



DR. MICOZZI'S

INSIDERS' CURES

PREMIER ISSUE

The problem with pain

Another reason the government is literally a pain in the neck... and back, and head, etc.

Plus, safe, effective, natural remedies for the top 3 types of pain

In the history of American medicine, alleviating pain has been one of the two central tenants of "rational medicine." (Preventing death was the other). Unfortunately, there's nothing rational about the way mainstream medicine handles pain relief these days.

From the arid mountains of Afghanistan, to the jungles of Honduras, from the gritty urban streets of New York, to the fruited plains of Nebraska, the government is hard at work protecting you from pain...medications.

You see, we live in an era where another misguided government "war"—this one on drugs—is intimidating competent and honest doctors and nurses. Keeping them from prescribing and administering adequate pain medication in effective doses. Even for those on their deathbeds, who often must suffer their last moments on earth in debilitating pain.

All under the guise of "protecting" the public from becoming addicted to painkillers.

If the situation sounds bleak, well...in many ways, it is. But before you give up hope, there is good news.

The fact is, there are many, many alternatives that can offer you *real*

relief. For just about any type of pain. Ones you won't hear about from the government medical bureaucracy. (Whose agenda has nothing to do with actually helping those who are suffering.) I'll go over some of the most effective natural solutions in just a moment.

But first, let me tell you a bit about why the "War on Drugs" has turned into a "War on People in Pain."

The best painkiller on earth that the government is desperate to keep out of your hands

Despite its potential for misuse, the opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) has been one of nature's best gifts to humankind. It is, without a doubt, the world's most effective pain medicine. Opium is the source of morphine and all its various modern derivatives.

And to this day, even in our era of modern pharmaceuticals, morphine and morphine derivatives still have unmatched pain-relieving and other healing properties. And they remain in widespread use throughout the world.

The reason they're so effective is that our brains and central nervous systems have built-in receptors for the opiates in these medications. It's a match made in pain-relief heaven.

But, unfortunately, like many good

things, opium also has a history of abuse. And that's where the focus has been for centuries.

So although morphine, hydro-morphine, oxycodone, and codeine remain the gold-standard opioid analgesics, the ham-fisted prosecution of drug wars has made many good doctors afraid to prescribe them. And as a result, the pharmaceutical industry has put out a slew of rival analgesics. These rival pain meds are less restricted than the opioids. The problem is, they're also typically less effective. And more toxic.

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53 years of useless—and dangerous—“relief”

For example, until recently, roughly 10 million Americans were taking the painkilling drug propoxyphene (sold as Darvon and Darvocet). But in November 2010, the FDA pulled it from the market because of serious heart risks. But here's the really interesting part of the Darvon story...

While it is classified by the DEA and FDA as a narcotic, it has never been shown in controlled studies to be even a **weak** analgesic.

In other words, it has all of the stimulating, addictive effects of opioids. But none of the pain-relieving benefits. Yet the FDA approved it for that very use back in the 1950s. Putting millions of people at risk for addiction, heart complications, and who knows what else for 53 years. Risk with absolutely no “reward” in the form of relief.

Then, to add insult to injury, the FDA recommended doctors switch patients to other painkillers, notably Extra Strength Tylenol (acetaminophen).

Take that advice and you trade in risk of heart problems for liver failure.

That's right. This common, over-the-counter painkiller—found in nearly every medicine cabinet in America—causes hundreds of deaths each year due to liver toxicity. But until now (there is finally a class action suit being filed in 2012) nobody talked about it.

It's yet another example of major medical mismanagement spawned by ill-informed politicians and misbegotten government regulatory agencies.

Here are a few more of the most common examples where the government also denies people

effective pain relief—and the alternatives you *can* get...

Why back surgery should be your last resort

Low back pain is the most common cause of pain and disability in working Americans. Nearly everyone experiences it at some point. After all, it's an unavoidable consequence of walking upright. But living with it doesn't need to be.

And there are treatments for back pain that are much safer—not to mention more effective—than dangerous painkilling drugs and potentially disastrous back surgery.

In fact, surgery should be your absolute last resort. The results can be debilitating. And there's no “going back” from surgery.

In fact, back surgery has become such a problem that it has actually spawned a new medical condition, called “failed back” syndrome. And there are doctors who specialize in treating people with it. It's become

A single dose of vitamin C cuts the need for morphine

A brand new clinical study published in the *Canadian Journal of Anaesthesia* showed that a single dose of 2,000 mg of vitamin C significantly reduced the need for morphine in patients who had just undergone surgery.¹

This is yet another benefit of making sure you have optimal levels of nutrients. It can reduce the need for pain relievers like morphine, which makes their use even more safe in the bargain.

Citations available online at www.DrMicozzi.com

a kind of “crisis.” But as I said to Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell at a US Congressional Field Hearing in Pennsylvania in February 2003, perhaps this crisis is a blessing in disguise. Because it should finally help open the door for the effective, non-surgical treatments that can help the vast majority of people with back pain.

To his great credit (on this and many other public policy issues), Governor Rendell was genuinely concerned and refreshingly open-minded. And a few weeks later, he contacted me to provide all the details on these alternatives to his office in Harrisburg.

That information included overwhelming evidence about one particular—and *completely non-invasive*—treatment that works for almost every person who tries it...

Affordable and effective

Spinal manual therapy (SMT), is the most effective and cost-effective treatment for most patients with low back pain. SMT is the primary treatment provided by chiropractors.

In fact, a decade ago the former US Agency for Health Care Policy & Research conducted a review and found SMT to be the most safe and effective treatment. Unlike the NIH, this agency was focused on using research and science to help guide rational medical practices. Things that would actually benefit the public.

Of course, their recommendation for SMT outraged orthopedic surgeons. So much so that they attempted to have the agency shut down. When that didn't work, they tried to have it de-funded. Eventually, they managed to at least get the office reorganized. (Today it's known as the Agency for Health Care Quality, and has little power to actually influence medical practice compared to the

“medical mandarins” at NIH, or the federal purse strings controlled by Health Care Finance Administration and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services.)

Perhaps this crisis is a blessing in disguise... and will open the door for effective, non-surgical treatments

But I digress...

At about this same time—during 2002-2003—I received a grant from the US Health Resources and Services Administration (another rare honest broker) to review all the studies on low back pain that had been done worldwide.

I worked with the Palmer College Research Consortium and a dozen other universities and scores of scientists around the country. And found—no matter how you sliced it—that spinal manual therapy (SMT) is indeed a safe and effective treatment for low back pain.

And, even better—it's easy to access. There are over 50,000 practicing chiropractors in the US (all of them from accredited schools). They are licensed in every state.

But if you can't find a chiropractor near you for some reason, physical therapists also provide effective SMT.

Other useful therapies for low back pain include massage and acupuncture. But with the overwhelming evidence for and easy availability of SMT, most people should try it first.

Arthritis alternatives you can trust

Arthritis pain is another common—and commonly mistreated—problem. And it all boils down to reducing the inflammation causing the pain. But there are also better, safer ways to do that than with NSAIDs or prescription drugs (like the infamous COX-2 inhibitors).

In fact, there are many herbs and dietary supplements that can help reduce inflammation in the joints. Here are a few of the most effective:

- ***Boswellia serrata*** (Indian Frankincense). One of the proverbial “Three Gifts of the Magi,” this herbal remedy has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for centuries, primarily for its anti-inflammatory benefits. Look for a standardized extract and take 150 to 450 mg three times per day. You may also be able to find a formula combining *Boswellia* with

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NEWS BRIEF

Sweet news for your health

Here is some good news for chocolate lovers. An extensive new review in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (one of my favorite sources of useful information about diet and nutrition) found that chocolate reduces blood pressure, improves blood flow, and helps improve insulin resistance (an important factor in diabetes).¹

But, remember: When it comes to chocolate, “bitter is better.” Avoid the “milk” chocolates with added fats and sugars and go for the dark varieties.

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curcumin, and/or Ashwaganda. These are additional Ayurvedic ingredients also known for their anti-inflammatory properties.

- ***Capsicum frutescens*** (cayenne pepper). You generally see capsaicin as an ingredient in topical creams (usually in 0.025% and 0.075% strengths). They can be very effective for relieving joint pain. However eating red chili peppers (if you like spicy food) can also have remarkably beneficial effects.
- **Vitamin C** (500 mg/day), **vitamin D** (2,000 IU/day), and **vitamin E** (400 to 600 IU/day). These nutrients are always important for bone and joint health. And yes, you need all three to work best together.
- **Omega-3 fatty acids.** The essential fatty acids in fish oil are another tremendous natural anti-inflammatory. However, to get as

much as you need—3 to 10 grams per day—you'll likely need to increase the amount of omega-3 containing foods you eat (like salmon, sardines, and walnuts) and take a fish oil supplement as well. Fish oil supplements are widely available. Just be sure to look for one that contains both the DHA and EPA fatty acids. Nordic Naturals makes several great fish oil products.

Some people also find that eliminating foods from the “deadly nightshade” family helps relieve their arthritis pain. Nightshade foods include white potatoes, peppers, eggplant, and tomatoes.

However, one caveat: There is no way to tell if eliminating these foods will make a difference for you until you actually do it. And you'll need to give the elimination diet at least six months (although some report almost immediate relief).

Managing migraines without drugs

Headache is probably the single most common cause of pain experienced regularly by most people. And the most difficult type of headache to treat is the migraine. But, again, there are very effective natural treatments. Ones that can actually keep migraines from occurring in the first place. And if you've ever had a migraine, you know that an ounce of prevention is definitely worth a pound of cure.

Feverfew is probably the most well-known natural migraine remedy. This herb is a short, bushy flowering plant that grows in fields and along roadsides and blooms from July to October. The leaves have been used for all sorts of medicinal purposes since the ancient Greek and Roman physicians. Recently, though, it was approved for treating migraine headaches in both the United Kingdom and Canada.

A dried feverfew leaf preparation containing a minimum of 0.2% parthenolide (the active ingredient) is effective for preventing migraines. You'll need at least 125 mg per day.

Although its most commonly used to improve cognitive function, **Ginkgo biloba** may also help ward off migraines. The effective dose is 120-240 mg per day.

And anyone who experiences regular migraines should be taking 200-600 milligrams of **magnesium** per day. Low levels of magnesium can contribute to migraines.

Food allergy may also be a problem for some migraine sufferers. The most common allergens (in decreasing order) include wheat (gluten), orange, egg, coffee/tea, milk, chocolate, corn, sugar, yeast, mushrooms, and peas. A small proportion of migraine sufferers may also react to the presence of

NEWS BRIEF

The death-defying vitamin you need everyday

There's no shortage of vitamin D news these days. But in the May 2012 issue of the journal *Diabetes Care*, a group of German researchers offered some especially impressive new research.¹ They found that optimum vitamin D intake cut the risk of death from heart disease by 66% in people with metabolic syndrome. It also cut overall mortality risk by a staggering 75%.

Metabolic syndrome is characterized by obesity, high blood pressure, and blood sugar imbalances. It's a problem that, as you're probably well aware, has reached epidemic proportions in this country. This research proves there is a simple way to dramatically cut some of the most serious risks associated with it. Certainly something worth doing.

Unfortunately, you can't rely on the standard “Recommended Daily Allowance” amounts you find in most multivitamins to reach optimal levels of vitamin D (or most other nutrients for that matter). Instead, opt for a stand-alone vitamin D supplement, and take 1,000-2,000 IU per day.

Citations available online at www.DrMicozzi.com

tyramine in foods such as aged cheeses, yogurt, beer, wine, liver and organ meats.


If you use the above remedies and for some reason still find yourself battling a migraine at some point, there are a couple of reports that say ginger may help them go away sooner. Mix 500-600 mg ginger powder with water and drink it every 4 hours until the migraine subsides (for up to four days—but hopefully not that long!).

And don't forget...

Aside from these nutritional approaches and dietary supplements, there are also effective mind-body therapies for many common types of pain. To learn more about them, refer to *How to Beat the Dirty Dozen: A guide to the mainstream's most puzzling illnesses* in the free Library of Confidential Cures you received when you subscribed. Also, in that same report, I'll tell you how acupuncture is the ancient

“Powerhouse of Pain Relief.” For even more information on what will work best for you see my book with Mike Jawer, *Your Emotional Type* (available at www.DrMicozzi.com, or your local bookstore).

No matter what method you choose, one thing is certain: The successful alleviation of pain can no longer be considered “alternative” vs. “mainstream.”

What works should simply be considered good medicine. 

The herbal secret making the “impossible” possible

One thing I learned early on about natural medicine is its ability to make the “impossible” possible. And there's no better example of that than adaptogens.

Their potential is so tremendous, I believe everyone should consider taking an adaptogen every day—right along with other essential nutrients like vitamin D and omega-3 fatty acids. Let me explain why...

Adaptogens are individual herbs that have the unique ability to help your body adapt to changes, both internal and external. For example:

- If you're cold, they help you warm up
- If you're hot, they help cool you down
- If you're tired, they wake you up
- If you need rest, they help you sleep

And so on. In fact, they have more serious effects, too. They can help return abnormal cells to normal. They can help regulate blood sugar swings. And they can help regenerate worn-out nerve cells and synapses in the brain.

There is no single drug that can do all of that.

But the human body has many mechanisms to maintain homeostasis, a “constant” internal environment. And adaptogens work by activating those mechanisms.

Modern-day miracles steeped in tradition

While adaptogens are still a foreign concept in western medicine, they're well known—and commonly used—in Chinese and Indian medicine.

In China, the classic adaptogen is ginseng. Traditionally they used Chinese (*Panax*) or Siberian (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*) ginseng. However, as soon as the Chinese began immigrating to America in the 1800s, the potent American version of this herb quickly made its way into the Chinese Pharmacopeia.

The properties of American ginseng were so highly valued, desire for it drove many into the mountains of Appalachia to collect it. In fact, the famous early American frontier hero, Daniel Boone, made a start exploring the early western frontier of the Appalachians as a “sanger.” He gathered the valuable herb in the hills and hollows where it could be found (what today would be called “wild crafting”).

American ginseng is still highly prized. And today is still “wild crafted” by American “sangers” in the Appalachian Mountains who closely guard the secret of where and how to locate it. However, the supply of American ginseng is scarce and there are problems with sustainability of it. So for the time being, I advise sticking with Chinese ginseng, which is widely available and has many health benefits. A dose of 200-500 mg of Chinese (*Panax*) ginseng per day is generally well tolerated but may contribute to insomnia.

Ashwaganda (also known as winter cherry, *Withania Somnifera*, and Indian ginseng) is probably the second best-known adaptogen. Ashwaganda plays a large role in Ayurvedic (traditional Indian) medicine. It is used for general “longevity” in Ayurveda (which itself means the “science of life, or “long life”), as well as for a number of specific indications. Really, everything ranging from relieving stress to fighting diabetes and Alzheimer's disease. A good general dose is 500 mg per day.

Sutherlandia frutescens is a


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relatively new discovery—at least in Western natural medicine. It has been used in South Africa for centuries. And is revered there for its tremendous potential. In fact, one of its nicknames in that country is “Cancer Bush.”

It counters the systemic

wasting (known as cachexia) that accompanies cancer. Many cancer victims die from cachexia even before they are overwhelmed by the tumor itself.

Evidence for its use is still emerging, but looks solid—and promising. I’ll keep you updated on

this exciting “new” adaptogen as information becomes available—both here in *Insiders’ Cures* and in my *Daily Dispatch* e-letter (which you can sign up for by visiting www.DrMicozzi.com). In the meantime, 600 mg of Sutherlandia per day is a good general dose. 

Getting hip to hypnosis: Taking the mystery out of a centuries-old medical marvel

Despite a somewhat mysterious quality—and its occasional use in some decidedly unscientific quarters—hypnosis has finally earned a well-deserved place in modern medicine. I’ve seen it do some truly remarkable things, and think it’s one of the best treatment options there is. It’s completely non-invasive, and harnesses your body’s own power to heal itself. And that’s what all good medicine should really aim to do.

Of course, with origins dating back to the 1700s, it certainly took a while for hypnosis to gain the respect it deserves. But hypnosis found its way into mainstream medical practice in the 1950s. In 1955, the British Medical Association endorsed it. Then a few years later—in 1958—both the American and Canadian Medical Associations followed suit.

Since then, interest in hypnosis has grown, and the practice of hypnosis has found numerous clinical applications. The technique is important for various psychological conditions. And has been used successfully to treat anxiety, phobias, and to help people quit smoking.

But what many people don’t realize is that hypnosis is also a promising tool for many *physical* ailments. And these aren’t just anecdotal accounts.

Yes, believe it or not, there are

many new scientific studies on the benefits of hypnosis. In fact, there are now abundant reports published in the medical literature describing the benefits of hypnotherapy for a wide variety of medical conditions. For example...

- One study published in April 2012 showed that hypnosis can help alleviate the maddening ringing, buzzing, and hissing in the ears associated with tinnitus.¹
- Another study showed significant blood sugar lowering benefits in patients with Type 2 diabetes who used hypnosis along with acupuncture.²
- Two specific studies showed impressive benefits for people using hypnosis for irritable bowel syndrome. In one, 40 percent of patients in the hypnosis group experienced significant relief—compared to just 12 percent in the control group.³ And in the other study, 85 percent of IBS patients who used hypnosis reported that they still felt the benefits seven years later.⁴

Thrusting hypnosis even further into the scientific realm are some of the high-tech imaging techniques now available. MRIs and PET scans in particular have made it possible—for the first time—for researchers to see

the actual metabolic changes that occur during hypnosis. Proving, once and for all—beyond a shadow of a doubt—that hypnosis is very much “for real.”

Still, even with strong science behind it, many people still think of it as little more than a “parlor trick.” So today, let’s take a few minutes and go over exactly what hypnosis involves—and what it can do for you.

What is hypnosis?

Physiologically, hypnosis resembles other forms of deep relaxation. It decreases nervous system activity, decreases oxygen consumption, and lowers blood pressure and heart rate. It can also increase or decrease certain types of brain wave activity.

Hypnotherapy’s effectiveness lies in the complex connection between the mind and the body. It is now understood how illness affects your emotional state. And, conversely, that your emotional state affects your physical state. For example, stress, an emotional reaction, can make heart disease worse. And heart disease, a physical condition, can cause depression.

Hypnosis carries this connection a logical step further by using the power of the mind to bring about change in the body.

How hypnosis works

Like many other functions of the human brain, the precise physiologic mechanisms of hypnosis aren't fully understood. On a superficial level, hypnosis patients appear to be asleep. But their EEG brainwave patterns resemble wakefulness.

The difference between "normal" wakefulness and the hypnotic state appears to be where the brain wave activity occurs. Neurologic studies using EEGs in hypnotized individuals have shown a shift of brain wave activity to different regions of the brain.

For example, imagining colors while hypnotized results in measurable increases in blood flow to the visual cortex—the area of the brain that is normally stimulated during actual sight.

What is it like to be hypnotized?

By most accounts, hypnosis is characterized by increased mental focus and concentration, a "*belle indifférence*" (a French-like indifference) to the external environment, and heightened receptiveness to suggestion.

Most people describe feeling a pleasantly altered state of consciousness (but not sleep), an air of calm, and a general feeling of well-being.

Hypnosis works best when the hypnotized subject is able to thoroughly discontinue conscious "censoring" of information. In other words, to suspend their disbelief (which most people have a lot of practice doing simply from watching movies—or just observing Washington DC). But a large percentage of patients benefit from even "light" levels of hypnosis.

How is hypnosis done?

You've no doubt seen hypnosis depicted by swinging a pocket watch in front of a person's face. Along with the phrase "You're getting very sleepy..." But I don't often see either of these techniques used in real life (nor do I see a lot of pocket watches anymore).

That said, there is no uniform method for inducing hypnosis. But there are three common elements in most applications of clinical hypnosis.

- ✓ **Absorption** in the words or images presented by the hypnotherapist.
- ✓ **Dissociation** from your ordinary critical faculties.
- ✓ **Responsiveness** to the suggestions presented by the hypnotherapist.

A hypnotherapist either leads patients through relaxation, mental images, and suggestions. Or he or she teaches patients to perform the techniques themselves. Many hypnotherapists provide guided audiotapes for their patients so they can practice the therapy at home. The images presented are specifically tailored to the particular patient's needs and may use one or all of the five (or six) senses.

A hypnosis session usually incorporates five steps:

- 1.) *Preparation*. You're placed in a comfortable, secure environment. Usually sitting in a quiet room. Distractions and interruptions are minimized.
- 2.) *Induction*. You're guided to a state of relaxation by deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and/or the use of imagery.
- 3.) *Deepening*. In this phase, the hypnotic state is deepened through repetition and reinforcement. Conscious thinking is minimized.
- 4.) *Purpose*. This is where the specific goal of the hypnosis is addressed. Hypnotic suggestions are given to modify perceptions or behavior. For example, in the case of pain management, you may be asked to *transform* the perception of pain to a numbness or tingling sensation.
- 5.) *Awakening*. In this final phase, you're gradually brought out of the hypnotic state. During this stage, the therapeutic suggestions presented during step 4 are

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NEWS BRIEF

Meditation and movement improve fibromyalgia symptoms

A recent study published in the journal *Rheumatology International* in February 2012 shows that "meditative movement therapies"—like Qigong, Tai Chi and yoga—showed significant benefits for fibromyalgia.¹

Patients experienced improvements in sleep, fatigue, depression, and overall quality of life. Yoga, in particular, offered considerable improvement for pain (as well as fatigue, depression, and quality of life). And no serious adverse events were reported for any of the therapies.

To find out which of these therapies is best suited to your own personality and health needs, see my book (with Michael Jawer), *Your Emotional Type*. And for some practical guidelines on using meditation in your busy, daily life, see my book (with Donald McCown), *New World Mindfulness*. Both books available at www.DrMicozzi.com or at your local bookstore.

Citations available online at www.DrMicozzi.com

repeated and reinforced as the level of hypnosis lightens. Then the hypnotherapist offers some final suggestions. And you will awake refreshed and relaxed.

Usually, a hypnosis session will produce immediate positive results. Patients also generally report a sense of well-being and calm, although they're often uncertain about how deeply they were "under." They often comment on how they were completely aware of what was going on, but with a curious unconcern about their surroundings.

Subsequent sessions usually produce "deeper" levels of hypnosis, since patients are usually less apprehensive about the technique and feel safer.

A typical hypnosis session takes between 30 minutes and an hour. There are no studies or guidelines about the optimal frequency of hypnosis sessions. Weekly sessions are probably realistic for most people.

Especially since between sessions, most patients are encouraged to practice "self-hypnosis."

The self-hypnosis method, while not quite as effective as guided therapy with a skilled hypnotist, uses your own skills at achieving a hypnotic state by applying breathing techniques and imagery that you learn during regular sessions.

Finding a practitioner

Hypnotherapy is generally provided by a licensed mental health practitioner, such as a psychiatrist or psychologist. And believe it or not, some dentists are also trained in the clinical practice of hypnosis. The American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (www.asch.net; 1-630-980-4740) is a great resource that can help you locate a hypnotherapist in your area.


But no matter who you choose, in order for hypnosis to work, a state of trust and confidence must exist between you and the therapist. Most

patients—even the most open-minded ones—usually need some reassurance, especially at the first session, that they won't be surrendering control or be subjected to inappropriate suggestions. Good practitioners will ease your mind of these worries and allow you to relax—which is, after all, an essential part of effective hypnotherapy.

"Oh, I can't be hypnotized"

It never fails. Anytime I mention hypnosis, someone tells me he or she is "immune." But that's only true in about 10% of people. Everyone else can be hypnotized to some degree.

Although it is true that women are slightly more "hypnotizable" than men. And children are usually more receptive than adults.

To find out whether hypnosis will work for you and your particular health concerns, see my new book with Michael Jawer, *Your Emotional Type: Key to Finding the Therapies That Will Work for You* (available at www.DrMicozzi.com). 

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NEWS BRIEF

Spicing up your arthritis relief and cancer protection

Over and over again, modern science proves ancient remedies to be effective and safe for their traditional uses. And I can't emphasize the plural of "uses" enough...Because unlike most pharmaceutical drugs, these ancient remedies are almost always effective for more than one thing.

Curcumin is a perfect example. Curcumin is a natural plant chemical obtained from the dry root and rhizome of turmeric (*Curcuma Longa*). You may see the words turmeric and curcumin used synonymously, but the chemical name is curcumin.

And, recent research has confirmed its long history of use for many different health concerns. Specifically, two new studies support its benefits for arthritis and for cancer.

The first study—published in *Phytotherapy Research*—evaluated the safety and effectiveness of curcumin alone, and in combination with a potent drug for patients with rheumatoid arthritis.¹

Patients receiving curcumin (500 mg) on its own showed the highest percentage of improvement overall. And there were no adverse events in the curcumin group. This study provides the first evidence for the safety and superiority of curcumin compared to drug treatment for rheumatoid arthritis.

There have also been several new studies just in the past year showing curcumin's powerful anti-cancer effects. The latest one focuses specifically on gastrointestinal cancers, including esophageal, stomach, liver, and intestinal cancer.² The researchers concluded that it has high therapeutic potential for gastrointestinal cancers.

Curcumin supplements are widely available in natural food stores and online supplement retailers. A good general dose is 200 mg per day.

Citations available online at www.DrMicozzi.com