

FREE

HEALTHY LIVING HEALTHY PLANET

natural awakenings



Essential Oils for Pets

How to Use
Them Safely

Heart of a Woman

The Right Choices
Keep It Strong

Investing for Good

How to Align Money
With Values

HEALTH CHECKUP

THERMOGRAPHY EXAM SCREENING

inflammation

sparks almost every major disease in the body

BRAIN

Pro-inflammatory cytokines cause autoimmune reactions in the brain, which can lead to depression, autism, poor memory, Alzheimer's disease, dementia and MS.

SKIN

Chronic inflammation compromises the liver and kidneys, resulting in rashes, dermatitis, eczema, acne, psoriasis, wrinkles and fine lines.

CARDIOVASCULAR

Inflammation in the heart and arterial and venous walls contributes to heart disease, strokes, high bloodsugar (diabetes) and anemia.

KIDNEYS

Inflammatory cytokines restrict blood flow to the kidneys. Complications like edema, hypertension, nephritis and kidney failure can result.

BONES

Inflammation interferes with the body's natural ability to repair bone mass, increasing the number of fractures and leading to conditions like osteoporosis.

MUSCLE

Inflammatory cytokines can cause muscle pain and weakness. Can manifest as carpal tunnel syndrome, polymyalgia rheumatica.

BREAST

Pro-inflammatory cytokines, principally interleukin-6 (IL-6) can facilitate tumor growth and metastasis in the breast tissue. *Source: Journal of Clinical Oncology*

LIVER

Build-up of inflammation leads to an enlarged liver or fatty liver disease. Increased toxic load build-up in the body.

THYROID

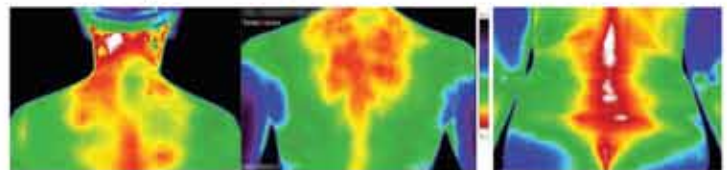
Autoimmunity as a result of inflammation can reduce total thyroid receptor count and disrupts thyroid hormone function.

LUNGS

Inflammation induces autoimmune reactions against the linings of airways. Can result in allergies or asthma.

GI TRACT

Chronic inflammation damages our intestinal lining and can result in issues like GERD, Chron's disease, Celiac disease, AND cancer.



CALL to schedule:

Carencro Office
(337) 896-4141

Lafayette Office
(337) 356-1251

\$94 for the screening

Do you have INFLAMMATION?

A Thermography Exam Screening can detect INFLAMMATION

HEALTH CHECKUP

VITAMIN TEST SCREENING

BIOTIN DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include anxiety; depression; memory problems; tingling or numbness in the feet; hair loss; irregular heartbeat; seizures; impaired sugar and fat metabolism; thin and/or weak nails; skin disorders including rash and/or infant cradle cap.

CALCIUM DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include premenstrual syndrome (PMS); premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD); osteoporosis; leg cramps; and white streaks or bands across multiple fingernails.

CHROMIUM DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include muscle weakness; fatigue; impaired glucose tolerance; type 2 diabetes; heart disease including high blood pressure, high cholesterol and triglyceride levels, irregular heartbeat, chest pain, and with severe deficiency, heart failure.

COENZYME Q DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include impaired glucose tolerance (or impaired carbohydrate metabolism); muscle weakness; fatigue; high blood pressure; chest pain; irregular heartbeat, and with severe deficiency, heart failure.

COPPER DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include anemia; numbness or tingling of the hands and/or feet; osteoporosis; joint problems; hypothyroidism; loss of pigment (color) in the hair and skin; irregular heartbeat; and high cholesterol levels.

IODINE/IODIDE DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include depression; fatigue; disorders of carbohydrate metabolism; goiter and hypothyroidism (fatigue, weakness, weight gain) and even hyperthyroidism (weight loss, irregular heartbeat, appetite changes); thin nails; thinning and/or loss of outer third of eyebrow; and hair loss.

Deficiency During Pregnancy: Fetal development can be affected with consequent irreversible brain damage and mental retardation.

IRON DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include anemia; rapid heart rate; restless legs syndrome; fatigue; headaches; dizziness; cold intolerance; depression; hair loss; red, dry, and cracked lips; difficulty concentrating; learning difficulties and lower IQ in children; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); multiple nail disorders including abnormally shaped nails, ridged or spoon-shaped nails, brittle nails, soft nails, pale fingernail beds, and thin/weak nails. **Excessive intake of iron can be toxic.**

MAGNESIUM DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include migraine headaches; restless legs syndrome; brittle nails; chronic fatigue; anxiety; depression; preeclampsia; premenstrual syndrome (PMS); premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD); osteoporosis; muscle cramps; refractory hypokalemia; insomnia; irregular heartbeat; high blood pressure; fibromyalgia; seizures; asthma; carbohydrate cravings (e.g. sugar and chocolate); and type 2 diabetes.

OMEGA 3 (EPA + DHA) DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include hyperkeratosis or a goosebump-like appearance of the skin; psoriasis; dry scaly or itchy skin; brittle hair and nails; poor concentration; depression; anxiety; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); bipolar disorder; schizophrenia; joint pain; and lack of physical endurance.

VITAMIN A DEFICIENCY

Signs and symptoms of deficiency include dry eyes; night blindness (or difficulty seeing at night); Bitot's spots; dry, scaly, and rough skin; hyperkeratosis or a goosebump-like appearance of the skin; decreased immunity; and frequent viral infections.

Excessive intake of vitamin A from animal sources can be toxic.



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\$49 for the screening

**A vitamin deficiency could be the reason you are sick.
Are you taking the correct vitamins? Call and get a Vitamin Test Today!**

publisher's letter



What is socially conscious investing? How can it change the way we live? Socially conscious investing is a movement where one makes investments to create a socially positive change.

While recycling and having a smaller carbon footprint creates a positive change, more can be done in the social aspect. This means investing in your health and the health and well being of others.

Since it is the month of February, it seems most appropriate to invest in heart health. Our hearts not only pump needed nutrients, oxygen, and cells throughout our body, they connect us to the world. As we go on with our lives, we meet new people and have different experiences. Our hearts are involved in this social process. They are a large part of our social awareness and ability. The way we feel and the way we act are somewhat connected to our hearts. Expressions like having a "broken heart", saying "my heart goes out to you", or feeling like someone has "touched your heart" are pure examples of our heart's relationship with emotions. When socializing with others and sharing our views/opinions we use our hearts. Along with our heart, our mind socially guides us. However, our mind is not as emotionally connected to people like our hearts are. That's why many people say our minds help us think, while our hearts help us feel. This is why it's important to be socially conscious. We can eat cleaner and exercise more, but our hearts won't be healthy if we aren't consciously aware of our emotions and actions.

There have been numerous studies showing how stress affects the heart. Stress can cause heart problems such as heart disease and high blood pressure. When becoming socially aware it is important to be able to recognize not only your emotions, but how someone else's actions affect you. It is hard to recognize when you feel a shift in your emotions due to someone else's actions. In addition, it's also hard to step back from the situation and identify why you're feeling a particular way. Once you do this, you become socially conscious. Identifying your emotions and reactions allow people to de-stress and find order in their lives. Sometimes that's all we need to become socially invested.

In the world we live in today, stress is an unavoidable factor due to technology, family issues, and politics. However, we can create our own positive investments. We can be aware of our hearts and it's physical and spiritual health. To begin being more socially conscious and, think of your social connection with others and how you can use our emotional health and mindful intentions to positively affect the people around you.

Namaste: we honor the spirit in you, which is also in us.

Lillyanna & Lydia

Lillyanna and Lydia Castille, Assistant Publishers



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natural
awakenings

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Natural Awakenings is your guide to a healthier, more balanced life. In each issue readers find cutting-edge information on natural health, nutrition, fitness, personal growth, green living, creative expression and the products and services that support a healthy lifestyle.

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The Urban Naturalist is Rooted in Sustainability



The Urban Naturalist, owned by Marcus Descant, is hosting a one-hour workshop on spring gardening from 10 to 11 a.m. on March 9. Guests are encouraged to bring along unwanted plastic, plant containers and trays to the free event.

Descant says he aims to create healthier landscapes for families, communities and ecosystems within the urban setting. In addition to providing heirloom vegetables and flowers, many of which

are Louisiana native species, The Urban Naturalist prides itself on growing and propagating healthy plants without pesticides or chemical fertilizers, with most of the containers used being recycled from previous plantings and customer donations. This knowledge of gardening and growing is willingly shared with customers who visit the urban gardens on Madison Street.

Customers can also enjoy a unique shopping experience that Descant calls, "the honor system." As he is often planting elsewhere, he encourages visitors to shop in his absence using self-checkout instructions, posted in the gardens, whereby one can text him a description of the items being picked out along with an email to be invoiced at a later time. There is also an option to leave payment at the shed door or online at Squareup.com. He offers this service in hopes that folks will stop by often, regardless of hours, and peruse his many plants and healing herbs including such favorites as borage (reduces swelling from insect bites), spilanthes ("toothache plant"), mullein ("self-heal"), lemon balm and chamomile.

Location: 216 Madison Street, Lafayette. For information, call 337-258-0878 or visit TheUrbanNaturalists.com and [Facebook.com/theurbannaturalist/](https://www.facebook.com/theurbannaturalist/).

The Yoga Garden - Using Ancient Teaching for Modern Day Healing

Come and meet the staff of The Yoga Garden from 4 to 9 p.m., on February 9, at a special event with Downtown Lafayette's second Saturday artwalk, called "Heartwalk at Gordon Square," at 100 E. Vermilion Street. The event welcomes Andrea Villen, Abby Conques and Jarrod Roy. The group will collaborate to give attendees a blissful experience of ancient yoga teachings, sound healing and Reiki on the heart chakra-connecting mind, body and spirit to the world of unity inside of us all—accompanied by the ancient, sacred sounds of singing bowls and soft, gentle, energetic healing touches of Reiki.



Owner Jarrod Roy believes in using the "full breath of yoga through classic teachings," all the while offering a community that encourages a healthy lifestyle, fel-

lowship and practice of yoga and mindfulness on and off the mat that goes beyond posture and asana. Their approach at The Yoga Garden is an adaptive one, in which the practice is adapted to the individual and their needs. It is their continued belief that yoga is for everyone from the experienced to the beginner.

Roy and his staff have created a safe place, a refuge and sanctuary for those who seek a connection to nature and others as part of their practice. Located in the heart of Lafayette, classes are offered in an at-home setting that boasts a beautiful indoor yoga studio, as well as a large screened-in outdoor deck studio. The backyard garden offers beautiful live oak trees, open space and seating areas that can be used for meditation, reflection and practicing yoga. Staff members, specialists, and holistic practitioners make it possible for The Yoga Garden to also offer services in sound healing, massage therapy, energy therapy and cranial sacral therapy.

For information, call 337-232-1884 or visit YoGarden.net.

AMAZING RESULTS !

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Includes Zerona Tummy Tuck Laser Sessions, Infrared Sauna, Personal Training, iLipo Treatments, Body Wraps, Weight Loss Supplements, and more.

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Lafayette Location: (337) 356-1251	9 Sessions \$650
Sunset Location: (337) 662-3120	12 Sessions \$850

Zerona Tummy Tuck Laser Sessions



BEFORE

Zerona Tummy Tuck Laser Sessions

AFTER

Zerona Tummy Tuck Laser Sessions

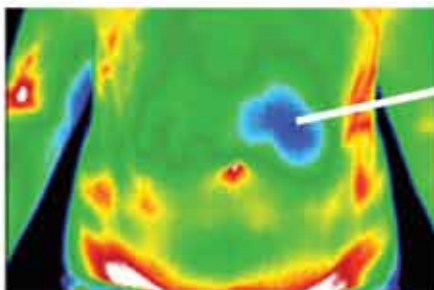
32 treatments over 6 months with proper diet and exercise.

Your **HEALTH** must be the most important thing in the world to you.

Without your health you can not enjoy family or work.

What did I learn from my thermography exam?

- Franklin Carter, Jennings, LA



I have hypothermia in my stomach. The "good" bacteria has been damaged in my stomach and the natural flora of bacteria needs to be reestablished. I have malabsorption of my food and my low energy levels, weight gain, and headaches are because I am not absorbing enough nutrients.

\$94 Full-Body Thermography Screening



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Thermography is used to:

- help make informed decisions regarding the need for further treatment
- visualize the physiological component of pain, injury or illness/disease
- provide early warning of potential health issues
- identify the originating source of neuropathic dysfunction
- support the existence of a suspected condition
- aid in accurate diagnosis and treatment

Bitter Melon Eases Knee Pain

Bitter melon (*Momordica charantia*), a spiky, cucumber-shaped fruit, has traditionally been used in Asian countries to lower blood sugar. Now, researchers at Universiti Sains Malaysia report that it can significantly improve symptoms and reduce the pain of knee osteoarthritis. Half of 75 patients were given a placebo and the other half 1,500 milligrams three times a day of a bitter melon supplement. After three months, the bitter melon group had significantly fewer symptoms and less knee pain and analgesic use, as well as lowered body weight, body mass index and fasting blood glucose levels.



Harmful Bacteria Linked to Certain Showerheads

Harmful bacteria from the genus *Mycobacterium* have been shown to linger in showerheads and lead to lung infections through inhalation of steam. University of Colorado researchers analyzed 656 biofilms coating the inside of showerheads sent to them by volunteers throughout the U.S. and Europe, and found twice as much mycobacterium in showerheads from households receiving municipal water than in those receiving well water. Chlorine disinfection methods were suspected by the researchers. Plastic showerheads

had levels that were, on average, two times lower than showerheads made of metal or metal and plastic components. “Hot spots” with high levels of mycobacteria—such as Hawaii, southern California, Florida, the upper Midwest and the mid-Atlantic states—generally overlapped regions where mycobacterium-related lung diseases are most prevalent.

Dmitry Bruskov/Shutterstock.com

Zinc Combo Fights Aging Diseases

When zinc, a trace mineral, is combined with tea, coffee, chocolate and other foods that contain specific antioxidant compounds, it boosts protection against the oxidative stress linked to aging and diseases such as dementia, cancer and heart disease, report researchers from Auburn University, in Alabama, and the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, in Germany. Zinc activates a plant compound known as hydroquinone, which boosts foods’ antioxidant properties. Hydroquinone alone cannot break down harmful free radicals, but when combined with zinc, a type of enzyme is created that helps prevent damage to organs and tissues.

Immigration to U.S. Lowers Healthy Gut Bacteria

People in developing nations have much greater diversity in gut bacteria than Americans, but a University of Minnesota study of U.S. immigrants has found that six to nine months after moving to the U.S. and eating a Western diet, the gut bacteria of those from countries with predominantly non-Western diets changed to match gut bacteria typical of a Western diet, while their gut bacteria became less diverse and less healthy. These effects increased with the duration of U.S. residence and were compounded across generations. The more “Westernized” a woman’s microbiome, the greater her risk of obesity.

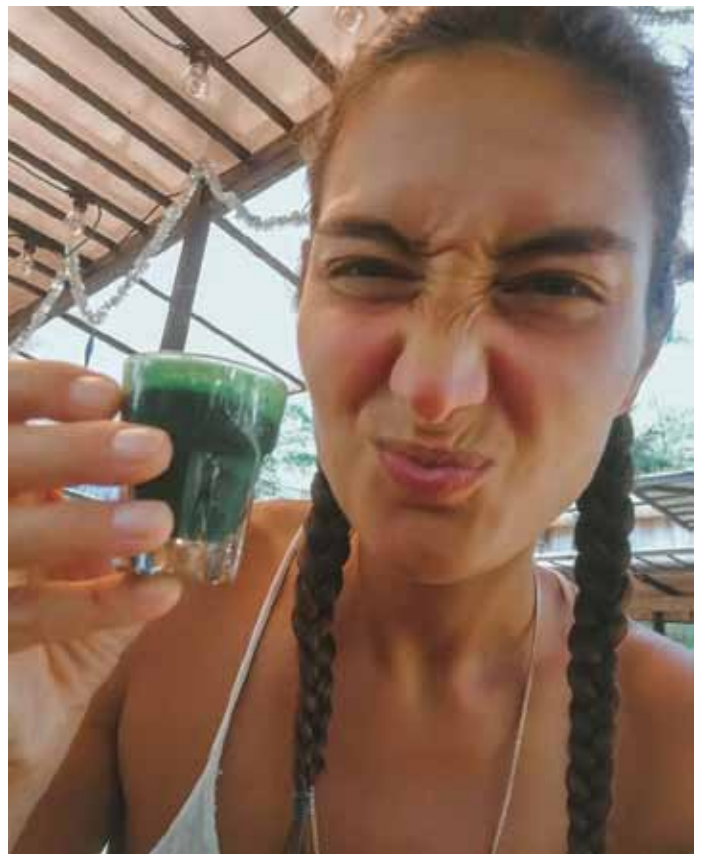
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Ashwagandha Normalizes Hypothyroid Levels

Ashwagandha, a traditional ayurvedic herb, can significantly improve symptoms of subclinical hypothyroidism, a condition that affects many women, a new double-blind clinical study shows. Researchers from India's Sudbhawana Hospital tested 50 patients that had high circulating thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) levels. For eight weeks, half were given 600 milligrams a day of ashwagandha; the other half were given a placebo. In the treatment group, TSH levels fell by more than 17 percent, T4 levels increased by nearly 20 percent and T3 levels increased by more than 40 percent. "Ashwagandha treatment effectively normalized the serum thyroid indices during the eight-week treatment period in a significant manner," the report concluded.



Wheatgrass Linked To Better Health

1 ounce of WHEATGRASS = 2.5 lbs of green VEGETABLES

Consuming two to three shots of wheatgrass daily, or at least four times a week, has been clinically proven to promote health on several levels. There have been numerous studies that prove that taking two shots of wheatgrass is equivalent to drinking eight glasses of vegetable juice. One ounce of wheatgrass is equal to 2.5 pounds of green vegetables.



Eric Isselee/Shutterstock.com

Sniffing Dogs Can Detect Malaria

After years of worldwide decline, malaria is on a worrisome upswing, but researchers from Durham University, in the UK, have found a quick, non-invasive, low-cost

detection method: dogs. Trained to sniff out malaria parasites in socks that West African children wore for one night, the canines correctly identified 70 percent among the infected and 90 percent among the uninfected children.



ZERONA: ZAP FAT WITH LASER LIGHT

Lasers are typically thought of as hot, but “cold” lasers that emit variable-frequency pulsed waves are used in surgery for pain relief and now to get rid of fat.

“It does seem too good to be true, but there’s a lot of science behind this,” says Steven Hopping, a cosmetic surgeon and otolaryngologist in DC. A former president of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery and a professor of surgery at George Washington University, Hopping has had a Zerona machine for about a year and a half.

With Zerona, a patient lies down and a four-armed device is positioned over the body. To treat the tummy and thighs, the laser eye in the middle of the contraption is positioned over the abdomen, while the four arms are over the thighs.

The laser is on for 40 minutes a session. Often, six sessions are spaced over a two-week period. Patients typically feel nothing, though some experience a tingle.

Fats cells are emulsified, causing them to collapse and be emptied via the body’s lymphatic system. The shrunken fat cells remain but are smaller.

In the study that prompted FDA approval, more than 80 percent of those in a Zerona trial lost an average of 3.64 inches combined over their waist, hip, and thigh areas. A control group that didn’t get Zerona averaged half an inch. The fat loss was evident in photos of participants.

Although it wasn’t required in the trial, patients getting Zerona now are asked during treatment to avoid caffeine and alcohol, and drink lots of water.

Zerona seems to have no adverse side effects. The laser operates at too low a level to affect deeper body tissues or skin. Blood studies conducted on those undergoing treatment were normal, and some people who had high or borderline-high cholesterol saw improvement.

In studies, more than 80 percent of patients responded to treatment. Hopping says that perhaps 75 percent of those he treats are pleased; the rest experi-

Zerona

Melt Belly Fat Using Zerona Cold Laser Treatments

Zerona employs a laser to shrink fat cells, and costs about \$1,500 to \$1,700 for a package of six purportedly painless treatments performed over two weeks in a doctor’s office. A package of six treatments at the LITEON Natural Health Center is under \$600. Each treatment takes roughly 40 minutes. Liposuction costs \$4,000 on average, and a tummy tuck costs \$5,000 to \$9,000. Unlike many laser sculpting procedures, Zerona has “absolutely no side effects, no allergic reactions, bruising, anything,” says Steve Shanks, president of Erchnoia, Zerona’s manufacturer. The company’s clinical trial for FDA approval found that the procedure removed about 1 to 1.5 inches from each area treated including waist, hips, and thighs. *Source: Health.usnews.com*



ence little to no effect. Wanda Dyson, a DC internist who has a Zerona, reports about the same numbers, adding that with more sessions the likelihood of a response appears to increase. Both doctors say they've had a few patients lose as much as 12 inches.

"Men are especially good candidates because they tend to carry fat around the waist," says Hopping. "That fat often responds well."



Deborah Johnson of Arlington, a patient of Dyson's, initially signed up for six Zerona treatments on her abdomen, thighs, and back. They worked so well that she got three more.

"I started on a Monday, and by that weekend I was in my closet trying on clothes I hadn't been able to wear in a long time," Johnson says. She did Zerona last February and, when interviewed in December, said she had not only maintained the lost inches but lost more: "It inspired me to keep exercising and eating well."

"I love Zerona as a way to jump-start a healthy lifestyle change," says Dyson. "People come in on a diet plateau, start seeing inches go away, then stick with their diet and exercise program."

Zerona can't be used to remove firm fat, only marshmallow flab. It should be avoided if you're pregnant or have a pacemaker. Some evidence suggests that Zerona may not work as well on people with diabetes or thyroid impairment, because their lymphatic systems may be slow to get rid of material in collapsed fat cells. Finally, no studies have shown how long the effects last but for now at least we know it works.



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- No Surgery

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 18 Sessions \$950 (\$1950 Value)
 Includes weight program and Detox

Naturally slims, shapes, and tones the areas of the body including those difficult to reach areas such as: waist, hips, thighs, upper legs and even the arms.

The more sessions/treatments you do the more fat you lose and the more you shape the area being treated.

ZERONA
Non-Invasive Fat Reduction

	Before	After
Right Arm	15 1/2"	11"
Left Arm	17 1/2"	12"
Right Thigh	22 1/2"	18"
Left Thigh	22 1/2"	18 1/2"
Waist	38 1/2"	31"
Hips	36 1/2"	33 1/2"
Total	142.5"	122"

Total Inches Lost 20.5
15 sessions



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Day 1: Infrared Heat Therapy (45 mins), Whole Body Vibration (10 mins), Ionic Foot Detox (30 mins)

Day 2: Deep Tissue Manual Massage (60 mins), Infrared Heat Therapy (45 mins), Whole Body Vibration (10 mins)

Day 3: , Ionic Foot Detox (30 mins), Hydration Therapy (30 mins), Lymphatic Massage (30 mins)

Week 2

Day 1: Organic Juice Detox (3 days), Vitamin Therapy, Infrared Heat Therapy (45 mins), Whole Body Vibration



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Organic Frozen Wheatgrass Juice

Wheatgrass juice is potent raw, living food. The grass itself comes from the common wheat plant (species triticum aestivum) when it is young, vibrant and full of rich green chlorophyll. When the grass is squeezed, a dark green liquid is expressed and this is called wheatgrass juice.



Wheatgrass is harvested for juicing when the grass reaches its nutritional peak. This is just before the jointing stage, when the plant is between 7 and 11 inches tall. At this point, it has accumulated energy which will

soon power a massive growth spurt. It is this energy that is captured in the juice.

- 1 fl. oz. of wheatgrass juice is equivalent to 2½ pounds of the choicest vegetables
- wheatgrass is mineral rich and contains 92 minerals needed by the body
- it is a complete protein containing 20+ amino acids and has higher protein densities than any other food source
- the magic is in the enzymes with more than 30 found in the juice
- the juice is 70% chlorophyll and since the chlorophyll molecule is virtually identical to hemoglobin (red blood cells that carry oxygen), wheatgrass juice will oxygenate your body

Suggested Use: Drink one 1.5oz frozen cup every other day.

.....\$30.00 (box of 16 count 1.5 oz frozen wheatgrass cups)

Green Waters Alkaline Water



Green Waters alkaline water reduces infections, flu and colds. Immunity weakens with more and more acidity in our body and thus we fall sick more frequently. Alkaline water can help build up alkaline reserves and neutralize acids helping our body to recuperate and grow strong.

Suggested Use: Drink 64 oz per day for 14 days.

.....\$36.00 / case of six

pH 9.5 Drops



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- Dr. Otto Warburg, **Nobel Peace Prize Winner** for cancer and alkalinity.

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We have all this sophisticated equipment and all these medications, but when it comes down to it, the vast majority of cardiovascular disease can be prevented.

~Christina Adams, M.D.

Heart of a Woman

The Right Choices Keep It Strong

by Lisa Marshall

Sometime between the salad and the main course at her grandson's bar mitzvah, Joyce Lenard, then 69, felt a crushing pressure deep within her chest. A tireless go-getter who had worked in Hillary Clinton's district office when she was a U.S. senator, raised two daughters and recently donated a kidney to one of them, Lenard had spent months painstakingly planning the 100-guest gala, so when the pain came, she ignored it and got on with the party. She even drove herself to her Long Island home that night. "I just assumed I was having indigestion and it would pass," Lenard recalls.

Hours later, her husband rushed her to the hospital, where she was diagnosed with a rare, often-fatal form of heart attack, takotsubo cardiomyopathy, in which intense stress literally changes the shape of the heart. Thankful to be alive, she has since taken up meditation, cleaned up her diet and now leads a support group for female heart patients of all ages. Like her, many of them never saw it coming.

"Women tend to be the caregivers," says Lenard. "We take care of our husbands, our families, our friends, our careers, and we often forget about our own health. Then look what happens." Lenard is among the 44 million U.S. women with cardiovascular disease, an insidious illness that until recently has been erroneously framed as a "man's disease". In reality, it is the number one killer of women, responsible for one in three deaths each year, according to the American Heart Association (AHA). By comparison, one in 26 women die of breast cancer.

While awareness has risen since 2004, when AHA launched its Go Red for Women campaign, surveys show only 17 percent of women view cardiovascular disease as something that should concern them. It should, experts say, because 80 to 90 percent of cases are avoidable with lifestyle and dietary changes. In some cases, natural remedies can even reverse it. "We have all this sophisticated equipment and all these medications, but when it comes

down to it, the vast majority of cardiovascular disease can be prevented," says integrative cardiologist Christina Adams, M.D., of the Scripps Women's Heart Center, in La Jolla, California.

Know Risks and Address Them Early

In the late 1990s, researchers discovered women were about as likely as men to be diagnosed with the disease, and far more likely to die from it. "They didn't have the classic signs and symptoms, so they often went undiagnosed and untreated," explains Jennifer Mieres, M.D., a cardiology professor at the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell, in New York.

Along with chest pain, women often suffer fatigue, shortness of breath, indigestion, pain in the neck, back or jaw, nausea or anxiety in the months leading up to a heart attack. In more than half of the cases, according to one recent study in the journal *Circulation*, doctors fail to recognize these symptoms.

Then there is the "not now" factor. "I used to see women all the time who said, 'I have had these symptoms for months, but I just didn't have time to take care of it,'" says Mieres, co-author of *Heart Smart for Women: Six S.T.E.P.S. in Six Weeks to Heart-Healthy Living*.

Recent research has also shown that women are uniquely vulnerable to developing heart disease in ways that men don't share. Taking birth control pills (especially while smoking) can boost risk. Complications during pregnancy such as preeclampsia and gestational diabetes can be hard on the heart, increasing vulnerability for years to come. Because estrogen is believed to be cardio-protective, when it wanes during perimenopause and menopause, risk goes up again.

"As soon as we hit menopause, our biological milieu starts to change," says Mieres, noting that "good" cholesterol tends to decrease and "bad" cholesterol (LDL) and triglycerides tend to increase. Yet, arterial plaque—which can ultimately build up, break loose and cause a heart attack or stroke—starts accumulating as early as age 20, so the earlier women start paying attention, the better.

Food Not Meds

Thirty years after the first cholesterol-lowering medication hit the market, so-called statin drugs have become the largest class of medications in the world, with U.S. sales doubling between 2000 and 2010 to reach \$20 billion, according to the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. While drugs can be appropriate for those already diagnosed with heart disease and at high risk of heart attack or stroke, they are not without serious side effects. Statins can cause chronic muscle pain, memory loss and increased blood sugar, while hypertension drugs can precipitate fainting and kidney damage.

For many patients, there's another way, integrative cardiologists say. Unfortunately, most of the talk about prevention focuses on prescription medications, says Stephen Devries, M.D., executive director of the Chicago-based Gaples Institute for Integrative Cardiology. "What often gets lost in the discussion are the dietary changes, which can be equally important."

Devries recommends a plant-based Mediterranean diet—low in the saturated fat found in beef, processed meats and cheese—and high in leafy greens, whole grains and the "good" fats found in fatty fish, olive oil and avocados. Specific foods have also been shown to lower cholesterol and blood pressure.

Nuts, including walnuts, peanuts and almonds, have been shown to lower LDL. One 2017 study of 77,000 female nurses, published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, found those that ate peanuts or tree nuts (including almonds and cashews) two or more times per week had a 19 percent lower risk of developing heart disease. Those that ate walnuts once a week cut their risk by 23 percent.

Dark purple and red fruits contain compounds called anthocyanins that boost production of nitric oxide, and in turn expand blood vessels, improving circulation. Another recent study, published in the journal *Circulation*, followed 94,000 women for 18 years and found those that ate four servings or more per week of blueberries and strawberries were a third less likely to have a heart attack.

Pomegranates are also key for heart health, with recent research published in the journal *Clinical Nutrition* showing a daily serving of juice can make platelets less sticky, lower blood pressure and reduce plaque formation.

Dark leafy greens like kale and broccoli—which are rich in vitamin K—play an important role in fostering a healthy heart structure, with each serving per week cutting the risk of heart disease by 23 percent, according to the Gaples Institute.

Nurturing the Emotional Heart

No discussion of heart health would be complete without an emphasis on social and emotional health, a critical risk factor which until recently has been largely absent, says Sandeep Jauhar, M.D., director of the Heart Failure Program at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center, and author of the new book, *Heart: A History*.

But research shows the emotional heart can break, too, as in Lenard's case. With as many as 90 percent of incidents occurring in women, the condition that landed her in the emergency room often shows up in patients with no signs of obstructed blood vessels or high cholesterol. Rather, factors like financial worries, work stress or the death of or break-up with a loved one can flood the heart with stress hormones, changing its shape to one that resembles a Japanese pot called a *takotsubo* and weakening it profoundly. "Remarkably, in many cases, once the emotional state returns to normal, so does the heart," says Jauhar.

Longer-term, emotional stress has been shown to lead to platelet aggregation, or stickiness in the blood, which can impact blood flow. Also, constant bombardment by stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol can damage the inner walls of blood vessels, boosting accumulation of plaque.

Supplements for a Healthy Heart



Red yeast rice extract: This over-the-counter (OTC) extract, commonly used in Chinese medicine, has been shown to significantly lower both total cholesterol and LDL, or "bad" cholesterol levels, much like a statin does. Studies show 1.2 to 2.4 grams per day can reduce cholesterol by 26 percent in 12 weeks.

Omega-3 fatty acids: Eating fatty fish or taking fish oil supplements (one to four grams daily of EPA/DHA) has been shown to reduce risk of heart disease in healthy people and lower triglyceride levels and risk of heart attack in those already diagnosed with cardiovascular disease. Walnuts, chia, hemp and flax seeds are excellent vegan sources of Omega-3s.

Coenzyme Q10: Found in small amounts in organ meats, sardines, cauliflower and asparagus, this powerful antioxidant—also available in OTC supplements—can lower blood pressure and help combat the side effects of statins.

Nicotinamide riboside: Fairly new on the supplement scene, this compound, known as NR, has been shown to mimic the beneficial impacts of calorie restriction, improving blood pressure and arterial health in those with mild hypertension.

Garlic: Some studies suggest that garlic, either fresh or in supplements, can lower cholesterol and blood pressure.



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To nurture the metaphorical heart, integrative cardiologists recommend taking time to maintain healthy personal relationships and minimize work stress. As well, exercising five to six days per week for at least 30 minutes and practicing activities like mindfulness meditation or yoga have been shown to lower heart rate. A recent study published in the journal *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* looked at 201 people with coronary heart disease. It found those that practiced meditation were 50 percent less likely to die or have a heart attack or stroke in the span of five years.

Finding quiet spaces to retreat to can also be important. A study published in November by researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital, in Boston, found that living and working in chronically noisy environments can boost the risk for heart problems. It is also wise to prioritize sleep (at least seven hours per night), because the lack of it can inflame arteries.

The bottom line is that a holistic approach is best, says Jauhar. "If you want to live a long life, don't smoke, eat well and exercise, but also pay attention to the quality of your relationships and your ability to withstand stress and transcend distress. Those are also a matter of life and death."

Lisa Marshall is a freelance health writer in Boulder, CO. Connect at LisaAnnMarshall.com.

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AMAZING EMBRACE

The Healing Power of Hugs

by April Thompson

Hugs don't just feel good; they do good. A simple embrace can boost our health and mood, connect us spiritually and even help mend society.

Hugs and other types of affectionate touching can provide numerous benefits in the face of

threats or stress, according to Michael Murphy, Ph.D., a researcher with the Laboratory for the Study of Stress, Immunity and Disease at Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh. "The research shows that touch behaviors like hugs reduce negative responses to threats and make people feel happier, more secure and more protected."

In a study of 404 adults, Carnegie Mellon researchers looked at how social support and hugs affected participants' susceptibility to the common cold after being exposed to the virus. "People experiencing lots of conflict are more likely to get a cold when exposed to a virus," says Murphy. "But individuals who also tend to receive lots of hugs appear protected from this additional risk."

These behaviors also turn down our biological response to stress and may even improve how our immune system works.

~Michael Murphy, researcher

A Primal Need for Connection

Mata Amritanandamayi, a 65-year-old Indian spiritual leader better known as Amma, has hugged tens of millions of people around the world, earning her the nickname, "the hugging saint."

Amma's tradition of hugging people grew organically, from hugging someone she noticed in distress, to how she receives massive crowds clamoring for one of her loving, compassionate embraces.

"A hug is a gesture that reveals the spiritual truth that, 'We are not two—we are one,'" says Swami Amritaswarupananda, one of Amma's senior disciples. "In today's world, where people often feel alienated and lonely, a hug can uplift and make us feel reconnected to the people and world around us."

Intention is key to the exchange of energy that occurs with a hug, says Amritaswarupananda. "What is important is the sincerity behind the action—the genuine feeling of love and compassion. A simple glance or mere touch

of the hand can have that same power to make us feel whole if that genuine, heartfelt connection is there."

Hugs tap into that fundamental human need to belong, says Murphy. "Hugs and other forms of affectionate touch act as powerful reminders that we belong. "These behaviors also turn down our biological response to stress and may even improve how our immune system works." For example, researchers think that touching might trigger our body to release oxytocin, a hormone that can reduce fear and improve social bonding, Murphy notes. Hugs and the associated oxytocin release can have powerful ripple effects in the body, decreasing heart rate and levels of stress hormones cortisol and norepinephrine, along with improving immune function and pain tolerance. Oxytocin can also trigger the release of feel-good hormones like serotonin and dopamine.

Bridging Divides With a Hug

While Murphy cautions that the jury is out on the effects of hugs on strangers, as most research has been done on embraces between loved ones, Ken Nwadike, Jr. has built a national campaign around the concept. Known as the "free hugs guy", the former competitive runner began offering up hugs during the 2014 Boston Marathon, the year after the deadly bombing. Nwadike has since brought the Free Hugs Project to more divisive spaces, from political rallies to protests, offering hugs to all to spread love and inspire change.

The Los Angeles activist's all-embracing hugs are a symbol of unconditional love, respect and unity at a time when tensions and political divisions are running high. For Nwadike, hugs are a way of de-escalating conflict and mending the human divide. "Communities are divided because of fear, hatred and misunderstanding. Starting the conversation with kindness, rather than hatred, will get us a lot further," he says.

Consent is always important, and not everyone appreciates an unsolicited hug. But like compliments, hugs are free to give and usually well received. As humans, we bear arms that were built not to harm, but to heal.

Connect with freelance writer April Thompson, of Washington, D.C., at AprilWrites.com.

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An acidic environment promotes the growth of bad bacteria, yeast and fungi. The imbalance of your body's good bacteria makes you more prone to getting infections. You will be less likely to suffer from the common cold when your body is alkaline.

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Soothing Anxious Kids

Natural Remedies Restore Calm

by Marlaina Donato

Kids and teens have always had plenty to be stressed about, such as family finances, parental bickering, the birth of a sibling and other challenges on the home front. Then there are the age-old tensions of taking school exams and squabbles with friends and other classmates.

Yet with the proliferation of social media and cyber-bullying, kids face obstacles other generations did not, and chronic juvenile anxiety has become a pervasive mental health issue. However, there are a number of integrative approaches that can help heal youthful psyches. “I encourage kids and parents to focus on skills, versus pills,” says Lawrence Rosen, M.D., founder of The Whole Child Center, in Oradell, New Jersey. “There are several safe and cost-effective natural options for anxiety.”

Mindful Modalities

Relaxing and engaging the imagination are necessary for healthy brain development and offsetting stress. Downtime in general and specifically limiting screen time is paramount. “Electronic devices can be very overstimulating and can cause or exacerbate anxiety,” says Kristi Kiel, ND, Ph.D., of Lake Superior Natural Health, in Ashland, Wisconsin. “There should be at least a one-to-one balance of screen time and outside play.”

It’s important to know that anxiety is highly treatable.

~Dr. Timothy DiGiacomo

Mindful activities and creative outlets like art, music and dance in a no-pressure environment help kids get out of “fight-or-flight” mode. “Both parents and kids need to have go-to coping skills,” says Rosen. “Meditation and yoga are safe and work very well.” Kids need to feel a sense of control over their bodies, he adds, and mindful breathing techniques can make a significant difference in how they handle stress.

So can a regular dose of the great outdoors. Exercise helps boost serotonin levels, which decreases anxiety. Timothy DiGiacomo, Psy.D., clinical director of the Mountain Valley Treatment Center, in Plainfield, New Hampshire, emphasizes the value of getting outside. “Connection to nature, calmness and present-moment awareness are all benefits.”

Sleep and Diet Triggers

Before parents seek any treatment for their child’s anxiety, Kiel stresses the importance of looking at the basics. “When children don’t get enough sleep, their bodies don’t respond as well to stressful situations. School-age children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep per night, and teenagers should be getting nine to 10 hours.” Sensitivity to certain foods such as gluten or dairy is also something to consider, says Kiel.

Rosen concurs. “Artificial dyes and sweeteners can negatively impact mood and focus. More of an issue, though, is nutritional imbalance.” Skipping breakfast or eating mostly carbs can feed anxiety, he notes. “The brain relies on sustainable fuel—a blend of lean proteins, healthy fats—and in some cases, gluten-free, whole grain carbs.”

Eating foods high in healthy fat and protein can help minimize blood sugar fluctuations that can trigger symptoms of anxiety in kids. Probiotics and/or cultured and fermented foods can help gut health and promote equilibrium. Omega-3 fats from fish or vegetarian sources are also important additions.

Helpful Supplements

Supplements dosed appropriately for children and teenagers are safe and can offer huge benefits. “Magnesium is good for relaxation, especially anxiety accompanied by muscle tension. B-complex vitamins are also important because they are depleted by stress and help the body to handle stress,” says Kiel. Her herbal recommendations include skullcap, hops and milky oat as teas or glycerin-based extracts. “For teenagers, in addition to these three gentle herbs, I recommend kava kava, which can have a significant calming effect without drowsiness.”

Polyvagal Theory

Research by Stephen Porges, Ph.D., a professor at the University of North Carolina, in Chapel Hill, addresses the importance of the vagus nerve, which runs from the brain through the face and thorax to the abdomen. His polyvagal theory suggests the interconnectedness of emotions, mind and body in both children and adults.

This nerve affects all major organs and plays a critical role in anxiety and inflammation. Mindful breathing and using the vocal chords, especially singing, stimulates the vagus nerve and nourishes well-being. Splashing the face with cold water during times of stress also tones this nerve and reduces acute anxiety.

DiGiacomo emphasizes that different natural therapies offer hope even for severe cases, advising, “It’s important to know that anxiety is highly treatable.”

Marlaina Donato is the author of Multi-dimensional Aromatherapy. Connect at MarlainaDonato.com.

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INVESTING FOR GOOD

How to Align Money With Values

by April Thompson

How we spend our money is important, but how and where we save it matters just as much. Today's financial marketplace offers diverse options for values-based investing and banking, regardless of interests or assets.

Sustainable, responsible and impact investing is rapidly expanding. Professionally managed assets in the U.S. using socially responsible investment (SRI) strategies grew from \$8.7 trillion to \$12 trillion in the last two years, according to a 2018 report by the Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investment. This represents 26 percent—about one in four dollars—of all U.S. assets under professional management.

The Big Bank Break-Up

While large numbers of investors are moving their money responsibly, changing bank accounts can still feel difficult to many people, says Fran Teplitz, executive co-director of the Washington, D.C., nonprofit Green America, which works to promote a more sustainable economy.

To make the sometimes intimidating bank-changing process a little easier, Green America's Get a Better Bank

campaign at GreenAmerica.org/GetABetterBank breaks it down into bite-sized steps. "Educate yourself on the issues with the conventional banking industry, from Wall Street speculation to predatory lending practices," says Teplitz.

People don't need to sacrifice banking needs for their values. Reflect upon what's important in a financial institution, and then shop around for the right fit. Credit unions and community development banks that lend in local and underserved communities are often great choices, says Teplitz. Green America's Get a Better Bank database is a great starting point for responsible banking options.

Investing for the Future

For longer-term investing, there are more vehicles available to responsibly assist investors toward their financial and social goals. While responsible investing once meant simply screening out "sin stocks", like tobacco, guns and gambling, which were available only to investors able to make a large minimum deposit, today there are values-based funds to suit every cause and income level.

"Socially responsible investing has come a long way since it got off the ground in this country during the apartheid divestiture movement in the 1980s," says Gary Matthews, an invest-

ment advisor and CEO of SRI Investing LLC, headquartered in New York City.

Countering some investor concerns about underperforming SRI funds, there is a growing body of evidence to show that money that does good can also do well. The firm Nuveen TIAA Investments assessed the leading SRI equity indexes over the long term and "found no statistical difference in returns compared to broad market benchmarks," nor any additional risks, according to a 2017 report *Responsible Investing: Delivering Competitive Performance*.

SRI Approaches and Outcomes

Fossil fuel-free portfolios are trending, Matthews notes—which Green America encourages. While acknowledging the ever-fluctuating price of oil, Matthews says he's seen diversified portfolios that eliminate oil, coal and natural gas do better at times than those that include them.

A subset of SRI investments, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investing focuses less on what sector a company is in than on how they conduct their business. The way companies treat their employees and respond to climate change are factors that may have a positive influence on financial performance.

Robo-advisors, a recent arrival in the SRI sector, are online investment services that automate money management. Robo-advisor companies make it easier for people to invest and leverage technology to keep fees down, although they usually do not offer in-depth impact research on the companies within the financial products they offer, according to Amberjae Freeman, of the portfolio management team for Swell Investing LLC, an impact investment company in Santa Monica, California.

Swell evaluates thousands of companies to build diversified portfolios of businesses aligned with at least one of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Like most SRI firms, Swell offers retirement IRAs (individual retirement accounts), as well as more liquid brokerage accounts, with a minimum initial deposit of \$50.

While the array of investment options can be daunting, investors should aim for progress, rather than perfection, in their portfolios. As the money and impact in a portfolio grows, so does an investor's confidence and knowledge.

April Thompson is a freelance writer in Washington, D.C. Connect at AprilWrites.com.

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Source: www.cancer.org



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WARMING UP FOR WINTER SPORTS

Sure-Fire Ways to Get Fit

by Marlaina Donato

Whether skiing on fresh powder on a mountain slope, ice skating or snowshoeing, winter recreation offers new opportunities to get in shape and a specialized focus for fitness.

"Preparing your body should be on top of your list of vacation details," says physical therapist Linda Scholl, of the University of Utah Orthopaedic Center. Her ski fitness classes in Salt Lake City focus on developing four muscle groups: quads, hamstrings, glutes and core. "Ideally, you should take six to eight weeks to prepare for a ski vacation, but three weeks' prep is better than nothing," she says. That also goes for most winter pursuits.

Sean Sewell, founder of Mountain Fitness School, in Denver, concurs. "People tend to think that these sports are mostly quad-dominant, but it's not necessarily the case. I believe the body works as a unit, and is therefore only as strong as its weakest link, so all muscle groups are important in the big picture."

Winter-Ready Workouts

Lunges, single-leg dead lifts and lateral-motion exercises are all well-suited for

Preparing your body should be on top of your list of vacation details.

~Linda Scholl

tailored training. Winter fitness prep classes offer ideal benefits, but simple walking or running up and down stairs can also do wonders. "Stairs are the closest thing to a hill, and you can get creative with

stairs—skipping a stair or hopping. It also has a cardio component which helps you adjust to the altitude of a ski destination," says Scholl.

Maggie Lehrian, owner of Roots Yoga Studio, in Hawley, Pennsylvania, attests to yoga's benefits for conditioning. "The standing sequences in yoga practice, especially hatha yoga, are tremendously effective at increasing balance and strength in the legs and glutes needed for cross-country and downhill skiing, skating and snow shoeing."

She recommends adding 30 minutes of cardio, such as walking or running, three times a week to a balanced yoga practice that includes components of strength-building and stretching. Yoga fosters concentration and endurance and offers unrealized benefits.

"Breathwork can be extremely helpful when traveling to higher altitudes," says Lehrian. Yoga also scores high for attaining a confident, healthy beach body

for a winter Caribbean getaway, with strength-building, core-focused styles such as vinyasa or power flow.

Avoiding Injury

Experts agree that the body's core muscle groups are not only key in getting fit, but play a major role in preventing common injuries. "The core should always be activated during heavy exercises. This keeps the back safe and allows for better power output," says Sewell. "The core is not just the abdominal muscles. I like to think of the core as an area from the shoulders to the knees and both the front and back of the body."

Proper alignment is paramount. "Skiing involves absorbing a lot of force. It's literally controlling a fall downhill, so leg alignment is everything," says Scholl. This applies to many winter sports—including skiing, hockey and ice skating—to avoid injuries to the anterior cruciate ligament, which stabilizes the knee.

Body Basics

Being winter-ready also means eating well and staying hydrated, both on and off the slopes. "Eat well and take recovery seriously," says Sewell. "If you are serious about performance and recovery, then do not skip out on eating."

Scholl recommends drinking plenty of water, avoiding alcohol before hitting the slopes and consuming a good balance of protein and carbohydrates, especially post-workout or after a day of skiing.

Perks of Winter Sports

Choosing a winter sport is ideal to help combat cold weather blues and the all-too-common winter rut. As a bonus, skiing and snowboarding burn a surprisingly high number of calories. In essence, getting outside just makes winter more enjoyable. "Whether it is a solo powder day or a mellow spring day, being in the mountains is empowering and rejuvenating," says Sewell.

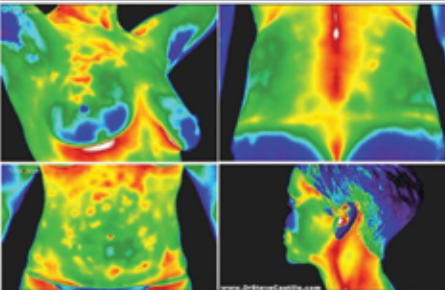
Scholl agrees. "It's important to stay active, regardless of how cold it is outside. Enjoy winter and where you are."

Marlaina Donato is the author of Multi-dimensional Aromatherapy and several other books. Connect at AutumnEmberMusic.com.



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Carmen
I've had an exam and am so grateful and thankful I did! The images picked up cysts in the breasts and inflammation of the intestines I would have never known about. My insurance does not cover "recommend" a mammogram at my age but did cover when I brought the images to my obgyn who referred me for one. Thank God they are not cancerous! I truly believe I would have ended up with breast and colon cancer if I hadn't done this. Also I went to numerous doctors including dermatologists because of my hair loss. From going through my exam here and treatment it was as simple as my body being toxic and too acidic. The doctors and staff are more than informative, patient and helpful. If you go, please be considerate of an occasional wait and the staff has more than enough tasks at hand-many people go who have or had cancer or are elderly and being treated and handled with care. So don't be impatient or selfish 😊 thank you natural awakenings for a life changing chapter in my life!

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Naturopathic Medicine Goes Mainstream

Naturopathic medicine going from margins to mainstream - "Since the beginning of my career to now, I've met hard-nosed doctors from respected U.S. hospitals who take seriously the effects of alternative medicine. For example, world-renowned cancer centre Memorial Sloan Kettering has Dr. Barrie Cassileth running its integrative medical department, and Johns Hopkins has Dr. Linda Lee."
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Essential Oils for Pets

How to Use Them Safely

by Sandra Murphy

Essential oils are derived from plant-based sources, leading people to equate natural with safe; but that's not always the case. Knowing how and when to use

oils is vital, according to Gary Richter, DVM, an integrative veterinarian and medical director of Holistic Veterinary Care, in Oakland, California. A veterinarian trained in the use of essential oils understands the properties of each oil, along with its proper dilution and application, a subject not generally taught in traditional veterinary schools; holistic medicine requires additional training.

With proper use under professional guidance, essential oils can be part of a larger treatment plan, says Richter. Cats are generally more sensitive to oils because they don't metabolize medicine as efficiently as dogs, he notes. "As one professor used to tell our veterinary class, 'Cats are not small dogs, so they can't be treated as if they are'—always good to remember."

Soothing Effects

Just as chamomile tea relaxes humans, anxious dogs find its scent calming.

One thing I'd say is, learn all you can before using oils around pets.

~Gary Richter, integrative veterinarian and founder of Ultimate Pet Nutrition

Some vets spray the exam room with lavender between appointments to calm anxious clients.

Sally Morgan, a physical therapist and advanced certi-

fied practitioner of the gentle animal bodywork therapy known as Tellington TTouch, sees clients in her Northampton, Massachusetts, office. "I put a drop of a peace and calming blend or lavender on the carpet or a pillow," she says. "It relaxes the animal and dissipates the smells of previous clients. I don't use diffusers. The odor can be too strong for their sensitive noses. There's also a danger it could spill and be licked up."

Certified Professional Dog Trainer - Knowledge Assessed Kim Paciotti, owner of Training Canines, LLC, based in Statesville, North Carolina, finds the scent of green apples relieves anxiety and soothes upset tummies for dogs and puppies that suffer from motion sickness. "Cotton balls placed inside a small container clipped to the outside of their crates deliver the smell," she says. "They don't have direct contact, but still reap the benefits, al-



Helpful Resources

Tinyurl.com/OilSafetyTips

24/7 Animal Poison Control Center: 855-764-7661

lowing the dogs to self-medicate by sniffing when they feel the need."

Kimberley Wallace, founder of kW Sustainable Brands, in San Diego, burns organic, sweet basil-scented candles for their antiviral, antibacterial properties. Her pugs love the smell. "Our rescue pug has mast cell tumors which compromise her immune system. I do my due diligence to buy all-natural products whenever I can."

Proceed With Caution

Pure essential oils are far too strong to use undiluted, Richter says. Age, physical condition and species are so varied that guessing which oil and how to use it can be dangerous to the pet. "Skin irritation like a hot spot or rash is a relatively minor problem that could benefit from the right essential oil. An open wound requires a veterinary visit," he says. "Some oils aren't recommended unless under veterinary guidance. Reactions can range from mere annoyance to toxicity."

Wintergreen, melaleuca, pennyroyal, tea tree and pine oils cause the most reported problems for dogs, according to *PetPoisonHelpline.com*. Peppermint, cloves, cinnamon and oregano oil also can be quite strong and require educated use, says Richter. An uneven gait, vomiting, diarrhea, drooling and weakness can be symptoms of toxicity, requiring immediate veterinary care to prevent damage to the central nervous system or organ failure.

In its fragrance and taste, plants have defense mechanisms to ward off destructive insects or to attract bees and butterflies. Those same properties can help people and animals. The plant's natural compounds can ward off fungi, bacteria, parasites or inflammation. However, just reading a label isn't enough to know which oils will work best for these problems.

"*The Animal Desk Reference II: Essential Oils for Animals, Second Edition*, by Melissa Shelton, is a reader-friendly guide," says Richter. "I touch on the subject in my book *The Ultimate Pet Health Guide: Breakthrough Nutrition and Integrative Care for Dogs and Cats*, but for deeper study, I recommend Shelton's book."

"One thing I'd say is, learn all you can before using oils around pets," Richter says. "There's not a one-size-fits-all formula for dilution for safe use. There are too many variables with oils and animals."

Be more than a well-meaning pet lover—also be well-educated.

Sandra Murphy is a freelance writer in St. Louis, MO. Connect at StLouisFreelanceWriter@mindspring.com.

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Copper device stops a cold naturally



New research: Copper stops colds if used early.

New research shows you can stop a cold in its tracks if you take one simple step with a new device when you first feel a cold coming on.

Colds start when cold viruses get in your nose. Viruses multiply fast. If you don't stop them early, they spread in your airways and cause misery.

But scientists have found a quick way to kill a virus. Touch it with copper. Researchers at labs and universities agree, copper is "antimicrobial." It kills microbes, such as viruses and bacteria, just by touch.

That's why ancient Greeks and Egyptians used copper to purify water and heal wounds. They didn't know about viruses and bacteria, but now we do.

Scientists say the high conductance of copper disrupts the electrical balance in a microbe cell, destroying it in seconds.

Tests by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) show germs die fast on copper. Some hospitals tried copper for surfaces like faucets and doorknobs. This cut the spread of MRSA and other illnesses by over half, and saved lives.

The strong scientific evidence gave inventor Doug Cornell an idea. When he felt a cold coming on he fashioned a smooth copper probe and rubbed it gently in his nose for 60 seconds.

"It worked!" he exclaimed. "The cold

went away completely." It worked again every time he felt a cold coming on and he hasn't had a cold since.

He asked relatives and friends to try it. They said it worked for them, too, so he patented CopperZap™ and put it on the market.

Soon hundreds of people had tried it and given feedback. Nearly 100% said the copper stops colds if used within 3 hours after the first sign. Even up to 2 days, if they still get the cold it is milder and they feel better.

Users wrote things like, "It stopped my cold right away," and "Is it supposed to work that fast?"

Pat McAllister, age 70, received one as a gift and called it "one of the best presents ever. This little jewel really works." Now thousands of users have stopped getting colds.

People often use CopperZap preventively. Frequent flier Karen Gauci used to get colds after crowded flights. Though skeptical, she tried it several times a day on travel days for 2 months. "Sixteen flights and not a sniffle!"

Businesswoman Rosaleen says when people are sick around her she uses CopperZap morning and night. "It saved me

last holidays," she said. "The kids had colds going around, but not me."

Some users say it also helps with sinuses. Attorney Donna Blight had a 2-day sinus headache. When her CopperZap arrived, she tried it. "I am shocked!" she said. "My head cleared, no more headache, no more congestion."

Some say copper stops nighttime stuffiness if used just before bed. One man said, "Best sleep I've had in years."

Copper may even stop flu if used early and for several days. Lab technicians placed 25 million live flu viruses on a CopperZap. No viruses were found alive soon after.

People have used it on cold sores and say it can completely prevent ugly outbreaks. You can also rub it gently on wounds, cuts, or lesions to combat infections.

The handle is curved and finely textured to improve contact. It kills germs picked up on fingers and hands to protect you and your family.



Sinus trouble, stuffiness, cold sores.

It kills germs picked up on fingers and hands to protect you and your family.

Copper even kills deadly germs that have become resistant to antibiotics. If you are near sick people, a moment of handling it may keep serious infection away. It may even save a life.

The EPA says copper still works even when tarnished. It kills hundreds of different disease germs so it can prevent serious or even fatal illness.

CopperZap is made in the U.S. of pure copper. It has a 90-day full money back guarantee when used as directed to stop a cold. It is \$69.95. Get \$10 off each CopperZap with code **NATA8**.

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Alkaline water can help lose weight by cutting in on our fat reserves. Acidity is the main culprit because we tend to store more fat than we require. Our dietary patterns not only include more fat but also more acidic foods that further aggravate the problem of a decreased pH level. We should aim to maintain a pH balance of 7.40 which is slightly alkaline. Drinking alkaline water helps in two ways. One that we hydrate our body as our body is 70% water, and second it helps in cutting down on acidity and then on fat.

Anti Aging:

Water is a good anti aging method and drinking ionized water is even better as it helps reduce acne and eczema apart from other skin problems. Alkaline water forms small clusters that are easy to absorb and they hydrate our body more effectively causing our skin to plump up and age more slowly.

Reduce the Chances of Osteoporosis:

Acidity leaches out calcium and magnesium from our body leading to osteoporosis. To combat this problem, alkaline water can help get rid of acidity by neutralizing it and bringing our body in pH balance. The more we lose important minerals from our body the more our bones and body becomes weak, and we become more prone to osteoporosis. The easiest step to avoid such a problem is to drink alkaline water.

Build Cardiovascular Health:

Acidic reserves in our body create several health problems like diabetes, kidney stones etc. Poor digestion led by stress and poor dietary habits add to decreased cardiovascular health. Acidic waste builds up and can aggravate this condition. To get rid of this waste, alkaline water can help neutralize the acidity in our body.

Reduce Joint Pain and Arthritis:

Joint pain develops only when our body is acidic. Alkaline water can combat that by regulating our pH balance and thus eliminating free radicals in our body that target joint causing pain and aggravating arthritic pain. Alkaline water has antioxidants that help reduce free radicals in our body.

Reduce Infections, Flu and Colds:

Immunity weakens with more and more acidity in our body and thus we fall sick more frequently. Alkaline water can help build up alkaline reserves and neutralize acids helping our body to recuperate and grow strong.

Detoxify:

Alkaline water has detoxification properties and it helps to get rid of free radicals. It is also easily absorbed as it is less clustered. Detoxification occurs as alkaline water has antioxidants that act on free radicals in our body, built up because of acidity.

Decrease Risk of Cancer:

We have a higher risk of cancer when our bodies are acidic in nature. Doctors promote alkaline water and alkaline dietary habits only to combat these health risks that are associated with acidity. Alkaline water is a good way to combat cancer risk and get rid of acidity reserves in our body. Cancer develops when our body cells become unhealthy and adapt to our body's unhealthy environment when our body is acidic. Alkaline water can help reduce the risk of unhealthy cell growth.

inspiration



A COMMON HEART SONG

Whales Point the Way

by Mark Nepo

Just as whales are born with an instinct for the deep, we are born with an impulse toward creating a quality of life. No matter the type of work that leads us there, following that impulse is the destiny of each soul, so we search to find our medium through which aliveness can express itself. Following our instinct for the deep, we find each other.

In areas of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, whales sing basically the same song, and when a new verse is added, they all incorporate it. As humans, we have a greater capacity to communicate, yet we resist adding to our common song.

Whales occupying the same geographical areas that may include large oceans tend to sing similar songs with local variations, but whales from other regions of the world will sing entirely different songs. Once united, though, they find a common pitch. The songs are constantly evolving over time, and old patterns are not repeated. In essence, whales stay current, freshly updating their communications with each other. It's a noble task for us all to emulate.

Most whales, especially humpbacks, compose patterns of sound that are strikingly resonant with human musical traditions. What helps whales be such good communicators is that sound travels about four times faster in water than on land. Thus, it is profoundly easier to hear in the deep. Dwelling there, we have a better chance of staying current and hearing our common song.

When we follow our instinct for the deep, we discover our common song, which brings us alive. Through this unfolding, we make our contribution to the common good. From generation to generation, all that we learn and create adds to this living work of art we call a quality of life.

Adapted excerpt from More Together than Alone, by Mark Nepo. Connect at MarkNepo.com and ThreeIntentions.com.

Zerona Treatment Overview

Treatment with the Zerona laser is easy, painless, and care-free. Each session takes less than an hour; the low-level laser is used for a total of 40 minutes. The laser is applied to the targeted area, which is generally a combination of the waist, hips, and thighs, for 20 minutes. The patient then turns over and the very same treatment is applied to the opposite side. The minimum suggested treatment period is two weeks, with three full sessions each week. You should consult your practitioner about the maximum results for your body type, weight, and target loss.



Many patients have described the session as relaxing, and even Zen. Some even try to catch up on phone calls with friends and loved ones as they lay down. You simply lay in a comfortable, stationary position for twenty minutes at a time, in a relaxed environment, while the cold laser does all of the work. Since the Zerona uses cold laser technology, you feel nothing during the procedure. You may feel a bit different and lighter as you exit the treatment center due to the bio-stimulation that begins in your body.

You are always welcome to listen to music, or just close your eyes and rest during the procedure. Listening to white noise such as running water or ocean waves is always a relaxing way to spend the forty-minute sessions. Ultimately, the treatment with a Zerona laser is a stark contrast to traditional methods of fat reduction procedures such as liposuction and gastric-bypass surgery. With Zerona, you can simply lie down, relax, and let the laser do all the work.



The Science Behind Zerona

Four separate histological studies were performed to assess the efficacy of laser in the emulsification (liquefaction) of fat. Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and transmission electron microscopy (TEM) were utilized to analyze adipose tissue. SEM and TEM images revealed the collapse of adipose arrangements subsequent to laser therapy. The voluminous state of an adipocyte cell is reduced due to the emulsification process. The fatty material is evacuated from the cell and moves into extracellular space. The voluminous nature of adipocytes due to the accumulation of fatty material is what gives rise to an enlarged subcutaneous fat region. Zerona induces the formation of a transitory pore in the membrane of the fat cell. The pore enables the fatty material to seep out across the aperture and into extracellular space.

Call 896-4141 to schedule an office visit and consultation.

calendar of events

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Saturday February 9

Jeepers Gumbo Cook-off – 10am - 3pm. Enjoy the Mardi Gras themed Jeep show and live music. There will be live and silent auctions, 50/50 raffle, and barrel of booze raffle. A benefit for Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy syndrome/Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, funds donated to the RSDSA Organization. Cajun Harley Davidson, 724 I -10 S Frontage Rd, Scott.

Bayou Mardi Gras Parade – 6-8pm. On the banks of the Bayou Tech enjoy a family style Mardi Gras celebration. Main Street, New Iberia. 337-367-2844.

Wednesday February 13

Yoga – 6-7pm & Wednesday Feb 20. Yoga practice led by Arnaudville native Christy Broussard Farnsworth. Last Wednesday of month, yoga en français with Martine Colin. \$13/class or \$50/five classes. Nunu Collective, 1510 Bayou Courtableau Hwy, Arnaudville.

Ailey II World Tour – 7:30 pm. Artistic director, Troy Powell leads a 12-member ensemble known for merging the spirit and energy of the country's best young dance talent. \$10- ticket-master.com. Daytime performance for students, workshops and other activities: UpStageLive.org/AILEYII or call 337-781-1273. Heymann Center, 1373 S College Rd, Lafayette.

Thursday February 14

Valentine's Dinner – 5:30-7pm & 7:30-9pm. Bring your special guest to enjoy fine dining under the stars by Lake Peigneur at Café Jefferson. Jefferson Island Rip Van Winkle Gardens, 5505 Rip Van Winkle Rd, New Iberia. 337-359-8525. RipVanWinkleGardens.com

Friday February 15

Women With Heart – 11:30 am - 1:30 pm. Celebrate 7 years of honoring women who exhibit exemplary volunteer leadership, philanthropic spirit and service in St. Landry and Evangeline Parishes. The 2019 Keynote speaker is Karen Roy, Ms. Wheelchair America. \$25. Benefit funds the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Opelousas Civic Center, 1638 Creswell Ln, Opelousas. 337-942-7815.

Saturday February 16

2019 King Cake 5K – 6:30am-12:30pm. Dust off running shoes and enjoy a morning of fun for that includes all you can eat king cake from the best bakeries in Acadiana and a costume contest. Benefits fund Faith House. Sugar Mill Pond, 220 Prescott Blvd, Youngsville.

On Cuisine du Jardin Cook-Off – 10am-12:30pm. Participants from the Lafayette Parish schools cook their favorite dishes. It is part of the LSU Ag Center School Initiative Program, where Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners teach gardening. David Thibodeaux STEM Magnet Academy, 805 Teurlings Dr, Lafayette.

Poetic Rhythms – 12-3pm. Teaching artist and spoken-word poet Alex "PoeticSoul" Johnson presents an interactive self expression workshop for youth ages 13-18. \$15 includes lunch. Teche Center for the Arts, 210 E Bridge St, Breaux Bridge.

Chicken Run/Parade – 2pm. Celebrate Mardi Gras with family fun, good food and great music. Parade entry fee \$10 & \$30 for floats, horses, ATVs, gulf charts, floats are all allowed. Contact Shawn Carrier. 301 W MLK Dr, Church Point. 337-308-4155.

Kent Gonsoulin Comedy Show – 6:30pm. Enjoy wine and cheese served before the show of this comedic styling of this St. Landry native inducted into the Cajun Comedians Hall of Fame. Purchase tickets lately. St. John's Episcopal Church, 308 Church St, Washington. 337-945-0948.

Mardi Gras Dance – 9pm-1am. A celebration dance featuring Lil Buck Sinegal playing blues, funk, Zydeco and a range of styles. There will be delicious food and beverages for sale. \$12 at the door, \$10 in advance. Renella Henry. Knights of Peter Claver Hall, 252 Church St, Grand Coteau. 337-349-5814.

Sunday February 17

Spiritual Living Circle – 10:30am - 12:30pm. A study group meets for discussion and exchange on a perspective of all the world's great religions. Nunu Collective, 1510 Bayou Courtableau Hwy, Arnaudville.

Love Actually – 3pm. Acadiana Symphony Orchestra performs romantic repertoire selections. \$38 and up. Acadiana Center for the Arts, 101 W Vermilion St, Lafayette.

Friday February 22

Real Comedians Of Social Media Lafayette – 7- 9pm. Host Tahir Moore presents performances by Tony Baker and headlined by KevOnStage. \$30-\$40. Destiny of Faith Church, 1900 Cameron St, Lafayette.

Saturday February 23

Here's the Beef Cook-off – 8:30am. Pit masters and area chefs prepare their best beef dishes following an old fashioned trail ride. \$15. St. Landry Parish Cattlemen's Association. Yambilee Ag Arena, 1939 W Landry St, Opelousas. 337-945-0364 or 337-684-6751.

Sunday February 24

A Prelude to Spring – 3-4:30pm. A candlelight chamber orchestra concert performed by the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra. St. Peters Church, 108 E St Peter St, New Iberia. 337-364-1603.

Water, Water Everywhere – 2 pm. Thru April 6. Painting art exhibit by Margaret Melancon with featured artwork of L'Acadian Art Guild. Jeanerette Museum, 500 E Main St, Jeanerette. 337-380-9057. JeaneretteMuseum.com.

Tuesday February 26

Healthy Start Community Baby Shower – 11am -1pm. A Mardi Gras themed shower with a light lunch, fun, games, door prizes and local vendors providing information. Healthy Start supported by sponsors, Healthy Blue Louisiana and Lafayette Parks and Recreation. George Dupuis Recreation Center, 1212 E Pont Des Mouton Rd, Lafayette.

Wednesday February 27

Taster's Choice – 6pm. Twenty-five chefs compete in this culinary event while live Zydeco music performed by Geno Delafosse & French Rockin Boogie. \$25. Proceeds benefit the Eunice Community Health Center Clinic. LSU-Eunice Campus-Acadiana Center, 2048 Johnson Hwy. 337-457-1205.

Thursday February 28

The 2019 Black Essentials Expo – 5-8pm. Open to the public, this expo showcases local black owned businesses in the arts, music, hair and make-up. UL Black Student Union. UL-Lafayette Campus-Atchafalaya Ballroom, 620 McKinley St, Lafayette. TheULBSU@gmail.com.

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About the conference

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LITEON Healthcare Group will be organizing its annual Healthcare Conference hosted by the Enterprise Business Center from May 24-25, 2019 at 3419 NW Evangeline Thruway, Carencro, Louisiana.

MAY 24-25, 2019

9:00AM - 5:00PM

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 8:00AM

CONFERENCE OFFICE
(337) 896-0085

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