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The Center's approach to osteoarthritis

Neil H. Riordan, R.P.A.-C

Osteoarthritis is very common. At the age of 35, approximately 40% of the population has some form of it, and by age 65, 80% will show some signs of the disease. The disease begins with degeneration of the joint cartilage—particularly the glass-like hyaline cartilage that covers the ends of the bones in joints. Factors that contribute to this disease include increased weight, physical stress, nutrient deficiencies, genetics, and possibly some immunological factors.

Walking is an excellent exercise for knee arthritis.

At The Center, we like to ask ourselves why osteoarthritis is occurring, and what is causing the symptoms. Two factors which contribute to the symptoms are inflammation and secondary oxidation (which causes more inflammation). Inflammation occurs because the cartilage in the joint has been roughed up as it degenerates, causing friction. There are two ways to attack this problem: 1. Stop or slow the inflammation and 2. Repair the cartilage.

To help stop or slow the inflammation we will generally test for, and recommend, appropriate supplementation of some nutrient which can affect oxidation. We test for levels of vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin D, and fatty acids. Vitamin C is a water soluble antioxidant which helps to suppress oxidation. Vitamin C also helps to rebuild col-

lagen, a vital part of cartilage.

Vitamin E is a fat soluble antioxidant which reduces oxidation at the cell membrane. Fatty acids are precursors to short-lived molecules called prostaglandins which mediate inflammation.

Some fatty acids, such as GLA (gamma linolenic acid), and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) inhibit inflammation, while others promote it. If low levels of GLA or EPA are detected they are corrected with supplementation.

Another way to inhibit inflammation in osteoarthritis joints is to take glucosamine supplements, usually in the form of glucosamine sulfate (GS). Glucosamine comprises one half of the hyaluronic acid (HA) that provides lubrication for the synovial (joint) sac. When there is not enough glucosamine available, the cells will produce poor quality HA with less lubricating ability. One clinical study showed that after two weeks, GS supplementation was more effective (95% response vs. 72% response rate) than non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) at reducing pain in affected joints. The pain relief in the GS group lasted much longer than the NSAIDs group after discontinuation of the study.

To repair the cartilage, we usually recommend supplementation of a nutrient, chondroitin sulfate. It has been known since 1965 that low levels (2/3 lower than normal) of this molecule are found in degrading cartilage. More recent studies have shown that oral supplementation with chondroitin sul-

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Why me?

Many people who have arthritis often ask the question, "Why me?" In a recent issue of *Arthritis Today*, a publication of the American Arthritis Foundation, various researchers attempt to answer this question.

Researchers, author Michael Briley points out, are finding part of the answer to this question and it may lie with genetic factors, infections, and several other factors. Many of these factors are preventable and, The Center believes, correctable.

Researchers look at large groups of people to try to find an effective treatment that will work for the greatest number of people. This type of research is valuable, but doesn't get down to the "Why me" question.

The Center looks for the "Why me" question when the medical staff evaluates a new person. We look closely at the "ME" as an individual to find out what are the underlying factors causing your body to do arthritis and what we can do to modify these factors. H

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Nutritional Medicine

by Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

Flexibility

"Biography becomes biology."

These prophetic words of Carolyn Myss hint at the profound mystery of the mind/body connection. The sum total of our life choices somehow gets reflected in the biological character of our bodies.


While overly simplistic in a diagnostic sense, the above statement could best be taken as an attitudinal directive. Attitudes are commonly appreciated as powerful predictors of outcome. If a team buys into the home field advantage of a dominant rival, their self-defeating attitude alone gives the opposing team a tremendous edge.

"Why should I give up smoking? You gotta die of something." This statement bespeaks a lethal attitude. The narrator has almost certainly sealed his or her fate. The toxicity of the cigarettes has been exponentially mul-

tiplied by the toxic finality of the behavior perpetuating attitude.

Now, looking at this from the reverse direction: arthritis is a disease of the joints characterized by painful stiffness. Does this imply that people who get arthritis have projected an attitude of inflexibility in their lives? Of course there are no double blind studies available to make or refute this contention.

The astute observer of people and life, through careful inquiry, could discern if arthritics are indeed more inflexible. Whether they are or not, however, may be missing the point: attitudes create outcomes!

Therefore, it may be the better part of wisdom to bring an attitude of flexibility to your life dealings. Who knows; you may just prevent a trip to your friendly rheumatologist's office! 

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The information in this publication is meant to complement the advice and guidance of your physician, not replace it.

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fate can rebuild cartilage in the joint.

Other nutrients that may be considered in the treatment of osteoarthritis are Pycnogenol and other bioflavonoids, boron, niacinamide, and vitamin D. Bioflavonoids have antioxidant capabilities themselves, but have the primary effect of helping to transport vitamin C into the tissues. Six milligrams per day of oral boron significantly improved osteoarthritis symptoms in a clinical study.

In another clinical trial, three thousand milligrams of niacinamide (a form of niacin, vitamin B₃) per day for twelve weeks increased joint movement and decreased global arthritis by 29% in the treatment group, while the control group worsened by 10%. We recommend if you take niacinamide to start with a lower dose under your doctor's care because high doses can adversely affect the liver. Low levels of vitamin D, which helps control how bone is distributed, contribute to the progression of osteoarthritis. One study which com-

pared people with different vitamin D blood levels found that those who were in the lowest 10% blood level group had a greater than 600% increase in risk for osteoarthritis progression compared to those in the highest 10% blood level group.

To prevent further damage to joints, exercise of the muscles below and above the affected joints will improve the strength of the joint, while decreasing the pain. Walking is an excellent exercise for knee arthritis. For the knees in particular, losing excess weight will decrease the amount of friction and decrease the chances of further damage.

In summary, when we see someone with osteoarthritis, we first test for blood levels of those nutrients which contribute to reducing inflammation. We then make supplementation, weight loss, and exercise recommendations that will hopefully begin reversing the causes and stop the progression of osteoarthritis. 

HEALTH HUNTERS AT HOME

Coffee better for colds than Russian vodka

After a long and exhaustive study, researchers from Bristol University in Great Britain told Russia's Itar-Tass news service the bad news: hot coffee is better for treating colds than Russian vodka. Vodka has been a standard in Russian medical cabinets for centuries.

The researcher found that using vodka as a cold remedy has side effects such as headaches. Hot coffee was free from side effects according to their research.

Professor Andrew Smith, who headed the research, said that the coffee could be served in any fashion, just so it is hot.

Hugh Riordan, M.D., director of The Center, often suggests drinking hot water to help combat a lingering cough—just get a cup of hot water and sip on it all day. If it gets cool, pour it out, refill it with more hot water, and keep sipping. Usually the cough will subside. [H]

Olive oil may help the heart

Olive oil, a rich source of mono-unsaturated fatty acids (MUFA), will help control atherosclerosis, according to a report in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

"We showed that consumption of a MUFA-rich diet decreased the expression of some adhesion molecules" in the blood—reducing the ability of the molecules to stick to the blood vessel walls.

Using middle-aged men as subjects, the researchers found that it took as little as two months to improve the fatty acid composition of the blood with a diet supplemented with olive oil. This, "reinforced the point that olive oil should not be considered a placebo in clinical and cell biology studies," the researchers said.

Mediterraneans who use olive oil as the primary source of added fat in their diets have lower heart risk factors. This research would agree. [H]

Eat fish, live longer

Over a four-day weekend during New Years, our family drove to Corpus Christi, Texas, to get an ocean fix. If we don't touch the ocean regularly, we feel that something is missing from our lives.

Whenever we are there we make a pilgrimage to the Black Diamond restaurant to eat our fill (temporarily) of raw oysters and other sea food.

For years, the motto printed on the back of tee shirts worn by the waiters at the Black Diamond has been, "Eat Fish, Live Longer." Intuitively, they knew that eating fish, especially at their restaurant, was healthy. I read a report when I returned from Corpus Christi confirming that if you eat fish, you do indeed live longer.

"These prospective data suggest that consumption of fish at least once a week, may reduce the risk of sudden cardiac death in men," wrote Christine Albert, M.D., and her colleagues in the January 7 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Actually, information about eating fish helping with heart problems first appeared over 25 years ago when researchers suggested a relation between fish consumption and lower death rates from heart attacks. Since then, the battle in the journals over how valuable fish may be has continued to rage.

Five years after the first study, Daan Kromhout, Ph.D., M.P.H., and colleagues suggested that there was a 50% reduction in coronary heart disease deaths when subjects ate fish once or twice a week. Over the next several years there have been at least 14 major studies supporting the eating of fish, as well as five recent studies showing that eating fish doesn't work. Albert, et al, think they have solved the controversy.

A total of 20,551 male physicians from the United States who were between the ages of 40 and 84 at the beginning of the research were followed for 11 years. Each participant in the research project was free of heart attacks, strokes, or any other type of cerebrovascular disease and cancer at the

beginning. Throughout the research project, the researchers regularly gathered nutritional information on each participant.

At the end of the 11 years, the researchers found that eating, "at least one fish meal a week was associated with a 52% lower risk of sudden death compared with less than monthly consumption, even after controlling for several confounders," Albert wrote.

The confounders, or circumstances that could have thrown off the results, were the consumption of red meat, vegetables, fruit, dairy foods, fried foods, saturated fats, and beta carotene. None of these had an effect on the results.

The researchers went on to point out that, "A component of fish may have antiarrhythmic properties that reduce the vulnerability to life-threatening arrhythmias during cardiac ischemia." It is generally believed that uncontrolled arrhythmias are the main cause of death from a heart attack, I understand.

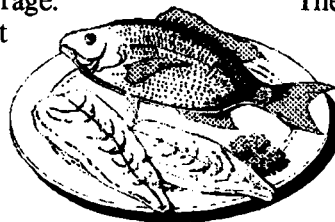
There is some speculation that the omega 3 fatty acids in fish may be the component that regulates these heart rhythms, but the researchers aren't sure. Some other as yet unknown component in fish may be responsible.

The good news for me was that fatty fish, such as salmon, tends to be better, or as one person put it, the darker-flesh fish. I don't think the week is complete unless I have salmon—and two or three times is even better.

Albert reminds us that of the 250,000 sudden cardiac deaths occurring in the United States each year, 55% have no history of heart disease and most die before they reach the hospital. Of those with cardiac arrest who reach the hospital, only 30% are discharged alive.

Given these statistics, it seems to me that eating fish once a week is a good idea. I hope it makes sense to you too. [H]

—Richard Lewis



INFORMATION WORTH KNOWING

Conflicts distort relationships. All too often conflict can get out of control and result in tragic consequences. By understanding how and why conflict occurs, all kinds of problems can be resolved. If you would like to handle conflict situations in a more productive manner, *Resolving Conflicts*, written by Wendy Grant, is for you. The questions this month are taken from her book.

- 1 To better manage our lives, we need to _____ and be prepared to consider the other person's point of view.
- count to ten
 - carry a big stick
 - listen actively
 - none of the above
- 2 All our behavior is influenced by conditioning, experiences, beliefs, other people's values, and _____.
- genetics
 - our thinking patterns and processes we use
 - none of the above
 - all the above
- 3 Sometimes it is only necessary to become aware to take control.
- True
 - False
- 4 The greatest hurdle to overcome in dealing with inner conflict is _____.
- parasites
 - our significant other
 - self-talk
 - all the above
- 5 Attitude, behavior, the way we feel about ourselves, and the way we value other people all play an important part in creating or avoiding conflict.
- True
 - False
- 6 When your anger appears justified, try to tone it down to annoyance. Remember the person who angers you, _____ you.
- loves
 - controls
 - ignores
 - none of the above
- 7 Most families experience conflict from time to time. When conflict occurs in the security of our own home, it can be good for us because we can _____.
- learn to practice our responses.
 - develop strategies that work.
 - learn how to handle our emotions.
 - all the above.

• FOR ANSWERS, SEE PAGE 7 •

Case of the month

This 27-year-old young woman came to The Center about a year ago with chronic depression, hypothyroidism, and maybe bipolar disorder. She had been hospitalized three times for depression and a serious suicide attempt, primarily overdose.

She had been sick all her life and had been labeled by her doctors as a nonresponder to any medication. Her last doctor told her that she would have to just live with her problems. She thought she would rather die than live this way.

Lab testing at The Center showed she had Page bodies which cause the blood platelets to clump in a particular way. In addition, she had food sensitivities and low chromium, threonine, and vitamin C. She was low in GLA, one of the essential fatty acids. She had an unfriendly bacteria in her gut.

After two months, her mother called and said she was not functioning and not taking her supplements. A month later she canceled her next appointment because the therapy was not working. She was not following what we had suggested. A physician wrote her suggesting that treatment at The Center takes time and that she needs to give it a chance before discarding it altogether. The doctor also suggested she read Sherry Rogers' book on depression.

After working on her health, she came back to The Center a few months later. She still felt nothing would work for her since she had been sick for so long. Her thyroid treatment was adjusted with the addition of time release thyroid.

At Thanksgiving time she wrote a card saying, "I just wanted to say thanks to you all. I'm so grateful I found The Center with its unique approach to illness. When I came [to The Center] I had absolutely no hope that I would ever feel well as I've been sick so long. I'm starting to feel better gradually and this has lifted my spirits. ...Mere words cannot express my gratitude for the very important work you all do at The Center. I feel you actually care about me as a patient and you actually want me to get better."

That is a nice turnaround.



Looking for information about The Center?

The Bright Spot for Health home page recently got a face lift adding several new services you may want to check out. These new services include the chance to easily purchase items from the Gift of Health from your computer including:

- Books
- Audio tapes and video tapes
- Supplements
- Health Hunter membership

We now offer you four ways to order from the Gift of Health. After selecting what you want from the home page, you can order by:

- Phone via 1-800-447-7276
- Faxing us your order to (316) 682-5054
- Mailing your order to The Center
- On line by filling out the convenient order form and then sending it to us via e-mail with just a click of the mouse.

Look us up at www.brightspot.org to see these and other new features on our home page.



My journey from arthritis

I had my first appointment with Dr. Hugh D. Riordan in January, 1980, when I was 63 years of age.

I was developing arthritis in all of my joints. My fingers, besides hurting all of the time, were becoming very deformed and red. My family physician could only prescribe six to eight Felden per day (at a cost of over \$1.00 per capsule) to lessen my pain. The only other suggestion he had was a total replacement of my right knee and left hip joints. Of course I would be off work for some time for recovery. So this got me to thinking—"surely there is an alternative to this."

After my first visit to The Center, I thought, "No way can I afford to have all those tests performed." It seemed I would need to totally change my lifestyle, eating habits, and much more. But after much consideration, I thought, "Why not give it a try. This doctor may have the answers." Today I am very grateful I listened to my "inner voice" and made this decision to follow Dr. Riordan's recommendations.

Several tests were recommended. One was to determine to which foods my body might be sensitive. To my surprise I found I was sensitive to many of my favorite foods. I followed their instructions closely, and took the recommended supplements. In less than a year, I was living a different lifestyle and was virtually pain free.

The Center not only takes into consideration our #1 complaint, but delves to find our overall lifestyle pattern. When I followed their recommendations, I was amazed to find I felt better and was able to live life to the fullest. I found that, not only were my joints less painful, but overall I was feeling better, had more energy, and I was more pleasant to be around.

My fingers are straight now, the large joints are diminished, and I stand straight. I no longer use a cane or walker as I have in years gone by. During the last 18 years, I have had better control of my weight and lead a more active and rewarding lifestyle than many others in my same age bracket.

—Nelda Reed

Herbal History

Green tea

Green tea has received a lot of press and research effort because of its anti-oxidant characteristics.

Tea has been used as a drink and for medical purposes for centuries in China and Japan. It came to Europe during the second half of the 17th century.

The tea plant, when left to grow naturally, reaches heights of as much as 30 feet. When cultivated, it seldom reaches more than six or seven feet. The first picking of leaves makes the highest quality tea and following pickings have reduced quality. By the fifth or sixth picking, quality of the tea has lessened considerably, according to a report by Robert Fortune in 1852. Fresh tea leaves are non-aromatic, having merely an astringent taste.

Processing of the tea leaves makes the difference between green tea and black tea. Green tea was originally prepared by setting the leaves out in the

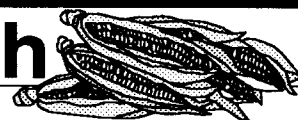
sun for one to two hours. In Japan the leaves were treated with steam, then roasted and hand rolled on bamboo tables. Black teas are processed by fermentation.

Some tea growing districts would often flavor the later harvested leaves with flowers, such as jasmine, to mask the poorer flavor inherent in this tea.

A French medical journal published in 1868 stated that, "Tea is a mild stimulant and astringent. Used in moderation, the infusion [the brewed tea], when not too strong, is a harmless and refreshing beverage. When made into a weak infusion, it is very agreeable to the invalid, and may be used in fevers and inflammatory diseases when it is desired to check sleep. In colds...and slight attacks of rheumatism, warm tea is taken as a diluent [something that dilutes other medications], diuretic, and diaphoretic."

Food of the Month

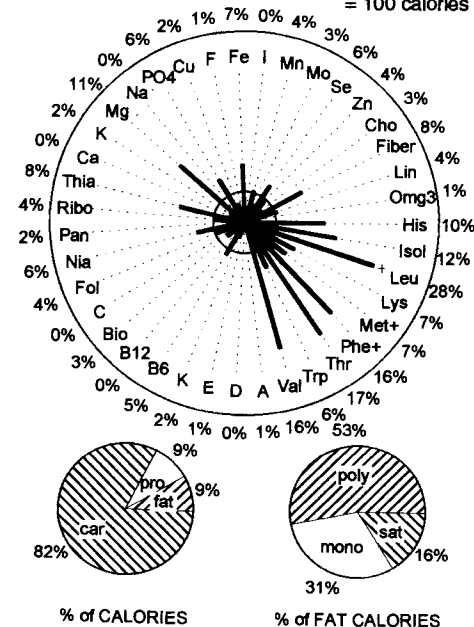
by Donald R. Davis, Ph.D.



NutriCircle

1 ounce meal = 100 calories

CORN seems to have appeared only about 7,000 years ago in what is now Mexico, created by humans who selectively bred it from much smaller-seeded grasses. It was an important food for Native Americans and early immigrants to the Americas. Shown here is yellow corn meal (whole, not degermed). Of the 39 nutrients displayed, 19 are adequately supplied relative to calories, including all 9 amino acids. Immature (sweet) corn, calorie for calorie, contains 2 to 10 times more of most vitamins than corn meal. It also contains 50% to 100% more of most amino acids, minerals, trace minerals, fiber, and fatty acids.



The length of each bar shows the amount of one nutrient. If a bar extends out to the inner circle, the food has enough of that nutrient to match the calories it contains. The numbers show nutrient amounts in RDAs per serving shown. The pie charts show the sources of calories (left) and the types of fat (right).

Mental Medicine

by Marilyn Landreth, M.A.

Dealing with chronic pain


Are you one of the millions of Americans who suffer from chronic pain? If so, what do you do to help cope with that pain?

Some of the coping mechanisms that seem to work best for people are: self-awareness, relaxation techniques, breathing techniques, self-understanding and self-acceptance, increased control, lifestyle improvements, and group and social support systems.

Self-awareness means becoming proactive and paying attention to what causes the pain to worsen or become softer. Sometimes learning to slow down before the pain is really intense can keep it from getting worse. Relaxation techniques and breathing techniques are closely related. When some people are in pain, they tend to tighten their muscles and breath shallowly. This can make the pain worse. Relaxing muscles and breathing deeply can help the body's

mechanisms work better.

Gentle relaxation, breathing exercises, and self-awareness are all experienced in yoga and can be used for pain relief. As a person gets more control over his/her body, strengthens weak muscles, and finds out how quickly they become more flexible, reduction in pain can result.

Although most of us would not choose to have pain, valuable lessons can be learned from dealing with chronic pain. Some of the things that can be learned from pain are that we are stronger than we think we are. Sometimes we learn to work to change things we can change and not worry about things we cannot change. Sometimes we get in touch with a spiritual aspect that may have been missing from our life. And sometimes we learn that while we may be experiencing pain in our body it is not the only thing in our life. 

CENTER UPDATE

Potassium helps lower blood pressure



For years The Center has been doing a simple test to see if you are getting enough potassium in your diet. The reason? If your potassium is higher than the sodium in your diet, you have better control over blood pressure.

Now, a study completed at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston agrees. Dr. Frank Sacks, the lead author of the report appearing in *Hypertension*, believes that people concerned about their blood pressure, "should eat a diet high in potassium or take potassium supplements."


Don Davis, Ph.D., a consultant at The Center, believes the best way to have a potassium rich diet is eat whole foods. Whole foods are defined as foods close to the way they grew on, in, or above the earth. Eliminate processed foods that often have more sodium than potassium.

For instance, an apple has a potassium to sodium ratio (K/Na) of 150,


meaning that it has 150 times more potassium than sodium. When the apple is processed to make unsweetened applesauce, the K/Na drops to 39.

An apple pie, which is highly processed and has quite a bit of salt (sodium chloride) added, has a K/Na of 0.27. This means the sodium way outstrips the potassium.

In Sacks' research, they used potassium supplements instead of food since supplements are easier to monitor. After four months of having women take 1600 mg of potassium a day, they noticed a drop in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

Either through eating whole foods, as Davis recommends, or from taking supplements, as Sacks' research shows, potassium will lower blood pressure. Whole foods, Davis points out, have the side benefit of many other nutrients that will enrich your body in other ways while working with blood pressure. 

Should I wear my seat belt?

In a highway crash, a back seat passenger not wearing a seat belt is hurled forward with a force of 3,000 pounds per square inch. Yet, only 4 out of 10 Americans say they wear a seat belt when riding in the back seat of the car. 


Statistics from: National Safety Council, Air Bag Safety Campaign, Washington

More research on exercise

Older women who walk for exercise may get different benefits, depending on their walking speed.

Dr. Katarina Borer, a professor of kinesiology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, found that women who walked 18 to 20 minute miles burned more fat and became more insulin sensitive than women who walked a mile in 15 minutes.


By contrast, women walking at the 15 minute pace tended to secrete more growth hormone, an aid to strong bones and greater lean body mass, than the slower walkers. These fast walkers became more insulin resistant.

"People kid themselves if they think that any exercise will do anything they want it to do. Exercise is very specific and you have to modify it in such a way to achieve what you want," Borer added. 

Green tea, a super antioxidant

In recent years, researchers have been touting green tea for its healing value in various diseases.

A new study by Lester Mitschner, Ph.D, a professor of medicinal chemistry at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, has found the active ingredient in green tea that makes it such a super antioxidant—epigallocatechin gallate or EGCG.

EGCG is 100 times more effective than vitamin C and 25 times better than vitamin E, according to Mitschner. The catch—you have to drink a lot of green tea, about six cups a day, to get its full benefits. 

Answers from page 4

- 1 c. There are always at least two points of view in any conflict, and really listening to what the other person is trying to communicate can lead to more tolerance and an open mind.
- 2 b. By understanding our thinking processes and the thinking processes of others, we can learn to avoid many conflicts.
- 3 a. We get stuck in responding one way and fail to come up with other solutions, but when we are aware of the processes involved, we can make positive changes.
- 4 c. That silent voice within us is always making comments. We can learn to make it an ally rather than let it further disrupt our abilities.
- 5 a. We need to become aware of those things that influence our perception of events.
- 6 b. When you are merely annoyed it allows you to express yourself while keeping control of your emotions.
- 7 d. In this fairly safe environment we can also learn how to use anger productively and develop other survival responses such as fear and caution. FH

SPECIAL DISCOUNTS

Audio Tapes: Regular Price—\$7.95; *Health Hunter* Price—\$7.16
 Video Tapes: Regular Price—\$19.95; *Health Hunter* Price—\$17.95

RESOLVING CONFLICTS: How to Turn Conflict into Co-operation
by Wendy Grant

We all are in conflict with our loved ones, employer, or friends at one time or another. Wendy Grant gives us tips on how to resolve those conflicts so that everyone wins. Her book is simple to follow and easy to understand. Soft-cover.

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LAUGHTER IS ONE OF THE BEST MEDICINES

with Ron Hunninghake, M.D. & Sister Anne Cecile Gaume
 Ever since *Anatomy of an Illness* was written by Norman Cousins, there has been a greater awareness of how laughter, or the lack of it, influences our level of well being. The medical benefits of laughter are reviewed in a way that lets the good humor flow. Plan to be inspired (and respired)! Audio cassette & video tape.

HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY SKIN?

with Neil Riordan, P.A.-C
 Helping skin to be healthier and more beautiful has been an interest of Neil's for several years. Now for the first time, he will reveal what his extensive research into the way skin ages means for all those who want to keep their skin as young as possible. Audio cassette & video tape.

PHOSPHATIDYL CHOLINE: Mem-Brain Food!

with Ron Hunninghake, M.D.
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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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9 Yoga	10 L & L - Brain Boosters	11 Yoga	12 L & L - Do You Eat as Well as Your Dog or Cat?	13 Health Through Food and Fitness
16 Yoga	17 L & L - Sound for Healing	18 Yoga	19 L & L - Natural Cholesterol Reduction	20
23 Yoga	24 L & L - Natural Treatment of Acne	25 Yoga, Health Through Food and Fitness	26 L & L - MSM: The Many Benefits of Organic Sulfur	27

MARCH

LUNCH AND LECTURE CLASS
5 Thou Shalt Not Become Senile II

SPECIAL CLASS
18 Health Through Food and Fitness

See clearer with C

Cataracts eventually cloud the vision of more than half of all Americans. Now, a group of researchers at Tufts and Harvard Universities have found that vitamin C may slow or prevent this clouding.

Using data from the Nurses' Health Study, the researchers divided the nurses into two groups—those who had little vitamin C in their diet and those who supplemented their diet with at least 400 mg of vitamin C every day. At the beginning of the study, none of the participants had a history of cataracts.

The results: not only did the vitamin C takers have better vision, but those who had been taking the vitamin for many years did the best.

Paul Jacques, the lead author of the study, said studies of eye tissue suggest that vitamin C acts as an antioxidant that neutralizes the molecules that cause the clouding of cataracts in the lens of the eye.

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