



# Is this fall fruit hiding the fountain of youth?

**Brand new research shows it may help you live an astounding 45 percent longer!**

Pomegranates were once a storied fruit in ancient myth and legend, but they had become relatively obscure in modern times. That is, until the tremendous marketing hype began for grossly overpriced pomegranate beverages.

For years, the hype for pomegranate juice was far ahead of the science—which led to skepticism among smart consumers.

Of course, “natural-know-it-all” never have to wait for the science. They just write whatever pops into their fevered minds that happens to sound good to them. And consumers who do not educate themselves about the science don't always have the tools to tell the difference. So in years past, you may have read my warnings not to fall for the hype before the proverbial “verdict” on pomegranates was in.

But far be it from me to stand in the way when research does prove the benefits of natural substances. As it turns out, science on pomegranates is beginning to catch up. And the powerful antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-cancer properties of this fall fruit are now being clinically documented.

In fact, the latest science shows pomegranates may actually be able to slow down aging...

## **The sweet way to combat aging at the cellular level**

Swiss scientists have found that a

molecule in pomegranates is converted in the gastrointestinal tract to a potent compound called urolithin A.<sup>1</sup>

Urolithin A enables muscle cells to protect themselves against one of the major causes of cellular aging. And that can help expand lifespan a whopping 45%, according to this study.

Let's take a closer look at the mechanics behind pomegranates and cellular aging.

## **How pomegranates can actually recharge exhausted cells**

As I've noted before, the keys to cellular energy are the mitochondria, which convert glucose and oxygen to energy and water for each cell. In essence, mitochondria act like batteries for the cells. But like any battery, they can degrade and lose their function over time.

This degradation gradually affects the health of many tissues, including muscles, which become weaker over the years. In fact, buildup of degraded mitochondria is suspected to be a direct cause of certain diseases like Parkinson's.

Some plants, such as aspal (red bush/rooibos), contain ingredients that have the ability to stoke the fires of functioning mitochondria to burn more calories and produce more energy and hydration for the cells. But what happens when the mitochondrial fireplaces simply “burn

out” and don't work well anymore?

The Swiss research found that urolithin A can re-establish the cells' ability to rebuild these mitochondrial fireplaces by recycling the components of the degraded, defective mitochondria. It's like taking the broken, burned-out bricks from an old fireplace and rebuilding them with new mortar.

In fact, urolithin A is the only known biomolecule that can launch this mitochondrial “clean-up” process. And its precursors are found not only in pomegranates, but also in some berries and nuts (more about that a little later).

The Swiss scientists initially started out testing these cellular effects in a type of worm that is often used in

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**Marc S. Micozzi, M.D., Ph.D.,** is a worldwide leader in nutritional and complementary/alternative medicine. He has had a distinguished career as a researcher and physician executive at the National Institutes of Health and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington, DC, and the College of Physicians in Philadelphia PA. He has published over 30 medical and trade books, and founded and edited the first scientific journal, and the first textbook, on complementary/alternative and nutritional medicine, now going into a 6th edition (2018) and continuously in print since 1995.

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Author: Marc S. Micozzi, M.D., Ph.D.  
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aging studies because it has a short lifespan. They discovered when urolithin A was given to these worms, they lived 45% longer than controls.

Next, the scientists moved onto mice. They found that urolithin A decreased the number of degraded mitochondria in muscle cells.

The result? The mice given urolithin A had a 42% increase in endurance while running, compared to the control mice.

Human clinical trials on urolithin A are now underway, and the scientists have high hopes they'll get similar results. But there is an interesting twist...

### Have scientists found the anti-aging molecule?

As I mentioned earlier, pomegranates and some berries and nuts contain a precursor molecule that is converted into urolithin A by probiotic bacteria in the GI tract. So the amount of urolithin A you can produce depends on how many of these particular probiotics your gut produces.

This can vary widely from person to person. In fact, the researchers discovered that some individuals don't produce any urolithin A at all.

And here's the really fascinating part: These differences may help explain the wide variations in biological vs. chronological age, and lifespan, that

we observe among different people.

In fact, scientists think that developing a method to deliver finely calibrated doses of urolithin A may effectively treat age-related conditions like macular degeneration.

Meanwhile, many big pharma products intended to slow aging or to increase muscle performance continue to fail. I've often said that one reason why is because they don't take into account the synergy between our bodies and our environments.

Case in point: urolithin A is thought to be the product of millions of years of parallel evolution among plants, probiotic bacteria, and animals.

### Pomegranates may fight osteoarthritis

Another recent study that caught my eye is the first clinical trial investigating the effects of pomegranates in people with osteoarthritis.<sup>3</sup>

The impressive results? Significant improvements in joint stiffness and physical function in people's knees were recorded after just six weeks of drinking pomegranate juice.

Researchers recruited 38 people with osteoarthritis of the knee. Half of them drank 200 ml (about 7 ounces) per day of pomegranate juice, and

### Even more impressive health benefits from pomegranates

Middle Easterners have long known the importance of pomegranates for a healthy life. In fact, scholars report that the fruit was buried next to Egyptian pharaohs to help them transition into the afterlife (after hopefully delaying their transitions).

Pomegranates are a rich source of antioxidants—particularly vitamin C. These antioxidants, along with pomegranate polyphenols, have been shown in several studies to help promote cardiovascular health by lowering blood pressure and reducing atherosclerotic plaque.

Pomegranates also contain an anti-inflammatory polyphenol called punicalagin, which has been shown in an animal study to help reduce the beta-amyloid plaque that is thought to contribute to Alzheimer's.<sup>4</sup>

If that weren't enough, several studies show that drinking pomegranate juice may lower your risk of prostate and breast cancers.

the other half didn't receive any type of treatment. After six weeks, a test showed that knee osteoarthritis in the pomegranate group decreased by an average of 25%. Meanwhile, the non-treatment group's osteoarthritis *increased* by 5%.

The researchers think pomegranate juice may help reduce osteoarthritis by inhibiting the enzymes that affect proteins known to play a role in the breakdown of joint cartilage.


Interestingly, this research was

conducted in Iran. Since ancient times, pomegranates have been the subject of many legends in Iran (historically Persia).

Oddly, these kinds of studies don't seem to get done in the U.S. despite the tens of billions of research funding dollars funneled through the NIH every year. But when it comes to pomegranates in Persia, I would trust the Iranian scientists.

Science is increasingly showing that pomegranates contain nutrients that

are important for your health. But you don't have to pay for the pushy, relentless, overpriced marketing and inflated profit margins that contribute to the high costs of retail pomegranate beverages.

Instead, you can find whole pomegranate fruits at your grocery store, especially this time of year. They keep well over time and can also add a decorative touch to your holiday season before being juiced or eaten. 

## The easy way to reduce your risk of dying from a heart attack by a whopping 25%

(Hint: It's sure not statins)

Statin drugs—the mainstream's “magic bullet” for protecting your heart—have turned out to be a big bust. In fact, in light of all their devastating side effects, they are more like “friendly fire” directed on unsuspecting patients. The whole sad story is proving to be a real heart breaker.

In the August issue of *Insiders' Cures*, I told you about a major new study that shows statins are actually useless for reducing your risk of dying from heart disease (see the article “Lower your cholesterol—and you may die sooner”).

Wasn't that supposed to be the whole purpose of taking these drugs?

Fortunately, there **is** something you can take that really will lower your risk of heart disease *and* death. And without the deadly side effects of statins.

### A fish tale that's really true

I'm talking about omega-3 fatty acids. The kind that are found in fish and marine oils, and some plant oils.

Study after study proves how effective

these nutrients are at protecting your heart. In fact, the evidence is so compelling that the FDA gave one of its elusive “qualified health claims” to omega-3s, stating that research shows they “may reduce the risk of heart disease.”

And now, a huge new research review involving nearly 50,000 people in 16 countries provides further evidence that omega-3s are linked to a *substantially* lower risk of heart disease and death.

I'll give you the details on that in a moment... But first I want to tackle the ongoing fraud by the cardiology cartel which persists in trying to weigh the so-called statin “benefits” (which turn out to be zero) against the risks—which are all too real.

### Metabolic poisons masquerading as drugs

The growing list of statin side effects reads like the standard textbook of pathology used in medical schools (*Rubin's Pathology*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, to which I recently contributed the new chapter “Forensic Pathology and Toxicology”).

When it comes to understanding the effects of these drugs, it helps to be an expert in toxicology—because they are basically metabolic *poisons*, disrupting every hormone, cell, tissue, and organ in your body. Take, for instance, two statin side effects that are particularly ironic.

### Feeling weak and achy? Blame statins

The first one is statins' ill effects on your muscles. Of course, the heart is the most important muscle in your body—yet statins are toxic to muscles. They can cause such severe cramps that many people have to give them up within the first day or two due to crippling and disabling muscle pain and weakness.

And the ironic part is that statins may be doing the same thing to your heart. Not to mention that they can cause your muscles to break down, which releases toxic substances that lead to kidney failure.

Because virtually everyone admits to statins' muscle toxicity, a new class of cholesterol-lowering drugs was just developed and tested. These

drugs were supposed to get around the problem of muscle toxicity.

But as my colleague Gina Bari Kolata reported in the *New York Times* recently, this new class of drugs did not reduce heart disease deaths, despite dramatically lowering cholesterol.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, there was some indication that death rates were actually increased with these new cholesterol drugs. (Of course, the idea that lowering cholesterol in the diet, or in the blood, is good for heart health or for health in general is a big fat myth that has been busted time and time again).

### The gateway drug to diabetes and cardio-metabolic heart disease

The second irony associated with statins is that there is now no question these drugs can cause type 2 diabetes.

Some of the earlier studies on statins did not continue long enough to reveal this side effect. But after decades of pushing these drugs onto tens of millions of otherwise healthy people, the disastrous results are now all too obvious.

Of course, diabetes is the major cause of metabolic cardiovascular disease, which is the leading cause of heart disease today. No wonder statins show no actual benefit when it comes to reducing the risk of dying from heart disease!

### The foods you shouldn't be eating...despite what the AHA says

A further irony is that the American Heart Association (AHA), which serves as an amen corner for crony-capitalist government, big food, and big pharma, still focuses on only two dietary risk factors for heart disease—saturated fats and salt. Both of which have been proven to be dead wrong (not that there was any real evidence in the first place for these two putative “risk factors”).

As I reported in my *Daily Dispatch* e-letter in July (“AHA ‘heart-check mark’ not worth the paper it’s printed on”), the AHA ignores the real nutrition-related risk factors for heart disease...like low B vitamin intake, high homocysteine levels, high insulin and blood sugar, and chronic inflammation.

And many of the foods approved by AHA under its Heart-Check scam are anything but healthy for your heart, body, or brain. For instance, the AHA thinks it’s fine to eat white bread and other simple carbs, and wash them down with sugary juices. With a nice big muffin for dessert.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the science, the AHA remains obsessively fixated on its fictitious fish story about fats and salt—like Captain Ahab maniacally manacled to the white whale...until he gets pulled under, tangled up in his own harpoons and ropes.

But don’t let big government, big pharma, and big food’s fishy stories tangle you up and pull *you* under. There is a much better tale when it comes to your heart health—the ever-increasing amount of research on the benefits of omega-3s.

### The “shark attack” of heart-health studies

As I mentioned earlier, a big new research review provides further evidence that consumption of omega-3s is linked to lower risk of heart disease and death.

Researchers from around the world banded together to organize the Fatty Acids and Outcomes Research Consortium (FORCE). They pooled data from various studies that measured blood or tissue levels of omega-3 fatty acids in a wide variety of people. Then they analyzed the relationship between these omega-3 levels and heart disease.<sup>3</sup>

There were a total of 19 studies from 16 countries that included 45,637 participants. During the study period,

7,973 people had a heart attack, and 2,781 died.

Together, these studies revealed that, on average, people who had higher blood or tissue levels of omega-3s had a 10% lower risk of having a fatal heart attack.

And people with the very highest levels of omega-3s had up to a 25% lower risk of dying from a heart attack.

### The best ways to boost your intake of omega-3s

Fish oil is the major dietary source of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids. I recommend 1-2 grams of a high-quality fish oil supplement every day. You can also eat two or more servings of fish a week to help boost your levels.

Fatty cold-water fish such as anchovies, herring, salmon, sardines, and trout have the highest levels of omega-3’s. And fish also provide important proteins and amino acids, selenium and other minerals, and vitamin D. But beware: Some fish can pose health hazards (see the sidebar below).

#### The safest fish to eat

Seafood with the lowest levels of mercury include oysters, sardines, salmon, shrimp, squid, and tilapia.

Also low in mercury are Atlantic croaker, Atlantic mackerel, crab, catfish, crawfish, flounder, haddock, sole, and trout.

Fish with the highest mercury levels include gulf tilefish, king mackerel, marlin, orange roughy, shark, and swordfish. Also high in mercury are bluefish, black cod, Chilean sea bass, fresh tuna, grouper, halibut, and Spanish mackerel. Eat these varieties only on occasion.

And remember, look for seafood labeled as “wild-caught” whenever possible. Especially when it comes to salmon. Wild-caught salmon from the Pacific are much healthier than farmed fish.

You can also obtain the omega-3 alpha lipoic acid (ALA) from plant sources such as flaxseed oil, walnuts, and other nuts and seeds and their oils.

### What the mainstream won't tell you...but I will

Of course, the continued research into omega-3s and heart health is all fine and good. But don't hold your breath waiting for the AHA or the government to change their dietary recommendations.

In fact, as I wrote in a January *Daily*

*Dispatch* ("Just a handful a day can do wonders"), a couple of years ago the FDA threatened to sue California walnut growers to prevent them from telling the truth that walnut consumption is associated with better health for your heart, brain, and body. The walnut growers turned around and sued the FDA instead—and won. So now the growers can talk truth about the heart-health benefits of walnuts, but you certainly don't see the feds following suit (so to speak).

Some mainstream studies have also confused dietary consumption of

fish versus fish oil supplements, with prostate cancer risk, making a mess of their results (as I reported in the October 2013 issue). And the wrong sources of fish, as well as poor-quality fish oil supplements, can be contaminated with heavy metals such as mercury, which of course have negative health effects (see sidebar).

That's why I only recommend fish oil supplements I know and trust. Otherwise you may be doing your heart—and your brain and body—more harm than good. **TC**

## The critical mineral that could save you from diabetes, depression, migraines—and more

*And there's an 80% chance you're not getting enough*

Periodically, I report on current findings regarding the role of key minerals for your diet and health.

Sadly, these findings almost always show how people are woefully deficient in these essential nutrients.

That's certainly the case with magnesium. Various researchers estimate that a stunning 70 to 80% of Americans don't get the recommended daily allowance (RDA) for magnesium—which is 310 to 320 mg per day for women, and 400 to 420 mg for men.

As you know, the U.S. government sets the RDAs to help people avoid outright nutritional deficiencies—rather than achieve optimal health. But in this case, the bureaucrats (surprisingly) got it right for half of the population—men. But based on the latest research, I recommend 400 mg of magnesium per day for both men *and* women.

The disturbing news that about three-quarters of Americans don't hit that target is a real problem for public

health. Why? Because magnesium is truly a magnificent mineral. In fact, it's involved in more than 300 different functions in your body.

### How magnesium can keep your heart, your brain—and the rest of your body—healthy

Reams of research show that magnesium helps lower your risk of diabetes, fight depression, and relieve migraines. And, along with calcium and vitamin D, magnesium is essential for bone health.

Magnesium is also an anti-inflammatory that supports heart health and may even cut the risk of a heart attack—perhaps by lowering blood pressure, according to a new study.

This study looked at data from 34 randomized, double-blind, controlled clinical trials, involving 2,028 people ages 18 to 84.<sup>1</sup>

Half of the participants took an average of 368 mg of magnesium a day for three months. Researchers

found the subjects' blood pressure decreased significantly compared to the people who didn't take magnesium.

The magnesium group's systolic (the top number) blood pressure fell by an average of 2 mmHg, and their diastolic pressure (the bottom number) dropped 1.78 mmHg. That doesn't seem like much—until you realize it's comparable to the results from the best of the blood pressure drugs.

A key consideration is how the daily doses of magnesium related to actual blood plasma levels of the mineral (which is what would be expected to affect blood pressure). The researchers found that taking 200 mg of magnesium per day (half of what I recommend) for one month significantly raised plasma magnesium levels.

### Why doesn't the mainstream want you to take magnesium supplements?

The researchers said magnesium is

often labeled the “forgotten mineral.” But other than calcium and iron supplements (both of which should be forgotten—see the sidebar below) what minerals have mainstream researchers actually remembered?

Another interesting point is that the study clearly showed that magnesium supplements work similarly to blood pressure drugs. Yet, most experts *still* maintain it’s “preferable” to get magnesium from the diet. Even though dietary magnesium doesn’t offer the same precision and control as supplements when it comes to a clinical protocol for reducing blood pressure.

It seems that, once again, the mainstream “experts” don’t want anything to interfere with big pharma’s profitable drugs.

### The simple—and tasty—ways to add magnesium to your diet

While I certainly don’t agree with the mainstream’s bias against magnesium supplements, it doesn’t hurt to incorporate more magnesium-rich foods into your diet as well (in addition to taking 400 mg in supplement form each day).

Of course, I’m going to start with my “go-to” foods for a wide spectrum of health benefits—**dark leafy greens** like collards, kale, spinach, and Swiss chard are rich sources of magnesium and many other nutrients.

Try combining them in a salad with **avocado**, which is loaded with magnesium and healthy fats, and **pumpkin seeds**. Half a cup of pumpkin seeds provides almost *all*

(325 mg) of my daily requirement for magnesium—not to mention many other nutrients. (See page 8 for more on the health benefits of pumpkins.)

And don’t forget nuts, which, like seeds, are nutritional powerhouses. Nuts high in magnesium include **almonds, Brazil nuts, and cashews**. In fact, now is the perfect time of year to make your own healthy mix of nuts and seeds so they’re handy for the holidays.

**Bananas** are better known for other minerals like potassium, but they also contain a healthy dose of magnesium (32 mg in a medium fruit). Slice them over a whole-grain breakfast cereal like **shredded wheat** (65 mg of magnesium per cup), or **oatmeal** (61 mg per cup).

### One more mineral you need more of—and two you should never take in supplement form

When it comes to mineral supplements, it seems like the “natural-know-it-alls” focus primarily on calcium pills. But **calcium** is one mineral that should never be taken in supplement form.

Calcium supplements are dangerous because they can elevate your calcium blood levels so much that they may actually harm blood vessels and other tissues. And this could potentially lead to heart disease.

If you follow the sensible diet I recommend, with organic dairy, fish, meat, and leafy greens, you’ll get plenty of calcium. In general, deficiencies of calcium only become a problem on artificially restricted diets, like vegan diets.

**Iron** is another mineral you should only get via dietary sources. For generations, doctors and public health experts have pushed iron supplements onto the American people. But this is a very dangerous practice.

Most women and virtually all men do not need iron supplements for optimal health. Excess iron in the body has

been linked to higher risks of cancer, heart disease, and infections, as shown by many studies over the years—including my own published work with Nobel laureate Baruch Blumberg in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *International Journal of Epidemiology*.

And, as I reported in my Daily Dispatch e-letter in September, recent research shows that excess iron can also lead to diabetes.

So unless you’re one of the rare people who have been diagnosed by their doctor with iron deficiency, avoid supplementing with this mineral.

On the other hand, **iodine** deficiency is rampant in our population—especially among adolescent girls and young women (probably due to abysmal diets). This is a serious problem because iodine is critically important for thyroid function and metabolism.

Typically, iodine is present in fish, seafood, and sea salt. But when populations move away from the coasts and into mountain and inland regions, they lose dietary sources of

iodine and may become deficient.

That’s why mid-20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. public health policy included the addition of iodine to table salt (sodium chloride, which, unlike sea salt, is not naturally high in iodine). But later 20<sup>th</sup> century policy was to advise everyone to restrict salt intake—although there was never any real scientific evidence that cutting back on salt would prevent high blood pressure and heart disease in the vast majority of people (what I call the “Great Salt Scam”).

So it’s hardly a surprise that today, there is widespread iodine deficiency among Americans. The solution is to eat at least two servings of fish or seafood a week. Milk, eggs, and non-sweetened yogurt are also good sources of iodine.

And don’t be afraid to add a little iodized salt, or sea salt, to taste when cooking organic vegetables and other foods, and in water for boiling pasta. (Processed, packaged, and canned foods are typically laden with salt, but you don’t want to be eating those anyway.)

Beans are super sources of magnesium—not to mention protein and other vitamins and minerals. One cup of **black beans** contains a whopping 120 mg of magnesium. Other good choices include **lentils** and **kidney beans**.

**Fish** is also a perfect food for body and brain. In addition to omega-3s and vitamin D, fish and seafood will add more magnesium to your menu. For example, a serving of 100 grams of mackerel has nearly 100 mg of magnesium. Have fish for dinner or lunch at least twice a week.

**Yogurt** (without added sugar) is another good source of magnesium,

with about 20 mg in one small container. Plus, yogurt and other dairy products also contain calcium. Getting enough magnesium may make it easier for the body to absorb more calcium from the diet.

I am also going to mention an exotic tropical fruit, although it is virtually impossible to find in the U.S. **Baobab** pulp has an average of 195 mg of magnesium per 100 grams. Only pumpkin seeds have more magnesium than this African fruit.

The good news is that baobab extract is available in supplement form, on its own or combined with other healthy ingredients.

And finally, I have saved the best for last. One ounce of **dark chocolate** (about a third to a half of a typical chocolate bar) has 41 mg of magnesium.

So at the end of the month, when little ghosts and goblins come calling, try dark chocolate instead of the more typical “milk” chocolate, which is full of sugar. Some say dark chocolate is an acquired taste, so why not start them young?

And remember to take a daily 400 mg magnesium supplement just to make sure your bases are covered for this magnificent mineral. **IC**

## New hope against MRSA superbug “right under our noses”

When I hear dire predictions about the final days of antibiotics, I shake my head, knowing it's only half true. Yes, one day big pharma's arsenal of antibiotic drugs will completely stop working against ever-adapting superbugs.

But that doesn't mean we will run out of natural agents that can kill bacteria. In fact, one new natural antibiotic agent comes from the unlikeliest of places: your nose.

### Take a breath of fresh air

Your respiratory tract is a close-ended, branching system open to the outside environment through the air you breathe. The tract's surface area is huge—about the size of a tennis court. So there's lots of room to encounter inhaled microbes and other particles.

With normal breathing, air enters through the nose. The nose warms, moisturizes and filters the air. But it turns out the nose does much more to protect us from airborne microbes.

Scientists discovered a type of bacteria

living inside the human nose produces a natural antibiotic that can kill deadly antibiotic-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).<sup>1</sup>

The CDC estimates MRSA caused more than 80,000 infections and more than 11,000 deaths during 2011 alone, the most recent year for which data is available. (Five-year-old data in the era of high-speed computers, big government screening, and the much-vaunted electronic medical record!) But MRSA only responds to a desperate, last-line of antibiotics. And those are failing fast.

### Science that passes the sniff test

It makes sense that we should turn back to the natural world in this next era to fight against deadly bacteria, as the first true antibiotic discovered nearly a century ago also came from Nature. The first penicillin came from a fungal microbe that produces it naturally in order to compete with other microbes in the soil.

Unfortunately, mainstream medicine had all but forgotten the wonders of

the natural world to fight infection, once big pharma started making synthetic antibiotics. But the new MRSA research came from Germany, which accepts all manner of natural treatments as safe and effective based on historic use.

The German researchers tested this natural nasal antibacterial substance, which they named *lugdunin*, on mice to cure skin infections by staph bacteria. They also found *lugdunin* offers potent antibiotic activity against a wide range of other bacteria, including antibiotic-resistant strains such as MRSA and resistant *Enterococcus*.

Among the 187 hospitalized patients the researchers found who carried *lugdunin* in their noses, only 6% also carried *Staph aureus*, compared with 34% of patients without *lugdunin*.

Only about 10% of the general population carries *lugdunin*, while 30% carry *Staph aureus*. (There are probably other natural antibiotics in the nose as well, which explains why

70% of the population don't carry Staph aureus.)

### The nose knows what big pharma doesn't

Big pharma continues to look in all the wrong places for solutions to antibiotic-resistant superbugs—mainly in their synthetic chemical labs.

And the government has nothing to offer other than another “permanent war” against antibiotic-resistant bacteria. “General” Anthony Fauci, the government director-for-life of the NIH institute for infectious diseases, leads this so-called war. President Bush (that is, the *first* President Bush, back when he was running for president in 1988) also lauded Dr. Fauci for his so-called war against HIV. Another unwinnable war. But

Fauci is still there, most recently holding out false promises for Zika.


We should be looking for solutions within the human body itself, and at the billions of bacteria naturally present there, in particular. These bacteria are obviously compatible with human metabolism and physiology, so they won't create yet another synthetic antibiotic drug disaster of toxic side effects. Plus, the German researchers observed lugdunin isn't prone to promoting antibiotic-resistance.

Of course, the researchers said they're excited to work with big pharma to develop a new drug based on lugdunin, which will take many years.

But nobody is researching how to support the nose for natural

production of lugdunin (just like we can do with probiotic-rich foods for the GI tract). At the very least, perhaps we could recommend making sure moisture levels in your home are sufficient. Running a humidifier is a good idea if your environment is very dry, which will help keep nasal passages moist and healthy.

As they say, the nose knows. And that's nothing to sneeze at.

You can also help ward off flu viruses, superbugs, and other infections by boosting your immune system with a daily B vitamin complex, 10,000 IU of vitamin D daily, and a healthy diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables from the fall harvest. 

Citations available online at [www.DrMicozzi.com](http://www.DrMicozzi.com)

## NEWS BRIEF

### The healing secrets inside your Halloween jack-o'-lantern

When I was growing up in New England, pumpkins began making their annual appearance on doorsteps, mantels, porch rails, and stoops in late September. Those that were not carved for jack-o'-lanterns were kept around until Thanksgiving for cornucopia...and pumpkin pies.

While pumpkins are native to the Americas (seeds dating back thousands of years have been found in Mexico), their name actually comes from the Greek *pepon*, meaning large melon. Amazingly, pumpkins, squashes, zucchini, gourds, and even cucumbers are all varieties of this same species of plants. That's one reason why squashes naturally interbreed and produce endless varieties of colors and patterns.

Pumpkin seeds, flesh, and flowers have been important food and medicine for Native Americans for centuries, and they shared their knowledge with early settlers of the 13 colonies.

Pilgrims liked pumpkins because they could be stored and eaten all winter long. And they're packed with nutrients. Pumpkin flesh is rich in fiber, vitamins A and C, and potassium. And like other seeds, pumpkin seeds are high in protein, minerals, and essential fatty acids.

One popular use for pumpkins in colonial New England was as a kind of “pie.” The pilgrims would fill a pumpkin shell with cream, eggs, honey (before cane sugar became available), and healthy spices like cloves,

nutmeg, cinnamon, and allspice. Then, the pumpkin and its filling was buried among hot coals in a fireplace and baked.

Pumpkins were also used as medicine by Native Americans to treat intestinal worms, rheumatism, swelling, and urinary conditions. Modern research has shown that pumpkin flesh and seed-oil extracts have anti-cancer, anti-diabetic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antibiotic properties.

So this Halloween, you can honor the earliest American traditions *and* keep yourself healthy by carving and eating pumpkins and their seeds.

(Interestingly, the tradition of carving jack-o'-lanterns actually began in Ireland. During the darkest part of the year, between the autumnal equinox and winter solstice, the Irish lit their way and kept spirits at bay by illuminating carved-out turnips. Irish immigrants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century imported the tradition to the U.S., swapping turnips for pumpkins.)

When you're carving your jack-o'-lantern, don't forget to save the pumpkin innards for pies or other recipes. And after you rinse off the seeds, try toasting them in the oven until they are dry and crisp.

These healthy treats will keep you and your family and friends grinning like a jack-o'-lantern, long past the end of the month.