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# Science-Backed Ways to Get Healthier as You Get Older

By Lynn Allison

It seems like the whole world is in search of the Fountain of Youth. From the Netflix documentary series on Blue Zones — areas of the world where people live longer than average — to a barrage of products and services that promise to combat the signs and effects of aging, the global anti-aging market is booming — estimated to be worth \$63.1 billion in 2022 and projected to reach \$106.54 billion in 2030.

Michael Greger, M.D., the best-selling author of “How Not to Die,” “How Not to Diet” and the newly released “How Not to Age,” says we don’t need pharmaceutical companies to keep us young; we already have the tools to do it. The internationally renowned physician, nutritionist, and founder of the website nutritionfacts.org and his colleagues, reviewed more than 20,000 studies on aging and distilled the simple changes we can all make today to increase our life span as well as our health span. Because as Greger says, “What’s the point of living longer if you can’t enjoy it vibrantly?”

Greger explains that he wrote his latest book to present an intervention that didn’t just reduce the risk of the leading killers such as heart disease and cancer, but also arthritis, dementia, osteoporosis, Parkinson’s disease, and sensory impairments.

“These risks tend to double every seven years,” he says. “Just slowing aging means that the average 65 year old could have the health and disease risk of today’s 58 year old, and could cut in half everyone’s risk of death, frailty, and disability.”

Rather than follow our current piecemeal approach of focusing on individual degenerative diseases, we should turn our focus to slowing the aging process in general, says Greger.

“I remember as a nerdy kid I wanted to cure cancer when I grew up,” he says. “Even if all forms of cancer were eliminated, the average life expectancy in the United States would only go up about three years. Dodging cancer doesn’t mean delaying death from something like a heart attack or stroke. If one age-related ailment doesn’t get us, another will. Rather than playing ‘whac-a-mole’ by tackling each disease separately,

progress in decelerating aging could address these issues simultaneously.”

## The Science Behind Successful Aging

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health researchers followed more than 100,000 men and women for 34 years and found that just a few basic lifestyle changes — such as eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, keeping a healthy weight, not drinking too much alcohol, and not smoking — translated into about 13 years of extra life span for the average 50 year old.

“Even from age 70, there are still about 10 extra years on the table,” Greger says. “Extending that back earlier than age 50, a Canadian study found that nearly 18 years were up for grabs based on simple, commonsense health behaviors.”

A midlife switch between the ages of 45 and 64 to even the barest minimum lifestyle changes — including at least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables, walking about 20 minutes a day,

maintaining a healthy weight, and not smoking — resulted in an impressive 40 percent lower risk of dying in the four subsequent years.

Another simple way to extend both life span and health span is to ditch the saltshaker. A study of more than half a million adults found that those who salted their food at the table, in addition to whatever salt was used in cooking, appeared to have a two-year lower life expectancy at age 50 than those who didn’t add salt.

“Just swapping the saltshaker for some savory salt-free seasoning could potentially add years to your life,” notes Greger.

While the role of exercise in longevity is still up for debate, Greger says the health benefits are still overwhelming.

“Physical activity improves muscle mass and strength, balance and mobility to help decrease the risk of falls while minimizing bone loss,” he says.

Exercise has also been shown to improve cognition, enhance mood, treat depression, and improve artery function, erectile function, insulin sensitivity,

and your overall quality of life. Observational studies have found that walking for as little as 15 minutes daily or achieving just 4,400 steps a day is associated with a lower risk of premature death.

## Anti-Aging Superfoods

**Nuts.** Compared to any other food group, consumption of nuts is associated with the lowest risk of premature death. Of all nuts, walnuts may be the healthiest, notes Greger.

**Dark, leafy greens.** A diet rich in these vegetables has been found to promote a longer life span. Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, kale, and cabbage have antimicrobial properties that boost the immune defenses.

The apparent longevity benefits tied to greens may arise in part from the metabolic slowing effects of nitrates, which are beneficial natural compounds concentrated in greens, which may also improve age-related declines in muscle and artery function.



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**Berries.** These fruits have more antioxidants than any other food except herbs and spices. “This helps combat the oxidized fats formed in the digestion of meat and fatty processed foods that can damage DNA and proteins,” explains Greger.

The anthocyanins in berries are responsible for beneficial effects on cognitive function, eyesight, inflammation, blood sugar, artery function, and cholesterol. Cherries are particularly beneficial for their anti-inflammatory and calming properties, cranberries for urinary health, goji berries for immunity and weight loss, and grapes for lowering cholesterol and improving artery function.

## Strategies to Preserve Our Aging Bodies

**Bones.** Weight-bearing exercise can improve bone strength, but Greger says that the single most important thing you can do to prevent fractures due to thinning bones from osteoporosis is to prevent falls. This can be accomplished by a combination of lower-limb strength exercises and balance training.

Prunes, onions, tomatoes, and almonds, as well as large quantities of fruits and vegetables in general, may have bone-protective effects while tobacco, heavy cannabis use, and stomach-acid blocking drugs may increase the risk for bone fractures.

**Circulation.** By age 10, nearly all children raised on a standard American diet develop fatty streaks in their arteries, which is the first stage of atherosclerosis.

“So-called ‘normal’ cholesterol or blood pressures can leave you at an elevated risk for dying,” says Greger, adding that ideal blood pressure is about 110/70 mm Hg, and the ideal LDL cholesterol level is 100 mg/dL or less, depending on age and known heart disease.

Quitting smoking, lowering consumption of trans fats, saturated fats, and dietary cholesterol, and eating a plant-based diet can help regenerate the inner lining of our blood vessels. Contrary to popular belief, fish oil does not appear to reduce cardiovascular risk, and low-carbohydrate diets are associated with poor cardiovascular health.

**Mind.** Alzheimer’s disease is linked to atherosclerotic buildup of plaque in the brain, so the same dietary changes that help with cardiovascular health may help cognitive health. Nonvegetarians have up to two to three times higher risk of dementia than vegetarians, says Greger. This could be because of increased exposure to saturated fat, oxidized cholesterol, toxins, and pollutants in the diet.

“The best diet to deter dementia would likely be low in added sugars, salt, saturated fat, animal products, and processed foods, and high in whole plant foods, particularly greens, beans, and berries,” says Greger.

**Immune system.** We can strengthen our immune system by maintaining a healthy weight, exercising, spending time in nature, getting adequate sleep, and increasing our intake of fruits and vegetables, according to Greger. For older adults

especially, he recommends getting a flu shot to reduce the risk of contracting the flu and subsequent cardiovascular events that could lead to an early death.

“It’s also a good idea to get vaccinated against pneumonia and shingles,” he adds.

**Hearing.** Excess earwax buildup, which can be cleared at home with bulb irrigation, is a common reversible cause of hearing loss, says Greger. Eating foods rich in folate such as legumes and dark, leafy greens can help prevent hearing loss. Hearing aids are underutilized to offer symptomatic relief of age-related hearing loss.

**Skin.** Protecting skin from sun damage is the single most important way to slow the signs of aging. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) — chemicals found in air pollution — appear to contribute to skin aging.

Carotenoids found in certain colorful fruits and vegetables like spinach, corn, red bell peppers, and tomatoes can offer a more “glowing” appearance, and the nutrients in greens may improve elasticity, collagen status, and facial wrinkles, explains Greger. Drinking extra water can decrease skin dryness and roughness and sipping honeybush tea may reduce wrinkles around the eyes.

“In general, a whole food, plant-based diet can be considered an anti-wrinkle diet,” says Greger. “But a good source of vitamin B12 is critical.” This important vitamin can be found in fortified cereals, nutritional yeast, eggs, salmon, and yogurt. □



## Making **YOU** Live Healthier

# Obesity Is an Illness You Can Cure

When obesity becomes the norm, as it has in the United States, it's a sure sign that our unhealthy food supply, advertising, car culture, screen-bound lifestyle, and relentless stress about health, income, and the future are out of control. Even before the pandemic, there was an epidemic of obesity. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicated that in 2019, in 12 states, 35 percent or more of adults were obese. That was an increase from just six states in 2017.

And it's only getting worse. When the USC Center for the Digital Future surveyed 1,000 adults, 41 percent said they were eating more since the COVID-19 pandemic; 33 percent said they were drinking more; 38 percent said were using marijuana more; and 32 percent were exercising less. All of those things increase the risk for cognition woes, cancer, Type 2 diabetes, gastrointestinal and kidney problems, heart disease, and premature death.

Here are some examples:

- A study published in *Brain Sciences* showed that severely overweight people are less able to rewire their brains and find new neural pathways, making it more difficult to recover from a stroke or head injury.
- Belly fat is far worse for you than fat in the thighs and hips. Researchers reviewed 72 studies involving more than 2.5 million participants who were tracked for three to 24 years: For every 4-inch increase in waist circumference, they found there was an 11 percent jump in the risk for all-cause mortality. And every 0.1 unit increase in waist-to-hip ratio increased the risk by 20 percent. You can calculate your waist-to-hip ratio by dividing your waist circumference by your hip circumference. A healthy waist-to-hip ratio for women is 0.85; for men, 0.9.

### Three Steps to Beat Obesity

Fortunately, a Cleveland Clinic study showed that losing 10 percent of your body weight through

metabolic surgery or 20 percent from nonsurgical dieting can significantly reduce your risk of major heart complications.

Dr. Ali Aminian, director of Cleveland Clinic's Bariatric and Metabolic Institute, who was lead author of the study, says your risk of death also decreases after a loss of 5 percent of body weight following surgery, or after a loss of 20 percent of your body weight with conventional dieting.

This reinforces another study published in *JAMA* that showed weight-loss surgery is associated with a 40 percent reduction in heart complications and the risk of death in folks who have both Type 2 diabetes and obesity.

If you're battling obesity, know that it's an illness that can be defeated one achievable step at a time. Here are three small steps with big benefits.

- Reduce your calorie intake by around 10 percent a day. A study in *The Lancet* found that cutting 12 percent of your calorie intake over two years improves markers of cardiovascular health.
- Increase the amount of vegetables and fruit you eat by one serving a day of each. An additional apple and 2 cups of raw leafy greens daily helps reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke and prevents some cancers.
- Get a pedometer. Measure how much you walk most days. If it's under 8,500 steps, add 1,000 to 1,500 steps to it, five to seven days a week for the next month. Twenty to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity activity five-plus days a week reduces the risk of heart disease.

If you have a body mass index (BMI) greater than 40 or have Type 2 diabetes and a BMI greater than 35, talk to your doctor about weight-loss surgery.

It's not for everyone, but find out if it might be part of a smart solution for you in your battle with obesity. □

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# Why Managing Blood Pressure Is So Important

By Chris Iliades, M.D.

Managing blood pressure is the most important way to prevent heart attack and stroke. However, nearly half of all Americans have high blood pressure (hypertension), and it is one of the conditions that doctors treat most frequently. Systolic blood pressure, the top number of a reading, measures the force your heart exerts on the artery walls each time it beats. The bottom number, diastolic blood pressure, measures the force the heart exerts between beats.

While you might expect that an exact measurement that indicates hypertension would have been settled a long time ago, experts do not agree. According to the American College of Cardiology (ACC), hypertension was 140/90 or higher in 2014. In 2017 it changed to 130/80. At the end of last year, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) went back to 140/90.

“Different organizations go with different numbers according to how they read the latest studies,” says Elizabeth Jackson, M.D., professor in the Division of Cardiovascular Disease at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Heersink School of Medicine. “Most doctors go with 130 for the systolic and 80 for the diastolic, with the systolic being the more commonly elevated number.”

There’s also an important difference between the numbers

for diagnosis and treatment. “High blood pressure is ‘either or.’ It could be your systolic, diastolic, or both numbers that are too high. For successful treatment the numbers are ‘both.’ You need to have both your systolic and diastolic numbers in the normal range,” explains Jackson.

## Finding the Sweet Spot

Studies show that blood pressure below 140/90 is strongly correlated with a reduced risk of stroke, heart attack, and death. But more recent studies support the benefit of less than 130/80. It’s important to work with a healthcare provider to regularly monitor blood pressure and adjust medication as needed. For some people, medications can have side effects, such as dizziness and passing out (syncope), but most take medication to lower blood pressure without any side effects.

## Still a Long Way to Go

According to a recent review in the *International Journal of Cardiology Hypertension*, about 50 percent of U.S. adults have hypertension, but only about 40 percent have hypertension under good control. Part of the problem is that about 20 percent of people have resistant hypertension — blood pressure that remains high even when three or more medications are taken.

Another factor is the failure to make the lifestyle changes needed to accompany blood pressure-lowering medications.

## Important Lifestyle Changes

The American Heart Association (AHA) has called these lifestyle changes “the Essential 8.” They include being physically active, not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, controlling cholesterol, and managing blood sugar and blood pressure. One of the most important may be a healthy diet.

“Eating a low-salt, Mediterranean style diet can lower your blood pressure by 10 points, which can be the difference between needing medication or not. This diet features lots of fruits and vegetables. It also limits processed foods, which are highly salted. Eighty percent of salt in the diet does not come from a saltshaker,” advises Jackson.

The Essential 8 used to be the simple seven. The new addition is sleep. AHA says getting seven to nine hours of sleep every night is essential for heart health.

## Bottom Line on Blood Pressure Control

While the best blood pressure number for you depends on your age, your health, and your risk factors, the upper limit is 140/90.

“Work with your doctor to reduce your risk of high blood pressure and to control your blood pressure and other risk factors if you are diagnosed with hypertension,” says Jackson.

All studies agree that a healthy blood pressure is the most important way to prevent a stroke or heart attack. □

# Knee Replacement Surgery Advances Result in Less Pain, Faster Recovery

By Charlotte Libov

Each year, nearly 800,000 Americans undergo knee replacement surgery to treat osteoarthritis, and that number is rising. But people often shy away from undergoing surgery because of the pain and long recovery they believe is involved. This is changing, however, an expert says.

“I warn my patients upfront that this is a painful surgery, but we have protocols to lessen the pain, and we’ve been able to cut the recuperation time in half,” says Karim Sabeh, M.D., director of adult reconstruction and joint replacement service at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, Fla.

Osteoarthritis of the knee happens when cartilage breaks down and the bones in the knee joint rub together, resulting in swelling, stiffness, and pain. Knee replacement surgery is performed to replace the weight-bearing surfaces of the knee joint. The surgeon removes the damaged part of the knee, and replaces it with an artificial joint.

Originally, knee surgery was modeled on hip surgery, but surgeons didn’t realize then the complexity of kinematics that was needed to reconstruct a well-functioning knee joint, says Sabeh. Kinematics is the branch of mechanical engineering involved in motion. “The hip joint is simply a ball and socket, but the knee is more complicated, involving a harmony of bone, ligaments,

and muscles that have to work perfectly together.”

Since then, both the implants and techniques have improved.

“Making state-of-the-art implants helped us improve, and as we did more and more knee replacements we learned how to improve on the surgery itself,” Sabeh says.

But people remain reluctant. A 2020 study found that 90 percent of patients who could potentially benefit from knee surgery waited too long, and therefore benefited less. Meanwhile, studies find that 85 percent of patients are happy with their new knees.

“Our goal is to achieve what we call the ‘forgotten knee score,’ in which people go about their daily life, unaware of their new knee. It used to take about a year for people to get to that point, but we’ve been able to reduce that time to three to six months,” says Sabeh.

This is due in part to improvements in the knee implants themselves. “For the best outcome, you want to reproduce each person’s anatomy. Before, we had some basic sizes, but a lot of people were in-between; nowadays, we can really tweak the implants to match their anatomy perfectly.”

Robotic surgery is another innovation. It uses the same procedure as traditional knee replacement, but the surgeon is assisted by a robotic arm or handheld robotic device.

Though often touted as better, recent studies have shown

robotic surgery to be equal to the traditional type, says Sabeh. “‘Robotic surgery’ is actually robotically assisted surgery; the robot follows the command of the surgeon. So it’s the surgeon that’s important, not the robot. Just because the surgery is done robotically doesn’t necessarily mean it will be done correctly.”

Other innovations include a so-called “smart knee,” which is the first implantable smart device in orthopedics. The smart knee uses cutting-edge technology to track important metrics that are used to guide patients through their recovery and alerts the surgeon if a patient is potentially having a complication.

## Selecting a Knee Replacement Surgeon

“If you select a surgeon who specializes in knee replacement surgery, with whom you are comfortable, and you’ve gotten yourself in tip-top shape for the surgery, then for most people this is a life-changing procedure,” says Sabeh, whose tips for choosing a knee replacement surgeon are:

- Select a surgeon that has done a fellowship in joint replacement, which is a year of study beyond the requirements of general orthopedic surgery.
- Look for surgeons who do a high volume of knee replacements for better results.
- Make sure the surgeon is upfront about risks and benefits, pain management, possible complications, and the physical therapy you’ll need. □

# What You Should Know About Treating COVID-19 With Paxlovid

By Fran Kritz

Winter is here and COVID-19 is on the rise, with thousands of new cases each week in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

If you're 50 or older and/or have a health condition such as heart disease or diabetes, you could be at risk for severe illness or even death from the virus. Paxlovid, an antiviral drug to treat COVID-19, was found to reduce the risk for hospitalization and death by 86 percent.

## Get Tested

To be effective, Paxlovid, an oral drug, has to be taken within five days of the start of symptoms. But COVID symptoms — such as fever, chills, sore throat, coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, and headache — are the same symptoms people can have if they contract the flu or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), another winter pathogen, says William Schaffner, M.D., a professor of infectious diseases at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville. "Testing remains important so that doctors can treat you effectively," says Schaffner.

Paxlovid only treats COVID-19, but there are antiviral drugs for flu that must be started within two days of symptoms. (There is no antiviral drug for RSV, but adults 60 and older can ask their doctor about a vaccine to help prevent the virus.)

A recent study found that it can take four or five days for a home test to come back positive if someone has COVID-19, which might be too late to connect with a doctor to receive a Paxlovid prescription in time. Chris Chao, M.D., president of the College of Urgent Care Medicine, recommends that people who have symptoms but test negative on a home test consider having a more precise test, called a PCR test, at their doctor's office or at an urgent care center. A different test at a clinic or doctor's office can also check for flu.

Chao says if your home test is negative on your first day of symptoms, you can also test again on day two or three to see if the test turns positive. Home

test kits are available at pharmacies for about \$20 per two-test pack, and some public libraries still stock free tests. You can get four free tests per household at [special.usps.com/testkits](https://special.usps.com/testkits).

The Food and Drug Administration has extended some test expiration dates so some tests you have at home might still be effective. Check at: [fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-otc-covid-19-diagnostic-tests#list](https://fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-otc-covid-19-diagnostic-tests#list).

## How to Take the Drug

You take three Paxlovid pills twice daily for five days. Common side effects include a metallic taste in the mouth and diarrhea.

Paxlovid can interact with some medications, including some blood thinners and cholesterol-lowering statin drugs. Paxlovid can increase the levels of those drugs in your bloodstream, which can be dangerous.

That's why if a doctor prescribes Paxlovid, it's important to let them know all drugs, vitamins, and supplements you take. In some cases, your doctor may advise you to stay off some drugs until you finish taking Paxlovid, "but don't do that without your doctor's guidance," says Aaron Glatt, M.D., head of infectious diseases at Mount Sinai South Nassau in New York.

If Paxlovid interferes with drugs you take, your doctor may prescribe a different drug, Lagevrio, which is also an antiviral drug for COVID-19 that is slightly less effective than Paxlovid but interacts with far fewer drugs.

## Paying for Paxlovid

Paxlovid was provided by the U.S. government for free through November 1. Some pharmacies who still have government inventory of the drug will dispense it for free through the end of the year. Medicare is currently providing the drug for free, but some insurance companies may charge a copay. Pfizer, which makes the drug, says it will provide the drug for free to anyone without insurance or who can't afford a copay. Ask the pharmacy about financial assistance. □

# POTS Has Increased Dramatically Since COVID



Lauren Stiles is the president and chief executive officer of Dysautonomia International, a nonprofit group that advocates for more than 3 million people around the world living with postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) and other autonomic nervous system disorders. A leading expert on POTS, Stiles is a research assistant professor of neurology at Stony Brook University Renaissance School of Medicine. She developed POTS at the age of 17 after a severe snowboarding concussion.

## Q: What is POTS?

**A:** Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) is a relatively common autonomic nervous system disorder estimated to impact more than 3 million Americans. The autonomic nerves regulate our heart rate, blood pressure, gastrointestinal motility, sweating, kidney function, tear and saliva production. When the autonomic nerves aren't working properly, POTS or other forms of dysautonomia (an umbrella term used to describe medical conditions that cause a malfunction of the autonomic nervous system) can occur. The number of people with POTS has increased dramatically since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Q: What are the signs and symptoms of POTS?

**A:** People with POTS have an abnormal increase in their heart rate and reduced blood flow to their upper body and brain when they stand up. Common POTS symptoms include lightheadedness when standing up, brain fog, fatigue, gastrointestinal dysmotility, and headaches. Some people with the disorder faint when they stand up, but this is not required to diagnose POTS.

## Q: How is POTS diagnosed?

**A:** POTS is diagnosed using a tilt table test. When a tilt table test is not available, POTS can be diagnosed by the active stand test: measurements of heart rate and blood pressure taken while lying down, then standing up. It's important to know

that the active stand test can miss many cases of POTS, so if your active stand test results are normal, ask your doctor if tilt table testing is available.

## Q: Who is most at risk for the disorder?

**A:** POTS most commonly occurs in young women but can occur at any age, and in males as well. The most common age of onset is 14, but about half of patients develop POTS in adulthood. POTS can be truly devastating for people who suffer from it. The level of disability seen with POTS is comparable to that of congestive heart failure patients and those suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). About 25 percent of people with POTS require a wheelchair.

## Q: When was POTS recognized as a medical condition?

**A:** POTS was first described in medical literature in the 1860s as "soldier's heart" by a Civil War surgeon, but it was given its modern name and diagnostic criteria in 1993 by the Mayo Clinic. Many people with POTS experience prolonged diagnostic delays — more than four years on average — due to lack of physician recognition and public awareness. POTS most often develops after an infection, and many people are developing POTS after COVID-19 infections. Ongoing research is exploring the role of genetic and immune mechanisms in POTS.

## Q: How is POTS treated?

**A:** Common POTS treatment recommendations include increasing oral salt and fluid intake, medical compression stockings, reclined exercises such as rowing or recumbent biking, and medications like beta-blockers and pyridostigmine (to reduce tachycardia) and fludrocortisone (to increase salt retention and blood volume). Treatment options may not provide relief, which is why Dysautonomia International is funding research and advocating for increased National Institutes of Health funding to find more effective treatments and eventually a cure for the millions of people suffering from POTS. □



# Combat Holiday Stress, Anxiety, and Fatigue With Adaptogens

By Lynn C. Allison

While the holidays can be a joyous time, for many the season can be overwhelming, resulting in additional stress and anxiety. Adaptogens may be an effective way to help you navigate seasonal stress.

Active compounds found in various plants, herbs, and mushrooms, adaptogens help the body adapt to stress, anxiety, and fatigue. Supermodel Gisele Bündchen swapped nicotine and alcohol for the popular adaptogen ashwagandha to help restore adrenal function and reduce stress, and says it changed her life. Ashwagandha and ginseng are two of the most popular and well researched adaptogens.

“The concept of calling certain herbs adaptogens began with the work of endocrinologist Hans Selye, who was known for his work on the effects of stress on the body,” says herbalist Ellen Kamhi, Ph.D., author of “The Natural Medicine Chest.”

“We all experience stress, but an individual’s ability to resist stressors and adapt to change can be the key to staying healthy.”

Kamhi says that adaptogens, which have been used in traditional medicine for centuries, tend to act gently, so they can be used on an ongoing basis. Modern research has uncovered various mechanisms of action, including reducing cortisol (the stress hormone),

decreasing inflammatory mediators, and helping balance carbohydrate metabolism.

## Health Benefits of Specific Adaptogens

Rebecca Kastin, a board-certified health and wellness coach, says that adaptogens can help improve energy and endurance. “Many adaptogens are believed to increase energy levels, reduce fatigue, and enhance physical and mental performance,” she tells *Health Radar*.

In addition, some adaptogens such as echinacea and astragalus are believed to boost the immune system to help the body fight infections and diseases.

Rhodiola rosea and Panax ginseng — also known as Asian or Korean ginseng — are two adaptogens that are believed to improve cognitive function.

Ginseng is commonly used to enhance stamina and endurance and to reduce fatigue, says Kastin. And rhodiola, also known as golden root, dates to ancient times when it was used by the Vikings and the Greeks.

“In Russia and Scandinavia, rhodiola has been used for centuries to cope with the cold Siberian climate and stressful life,” says Kamhi. Studies have found this herb may also help strengthen the body’s response to physical stressors such as exercise and psychological stressors such as fatigue and depression.

Holy basil is another popular adaptogen used to combat stress

and anxiety, notes Kastin. Maca root purports to improve energy, endurance, and libido. It’s often used to combat fatigue and enhance fertility.

## Using Adaptogens

“It’s important to note that while adaptogens have a long history of use in traditional medicine systems, scientific research on their efficacy and safety is ongoing,” says Kastin. “Before using adaptogens for any specific health concern, it’s advisable to consult with a healthcare professional, as individual responses to these substances may vary, and there may be potential interactions with other medications or health conditions.”

If you are adventurous, you can learn to identify, collect, and process the wild plants into your homemade remedies, says Kamhi. But if you want convenience, adaptogens are available in various forms, such as herbal teas, liquid extracts, and capsules.

“Because adaptogens are such a hot topic these days, look for manufacturers who have been around for a long time before purchasing any herbal products,” Kamhi tells *Health Radar*. “Many new companies are jumping on the bandwagon. Choose companies committed to good manufacturing practices.”

Nature’s Answer is one that is registered and inspected by the Food and Drug Administration, adds Kamhi. □

# Winter Increases Your Risk of a Dangerous Fall

By Fran Kritz

More than 800,000 men and women are hospitalized each year due to a fall, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fact, unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury and death from injury among adults 65 and older.

That risk increases with cold and icy weather, which make it easy to slip and fall. And sensation in feet may decline with age, especially if you have arthritis, diabetes, poor circulation, or complications from a stroke. A decrease in sensation can affect balance, and cold can make the loss of sensation worse.

Older adults are more likely to be more seriously injured in a fall than younger people, according to researchers at the Mayo Clinic. That's because brain blood vessels in older people become more fragile and can bleed more easily after a fall. And older bones can be more brittle, which is why hip and arm fractures are common for older adults if they fall.

## Preventing Winter Falls

To give yourself the best chance to avoid an accident, have a pair of boots with good support and buy snow grips (also known as traction cleats) for the bottoms of your shoes or boots. These attach to your shoes with rubber straps that fasten to the toes. The grips on the soles can

help keep you from slipping on snow and ice.

In ice or snow, pay attention to your steps and walk slowly, and consider a walking stick or cane. Hold onto handrails when you can and take small steps in snow, from side to side, to help maintain your center of gravity. When it's icy, consider staying in.

## Talk to Your Doctor About Preventing Falls

Many risk factors can be modified to help prevent falls:

- Review medicines to see if some make you dizzy or off-balance. If so, talk to your doctor about taking the drug at a different time, or if a different medication could be prescribed.
- Consider a pair of distance-only glasses for walking outside. Bifocals can be disorienting if you are looking down.
- Check home hazards or dangers such as broken or uneven steps and throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over.

Exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance can also help prevent falls. Check local hospitals and community centers for online and in-person fall prevention classes.

## How to Fall

If you do feel yourself falling, don't try to catch yourself with your arms, which can lead to more injuries. Try to take the hit on your buttocks or back. Then, wait for someone to help you up in case you are injured and to avoid another fall.

## Lift Assist

If you live alone, ask your doctor if your risk of a fall warrants considering an alert system to connect you with help if you fall. You can also designate a friend or relative to call in an emergency, says Douglas Kupas, M.D., medical director of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians.

In many communities, you can call the emergency medical services number in your area and ask for a "lift assist." If they do a quick check and clear you medically, you won't need to go to the hospital.

**“If you feel yourself falling, don't try to catch yourself with your arms, which can lead to more injuries.”**

Use a search engine to locate the emergency medical service number for your area and see if there is a non-emergency number you can call. Ask if they do lift assists, if they charge for the service, if you can call that number 24/7, and if you can call 911 if the EMS number does not operate at all times. If you do call 911, let them know it's a lift assist call and ask if you can avoid the hospital trip if the responders determine you are not injured, advises Kupas. □

# FDA Approvals: Ulcerative Colitis, Melanoma, Myasthenia Gravis

Compiled exclusively by Health Radar, here are the most significant new drugs and medical devices approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

## Velsipity for Moderate to Severe Ulcerative Colitis

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved etrasimod (Velsipity) for adults with moderate to severe active ulcerative colitis (UC). The approval was based on results from the ELEVATE UC phase 3 registrational program, which included UC patients who had previously failed or were intolerant to at least one conventional, biologic, or Janus kinase inhibitor therapy. Twenty-seven percent of patients receiving Velsipity achieved clinical remission versus 7 percent of patients receiving placebo at week 12. And at week 52, clinical remission was achieved by 32 percent and 7 percent, respectively. The selective sphingosine-1-phosphate receptor modulator was approved at a 2 mg recommended dose. The safety of Velsipity was consistent with previous studies, with the most common adverse reactions being headache, elevated liver tests, and dizziness.

“Velsipity provides adults living with moderately to severely active UC the opportunity to achieve steroid-free remission with an oral, once-daily pill that has a favorable benefit-risk profile,” said Angela Hwang, Pfizer chief commercial officer and president of global biopharmaceuticals business.

## Nivolumab as Adjuvant Treatment for Melanoma

The FDA approved nivolumab (Opdivo) for the adjuvant treatment of completely resected stage IIB/C melanoma in patients ages 12 and older. The approval was based on results from the CheckMate-76K randomized, double-blind trial. The trial included 790 patients with stage IIB/C melanoma who were randomly assigned to nivolumab 480 mg or placebo by intravenous infusion every four weeks for up to one year or until disease recurrence or unacceptable toxicity.

Nivolumab reduced the risk for recurrence, new primary melanoma, or death by 58 percent compared to placebo. The recommended nivolumab dose for patients weighing 40 kg (88 lbs.) or more is 240 mg every two weeks or 480 mg every four weeks until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity for up to one year. For pediatric patients weighing less than 40 kg, the recommended dose is 3 mg/kg every two weeks or 6 mg/kg every four weeks.

The most common adverse reactions (reported in at least 20 percent of patients) included fatigue, musculoskeletal pain, rash, diarrhea, and pruritis.

## Zilbrysq for Generalized Myasthenia Gravis

The FDA approved zilucoplan (Zilbrysq) for the treatment of adults with generalized myasthenia gravis. Zilbrysq is a targeted peptide inhibitor of complement component 5 (C5) and is approved as a once-daily, self-administered, targeted therapy in patients with anti-acetylcholine receptor (AChR) antibody-positive generalized myasthenia gravis. The approval of Zilbrysq is based on results from the phase 3 RAISE study, in which patients were randomly assigned to receive daily subcutaneous injections of 0.3 mg/kg Zilbrysq or placebo for 12 weeks. Significant benefits were seen for the primary end point of improvements in symptoms and functional activities as measured by the Myasthenia Gravis Activities of Daily Living at week 12. The most common adverse reactions in patients receiving Zilbrysq were injection site reactions, upper respiratory tract infection, and diarrhea.

“Until now, people living with generalized myasthenia gravis have only had access to C5 therapy intravenously, which can be inconvenient and time consuming,” Iris Loew-Friedrich, chief medical officer at UCB, said in a statement. “Now . . . we hope a broad population of mild to severe adult patients with AChR-antibody-positive generalized myasthenia gravis will be able to have greater independence.” □

**TREATING URINARY SYMPTOMS MAY LOWER MORTALITY RISK**

Treating men 50 or older for lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) reduces the risk of dying over the next few years, according to a study in *The Journal of Urology*. Symptoms include weak stream and frequent nighttime urination. Participants with moderate to severe LUTS were randomly assigned to treatment with medications — doxazosin, finasteride, or a combination of the two — or a placebo. “Improvement in male LUTS was associated with a reduced risk of death,” wrote the researchers. The greatest improvement in LUTS symptoms lowered the risk of dying during the two-year follow-up by 35 percent.

**VACCINES PROTECT AGAINST ALZHEIMER’S**

Being vaccinated against tetanus and diphtheria, shingles, and pneumonia lowers the risk of developing Alzheimer’s, according to research from UTHealth Houston. Researchers divided participants who were at least 65 years old and free of dementia into two groups — one vaccinated and one unvaccinated — and followed them for eight years. Those who received tetanus and diphtheria vaccines were 30 percent less likely to develop Alzheimer’s. The vaccine for shingles and pneumonia lowered risk by 25 percent and 27 percent, respectively. “Vaccines may change how the immune system responds to the build-up of toxic proteins that contribute to Alzheimer’s disease,” said Avram Bukhbinder, M.D.



**GENE SILENCING DRUG LOWERS ALZHEIMER’S TAU PROTEIN**

Researchers at University College London discovered a new genetic therapy that safely lowers levels of harmful tau proteins known to cause Alzheimer’s disease. The drug, BIIB080, is used to “silence” the MAPT gene, preventing it from being converted into the brain-destroying proteins. A phase 1 clinical trial looked at three doses of the drug, given by an injection into the spinal cord, compared with a placebo. After 24 weeks, total tau was reduced by 50 percent in the central nervous system of patients receiving the higher doses. “The results are a significant step forward in demonstrating that we can successfully target tau with a gene silencing drug to slow — or possibly even reverse — Alzheimer’s disease,” said neurologist Catherine Mummery.

**WHICH COVID VACCINE IS MOST EFFECTIVE?**

Researchers at UC San Francisco tracked the response to the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines in the blood samples of healthy volunteers. One month after being vaccinated, those who received the Pfizer vaccine had an antibody response 21 times higher than Johnson & Johnson vaccine recipients, while those who received Moderna had a vaccine response 51 times higher than those who received Johnson & Johnson. But at six months, according to the journal *Scientific Reports*, the antibody levels in people who received the Johnson & Johnson shot overtook the antibody levels of the Pfizer vaccine recipients, and equaled the Moderna vaccine, as the antibody levels declined in Pfizer and Moderna volunteers.

**CHEMICAL RAISES RISK FOR PARKINSON’S**

A study published in *JAMA Neurology* found that exposure to the chemical TCE, or trichloroethylene, may increase the risk for Parkinson’s disease by 70 percent. TCE was used as a surgical anesthetic until 1977, and is still used to make refrigerants and as a degreaser for metal equipment. Researchers compared Parkinson’s diagnoses in about 160,000 Navy and Marine veterans. Those who were exposed to TCE at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina where it was used to degrease military equipment had a 70 percent higher risk for Parkinson’s than veterans who were stationed at Camp Pendleton in California where TCE wasn’t used.

**THE HERB ASTRAGALUS MAY HELP HEAL HEART ATTACK PATIENTS**

A compound found in the traditional Chinese herb astragalus may help heart attack patients. Experts at Newcastle University in England found that the compound, called TA-65, significantly reduces inflammation, which plays a key role in the formation of coronary-inducing plaque. But unlike current cardiovascular treatments, TA-65 has no negative impact on immunity. “Reducing inflammation is considered a key treatment target following a heart attack for patients, and our study showed that TA-65 reduced inflammation by up to 62 percent,” said Ioakim Spyridopoulos M.D.

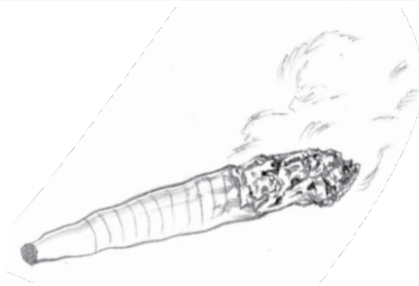
**PROBIOTICS MAY ALLEVIATE DRY EYE**

Dry eye affects one in 20 Americans, and the most common

treatments are eye drops, gels, and ointments. But a study from Baylor College of Medicine found that oral probiotics improve the condition in mice. Researchers first treated mice with dry eye disease using antibiotics, which killed many of the “friendly” bacteria living in the gut. They were then given either daily doses of the probiotic bacteria strain *Limosilactobacillus reuteri*, or a saline solution. After five days, mice given the probiotic bacteria had healthier corneal surfaces and produced more mucin, an essential component in tears. “The ‘friendly’ bacteria that live in the human gastrointestinal tract have been linked to health and protection against disease in many parts of the body, including the gut, brain, and lungs,” said Laura Schaefer, Ph.D. “It’s therefore not surprising that the gut microbiome also has effects on our eyes.”

### TEEN POT USERS AT HIGHER RISK FOR DEPRESSION, SUICIDE

Teens who use marijuana recreationally, but are not addicted to the substance, are two to four times more likely to develop psychiatric disorders such as depression and suicidality than nonusers. Recreational users are also at risk for problem behaviors such as poor academic performance and trouble with the law, according to a study published in *JAMA Network Open*. Teens who were deemed addicted to cannabis were 3.5 to 4.5 times more likely to have mental health and behavioral problems compared to teens who didn’t use cannabis. “Perceptions exist among youth, parents, and



educators that casual cannabis use is benign,” said Ryan Sultan, M.D. “We were surprised to see that cannabis use had such strong associations to adverse mental health and life outcomes for teens who did not meet the criteria for having a substance use condition.”

### ACID REFLUX DOESN’T INCREASE CANCER RISK

Reflux disease is considered a risk factor for esophageal cancer, but a new, large-scale study by the Karolinska Institute found that most patients with reflux do not have a higher risk for cancer. The risk was elevated only in patients who were found to have changes in their esophageal mucosa. “This is a gratifying result because reflux disease is a very common condition, and most patients are found to have a completely normal mucus membrane on gastroscopic examination,” said Dag Holmberg, M.D. Many patients with reflux undergo repeated gastroscopies. “Our study suggests that these repeated gastroscopies are probably unnecessary for people with reflux disease who have a normal esophageal mucosa.” The study was published in *The BMJ*.

### NAPS LINKED TO LARGER BRAIN VOLUME

Taking a daily nap may help slow age-related brain shrinkage. Research published in the journal *Sleep Health* analyzed DNA data

from men and women ages 40 to 69 and compared measures of brain health and cognition of those who were more genetically “programmed” to nap with peers who did not have the genetic variants. Overall, the difference in brain volume between people predetermined to nap and those who were not was the equivalent of up to 6.5 years of aging. “Our findings suggest that for some people, short daytime naps may be a part of the puzzle that could help preserve the health of the brain as we get older,” said University College London’s Victoria Garfield, Ph.D.

### VITAMINS THAT IMPROVE VISION

**Vitamin C.** A number of studies have shown that high vitamin C intake lowers intraocular pressure (IOP) in glaucoma and protects the retina. In one study, vitamin C lowered IOP within a few hours. When combined with natural vitamin E (mixed tocopherols and tocotrienols), vitamin C has its maximum protective effect. In addition, vitamin C is used by the body to produce hyaluronic acid, which is deficient in people with glaucoma.

**B vitamins.** One of the major functions of B vitamins is energy production by cells. They have also been shown to counteract excitotoxicity — particularly vitamin B12 (methylcobalamin), folate, niacinamide, thiamine, and riboflavin, especially when used in combination. In one study of patients with glaucoma, researchers found that giving vitamin B12 stopped progression of vision loss during a five-year follow-up. □

# How to Cope With Holiday Hangovers

By Lynn C. Allison

**T**is the season to be jolly, but when it gets a little too jolly, that joy may be hindered by a hangover. Too much alcohol can cause nasty post-party symptoms such as headaches, nausea, fatigue, weakness, and increased blood pressure.

The effects of a hangover can vary from person to person, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Peak symptoms, which can last 24 hours or longer, end when the blood alcohol level concentration in the body returns to zero. While hangovers are notoriously miserable, they can also be dangerous because the symptoms can impair a person's ability to make decisions or drive safely.

Alexander Mauskop, M.D., a board-certified neurologist and director and founder of the New York Headache Center, says that magnesium depletion and dehydration are two likely factors for hangovers.

In fact, Mauskop tells *Health Radar* that taking a magnesium supplement before going to bed after imbibing can help prevent a hangover. Taking a second supplement the next morning along with Advil may ease symptoms.

"It is not a good idea to take Advil, and especially Tylenol, while still having alcohol in the bloodstream," he warns. "Advil with alcohol increases the risk of stomach ulcers, and alcohol with Tylenol is damaging to the liver."

Mauskop says that drinking more alcohol the next day, a hangover myth commonly called "hair of the dog," will absolutely not help. It merely masks the symptoms.

Amanda Beaver, a registered dietitian with Houston Methodist Wellness Services, adds that hangovers can be triggered by inflammation caused by acetaldehyde, which is produced by the liver when it breaks down alcohol.

"This compound causes inflammation in various organs including the brain and the gastrointestinal tract," Beaver tells *Health Radar*. Disruption of deep, restful sleep also contributes to hangovers.

Alcoholic drinks contain congeners, compounds produced during the fermentation of alcohol, that exacerbate hangovers. Darker spirits such as whiskey and brandy tend to have higher levels of congeners than clear spirits such as vodka and gin.

"It can be easy to drink more during the holiday season due to peer pressure and social norms," says Beaver. However, these tips can help you handle the holiday season hangover-free:

- **Stay hydrated.** Remember that alcohol is a diuretic, so you lose more fluids when you drink it. Have a glass of water between alcoholic beverages or switch to sparkling water. "There are so many deliciously flavored nonalcoholic drinks to enjoy," says Beaver, who suggests that if you are hosting a party, keep these options open for your guests, including "mocktails," that can be just as enjoyable as the real thing. Experts say that enjoying a sports drink that contains electrolytes can help replenish the minerals lost by drinking too much alcohol.

- **Eat before you drink.** Lyssie Lakatos, a registered dietitian, says that consuming vegetables, protein, and healthy carbohydrates before drinking slows the digestion of alcohol so it doesn't enter your bloodstream as quickly. "This gives your body a chance to metabolize alcohol," she says.

- **Set a drink limit.** "That way, as the drinks are flowing, you will have a plan with a set number of drinks in your head, rather than accepting each drink that comes your way," Lakatos tells *Health Radar*.

- **Eat a breakfast with banana and peanut butter.** Try a morning-after meal of whole grain toast with peanut butter and a banana. "A banana the morning after a night of heavy drinking replaces lost electrolytes, especially potassium," she says. "With the peanut butter, you'll get the fat you crave, but it's a healthy fat that helps stabilize blood sugar to negate some of the ill effects of the hangover." Whole grain toast provides the boost you need for longer lasting energy. Avoid eating sugar, which causes your blood sugar level to spike and crash. And stay away from saturated fat that takes a long time to digest, causing a feeling of sluggishness and heaviness. □

# Use Light to Boost Mood and Energy on Winter Days

By Fran Kritz

Shorter, darker winter days can make people feel low, sluggish, and even depressed because light is an important part of our well-being, says Norman Rosenthal, M.D., a psychiatrist in Bethesda, Maryland, and author of “Defeating SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder): A Guide to Health and Happiness Through All Seasons.” Rosenthal was part of a team that developed light therapy to treat SAD, a form of depression that occurs because of winter’s reduced daylight hours.

“Not everyone finds it difficult to have shorter days and less light, but if it does affect you, there are ways to handle it and improve your mood,” says Rosenthal. Natural light is an important mood booster, but if you aren’t exposed to outdoor natural light because of the cold weather and shorter days, then exposure to indoor light becomes very important.

## Create a Bright Room

Rosenthal suggests having a particular room that is lighter than the others, and if possible, making sure the room has at least one window. “I call it the bright room,” he said. “If possible, paint the walls a bright color such as white or yellow, which reflects light very well,” he says.

Rosenthal also suggests scattering brightly colored cushions to help make the room a space you enjoy sitting in. For

even more light, you can also add a mirror or even a wall of mirrors that reflects light from colorful items in the room and during the day from light that shines through the window, advises Rosenthal.

“Add an extra lamp if you can, and if the room has windows, make sure to keep them clean to allow as much light to shine through as possible.” (To be safe, it’s probably smart to hire a window washing company to clean the outside of windows if they’re not on the ground floor.)

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**“If you aren’t exposed to outdoor light because of the cold weather and shorter days, then exposure to indoor light becomes important.”**

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Rosenthal warns that the light coming in from outside won’t give you much vitamin D. “We need light to fall directly on our skin for that,” he explains.

Talk to your doctor about whether you might need a vitamin D supplement in winter if you are not going outdoors as much.

## Why Light Matters

Studies have shown that exposure to sunlight can increase the brain’s release of serotonin, which helps people feel calm and focused.

And while darkness prompts the pineal gland in the brain

to produce melatonin, which makes people sleepy, even artificial light — such as lamps in a living room — can help suppress melatonin and make us feel more awake.

## Consider a Light Box

For people who feel sad during winter, sitting in front of a light box — available online and at large retail stores — can help. Check with your doctor before buying a light box, though, because it may not be appropriate for some people with depression, certain eye conditions such as glaucoma and cataracts, and other health conditions.

If you get the all-clear from your doctor, look for a light box that provides exposure to 10,000 lux of illumination — it will say so online or on the box at the store.

Best advice for using the box, says Rosenthal, is to switch it on during your first hour of waking up. Make sure to follow instructions from the manufacturer about how far to sit from the box.

Sit in front of the light box for 20 to 30 minutes, keeping your eyes open, but don’t look directly at the light.

## Take a Walk if You Can

Even if you are adding light strategies to your home, being outdoors in daylight has been found to be very beneficial during the dark days of winter.

Consider a half hour walk outside on some days, says Rosenthal. □

## Enlarged Prostate Treatment Improves Symptoms While Preserving Sexual Function

A minimally invasive technique improves urinary symptoms while preserving sexual function in men with benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), according to a study published in *The Journal of Urology*. A recently approved device called Optilume BPH uses an uncoated balloon catheter to open a passage between the lateral lobes of the prostate. A second balloon, coated with the antiproliferative drug paclitaxel, further widens the opening. Paclitaxel is believed to prevent the prostate from continuing to enlarge and to prevent refusion of the lateral lobes. In a double-blind study that included 12 months of follow-up, 75 percent of men had at least a 30 percent improvement in their BPH-related symptoms compared to a third in the control group. The Optilume group also had a dramatic increase in urine flow. Sexual function was not adversely affected.

## Brain Stimulation May Help Stroke Patients

Ischemic strokes, the most common type, are caused by a clot blocking blood supply to part of the brain. *JAMA Network Open* reported that UCLA Health researchers placed a series of electrodes across the scalp of stroke victims, focusing on areas suffering from low blood flow. The noninvasive therapy, called high-definition cathodal transcranial direct current stimulation (HD C-tDCS), delivers a weak electrical current. The pilot study involved acute stroke patients who were randomized to receive either the electrical stimulation or a sham stimulation. Scans after treatment showed that patients receiving HD C-tDCS experienced improved blood flow while flow decreased in the sham group. The most exciting find, according to researchers, was that 66 percent of the threatened brain tissue surrounding the core of the stroke was

saved in the first 24 hours following the stroke, compared to zero percent in the control group.

## Hearing Loss Reversed in Mice

Researchers at King's College London have successfully reversed hearing loss in mice. Deaf mice with a defective *Spns2* gene were given a special enzyme at different ages to activate the gene, which improved their hearing. The technique restored hearing in low and middle frequencies, and was most effective when *Spns2* was activated at a young age. It was less effective the longer the researchers waited. "Seeing the once-deaf mice respond to sounds after treatment was a pivotal moment, demonstrating the tangible potential to reverse hearing loss caused by defective genes," said Elisa Martelletti, Ph.D. "This groundbreaking study unlocks new possibilities for future research." The research was published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

## Engineered Probiotic Treats Multiple Sclerosis

Researchers from Brigham and Women's Hospital have designed a probiotic to suppress autoimmunity in the brain, which occurs when the immune system attacks healthy cells in the central nervous system. Autoimmunity, which causes inflammation, is at the center of several diseases, including multiple sclerosis and other brain diseases that are difficult to treat due to the inability of drug therapies to cross the blood-brain barrier. To find a solution, researchers studied dendritic cells, a type of immune cell that is abundant in the gastrointestinal tract and in the spaces around the brain. The researchers discovered a biochemical pathway that dendritic cells use to stop other immune cells from attacking the body. The pathway can be activated with lactate, so they genetically engineered probiotic bacteria to produce lactate. When the probiotic was tested in mice with a disease resembling MS, the researchers found that even though the bacteria live in the gut, they reduced the effects of the disease in the brain. They believe the approach can be transferred to humans because the bacteria used to create the probiotic has been tested in humans. "Engineered probiotics could revolutionize the way we treat chronic diseases," said lead author Francisco Quintana, Ph.D. □

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# Protect Your Aging Eyes

Doctor-developed natural formula provides **24 essentials** for vision health



By S.A. Nickerson, Health Correspondent

**R**enowned holistic physician David Brownstein, M.D., knows aging eyes require diligent and comprehensive vision support.

However, fewer than 1 in 5 baby boomers use supplements to maintain optimal eye health, and many boomers are facing an explosion of eye health problems.

“Your aging eyes are under constant assault,” warns Dr. Brownstein. “They’re particularly vulnerable to free radical or oxidative damage. And special photoreceptor cells in your eye’s retina display the highest rate of oxidation of all cells in the body.”

And that’s not all ...

## The New ‘Blue’ Challenge

You already know your eyes need shielding from the sun’s harsh UV rays.

Now, experts are recognizing concerns related to another type of light — blue light.

Because of exploding technology, you’re bombarded by blue light from electronic devices: tablets, iPads, e-readers, smartphones, computer monitors, and TVs, plus

other LED lighting.

High-energy wavelengths from blue light can affect visual sharpness and clarity. Plus, they’ve been linked to eyestrain, headaches, fatigue, and other issues.

## Natural Eye Health Support

Dr. Brownstein knows the solution to optimal eye health can be summed up in one word: antioxidants.

Unfortunately, those over 60 consume the lowest quantity of antioxidants. And not all antioxidants are equal. Your eyes require *special* antioxidant nutrients.

That’s why Dr. Brownstein formulated the advanced eye health and vision support formula **OPTIZO™**.

## 24 Eye-Loving Nutrients

**OPTIZO** is truly a breakthrough, with 24 powerful, handpicked nutrients working together in this advanced formula.

Dr. Brownstein made Lutemax 2020® the “jewel” of the **OPTIZO** formula. This proprietary extract contains three nutrients — lutein, zeaxanthin, and meso-zeaxanthin — at researched levels.

These nutrients are specialized carotenoid antioxidants found in high concentrations in the retina. Since they are not produced by the body, they must be obtained by diet or supplementation.

Additional ingredients, including lycopene, resveratrol, taurine, and vitamins C, E, and D, help provide antioxidant support for the eye’s macula, important for crisp central vision.

Plus, nutrients such as bilberry and vitamin A are not only antioxidants, but are also essential for night vision.

## Support Your Eyes for Life

**OPTIZO** makes it simple to support your vision and eye health for life. After all, there’s so much beauty to see in the world! You shouldn’t have to miss any of it.

## 9 Powerful Benefits of OPTIZO

1. Supports overall eye health and vision
2. Helps filter blue light
3. Helps reduce eyestrain and fatigue from digital devices
4. Supports macular health
5. Reduces oxidative stress and free radical damage
6. Supports normal MPOD (macular pigment optical density) associated with overall visual function
7. Supports visual acuity in low light conditions
8. Supports visual recovery after bright light exposure
9. May improve contrast sensitivity in retinal health

## RISK-FREE Trial of OPTIZO™



DR. BROWNSTEIN

Medix Select, one of the nation’s premier nutraceutical companies, is sure you’ll love **OPTIZO**. That’s why they’re offering you a risk-free trial supply at **NO COST\***— That’s a **\$39.95 value!** Just cover a small shipping fee of \$4.95, that’s all.

You’ll also receive Dr. Brownstein’s detailed special report **A Doctor’s Guide to Healthy Eyes and Vision** as a **FREE BONUS GIFT** (a \$20 value).



Toll-Free: **844-861-5163**  
Online: **TryOptizo.com/Free**

\*Trial offer requires enrollment in SmartShip program. See website for details. These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.