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September/October 2020

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By Lauren Del Sarto

So much has changed. The world has changed. I have changed. Those around me have changed. And life in the desert has certainly changed.

While we each found our way to this unique place for different reasons - some to escape city life or retire in the sun, others to take care of parents or simply try something new - one thing we share is a love for desert life.

We were drawn by the beauty and nature, splendid seasonal weather, and the vast array of events, festivals and happy hours that make our valley a world-renowned resort destination.

Many, like me, however, didn't expect to discover such a strong sense of community. We belong to social groups or clubs and play pickleball, golf, or tennis. We hike, bike and ride horses together. We schedule bunco and mahjong and convene for lunches and dinners. We thrive on business-to-business opportunities and give back through volunteering. We support each other's galas and gatherings, and along the way, make new friends, feel fulfilled and develop a strong sense of purpose.

At this time, much of that is missing.

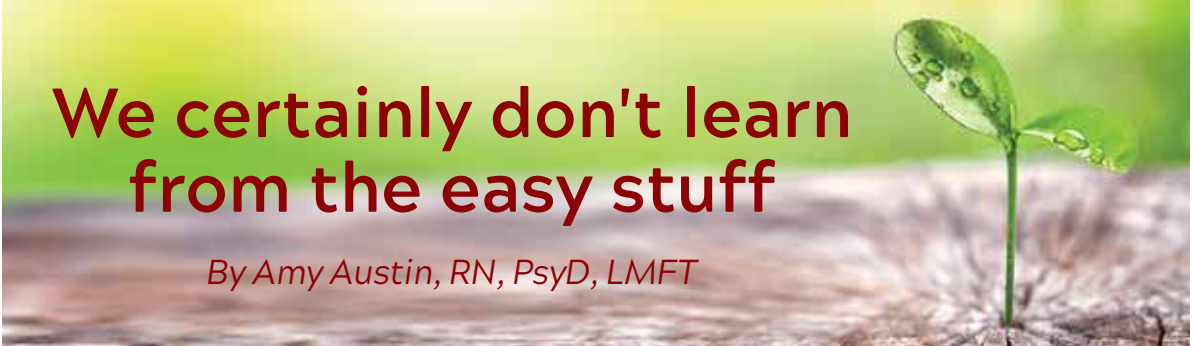
Our individual worlds have become smaller and the mere thought of communing can evoke uncertainty and fear. We each live in our own little COVID cluster and no one knows how the other looks. It's so different and strange.

Who would have ever thought this of our desert paradise?

I miss my friends, our community and desert life immensely. While I know it's temporary, I can't help but wonder, will it ever be the same? How will quarantine change us individually and as a society?

A February 2020 report in *The Lancet* reviewed 3,166 papers on the mental impact of quarantine.¹ Some of the adverse effects reported include post-traumatic stress symptoms, confusion (anyone else have COVID brain?) and anger (COVID crazy). These feelings are brought on by fears of infection, frustration (why does everything seem so *challenging?*), boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss and the long durations we are experiencing now.

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By Amy Austin, RN, PsyD, LMFT

Last week I was at the market masked up like the Lone Ranger (and believe me that's how I feel when I am wearing a mask sans my trusted horse Silver) walking up and down the aisles talking to myself (one of the perks of wearing a mask) when I heard, "Hello, how are you?"

I stopped mid-sentence asking myself where the canned tuna was and replied, "Fine, thank you!" I was so taken back that I forgot to ask this nice gentleman how he was doing. Imagine that! A simple pleasantry, a common exchange BC (before COVID), was now a monumental event saying, "I see you. I recognize you. I know you are there. I care enough to stop and ask how you are."

Well, at least that was my interpretation of such a surreal moment because something as simple as an exchange that lasted a nanosecond had not happened since before COVID-19 began - a sad state of affairs for sure.

And what about the oxymoron, "social distancing?" Another one I adore is "cautiously optimistic," but I digress. What is social about distancing? I get it's about being socially polite and attempting to stay virus-free, but there's nothing social about distancing.

Human beings, as a whole, crave connection and communal experiences. That's what makes life worth living. Celebrating, breaking bread, praying, sharing successes and wins together, seeking shoulders to cry on, friendships to cherish, accepting foibles and quirks and even heated discussions to lovingly resolve are part and parcel of being human.

Face it. We need one another.

The good news is animal shelters are at an all-time low because people are in desperate need to love and be loved. I mean, who needs a shrink when a pup is licking your face or a kitty is purring in your lap?

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Social distancing is changing the way we come together.



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Making Memories

So happy to welcome September, the beginning of fall! Maybe you're sitting at an outdoor café right now enjoying a warm coffee and cool breeze. I'm writing this at the end of August in hopes that the new month shepherds in much anticipated change - in the weather and our ability to freely enjoy cafés.

How are you doing? Are you taking the time to have some fun, to make positive memories from 2020? We certainly could use them.

Some of my all-time favorite memories are camping with the family. Mom even drove us cross country in a Volkswagen camper in 1976. Classic memories! And since nature is the best place to be right now, we are hiking, camping and enjoying the great outdoors as much as possible.

It's fascinating to see many old things becoming new again. A young Silicon Valley techie told me she and her friends are knitting, canning jams and bartering goods back and forth. Now that's making good memories! Hopefully, you're taking this time to be creative.

We appreciate your taking the time to read *Desert Health*! In this issue you'll find advice from our valley's health care community on building healthier habits (p.11), reversing disease (p.14), managing diabetes naturally (p.17), changing pain to comfort (p.3), and adding medicinal mushrooms and ashwagandha to your diet (p.12) to name a few.

If you're spending more time in the kitchen, we've got tasty recipes in *Fresh Cuisine* (p.20) and money-saving tips we all can use in *Financial Health* (p.22).

Be well, and have fun making wonderful memories to take with you. This year will be over before you know it!

With sincere appreciation ~

Lauren
Lauren Del Sarto
Founder/Publisher

Check out Lauren's blog at www.LaurenDelSarto.com



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(760) 238.0245

PO Box 802, La Quinta CA 92247

lauren@deserthealthnews.com

www.DesertHealthNews.com

[f](#) [t](#) [@DesertHealth](#) • [i](#) [@DesertHealthNews](#)



Erika Z. Byrd, APR
LEAD EDITOR



Doris Steadman
EVENT MANAGER
& EDITOR



Heather McKay
GRAPHIC DESIGN
mkaydesign.com



Michelle Steadman
SOCIAL MEDIA
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Building a Bridge to Behavioral Health Careers

By Kim McNulty

The Coachella Valley has a critical shortage of behavioral health professionals to serve the needs of our community. To address this need, local behavioral health partners came together as OneFuture Coachella Valley's Behavioral Health Workforce Team (BH A-Team) in 2016 with the vision that the Coachella Valley will have an abundant supply of mental and behavioral health professionals from our own student population who can be responsive to the needs of our community.

The Bridge to Behavioral Health Careers (BBHC) program is the team's newest strategy designed to support rising college freshmen and underclassmen from Coachella Valley high school health academies who are committed to staying connected with the BH A-Team as they pursue their higher education and career in behavioral health/social work. The team will help these students navigate the transition through college and into their career by providing activities to keep them connected to a behavioral health career path and help bring them back to the valley as a next-generation professional.



OneFuture's mission is to ensure all students succeed in college, career, and life - expanding and enhancing the local workforce so our youth and economy thrive. Specifically, our goal is that all students will:

- have a clear economic and academic path to and through college
- successfully complete post-secondary degrees, credentials or certificates
- land a job with a promising financial path
- contribute to a thriving economy

The BBHC students will receive comprehensive Student Support Services through OneFuture's team and our behavioral health partners, including workshops and individual coaching in five core areas:

- Support and guidance - academic counseling/advising
- Student enrichment - workshops and skill building
- Inspiring leadership, engagement and connection - student leadership program
- Empowering students - experiential learning and career mentoring

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Changing Pain to Comfort

By Roger Moore, CHt

In mid-July, I had rotator cuff surgery on my left shoulder. Leading up to the surgery, I was fascinated by how the surgeon cautioned me about managing the pain, and he gave me three different pain prescriptions. Everyone I talked to said, "Oh, that's going to hurt!" And since the surgery, people frequently ask about the pain. They are bewildered when I respond, "What pain?" And at physical therapy, I'm constantly asked, "How is your pain?" and "Does this hurt?" (For the record, I'm not using any pain medication.)

I don't know about you, but I don't want to think about or talk about pain. I focus on comfort. The traditional medical pain scale ranges from 0 to 10, where 10 indicates miserable pain, and 0 means feeling great. With this scale, the emphasis is on pain.

What is referred to as pain is the perception of stimuli, both physical and emotional. Pain does have a purpose: it warns you of danger and reminds you that you must give care to and maintain your physical and emotional self. In this context, pain is a good thing; it gets your attention. Once pain has your attention, it no longer has a purpose. When I move my arm in a way that I shouldn't, I get a jolt of pain telling me to stop doing what I'm doing and when I stop, it's gone.

Pain is subjective, and suffering is determined by the meaning you give to the experience. When you react emotionally to the pain, you begin to suffer. Anxiety, frustration, guilt and the fear of pain continuing are examples of suffering. Suffering also derives from the helplessness and depression that often follow seemingly endless medical visits with no improvement.

Instead, with physical, mental and emotional pain, I suggest my clients focus on comfort. I give them a copy of the Comfort Scale (pictured here), which was created by my colleague Kelley T. Woods, and ask them to track their overall level of comfort daily.

With the Comfort Scale, 10 is feeling great and 0 is "Help!" So, rather than focusing on physical pain, mental anguish or depression, the focus is on feeling good, mental well-being and happiness. The Comfort Scale also is empowering as it gives you a sense of control. You get to choose to focus on feeling better rather than worse.

To help enhance your comfort level, never refer to *my pain*, *my illness*, *my depression*. Distance it by saying *the pain*, *the illness* and *the depression*. Don't make it yours - it's not your identity. Simply changing your language to release that ownership can help relieve suffering.

Using simple, quick, easy mindfulness techniques can really help you to experience comfort. Mindfulness allows you to acknowledge there *is* pain - be it physical, mental and or emotional - without *being* the pain. Being mindful, you can take the suffering out of pain.

Roger Moore is a certified counselor and registered hypnotherapist with Palm Desert Hypnosis and can be reached at Roger@HypnosisHealthInfo.com or (760) 219.8079. For more information, visit www.hypnosishealthinfo.com/medical-hypnosis.



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Beating Cancer

Encouragement from the other side

By Lauren Del Sarto

Many have been following my cancer journey, which began with a diagnosis of invasive ductal carcinoma in January 2019. As most who share the journey will agree, the entire experience is life-changing and shouldn't be traveled without the support, knowledge and encouragement of those who came before us.

I am now on the other side and honored to share a few insights along with an update on my health. Realizing that no two cancers and no two people are alike, I can only hope these words will inspire others to work hard toward the same positive outcomes I have experienced.

At my one-year follow-up appointment in July, mammograms and an MRI showed no abnormalities. A circulating tumor cell blood test (previously 0 at diagnosis, 105 at seven months and 54 at nine months) was back to zero, and a CRP blood test (inflammation marker) was close to zero at <0.15 (average is 1-3) - a good sign of overall health.

The path I chose and the protocol designed by my integrative team of doctors has worked well for me. But creating that path was no easy task.

Do your research and know your options

One of the first responses people often have with a diagnosis is to look for someone to fix them. The news is overwhelming, and it can feel easier to go with the first recommendation or choose the most extreme measures in an attempt to get it over with quickly. However, there can be tremendous value in doing research and consulting with as many professionals as possible. In my case, it saved my breasts.

When first diagnosed with a 1.5 cm tumor on my left breast and precancerous cells on the right, I was leaning toward a double mastectomy. The "standard of care" (lumpectomy, radiation and hormone therapy) was not for me, and three of the first specialists with whom I consulted agreed that mastectomy was a good second option.

Then through research, I learned of cryoablation, a less invasive procedure that freezes the tumor. Cryoablation is used on different cancers and is currently in clinical trials for breast cancer. I was a good candidate but didn't want to do the radiation and hormone therapy required of trial participants. City of Hope agreed to do the procedure off-protocol, along with a small surgery on the right to remove the precancerous cells. To address hormones, I continue to take the natural estrogen-reducing supplements DIM (diindolylmethane) and ginkgo biloba.

I am so grateful to have found these options.

Time to put yourself first

When you hear the C-word, you can't help but wonder why. I agree with those who approach disease as a sign your body, mind and spirit are out of alignment.

Now is the time to connect with your spirit and soul on a deeper level; to address those things you may be keeping suppressed, to get in touch with your intuition and make positive changes physically, emotionally and spiritually. You will come to understand how much you need that intuition to create your own path to healing.



Support, knowledge and encouragement from those who came before us help ease the cancer journey.

This time is yours. Put yourself first and make sure those around you support your decision. As author and oncology nurse Judy Kneese said, "At no other time in life will people give you as much permission to make changes."

Read *Radical Remission*

Author Kelly Turner, Ph.D. interviewed hundreds of survivors around the world who beat cancer against the odds to determine how they did it. While each listed numerous factors they felt contributed to their success, there were nine key things the majority shared - from radically changing their diets to releasing suppressed emotions. This insightful and motivational book tells their stories and serves as a guide, not only for those fighting cancer but also for those looking to prevent cancer.

Build your integrative team

If you approach cancer on all levels - body, mind and spirit - you realize it is more than the medical community alone can offer. An integrative team will work together to ensure you are addressing all aspects of strength and healing.

In addition to my surgeon and oncologist, I have naturopathic doctors for nutrition and supplemental support, an acupuncturist applying Eastern medicine and an energy worker to help keep things light and positive. I feel confident their combined effort and guidance contributed to my success.

Emerging on the other side

For me, life seems richer and calmer than before cancer. I have a clearer sense of what I want and don't want in my life and am working on living in harmony with the universal flow. Considering the driven, meticulous, and high-energy path I have been on for 54 years, I wouldn't have sought this new level of consciousness if it weren't for this past year, and for that I am grateful.

At our final appointment in August, my oncologist said I looked different from when she met me almost two years ago. "Your body language is more relaxed and less intense," to which my mom replied, "She's had that intensity since she was a little girl."

At that moment, I was overwhelmed with a deep sense of pride. My hard work has paid off. This cancer journey has changed me, and I know I am a healthier - and better - person.

My naturopathic doctor asked what my new health goals were, and I was excited to plan for something other than beating cancer.

However, most of my cancer protocol has now become a way of life, and I love it. I'll maintain my pescatarian diet (I don't miss meat at all), avoid sugar and grains, take immune-building supplements, consume less alcohol, practice daily meditation and yoga, and maintain a more balanced pace. I'll continue using my grounding mats and natural body care products, and will continue with acupuncture and energy work monthly for maintenance.

Today, when I think of my cancer journey, I smile. I made it to the other side better than before and know there is hope for those who follow.

Lauren Del Sarto is founder and publisher of Desert Health and can be reached at Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com. Visit her blog at www.LaurenDelSarto.com.



Tending to Our Tendons

By Eric Sickinger, DO and Thalie Timsit, BS

As we become more active, our bodies become more susceptible to overuse and injury. In particular, our tendons, which are involved in muscle movement, are easily damaged. Tendons are the fibrous connective tissues that attach a bone to a muscle. Many movements involve pulling on a tendon for the desired muscle to contract.

Tendinopathy is the broad term for any disorder of the tendon, which includes tendinosis and tendonitis. It is commonly a result of overuse from repeated activity. While athletes are particularly at risk, ultimately, anybody can be affected. Those with hypertension, diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol are also at higher risk.

The amount we use our tendons reflects the ubiquity of the disorder. About 30 percent of clinical consultations for musculoskeletal pain are related to tendinopathy.¹ With such a high prevalence, you, or someone you know, may be affected, so it's important to educate yourself on the causes and treatments.

How does it occur?

When we injure a tendon, there is a cascade of biological processes that occurs to ensure it fully heals. Our body sends out signals, essentially waving its hands in the air calling for help. Ideally, these signals initiate blood to flow to that region (inflammation), "clean up cells" (macrophages) to remove damaged tissue, growth factors to regenerate the tissue, and collagen to proliferate in an organized manner. Collagen is the primary component of tendons and is essential to the proper functionality of the musculoskeletal system. In the case of tendinopathy, the healing process does not go as planned. Under the microscope, one might find less inflammatory cells, collagen degeneration and disorganization and hypercellularity (an excess of cells).² Basically, the immune response is not responding to our body's call for backup.

How is it treated?

We focus treatment on tricking the body into getting the proper response, one way or another. Standard conservative treatment options that apply to general musculoskeletal injury remain effective for tendinopathy. This includes ice/heat, activity modification, stretching, physical therapy, bracing and anti-inflammatory medication. These typical treatments generally resolve the pain, but sometimes further options need to be explored.

Several different types of injections can be favorable in treating tendinopathy. Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) has strong empirical support for alleviating tendon pain. The process takes advantage of using the patient's own platelets and injecting them into the problem area. Platelets are beneficial as they accelerate cell growth and healing. Another type of injection is prolotherapy, which entails injecting an irritant such as dextrose around the area of pain. It sounds counterintuitive, but the irritant stimulates the immune response that leads to inflammation and healing. Finally,

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Tendinopathy is commonly a result of overuse from repeated activity.



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Addressing Women's Sexual Health

By Laura Moroney, FNP-C

Viagra is practically a household name. It's easy to talk about Viagra and Cialis for erectile dysfunction. It's not as easy to talk openly about women's sexual health issues. But certain conditions or phases of life can affect a woman's ability to feel sexy or even enjoy sex. I want women to feel comfortable discussing sexual issues and to know they don't have to suffer. There are treatments to help conditions like



Treatments are available to enhance women's sexual experiences at any age.

contributes to dryness, burning and itching. It also helps strengthen the pelvic floor to reduce urinary leakage without a mesh implant and also can provide tightening of the vaginal muscle, which may increase sexual enjoyment.

The first question people always ask is, "What does the treatment feel like?" The treatments only take about 15 minutes and most patients describe them as virtually painless.

Then they want to know how long before they can resume sex. We advise patients to refrain from exercise and sexual intercourse for about a week following each treatment. Typically, five to six treatments are recommended, spaced about two weeks apart for best results.

One of my patients, a 30-year-old woman with perimenopausal symptoms including dryness and discomfort during sexual intercourse, commented, "There was barely any discomfort, just a little pressure. I would describe it as similar to a pap smear, if not easier." She was impressed with the treatment adding that she saw an improvement after the first treatment, which was very encouraging. After the third treatment, she really noticed a difference - and so did her husband.

It's rewarding to help women feel better about one of the most intimate areas of life. I encourage women to take more control of their sexuality and not be ashamed to say, "I want to feel better with my partner even into my 60s, 70s and 80s." Why not?

Laura Moroney, FNP-C is a laser specialist and nurse practitioner at Contour Dermatology & Cosmetic Surgery Center. She can be reached at (760) 423.4000 or www.contourderm.com.

painful sexual intercourse (dyspareunia), vaginal atrophy and dryness (common with menopause), as well as vaginal relaxation syndrome (VRS) and stress urinary incontinence (SUI), both frequent issues after multiple childbirths.

While working as a laser nurse at a dermatology practice in Bahrain, where my husband was stationed as a U.S. Marine, I was trained to perform gynecological laser therapy. I successfully treated many patients, and as a mother of two, I also had this laser treatment myself and experienced improvement for incontinence.

When I came back to the United States after getting my nurse practitioner credentials, I resumed working in dermatology at Contour Dermatology and began talking with Dr. Jochen about bringing this laser technology to the desert to help women locally feel more comfortable about themselves and their sexuality. We selected the BellaV, an erbium laser, one of several types of lasers FDA cleared for gynecological use.

This laser technology offers an effective alternative to surgery for treating the vaginal and pelvic floor area. It helps restore natural vaginal lubrication by rejuvenating and thickening the mucosal tissue as thinning of this tissue

Championing the Fight Against Prostate Cancer

ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer is bringing the first-ever virtual celebration for prostate cancer to the Coachella Valley on Saturday, September 19 at 9 a.m. Community members are invited to head outside prior to the event, and then head online this day for an inspiring event that will show the love to local prostate cancer patients, survivors and caregivers.

This digital gathering replaces the ZERO Cancer Run/Walk launched last September but will retain a community atmosphere and spirit of hope that is signature to ZERO's nationwide Prostate Cancer Run/Walk held in about 45 cities across the country. Programming will include live interviews, performances, the chance to get outside for unique activities and more.



ZERO returns with interactive opportunities for the entire family to get involved.



The virtual ceremony will honor survivors, caregivers and local champions.

ZERO's mission is to end prostate cancer through advancing research, improving the lives of men and families, and inspiring action. Through their national run/walk series, education, patient support programs, and grassroots advocacy, they are building Generation ZERO, the first generation of men free from prostate cancer. ZERO dedicates 86 cents of every dollar to research and patient support programs, including the Veterans initiative, MENTor and ZERO360.

"While COVID-19 is changing how we get together, it is not changing our passion and dedication to support patients and families through this crisis and celebrate community," said Jamie Bearse, ZERO CEO and president.

"The increased financial and emotional needs for patients due to COVID-19 are devastating," said Lisa Ford, local race director and director of business development with HALO Diagnostics. "Together, we can show our support to prostate cancer patients, caregivers and survivors during these difficult times."

Some of the online festivities include:

- A fundraising spotlight and local highlights showcasing some of Coachella Valley's premier warriors in the fight against prostate cancer
- A touching ceremony honoring survivors
- Informative, educational segments led by HALO Diagnostics and Valley Urology Medical Group will inform the community on prostate cancer, and much more.

How can you get involved? Registration for the web-based gathering is free. Participants are encouraged to select one of four posted 5k race routes and log their time online before September 18. Registrants are encouraged to raise funds leading up to the event date as all funds raised will provide direct support to local prostate cancer patients and families who have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Custom event

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Tending to Our Tendons

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dry needling/fenestration is a technique that involves a needle puncture to instigate inflammation and, therefore, the healing response.

Nitroglycerin patches are another non-invasive choice that has had promising outcomes. Nitroglycerin produces nitric oxide, which stimulates collagen growth and vasodilates to increase blood flow. These patches have been shown to decrease pain, improve range of motion, and improve the muscular force.

Wave therapy is an emerging treatment alternative that uses sound or light waves to treat the condition. Shockwave therapy involves a series of high energy sound waves directly applied to the area of concern. The pulses of waves lead to new blood vessel formation, decreased inflammation, and stimulus of collagen synthesis. Ultrasound therapy is another form of soundwave therapy that uses high frequency, low energy waves. The energy from the sound wave is converted to heat and increases local blood flow and tissue relaxation while decreasing scar tissue. Lightwave therapy involves lasers that use non-thermal photons through the skin at multiple wavelengths and depth to decrease pain, inflammation and edema.



Physical therapy, bracing, and wave therapy are non-invasive treatment options.

When all options are exhausted, surgery may be the best solution for the patient. Skilled surgeons can repair the tissue in an operating room, however, it should be reserved as a last resort. In most cases, more conservative options are sufficient for reducing symptoms.

Since tendinopathy is so prevalent, it's important to understand exactly what it is, how it happens, and how to treat it. Our bodies do what they can to ensure a smooth healing process, but they are not foolproof. The immune system's failure to follow the correct steps of healing affects many people in the form of tendinopathy. Thankfully, there are many promising, non-invasive treatment options available today.

Founding physician Eric Sickinger, DO and medical assistant Thalie Timsit, BS are with Advanced Center for Sports & Musculoskeletal Medicine. For more information, contact their Palm Desert office at (760) 636.1067 or the San Clemente office at (949) 388.1060, or visit www.SportsandMSKmedicine.com.

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Championing the Fight Against Prostate Cancer

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Thank you for your support! We look forward to seeing you on September 19 at 9 a.m. For free registration, visit www.ZEROCancerRun.org/Coachella and follow on Facebook @Zerocancer. For more information on ZERO programs, visit www.ZEROCancer.org. For questions, please contact So-Cal Chapter Director Andrea Sweet at andrea@zerocancer.org or Coachella Valley Race Director Lisa Ford at Lisa.Ford@HALODx.com.

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The COVID-19 Hearing Loss Crisis

By Lisa Nathan Bellows, MA, CCCA

The coronavirus emergency has made life more dangerous and difficult for people worldwide. However, the extraordinary challenges experienced by the hearing impaired and deaf populations have not been addressed adequately to date by the media.

Listening is defined as an "active or intentional behavior involving the brain's ability to decode and process communication."¹ Affecting approximately 48 million Americans,² hearing loss, therefore, presents special needs for 20 percent of the U.S. population. With many people over the age of 60 at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19, the impact of hearing loss and aging combined can have many negative social effects, especially on verbal communication between partners and family members.

Strategies utilized to improve communication with a hearing impaired individual have been well-documented in the literature and are important to consider at this critical time. The Cleveland Clinic³ suggests the following tips to improve dialogue (2019):

- Gain the listener's attention.
- Maintain eye contact to convey the facial expressions.
- Keep hands away from the face.
- Provide proper lighting.
- Speak naturally and pausing speech when needed.
- Rephrase a message.
- Reduce background noise in the environment.

Now that society is facing COVID-19, hearing loss factors have been further compounded by an individual's inability to read visual and contextual cues due to mandatory social distancing and the proper usage of protective face masking. New effective strategies can assist the hearing impaired during this emergency. In 2020, the Hearing Association of America⁴ has proposed the following coping tips:

- Take a careful inventory of communication supplies. Be sure to stock up on all necessary accessories to keep hearing aids in good functional condition. You can easily replenish these items by contacting an audiology provider. Hearing aid batteries, wired receivers, dry aid kits, cleaning picks/brushes/wires, magnets for ease of dexterity, battery caddies and dry wiping cloths are still readily available.
- Explore telehealth options by contacting an audiology professional. Utilizing face-time calling strategies are particularly effective for hearing impaired individuals to facilitate lip and speech reading without any mask protection. Closed-caption phone communications enhance comprehension since the dialogue is read and not auditorily received.
- Utilize curbside services when warranted to avoid unnecessary human exposures. Take advantage of cleaning, maintenance and repair services that are available to keep amplification, assistive listening devices and desiccants in optimal operational and clean conditions.
- Consider the utilization of back-up older hearing aid devices, remote controls, and assistive listening devices, such as pocket-talkers or personal amplification products, during an emergency crisis with their appropriate fresh battery supplies and chargers.
- Prepare an "Emergency Communication Kit" with a six-month supply of fresh batteries and cleaning tools for impending travel, surprise hospitalizations, earthquake or other critical situations.
- Invest in a transparent FDA-approved face mask, if available. If such a product is unavailable, follow instructions to make a DIY project to produce an adequately protective face mask with a clear window. This enhanced strategy can preserve the "integration of speech cues"⁵ and can potentially enhance the dynamics of communication while protecting the individual from airborne viruses and information alerting the presence of any potential physical dangers.



Transparent masks can enhance the dynamics of communications for those with hearing loss.

Audiologists and other health care providers remain committed to serving the hearing-impaired population with service, support and education to promote the importance of hearing health and communication during these uncertain times. The hearing-impaired community is also encouraged to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local public health officials as warranted.

Lisa Nathan Bellows is an audiologist practicing in Palm Desert and a member of Desert Doctors. She can be reached at (760) 340.6494. For more information, visit www.DesertDoctors.org or call (760) 232.4646.

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Building a Bridge to Behavioral Health Careers

Continued from page 3

- C2N: College and Career Navigator Digital Platform - student progress monitoring
- The inaugural program schedule includes:**
- Welcome Reception with OFCV's Behavioral Health A-Team - September 2020
- BH Mentor Session #1: BH Careers Panel and Discussion - October 2020
- BH Mentor Session #2: Meet with Behavioral Health A-Team Mentor - November 2020
- OneFuture Scholar Student Networking Mixer - January 2021
- BH Mentor Session #3: DHCD BH Scholar Meet-Up - April 2021
- Student Leadership Conference - June/July 2021

As students rise to their junior and senior years of college, they will become eligible to apply for the Desert Healthcare District Behavioral Health Scholarship, and the OneFuture Health Career Connection Summer Internship to make deeper connections with the local behavioral health/social work community and earn wages to support their journey.

For more information on this program, contact OneFuture at (760) 625-0422 or www.OneFutureCV.org.



Oral Health in Children

By Nick Baumann, DDS

As children grow, it's important to monitor their oral health and development. Preventing many common problems is easier than trying to correct them once they arise. Being aware of how to take care of our children's teeth and what issues to look for can help immensely in development.

We usually start to see the first baby teeth when a child reaches around 6 months old. The last of them come in between ages 2-3. It's good to have an initial dental visit within 6 months of the first teeth appearing. Even though the child will eventually lose all these teeth, they are very important to the development of permanent teeth, so, it is vital to keep them clean and cavity free. Teeth should start to be cleaned lightly as soon as they erupt. At about 18 months to 2 years, a very small amount of toothpaste can be used as long as care is taken not to allow the child to swallow any.

Primary tooth care is imperative because early loss of these teeth can lead to crowding or misalignment of the permanent teeth. Sugary foods should be limited in young children. It's also important to know once a child has teeth, they should not be given a bottle that has sugary liquid in it at bedtime, including juices or formulas with sugar, as it can sit on their teeth overnight and cause cavities.

As a child is growing, parents need to be cognizant that some habits need to be monitored as they can have a negative effect on the way the mouth develops. Among these issues are thumb sucking and tongue thrusting. After the permanent adult teeth start erupting

at 5-6 years old, it's easy to adversely modify growth with these habits. Instead of growing normally, thumb sucking and tongue thrusting can cause the palate to constrict and elongate.

These practices can cause issues with teeth position, including flared teeth or open bites. Among other effects, this may cause speaking issues such as a lisp. It's important to eliminate these habits when the child is young. Parents can implement some strategies, or a dentist may be able to help.

After the permanent teeth start erupting, it is also a good time to ask your dentist or orthodontist questions to see how the teeth and jaw are developing. As children have a large potential for growth when they are younger, noticing issues developing earlier can often be corrected easier and with less intervention than if you wait until the child is older. Waiting too long can mean more involved and costly treatment. Sometimes with early intervention, children can avoid braces just by using appliances to direct their natural growth in the right direction.

If you have young children, it's important to educate yourself about what will lead to good oral health and development. Parents should be aware of what they can do to keep their children's mouth and teeth healthy and avoid issues as they grow up. Don't be afraid to ask your dentist what you can do to make your children's teeth as healthy as possible.

Dr. Nick is with Palm Desert Smiles and can be reached at (760) 568.3602.



Baby teeth are very important to the development of permanent teeth.



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Forgiving Yourself

By Dipika Patel

The more I understand forgiveness, the closer I come to understanding that forgiveness is an inside job. It truly has nothing to do with the other person(s) or situation(s) which have done you wrong. Until you have done some serious and deep internal work, you may keep telling yourself that you have forgiven the other person or situation, yet forgiveness in the subconscious mind may not be complete. With this lack of understanding, your actions/reactions may continue to be self-sabotaging inside and out, and you may continue to feel wronged.

Some of my clients express that they feel used, manipulated and pushed/pulled to their wits end, leaving them feeling depleted, unappreciated and unlovable. I often find that, while their individual experience may be valid, their opinion of and reaction to the wrongdoing is the foundation that needs to be identified and healed.

The blame game is often so easy to play when someone or something is wrong: "It was her/his fault," "They made me do it," "They keep using me and not appreciating what I do for them," etc. I can both understand and empathize with their experience, but nobody said life would be easy, neither is self-forgiveness. When we can recognize that we are unhappy, it is our responsibility to bring the joy of life back into every cell of our body to support healing on a cellular level.

If you find yourself in a rut and unable to truly forgive or unable to do the things you promised yourself due to procrastination, avoidance and not being fully available, I invite you to explore my Top 5 Tips to Self-Forgiveness. Offering self-forgiveness will allow you to forgive those outside of yourself. You can begin to build confidence and integrity to make the right choices in life, which will support you in ways that you never thought possible.

Top 5 Tips to Self-Forgiveness:

1. Give yourself the chance to recognize what you are feeling by expanding your feelings vocabulary. I recommend Dr. Gloria Willcox's Feelings Wheel to help you identify.¹
2. If you are struggling to accept those feelings, explore what you wish to feel about yourself, the person(s) and or the situation.
3. Now that you recognize what you desire to feel, ask yourself this question: what can I do to change the old negative feelings, or can I reframe that feeling? This new mindset is about taking responsibility through action to make a difference in your own life.
4. Once you have identified your negative feelings and reframed them into new positive feelings, gift yourself by forgiving yourself for your previous thoughts, feelings and actions.
5. What's NEW about you? Create and develop new behaviors and actions; set boundaries, cut ties, accept and celebrate differences, develop your communication skills, trust yourself, and, most importantly, build your self-love practice.

If this article resonates with you, do yourself and your loved ones a favor, grant yourself forgiveness. As coaching guru Tony Robbins says, "Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself."

Dipika is a holistic health coach and author and can be reached at dipika@dipikapatel.life. Pre-orders for her new book *Own Your Inner Bitch So She Can't Own You* are now available at www.ownyourinnerbitch.com. For more information visit www.loveyourlifehealthy.com.

Reference: 1) <https://www.gottman.com/blog/printable-feeling-wheel/>

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Living Wellness with Jennifer Di Francesco



Cultural Connectivity Fosters Creativity

Perhaps there is no better time than the present to explore our creative potential. During this current pandemic, creativity can minimize lethargy and helps us find sustaining experiences and innovation. The challenge at hand reveals creativity to be an attribute some feel in plentiful amounts while others feel depleted.

How can we express our creative spirit? One way to do this is by building close connections with a person from another culture, through friendship or romance. Numerous studies support this approach. One study followed 2,000 foreign nationals who worked in the United States for seven years on J-1 visas and then returned to their home country.¹ Those professionals who kept in regular contact with their American friends after returning to their home country tended to be more innovative and entrepreneurial. The study found it was the depth of the relationships that provided this innovation. Connections cannot be superficial but must be at a deep level of cultural interaction for transformation to take place.

A musical collective called Silk Road Ensemble demonstrates a beautiful example. Created in 1998 by the famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma, this group consists of a diverse community of 59 musicians from across Asia's Silk Road region combined with Western musicians. The best way to get a feel for the palpable inspiration and deep connection this music ensemble creates is to view the 2016 documentary "The Music of Strangers." These musical virtuosos were strangers from varying countries and traditions. After traveling the world together and melding various instruments of the world in sync, a deep bond and combustible creativity ensued.

Creativity comes down to connecting dots. When we enter a close relationship with someone from a different culture, we have opportunities to collect more dots to the ones we already possess. Not only do we collect more dots, but we also find ways to connect the dots. This experience of learning deeply about others opens our life box.

My own experience reflects lessons from dating a Persian gentleman who I can now thank for increasing my creativity quotient. I have always considered creativity to be a strong trait. However, by understanding the customs and etiquette of my significant other's culture, I now see that the experience of opening my worldview helps foster my creativity.

There is a phenomenon in ecology called the edge effect. This principle defines a point in which two ecosystems meet, such as the forest and the savannah. There is potential through colonization for new life forms to be created when biospheres meet. Each one of us can take this trepidatious and opportunity-filled time in our lives to step over the edge and connect deeply with someone different from us to experience a more inspired world.

Jennifer Di Francesco is a wellness explorer and desert adventurer and can be reached at zenjzen@aol.com.

Reference: 1) <https://www.npr.org/2018/07/02/625426015/the-edge-effect>



Steps to Build Healthier Habits

By Jason Tate, FMCHC

Humans are creatures of habit. We have heard this time and time again, yet what does it mean?

Psychologically, our brains are working to determine the most efficient ways to navigate our life and make it through our day. Some of us make thousands of decisions a day, and habits allow us to become more efficient decision-makers.



Consider two different scenarios when it comes to meal planning. In the first scenario, you have no idea what to make for dinner each night and have to come up with something on the fly to satisfy your family. In the second scenario, you plan your meals a week ahead of time and do your grocery shopping to meet the needs of those meals. With the second scenario, there is a lot less stress involved in the decision process because you made the choice of having 'Taco Tuesday' and 'Pasta Thursday' ahead of time.

What about those of us with bad habits? How do we break our bad habits and form healthier ones? Why do we have bad habits anyway?

The most common bad habits are excessive alcohol consumption, overeating, increased sugar intake, and the overuse of technology. Even procrastination is a bad habit that, like all the others, has a psychological impact on our brain and body chemistry. When we decide to put something off until tomorrow, we trigger a cascade of dopamine and serotonin neurotransmitters that elicit momentary pleasure from our choice. These same "happy chemicals" are released when we consume sugar and, for many people, when we get positively reinforced on our social media accounts.

When you understand the biochemistry, the "why" becomes clear; we do these things to become happy. Unfortunately, these bad habits only elicit a momentary burst of happiness, like a firework bursting in the night sky. There is a better, healthier way to achieve happiness that lasts longer and is sustainable. However, to change our habits, we must first acknowledge them. Then we can take steps to address them in a healthy and sustainable way.

- ✓ **Step 1:** Identify the habit you wish to change and the triggers that are associated with that habit. Also, write down WHY you wish to change this habit and post it somewhere you can see it every day.
- ✓ **Step 2:** Do your research. If your habit is consuming unhealthy food, find healthier food choices or behaviors.
- ✓ **Step 3:** Make a commitment to yourself for one week. At the end of that week, re-evaluate your situation and renew your commitment. One week at a time.
- ✓ **Step 4:** Tell a friend or family member about your commitment. You're more likely to follow through on a promise to yourself when you have shared it with others.
- ✓ **Step 5:** Control your environment. You're the one who fills the pantry with food and or liquor. If it's there, you will likely eat or drink it. Buy less each week or none at all.

How long does it take? That depends on multiple factors, and it could take weeks or months. The point is, you CAN do it. Focus on the fact that it is possible and focus on the "why" you're doing it, and you will find a way.

Jason Tate is a functional medicine certified health coach with Restore Health in Indian Wells and can be reached at (760) 408.2720. For more information visit www.restorehealth.me.

Is Alcohol Putting Your Immune System at Risk?

By Sonja Fung, ND

2020 has been a monster of a year, with shelter-in-place orders and constant, head-spinning policy changes. It's no wonder people fall back to unhealthy coping mechanisms such as poor eating and drinking habits.

In April, the World Health Organization issued a press release warning against alcohol consumption. At the same time, according to Nielsen ratings, online alcohol sales soared 477 percent compared to last year, and Statista showed a 40 percent growth in retail alcohol sales from February to May 2020 in the U.S.



Online alcohol sales have soared 477 percent compared to last year.

But there are many reasons to take a serious look at your drinking habits to keep you safe and healthy in today's COVID-covered world.

Chronic alcohol use, especially heavy or binge drinking, inflames epithelial cell lining (your first line of immune defense in your nose, throat, and GI system), reduces the activity of white blood cells (your defenders in your blood), funnels energy away from other metabolic functions such as cellular repair, directly interferes with liver detoxification, impairs quality of sleep, contributes to weight gain, and creates an imbalance in your gut bugs.

A strong immune system starts with the gut. Your intestines make up 70 percent of your immune system called GALT (gut-associated lymphatic tissue). A healthy gut protects you from bacteria, viruses and parasites, and maintains your immune system by digesting and absorbing vitamins and nutrients from your food to fuel your body.

Given these facts, are you willing to risk your health for one more drink?

Heavy drinking is defined as more than two servings of alcohol for males and one serving of alcohol for females a DAY. One serving of alcohol is 5 ounces of wine (at 12% ABV), one 12-ounce beer (at 5% ABV), and 1.5 ounces of spirits (at 40% ABV).

Heavy drinking has immediate negative effects on your body by depressing your immune system and puts you at risk for many chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer's/dementia and cancer. Because of these risk factors, there is no "safe" level of recommended alcohol intake.

Continued on page 13

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The Many Benefits of Ashwagandha

By Jessica Needle, ND

Ashwagandha is a revered herb in India, and it's a workhorse of traditional Indian medicine known as Ayurveda. Indeed, its name means "smell of horse," both for its aroma and its ability to make one as strong as a stallion. Ashwagandha can be given to emaciated children to restart growth and to adults to increase longevity. It is especially known as a tonic for the nervous system, which allows people to adapt to stress and regain vigor.

Ashwagandha is a member of the nightshade family, which includes tomatoes, eggplant and bell peppers, but its constituents are similar to ginseng, another root used to heal a variety of illnesses. You may find ashwagandha and ginseng in herbal formulas aimed at supporting healthy adrenal function and combating stress since they work well together. In addition to improving self-assessed quality of life, ashwagandha reduces anxiety and cortisol, a hormone released by the adrenal glands when under stress.¹

Ashwagandha contains compounds called steroidal saponins, which have anti-tumor, antiviral, antifungal and anti-inflammatory effects. Due to its steroid-like effects, as well as its antioxidant activity, ashwagandha can improve testosterone levels in men and improve their sperm quality.² It also helps healthy men improve muscle strength and size after only 30 days.³



Ashwagandha is a revered herb in Ayurvedic medicine due to its many health benefits.

Ashwagandha has an affinity for the nervous system. It can also improve memory, attention and information processing speed in adults with mild cognitive impairment, making it useful in slowing the mental decline that occurs with age.⁴ Animal experiments have shown promise in protecting the brain against plaques that occur in Alzheimer's disease and the degeneration characteristic of Parkinsonism, but human studies have yet to be performed.

Ashwagandha root extract is commonly taken in 450 or 500 mg capsules twice daily, but as little as 250 mg per day was effective in lowering inflammation as measured on the C-reactive protein (CRP) test.⁵

Because ashwagandha is potent, it should be used with caution if you are taking medication to lower your cholesterol or blood pressure, control diabetes, or treat thyroid dysfunction. You may need less medication since ashwagandha can affect the same body systems and produce synergistic effects with pharmaceuticals. Ashwagandha should not be mixed with benzodiazepines such as Klonopin, Valium and Ativan. It is contraindicated in pregnancy and breastfeeding. A health care professional knowledgeable in herbal medicine can guide you in using this herb safely to reap its many benefits.

Dr. Jessica Needle is a licensed naturopathic doctor with Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568.2598.

References available upon request.

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Mad About Medicinal Mushrooms

Packed with nutrients, these superfoods deliver

By Diane Sheppard, PhD, LAc

The medicinal mushroom craze has arrived. Long used in traditional Chinese medicine for their potent health benefits, these superfoods can now be found, not only in health food stores, but also in coffee shops serving up chaga chais, cordyceps lattes, and lion's mane matcha teas. There is even the "Shroom Room" in Venice Beach, one of many places to try these tasty and beneficial beverages.



Many gourmet coffee shops now offer mushroom teas like this birch chaga tea.

Mushrooms are fleshy spore-bearing fungi long used in Eastern medicine to promote general health and longevity. Referred to most commonly as vegetables, they are revered for their healing properties and are among the favored treasure trove of Chinese pharmacopeia.

Mushrooms are high in protein, vitamins, fiber, minerals and trace elements and are also rich in polysaccharides, especially beta-glucans, a form of soluble dietary fiber which helps lower cholesterol and is heart healthy.

Additionally, mushrooms offer significant vital health benefits as antioxidants, antiviral, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, anti-hypertensive and liver protecting agents. They are also prebiotics and stimulate the growth of beneficial microbiota, enhancing our immune system.

Here are some of the health benefits of popular types of mushrooms:

Reishi: Referred in Asia as the "mushroom of immortality," reishi is considered a nerve tonic that nourishes the heart, soothes the spirit, reduces anxiety and induces better sleep. It supports cardiovascular health and disease prevention through blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol regulation. Reishi mushrooms also have antimicrobial actions against viruses, bacteria and fungi (including candida yeast) and help regulate the immune response to boost our body's ability to fight infections. The Japanese government officially lists reishi mushrooms as part of their anti-cancer protocols.

Cordyceps: Taken as a kidney, lung and liver tonic, cordyceps mushrooms boost the immune system. A powerful antioxidant, it is also popular as an anti-aging tonic and in-vitro shows potential to slow the growth of tumors and help against side effects of chemotherapy. Recent research has shown that when cells are exposed to these fungi, proteins that usually increase inflammation are suppressed. Cordyceps grows in Asia and is the main source of income for Tibetan yak farmers. During the two months of the harvest season, schools are closed and families scavenge the mountains for the highly prized mushroom.



Lion's mane, which gets its name from a shaggy exterior, is known to boost mental function.

Lion's mane: Its shaggy white appearance gives this mushroom its name. Studies have found that lion's mane contains two special compounds, hericenones and erinacines, which can stimulate the growth of brain cells and prevent neuronal damage caused by amyloid-beta plaques. Thus, this varietal is commonly used to boost mental functions.

Turkey tail: This powerful antioxidant full of phenols and flavonoids gets its name from its vibrant colors and is known to promote the immune response by suppressing inflammation and both activating and inhibiting specific types of immune cells.

Chaga: A rich source of B-vitamins, chaga boosts energy levels and reduces inflammation promoting overall well-being. These mushrooms contain massive amounts of the pigment melanin, but also high levels of oxalate, so people with kidney stones or kidney disease should avoid consumption.

Due to their powerful effects, it is recommended that you check with your health care provider before adding medicinal mushrooms to your daily routine.

Diane Sheppard is a licensed acupuncturist and doctor of traditional Chinese medicine. She is the owner of AcQpoint Wellness Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 345.2200 or visit www.AcQPoint.com.

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You Are Worth the Effort

By Amanda Beckner, CN, HHP, PhD

As we continue to struggle with settling into the new norm, we know that establishing routines is important for our mental and physical health. This is especially true when considering diet and exercise. Even if you've let yourself go over these past few months, it's never too late to get back on track. Remember, you are what you eat, and you are worth it.

There is great wisdom in those words. If you put junk in, expect to feel like junk. If you want to perform at top capacity, if you want to feel and look fit, you won't get there by sitting on the couch eating ice cream.

Simply put, it's calories in, calories out. If you eat more than you expend, you'll store the excess as fat. If you work out every day and burn 300 calories and your basic metabolic rate is burning 1,000 calories a day, but you're eating 3,000 calories daily, you're storing a lot of extra calories and fat on a daily basis.

As we age, we go through metabolic and cell cycle changes; however, our bodies are constantly working toward renewal. These changes are why it is never too late to establish - or return to - healthy habits. Every seven years, we have a cell cycle change, every 180 days, we have a blood change, and every seven days we have a bowel lining change (which is why our bowels are often the first to get disease).

Remember, only 25 percent of health is genetic makeup; 75 percent is lifestyle choices. So, if you consistently eat poorly, you are eating toward hereditary disease - high cholesterol, high blood pressure, high blood sugars, kidney or liver dysfunction, cancer, inflammation, arthritis, joint pain, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis and more.

Now, if you eat correctly, when your seven-year cycle comes into play, you feel and look better than you did before your cycle change started. This improvement can happen at any age. I have clients who say they feel better at 60 than they did at 40. These individuals chose to change in favor of renewal by eating for health and not against it.

If health concerns arise, always aim to fix the core issue, not just the symptom. Taking medication with no consideration of what you are eating may be why you have the health problem in the first place. You can often do more harm than good by treating the symptom and not the problem. Discontinuing the foods and beverages that may cause the problem allows the body to start to heal and fix itself. Little changes can make a big difference.

The bottom line, your health is worth everything, especially in today's world. It is the most important thing we have. If you feel great, you can do just about anything, including losing those extra pounds.

Change starts with you. Work with your emotions, food choices and exercise regime, but most of all, start, continue and finish. Believe in *yourself* and that *you can*, because you're worth the effort.

Love yourself. You matter.

If you tell yourself, "I can't," you won't.

If you believe you can't get well, you won't.

If you tell yourself you will never lose the fat, it will never happen.

Be kind to yourself and believe in yourself. You can.

Dr. Beckner is owner of Your Body Code in Palm Desert which offers personalized nutrition and wellness programs. For more information, visit www.yourbodycode.com or call (760) 341.BODY (2639).

Is Alcohol Putting Your Immune System at Risk?

Continued from page 11

Let's be clear; I'm not telling you to stop drinking alcohol. However, it is important to make informed decisions about your health. Please be mindful of the physiological and mental/emotional consequences on your body and in your living space. Changing your routine and finding other outlets to help you reduce stress can be a much healthier solution.

Create a balanced daily quarantine-routine

Your body is designed to function optimally by maintaining a homeostatic environment, (i.e., perfect balance). One of the best things you can do to keep your body in balance is to create a balanced lifestyle, including adequate nutrition, exercise, sleep, and stress reduction. In stressful times, it is vital to maintain as much balance as possible.

In general, you can support your immune system by incorporating these good habits:

Move your body. Get adequate exercise every day as part of your stress reduction. Individuals who receive 40 minutes of moderate exercise daily reduce sick days by 50 percent.

Practice stress reduction. Chronic stress decreases the function of our immune system. A daily system of stress reduction, either through prayer, meditation, exercise, etc. can help enhance your immune system and overall well-being.

Get adequate rest. A full eight hours of rest every night allows your body to recover from the wear and tear of everyday stress and helps your body rejuvenate.

Practice safe socializing. Connection improves your immune system! Online game nights and social time can improve mood and de-stress your body. Try skipping the drinks next time.

Eat cleanly. Avoid inflammatory foods such as excess sugar, alcohol, dairy and starches. Reduce the amount of fast food or packaged foods you're consuming and focus on green veggies, lean protein, and healthy fats. Chronic inflammation decreases your ability to digest and absorb nutrients from your food, and thus, your body's normal function, resulting in a disturbed gut and decreased immune strength. Avoid sugary foods and beverages, including soda, juices, and alcohol; one teaspoon of sugar decreases your body's immune system by 50 percent for the next five to eight hours!

These changing times are challenging for all. If you are struggling with your coping mechanisms, seek professional help from the many resources available in our community.

Dr. Sonja Fung is a primary care naturopathic doctor at Live Well Clinic in La Quinta. She has a focus on integrative cancer care and PRP regenerative joint injections for pain. For more information, call (760) 771.5970 or visit www.livewellclinic.org. Follow us on Instagram @livewellclinic.

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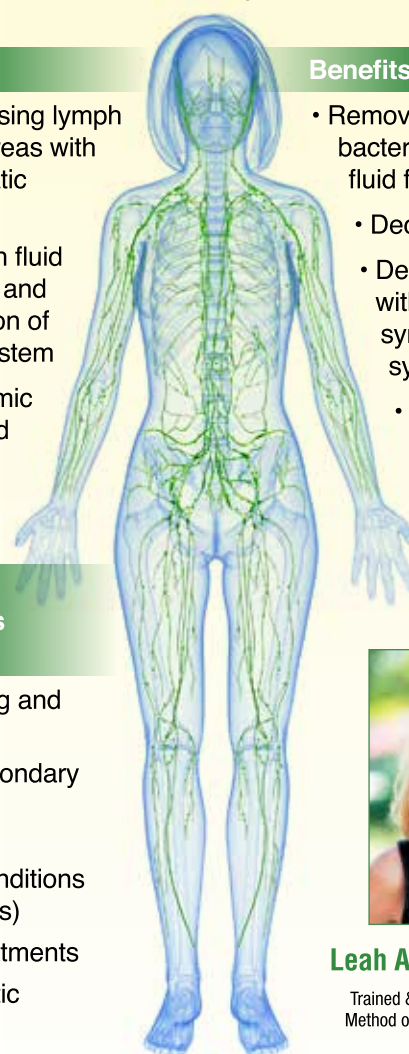
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Reversing Six Diseases with One Effort

By Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH

There is one thing a person can do to help reverse six different diseases: reduce body fat in the trunk area.

Most Americans have excess body fat in their mid-section. That fat is metabolically active causing a host of medical problems including:

1 Overweight and obesity

This is the obvious problem of excess body fat.

2 Prediabetes

70 percent of Americans are considered overweight or obese; an elevated blood sugar accompanies that. For the first 30 years of my career starting in 1971, a fasting blood sugar between 60 and 90 was considered normal. With the current overweight and obesity epidemic, most Americans have a fasting blood sugar over 90, so the normal range was changed to 70 to 100. A normal range does not mean a healthy range; it just means what most people have without being labeled as having a disease. We know that a fasting blood sugar below 90 is the healthiest and prevents many problems, including cognitive decline. The recognized range for prediabetes is a fasting blood sugar of 100-125.

3 Type 2 diabetes

First diagnosed around 1890, type 2 diabetes already accounted for 80 percent of people with diabetes by 1971. It occurred almost exclusively in adults and was referred to as adult-onset diabetes. Today, it comprises 95 percent of all diabetics in America, and with the prevalence of excess body fat, overweight children are also being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

4 Fatty liver disease

As body fat in the trunk collects, more of it spreads into the liver causing liver inflammation and damage. This is referred to as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Today in America, more chronic liver disease (such as cirrhosis) is caused by a fatty liver than alcoholism or hepatitis.

5 Hyperlipidemia

Body fat in the trunk leads to an unhealthy lipid profile with its increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

6 Hypertension

High blood pressure is the most common chronic disease in America and a leading cause of heart attack and stroke. With every 10 pounds of weight gain, blood pressure goes up. The good news is that with every 10 pounds of weight loss, the blood pressure and risks go down.

All of these diseases together are referred to by a general diagnosis of metabolic syndrome. People with metabolic syndrome become unhealthy and die much earlier than those without this condition.





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What is the most effective way to reduce body fat and reverse these diseases?

An excellent place to start is with a body composition profile that analyzes the body's major structural components: muscle mass, fat and bone. Technology like InBody and others (possibly available at your primary care physician's office) can identify a baseline and help you set goals to achieving a leaner physique.

How do we do that? Body fat is stored energy; it only goes away if it is burned. The body is like a hybrid car with two energy sources - sugar and fat. Sugar, which comes from all carbohydrates, is the body's first choice ready energy source. A person only becomes a fat burner after the sugar has been burned off. That is why low carbohydrate diets with intermittent fasting work best.

Most Americans consume more carbohydrates than they burn and the excess turns into fat for energy storage. Carbs make a person fat, not eating fats (see Mark Hyman's book *Eat Fat, Get Thin*). Exercise is also helpful in burning off energy and helps a person become a fat burner sooner. Exercising while consuming sugar such as energy drinks will not result in fat burning.

Becoming fat in America comes from following the cultural norms of fast food, sweets and soda. Sugar and carbs are the most profitable food commodities and they are addicting. Becoming a healthy fat burner means breaking out of these cultural norms, overcoming sugar addictions, and choosing a healthy diet and lifestyle. Best yet, the six diseases listed above and the number of medications required are greatly reduced, resulting in a longer, healthier life.

Joseph Scherger, MD, MPH is co-founder of Restore Health in Indian Wells. For more information, visit www.restorehealth.me or call (760) 408.2720.



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Intentional Walking for Winning at Health

Walking is a simple way to increase your health and longevity with little effort. Here are five reasons you should do intentional walking at a moderate intensity (fast enough that conversation makes you a little breathless) for 30 minutes a day:

Reduces chronic diseases. Walking at a moderate pace can decrease your risk for diabetes, stroke, heart attack, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. If that came in a pill form, everyone would be on it.

Enhances bone and joint health. Walking puts very little stress on joints compared to other types of exercises, and it is very hard to do wrong. Studies show it can also reduce the risk for osteoporosis. Patients often state that after they've been walking a while, they can't walk fast enough to feel a moderate intensity. The easy fix? Wear a weighted vest or ankle weights.

Positively impacts mental health. Studies show walking to be just as effective, if not slightly better than some anti-depressant medications.¹ Another study showed that just 10 minutes of walking (especially in nature) significantly reduces anxiety symptoms.² My favorite mental health boost that comes from walking is that of socialization. My walks are often when I connect with friends, my husband, or my kids; whoever decides to accompany me that day. If no one is available, I use that time to listen to my favorite music, a book, or a podcast, or take the time to meditate.

Boosts your immune system. A daily walk can decrease your likelihood of coming down with colds and catching viruses.

Helps manage weight. Walking is a powerful tool for weight loss if done consistently. To boost the benefits, walk after meals, and in combination with a healthy diet. And it is pretty cheap; no gym membership required. All you need is a good pair of walking shoes.

Our desert heat makes it a little difficult to get out during the day, but early morning and dusk are perfect for walking. Start with just a few minutes and work your way up to 30 minutes a day. If you don't want to get outside, you can always hop on a treadmill. It doesn't matter how or where, just incorporate this habit into your daily routine for better health all around.

Dr. Fayssoux is an integrative primary care practitioner with Ohm & Oot Wellness Medicine in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 469.9900. For more information visit www.KinderFayssouxMD.com.

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We certainly don't learn from the easy stuff

Continued from page 1

How do we stay connected during a time when we are told to keep six feet apart from each other, not to go out unless it's an essential trip, and not to congregate together?

I was at the dentist's office and saw a woman walk through the door and spot a friend she hadn't seen in a while. She said, "I'd give you a hug, but you know..." Yeah, we know.

Resiliency is the ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly. The degree of resiliency differs between individuals; some bounce back sooner than others. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a cloud of frustrations, fears, and heightened anxieties. Many people are feeling shell-shocked and wondering when life will return to normal, or if not, how a new normal might look.



With every struggle there is opportunity for growth.

The mindset I keep in mind and heart and try to pass on to others, is that all struggles are opportunities. We certainly don't learn from the easy stuff. Opportunities exist through reaching out, no matter the forum. So, touching someone's heart - even if it's as simple as saying hello in a supermarket - can be life-giving, life-restoring and life-sustaining.

In Lynda Fishman's *Repairing Rainbows*, she shares a truth:

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, forgiveness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith." The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

This could be the perfect time to feed your opportunities.

Amy Austin is a licensed marriage and family therapist (MFC# 41252) and doctor of clinical psychology in Rancho Mirage. Dr. Amy can be reached at (760) 774.0047.



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The Cancer Connection in Our World Pandemic

The last time I wrote an article COVID-19 was not something we were so worried about in the United States; it was something we were watching unfold in China and Italy. But, in a blink of an eye, it started to unfold in New York City. I think a lot of us, myself included, thought this was not that big a deal; we are the most powerful country in the world with some of the most advanced health care systems. As I saw one of America's beautiful cities start to crumble and the death toll start to rise, so did the anxiety for me and my fellow cancer survivors.

Maybe it's because COVID-19, a little like cancer, is so unknown. You don't know who is going to get it, how it would affect you, or if you would survive. These are the same thoughts a cancer patient goes through the first days of "you have cancer." What type of treatment will I have? How aggressive is it? How will I survive? All the "what-ifs?" are scary.

Those of us with cancer already understand what it means to "shelter in place" and stay away from people, germs in particular. When going through treatments, your white blood cells are too low, so you must be extra cautious since your immune system is already compromised. It was like we already had some inside information on how to get through this time as the world shut down around us.

Personally, I did what I always do and jumped into action. I set up online yoga and spin classes to keep my health and mindset above the line. In the back of my mind, I somehow knew that we were in this for the long haul. My friends were hopeful that this would be over in a few weeks. Then, those days turned into weeks, and as the reality set in days turned to months, hope turned to fears, and fears turned into more anxiety.

Social media outlets bred worry, doubt, and anger. Breakdowns of friendships and relationships with people who you never thought would have disagreements had openly unfriendly fire right in front of our eyes. Heated tensions rose. With the news talking about the virus daily, our cancer community became scared to leave their homes fearful of death once again.

All of this is sensory overload in my heart; everyone has their valid reasons for the fears of the unknown.

So, six months later, we wait and see what will happen. Fears and anxiety remain high. It is a long pause in life, but time for all of us to take a good look at what is most important; to take a step back and really enjoy a moment or to re-evaluate what your future will be.

If you can change your mindset to see what you have been given versus what has been taken away, it might be easier to accept change and then pivot to what may be a new future. Only time will tell, but ask yourself, do you have the courage to embrace change? Because one thing is for sure...it's inevitable.

Shay Moraga, E-RYT500 is a triple negative breast cancer survivor. She teaches Yoga for Cancer Caretakers and Survivors locally at Eisenhower's Lucy Curci Center and is founder of Shay's Warriors - Life After Cancer. Contact Shay at shay@namastewithshay.com, or reach out on social media at Shay's Warriors.

Together Apart

Continued from page 1

But do these feelings last? Several studies in the review concluded that it could take months or even years to return to a sense of normalcy and to feel comfortable in crowds again. Unfortunately, two vulnerable groups at higher risk of long-term consequences appear to be health care workers and children. Those on the front line certainly see the worst and often experience stigma from others who fear to get close or develop a greater fear of closeness themselves. One study comparing parents and children stated that post-traumatic stress scores in kids were four times higher. These precious groups certainly deserve the support we need to provide them at this time.

The good news is there appears to be less distress and fewer long-term complications associated with voluntary quarantine, especially when leaders keep us informed and supplied with necessities, and remind us that we are self-isolating for the greater good. The health and progress of our community is in our hands and we are all in this together.

Finding the good in it all

In April, I wrote about the positive impact our human interlude has had on the global environment (Pause and Reflect; May/June 2020). But as time goes by, it gets harder to celebrate the

big picture with so much concern for your personal tribe and own state of being.

I'm having to reach deep to find the good in it all, but feel hopeful that these unparalleled times are designed to help us evolve into better human beings.

Slowing down is teaching us to be comfortable with slowing down. We are taking time to focus on what truly matters and realizing our health is the most important thing we have. Simple hobbies long thought to be "old fashioned" are making a comeback, and we are learning new things. We are taking less for granted and making a concerted effort to share a smile. We are learning to manage stress through meditation, breathing and rest. And the love for everything we have - and everything we miss - is greater than ever.



Desert life will return someday soon; maybe not exactly as it was, but with the possibility that it could be even better. We will come together again more bonded than before with a deeper sense of purpose and a greater appreciation for it all.

Lauren Del Sarto is founder and publisher of Desert Health and can be reached at Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com. Visit her blog at www.LaurenDelSarto.com

Reference: 1) [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30460-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30460-8/fulltext)



Doing Diabetes Differently

By Megan Stone, DO

Let's get the depressing part over with...then we'll get to the hopeful stuff! When it comes to diabetes, we know the stats; they aren't great. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over 34.2 million people in the United States have diabetes, and one in five don't know they have it. Over 88 million people (that's one in three) have pre-diabetes.

The numbers are overwhelming, but they're not personal. What about you, your father, or your wife? What more can you do for your health?

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes or pre-diabetes, chances are, you are already going to your regularly scheduled doctor's visits, taking your medication and doing your follow-up labs. There has to be more; there's got to be hope for those searching for a more effective way to reverse their diabetes or prevent it altogether.

Functional medicine physicians focus on the "why" of disease, not so much the "what." We ask questions like, *why* is your blood sugar high, and what are the barriers toward halting the progression of diabetes and eventually reversing it? How can we change the landscape of your body and cells so they may process sugar more efficiently?

First, the obvious, we all know that lowering the amount of sugar in the diet is crucial. This is important for all of us, diabetic or not! Sugar (think pasta, cookies, chips, processed carbs, bread, etc.) creates inflammation and inflammation is the main cause of disease, including diabetes, stroke, heart attack and dementia. After lowering glucose levels (sugar) in your body, the next important step is to refuel the body with potent nutrients, vitamins and anti-inflammatories. This refueling process is crucial and can't be skipped if we are going to repair the damage that has been done.

Let's look at some specifics:

B vitamins. B vitamins are needed to fuel your mitochondria (the body's powerhouse) and improve metabolism. Your body needs plenty to combat the years of poorly treating your system. Dark leafy green vegetables, beans and fruits are loaded with B vitamins. They can also be supplemented.

Cinnamon and green tea. These two ancient healers help control blood sugar and improve insulin sensitivity. Be sure to use Ceylon cinnamon (vs. Cassia). Derived from the *cinnamomum verum* tree, it is considered "true cinnamon" and shown to contain more antioxidants.

Fiber. Fiber slows the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream, helps us feel full, and reduces cholesterol. Plants, vegetables, nuts, seeds and beans are rich in fiber.

Chromium. This essential mineral is important for sugar metabolism and insulin sensitivity. It can be found in mussels, brazil nuts, oysters and dates and can also be supplemented.

Vitamin D. D reduces inflammation, boosts your immune system and influences the genes that help prevent diabetes (speak with your doctor about dosing).

Fish oil. This superstar of supplements decreases cholesterol, blood sugar and inflammation, and also improves insulin sensitivity. Try to eat two servings of seafood high in omega-3 fatty acids per week. These include salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, herring and mussels. Fish oil can also be supplemented.

Magnesium. Magnesium helps sugar enter the cells and turns those calories into energy for the body. Magnesium can be supplemented and also is found in greens leafy veggies, nuts and seeds.

Lastly, don't forget that stress plays a huge role in blood sugar balance. Learning to control stress will help decrease cortisol levels and yield amazing results regarding blood sugar, weight and blood pressure. Daily meditation, exercise and rest are ways to start working on this category.

These are only a few examples of how you can affect your blood sugar naturally. There are also many things your physician can help you address regarding diabetes such as hormone imbalances, food sensitivities, metal toxicities, chronic underlying infection, allergens and poor gut health. Pills don't fix these problems, but researching your particular vulnerabilities and addressing your unique issues certainly will.

Halting and reversing diabetes involves attacking the problem from many directions. This approach is not a 'one pill fits all' situation. With a good medical team on board, you can aggressively change your state of health. However, there are a lot of things you can start to do now. It's as simple as changing your food and moving every day. Making these small daily changes adds up to big results. The quality and type of food you eat inform your genes and your body how to behave. *As always, you should speak with your doctor before changing your current health plan and regarding safely adding supplements.*

Above all else, remember that you have more power than you think you do to change your health, longevity and happiness.

Dr. Stone is a family and functional medicine physician and founder of Stone Functional Medicine in Palm Desert. She is a Wahls Protocol Certified Practitioner and can be reached at (760) 350.6988 or www.stonefuncmed.com.



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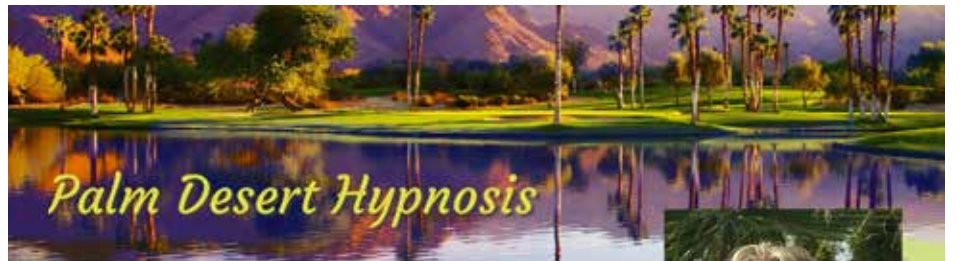
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Advantages to an Earlier Dementia Diagnosis

Provided by Alzheimers Coachella Valley

While some people may be reluctant or afraid to have a full medical evaluation for possible dementia, the benefits to an early diagnosis far outweigh the fears. In fact, an early accurate diagnosis may be a relief for the individual and family to know - including a possible treatable or reversible condition.

Once a family is equipped with the knowledge, it can mean access to essential services, relevant information and support, as well as providing them an opportunity to plan for the future and to adjust living well with dementia.

Cost saving. Studies show that earlier diagnosis enables the patient to live independently longer and make the most of their abilities that enhance their quality of life. Delaying or avoiding early or unnecessary admission to a care home or hospital can save thousands of dollars.

Treatment and research. Treatments for Alzheimer's and other dementias are most effective when started early in the disease progression - both drug and non-drug treatments - as research leads to more options. And getting an accurate diagnosis is more easily obtained while the person is still able to answer questions and recall the order in which symptoms appeared.

Those diagnosed early can take advantage of clinical trials or advocate for more research and improved care and opportunities.

Education and care. The early-diagnosed individual is better empowered to plan for the future while they're still able to make important decisions regarding legal and financial matters as well as their care and support needs.

An early diagnosis gives families more opportunities to learn about the disease and develop realistic expectations as they plan together for the future. It enables families to gather practical information, advice and guidance as they face new challenges. This education alone can reduce stress by lessening the feelings of burden and regret.

Early diagnosis allows the person and family to attribute cognitive changes to the disease rather than to personal failings - preserving the person's dignity throughout the disease process and enabling the patient to feel they are still viable and valuable.

Prioritize time. In addition, the person is better able to prioritize how they spend their time and focus on what matters most to them. They can take advantage of early-stage support groups, for example, to learn how to better manage and cope with symptoms. Support groups are also an important social component for both the diagnosed and caregiver.

Overall, early diagnosis can result in a higher quality of life, less stress for family care partners, more time to treasure the present and increased time for future planning.

For more information about support groups, social and educational programs for both the diagnosed and caregiver, contact Alzheimers Coachella Valley (ACV) at (760) 776.3100, or visit online at www.cvalzheimers.org.

Sources: 1) <https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/symptoms/diagnosis/early-diagnosis.asp>; 2) <https://www.alzswisc.org/learn-more/alzheimers-and-dementia-basics/early-diagnosis/>

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Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

By Kathleen O'Keefe-Kanavos

The invitation read, "Zombies and Vampires are not welcome, but the dead are invited to dine with the living at a Dumb Supper on All Hallows' Eve." Was it trick or treat?

Think about it... Rather than mourning our deceased with tears, why not celebrate their memory with love, because love never dies? And, under certain circumstances, like a dumb supper invitation, love may bring the family back from the dead to break bread with the living for a magical night of communion.

Dining with the dead is an ancient tradition that honors our ancestors regardless of culture or creed. Food has been offered to the dead throughout history from the mummies of Egypt to the Celts and even the Catholic Church.

A dumb supper is a serious meal meant for spirits, ghosts, or your departed loved ones.¹

Dinner dates with the dead began as an ancient Celtic celebration known as Hop-tu-Naa.² The first celebration was in Cregneash Village on the British Isle of Man on October 31, All Hallows' Eve, which is Halloween night. It is part of Samhain, Festival of the Dead, considered one of the oldest traditions celebrated worldwide. While the traditional name dumb supper may sound a bit insulting, it is named for a meal held in silence.

Most of us understand the concept of death as a spirit leaving the body. But, what about the idea of souls returning for dinner?

We regularly show our love for the dead by talking to them at their burial place, taking them gifts of flowers, lighting candles for them in our places of worship, and displaying their pictures as a token of our enduring love. On the anniversary of their passing, we have moments of silence, song and food where we live, work and pray.

But, is setting a place for the dead at our dinner table going too far?

Those who practice the dumb supper on All Hallows' Eve say, "No!" They consider it a reverent event that discourages conversation or noise of any kind for fear of disturbing their beloved dead.

A dumb supper is a bridge between realms built with affection. The centuries-old tradition has roots in Europe and branches in America, especially New England. One of the largest gatherings is in Salem, Mass.³

The traditional supper is served in your home with family and friends. This solemn occasion shrouded in silence culminates with a celebration of spirits. It begins at the witching hour of midnight with a prayer of thanksgiving and ends between 1-3 a.m. during the "Hours of Souls" when souls leave the earth.

Dumb supper refers to a non-verbal meal (mum's the word - so, shhh!)

Silence during the meal is of the utmost importance; therefore, electronics and motors that beep, buzz, or squeak are turned off or unplugged, including television sets, refrigerators, freezers, computers, and phones.



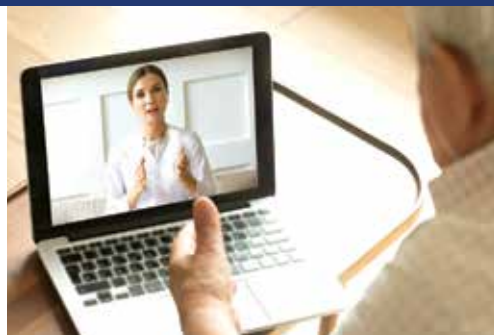
The ancient ritual of a dumb supper is a means of reconnecting and honoring loved ones in the spirit world.

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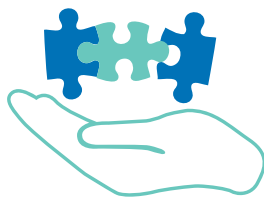
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Mighty Microgreens

By Mario Garcia

In our vastly expanding world of information, it is no secret that what we choose to eat can directly affect our overall health. Chronic diseases continue to be a critical health concern across America.

In 2018, the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) conducted a study estimating that 85 million adults consume fast food in the United States on any given day. With plenty of data suggesting that the consumption of raw fruits and vegetables can greatly reduce the risks of chronic illnesses, it is still evident that many people fall short of the average amount of vegetables needed for optimal health. Mineral malnutrition impacts two-thirds of the world's population.



Microgreens deliver maximum nutrition while using less space and resources to cultivate.

How can we incorporate these essential elements into our daily diet to help our bodies achieve optimal health? Microgreens can help.

Microgreens are just like the baby and mature vegetables you're used to eating (kale, broccoli, cabbage, cilantro, radish, etc.) but harvested at a much younger stage. The reason they're harvested at this stage (known as the cotyledon or "true leaf" stage) is because of the high concentration of nutrients available in comparison with the nutrient concentrations of their mature counterparts with some varieties recording up to 40 times more nutritional value than their mature stage.

Aside from being a powerhouse for nutrition, microgreens also require fewer resources to cultivate. Data collected in 2017 indicates that broccoli microgreens would require up to 236 times less water than it takes to grow a nutritionally equivalent amount of mature vegetables in California fields in 93 to 95 percent less time and without the need for fertilizer, pesticides, or energy-demanding transport from farm to table. These resource and time-saving benefits are critical for the evolution and diversification of our food systems.

Food systems consist of food production but also associate with food processing, transport, and consumption. Microgreens ensure maximum efficiency on every level producing little to no waste. They need less time to be transported from urban cultivators, thus saving energy and limiting pollution, plus ensuring maximum nutrient availability because produce will be more recently harvested. Studies have shown that after just five days of being harvested, the vegetable's nutrient availability diminishes by nearly 30 percent.

Concerning our nutrition and the world we live in, microgreens could be the emerging crop to help fortify our future. From vitamins A, B, C, E, K, and essential minerals like zinc, magnesium, iron, potassium, manganese, plus disease-fighting antioxidants like folate and polyphenols, these mighty micro vegetables are quickly proving to have a macro impact on our daily lives.

Mario Garcia is owner of Coachella Urban Valley Farms providing locally grown microgreens to our valley through seasonal Certified Farmers Markets and local health food stores like Harvest Health Foods in Palm Desert. They also offer a free delivery subscription to all valley residents. Visit www.coachellaurbanvalleyfarms.com.

Healthy Inspiration from My Italian Kitchen

By Janet Zappala

Wellness is our most precious gift, and one of the best ways to ensure good health is to keep our immune systems strong, especially in this age of COVID-19.

Eating mindfully is essential for strengthening the immune system and fighting disease. Protect your body by eating fresh produce. Build strong bones with foods like broccoli, Swiss chard, almonds, calcium-fortified soy and beans. Fuel your brain and body with disease-preventing omega-3s like walnuts, chia seeds, spinach and, of course, salmon. Choose wild-caught salmon when possible as it is higher in omega-3s, vitamins and minerals.

Here's one of my favorites from my cookbook, *My Italian Kitchen, Homestyle Recipes Made Lighter & Healthier*.

Baked Salmon with Lemon Dill Sauce

- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 6-ounce wild salmon fillets
- 1 lemon, cut in half horizontally
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh or dried dill weed
- 1 teaspoon fresh parsley, chopped fine (or 1/4 teaspoon dried parsley flakes)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Lemon Dill Sauce

- 1/2 cup nonfat plain yogurt
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh or dried dill weed



Preheat the oven to 375 F. Brush a medium-size baking sheet with 1 teaspoon of olive oil. Place the salmon fillets on the baking sheet. Brush the salmon lightly with the remaining teaspoon of olive oil. Squeeze the juice of 1/2 of the lemon over the fish; season the fillets with dill, parsley, salt, and pepper. Cut the remaining 1/2 lemon into thin slices and place on the fillets. Bake for 12 minutes for medium-rare; longer if desired.

To make the lemon dill sauce, place all sauce ingredients in a small bowl and whisk together until thoroughly blended. Drizzle the sauce over the cooked salmon or serve it on the side. Enjoy immediately!

Janet Zappala is the author of *My Italian Kitchen Homestyle Recipes Made Lighter & Healthier* available on www.Amazon.com. She's also a certified nutritional consultant, an Emmy award-winning news anchor and reporter, and the creator and host of *Your Health Matters*. Find her on Facebook @JanetZappalaYourHealthMatters.

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Russian Cabbage Rolls with Cauliflower Caraway Rice

By Dipika Patel

Keeping with my low carb meal plan, I would like to share my version of Russian Cabbage Rolls with Cauliflower Caraway Rice. This meal is easy to make, full of flavor and great texture. I call it delicious! You can make this recipe with mushrooms in place of any animal protein if desired. Enjoy! I can't want to hear from you. Your thoughts and ideas of how your rolls turned out are very important to me.



Russian Cabbage Rolls (Serves 4-6 people)

Cabbage Rolls Ingredients:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 head of green napa cabbage | 2 tablespoons dill sprigs |
| 1 pound grass-fed minced beef/pork/turkey or 48 ounces organic whole baby bella mushrooms, diced | 1 can diced tomatoes (14 ounces) |
| 1 large diced onion | ½ cup of 33.5 ounces Pomi carton tomato sauce |
| 4-6 cloves garlic minced | Salt and pepper to taste |
| ½ teaspoon dry dill weed | Red chili flakes (optional) |
| 4 tablespoons fresh parsley | 2 tablespoons grapeseed oil |

Cauliflower Caraway Rice Ingredients:

- | | |
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| 1 large head of cauliflower, largely grated to rice size | ¼ teaspoon caraway seeds |
| 3 fresh dill sprigs finely chopped | 1 tablespoon sunflower oil (traditional to taste) or olive oil |
| Salt and pepper to taste | |

Directions:

The Filling

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Boil cabbage leaves about 2 minutes or until soft. (to remove leaves from the head of cabbage, cut approx. ¼" off the bottom of the head and place the whole head of cabbage in boiling water. Boil about 2 minutes. Peel off the softened leaves. Place the remaining head back in the boiling water and repeat until all of the leaves are removed. Remove any tough stems from cooked leaves. If you have some smaller leaves and still have filling leftover, just overlap the leaves as needed.
3. In a medium-sized frying pan, heat grapeseed oil on a medium flame and add in your chopped onions meat or vegetable of choice, garlic, dry dill weed, salt and pepper to taste. Sauté until brown.
4. Add in ½ cup of Pomi tomato sauce and stir into the mixture cook for another 5 minutes and set aside. Garnish with ½ of the fresh dill and all of the parsley
5. In a medium to large casserole dish, pour in the rest of the tomato sauce and season to taste. Add in the rest of the dill in the sauce. Sprinkle with a little red chili flakes (optional). Set aside.

Cabbage Rolls

1. Thin any thick stem on cabbage leaves. Lay 2-3 cabbage (depending how much cabbage you like it) leaves flat on top of one another and add ½ cup filling to the center of the leaves. Fold in the side and roll the cabbage up to form a burrito like roll. Place all rolls seam side down in the pan over the seasoned tomato sauce in casserole dish.
2. Spoon some of the sauce in the casserole dish over the rolls to give them more flavor and then cover tightly with foil. Bake in the oven for 60 minutes. Let them cool for about 10 minutes before serving.

Cauliflower Caraway Rice

1. In a medium frying pan on medium heat add in oil and all ingredients apart from fresh dill sprigs in a frying pan and sauté for 3-5 minutes.
2. Finish with the fresh dill sprigs and serve.

Dipika is a Holistic Health & Lifestyle Coach who empowers clients to activate a balanced lifestyle of the mind, body and soul. She can be reached at dipika@dipikapatel.life.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

Continued from page 18

Here is how the dumb supper works. The evening opens with a blessing. It guides attendees through the veil between the two worlds to the realm of the dead. Photographs of the deceased are placed on the table beside an empty place setting as an invitation. It is a first step in manifesting the desired visitation. After the family meal is cooked and served, fill the empty plate with food for the dead.

In keeping with tradition, the courses are served backward. The placement of everything, including the silverware, is reversed to weave participants into the shadowy world of spirit.

Rather than starting the meal with soup and salad, it begins with dessert. (Perhaps exemplifying the saying, "Life is short. Eat dessert first!") Soup and salad are served at the end of the dinner.

Never throw away the food on the deceased's plate. It is fed to family pets or put outside for wild animals to enjoy. The idea is to share it with anything living, to keep the love and memories alive.

Why is the veil between the living and the dead thinner on Halloween than any other time?

Perhaps "collective intention" empowered through ritual, prayer and meditation can pull aside the curtain of death so the deceased can share limited time and space in the land of the living. Maybe, intention powered by the flame of love is capable of building a bridge between the realms.

So, this Halloween, dare to declare your undying devotion by setting a place at your table for the dead. It is a way of saying, "I love you." If you set your intention to have the deceased dine with you in the name of love, you never know who may come for dinner.

Kathleen O'Keefe-Kanavos of Rancho Mirage is a cancer survivor, coach, author, dream expert, speaker, TV/radio host/producer, and has been featured on Dr. Oz and The Doctors. She can be reached at www.KathleenOkeefeKanavos.com.

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A Tale of Two Decades

By Michele T. Sarna, AIF, AWMA

When looking back at the roaring '20s I think of flappers, jazz music and prohibition. However, it was a time of social and political change, defiance and the great stock market crash. Sound familiar?

We're barely in the first year of a new decade and it's already lived up to the name of Roaring 20 with demands for social and political change, justice and crashing stock markets.

In 1920, the prohibition of making and selling alcohol was signed into law, leaving patrons to purchase and drink alcohol illegally at establishments under the radar of the law.

As of August, hair salons, nail bars and barbers are not allowed to operate (unless outside), leaving patrons to sneak around and get haircuts and salon services at businesses willing to offer services discretely.

In the 1920s, the tension between Russia and the U.S. was high. Communism was a big threat resulting in the Palmer raids, which targeted radicals, anarchists and immigrants.

In 2020, tensions with China and the U.S. are high. Although the year started on the right track with the first phase of a trade agreement signed by both parties, COVID-19 quickly turned the tables again. Amongst many other things, the U.S. ordered China to close its consulate in Texas, and President Trump ordered a ban on the Chinese-owned social media app Tik Tok.

During the 1920s, the Ford Model T was considered the most important consumer product. In 2020, it's toilet paper.

The 1920s sparked the "Cultural Civil War," according to History.com editors. Civil unrest between Black and White Americans ignited. Today, there is still civil unrest, which escalated after the killing of George Floyd, sparking riots and peaceful movements across the country, urging for social change.

The early 1920s were fresh off recovering from the Spanish Flu Pandemic. Schools had been closed, masks were required and large crowds discouraged. Today, we are in the throes of battling another pandemic, COVID-19; schools are closed, masks are required and there are orders to avoid large crowds.

The 1920s weren't all despair. Women obtained the right to vote, the Harlem Renaissance gave birth to Jazz music and many African legends, television was invented, and the first Olympic Games were played.

As with our sister century, the 2020s will persevere and many good things will occur. Let's just hope for a little less roar in the years to come.

Michele Sarna is a financial advisor at Beacon Pointe Advisors and can be reached at (760) 932.0930 or msarna@beaconpointe.com.

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Staying Safe Financially

By Jenell Fontes VanDenBos

These are some crazy times. Many of us are not only feeling the stress physically but also financially. The good news is there is financial help out there. Here are some helpful tips to consider:

Paying rent. If you are a renter and have lost your job or cannot work for health reasons, call or write your landlord and ask them for some rent forgiveness or a payment plan to help ease the pressure. Even though there are no evictions at this time in California, you don't want to risk an eviction on your record when the courts are back in session. Most landlords are willing to give some consideration for hardship circumstances.

Credit cards and home loans. Many credit card and home loan companies will work with you to defer or skip a payment, or bundle other payments. They may waive late fees or penalties and/or increase your credit line to consolidate other debt. Many credit card companies may waive your annual fee to keep you as a consumer. Most credit card and mortgage companies will let you set the date that your payment is due. For example, if your payment is due on the first of the month and you don't get paid till the 15th, you can move the due date to the 20th. Policies vary by company, so call directly. It doesn't hurt to ask! Nerdwallet.com offers many helpful blogs (search 'COVID credit card relief')

Save NOW. We don't know how long this will all last, so it is important to make cuts in your budget now instead of waiting till you are on your last dollar. The goal is to put yourself in the best financial position possible, whether that means learning new investment strategies or budgeting every cent of your income. One thing is clear; because Americans have been staying at home more, they are spending less. The savings rate hit a record high in June, which could increase spending habits after the coronavirus pandemic ends - especially with interest rates so low. Though for now, we will have to wait for the economy to reopen and see how quickly employees are able to return to the workforce.

Your phone, your lifeline. Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile are all offering to help costumers impacted at this time.

Here are some additional resources to help you save:

Basic needs. <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/consumer-policy/personal-finance-and-consumer-protection-steps-for-quicker-financial-relief>

Utilities. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/covid19protections/>

Prescriptions. CVS Pharmacy and Walgreens are offering free prescription delivery.

Child care. www.mychildcare.ca.gov or www.rrnetwork.org/family-services

Food resources. www.findfoodbank.org

The uncertainty of our world, safety concerns and loss of income are enough to put undue stress and pressure on anyone's life. It's important to know that you live in a community that cares. For more information and other resources, please reach out to your local cities and community organizations. Stay safe and stay healthy!

Jenell Fontes VanDenBos is a local real estate and investment property specialist with Bennion & Deville Fine Homes. She can be reached at j@jenellfontes.com or (760) 831.4126.

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