

The No. 1 cancer killer ignored by both mainstream medicine and "natural-know-it-alls" alike

The insider's guide to breathing easier and living longer

Breathing is fundamental to human life. Humans can't survive more than two to three minutes without drawing a breath of air.

But while breathing is instinctual, it also depends on healthy lungs. That's why it's so shocking that both mainstream medicine and the "natural-know-it-alls" of integrative medicine have neglected lung health for *decades*. Even lung cancer, the No. 1 cancer killer by far, gets much less attention—and research dollars—than other cancers.

This is inexplicable when you consider how critical lung health is for survival. But thankfully, that's now changing.

New studies on lung health are being published regularly. That's why, this month, I'm updating you on some of the most compelling research, including studies that found strong links between common respiratory ailments and nutritional deficiencies.

Plus, I'll tell you how many fruits and vegetables you *really* need to eat each day for optimal lung health (an area where it counts the most of all)! And I'll share new research showing how the all-important microbiome has a key impact on lung cancer.

So, let's take a deep breath and dive right in...

Three key nutrients for lung health

We've known for a long time that nutrition plays a critical role in preventing diseases like cancer and heart disease. And now, researchers are finally taking a closer look at nutrition's role in lung diseases, too. (I suppose we can partially credit the coronavirus pandemic for sparking some long-overdue interest in this subject.)

In fact, a large new study found that supplementing with just three nutrients—vitamins A, D, and E—can protect you against chronic bronchitis, chest infections, and other common respiratory ailments.

Researchers analyzed data from 6,115 adults in the U.K. who took part in a national health study between 2008 and 2016.¹

The participants answered questions about their diets, supplement intakes, and respiratory complaints like breathlessness, bronchial issues, chest infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), coughing fits, lung damage from pneumonia, and wheezing.

Thirty-three of the participants reported suffering from some type of respiratory complaint. These participants were generally older. And they reported they were less likely to

take vitamin supplements.

On the other hand, the study participants who reported a higher intake of vitamins A and E from their diet and/or dietary supplementation had lower rates of respiratory complaints. In addition, those who took vitamin D supplements had even fewer respiratory complaints.

How to apply this study to your daily life: I think it's important to note that there wasn't an actual association between consumption of so-called vitamin D-rich foods and better lung health in the study participants.

Part of this is likely due to the fact that there aren't many foods anymore that contain healthy levels of D (as

In this issue:

Everything you need to know about proper—and safe—vitamin D supplementation4

Safe ways to sufficiently soak up the sun this summer6

The shocking heart benefits of adding THIS to your menu just twice a week.....8

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 available in a 6th edition and continuously in print since 1995.

Dr. Micozzi's *Insiders' Cures* is published monthly by OmniVista Health Media, L.L.C., 100 W. Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201 for \$74 per year (\$6.16 an issue).

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Insiders' Cures*, 100 W. Monument St. Baltimore, MD 21201.

Author: Marc S. Micozzi, M.D., Ph.D.
 Publisher: Katherine Wheeler
 Executive Editor: Amanda Angelini

All material in this publication is provided for information only and may not be construed as medical advice or instruction. No action should be taken based solely on the contents of this publication; readers should consult appropriate health professionals on any matter relating to their health and wellbeing. The information provided in this publication is believed to be accurate and sound, based on the best judgment available to the authors, but readers who fail to consult with appropriate health authorities assume the risk of any injuries. The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher. The publisher is not responsible for errors or omissions.

For questions regarding your subscription, please contact reader services at www.drnicozzi.com.

Copyright © 2021 OmniVista Health Media, L.L.C., 100 W. Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission of the publisher.

I mention on page 5). I think it's also the result of the lower nutrient content found in even healthy, whole foods in the 21st century, thanks to industrialized food production.

Either way, this study finding reinforces my long-standing recommendation that people *need* dietary supplements. And vitamin D, especially. That's why I regularly encourage you to take 250 mcg (10,000 IU) of vitamin D daily for overall health—including lung health.

In addition, you can (and should) supplement with 50 mg of vitamin E each day (as long as you also follow a healthy, balanced diet with meats and seafood). Just look for a supplement that ideally contains the eight active compounds that make up vitamin E—four tocopherols (alpha, beta, delta, and gamma) and four tocotrienols (also called alpha, beta, delta, and gamma).

You can also add more foods that are naturally rich in vitamin E to your healthy diet. This nutrient is found in many types of nuts and seeds, along with fatty fish like salmon and trout, avocados, mangos, red peppers, and leafy greens.

Now, when it comes to vitamin A, I don't recommend taking it as a nutritional supplement. This nutrient is fat soluble, so supplements have the potential to build up to toxic levels in your body.

Fortunately, this is an instance where you CAN get enough from food alone. There are plenty of foods rich in vitamin A—including meat, fish, and full-fat dairy. Plus, yellow and orange fruits and vegetables like sweet potatoes, pumpkin, squash, carrots, and cantaloupe are loaded with carotenoids, which your body safely and naturally converts to vitamin A. Which brings me to my next point...

Just five a day for lung health

For decades, dietary experts have

debated how many fruits and vegetables we should eat each day in order to obtain optimal nutrients and prevent disease.

And that number seemed to be going up. Over the years, we've heard about the importance of eating six, seven, and even eight servings of produce a day.

But an important new study found that just five servings of fruits and veggies per day substantially extends longevity—and *especially promotes lung health*.²

Researchers analyzed data from more than 2 million people in the U.S. and other countries. The people who ate two servings of fruits and three servings of vegetables per day had the lowest risk of early death.

Specifically, this group had 13 percent lower risk of death from all causes, 12 percent lower risk of cardiovascular deaths, and 10 percent lower risk of death from cancer.

They also had a whopping 35 percent lower risk of death from respiratory diseases. The researchers cited evidence suggesting that fruit and veggies' antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties may be what improves lung function.

Interestingly, the study participants who ate *more* than five fruits and vegetables per day didn't have any further decrease in mortality. Meaning that five servings a day seems to be the "sweet spot" for optimum health.

This new research really shakes up what the experts have said for years about how many fruits and vegetables to eat—and takes some pressure off of people who have been struggling to eat enough produce each day.

How to apply this study to your daily life: It's important to note that the researchers also found that not *all* fruits and vegetables were protective.

The most beneficial were cruciferous

vegetables (such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, spinach, and kale), other leafy greens, and fruits and vegetables high in carotenoids (as we just discussed) and vitamin C (like citrus fruits, berries, and carrots).

Meanwhile, starchy vegetables (such as corn, peas, and potatoes) and fruit juices were not associated with a lower risk of death. The researchers believe this may be because starchy vegetables and fruit juices spike blood sugar levels, compared to other types of vegetables or whole fruits.

Of course, this doesn't mean you shouldn't ever eat starchy vegetables or enjoy a glass of fruit juice. Just consume them in moderation, and try to fill your plate with a rainbow of fruits and vegetables to keep your diet balanced. (And if you do opt for juice, I typically recommend a modest glass of freshly squeezed orange juice or tart cherry juice, rather than commercialized varieties lining grocery store shelves.)

Just remember, it doesn't even have to be a large plate. I've reported before about how most Americans eat far less than five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. But when you consider how small a serving actually is, it's actually not so hard to consume five a day.

A single serving of fruits and vegetables is 4 to 6 ounces, which generally works out to be about one cup of raw vegetables, half a cup of cooked veggies, 2 cups of raw, leafy greens, a cup of fruit like berries, or one medium-sized whole fruit like an apple or banana.

Of course, there are many ways to incorporate at least two servings of fruit and three servings of vegetables into your daily diet. For example, if you're enjoying a meal-sized serving of a classic stew (like my recipe for French *ratatouille*), or something similar, it may even count towards three or four servings of vegetables all by itself!

As for me, I also like to keep fresh fruit out in a bowl so that they're easily accessible when I'm ready for a snack. And I encourage you to do the same. After all, you'll find yourself breathing easier and living longer!

Your microbiome affects lung disease risk

Now, with all of these strong findings about diet, nutrients, and lung disease, it's no surprise that a healthy microbiome is critical for lung health.

Of course, I often write about the gastrointestinal (GI) microbiome, which refers to the environment in your GI tract where healthy bacteria thrive, and is strongly influenced by diet. But in addition to the GI tract, the skin has a microbiome, too. And so do the lungs.

Basically, any place on or in the body that comes into direct contact with the outside environment has a microbiome.

All of these microbiomes host so-called "good" probiotic bacteria that help keep out the "bad," disease-causing bacteria. Which is key, because research shows "bad" bacteria can lead to inflammation, infection, and many chronic diseases—including cancer.

For the new study I mentioned earlier, researchers focused on the lung microbiome and its connection to lung cancer. (It's important to note that both "good" and "bad" microbes [bacteria] enter the lungs through the mouth and nasal cavities. And there are lots of places to hide in the lungs. In fact, when laid out flat, tissue from one set of human lungs can cover an entire tennis court!)

Specifically, researchers analyzed lung tissue samples from 83 men and women newly diagnosed with lung cancer.³

They found that the people with advanced-stage lung cancer carried more harmful microbes than those with early-stage disease. The

researchers also discovered that those "bad" bacteria were linked to dangerous inflammatory response in the lungs, tumor growth, and significantly reduced survival time.

Ask your doctor about this effective lung cancer screening test

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in much more screening for respiratory ailments and diseases. But doctors still rarely screen anyone but smokers for lung cancer. . . even though government figures show that 15 percent of new lung cancer cases occur in people who have never smoked.⁴

That's why I recommend a low-risk lung imaging test called low-dose computed tomography (LDCT)—where an x-ray machine scans your body using low doses of radiation to make detailed pictures of your lungs.

This test can substantially reduce your risk of dying from lung cancer. . . and decrease your risk of dying from any cause.

In fact, several studies show that LDCT tests can find lung cancer early enough to treat and sometimes even reverse it.

At the very least, your doctor should be asking about your family history and discussing whether this test is right for you—whether or not you're a smoker. But if your doctor isn't on board, don't be afraid to speak up or ask for a referral to your nearest cancer-screening facility.

And if you're a current or former heavy smoker, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recently changed the recommendations for annual lung cancer screening with LDCT.⁵

They now recommend the screening to begin at age 50, rather than 55. And it defines "heavy smoker" as having a 20 pack-year history (the equivalent of smoking a pack of cigarettes daily for 20 years.) Former smokers are defined as people who quit within the past 15 years.

These new recommendations are expected to double the number of people eligible for lung cancer screening. And while that's still not good enough, at least it's a step in the right direction.

The researchers think testing the lung microbiome for the presence of these harmful bacteria could one day be used as a biomarker for lung cancer risk. It could also help assess the progression (or regression) of the disease, and used as a treatment guide.

How to apply this study to your daily life:

Rather than wait for disease to sneak up on you, there are four important steps you can take to protect *all* of your microbiomes, including the one in your lungs, starting TODAY...

- 1.) **Avoid antibiotics whenever possible.** Since antibiotics wipe out both “bad” and “good” bacteria throughout your body, try not to take them unless they’re absolutely necessary to clear a serious infection. Plus, I’ve reported before on research showing you need not follow the medical myth to always complete a full course of antibiotics. Instead, you can stop popping pills as soon as you start to feel better. Then, let your immune system do the rest.
- 2.) **Stay away from sugar.** Several of the “bad” bacteria pinpointed in this study feed on sugar (just like cancer does). So, avoid all

processed foods and foods made with added sugars. Instead, follow a healthy, Mediterranean-type diet filled with fresh, whole foods.

- 3.) **Eat your probiotics.** I don’t recommend taking probiotic pills because they’re ineffective and can even be dangerous. Instead, feed the naturally occurring healthy probiotic bacteria in your body with probiotic foods—including fermented vegetables like sauerkraut and kimchi, as well as apples, asparagus, avocados, bananas, garlic, leeks, onions, whole grains like barley and oats, and yogurt.
- 4.) **Mind your mouth.** Several of the “bad” bacteria tend to proliferate in the mouth and beneath your gums. Then, they can make their way to your microbiomes. So, make sure to brush and floss your teeth daily, and get regular dental cleanings.


The natural way to breathe easy

At the end of the day, maintaining good lung health is imperative to longevity—and can be easy (and delicious) to do.

I seem to be one of the few who talk about the natural approaches to lung

health, while others (both mainstream and “natural-know-it-all” alike) just repeat the mantra “don’t smoke.”

But, as you just read, there’s so much *more* to lung diseases—and lung health—than not smoking.

In fact, I recently pulled together 40 years’ worth of research into the many effective, science-backed, natural approaches to preventing and fighting all types of lung disease (in addition to the findings reported here today). You can learn all about them in my online, comprehensive learning tool, my *Breathe Better Lung Health Protocol*. To learn more, [click here](#) or call 1-866-747-9421 and ask for order code EOV3X600. 

The benefits of fresh air: Inhale the outdoors

Did you know that one of the best things you can do to improve breathing and lung health is to spend as much time as possible outside in Nature?

In fact, one of my top health secrets is to seek out places where lichen (also known as moss) grows. Lichen thrives where the air quality is good, meaning you’re breathing in non-toxic air. So, seek places that grow blue-green, yellow, and even reddish lichen. Then, take in a deep breath and enjoy!

Everything you need to know about proper—and safe—vitamin D supplementation

Once thought to only prevent rickets and broken bones, this versatile vitamin has now been shown to help stave off a whole host of chronic diseases that plague the body and brain...

I’m talking about vitamin D.

In fact, every month, there are more new studies published on the many

health benefits of this essential nutrient.

But despite this newfound knowledge, many people still continue to have insufficient vitamin D levels in their blood. There are various reasons why, but what it all adds up to is the need to take a high-quality vitamin D supplement each and every day.

And yet, even this basic, commonsense advice is subject to controversy. Debate rages over how much vitamin D people should take, and whether they can actually get enough D without taking any supplements at all.

Well, allow me to answer some common questions (and misconceptions) about vitamin D,

based on the science—so that you can be an informed consumer of vitamin D supplements, once and for all.

How are your vitamin D blood levels?

First and foremost, the best way to know if you are D deficient is through a blood test. Ask your doctor for a 25-hydroxyvitamin D, or 25(OH) D, test. It measures the levels of vitamin D in your blood in tiny units of nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL). I recommend it twice a year—at the end of winter (late March) and at the beginning of fall (late September).

The U.S. Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommends that vitamin D blood levels be at least 20 ng/mL. But that's strictly for prevention of outright deficiency that leads to bone disease.

To prevent other diseases associated with low levels of D—including Alzheimer's and dementia, common cancers (like lung cancer, see page 1), diabetes, high blood pressure, and immune system dysfunction—research shows your blood levels should be much higher. I recommend aiming for 50 to 75 ng/mL.

If your levels are lower than that, you most likely need to supplement with vitamin D. Which leads me to my next topic...

How much D should you take?

Based on its recommendation that “healthy” vitamin D levels could be as low as 20 ng/mL, the IOM issued correspondingly low “optimal” intakes of D. The recommended U.S. dietary allowances (RDA) are a measly 15 mcg (600 IU) daily for people ages 1 to 70 years, and 20 mcg (800 IU) for those who are older.

But even a decade ago when these recommendations were updated, research showed that the dosages were too low to maintain optimum

health. And now, as we know far more about vitamin D's role in the body and brain, these dosages are laughable.

That's why, based on the latest science, I routinely recommend 250 mcg (10,000 IU) of vitamin D per day. This dosage is perfectly safe alongside the 25(OH)D test—and oftentimes necessary to get your blood levels where they need to be.

Look for a high-quality D supplement from a brand you trust. And remember, you can even find D in easy-to-use liquid form, alone or together with the potent marine carotenoid astaxanthin.

And since D is fat soluble, I recommend taking supplements with food to properly absorb the nutrient. Opt for foods that naturally contain healthy fats, like avocados, olives and olive oil, nuts, and seeds.

And speaking about food...

Can I get enough D from my diet alone?

Consuming a healthy, balanced diet is the basis for determining the optimal amounts of dietary supplements you should take. After all, dietary supplements are meant to *supplement* the diet—not substitute for an unhealthy diet.

But when it comes to D, the problem is that very few foods naturally contain good amounts of this vitamin.

Fatty fish like salmon is the best source of vitamin D. But one recent study found that an average-sized wild-caught salmon (the only kind I recommend eating) contains about 10 mcg (400 IU) to 20 mcg (800 IU) of D—meaning you'd need to eat an entire school of fish to get the recommended 250 mcg (10,000 IU) a day!¹

In addition, red meat and egg yolks are also reasonable sources of

vitamin D. But, as with fish, you'd have to eat *huge* quantities to get adequate levels of D per day.

I should also warn you that foods “fortified” with vitamin D, like milk and cereal, are still inadequate. And you don't want to be eating bowls of highly processed carbs, typically with added sugars, in cereals anyway. (Not to mention that the sugar and high-fructose corn syrup in processed foods can interfere with vitamin D levels in the blood.)

But there *are* some foods that are symbiotic with vitamin D...

Is there anything I can consume to boost my D levels?

Research shows that magnesium—either in food or supplements—plays an essential role in the synthesis and metabolism of vitamin D.

One study of participants in the huge NHANES (National Health and Nutrition Examination Study) found that higher intakes of magnesium were associated with reduced risks of vitamin D deficiency.²

Plus, people who had low vitamin D levels but high magnesium intake were less likely to die from cardiovascular diseases or colon cancer.

Good food sources of magnesium include nuts, seeds, leafy greens like spinach, beans, and whole grains. You can also supplement your healthy, balanced diet with 150 mg of magnesium daily. (Just stay away from magnesium glutamate, magnesium aspartate, and magnesium oxide.)

Another way to get magnesium is to absorb it through your skin. Two easy ways to do this are through soaking in Epsom salts or spending time in seawater (while getting some sun)—which leads me to the next question...

Do I still need vitamin D supplements if I spend time in the sun?

There's a reason why D is called the sunshine vitamin. The sun's rays are essential for natural activation of D through our skin.

But, as I've often mentioned, in latitudes north of Atlanta or Los Angeles, the sun's rays aren't high enough in the sky from October to March, nor strong enough to allow your body to naturally produce D. That's why supplements are especially crucial in the winter months.

But what about during the summer, when you're outside, actively soaking up the sun? Well, the problem is, your ability to make your own vitamin D from ultraviolet (UV) rays begins to drop as you get older.

In fact, one study found that people between the ages of 8 to 18 years produce more than twice the amount of vitamin D in skin exposed to sunlight than those ages 77 to 82.³

So even if you spend time in the sun *without* sunscreen (which prevents your skin from making vitamin D at

all), it may simply not be enough. (And isn't, in most cases.) That's why I still recommend dietary supplements in order to maintain adequate levels of the sunshine vitamin—even in the warmer months.

Which leads me to the final "Frequently Asked Question" about this essential nutrient...

Can I "overdose" on vitamin D?

Even though the recommended RDA for vitamin D is woefully low, some doctors warn against taking higher dosages. They harbor an irrational fear about "toxicity" or "overdose" at this level. (I know because, years ago, I was brainwashed into believing some of these baseless concerns as well.)

But as I routinely report, and as I thoroughly explained in the May 2018 issue of *Insiders' Cures*, the way vitamin D has been measured makes the doses seem *much higher* than they actually are.


Thankfully, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently provided guidance for updating units of measurement for certain nutrients

on supplement facts labels—including vitamin D.

That's why you'll see me write out the amounts using the newly enforced measurement—micrograms (mcg)—and the formerly used measurement—international units (IU).

As you'll see, 10,000 IU of vitamin D is just 250 mcg (or 0.25 milligrams [mg]). That's miniscule compared to the doses of other nutrients. For example, the RDA of vitamin C (which is also too low) is almost 200 times higher than that amount—at 46 mg!

Plus, as I reported in the September 2019 issue, you can count the actual cases of clinical toxicity associated with vitamin D on your fingers. And they all occurred under circumstances so rare and unusual, the vast majority of doctors won't encounter them even once in their lifetimes.

So don't be afraid to supplement with 250 mcg (10,000 IU) of vitamin D daily. And remember to get your blood levels screened regularly. Then, continue to eat a healthy, balanced diet...and have fun in the sun this summer! 

Safe ways to sufficiently soak up the sun this summer

This month, we celebrate the Summer Solstice—the longest day of the year, when the sun reaches its highest position in the sky. This ancient holiday is thought to date back to Neolithic times, serving as a seasonal marker for crop planting and harvesting.

Many modern cultures mark the Summer Solstice with festivals and other celebrations of life. Indeed, the summer sun bestows one of the most

life-giving nutrients of all—vitamin D (see page 4).

In the last century, scientists have discovered that healthy sun exposure is essential for natural activation and production of vitamin D in the skin. But "sun worshippers" began soaking up the rays long before that, naturally boosting their physical, mental, and emotional health. (Including lung health, as I discuss on page 1.)

That's why it's so perplexing and

disappointing that in recent years, celebrating the sun has fallen out of favor. And nowadays, there's a common medical misconception that everybody (and *every body*) must be protected against sun at all times...

The perils of photophobia

This hysteria about sun exposure was generated by the cosmetics industry and some narrow-minded medical specialists.

It's parroted by clueless public health officials—which is particularly egregious because photophobia (or fear of light) is a major reason for the huge problems associated with vitamin D deficiency worldwide. (To put this into perspective, nearly 80 percent of Americans are D deficient.)

Why? Because people are now afraid to go outside without slathering themselves with toxic chemical concoctions marketed as “sunscreens.”

Many people persist in this behavior even though study after study shows that common sunscreen chemicals are linked to cancer, hormone disruption, and skin allergies. Not to mention that sunscreens actually screen out our bodies' natural ability to produce vitamin D (and they exert toxic effects on marine life at extremely low levels).

How to safely let the sun shine in

Fortunately, the solution for this rampant D deficiency is simple. Spending just 10 to 15 minutes out in the sun each day in the summer—*without* sunscreen—will help your body generate enough vitamin D to keep you healthy. And if you prefer your sunbathing *au naturel*, a recent study found you may need even less time in the sun.

Researchers in Norway (not exactly a “hotbed” for year round sunshine) reported that just 40 minutes of midday sun exposure on your whole body per week is like getting a daily dose of 50 mcg (2,000 IU) of vitamin D.¹ Which breaks down to roughly 5 to 6 minutes each day.

Of course, a lot of us spend way more time than that outside in the sun, particularly in the summer. So what can you do to help protect yourself, if and when you need to?

The good news is, there's natural and

effective sun protection available that helps you avoid sunburns—and slowly build up a healthy tan that allows you to spend enough time in the summer sun to generate adequate levels of D.

And, believe it or not, one of those natural sunscreens is *edible*. In fact, a new study found that the humble grape is a highly effective “sunblock.”

Sun protection from the inside out

Researchers gathered 19 healthy men and women and measured how sensitive they were to the ultraviolet (UV) rays that cause sunburn and skin damage.² Then, each study participant consumed a whole-grape powdered extract (equivalent to 2 ¼ cups of grapes) daily.

After two weeks of this regimen, the researchers once again measured the participants' skin response to UV light. They also performed skin biopsies to study changes in the participants' skin cells at the microscopic level.

The results were truly amazing. The participants had an average *75 percent increase* in natural skin protection after just two weeks of grape extract consumption. Meaning it required substantially more sunlight exposure to cause a sunburn or other skin damage.

Plus, analysis of the skin biopsies demonstrated that eating grapes resulted in fewer deaths of skin cells, reduction of inflammation, and decreased DNA damage in skin cells.

The researchers believe the grapes' natural sunblock capabilities may be due to the polyphenols found in their skins. Which, of course, raises the possibility that red wine (which includes extracts of grape skin) is also photoprotective.

Perhaps other foods high in

polyphenols may also be natural sun blockers, including dark chocolate, berries, hazelnuts, pecans, artichokes, cloves, and peppermint. But for now, I'd stick with grapes, based on this study.

If you're not in a position to lie back on the beach and be fed bunches of grapes like an old Roman, the study showed you can get what you need with a whole-grape powdered extract. So, go ahead and look for it in high-quality dietary supplements.

Sun protection from the outside in

In the April issue of *Insiders' Cures*, I reported about using natural plant oils in aromatherapy for relaxation, stress reduction, and sleep. But these essential oils can do even more...

In fact, there are several natural plant oils that provide a good level of natural protection against the sun—without the unwanted chemical ingredients. And they still allow sufficient sunlight to reach the skin to make vitamin D naturally. (As an

How does your skin react to the sun?

Freckles or burns and peels. Typically fair, pale, or ivory skin. This skin type never tans and should only be exposed to the sun for 10 to 15 minutes daily, even after using a natural, healthy sunscreen.

For longer periods of exposure, I recommend wearing protective clothing (like light-weight long sleeve shirts and pants, and a hat).

Burns on occasion, rarely, or never. Typically beige, olive, light to darkest brown, and Black skin. These skin types are better capable of slowly increasing sun exposure to build a healthy tan.

But, as always, it's important to protect your skin from burning through the use of natural sunscreens and, eventually, with protective clothing.

added bonus, they also make your skin look healthy and feel soft!)

My top three natural plant oils for sun protection include:

Carrot seed oil filters the sun's rays while allowing your skin to naturally build its own tanning protection from melanin. Plus, it has plenty of alpha- and beta-carotenes, which are natural antioxidants that help your body produce vitamin A.

Red raspberry oil has all of the protection of a chemical sunscreen. And it's high in vitamin E, which is healing *and* protective for the skin.

Wheat germ oil is inexpensive and has no scent. It's also lighter and less oily than carrot seed or red raspberry oil.

Because these essential oils can be strong on your skin, I recommend diluting them in a carrier oil like coconut, olive, jojoba, sweet almond, or avocado oil. You can also combine different essential and carrier oils to your liking. Experiment until you find a texture and scent that's right for you!

You can find all of these oils at your

natural foods store or local farmer's market. Look for organic versions, as they don't contain pesticides or other toxins.

What you need to know about SPF...and VDDF

Of course, mainstream medicine will tell you *not* to make your own natural plant oil-based sunscreens because they don't have enough sun protection factor (SPF). But this made-up term is based on yet another lopsided notion about sun exposure that's causing more harm than good.

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, an SPF of 30 blocks 97 percent of skin-damaging UV rays.³ But contrary to popular belief, no sunscreen on the market can block 100 percent of UV rays. And choosing products with higher SPFs does nothing more to protect you from sun damage.

Basically, anything beyond SPF 30 is *meaningless* except as a marketing gimmick. In fact, I would like to suggest the term VDDF instead (meaning "Vitamin D Deficiency Factor").


Why certain plant oils are sun protective

Of course, natural plant oils have a nonexistent VDDF. But what about their SPF?

Well, one study found that raspberry oil has an SPF of 28-50.⁴ Another study found that wheat germ oil has an SPF of 22 and carrot seed oil has an SPF of 19.⁵

So when combined with the carrier oils I mentioned earlier, which have SPFs between 5 and 10 each, all of these natural plant oils are sun protective.

Bottom line: If you can make a healthy salad dressing, you can make a healthy sunscreen, despite what the mainstream and "natural-know-it-all's" try to tell you. What's more, creating your own natural sun protection helps nourish your body from your skin to your cells.

So this Summer Solstice, I suggest you celebrate the sun...and all of its vital, healthy, life-giving energy... *without* toxic chemicals. 

Citations for all articles available online at www.DrMicozzi.com

NEWS BRIEF

The shocking heart benefits of adding THIS to your menu just twice a week

The lead article this month presents the somewhat surprising breakthrough news that just *five servings* of the right fruits and vegetables per day is associated with optimal health benefits—especially for long-neglected lung health.

This is good news for people who have struggled to keep up with the ever-increasing U.S. dietary recommendations for fresh produce. (Turns out, you can eat a sensible five servings of produce a day rather than the less reasonable eight servings that some dietitians have long touted.)

And now, there's equally good news for fish consumption as well.

For optimal health, I recommend five to six servings of omega-3 rich fish or seafood (like salmon or tuna) a week. But, let's face it...that can be *a lot* of fish—and many people have trouble attaining that goal.

That's why I was intrigued by a new analysis of four large studies. It included nearly 192,000 participants from 58 countries on six continents. And the researchers who conducted this analysis found that you can still reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease by eating only a moderate amount of fish...¹

In fact, the researchers reported that people who already have cardiovascular disease and consume fish just twice

a week can lower their risk of a heart attack or stroke by about 16 percent.

Of course, you gain a lot more by eating more fish, or by taking higher doses of fish oil to supplement what you're not getting from your diet.

But don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. If you can't eat fish five or six times per week, twice a week *still* does your heart good.

For those who don't eat *any* fish, try to work your way up to this very reasonable goal. It's well worth it—especially when it comes to your heart. Then, once you're enjoying fish twice a week, I still recommend 4 to 5 grams of fish oil daily.