

Dr. Jonathan V. Wright's
NUTRITION & HEALING

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Three steps—and 11 months—to diffuse the ticking time bomb threatening your access to vitamins and minerals

By Jonathan V. Wright, M.D.

You've taken supplements for years. You're out of vitamins C and E. You go to your natural food store, but you can't find the kind you want on the shelf. You ask a clerk to find them for you. She says you can't get your vitamin E as mixed tocopherols (the best natural form) anymore, and asks if you like your vitamin C in the 100 or 200 milligram size. The 1,000 milligram size, you say.

"Where have you been?" she asks. "Asleep since 2004? It's 2007 now! The types and sizes of vitamins you just asked for have been declared illegal by the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organization!"

"Wait!" you reply. "This is America! Our President says we're fighting for American freedom—and you're telling me that the World Trade Organization can dictate what size vitamin C I can take, and forbid me from taking mixed tocopherols?"

The sales clerk sighs, and reaches for a piece of paper. "It's a little complicated," she says. "A few years back, the European Commission passed the European Food Supplements Directive..."

You feel your blood pressure rising. "What does the European Commission and its Directive have to do with me? If Europeans want bureaucrats to tell them what to do, that's their business. I'm a free

citizen of these United States!"

"Now, now, dear, your blood pressure will go up, and you can't get calcium citrate, magnesium aspartate, CoQ₁₀ or L-arginine or anything else natural to help regulate it anymore."

"What? This goes beyond the FDA's wildest dreams!"

"That's not a tenth of it, dear. While you were distracted by the war overseas for American freedom, here at home we lost our right to buy any amino acids at all—no arginine, no carnitine, no tryptophan, nothing. I can't sell you any essential fatty acids either—no DHA or EPA. And no beta-carotene, no mixed carotenoids, no MSM, no boron...The list goes on and on."

"So what can I buy?" you ask.

"Let's see...those 100 and 200 milligram vitamin Cs. Vitamin B₆ maximum 4.2 milligrams, vitamin B₁, 2.4 milligrams. Oh, here's a better one: You can get niacin at 32 milligrams."

"Enough! I'm getting sick! How did this ever happen in these United States?"

"As I was saying, the European Directive..."

"I heard you. But what about America's Congress, America's President?"

"Oh, they signed us up for this in the 1990s, when they made us members of the World Trade Organization. According to the

Congressional Research Service: 'As a member of the World Trade Organization, the United States does commit to act in accordance with the rules of the multilateral body. The United States is legally obligated to ensure national laws do not conflict with World Trade Organization rules.'

"Our President and Congress send troops overseas to fight for freedom, but let the WTO tell us what to do with our vitamins? There must be something we can do."

"Actually, we did have a chance or two to reverse this in 2004, but it's going to be incredibly difficult now."

"But I really need my mixed tocopherol vitamin E. And my mother with congestive heart failure depends on CoQ₁₀."

"I'm not unsympathetic, especially to your poor mother, dear." She looks all around, then lowers her voice. "I can give you some sources downtown." She whispers a few names.

"But those people deal dangerous drugs! Now they're selling vitamins, too?"

"That's freedom in America in 2007, dear."

**Think it can't happen?
Think again**

The FDA's wildest dream—and our worst nightmare—is

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Our mission:

Nutrition & Healing is dedicated to helping you keep yourself and your family healthy by the safest and most effective means possible. Every month, you'll get information about diet, vitamins, minerals, herbs, natural hormones, natural energies, and other substances and techniques to prevent and heal illness, while prolonging your healthy life span.

A graduate of Harvard University and the University of Michigan Medical School (1969), Dr. Jonathan V. Wright has been practicing natural and nutritional medicine at the Tahoma Clinic in Kent, Washington, since 1973. Based on enormous volumes of library and clinical research, along with tens of thousands of clinical consultations, he is exceptionally well-qualified to bring you a unique blending of the most up-to-date information and the best and still most effective natural therapies developed by preceding generations.

Nutrition & Healing cannot improve on these famous words:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The inalienable right to life must include the right to care for one's own life. The inalienable right to liberty must include the right to choose whatever means we wish to care for ourselves. In addition to publishing the best of information about natural health care, *Nutrition & Healing* urges its readers to remember their inalienable rights to life, liberty, and freedom of choice in health care. This information is published to help in the effort to exercise these inalienable rights, and to warn of ever-present attempts of both government and private organizations to restrict them.

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vitamin access

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about to come true. Two years ago, I told you about the passage of the European Union (EU) Directive on Dietary Supplements. This directive, which is part of a larger form of legislation called Codex Alimentarius, severely restricts access to natural health products in Europe. At the time, it probably seemed a long way off: After all, the law wasn't to go into effect for several years following the initial passage.

Unfortunately, that several years is up, and the EU Directive is on track to take full effect in August 2005—less than a year from now—and by 2007, the scene described above will certainly be a reality for many, many people. Obviously, this is devastating news for Europe. But thanks to some pre-existing international agreements made by the U.S., the EU Directive will be just as devastating for the natural health community here. The main difference is that while the Directive has been big news in Europe for some time, it's been virtually ignored by U.S. media, which means that the severe restrictions it calls for will sneak up on most people and rob us all of our freedom to choose natural alternatives before we even know what's happening. That's why I and many of my colleagues in the health publishing world have done our best to keep you informed of the Directive's developments—and their consequences for the U.S.—over the years. And why we've decided to make a big push in our September newsletters by covering it in-depth.

Simply put, we're down to the wire, and if we don't act immediately, we will be facing the same fate as Europeans. There are steps you can take to get the word out and, hopefully, to diffuse this ticking time bomb. But first, let's take a few minutes and recount some of the specifics included in the Directive so that you know exactly what it is we're fighting against.

5,000 products set to disappear

The EU Directive classifies vitamins and minerals in Europe as "medical drugs" rather than dietary supplements, which means that they're subject to government regulation in terms of dosage and availability. It gets worse: There are many nutrients known to be vital to optimal health that are not on the government's RDA nutrient list including chromium picolinate, lysine, and selenium. Under the Directive, these types of supplements are banned from over-the-counter sale. Put simply, it will be illegal to buy them without a prescription.

The supplements that will be available will be restricted to multi-vitamins containing no more than 100 percent of the established RDA amounts, which are usually useless, trivial quantities—and they'll be far more expensive than what we have now.

This Directive, for all intents and purposes, makes it illegal for people to keep themselves healthy by supplementing with essential nutrients.

Plus, the Directive only allows supplements to be made from a list of 15 minerals and 13 vitamins. That leaves out at least 40 minerals important in human metabolism and forbids the use of

the most bio-available forms of vitamin complexes. In essence, it means that all nutritional supplements will be virtually the same—the specific combinations might vary, but the types and amounts of nutrients will be identical—no matter what product they're formulated into.

So, for instance, a middle-aged woman in Liverpool, England, who has a dangerously elevated homocysteine level will no longer have the option of reducing her risk of heart disease with a vitamin B dosage of her own choosing. If she's currently taking 5 mg of folic acid daily, under the new Directive she will be legally restricted to a prescription of 1 mg per day. If she's taking a 100 mg dose of B₆, she'll be restricted to 10 mg. And her pantothenic acid (B₅) intake of 500 mg will drop to 200 mg. These maximum dosage levels have been chosen to "protect" her (so we're told), when in fact the protection she needs the most will be unavailable.

In addition to these essential B vitamins, low maximum dosage levels have also been set for vitamin C, niacin, and vitamin E. But at least they made it on the list of allowed nutrients.

Approximately 350 supplement ingredients are missing from the list. If they are not added to the list by June 2005, they will be deemed illegal throughout the European Union. Supplement manufacturers may submit "technical dossiers" to support applications for the inclusion of individual elements or formulations on the so-called "positive list." But the EU has made this process so expensive and time consuming that many manufacturers simply can't afford the costs involved. As a result, around 5,000 safe formulas and nutrients that have been on the market for

decades will soon be banned.

Saving us from ourselves

Of course, these regulations were all passed under the guise of "protecting the public." According to the World Health Organization, popular alternative medicines are often "misused" and may "harm patients." They point out that the "incorrect use" of alternative therapies has caused deaths in wealthy countries where more and more patients rely on them.

You could also argue that the incorrect use of kitchen knives, water skis, and even plastic bags have all caused deaths! Not to mention the use of AMA-sanctioned medical procedures and FDA-approved drugs. The key phrase here is "incorrect use."

The WHO could do everyone a service by first addressing the incorrect use of accepted mainstream therapies that have caused far more widespread death and adverse reactions than natural medicine therapies ever have or ever will.

Although they are few and far between, there are mistakes and fatalities associated with alternate therapies, supplements, and herbal remedies. It's always important to keep in mind that many of the compounds and herbs used in natural medicine treatments are very powerful. They have risks and potential side effects, which is why I always recommend that you work closely with skilled natural medicine practitioners whenever you use these therapies. But even with their cautions, natural remedies are far, far safer than prescription drugs, and one reason might be the users themselves. An article published in the journal *Psychologist* noted that people who seek out natural and alternative treatments are generally more health conscious than non-users, and believe that by making sound

lifestyle choices they can influence their own health. But not if the EU has anything to say about it.

Where's the "fight for freedom" when you need it?

You'd think that such blatant abuse of power to restrict people's personal liberty would have our own self-proclaimed freedom-loving government up in arms (literally). But there's an even darker side to all this, and it has little—if anything—to do with health or looking out for people's best interests.

Even if the American government didn't want to go along with the regulations imposed by the EU Directive, we really wouldn't have a choice. In fact, the United States never has acknowledged or stated any form of acceptance for the EU Directive. But hard as it is to believe, this "Directive" can actually override United States law if it isn't stopped in Europe.

As a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the U.S. will be bound by any finalized standards put forth in the Directive.

If we choose to ignore the regulations our WTO-affiliation binds us to, we would face severe trade sanctions with other WTO countries, which could potentially cripple part of our economy. And there's no way that our already anti-natural-medicine government is going to let that happen over access to vitamins and minerals. So the best way to ensure it doesn't get to that point is to do everything we can to stop it now—before it happens.

Protect your rights with these 3 steps

There are three actions to take. The most urgent is to support a case brought by the British Alliance for Natural Health to overturn the European Food Supplements Directive. In January 2004, the

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Mainstream finally discovers glucosamine's arthritis-busting power

Glucosamine is “old news” in the arthritis world. You’ve probably benefited from it yourself, and if not, you likely know someone who has. So I found it a bit amusing when I read a newly published study that said, “This analysis... demonstrated for the first time that a pharmacological intervention for [osteoarthritis] has a disease-modifying effect...”

The “pharmacological intervention” they’re referring to is actually glucosamine—a totally natural substance, and not “pharmacological” in the slightest. University researchers just can’t bring themselves to admit that anything but “pharmacologics” can actually work, so they stick with the language they’re most comfortable with.

But what’s funnier about this study is that the researchers claim this is the first time glucosamine has shown a positive effect on osteoarthritis. The first time? Tell

that to the thousands of people who have been using it for years with such great success.

Let’s take a minute to go over the details of this “revolutionary” finding, in case you want to pass them along to your doctor. The study was prospective, randomized, double-blind, and placebo-controlled—all criteria for “the very best” in academic studies. The researchers measured the participants’ symptom changes and X-rays of joint space. The study took three years and involved 319 postmenopausal women.

After three years, the women in the glucosamine group showed a 14.1 percent improvement in symptoms while the women in the placebo group had a 5.4 percent worsening. The glucosamine group exhibited a 0.003 millimeter gain in joint space while women in the placebo group showed a 0.33 millimeter loss of joint space.¹

Glucosamine won’t work any

better after this study than it did before, but, now that it’s been “proven” by a study published in a mainstream medical journal, maybe conventional doctors will finally “officially” acknowledge its value. Stranger things have happened.

I usually recommend 500 milligrams of glucosamine sulfate three times a day for those with osteoarthritis. For more information on natural ways to tackle osteoarthritis (and rheumatoid arthritis), refer to the report “New Secrets for Success With Arthritis” that you received when you first subscribed to *Nutrition & Healing*. If you don’t have a copy, you can download and view the report for free from the N&H website. Just visit www.wrightnewsletter.com and log-on with the username and password listed on page 8 of this issue. **JVW**

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Alliance’s attorneys (a firm which has successfully had another European Directive overturned) won the first round in the High Court of Justice in London; the appeal was referred to the European Court of Justice. Please visit the Alliance’s website, www.alliance-natural-health.org, read about their case, and most importantly, make a donation to support their efforts to protect everyone’s supplements, including yours. Even a few dollars will help; a few dollars from each of us will add up. If we can help them overturn this food supplement dictatorship in Europe, it won’t ever come here.

The second action I urge you to take is to write, call, and e-mail your state’s Senators and Congressmen. Tell your Senators to oppose S.722, the Dietary Supplement Safety Act, and tell your Congressmen to oppose H.R. 3377, the Dietary Supplement Access and Awareness Act. These two bills put the wheels in motion for restrictions similar to those outlined in the EU Directive to become U.S. law, which would be even more threatening to us than just an international code of standards. These extremely dangerous and misnamed proposals would allow the FDA to “roll back” most of the small amount of health care freedom you and I re-gained with the 1994 “DSHEA” law we all fought so

hard for. Even if we’re successful in helping the Alliance for Natural Health defeat the European Food Supplements Directive, if these bills are passed into law, our supplement choices will shrink dramatically anyway.

The final step to take is to tell your U.S. Senators and Congressmen to support U.S. Representative Ron Paul’s H.R. 1146, the American Sovereignty Restoration Act. This accurately named (for once) legislation would make the Constitution of the United States the supreme law of the land again, and restore law-making and judging power to our elected representatives and American courts, respectively. Please don’t leave this off your list; in the long

Department of "Duh"

"Evil estrogen" gets parole

Ever since the Women's Health Initiative study implicated "hormone" replacement therapy (HRT) in cardiovascular disease, cancer, and other problems, the media has made countless blanket statements condemning HRT as dangerous. Most of the blame has been put on "estrogen." Without examining the evidence, or indicating that it was horse estrogen (which is quite different from human estrogen) used in the highly publicized study, even otherwise-careful science writers repeated the mantra: "Estrogen is dangerous."

But evidence has been slowly building for years that the more dangerous half of mainstream medicine's "hormone" replacement duo is the "progestin." Recently, a research group from the University of South Florida published some extremely convincing evidence supporting this view.¹

Using a technology which allows "real-time" microscopic video recordings of blood flow, blood vessel structure and function, and activities of various blood cells in live animals, they observed and recorded the effects of five different substances: real progesterone, two synthetic progestins—medroxyprogesterone and norethindrone), a real human estrogen (17-beta estradiol), and horse estrogens.

Their directly observed, real-time, recorded images showed an absolutely clear-cut difference in the effects of these substances on blood vessels in the brain and the rest of the body. Both progestins disrupted the cells lining blood vessel walls. They also activated platelets, promoted clot formation, and caused white blood cells to accumulate in the walls of blood vessels. The researchers pointed out that these problems are all early events in cardiovascular inflammation, thrombosis, and atherosclerosis.

However, their observations showed that real human progesterone and estrogen didn't cause any of these problems; horse estrogen didn't either. When it comes to vascular problems, it appears estrogen isn't dangerous, progestin is.

This study underlines for the zillionth time a basic premise of natural medicine: Identical-to-human molecules and molecules found in nature are (with rare exceptions) much, much safer than twisted, misshapen—but patentable—molecules, even those "based" on natural molecules.

Based on these results, it would be logical to expect the researchers to recommend bio-identical progesterone along with

bio-identical estrogen in future HRT programs. But logic is lacking in all too many areas of medicine and science these days. Instead, the researchers followed the Alice-in-Wonderland version of logic employed by most of mainstream medicine. They concluded, "Using progestins with minimal vascular toxicity may lead to safer estrogen preparations for menopausal women."

Instead of trying to find a different synthetic progestin with "minimal vascular toxicity" (which isn't likely to happen anyway), why not just use the no-toxicity natural progesterone? Duh!

Even though this common-sense approach seems to elude the mainstream medical community, that doesn't mean you can't put it to work for you. If you're going through menopause and your doctor still recommends synthetic HRT, or if he or she won't prescribe any HRT at all anymore, talk to a skilled natural medicine physician about using bio-identical HRT (see the Resources box on page 8 for a list of organizations that can help you find such a physician in your area). Bio-identical HRT will offer you the relief you still need, without the risks you don't. **JVW**

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run, it's the most important action of the three.

Please make a donation—of any size—to the Alliance for Natural Health as soon as you can. Then, please write, call, fax, and e-mail your U.S. Senators and Representative as often as you can, telling them to oppose S. 722 and H.R. 3377, and to support American

freedom by voting for H.R. 1146.

For further information on the European Union Directive on Dietary Supplements and on the Codex Alimentarius legislation, contact the American Holistic Health Association (www.ahha.org), the Alliance for Natural Health (www.alliance-natural-health.org), or the International Advocates for

Health Freedom (www.iahf.com).

Don't wake up next August to find your supplements gone for good. Join me in taking action now, and recruit everyone you can to join the battle. While our troops are fighting for your freedom and mine overseas, you and I can literally fight for American freedom right here at home. **JVW**

The top 10 anti-aging herbs that will keep you living better longer

By Kerry Bone

Although the term “anti-aging” has caught the public imagination, the reality is that the best sort of anti-aging therapy should focus on providing and supporting a healthy longevity. In other words, the issue is not so much about how old someone looks, but rather that they live a long and healthy life.

So the anti-aging therapy I prescribe to my patients is particularly focused on preventing the diseases most commonly associated with aging, such as macular degeneration, heart disease, cancer, and Alzheimer’s disease. There are 10 well-researched herbs that I recommend to nearly every person I put on this anti-aging, healthy longevity program. Let’s take a few minutes to count them down, starting with:

10. Ginkgo biloba

Ginkgo biloba is well known as an herb that improves memory and concentration, especially in older people.¹ However, recent research has shown that Ginkgo can protect brain cells and enhance their survival.^{2,3} In addition to its benefits in existing cases of Alzheimer’s disease, which have already been established in a number of clinical trials, Ginkgo is also the No. 1 herbal candidate for preventing this disease from occurring in the first place.⁴ A recent analysis found a lower incidence of Alzheimer’s disease among a group of people taking Ginkgo and other brain-enhancing treatments compared to a control group that was not receiving such treatment.⁵

9. Turmeric

Turmeric is widely used in the Ayurvedic medical system of India

as a key herbal treatment. It is also added to curries as a spice and is commonly consumed on a daily basis throughout India. Research has shown that the phytochemicals in turmeric are powerful antioxidants, and many animal studies have shown that turmeric can help to prevent cancer.⁶ This is certainly one of the traditional uses of turmeric in India—to prevent and treat cancer—but recent research has also focused on a different aspect of the value of turmeric. It was noted that despite the high number of elderly people living in Indian villages, the incidence of Alzheimer’s disease was quite low in this group.⁷ Researchers pointed to regular intake of turmeric as a possible reason. Indeed, when turmeric was tested in various laboratory models, it was shown to be active in preventing development of Alzheimer’s disease.^{8,9}

8. Green tea

We just took an in-depth look at green tea’s ability to prolong life by way of preventing cancer in the June 2004 issue of *Nutrition & Healing*, so I’ll only touch on it briefly here. A recent review of 28 studies found an overall positive association between intake of green tea and protection against various types of cancer.¹⁰ This review found that intake of green tea was more often linked to reduced frequencies of colon, bladder, pancreatic, esophageal, and lung cancers. But other studies have suggested that it might also help prevent prostate, breast, and ovarian cancers.¹¹⁻¹⁴ Green tea and black tea also seem to be able to help prevent two other major killers: heart attacks and strokes.¹⁵

7. Bilberry

One of the primary problems associated with aging is vision loss. In particular, a condition known as macular degeneration is a major cause of blindness in older people. Research has shown that bilberry has favorable effects on the micro-circulation of blood in the retina and can help to prevent its degeneration.¹⁶ When combined with Ginkgo, which has been shown on its own to reduce macular degeneration in clinical trials, this is a particularly powerful combination.¹⁷

6. Garlic

Heart disease is a major killer in the Western world. Research has shown that there are many risk factors associated with the development of heart disease, such as high cholesterol, high triglycerides, high blood pressure, and high levels of clotting precursors in the bloodstream. Garlic can help address all of these risk factors associated with heart disease. For example, clinical trials have shown that it can lower cholesterol and triglycerides and reduce blood pressure. In a sense, garlic is like an herbal polypill that can tackle many of the most serious cardiovascular risk factors in one compact treatment.¹⁸

5. OPCs (Grape Seed)

Specific compounds in red wine and grape seed extract known as oligomeric procyanidins, or OPCs, have a favorable effect on the lining and functioning of blood vessels.^{19,20} The beneficial effects of red wine have been used to explain the fact that the incidence of heart disease in France is lower than in the UK, when both countries share a similar style of diet. This is known as the

French paradox. Recently, one study also found a lower incidence of dementia among people who consume red wine on a moderate but regular basis.²¹ If you're not a red-wine drinker, you can still get the benefits of OPCs from herbal products that contain grape seed extract.

4. Hawthorn

Clinical trials have proven the herb hawthorn's value in supporting the heart, especially in chronic heart failure. But according to herbalists, the use of hawthorn for the heart goes beyond this.²² Herbalists believe that it helps nourish and regenerate the heart tissue. The famous German herbalist Rudolf Weiss described hawthorn as the nurse for the aging heart, and I think his description nicely sums up the way it can be used as part of any anti-aging protocol.²³

3. Korean or Chinese ginseng

Ginseng is well-known in the Chinese medical system as a longevity-promoting herb. Research has shown that it helps the body cope better with stress and also optimizes the functioning of many bodily systems.²⁴ But recent studies out of Korea have added another significant development to our understanding of this highly prized

herb. Studies there have shown that people who consume ginseng on a regular basis have a lower incidence of most of the common cancers.²⁵ This is backed up by laboratory research, which shows that ginseng can prevent cancer in animal models and also clinical trials where ginseng improved survivor rates among cancer sufferers given conventional treatments.²⁶

2. Echinacea

The long-term use of Echinacea is controversial, even among herbalists. There are some that say that regular use of Echinacea will "wear out" the immune system. However, there is no evidence to support these fears, and many other herbalists now recommend that Echinacea can be taken on a regular basis to support immune function.²⁷ Given that most of the degenerative diseases now have some link with immune function, the importance of maintaining a healthy immune system is more important for healthy longevity than ever before.

1. Schisandra

The Schisandra berry is another Chinese herb that has a number of traditional uses. But recent research has focussed on its value in improving liver function, especially

the capacity of the liver to detoxify and remove foreign chemicals from the body.²⁸ Exposure to such foreign chemicals is becoming an increasingly important issue as use of pesticides, herbicides, synthetic food additives, and so on becomes more and more widespread. Just a hundred years ago, the demands on the liver to detoxify these agents were substantially lower than they are now. If these agents are not detoxified adequately, they can impair immune function and possibly even cause more harmful effects, such as increasing the likelihood of cancer. Some of the herbs already mentioned also support the detoxification capacity of the liver. These are turmeric, green tea, and garlic. So their use in conjunction with Schisandra will offer an even greater benefit in this regard.

Feeling better, living better

While none of these herbs can promise to smooth out your wrinkles or erase the gray from your hair, they can help your body keep functioning at peak performance. This means you'll feel better overall—and feeling better means living better, well into old age. And that's what I call anti-aging. **KB**

Citations available upon request and on the Nutrition & Healing website: www.wrightnewsletter.com

Publisher's note: In the August 2004 issue, two editing errors occurred in Kerry Bone's article titled "Taking the mystery out of fibromyalgia, one herb at a time." The first error occurred in the sentence "Often the body's immune cells, the antibodies, begin to attack healthy tissue, setting the patient up for autoimmune disorders." That sentence should have read: "Often in fibromyalgia, the body's immune cells produce antibodies that begin to attack healthy tissue, just like in autoimmune disorders."

The second error occurred in the portion of the article dealing with Echinacea use and altered the author's intended message. That section should have read as follows: "This suggestion might pose a bit of a controversy, since some people believe that prolonged use of this herb can actually overstimulate the immune system. But since Echinacea is one of the most effective immune enhancers, and there is no real evidence of harm from its long-term use, I believe it's worth a try—especially if you haven't found success with other approaches."

We apologize for any misunderstanding or confusion resulting from these errors. To download and read the updated, full-text version of this article, please visit www.wrightnewsletter.com and log-on using the information listed on page 8.

Natural Response



Squelching those cancer-causing flames

"I was diagnosed a little over a year ago with intestinal metaplasia. I understand that the next step in my condition is stomach cancer. No article anywhere that I have seen deals with this problem. All of them usually mention acid reflux and then they jump to ulcers. However, my problem is chronic inflammation of the stomach lining and the lower esophagus. I am interested in learning about any natural alternatives that I could consider trying."

—L.G., Elmwood Park, NJ

JVW: There are no certain ways of reversing intestinal metaplasia, but there are some very logical things to try. Since you have chronic inflammation, the first thing to put into your program is cod liver oil, 1 1/2 tablespoonsful twice daily. The omega-3 fatty acids in cod liver oil are "nature's anti-inflammatories." Make sure to accompany each tablespoonful of cod liver oil with 400 IU of vitamin E, as mixed tocopherols. Also, look for a cod liver oil formula with 1,000 IU of vitamin D per tablespoonful, since vitamin D has its own anti-cancer properties.

Next, since this inflammation occurs specifically in the lining of the stomach and esophagus, chew and swallow two tablets of deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL), three to four times daily on an empty stomach, and make sure not to eat anything for an hour before or after. If you just can't

stand licorice, try aloe vera gel (not liquid) instead.

Zinc carnosine, 30 milligrams twice daily with meals; L-glutamine, 1,000 milligrams daily; and sodium ascorbate (not ascorbic acid), 1,000 milligrams twice daily, can also help heal an inflamed stomach lining. Make sure it's zinc carnosine; other forms of zinc have not yet been found to have this effect. Zinc carnosine is sold as "Nature's Lining" at natural food stores, compounding pharmacies, and the Tahoma Clinic Dispensary.

Although there's no way to say for sure, there's evidence suggesting that calcium-magnesium butyrate and retinoic acid, a natural form of vitamin A, may help reverse metaplasia. Calcium-magnesium butyrate is available as a product called Butyrex. I usually recommend taking one capsule three times per day. Retinoic acid is available only by prescription, so you'll need help from a compounding pharmacist and a physician skilled and knowledgeable in nutritional medicine to get it and to determine what dose might be best for you.

Glucosamine and chondroitin: Arthritis action vs. blood pressure reaction

"I noticed that the year I took glucosamine and chondroitin, my blood pressure went up...When I stopped the glucosamine, my blood pressure returned to a nice 120/80. I have since checked with others,

and, so far, two people also reported their blood pressure was raised during the time they took glucosamine. ...It is not true for everyone, but I think you should include that information in your newsletter when you suggest that glucosamine sulfate and chondroitin sulfate can help arthritis, that blood pressure should be monitored carefully for several months to make sure that people do not have this untoward reaction to these products."

—A.S., Ph.D., New York, NY

JVW: Thank you for bringing the possibility of reactions to glucosamine/chondroitin to the attention of *Nutrition & Healing* readers. So far, I haven't seen blood pressure elevations with either of these agents, although I usually recommend glucosamine alone.

But unusual reactions like this illustrate that it's possible for anyone to react to anything, even completely natural—and usually very safe—substances. It's good that you were alert and spotted your own reaction.

The text contained herein does not constitute medical advice. Nutrition & Healing advises that you consult your own physician before acting on any recommendations contained within this publication.

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