) and daytime tiredness or sleepiness. Some of these symptoms may be overlooked by health care professionals unfamiliar with breathing challenges and the physiological functions of air breathing and sleep.

Symptoms of sleep disorder breathing (SDB) can be headaches, migraines, pains in the neck, shoulders, back and face, clenching or grinding of teeth, sore jaw, missing or broken back teeth, popping of the jaw and limited opening of the mouth. Morning headaches, night sweats and erectile dysfunction (ED) have now been associated with sleep disorders.<sup>1</sup>

**Morning headaches**—Headaches are among the most common in medical complaints (approximately 80 million people). Awakening with a headache represents an important subset and is coincidentally also a part of the obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (OSA). Several explanations have been proposed for OSA. Nighttime fluctuations of arterial oxygen saturation along with increased intracranial pressure and the interruption of sleep may contribute to the headache phenomenon.<sup>2</sup>

Neurologists now often include an oral or mouth exam and a sleep study as part of the neurological diagnosis for headaches since they now recognize that opening the airway and improving sleep patterns may be fundamental to the elimination of the headaches. Neurologist and physicians have pinpointed the dental nerve (the Trigeminal nerve) for vascular headaches.<sup>3</sup>

Dentists who have post graduate training in sleep disorders can see the physical and structural evidence related to sleep and airway challenges. Physical evidence of wearing patterns of teeth from clenching or grinding can also cause bone growths in the mouth. This constant forceful biting stabilizes the tongue to maintain an open airway to breathe causing pain and tension in the muscles of the neck, back of the head, temples, face and jaw.<sup>4</sup> This points again to the dental nerve, the Trigeminal nerve, responsible for these actions and the vascular reflex triggering headaches and migraines.<sup>3</sup>

**Night sweats**—One of the most common causes of night sweats in men and menopausal women is obstructive sleep apnea syndrome. A hyperactive sympathetic nervous system (SNS) is believed to be responsible.<sup>5</sup> The struggle to get proper oxygen causes a stress response much like the “fight or flight” mechanism leading to excessive sweat gland production. The SNS is demonstrated by increased catecholamine production and excretion of urine. Treating sleep disorder breathing (SDB) and allowing the airway to function properly can diminish both night time sweats and urinary catecholamine production.

**Erectile dysfunction (ED)**—It is well documented and established that OSA increases the risk of heart attack and strokes. It has now been found that OSA increases the risk of ED in men and there is a strong correlation between these disorders. A recent

study at Cornell University revealed that 80% of men who had abnormal or disruptive sleep, OSA, or sleep disorder breathing had trouble achieving or maintaining erections. Dr. David Gozal from the University of Louisville found that after one week of being exposed to chronic intermittent hypoxia (low oxygen saturation similar to the test of OSA and SDB), mice showed a 55% decline in daily erections, and after 6 weeks the drive or incentive for sex decreased by 60 times.<sup>6</sup>

The clinical consequences of untreated sleep disorders are devastating. Serious medical conditions including (but not limited to) high blood pressure, heart attacks, stroke, ADHD, sexual dysfunction, decreased mental functions, car accidents, growth retardation in children, crowded and mal-aligned teeth (too small of a mouth or no room for the teeth) all can lead to a decreased quality of life. In the majority of cases, sleep disorders can be diagnosed and managed by qualified practitioners. According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine Dentists, dentists who have post graduate education are first in the line of defense against SDB<sup>7</sup> by diagnosing patients’ dental structural. Patients are best served by having their primary care physician work together with a qualified dental practitioner to properly diagnose and treat SDB.

Dr. Leonard Feld is a TMJ-TMJD Dentist with offices in Los Angeles, San Jose and Palm Desert. He is the co-founder of the TMJ & Sleep Medicine Network and is located at Southwest TMJ Specialty Group on Hwy 111 in Palm Desert (760) 341-2873. Dr. Feld’s philosophy is always a conservative, non-invasive and no-surgical treatment. [www.DocFeld.com](http://www.DocFeld.com)

References available upon request.

**Tune In for Interviews with the following  
Desert Regional Medical Center Doctors**

**Palm Springs KPSP—Channel 2 CBS**  
Ramy Awad, MD – Bariatric Surgery  
Sat. April 9th - 3:30 PM • Sun. April 10th - 5:30 AM

**Stuart Menn, MD – Sleep Apnea**  
Ragui Sedeek, MD – Eyes over 50  
Sat. April 30th - 3:30 PM • Sun. May 1st - 5:30 AM

**Christopher Hurley, MD – Heartburn**  
Sat. May 7th - 3:30 PM • Sun. May 8th - 5:30 AM

**Camille M. Harrison, MD - Macular Degeneration**  
**Michael Gatto, MD – Laryngitis**  
Sat. May 14th - 3:30 PM • Sun. May 15th - 5:30 AM

**KOCE/PBS SoCal**  
Raqui Sedeek, MD – Ocular Migraines  
Thursday April 14th - 12:30 PM

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## EMC Launches the Eisenhower Wellness Institute

Recognizing the national movement towards integrative medicine, Eisenhower Medical Center has opened the Eisenhower Wellness Institute at the Argyros Health Center in La Quinta.

In its initial phase, the Institute will offer doctor consultations on preventative health care, memory assessment and preservation, and sports medicine. Phase two, planned for late summer, will incorporate complementary therapies such as yoga, acupuncture and mindfulness meditation.

"We've come to learn that our patients want preventative care. There are a lot of wellness practitioners in the Valley, but physicians have typically been medically oriented. We realize it is time for us to offer these options," stated Dr. Joseph E. Scherger, Vice President of Primary Care, who developed the program.

Scherger researched wellness programs offered by leading hospitals throughout the country and retained the help of Dr. Robert Bonaker of Scripps Integrative Hospital in San Diego. EMC sent three select physicians, Dr. Hessam Mahdavi, Dr. Sunny Vendiola, and Dr. Jennifer Sarayba to Scripps for certification in Integrative and Holistic Medicine.

Overseeing the Institute is Medical Director Dr. Patricia Avila, formerly Medical Director at the Hawaii Medical Service Association. Dr. Avila did her Preventive Medicine Residency at UCSD. Diana Berchem, R.N. joins the team as Patient Care Coordinator.

### EWI currently offers these programs:

#### Integrative Medicine

- Consultation, assessments and recommendations from a Board Certified physician with advanced training in Integrative and Holistic Medicine, on alternative practices and supplements as part of your health care regime (Note: Resource for standards are evidence-based reference journals on integrative medicine such as the Natural Medicine Comprehensive Database)

#### Cognitive Fitness/Memory Assessment

- Designed to determine the health and

fitness of a person's brain by providing an evaluation focused on memory preservation.

- Three levels of consultations are offered including comprehensive memory assessment and preservation, memory preservation, and a neuropsychological consultation and exam.

#### Sports Medicine

- Consultations and assessments on sports injuries and rehab with a focus on healing and returning to optimal functionality.

#### Executive Physical Program

- Concierge service offering health assessment screenings and prevention strategies beyond what an annual physical provides.

In phase two, the program is scheduled to grow valley-wide with additional locations in Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage. "I see our wellness program growing to be comparable in size to our primary care program as they are very complementary," adds Scherger. And are all Eisenhower physicians supporting the effort? "We have 30 physicians in primary care," states Scherger, "All of them are wellness-oriented and supporting this integrative approach to medicine."

As with most wellness care, the programs are cash-based and most services are not covered by insurance.

When you consider what the Cleveland Clinic's Wellness Institute has done for their community, as reported in last month's issue of *Desert Health News*, the launch of Eisenhower's program is very exciting for the Coachella Valley.

"We look forward to growing and to providing integrative medicine to the same standard of care that people have come to know from Eisenhower. The only limit to the program is what people are willing to do to care for themselves."

For more information, contact the Eisenhower Wellness Institute at 760-610-7360.

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In our effort to bring innovative programs to the Coachella Valley, we proudly introduce the Eisenhower Wellness Institute at the Eisenhower Argyros Health Center in La Quinta. Here, you can receive services and assessments above and beyond what your regular doctor may offer.

- ★ **Executive Physical Program:** A comprehensive, four-hour evaluation that includes an extensive range of screenings beyond your annual physical, and an individualized wellness and disease prevention plan
- ★ **Memory Assessment and Cognitive Fitness Program:** Unique consultations to assess brain health, and detect and prevent the earliest signs of dementia through leading-edge research and technology
- ★ **Integrative Medicine Consultation:** An assessment by a board certified physician with advanced training in integrative and holistic medicine, along with recommendations that combine conventional medicine with evidence-based alternative treatments
- ★ **Sports Medicine Consultation:** Assesses stress and injury caused by specific sports, such as golf, tennis and running, with a focus on restoring optimal performance and functionality

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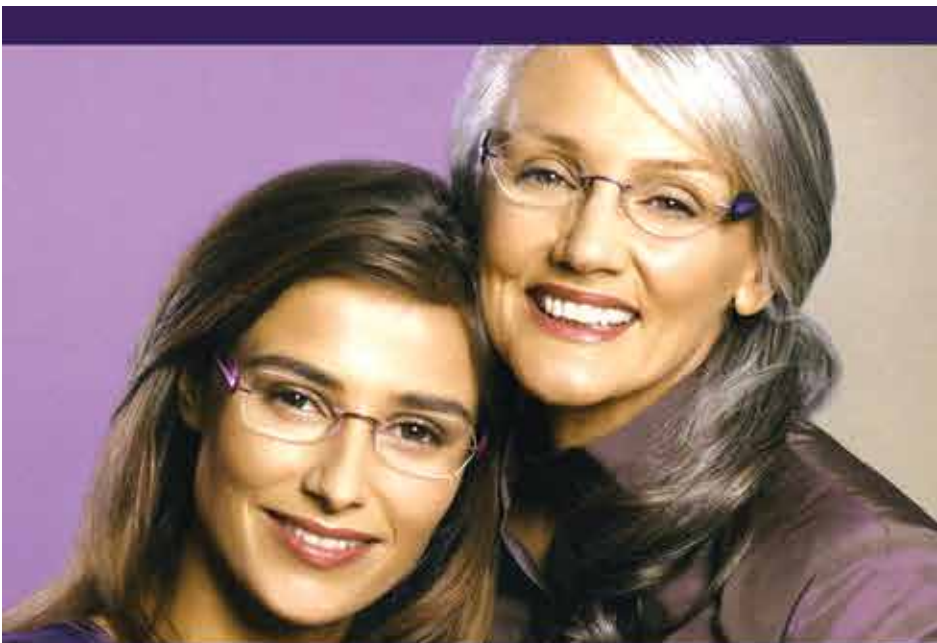


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## What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

By Jon G. McLennan, M.D.

Each year, millions of Americans slowly develop debilitating pain in their hand(s) that causes sleepless nights and weakness of grip limiting the use of their hand or even the ability to work. Usually not related to injuries, the pain evolves slowly over time in one or both hands. There may be painful numbness or tingling sensations that come and go based on the position or usage of the hand during daily activities. This condition is known as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS).

CTS is caused in the wrist by compression of the median nerve from swelling of the flexor tendons. It is commonly seen in people in their 40's and 50's (but may occur at any age), and more frequently in women. CTS may occur after injuries such as fractures, sprains and strains of the wrist, after pregnancy or in various medical conditions, but typically evolves from the chronic over-use of the hand. It has been associated with certain activities and/or types of work, referred to as repetitive or occupational stress syndromes.

Diagnosed by symptoms, physical examination and at times by nerve conduction and electromyography (or NC/EMG), CTS is usually first diagnosed by one's primary care physician or an internist. Treatment consists of bracing, anti-inflammatory medications, stretching of the muscles of the palm and ergonomic changes to activities, work-stations and other objects the hand may hold. Conservative treatment may take months to resolve symptoms. If treatment fails, patients are referred to an orthopaedic surgeon.

Treatment by an orthopaedic surgeon may include injection of the carpal tunnel, continued bracing, medications, physical therapy and the addition of NC/EMG testing if it has not been completed. Should symptom management fail, surgery is recommended.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome surgery releases the ligament at the base of the palm that is compressing the tendons which flex the fingers. This surgery usually involves minimally invasive techniques known as endoscopy or arthroscopy, and is completed in less than 20 minutes (surgery time) in a surgery center or hospital's outpatient unit. If CTS is apparent in both hands, the surgeon may recommend operating on both hands simultaneously.



Patients are encouraged to use the hand right way, avoiding overuse. Bracing may be continued and physical therapy initiated. Most individuals return to standard daily activities within 2 weeks and to work when the wounds are healed (depending on the type of work.)

Early Carpal Tunnel Syndromes may resolve over several months. Symptomatic treatments may also be effective. When this is not the case, minimal invasive surgery is predictable, the outcomes excellent and recurrence rare.

Dr. Jon McLennan specializes in Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine and is located at JFK Orthopedics in La Quinta. Dr. McLennan can be reached at 760.777.8282. Visit [www.OrthopaedicsportsMedicineLaQuinta.com](http://www.OrthopaedicsportsMedicineLaQuinta.com)

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## Problems Hearing? When Is It Time to See a Doctor?

By Maya Kato, M.D.

Hearing loss is one of the most common health conditions in the United States, affecting more than 31 million Americans. Hearing loss affects children and adults, and the incidence of hearing loss increases with age. Nearly one-third of individuals over the age of 65 have hearing loss, and half of those over 75 have significant hearing loss.

Hearing is one of our five key senses, and is important in many facets of our life. It is our primary mode of communicating with the world around us.

### Signs of hearing loss include:

- You often ask people to repeat themselves
- You have difficulty understanding a conversation in a large group or in restaurants
- People seem to mumble more frequently
- Your family complains that you have the TV on loudly
- You have trouble hearing when you are not looking directly at the speaker
- You have been told that you speak too loudly
- You have trouble understanding the speech of women and children


**Diagnosis:** Hearing loss is a medical condition. Patients who suspect they may have a hearing problem should be evaluated by a physician. The problem may be simply ear wax, blocking sound from conducting to the eardrum. However, other medical conditions, including inner ear disorders, infections and even tumors, can also cause hearing loss. Thus, it is important to have a medical evaluation by a doctor – typically an Otolologist (Ear physician/surgeon) or an Otolaryngologist (Ear, Nose & Throat doctor). The physician will do a complete examination, remove ear wax, and order a hearing test. Two common tests are audiograms and tympanometry. An audiogram is a test used to measure how well a person hears. The tympanogram is a test done to evaluate the ear drum and middle ear (space behind the ear drum).

**Causes:** Getting a hearing test can tell you if you have a hearing loss, but only a physician can diagnose the exact cause and recommend appropriate treatment. Hearing loss has numerous causes. Although age-related hearing loss is common, patients should not purchase hearing aids without a physician's advice. The FDA requires that all hearing aid users be medically evaluated and have a written statement from the physician, clearing them for hearing aid usage.

**Treatment:** There are many excellent solutions to treat hearing loss, including medication, surgery (implantable hearing devices, cochlear implants), hearing aids, and assistive listening devices. Improved hearing health has been associated with improvements in the social, emotional, and physical well being of people with hearing loss.

Dr. Kato is the founder of The Ear Institute in Palm Desert and can be reached at 760-565-3900.

Source: National Institute of Health website: [www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov). Text: Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, Bailey, ed.



## THE **EAR** INSTITUTE

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## GET MOVING! For Weight Loss and Good Health

By Ruth Anderson, M.D., M.S.

There is a new scientific movement on the health and wellness horizon that I want to share with you. It is the concept of Too Much Sitting. Researchers have identified two major health risks: too much sitting and too little exercise; and both are significant risks for your health and your waistline.

We are seemingly more health conscious than ever with gyms and get-fit workout products at an all-time high. Yet, as a population, the U.S. is getting sicker and fatter each year. In fact, experts are now saying that our children will be the first generation in history to be sicker than their parents.

One basic problem is that we are sitting way too much – and it is killing us. Modern life in America is generally pretty sedentary. We are spending more and more time in front of computers, sitting behind a desk at work, and lounging on the sofa at home watching TV. We've all heard that TV viewing is linked with increased waist line circumference (a nice way to say fat), heightened blood pressure and abnormal glucose metabolism (the harbinger of diabetes). Not that surprising if you think about it.

What really opened my eyes is a new term researchers have coined: Active Couch Potato Phenomenon. Research found that the risks of so much time sitting are significant even among those of us who are doing the recommended amount of exercise. In other words, you can be doing the right stuff – 30 minutes of aerobic exercise 3-5 days a week, but if the other 80% of your day is spent in a non-active, sedentary state – YOU ARE STILL AT RISK. To optimize your health and wellness, you must get moving!

Sitting too much is so dangerous that the more time you spend sitting, the higher your risk of dying from all causes. ALL causes! So get moving not just for your waistline, but for your life. Take advantage of any and all opportunities to walk, stretch and stand. Not only will you control your fat and shrink your waistline, you will also be healthier and stronger than ever before. And you're never too old to start.

As a pain management physician, I see patients all day long who are dealing with varying degrees of physical pain on a regular basis. I encourage the majority of them to MOVE as part of their treatment. I ask patients to describe their regular exercise programs and how strong they feel. Often many will answer strongly with pride, yet when they get out of the office chair, their legs are so weak, they have to use their arms to stand up. What good is their daily exercise when they spend

the rest of the day sitting and getting weaker by the minute?

No wonder they tell me their knees and hips hurt, their balance is bad and their legs are getting weaker. Old age doesn't cripple us, inactivity does. We unconsciously move less as we get older. Be aware of how you move (or don't) through the day. Instead of just sitting in front of the TV, use the time to stretch or play catch with the dog. Iron or do dishes. Do something. Do anything that adds a bit of calorie burn and movement to your day. Research has shown that even sitting reading a book burns more calories than sitting in front of the TV screen. This is one time that multi-tasking is a good thing. If the TV needs to be on in the background, fine. But don't let it be the primary focus of your free time.


I recommend that you continue your regular exercise regime but remember, after your thirty minutes at the gym is over, you are not off the hook. Consider what are you doing for the other 23 hours and 30 minutes of each day? To optimize your health and wellness, find simple, easy ways to GET MOVING. These simple lifestyle choices are far more important than any pill your doctor can prescribe. Only you have the power to control your life and maintain your good health.

### Simple Tips to Get Moving for Weight Loss and Good Health


- Brush your teeth standing on one leg – strengthens legs and core, improves balance
- Stand to put on your shoes and socks to practice your balance and build strength
- Do not use your arms to help you get out of a chair, use your legs
- Do deep knee bends while you are waiting for the coffee to brew or the microwave to finish
- Stand on one leg while you're in line at the grocery store (no one will know)
- Keep your shoulders back to minimize shoulder pain and injury

Dr. Ruth is a noted fitness expert, wellness consultant and pain management specialist and author of "Get Moving! Live Better, Live Longer." Desert Pain Specialists can be reached at 760.625.1960

Medical Hazards of Prolonged Sitting (Bassett, David R. Jr.; Freedson, Patty; Kozey, Sarah); Exercise & Sport Sciences Reviews. 38(3):101-102, July 2010.



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## Plan for Retirement as You Would a Vacation

By Reesa Manning

One of the most frequent questions I hear from clients is: Will I have enough money to stop working and retire? Funding retirement is one of people's most worrisome financial concerns. Yet most of us spend more time planning a vacation than we do planning for a comfortable retirement.

Typical vacation planning starts like this: Where are we going and when? How will we get there? How long and where will we stay? How much is it going to cost us?

Yet, if people planned their vacations like most plan for retirement, here's what it might sound like: Okay, honey, it's time for our dream vacation. Pack the bags; We'll go to an airport and take the first plane we can catch. We'll stay in the best

hotel, eat at the finest restaurants, and stay until the money runs out.

The difference between these two approaches is that the former involves setting a goal and managing money to reach it. The latter is an impulse-driven approach based on dreams, wishes and hope.

To be more than a dream, an investment goal should include the following: 1) Time Horizon: When will you need it? 2) Amount: How much money will you need? 3) Term: For how long will you need it? 4) Resources: How much do you already have put aside, and how much more can you put aside every year, and 5) Rate of Return: What rate of return will you need? Now, let's see what's involved in answering these questions:

### When Do You Want to Retire?

This is where you start with your dream. If you've always dreamt of retiring at 55, run the numbers and see what happens.

### How Much Annual Income Do You Want to Make?

Simple rules of thumb indicate anywhere from 60% to more than 100% of your current annual household budget. If you can't decide, start with 80%.

### How Long Will You Need It?

If you reach the age of 65, the odds are good that you'll live at least to age 85, so use that age for your calculations. If you're older than 65, add 20 years to your time horizon.

### How Much Savings Do You Have Already, and How Much Will You Have When You Retire?

Start with how much you've already accumulated in retirement assets, and how much these assets will total by the time you retire, given how much you put away and the rate at which it's growing. Also any other sources of annual income,

including Social Security, a pension, and rent or royalties, plus the value of the sale of any assets like investment property or a business.

### What Annual Rate of Return Do You Need?

The answer to this must be derived from the answers to the preceding questions. Likewise, the investment choices you make and returns you earn will be heavily dependent on these answers.

Planning for retirement requires a diligent review of your current situation, potential future challenges, and goals. To alleviate your concerns and ensure that you are on track for a secure retirement, consult with a professional financial advisor who specializes in retirement planning. Together you can discuss optimal investing strategies and a strategic long-term plan geared to your specific needs... and dreams.

Reesa Manning is a Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834.7200 or e-mail [Reesa@IWMgmt.com](mailto:Reesa@IWMgmt.com).

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## Why We Should LOVE the SUN

Continued from front page

in better sleep and overall health.<sup>8</sup>

**Reduce anxiety:** Serotonin, a neurotransmitter that is often lacking in people with anxiety and depression, is thought to be increased by Vitamin D, as possibly are other essential neurotransmitters such as Dopamine.<sup>8</sup>

**Fight Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):** Snowbirds know this one! If you suffer from SAD during the winter, introduce more sunlight into your environment through open shades and windows.<sup>8</sup>

### Disease Prevention

**Reduce the chance of multiple sclerosis:** There are indications that Vitamin D can help ameliorate some of the symptoms associated with MS and even fight against its development. This theory is supported by the geographic distribution of MS, which is nearly zero in equatorial regions and increases dramatically with latitude in both hemispheres.<sup>9</sup>

**Reduce risk of rheumatoid arthritis:** Women living in the northeastern US are more likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis (RA), suggesting a link between the autoimmune disease and vitamin D deficiency.<sup>10</sup>

**Reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes:** Multiple studies suggest that Vitamin D, along with calcium, may help reduce the risk for developing the disease.<sup>11</sup> In addition, both nutrients may be beneficial in optimizing glucose metabolism.<sup>12</sup>

**Prevent high blood pressure:** A growing body of research suggests that vitamin D may play a role in blood pressure regulation and heart health. It is known, for example, that cases of high blood pressure increase during the winter and in places that are further from the equator.<sup>13</sup>

**Cancer risk reduction:** Studies show that Vitamin D could actually aid in reducing the risk of different cancers. And some cancers are actually encouraged by a lack of Vitamin D.<sup>8</sup>

### Dermatologists May Disagree

The nation's largest dermatology group remains unconvinced. In a recent press release, the American Academy of Dermatology wrote that they were "deeply concerned" that messages that unprotected sun exposure may have health benefits could "mislead the public about the very real danger of sun exposure, the leading cause of skin cancer."

As with all things related to health and wellness, moderation is the key. The recommended exposure to direct sunlight is 15-20 minutes daily<sup>14</sup>, however a sun burn is never recommended. For longer periods of exposure, SPF 15+ should be selected and used regularly based on skin type.

So be wise, but get outside and embrace that big yellow ball in the sky...I'll see you out in the sun!

1) Harvard Medical School Family Health Guide June 2004; 2) Nature Immunology, March 2010 Professor Carsten Geisler, of the Department of International Health, Immunology and Microbiology at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark; 3) 2. Adams and Hollis, "Vitamin D: Synthesis, Metabolism, and Clinical Measurement." In: Coe and Favus, eds., Disorders of Bone and Mineral Metabolism, Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins (2002) p. 159. 4) Anticancer Res. 2009 Sep;29(9):3713-20. The dependency of vitamin D status on body mass index, gender, age and season.; 5) Gregory A. Plotnikoff, MD, of the University of Minnesota Medical School; 6) Vitamin D and outcomes in chronic kidney disease. Cheng S, Coyne D. 2007 Mar;16(2):77-82. Division of Nephrology, Washington University School of Medicine; 7) Sunlight and vitamin D for bone health and prevention of autoimmune diseases, cancers, and cardiovascular disease. Holick MF. Department of Medicine, Boston University Medical Center 2004 Dec;80(6 Suppl):1678S-88S; 8) Issues Ment Health Nurs. 2010 Jun;31(6):385-93. Vitamin D and depression: where is all the sunshine? Penckofer S, Kouba J, Byrn M, Estwing Ferrans C. Loyola University Chicago, School of Nursing, Maywood, Illinois; 9) Department of Biochemistry, University of Wisconsin-Madison Proc Soc Exp Biol Med. 1997 Oct;216(1):21-7. Vitamin D and multiple sclerosis.Hayes CE, Cantorna MT, DeLuca HF.; 10) Arthritis Rheum. 2004 Jan;50(1):72-7.Vitamin D intake is inversely associated with rheumatoid arthritis: results from the Iowa Women's Health Study. Merlino LA, Curtis J, Mikuls TR, Cerhan JR, Criswell LA, Saag KG; Iowa Women's Health Study.College of Public Health, University of Iowa, Iowa City. 11) DIABETES: Vitamin D and Calcium Intake in Relation to Type 2 Diabetes in Women Anastassios G. Pittas, MD, Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Tufts-New England Medical Center; 12) The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism Vol. 92, No. 6 2017-2029 Copyright © 2007 by The Endocrine Society 13) BP: Lind, L, Wengle, B, Wide, L, et al. Reduction of Blood Pressure During Long-Term Treatment With Active Vitamin D (Alphacalcidol) Is Dependent on Plasma Renin Activity and Calcium Status. A Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Study. Am J Hypertens 1989; 2:20.(14) National Institutes of Health





# Teaching Your Children to Achieve Excellence

By Brent M. Cooper

I often hear that kids aren't living up to their full potential. With all the distractions – video games, internet, TV, smart phones, texting, email, etc. – how do we motivate our children to excel in all they do?

In one of his many books, Dr. Wayne Dyer recounts his days as a young boy working for the local grocery store. He was a bagger, or "box boy" as it was then called, loading groceries into bags and placing them into customers' shopping carts. He made it his personal goal to ensure that none of his covered checkers would have to pack a single grocery item while he was working. Dyer categorized fellow box boys as 1-baggers, 2-baggers or 3-baggers – referring to the number of checkers managed during their shift. His aim was to be a 3 or 4-bagger, covering up to 4 checkers and moving like a whirlwind between them.

Many of us have experienced both types of workers: the disinterested sales clerk barely able to ring up your order let alone answer questions about store products, and the engaged employee who knows the inventory, answers your questions, and gets things done promptly and courteously. This employee is proud of their work, wants to be of service, and strives to be their best.

So how do we encourage our children to be this type of employee – the one who strives for excellence? Why would a child or teenager bother to become a 3 or

4-bagger? Because by taking a stand in all you do, you are announcing to the world your intention and action of pursuing a course of excellence in your life. But how is this going to improve your life?

When we are a 3 or 4-bagger, we become fully engaged and present in the activities at hand. What once was a boring, menial job, becomes a satisfying, fully-engaging activity. One is no longer in the world of "Tick Tock", as metaphorical author Stuart Wilde loves to call the stress-filled, desire-seeking, never-at-peace, clock-watching world in which most of us exist daily.

If you are a young Wayne Dyer, you pay attention to the flow of activities around you – groceries rolling on the conveyor belt, the movements of the checkers and market customers in line. Not only are you in tune with the flow of activities around you, but you are an integral part of the flow.

When I was a child, my mother took us to the Farmer's Market. There I would enjoy all the craftsmen at work - the glassblower making beautiful, delicate glass unicorns, dolphins and sea horses; or the baker squeezing out perfect pink elephants onto a white layer cake. Even as a child, I knew I was observing excellence. There was something magical



about how these tradesmen delighted in making everything perfectly – and in turn, it made me want to achieve excellence.

There is something captivating – even mind-altering – about excellence. By taking charge of your situation, and striving to be the best, it is impossible to become a victim. You realize that no outside force determines your level of achievement – the decision is all yours.

So, teach your children to take a stand right now. Teach them that when they are work-proud, they will feel proud. When they do the best job that they can – whether in school, work or life, they will feel their best. Introduce them

to places and people who also strive to achieve excellence. When they are engaged in life through the pursuit of excellence, they have the greatest chance of reaching their full potential.

Brent M. Cooper, Licensed Educational Psychologist is the Director of the El Paseo Children's Center for Psychological & Educational Assessment. He specializes in conducting assessments for children, adolescents and adults who may have Learning Disabilities, ADHD, or Autism. He also provides counseling and life coaching. Brent can be reached at 760-342-4900 or visit his website at [www.ElPaseoTesting.com](http://www.ElPaseoTesting.com)

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## Coachella Valley's Health Care Industry MENTORING THE FUTURE

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## Local Hospitals Help Prepare Students for Future in Health Care

Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD) is collaborating with Valley hospitals allowing hundreds of students to experience what a career in health care might feel like. Through a unique program called "Career Explorations", Eisenhower Medical Center (EMC) and Desert Regional Medical Center (DRMC) are making connections with students and helping to prepare their next generation workforce.

Since 2005, the hospitals have hosted more than 1,250 students for interactive tours of their campuses, introducing students to the wide-range of careers and professionals who work to keep our Valley healthy. Students have a chance to speak with emergency room nurses, lab technicians, research scientists, imaging professionals, doctors, nurses, physical plant operators and many others.

It is no small feat to facilitate meaningful engagement between students and on-the-job professionals and in March, PSUSD Board of Education expressed their appreciation to Pam Silver and EMC with their "Shiny Apple Award." Silver is a Senior Project Coordinator for Professional Development at EMC, and has coordinated the hospital's partnership with PSUSD for the past five years. In that time, more than 450 PSUSD middle and high school students have toured EMC, discussed hospital operations with management executives, and considered their own pathway in the field of health care.

On behalf of EMC, Silver has created a model program for students to explore the promise and possibilities of careers in health care. The program has served as an excellent recruitment tool for the 275 students in Cathedral City High School's HEAL (Health and Environmental Academy of Learning) Academy and another 177 in Palm Springs High School's PALM (Palm Springs Academy of Learning Medicine) Academy.

## Pathways to Success Scholar Spotlight:



Sandra Carbajal will graduate from CSUSB Palm Desert in June with her Bachelor's degree in Biological Psychology, and will immediately head to Lafayette, Indiana to study in the PULSE program at Purdue University. This prestigious interdisciplinary lab science graduate program accepted only 35 students from across the country this year.

At Purdue, Carbajal will study neuroscience with a focus on brain injuries, Alzheimer's disease and spinal cord injuries. After completing her Ph.D., Sandra plans to return to the Valley to teach and continue her research. Sandra moved to the desert from Guadalajara in 2002. Unable to speak English, she enrolled at College of the Desert as an ESL student, completed her general education coursework and transferred to CSUSB.

**Congratulations and good luck, Sandra!**

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Pam Silver and her colleagues at Eisenhower Medical Center, as well as the team at Desert Regional Medical Center, are helping students see health care careers as a viable option for their future.

Learn more about how you can partner with the future by contacting Donna Sturgeon, CVEP Healthcare Industry Council Work Based Learning Coordinator [donna@cvep.com](mailto:donna@cvep.com)





## Not Just Another Pretty Face... The Benefits of a Therapeutic Facial

I am not one to pamper myself often. I know that facials are an important cleansing process for the skin, but I tend to spend my time and resources on therapies that improve overall health and well-being. That is why Diana's "therapeutic skin care" caught my eye.

Diana Hurt is a licensed esthetician with a certification in Lymphatic Facial Massage (LFM) from Soma Therapy Institute in Rancho Mirage. In addition, she has completed two of three levels towards achieving Reiki Master status (Reiki is a form of therapy in which the practitioner is believed to channel energy into the patient in order to encourage healing or restore wellbeing. Dr. Oz's wife, Lisa, is a Reiki Master). Diana's combined education and training results in beauty treatments with the added benefits of lymphatic drainage massage and energy work.

What does this mean? The lymphatic system is the body's garbage can. It includes many tiny lymph nodes throughout your body located just under the skin. These glands store fat and toxins and will continue to store them unless they are drained. In your face, the result can be puffiness, dark circles, and fine lines. Aerobic exercise, yoga and stretching, and most effectively lymphatic massage, can successfully drain your lymph system.

Diana's therapeutic treatment includes the cleansing, masks and moisturizers you expect in a facial, and is coupled with an hour of very light methodical massage starting in the clavicle area and working up through your face and head.

"The nodes are located just under the skin with little flaps that allow the fluid to pass through," explains Diana. "If there is blockage, I can sometimes feel pea sized sacs of fluid that will release. We use gentle touch to allow the flaps to open. If too firm, it will cause them to close."

While these treatments are good for overall health, Diana notes that they can be most beneficial for chronic swelling, puffiness, and for pre- and post-surgery. "Activating the flow before surgery prepares your skin for healing. After surgery, and with your doctor's recommendation on timing, lymphatic drainage can help speed the healing process significantly."

LFM can also be a natural remedy for removing bags under the eyes. While this usually takes a series of treatments, Diana teaches her clients how to work on themselves at home in between professional treatments.

You leave Diana's office feeling the usual pampered way, and you will actually feel the movement and drainage taking place in your face. For me, this "active" feeling continued for about 24 hours. I woke up the next morning and my bright and shiny face was still tingling with movement. After this treatment, the beauty was certainly more than just skin deep.

For more information on the benefits of Lymphatic Facial Massage for general health and recovery, call Diana at 760.275.4479 or visit her website at [www.SkinTherapybyDiana.com](http://www.SkinTherapybyDiana.com)

## A Trip to Morocco...Just Up the Road!

### A Review by Lauren Del Sarto

When my husband and I travel abroad, we enjoy the B&B experience. We appreciate local décor, true to the culture, with exquisite detail and a proprietor that makes you feel at home. But lately, traveling abroad has given way to the economy and busy work schedules, so we were delighted to spend an evening in Morocco... just 30 minutes away from home.

El Morocco Inn & Spa is one of Desert Hot Springs' magical little resorts and perfect for a night or weekend getaway. With its authentic décor and exotic flavour, the El Morocco transports you to another land and is a wonderful, affordable escape.

Much of this is due to the El Morocco's proprietor, Bruce Abney, who has been consulting with boutique hotels for 20 years. When Bruce decided to open his own place, he didn't spare any details. All the colorful interiors, fine bedding, artwork, and even the Sultan's tent in the garden, were flown in from Morocco. In the community living room, Casablanca plays continuously next to the ambient fireplace. Complimentary wine and 'Moroccotini's' are offered to guests in the evening around the pool bar and a bountiful continental breakfast with pressed coffee awaits you in the morning.

There are two mineral pools available 24 hours a day, one under the clear desert sky and one under a romantic Moroccan canopy. This was the first time we had experienced 24 hours of dips and lounging in our local mineral springs and the effects were truly astounding. We felt cleansed to the core -- bright and alive -- and came to understand the magic of these waters. (We are very lucky to have this natural hydrotherapy available to us here in the Valley!)

El Morocco is a great little escape. Enjoy the elegant Sahara Suite or the exquisite Sultan's playpen. Pack food and beverages for the weekend and settle in -- you have no reason to leave your cozy and friendly surroundings.

Packages include the Romantic Rendezvous, Girlfriend's Getaway, and Day Visits. For more information email Bruce: [info@elmoroccoinn.com](mailto:info@elmoroccoinn.com) or call (888) 288-9905. [www.ElMoroccoInn.com](http://www.ElMoroccoInn.com)







## AT THE GYM WITH Casey

### Step Away From the Little Purple Weights

I was walking through the grocery store when I saw a little boy walking with his Mom. The boy wanted to be picked up, so without thinking twice, his mother, groceries in the other hand, scooped him up effortlessly. I was impressed. That boy must have weighed at least 60 lbs and the groceries another 10.

A few days later, I was finishing a session at the gym when I saw the mom from the grocery store. She was holding these little purple dumbbells which could have been mistaken for salt shakers. She was doing good repetition ex-

ercises but with almost no weight. As a Personal Trainer, I felt obligated to go over and share my knowledge with her.

**The problem with the little purple weights:** When you exercise, you are putting stress on your muscles. This added stress makes microscopic tears in muscle fibers which then heal and become stronger. So when the stress stays the same (same size weights, same exercises), or is too light, there is no adaptation. So really, there is no gain.

When you are regularly lifting a child, and a purse, bag or groceries, how is

a small 5lb weight going to help you grow stronger?

When you exercise, you are working out to become better or improve. The harder you train, the more you can work, play and enjoy your life. We are all athletes, in some way, shape or form – team sports, individual pursuits or simply running after young children in every day life. So we need to train for our sport and our daily life.

**The need to increase the weights:** Ever wonder how moms are able to carry their toddlers as they grow? The child gets heavier and the Mom is still able to pick up and carry the child. This is because the increase in weight is gradual. The mother's muscles are adapting to the slight change in weight. So as long as the weight gain is gradual, the mother's muscles will be able to

adapt to the new loads.

This idea of gradual weight increase is needed in your workout routine as well. If the stress on the body remains the same, the body will no longer adapt or grow stronger.

So everyone put down the little weights and grab something that feels like work. Remember "working out" has the word "work" in it. I want you to work harder in the gym, so everyday life outside the gym feels easier.

Casey is a certified nutritional coach and a certified personal trainer. His clients include US Marines, PGA and LPGA golfers, and those with physical limitations and medical conditions. Casey is co-owner of Next Level Fitness and co-creator of the highly successful Fit in 42 program. He can be reached at 760.413.9858 or [casey@nextlevelfitness.org](mailto:casey@nextlevelfitness.org).

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### When is the Right Time to Start Training After Injury or Illness?

By Patty Curtiss, ATC, MS, MHA

This question is one of sports medicine's greatest challenges — how to get people back into action while allowing sufficient time for healing. What's alarming is how often a "got to get back" mentality interferes with athletes who are recovering from an injury or surgery.

In order to minimize the risk of re-injury or further damage, each individual should recover at the pace that is right for their body. Whether you are a top-level amateur or weekend warrior, we all need to listen to our body and allow proper rest and recovery time. The rule-of-thumb for this is:

- 1) reduce pain and inflammation by icing the injury for the first 48 to 72 hours
- 2) slowly re-establish range of motion and strength
- 3) begin exercises that are specifically tailored to your sport

Some overuse issues are the result of too much repetitive motion. Golfers in particular, often return to the same movement patterns that got them injured in the first place. If you are one of these golfers, the key is to listen to your body, back off when there is persistent soreness or pain, and work into regaining the necessary range-of-motion and strength required to play the sport.

Golf and tennis are popular activities here in the desert, yet both require different "sport specific exercises" to further enhance performance and avoid re-injury. Once range of motion and strength are re-established, this type of exercising can begin. Golf specific exercises should include focusing on the core, and incorporating standing balance into most exercises and swing drills. Tennis specific exercises should also include the core but

each workout should have much more emphasis on developing strength and speed.

Of course, very few of us are professional or even high-level amateur athletes, but the need for proper rest and recovery time is still important. For avid sportsmen, the concept of "taking a break" is difficult to embrace. Yet when the alternative



Patty Curtiss works on client's setup

may be losing your life's passion forever, a temporary rest period becomes much more attractive. Do you enjoy your sport enough to take the steps necessary to continue playing it? If the answer is "yes" then do what is right for your body. Work with a qualified specialist to help you maximize your recovery time, reap the benefits of a well-thought-out training plan and (most importantly) recover **fully** before you start playing again!

Patty Curtiss is a Certified Athletic Trainer, LPGA 'Class A' Member, founder of Golf Rehab and co-founder of Bounce You Back in-home care. Her unique Golf Rehab program currently operates at the College Golf Center on the COD campus. Patty can be reached at 760.578.6401. [www.BounceYouBack.com](http://www.BounceYouBack.com)





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## Reducing Environmental Cancer Risks

*By John R. Dixon, D.C., C.C.N., Dipl.Ac*

The President's Cancer Panel issued a report to the President of the United States in 2009 entitled 'Reducing Environmental Cancer Risk'. This panel is affiliated with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Cancer Institute. A brief summary of these findings is important for all Americans to consider.

The entire U.S. population is exposed on a daily basis to numerous agricultural chemicals including many used in residential landscaping. Many of these chemicals have known or suspected carcinogenic or endocrine disrupting (chemicals that cause hormones to malfunction) properties. Pesticides, herbicides and fungicides which are approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contain almost 900 active ingredients many of which are toxic.<sup>1</sup>

According to the panel's report, 41 percent of the American public will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives and about 21 percent will die from cancer.<sup>1</sup> They further stated that the incidence of occurrence of some cancers, especially among children, is increasing for unexplained reasons. Children are far more susceptible to damage from environmental carcinogens and endocrine disrupting compounds than adults.

### **Some of the panel's recommendations included:**

- Parents and child care providers should choose foods, house and garden products, play spaces, toys and medicines which might help minimize a child's exposure to toxic substances as much as possible. Both mothers and fathers should avoid exposure to suspected carcinogens and hormone disrupting chemicals prior to a child's conception and throughout pregnancy.
- To reduce chemical exposures, individuals and families are to do things as simple as removing shoes before entering the home and to wash work clothes separately from other laundry.
- Filtering home tap or well water will help to minimize exposure to numerous known and suspected carcinogens and hormone disrupting chemicals.
- Avoid microwaving food or beverages in plastic containers.
- Store and carry water in stainless steel, glass containers or other phthalate-free containers. Phthalates are known toxic chemicals found in plastic products and are now ubiquitously found in the environment.<sup>2</sup>
- Americans should attempt to decrease exposure to pesticides by choosing food grown without pesticides or chemical fertilizers. Additionally, all people are encouraged to wash conventionally grown produce to remove chemical residues.

It was the Panel's opinion that a thorough, new assessment of workplace chemicals and toxin exposure is needed to quantify current health risks to Americans as previous estimates of occupational cancer risk were outdated and should no longer be used by government or industry.

### **Treating Toxin Exposure**

To treat the effects of toxin exposure it is necessary to reduce your exposure and then apply therapies to facilitate removal of the toxic burdens. Nutrition plays a key role in toxin management. Nutrient deficiencies can lead to difficulty with toxin clearance and detoxification.

To a large extent, a person's response to environmental toxins depends on their nutrient status. The human body will attempt to detoxify these cancer causing chemicals, which are often referred to as xenobiotics, in the liver. This is a two step process known as phase 1 and phase 2 hepatic detoxification. Phase 2 detoxification is largely dependent on adequate amounts of protein with a special emphasis on amino acids containing sulfur including glycine, L-glutamine, methionine, L-cysteine and N-acetylcysteine.

Essential trace elements such as zinc, magnesium calcium and manganese are also high on the priority list of almost every case of clinical toxicology.<sup>2</sup> Beans, eggs, garlic and cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage and brussels spouts are rich sources for many of these critical nutrients. High fiber diets based upon whole foods to include generous portions of fruit and vegetables help maintain speedy intestinal transit to assist in toxin removal. Whole foods, particularly those in the vegetable family, contain phytochemicals that support detoxification systems.<sup>3</sup>

There are several laboratories that currently offer testing to quantify the level of organic toxins in the blood, urine or adipose tissue. Available panels include testing for such things as organochlorine pesticides, PCB's, fire retardants and dioxins. These same laboratories also perform functional testing to measure your body's particular ability to detoxify chemicals and detect genetic weaknesses in detoxification systems.

If you are experiencing unexplained symptoms or believe you could be at risk to toxin exposure presently or in the past, ask your health care provider if this type of testing might be of benefit to you.

*Dr. John Dixon can be reached at the Natural Medicine Group 760.776.0022*

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## Acupuncture and the Western Medicine Model

By Diane Sheppard, Ph.D., L.Ac.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and acupuncture employ a paradigm that uses the concept of Qi, or vital energy, traveling along defined pathways called meridians to both explain and treat disease and to restore harmonious, healthy body function. Qi can not be measured by standard western means and there are no corresponding anatomical structures to explain the meridians.

That said, in the 1940's Dr. Reinhardt Voll discovered that electrical resistance on human skin is not homogenous and that meridians exist all over the body. These may be demonstrated as electrical fields and measured using an ohmmeter-like instrument. Within the next decade, Voll learned that the body had at least 1000 points of discontinuous resistance on the skin which follow the 12 lines of the classical Chinese meridians.<sup>1</sup> This was the first scientific evidence that the theories and practice of classical TCM were more than mere myth and tradition.

Given the ever increasing evidence of the effectiveness of TCM in treating a variety of disorders (the WHO's review and analysis of controlled clinical trials involving acupuncture lists 293 such studies) a conundrum exists among those trained by the scientific method of Western medicine, namely just how does TCM actually work? Several theories have been postulated including:

### The Gate Control theory

Put forth by Wall and Melzak in 1959, Gate Control states that the transmission of nerve impulses from afferent fibers to spinal cord transmission cells is modulated by a spinal-gating mechanism in the part of the spine referred to as the dorsal horn. The spinal-gating mechanism is influenced by the relative amount of activity in large-diameter and small-diameter fibers. Activity in large fibers tends to inhibit transmission (close the gate) while small-fiber activity tends to facilitate transmission (open the gate).<sup>2</sup> It is considered that by increasing activity in the large fibers through needling, acupuncture activates receptors that inhibit the transmission of nociceptive signals in the dorsal horn thus "shutting the gate" for pain stimuli – and offering a means of pain control.

### Blood Chemistry theory

Acupuncture can affect blood chemistry through blood concentrations of triglycerides, cholesterol, and phospholipids. Numerous examples reveal that

the regulatory action of acupuncture is bi-directional.<sup>3</sup> Acupuncture lowers the blood pressure in patients with hypertension and elevates it in patients with hypotension; increases gastric secretion in patients with hypoacidity, and lowers it with those suffering from hyperacidity. Although the results are amply documented, the exact mechanism for this is still unclear.

### Neurotransmitter theory

Certain neurotransmitter levels (such as Serotonin and Noradrenaline) are affected by acupuncture. By stimulating neural pathways, acupuncture affects higher brain areas, stimulating the secretion of beta-endorphins and enkephalins in the brain and spinal cord. The release of these neurotransmitters influences both the immune system and the antinociceptive system involved in gate theory.

### Autonomic Nervous System theory

Acupuncture stimulates the release of norepinephrine, acetylcholine and several types of opioids, affecting changes in their turnover rate, normalizing the autonomic nervous

system, and reducing pain.

### Vascular-interstitial theory

Acupuncture manipulates the electrical system of the body by creating or enhancing closed-circuit transport in tissues. This facilitates healing by allowing the transfer of material and electrical energy between normal and injured tissues. This theory fits well with the findings of electro-galvanic skin resistance differentials at acupuncture points.

All these theories go far in explaining – in western medical terms – the various biological processes by which acupuncture affects bodily functions within biophysical systems.

As more research is conducted we are confident that precise mechanisms that instigate these biological processes by the insertion of needles will be better understood and universally accepted.

Diane Shepard is a licensed acupuncturist with a Ph.D. in Oriental Medicine. Dr. Sheppard trained in both China and the U.S and recently opened AcQPoint Wellness Center in La Quinta. 760-775-7900 [www.AcQPoint.com](http://www.AcQPoint.com)

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## Facets of Integrative Cancer Care: A Naturopathic Medical Standpoint

By Sonja Fung, N.D.

*Editors Note: The July/August issue of Desert Health will feature an in-depth look at Integrative Cancer Care with input from both medical and natural health care professionals*

### What is Integrative Cancer Care?

Integrative cancer care uses a comprehensive approach to health, combining conventional and alternative therapies specific to the patient's needs. Integrative cancer care is NOT about replacing your medical oncologist; it is about creating a diversified team of doctors and health practitioners to formulate your unique treatment plan. An integrative approach uses the best treatments at the most appropriate time to get optimal results. This means that before surgery, chemotherapy or radiation, appropriate use of complementary therapies can fortify your body with healing nutrients to maintain your energy, strengthen your immune function, shrink recovery time, augment your cancer-fighting ability, and minimize side effects for a more optimal quality of life.<sup>2</sup>

### Role of Naturopathic Medicine in Cancer Care

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) focus on cancer care from a holistic standpoint. These physicians have expertise in complementary treatments used to support your body's innate ability to heal and support itself. Treatments include diet and nutrition, life-style counseling, IV nutrient therapy, and appropriate supplementation to enhance cancer cell death. NDs are also poised for continued care post-cancer treatment to address and minimize risks for cancer reoccurrence.<sup>2</sup>

### IV Nutrient Therapy: A Facet of Cancer Care

Naturopathic cancer care has multiple facets: nutrition, botanical medicine, nutrient therapy, movement therapy, and mental and emotional support. Here we are focusing on Intravenous Nutritional therapy.

IV nutritional therapy is a highly concentrated infusion of vitamins, minerals, and other natural substances delivered directly into your cells to support optimal health and correct any nutrient deficiencies. It effectively stabilizes and increases muscle mass, replenishes vitamins and minerals, increases energy and strengthens the immune system.<sup>3</sup>

High dose Vitamin C infusions can be used to decrease tumor burden and boost the immune system.<sup>5</sup> Doses as high as 50-100 grams of vitamin C are necessary for therapeutic effect and is only achievable when given via IV, whereas an oral intake of the same amount will cause severe diarrhea and cramping.

In lung, ovarian, colon, and pancreatic cancers, disease progression is often marked by loss of appetite, loss of energy, and muscle wasting.<sup>4</sup> For patients unable to intake enough food, IV amino acids, b vitamins, and minerals are commonly used in naturopathic clinics to halt and reverse progression of muscle loss and fatigue. It is best to start IV therapy before that point, however, and it is one of the most effective therapies at any point in the cancer fighting process.

Dr. Sonja Fung is a Naturopathic Doctor utilizing IV nutrient therapy at Live Well Clinic. Live Well Clinic is located on Washington and Hwy 111 in La Quinta at Point Happy Plaza. For more information you can visit [www.livewellclinic.org](http://www.livewellclinic.org) or call 760-771-5970.

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## Exploring Art as Medicine

By Judy Nemer Sklar

Contemporary life is stressful and to enhance the quality of our lives we must find effective ways to manage this stress. Many doctors now suggest we treat the 'whole person' by combining conventional Western medicine with complementary treatments, such as acupuncture, yoga and massage. Integrative medicine, as this is called, appeals to many patients because it promises a broad approach to one's health. I am not a doctor, but as an artist and a teacher, I advocate that included in this array of complementary therapies should be the Exploration of the Art Making Process.

The benefits of Art Making can be transformative. It can heal us individually and engage us socially. Studies on aging indicate that those who participate in arts programs are in better health, have a greater sense of self and community, and are less prone to depression. Stimulating our brains by learning and trying new things is good for us. We discover that when we open ourselves to the exploration of our creative nature, powerful changes occur; as we evolve so does our view of the people, places and greater world around us.

As children, creating things was natural; we built castles in the sand and made patterns from bird feathers and sea shells. What happened to that creative child? Why is it so difficult to tap into that which was once instinctive?

Every day we are faced with obligations, expectations and demands. Some of these stressors are self-imposed, others societal. Either way, we are bombarded with so much information that there doesn't seem much time for free thinking and play. That is why at the start of an art workshop I suggest taking a few moments to just breathe deeply a few times. With relaxed shoulders and eyes closed, this simple act of relaxing allows us to hold the moment before we begin the process of creating. It gives each participant "permission" to release his/her outside obligations and (for the duration of the project) focus solely on making art.

No matter what your age or current career path it is not too late to express yourself creatively. When you begin to explore your creative side, you are planting a seed that allows you to build upon your strengths, relieve stress and nurture different parts of your personality. Art will expose you to new ideas, people and as many colors, textures and materials as you are willing to embrace. Most importantly, the process is fun. It will put a smile on your face and make you feel good about yourself. And while art is indeed very personal, it also tends to bind people and communities together in a non-competitive, harmonious way. That's why I believe that Art is the perfect medicine!

Judy Nemer Sklar is a professional artist, teacher and student. She is in the process of earning her Master's Degree at CSUDH/Humanities-Creative Track. She teaches a workshop series she has developed entitled "Planting a Seed: Creating Art Inspired by Words, Music Artifacts, Texts and Tweets" @2010. 760.340.9404





## Integrative Medical Practices for Reducing Stress: Kindness and Mindfulness

By Jaime R. Carlo-Casellas, Ph.D.

Loving kindness is a precept of yoga that teaches us how to resonate and be compassionate with others.<sup>1,2</sup> By cultivating loving kindness and resonating with others—including family, friends, strangers, and even adversaries—we begin to see that we are all essentially the same, with the same desires, fears and hopes. Understanding this, we can cope better with the ravages of stress and the chaos in our lives.<sup>3</sup> We feel less isolated from others. On the other hand, lack of compassion, stress, and isolation are major risk factors known to increase the mortality rate and exacerbate the symptoms of many chronic illnesses, such as coronary heart disease.<sup>4</sup>

But, how do we cultivate kindness and compassion? Some learn it from those who lack it;<sup>5</sup> others from those who practice it; others from books or audio CDs;<sup>6</sup> and others by participating in yoga classes that embrace the humanistic principles of yoga more than its physical aspects. Yoga comprises a series of postures and breathing exercises practiced to strengthen the body, clarify the mind, and to cultivate empathy.

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is another modality for reducing our risk of disease. The MBSR program was established at the University of Massachusetts in 1997.<sup>7</sup> Extensively researched, MBSR and loving kindness have been shown to reduce stress by inducing beneficial changes in the structure and function of the brain—changes that enhance attentiveness, information processing, and control of emotions.<sup>8</sup> Such changes are analogous to the effects of physical workouts that increase muscle mass and strength.

Given its healthful effect in preventing, reversing, or ameliorating the symptoms of many stress-related conditions,<sup>9</sup> MBSR classes are now offered in over 200 sites around the world. MBSR encompasses mindfulness meditation and yoga.

What keeps individuals from embracing mindfulness and loving kindness meditation? Yoga and other Eastern practices are suffused with Hindu, Buddhist, and Sanskrit terminology—terminology that may be confusing or frightening to some. Others associate yoga with a religious practice that may defile their form of worship. This is not the case.

There is no doubt that loving kindness and MBSR, when practiced in tandem with each other, are well-documented, adjunct modalities for the treatment of many stress-related illnesses. They are practices now recognized by the medical community that can help not only those suffering from stress-related conditions, but also those striving to live a happier and healthier life.

*Jaime Carlo-Casellas, Ph.D. is a Stress Management Specialist, a Certified Life Coach, a Registered Yoga Instructor, and founding director of the Stress Management & Prevention Center in Rancho Mirage. For more information, visit [www.stressprevention.org](http://www.stressprevention.org).*

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## Rheumatoid Arthritis: Treating the Root Cause

By Shannon Sinsheimer, N.D.

The human body is a complex, interconnected system, and a dysfunction in one location can present issues in a completely different area on the body. Supporting the basic foundations of health, such as digestion, is often overlooked in traditional medicine. If our basic body system is unhealthy it can cause progressive problems in other areas. For example, rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease that typically presents as joint inflammation. However, through my experience in treating patients, I believe an underlying root cause of this disease is bowel and digestion dysfunction.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) can begin as a small pain that increases over time to be a much larger problem. In other cases, patients simply wake up with it one day. Common symptoms are inflammation, pain, and morning stiffness of the small

joints in hands, feet, wrists, and ankles. The medical tests used to diagnose RA are rheumatoid factor, anti-nuclear antibody, and ESR. X-rays are also performed to determine any changes in bone formation. Medications for RA are typically immunosuppressant, chemotherapy, and anti-inflammatory agents. While useful, these tests and medications do not constitute restorative medicine, and do not treat the underlying root cause of the disease.

Autoimmune diseases often start with digestive dysfunction. If there is dysfunction within the bowels or digestion, lymph glands, which produce our white blood cells, can be affected. In autoimmune diseases, our white blood cells attack our own body (synovial joint fluid in the case of rheumatoid arthritis) so it is not surprising to know that GI dysfunction

can lead to autoimmune issues. In the case of RA, treating the GI tract as a first line approach is important to begin restoration of the whole body.

Treating the digestive system to alleviate the symptoms and progression of RA begins with a whole food (primarily vegetarian) and gluten-free diet. RA tends to be more prevalent in western society with processed-food diets. In addition, certain supplements help restore GI health such as digestive enzymes, probiotics, and herbs with healing, anti-inflammatory, and mucilaginous properties. These supplements assist in rebuilding healthy GI tissue to ultimately renew the digestion processes. The course of therapy for GI improvement can take anywhere from 4 to 6 months, and progression is monitored by tests and changes in symptoms.

After beginning treatment for GI health, other therapies may be accessed for RA including: natural anti-inflammatories, anti-oxidants, specific vitamin and mineral protocols, and essential fatty acids.

Improving GI function is important before introducing supplements the body can't process. As with any chronic illness, balancing adrenal and thyroid hormones, eliminating food allergies, detoxifying heavy metals, and optimizing sleep, energy, and exercise patterns, is part of a complete and necessary treatment plan.

In my experience, treating RA from the root cause and giving the body time to restore with natural therapies will ultimately alleviate pain, preserve the body from further changes, and manage the patient in a way that makes sense for long term health and wellness. Although medications are useful and can provide significant pain relief, long term use is not ideal. Rheumatoid Arthritis is a disease whose progression can be halted with the appropriate naturopathic support.

*Dr. Shannon Sinsheimer is a Naturopathic Doctor at Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568-2598.*

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**Jaime Carlo-Casellas, Ph.D.** is a Stress Management Specialist, Certified Life Coach, Registered Yoga Instructor, and founding director of the Stress Management & Prevention Clinic in Rancho Mirage. Jaime studied at the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

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## When Should I Hire A Caregiver?

Fear of losing their independence is the primary concern of older adults. Take Mrs. Weeks, who fell and lay on the ground for three hours before being found by the gardener. She was given an ultimatum by her family, either go to a nursing home or hire an in-home caregiver. That was four years ago. Today, Mrs. Weeks is 93 years old and enjoying the caregiver who has enabled her to retain her independence and enjoy her life at home.

When simple tasks become difficult, hiring a caregiver is a wise choice.

### So when is it time to hire a caregiver?

- Difficulty with walking, balance, standing and sitting or transferring from one place to another and history of falls
- Spoiled food in the refrigerator, unclean or cluttered home environment, bills unpaid.
- Difficulty driving or recent car accidents
- Changes in physical appearance or hygiene.
- Forgetful/confused with medications or prescription refills.
- Confusion, memory loss, difficulty concentrating and changes in personality (which all may be sign of dementia or Alzheimer's disease).

### Benefits of an Agency (vs. Individual)

When choosing a caregiver, you want to find someone who is loving, caring, responsible and dependable. With many employees on-call, a care giving agency can arrange for the assistance needed to help your loved ones to continue to live safely at home, from 1 - 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. An agency will also run extensive background checks, including fingerprinting, DMV records, TB testing, and accuracy of paperwork and current certifications, to ensure all caregivers are thoroughly screened. These are good reasons to consider a care giving agency.

Additionally, the caregiver is standardly covered under the agency's umbrella insurance policy with a license, bond and liability coverage. This gives clients recourse if an incident or theft should occur. Agency's may employ certified caregivers, Certified Nursing Assistants, Licensed Vocational Nurses, and other trained professionals. All caregivers you are considering should be at least certified in CPR and first aid training.

Another advantage to an agency is the ability to immediately cover a shift when a caregiver becomes sick or needs time off. Most agencies also have an emergency after hours phone number, providing you with much needed peace of mind.

Whether you are a family member or friend seeking assistance for another, you need to ask very specific questions to the potential caregiver or agency. Be sure that they provide the items mentioned above. Also be sure to approach the conversation with your loved one with sensitivity. Remember their biggest fear is losing independence and needing to leave home. Listen to them and share your concerns in order for them to become participants in finding solutions.

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Letting Go

We have all had those times in our lives when we are momentarily able to see that we may have lost sight of that which is really important.

Maybe we think we are the only one who is suffering emotionally. Then comes that moment when, in lashing out at someone for being uncaring about our situation, it becomes apparent that he or she is suffering as well, and that we are the cause. Or maybe we are lucky enough to be with someone who has less than we do, but is happy to share what little he or she has in spite of what tomorrow may (or may not) bring. In such moments, we realize, in our own humility, that we have been blind to the existence of our own greater estate.



Jasenka Sabanovic

Even more important than this initial revelation is the one that follows. It appears within our new awareness. We can now see, by the faintest light, that we had mistaken ourselves for someone we are not. And in this self-awakening, we are granted that first priceless glimmer of self-knowledge that is sought after by all who strive to find their inner truth. We begin to see that we have been playing host to an unconscious nature that is blind to the world, and would have us believe that its little selfdom is the same as our actual True Nature.

How can such a deception take place in us and go undetected? We would never willingly agree to be the blind agent of that which makes another human being ache, let alone hurt our own chances to grow into a kind and compassionate being. And yet the evidence reveals that we are indeed living under the sway of self-compromising influences that are invisible to us.


Our True Nature is not some static line drawn upon a horizontal plane, where access to what we may become depends upon what is already known. We are at our core creatures of the universe who continue to grow. Beings whose original and celestial self is not only born of light, but also intended to live unbound.

It is this higher, yet still hidden Self of ours that beckons us to realize and enter into a greater life. And though its whispered wisdom often gets lost in the din of other voices that tell us what we need and where to look, if we listen closely enough, our True Self will have us know.

Whenever we start to feel small it's only because we have unconsciously identified ourselves with life's little things. If you're tired of feeling walled in by unwanted circumstances, nagging doubts, or the weight of an unforgiving past, its time to let go and open the doors to a brand new phase of your life.

Jasenka Sabanovic is a Certified Life Coach and owner of Coaching to Vision offering individual life coaching and group workshops. For additional information and workshop schedules call 760-799-0523 or visit [www.CoachingToVision.com](http://www.CoachingToVision.com)





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## Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco

### Harnessing Intention for Positive Energy and Wellness

Many Eastern principles and approaches can resonate and spread positive energy and wellness into our lives. The following are a few techniques and approaches to explore:

- **Chi is the aspect of energy from an Eastern perspective.**

There is a Taoist approach identifying two different types of chi; prenatal and postnatal. We are born with Prenatal. Some of us are born with stronger levels of chi at birth. Postnatal chi is the energy we cultivate and harness for ourselves after birth. Energy is everything we eat, think, do, absorb and practice.

- **How do we harness Chi in life?** We direct Chi through intention. How do we harness proper intention? In an Eastern approach, it is first through Yi (what you think - the initial forms of intention) then we progress to Chi (this is the energy behind thoughts and intention) then we arrive to Li (the action or end result from thoughts and energy). Health practitioners such as Reiki Masters and Qigong Practitioners help us realize and understand our energy flow.

- **There are Chi Vampires.** These are people that take the life from us. Individuals who have very low prenatal and postnatal Chi and are desperate to pull others into their low negative energy field. Instances of energy pull might simply be people around us who are having a bad day, need to be heard or have questionable boundaries. We can learn techniques (such as Tai Chi, an ancient Chinese system of movement) to ensure we protect ourselves.

- **Martial arts is a practice based around four ways to generate power.** One can employ the movements of sinking, shifting, turning and rising. These are techniques that allow for leverage, momentum and power. These 4 movements are at the crux of proper movement. Multiple movements are put together and when employing these mechanics one is suddenly living from center. Our dan-tien (energy center), which resides in the belly assists us in powerful ways. Throughout the day we are using our center for all movement; expending energy outward and storing energy back inward. In order to feel connectivity in all day-to-day movement we must be in touch with these principles.

- **We must learn how to still the fluctuations of the mind.** This is the ultimate definition of yoga; another Eastern practice that provides insight. How can positive intention be harnessed when the mind is darting from one place to the next? Taking some of the basics of asana (posture) and breath in yoga can create further clarity on the journey to "healthy habits." Movements can be practiced in workday breaks. A backbend will give energy, a forward bend will provide a cool off, a twist will aid in detoxification, and a balancing posture will bring balance. These are all profound concepts woven into the practice of living and healing in our daily existence.

Intention is the first step in life toward achieving positive energy. Then, action towards a healthier, happier lifestyle will proceed.

Jennifer is a Desert native with 20 years of experience in the spa industry. She is the Director at the Hyatt's Agua Serena Spa in Indian Wells and has a Tuesday morning wellness segment as ZenJen on 100.5fm radio.



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## Hard to Change Habits? Blame Your Killer Genes

Continued from front page

weight, so he was the perfect lab rat using sophisticated blood tests to scientifically experiment on how foods and supplements biologically changed his own body. The results amazed him. Not only did he lose over 75 pounds, but he restored his body's normal cell functioning. His LDL ("bad" cholesterol) dropped more than 100 points and his HDL ("good" cholesterol) increased 50 points. His migraines vanished and his blood pressure dropped to 90/50.

After further research, Gundry created the Diet Evolution and found that people who adopted the program all experienced positive, life changing results. He moved to the Desert to establish The International Health and Lung Institute and The Center for Restorative Medicine.

Gundry's protocol is not the typical diet recommended by health care professionals.

"We are what we are because of the interaction of compounds in food and our environment that activate the genes in our body, literally switching them on or off and telling our genes to do good things or to do bad things," states Gundry. "A lot of times there are things happening at the cellular level that we might not feel from day to day but are having a tremendous influence on the long term effects in our body. This is a process that has been going on since the dawn of time. It's a beautiful design as long as you understand what the design is looking for."

Gundry believes that aging and death are not preordained, but "ordered" to occur by what he calls "killer genes" to make room for new copies of your genes (your offspring) to survive and reproduce. This is not a theory, but a behavior that scientists have known for years. It's these genes that make you crave sugar, tobacco and other substances that may kill you in the end.

"Your genes are constructed to achieve three main goals: 1) deliver genes into the future by reproducing; 2) ensure the survival of your genetic copies; and 3) after accomplishing #1 and #2, get out of the way so you don't compete for limited resources with your offspring. And here's the clincher. The faster you accomplish these goals, the better things are from your genes' point of view."

It seems that the western diet has evolved as if controlled by these killer genes. We now have more diseases designed to kill us off quickly. And studies show that populations—even animals—newly introduced to the Western diet prefer this food and even crave it.

"Food has changed dramatically in the past 100 years. Our diet was remarkably uniform for millions of years up until about 8000 years ago when grain and beans were introduced and about 100 years ago when processed grains came along. A significant change also occurred 50 years ago when farm animals stopped being fed foods that they normally eat and were fed grain, which they were not designed to eat."

#### The Good News?

You can "tame" your killer genes, and in fact tell your genes to behave to your benefit by deactivating bad cells, repairing damaged cells, and reproducing healthy cells, with diet and supplements.

"I approached this new field as a research project and every one of my patients is their own laboratory. I get rather fascinating blood work every 3 months on every one of our patients. With special genetic testing, we can track food that people eat and supplements they take and their effect at the cellular level. These tests can tell me if a patient has stopped taking a supplement and even if they have changed brands."

#### Even Better News?

Gundry has found that this reversal process works at all ages. "I call myself a restorative medicine professional. My job is to give people tools to restore their body to as perfect a health as they want. I teach people how to de-age. What has been most surprising to me is that it is never too late. We have found that you can actually return quite damaged cells into very healthy cells. I have seen people in their mid to late 80's completely turn their lives around—get rid of what are considered chronic diseases like diabetes, arthritis, Parkinson's—and go about leading their exciting and active lives."

Gundry adds with a smile, "I have 90 year old women who now won't even look at 80 year old men because they are too boring."

How do Gundry's peers react to his new practice? "My client's call me 'No More Mr. Knife Guy' so it doesn't get any better than that. Some physicians think I am selling snake oil, but the biggest compliment comes when they send me patients, or come to see me personally, and we are able to change their lives around."

To start your journey towards healthier cells and to turn off those killer genes, memorize the following "Gundryisms":

- If you eat less, you'll live longer
- Eat food "live" to arrive at a hundred and five
- Vegetables are good for you because they are "bad" for you (according to your killer genes)
- Exercise is good for you because its "bad" for you
- Drink some red wine, and you'll be fine
- Keep your genes guessing as to the timing of your next meal
- The cooler your engine runs, the longer you'll go without a major breakdown

Dr. Gundry is on the medical staff of Desert Regional Medical Center. Dr. Gundry's Diet Evolution is available at Barnes & Noble in Palm Desert or online at [www.BarnesandNoble.com](http://www.BarnesandNoble.com).

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