

Our Naturopaths answer some commonly asked questions from the voicemail

Q. Can you make any recommendations to help me stay healthy this winter?

A. Certainly. Here are some tips to carry you through winter in good health:

- ✓ Avoid winter weight gain by being proactive; join a gym or find a personal trainer to help you establish an exercise routine that you can continue throughout winter
- ✓ Prepare a list of your favourite recipes to nourish and warm you, as the days and nights become cooler
- ✓ Watch your meal portion sizes to avoid putting on extra kilos
- ✓ Support your immune system with herbs such as echinacea, garlic and olive leaf, plus the nutrients vitamin C, selenium and zinc
- ✓ If out and about all day, pack a coat, hat and scarf to stay warm if the weather suddenly changes
- ✓ Keep your home snug and warm. Check for any leaks and cracks, ensure heaters are working and invest in a snake doorstop to keep out cold drafts



Darlene Young

Q. I take my supplements with a cup of tea, is that ok?

A. Tea is very high in tannins. Tannins have the potential to interfere with and inhibit the absorption of your supplements and medications; it is therefore not advisable to take supplements or medications with tea. Taking your supplements with a glass of water is the best option.

Healthy Recipes

NUTTY COCOA BALLS

Indulge your taste buds with a healthy delicious treat, nutty cocoa balls. They're naturally sweetened with honey and packed full of nuts and seeds for high quality protein and healthy oils. They also contain calcium-rich figs and antioxidant-rich cocoa. After trying these tasty balls, see if you can stop at one!

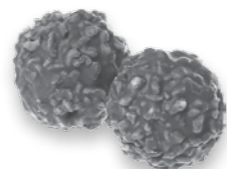
Ingredients

- 6 dried figs, diced
- 1 cup walnuts
- ½ cup Brazil nuts
- ½ cup macadamia nuts
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- 3 tbsp honey
- ½ cup cocoa
- ½ cup LSA meal (linseed, sunflower and almond), available in health food stores

Method

1. Combine diced figs, nuts and honey in a food processor until course and slightly sticky
2. Add the cocoa powder gradually until fully mixed
3. Roll the dough into a 3cm ball
4. Roll the ball in the LSA meal to coat
5. Store the nutty cocoa balls in an air-tight container in the fridge

Makes 16 balls



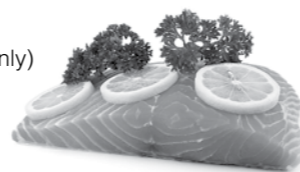
THAI BAKED FISH

Ingredients

- 2 salmon fillets 150g each
- 1 tablespoon chopped lemongrass
- 2 cloves chopped garlic
- ½ small red chilli, finely sliced
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tablespoons tamari sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- 8 pieces of baby corn, halved lengthwise
- ½ cup vegetable stock
- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 leek, finely sliced (white part only)
- 1 celery stick, finely chopped
- Handful of snow peas
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- 1 shallot, finely sliced diagonally
- 1 cup cooked rice, brown or basmati

Method

- Preheat oven to 190°C. Place fish in an oven-proof dish, garnish with lemongrass, garlic and chilli. Mix lime juice and 1 tablespoon of tamari sauce, pour over the fish, cover the baking dish with foil and cook for 12-20 minutes. In a frypan, toast the sesame seeds for 2 minutes then set aside. Cook the corn in the stock for 5 minutes, drain any leftover stock, and leave the corn in the pan. Add the oil and stir-fry on high the corn, leek, celery and snow peas for 2 minutes. Turn off heat and stir in the sesame seeds, bean sprouts and remaining tamari sauce. Garnish the fish with shallots, place vegetables on top of rice and serve.
- Serves 2



Welcome to the winter edition of the NaturalCare Wellness News. This edition we have articles on staying young, vein health and the second part of our myth-busting article. We also have a supersized research corner, some yummy recipes and questions from the voicemail.

SECRETS OF THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Ageing is a completely natural part of life, but as an ageing society we crave eternal youth. We've unlocked the secrets to premature ageing and we want to share them with you!

The skin

The skin is the body's largest organ and comprises three layers; the epidermis, dermis and subcutaneous tissue. The skin has numerous roles such as vitamin D synthesis, body temperature regulation, protecting from external threats, protecting internal organs and allows sensations like touch, pain, pressure, heat and cold.

Collagen and elastin are proteins, which give the skin strength, flexibility and texture. Collagen gives the skin its tautness, softness, resiliency and suppleness. Elastin acts like a spring, allowing the skin to bounce back if it is pulled and it also keeps the skin tight and flexible.

Why do we age?

There are two types of skin ageing, internal and external, both contribute to premature ageing. Causes of premature ageing include sun exposure, smoking, pollution, poor nutrition, stress, inflammation, poor skin care, alcohol and sleep deprivation.

Ageing can be explained by the free radical theory. Free radicals are created by normal body processes and by external factors including sunlight, cigarette smoke and air pollution. Free radicals are highly unstable and reactive molecules that stabilise themselves by stealing electrons from healthy molecules, and in the process damage healthy cells.

Most free radical damage occurs in the outer membrane layer of the cell. This damage prevents nutrients from entering the cell and toxins from exiting. As a result, the cell's water supply is pushed out and the cell becomes dehydrated, contributing to premature ageing. Prolonged exposure to the sun or other toxins depletes vital antioxidants, leaving the skin susceptible to free radical attack.

Sun exposure is one of the biggest contributors to premature ageing. It activates a collagen-digesting enzyme, causing microscarring, leading to wrinkles. Exposure to external factors such as cigarette smoke activates an enzyme that breaks down fat in skin cell membranes, causing inflammation, which produces free radicals and accelerates ageing.

Antioxidants

Antioxidants are free radical fighters and protect the body against their harmful damage. It's extremely difficult to get adequate amounts of antioxidants from the diet to combat the constant bombardment from free radicals. Taking a range of antioxidants can reduce the malicious damage of free radicals.

Nourish your skin

The key to beautiful, youthful skin is what you put into your mouth.

Dietary keys to beautiful healthy skin

- Diet rich in antioxidants – berries, brightly coloured fruit and vegetables
- Moisturise your skin with omega-3 rich fish, flaxseeds and walnuts
- Eat foods rich in vitamin C, bioflavonoids, beta-carotene, zinc, manganese and iron
- Fish, legumes, tofu, chicken, turkey, eggs, nuts and seeds are good protein sources
- Eat lots of anti-inflammatory foods like ginger, garlic and turmeric

- Control blood sugar levels, eat low glycemic index foods
- Avoid refined sugar
- Minimise vegetable oils, margarine and red meat
- Limit dairy products
- Avoid junk food and processed or packaged foods
- Eat 80% alkaline foods and 20% acidic foods
- Eat less, this increases the production of melatonin, an anti-ageing hormone
- Drink green tea and 8 glasses of pure filtered water daily

Lifestyle tips for beautiful glowing skin

- Protect yourself from the sun. Use natural sunscreen, wear protective clothing, a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses, seek shade
- Limit alcohol
- Stop smoking
- Manage stress, relax
- Try to get 8 hours of sleep, and sleep on your back
- Cleanse, tone and moisturise daily. Exfoliate once a week. Have regular facials. Use all-natural skincare products. Remove makeup before bed
- Exercise regularly at least 30 minutes daily
- Avoid yo-yo, low calorie and starvation diets
- Be aware some pharmaceutical medications deplete vital nutrients from the body



Skin saving supplements

Demineralised fish protein – helps reduce fine and coarse wrinkles, improves appearance of sun-damaged skin, hydrates the skin, improves rough skin, increases skin elasticity and thickness and has a beneficial effect on damaged collagen.

Vitamin C – essential for collagen and elastin production, maintains skin's strength and resiliency, antioxidant, nourishes deep skin layers, involved in tissue repair, anti-inflammatory, reduces skin degeneration and damage caused by the sun.

Grape seed – antioxidant, enhances collagen renewal, protects hyaluronic acid from damage, protects against damage to cell DNA, protects against collagen and elastin breakdown.

Vitamin E – antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, protects skin from sun damage, nourishes deep skin layers, may improve skin texture, moisture, smoothness, softness and reduces wrinkles.

Selenium – helps protect against skin cancer development, antioxidant, protects against sun and DNA damage, slows hardening of tissues and preserves elasticity.

What changes could you make to prevent premature ageing?

References:

Perricone, N. (2000). *The wrinkle cure*. London: Random House.

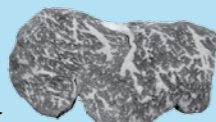
HEALTH MYTHS BUSTED - PART 2

We continue to tackle some of the most common health myths:

Myth Choose low GI sugar – Sugar is sugar, whether it is white, raw, brown or low GI. It is all refined and all forms of sugar deplete nutrients from the body for the body to process it.



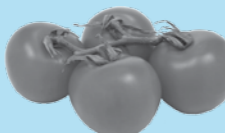
Myth Grain fed animal products are healthy for you – Cattle may be fed a very high grain diet for several weeks prior to slaughter so that tasty fat marbling is added to the meat. It is not natural for cattle to eat an all-grain diet; cattle are healthiest when they eat grass, hay and other high-fibre feeds. Diets of starchy, high-calorie grain trigger disorders in cattle that must be treated with antibiotics and other drugs.



Myth The produce we buy is fresh and grown all year round – Fruits and vegetables commonly found in our supermarkets can be stored for long periods of time in cold storage. Ask your green grocer when your favourites are in season, and remember fresh is best.



Myth Organic means no chemicals are used – The use of the word “organic” is not strictly regulated in Australia and can actually mean anything related to or derived from a living organism. To ensure your produce is actually certified organic or biodynamic, look for labelling from certifying bodies such as Demeter, OGA Certified Organic, NASAA, Australian Certified Organic, TOP, OFC and SFQ.



Myth Diet soft drinks are good for losing weight – Sugar substitutes do little to reduce the craving for refined sugar and sweet-tasting foods. Rather than helping to lose weight, studies have found a 41% increase in risk of becoming overweight or obese for every can or bottle of diet soft drink consumed daily.



Myth Eat Soy - Don't Eat Soy – So much controversy! The first soy foods were tempeh, natto, miso and shogru (tamari sauce) - eaten during 1134-246 BC when fermentation techniques were discovered. Since that time soy has been made into bean curd and tofu, and recently westernised to imitate milk, cheese, yogurt and ice cream, infant formula and artificial meat products. Choose fermented soy only. Why? Fermentation deactivates an ingredient in soy that normally blocks protein digestion, and significantly reduces phytates, which would otherwise prevent absorption of essential minerals calcium, magnesium, iron and zinc. This means that fermented soy products are easier to digest and the minerals are easier to absorb than unfermented soy.



References:
Emed. (2001). *High grain diets in cattle*. Available at: www.emed.com.au
Fallon, S & Enig, M. (2001). *Nourishing Traditions (2nd Ed)*. Washington: New Trends Publishing, Inc.

Research Corner ::::

Processed food linked to depression

Eat your fish, fruit and vegetables! That's the message from new British research into diet and the risk of developing depression.

This study involved 3486 civil servants aged 35 to 55 years. Researchers compared participants who ate a whole food diet based on vegetables, fruit and fish with those who ate a diet high in fried foods, desserts, processed meat, refined grains and high-fat dairy products. Five years later participants completed a self-assessment for depressive symptoms.

Results of the study showed that participants who ate a diet heavy in processed food, typical of a Western diet, had a 58% higher risk of depression. Those who ate a whole food diet were less likely to report depressive symptoms.

The researchers propose several explanations for these findings. A Western diet increases inflammation in the body and is higher in refined sugar, both linked to depression. A whole food diet contains a variety of nutrients and is rich in antioxidants – nutrients that reduce the risk for depression. This diet is also rich in folate and polyunsaturated fatty acids that might also reduce the risk for depression.

The authors recommend that diet should be considered a potential target for the prevention of depressive disorders.

Reference:
Akbaraly, T.N., et al. (2009). Diet rich in Processed Food Linked to Increased Risk for Depression. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 195 (5), 408-413.



Smoking, high blood pressure and diabetes may lead to dementia

Do you smoke, suffer from diabetes or have high blood pressure? A recent study from the United States has shown that there is a link between smoking, diabetes and high blood pressure and an increased risk of developing dementia.

The study included 11,152 participants aged between 46 – 70 years old and was conducted over a ten-year period. During the study 203 participants were hospitalised with dementia. Researchers found that in these 203 participants, smoking, diabetes and high blood pressure were all contributing factors to their dementia diagnosis.

The study revealed smokers were 70% more likely to develop dementia than non-smokers. Diabetes sufferers were twice as likely to experience cognitive impairment and people suffering from high blood pressure were 60% more likely to develop dementia. The younger the onset of these risk factors, the stronger the association with the development of dementia.

Researchers concluded that it is of the utmost importance to ensure early lifestyle modification and treatment of the risk factors to help prevent the development of dementia.

References:
Alonso, A., et al. (2009). *Risk of dementia hospitalization associated with cardiovascular risk factors in midlife and older age: the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study*. Available from: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez>
Gandey, A., & Vega, C. (2009). *Smoking, High Blood Pressure, and Diabetes May lead to Dementia*. Available from: <http://cme.medscape.com/viewarticle/708204?src=cmenews&u=c=125705BY>

Spotlight on Varicose Veins

Varicose veins affect nearly 50% of all middle-aged adults, with superficial veins in the legs most commonly affected. Individuals in occupations that involve a lot of standing are most at risk, as standing for long periods of time increases the pressure within these veins up to 10 times. Other risk factors include pregnancy, obesity, sitting for long periods of time, ageing, being female and a lack of regular exercise. Let's take a look at some ways you can support your veins.

What are varicose veins?

Veins are fairly frail structures that return oxygen-depleted blood back to the heart. They do this without the help of muscles and against the force of gravity. Veins contain a multitude of one-way valves to prevent blood flowing backwards. Excessive pressure exerted within the vein causes the valve to fail, allowing blood to flow back towards the feet, stressing other valves. When enough valves fail, the blood pools, resulting in stretched distorted varicose veins. With ageing, the walls of the veins weaken and in some cases a genetic weakness of the vein walls or valves can cause varicose veins.

Signs and symptoms of varicose veins:

- ✓ Aching
- ✓ Swelling
- ✓ Feelings of heaviness
- ✓ Numbness
- ✓ Tingling

What about haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids are somewhat like varicose veins in the legs. They are swollen blood vessels in and around the anus and lower rectum. Haemorrhoids may be caused by frequent forceful bowel movements brought on by constipation, and they are extremely common in pregnancy.

Vein support from nature

Here are a few of our favourite herbs and nutrients to support your veins:

- **Horse chestnut**
Horse chestnut has been used medicinally since the 16th century and its benefits relate to its vein-toning and vein-protective properties. Horse chestnut inhibits the enzymes that break down the support structure of vein walls as well as helping strengthen vein walls. Clinical studies indicate that horse chestnut improves circulation by toning the veins, which is primarily due to its active constituent escin. Horse chestnut provides symptom relief of varicose veins and haemorrhoids.
- **Butcher's Broom**
Butcher's broom has a long history of use in treating vein disorders and its active ingredients, the ruscogenins, have demonstrated a toning effect in blood vessels. Scientific studies have shown butcher's broom inhibits an enzyme involved in degrading the structural support of veins. Butcher's broom may help ease the discomfort of symptoms associated with varicose veins, and provide relief of the itching and burning associated with haemorrhoids.
- **Gotu Kola**
Gotu kola's impressive benefits for vein health appear to be related to the herb's ability to strengthen the connective tissue structure surrounding veins, reduce hardening of veins and improve blood flow through veins. Subsequently, this herb is ideal for providing symptom relief of varicose veins and haemorrhoids.
- **Vitamin C and Bioflavonoids**
Vitamin C is necessary for the production of healthy collagen, a protein that gives veins their strength.
- Bioflavonoids help stabilise and strengthen the vein wall, increase muscular tone of the vein and increase the effects of vitamin C.

Food for your veins:

- Eat blue-red berries and buckwheat for bioflavonoids
- Have some kiwi, capsicum and broccoli for vitamin C
- Try vitamin E rich foods such as nuts, seeds, wheat germ and leafy green vegetables
- Cook with garlic, onions and ginger
- Increase fibre found in fruit and vegetables to bulk the stool and ease emptying of bowels
- Drink 8 glasses of filtered water daily to ensure proper hydration and healthy bowel movements
- Minimise consumption of processed foods

Preventative measures

- ✓ Quit smoking
- ✓ Wear compression support tights if pregnant or if standing a lot
- ✓ Avoid tight garments that constrict the groin area
- ✓ When sitting, elevate feet higher than the hips
- ✓ Stretch, exercise and do yoga
- ✓ If you sit a lot take a five-minute walk every hour
- ✓ Avoid holding on or straining if you have to evacuate your bowels
- ✓ Do pelvic floor exercises to aid bowel movements
- ✓ Try a sitz bath to soothe haemorrhoids. This involves alternating warm and cold baths, with water 20cm high, three minutes in each bath, several times a day. Those with heart problems may find sitz baths cause dizziness, so caution is advised

If leg pain wakes you at night or occurs when you elevate your legs, you need to see your doctor.

**For lovely legs try
Australian NaturalCare
Products:
Vein Care and Super C 1000.**

References:
Pizzorno, J et al. (2002). *Natural Medicine Instructions for Patients*. USA: Elsevier Science.
Tkac, D. (Ed). (1994). *The Doctors Book of Home Remedies*. Emmaus, USA: Rodale Press, Inc.