



The verdict is in on “The Great Coconut Oil Craze” *Separating hard facts from the hype — once and for all*

You might think I’m late to the party on coconut oil. But the truth is that I never really joined it.

Don’t get me wrong—there are certainly *worse* oils out there. (Like supposedly “healthy” canola oil, for starters, which has been refined, heated, and damaged beyond repair.) In fact, coconut oil possesses several compounds that are incredibly good for your health.

But its outsized reputation as a natural panacea in recent years always rubbed me the wrong way. To be honest, I wasn’t surprised to see that consumer enthusiasm seems to be waning. (Coconut oil sales dropped by more than 25 percent in 2017¹—*ouch!*)

Part of that might be due to recent attacks from the American Heart Association (AHA). Of course, the AHA wouldn’t know good nutrition even if it fell out of a palm tree and hit them on top of the head.

But despite these mainstream misgivings, there are still a whole lot of people out there who believe coconut oil is the best oil there is.

As for me, I think the truth lies somewhere in the middle. I also think you have better options when it comes to getting the most bang for your buck, in terms of both versatility and health benefits.

But in the interest of fairness, let’s start with a couple of good points about coconut oil and its components...

Boost metabolism and immunity with MCTs

One reason to like coconut oil: Lauric acid accounts for roughly half of its fatty acid content.

Lauric acid is a *medium-chain triglyceride* (MCT)—and interestingly, coconut and human breast milk are two of the only natural sources. Needless to say, it delivers a few significant benefits.

For one thing, unlike more common long-chain fatty acids (LCFAs), most of the lauric acid you ingest will go straight to your liver to be converted into energy. As a result, it’s less likely to turn into body fat. And, in fact, clinical research suggests that increasing MCT intake can actively contribute to weight loss.²

There are other benefits, too. Lauric acid and its derivative, monolaurin, have both shown significant activity against a number of harmful bacteria, fungi, and viruses.³ (In fact, many commercial products use these compounds as antimicrobial agents.)

It goes without saying that the majority of the benefits coconut oil carries trace directly back to its abundant MCT content. And the available

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literature runs the gamut—suggesting anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and pain-relieving properties. Not to mention cardiovascular benefits, too.

Unfortunately though, a lot of the support for these claims comes from animal research—which isn't exactly worthless, but definitely of limited value.

However, there's one application for coconut oil that I find particularly promising. And that's its role in promoting ketosis.

As you might recall, ketosis is a normal metabolic process that occurs when your body doesn't have enough glucose (sugar) for energy, so it burns fat stores instead. And when fat is burned as your primary source of energy, your liver produces a build-up of acids—a by-product called ketones.

Carbohydrate restriction—like you'll find in my A-list Diet—is one way to facilitate this process, mainly since carbs turn into sugar (glucose) upon digestion. But MCTs can also help your body naturally generate ketones.

This is why coconut oil has taken a starring role in a lot of ketogenic diets. And if you've been a reader of mine for a while, then you know that ketogenic diets have their own impressive roster of benefits.

A missing link in the fight against Alzheimer's

First and foremost, ketogenic diets turn your body into a veritable fat burning machine. Which makes them great for weight loss.

But as I explained last May, they also deliver natural protection against diabetes, cancer, seizures, even depression. And as I mentioned back in January, emerging research points to ketosis as a potential therapy for Alzheimer's disease, too. (To access these newsletters from my archives, simply log into the Subscribers section of my website, www.DrPescatore.com.)

That's because Alzheimer's impedes your brain's ability to use sugar for energy—dropping glucose metabolism

by as much as 40 percent in some areas. This energy loss contributes to both the structural and cognitive dysfunction we associate with dementia.

But early research suggests that your brain can substitute ketones in place of sugar for energy, just like the rest of your body can. So it's not hard to see how coconut oil—rich in MCTs that ramp up the production of ketones—could improve cognition in Alzheimer's patients.

And while I haven't come across much in the way of credible science to back up some of the other health claims about coconut oil, clinical research does support this particular association.

As part of a recent study, researchers examined the effects of extra virgin coconut oil in 31 subjects with moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease. Subjects consumed 20 grams daily—or about 1 ½ Tbsp—for four weeks.

Results showed that after two weeks, 41 percent of the subjects showed improvement. And by the fourth week, that number more than doubled—with 84 percent of subjects demonstrating significant improvements in cognition and behavior.⁴

Caregivers noted increases in mood, alertness, easier language expression, and boosts in overall activity. Patients were also more relaxed and cooperative.

The only thing keeping coconut oil out of my kitchen

Now that I've explained a few of the reasons behind coconut oil's recent rise in popularity—and some of the research supporting its benefits—you might be wondering why I'm not an enthusiastic proponent of it...

First, a few basics about oils in general. Myths abound in this department, and people often choose an oil thinking it has fewer calories or less fat than other kinds. But the truth is:

- 1) All oils have the same amount of calories.
- 2) All oils have the same amount of fat.

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3) The main difference lies in the smoke points and the type of fatty acids within the oils.

An oil's smoke point is the temperature at which it begins to break down into damaging trans fats. And even an otherwise healthy oil can turn into bonafide heart hazard if you push it past its smoke point in the kitchen.

Coconut oil has a high smoke point of 350° F. That's why for high heat applications like stir-fries, coconut oil is certainly preferable to so-called "vegetable oil." In fact, for cooking, it's even a better choice than olive oil, which has a comparatively low smoke point of 320° F.

However, coconut oil is also almost entirely saturated fat.

I know, I know—I defend saturated fats all the time. And again, I'm not saying that this makes coconut oil unhealthy. There's indeed a role for saturated fat in your diet—whether it's from butter, grass-fed meat, or coconut. The only time saturated fat becomes dangerous is when it's combined with sugar and refined flour to produce all those packaged, processed foods you find in the supermarket snack aisle.

At worst, coconut oil's a neutral food—and not even

remotely the boogeyman the AHA would have you believe. But at the end of the day, it's not the fat *in* coconut oil that's keeping me from jumping on board this train...

It's the fat that's *missing* from coconut oil—namely monounsaturated fats.

That's why the latest literature hasn't done much to change my original conclusions on this subject.

Yes, MCTs, and lauric acid in particular, are beneficial. But they're also available (and in much more concentrated, effective forms) as nutritional supplements.

For everyday cooking oils, you have better options than coconut oil. So let's revisit those now. And I'll explain why there's only ONE kind of oil I keep in my kitchen.

My top oil for everyday use

Like I said, coconut oil is mostly saturated fat—92 percent, in fact. Which means it barely contains any unsaturated fatty acids. This wouldn't be a problem if we were only talking about omega-6 fatty acids, which are

What to look for when purchasing cooking oil—of any kind

Whether you decide to opt for macadamia, coconut, or olive oil, there are several questions you should ask before buying:

Where is the oil manufactured?

This matters because you want the ingredients to be grown in their native areas, or areas where climate is similar.

For example, my NuLogic Foods macadamia nut oil comes from East Africa, which has ideal growing conditions for macadamia nuts. This way, I know the very best quality nuts are being used.

How is the oil extracted and processed (is it heated, does it contain added solvents, etc.)?

You want to look for pure, unrefined oil. It should simply be crushed, filtered, and bottled. There shouldn't be any degumming, deodorizing, or bleaching.

This gentle process preserves the nutrients in the oil—the fatty-acid content, antioxidants, and minerals.

Have herbicides or pesticides (or any chemical for that matter) been used to produce the source crop?

As I've written about many times before, over 93% of soybeans in this country are genetically modified to resist pesticides. And that means that whatever chemicals used to kill pests and weeds eventually make their way into your food, and into your body. So avoid soybean oil, corn

oil, and canola oil at all costs.

Look for labeling certifying the oil of your choice as organic, non-GMO, and/or free from pesticides or hexane.

What is the "harvest date" on the bottle?

It should be within the past year. Unfortunately, this may be difficult to find on some brands. More than likely, you'll see a "sell-by" date, which in most cases is two years after the harvest. But the polyphenol content diminishes drastically after two years. So the further away the "sell-by" date, the better.

You should know that macadamia nut oil may be a little tricky to track down in your local grocery store. Head to my website, www.DrPescatore.com, and use the search bar for more details on my favorite oil.

And if you decide to enjoy a Mediterranean-style diet (where macadamia and olive oils can be used liberally) I hand-picked a ton of delicious recipes you can use these oils with. You can find the full recipes, as well as a 30-day meal plan, in my latest book, *The A-List Diet*.

In fact, I'm releasing the paperback version this month, for a more portable, convenient way to eat right, feel more energized, and ensure you hit your weight loss goals! For more information, simply visit www.AListDietBook.com.

already overabundant in the Western diet.

But this category also includes monounsaturated fatty acids, or MUFAs. And research shows that diets rich in MUFAs can drop fasting blood sugar by as much as 30 points. (That's enough to kick medication, in some cases.) Studies also show MUFAs can help cut visceral fat by as much as 20 percent. (Visceral fat is the kind that builds around your internal organs and boosts inflammation—in other words, the most dangerous kind.)

And research also suggests that a MUFA-rich Mediterranean diet is the only diet that facilitates long-term weight loss.

So as far as I'm concerned, MUFAs are a must. And in order to get them, you have to look to other sources beyond coconut oil. Like olive oil, which is 72 percent MUFAs. Or avocado oil, which is 65 percent MUFAs.

Both of these are decent options for everyday use, depending on the application. Olive oil should be

reserved for cold uses only (as a finishing oil, or in salad dressing) since its smoke point is so low. With a 410°F smoke point, avocado oil can stand up to higher temps, so it's OK for cooking.

But my personal favorite is macadamia nut oil—which is comprised almost *entirely* of monounsaturated fatty acids. And it also boasts a sky-high smoke point (520°F).

Plus, MUFAs and smoke point aren't the only things macadamia nut oil has going for it. It also boasts low levels of omega-6 fats. (Again, Western diets are already packed with omega-6—and this imbalance is one of the main culprits behind runaway inflammation.) And it contains a long list of vital nutrients—including potassium, magnesium, calcium, selenium, vitamin E, niacin, and folic acid.

The bottom line: Coconut oil is good for you—I won't deny that. But MUFA-rich macadamia nut oil isn't just better. It's the best.

REVEALED: The real-life fountain of youth

Plus, my accessible, affordable, natural anti-aging secrets

They say that age is just a number. But when I tell you that “you're only as old as you feel,” I mean it *very* literally.

How you *feel*—whether it's wracked with fatigue or brimming with energy—is always your best barometer for what's really going on behind the scenes. It also reveals your body's “age” a lot more accurately than any calendar could.

And, well... I don't have to tell you that some people get “old” a whole lot faster than others.

The question is, why? The quest for the answer has been dogging researchers for centuries now. But in recent years, modern anti-aging medicine has delivered what might be the best explanation yet.

It turns out, the secret to successful aging lies within your mitochondria.

Good things really do come in small packages

I've covered this subject in passing before, but let's start with some definitions, as a quick refresher: Mitochondria are tiny organelles inside your cells that serve as microscopic power plants.

They use the food you eat and the oxygen you breathe

to churn out a chemical called adenosine tri-phosphate (ATP)—your most elemental form of energy. This is the fuel that keeps your body running at the most basic level.

It's no doubt an important job. ATP keeps many of your basic functions firing on all cylinders—everything from hormone generation to digestion. It keeps your heart beating and your brain thinking. It facilitates every biochemical reaction and every vital biological function imaginable.

Cells that require the most energy to operate—in your skeletal and heart muscles and in your brain, for example—are especially packed with ATP-generating mitochondria.

But when your mitochondria begin to falter, your whole body suffers. And constantly feeling run down, tired, and worn out is just the beginning of the problems you'll encounter.

That's because any dysfunction in this department sets off a dangerous cascade of events—one in which mitochondria become their own worst enemies.

What happens when mitochondria go haywire

You see, even when they're functioning correctly, mitochondria serve as the primary source of oxidative

stress within your body. As a reminder, oxidative stress occurs when the body is overwhelmed by the production of free radicals and is unable to regulate them.

And basically, free radicals are the inevitable byproduct of ATP production, or the energy produced by our mitochondria. They're essentially the leftover waste product from various chemical reactions in the cell. But when they build up, they can wreak havoc in your body.

And unfortunately, mitochondrial DNA is particularly vulnerable to their damaging effects.

Damaged mitochondria generate more free radicals, creating an unstoppable downward spiral. This vicious cycle is the crux of what's called the "free radical mitochondrial theory of aging." And it could help to explain why getting older is so often synonymous with chronic disease.

There are multiple factors that influence the fate of your health as you get older, obviously. But at the end of the day, a growing number of experts believe that it all boils down to your mitochondria.

Both the numbers and the functioning of your mitochondria decline with age. This deterioration leads to decreased ATP (or energy) output. And when your mitochondria can't keep up with your body's energy demands, it leads to some serious problems.

Fatigue, for starters. And not just run-of-the-mill tiredness, either. Mitochondrial dysfunction is one of the main factors behind chronic fatigue syndrome—a truly debilitating condition.¹

Muscle atrophy and age-related sarcopenia have also emerged as natural consequences of poor mitochondrial function.² And the heart muscle is *especially* susceptible to the resulting energy deficit. (In fact, mitochondrial dysfunction is a defining characteristic of heart failure.³)

But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Ultimately, research has linked deteriorating cellular power centers not only to heart disease, but to diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, and even cancer.⁴ And that's just a short list of the age-related problems with roots in mitochondrial dysfunction.

At this point, it should be crystal clear as to why mitochondria are quite possibly the *most* essential weapon against aging you have. Which raises the question... how do you keep them healthy?

Well, the good news is, it's not nearly as complicated as you might think...

Healthy mitochondria are creatures of habit

First off, it's important to understand that mitochondrial function is very much subject to your body's circadian

rhythms. If your internal clock is off-kilter, your mitochondrial network will be too—triggering a marked drop in energy production.⁵⁻⁶

And if you read the feature on circadian rhythms in last month's issue, then you may have already guessed what that means. (To refer back to my archives, simply use your username and password to log into the Subscribers Sign-In via www.DrPescatore.com.)

For starters, it means that getting the right amount of sleep—and just as importantly, sleeping at night—is essential for ensuring proper mitochondrial function. (Sleep disruption is a known hallmark of mitochondrial disease.⁷) For my patients, I recommend seven to nine hours.

It also means that exercise is equally vital. As I explained last month, regular physical activity can effectively restore a disrupted circadian clock. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that those workouts boost mitochondrial health, too.

When it comes to how much exercise is ideal, multiple studies have shown that 150 minutes a week (just 30 minutes, five days a week) has substantial health benefits.

In my mind, *any* exercise is better than none. So, at the risk of sounding cliché, *just do it*. Start slow until it becomes a consistent routine, then as you grow more comfortable, work your way up to longer, more intense workouts.

In fact, high-intensity interval training (HIIT)—where short bursts of intense exertion are separated by lower intensity intervals—is particularly beneficial to mitochondria.

A recent study showed that this type of workout can boost mitochondrial capacity by nearly *50 percent* among younger volunteers—and by nearly *70 percent* among older subjects.⁸

And of course, *when* and *what* you eat also has the power to make or break your mitochondrial health.

For one thing, eating big meals late at night remains a major no-no. But excessive carbohydrate and sugar intake, at any time of day, stresses your mitochondria too.⁹ While a ketogenic diet (as I discussed on page 2, and in-depth in the January issue of *Logical Health Alternatives*)—sugar-free, carb-free, and rich in fats—appears to be one way to revive your body's power centers.

Laboratory models of traumatic brain injury demonstrate that ketones—metabolites generated when your body uses fat instead of sugar for fuel—can reduce post-injury oxidative stress and boost mitochondrial function.¹⁰

We also know that intermittent fasting—whether it's

restricting calorie intake to eight-hour windows, fasting one to two days a week—can stall aging and reverse metabolic disease. And recent research shows that its effects on mitochondrial networks are at least one major reason why.¹¹

Over the years, I've seen these anti-aging strategies breathe life into my patients, literally and figuratively. And I've felt the results for myself. As with many pathways to better health, lifestyle changes are a large chunk of the equation.

A foolproof protocol for peak mitochondrial function

There are also a number of supplements that I recommend for supporting mitochondrial health—some of which you'll recognize as old standbys, and some that I've only introduced to you recently.

- **CoQ10.** This powerful antioxidant is probably best known as a heart health supplement—and given this muscle's high energy requirements, it's easy to see why. CoQ10 is vital for mitochondrial support and metabolism, helping to release stored fat for fuel. That's why I recommend 100 mg, three times per day.
- **B vitamins.** No energy protocol—mitochondrial or otherwise—would be complete without this vital class of nutrients. B vitamins play a vital role in warding off mitochondrial toxicity and supporting mitochondrial function. They also maximize CoQ10 absorption, so these two supplements are a natural pair. What you'll find in your average multivitamin really isn't sufficient. Take a good B vitamin complex daily.
- **Carnitine.** This nutrient helps your body release fat for fuel and powers up your mitochondria—it basically “stokes the furnace.” I recommend taking 500 to 1,000 mg of l-carnitine, three times per day.
- **Robuvit®.** This patented extract from French oak trees features active compounds—including roburins and urolithins—that reduce oxidative stress and enhance mitochondrial function. Clinical research backs this benefit up, showing supplementation can significantly elevate energy levels in patients with chronic fatigue. I recommend 300 mg per day.
- **ME3.** This cutting-edge probiotic is the only known substance that can raise your body's levels of glutathione—a so-called “master antioxidant” that depletes with age. This decline leaves mitochondria vulnerable and sets the wheels of disease in motion. I've written quite a lot about this supplement—simply search www.DrPescatore.com for more. I recommend 60 mg per day.

Last but certainly not least, I recommend polyphenols—and lots of them.

My top three polyphenol picks for ironclad mitochondria

Polyphenols are antioxidant powerhouses, which of course helps to protect mitochondrial integrity. But research also demonstrates their role in facilitating optimal mitochondrial function across the board.¹² So it really is hard to imagine a simpler or stronger form of anti-aging support.

I declined to give them their own bullet on the list above, because you have your pick of first-rate polyphenol sources, both in food and supplement form. If I listed them all one by one, this article would turn into a book.

But that isn't to say that I don't have a few preferences. Because based on the research available, I definitely do.

Chocolate is probably tops on this list, which may come as a pleasant surprise. Believe it or not, clinical trials show that daily dark chocolate consumption can significantly improve markers of mitochondrial function, while providing a boost in energy levels and endurance.¹³

This assumes, of course, that you're not getting yours with a hefty helping of sugar. Sweeten 100-percent cocoa with stevia to taste, instead. Or you can just take cocoa flavonoids in supplement form. (In this case, I recommend 1 gram, three times per day.)

You may even enjoy one of my favorite products in my supplement line, CocoaLogic. It not only tastes great, but is packed with premium dark cocoa powder and youth-promoting amino acids. Mix up one scoop a day with cold water or unsweetened almond milk for a tasty, easy-to-make shake. For more information, visit www.NuLogicNutritionals.com.

Then there's EGCG and resveratrol—two polyphenols derived from green tea and red wine, respectively. A recent trial published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* showed that an EGCG and resveratrol combo supplement was able to boost mitochondrial capacity in obese subjects within just 12 weeks.¹⁴

To get your EGCG, I typically recommend two to three cups of unsweetened green tea per day—or green tea supplements, if you prefer. (Specifically, 500 mg of an extract that contains 60 percent catechins and 30 percent EGCG.)

For resveratrol, skip the red wine—it's loaded with sugar—and go straight to supplements. I recommend 500 mg of trans resveratrol (the most potent form) per day.

By following the simple recommendations I've laid out for you here, your mitochondria will be equipped with what it needs to keep your body running like a well-oiled machine. And this will not only keep you healthy, but ensure you stay younger, longer.

Solid protection against the deadliest of cancers—

From a surprisingly ordinary source

I devote a lot of space in this newsletter to the latest, cutting-edge natural cures. But sometimes, the most powerful solutions are also the most ordinary ones. And today, I want to take a moment to talk about a common, affordable, and surprisingly effective form of cancer prevention that no one ever talks about...*especially* mainstream doctors.

At least, they don't *usually* talk about it. But thanks to newly published research, the life-saving benefits of this surprisingly ordinary source actually made a few headlines recently. And it's a good thing, too. Because the more people know about this essential trace mineral's disease-fighting power, the better.

So let's start with the latest finding and then I'll fill you in on all the rest. As you'll see, there's a lot more to this natural substance than most people think...

Stop the most lethal cancers dead in their tracks

Of course, I'm talking about one of the most common minerals there is—zinc.

Researchers from the University of Texas at Arlington recently found that zinc was able to block overactive calcium signaling in esophageal cancer cells—impeding their growth, while leaving healthy cells intact.¹

This would be a major discovery for any type of cancer. But for cancer of the esophagus—where chances of a five-year survival rate are below 20 percent—it's nothing short of groundbreaking. And it's not the only finding of its kind either.

One previous study found that nearly 65 percent of subjects with head and neck cancer were zinc deficient—and suffered reductions in natural killer cells because of it.² (It's important to note that a natural killer cell—also known as a lymphocyte, or a type of white blood cell—is typically your first line of defense against cancer.)

In fact, these researchers found zinc levels to be a better indication of a patient's tumor size and disease stage than their overall nutritional status. Levels of this mineral also correlated to the number of both hospital admissions and infections.

It might be hard to believe that a single, simple nutrient could have such a profound affect on the course of disease—but given what we already know about zinc's role in cancer prevention, it actually makes perfect sense.

For one thing, zinc blocks NF-kappa B. This is a pro-inflammatory protein that's activated in cancer cells—

responsible for fueling the growth and spread of tumors, while shielding them from programmed cell death, or apoptosis.

That's not all: Cancer cells are able to avoid their natural fate by subverting a protein called p53. This is a tumor suppressor that triggers the death of cells with damaged DNA. And it just so happens that zinc plays a critical role in ensuring that p53 works effectively, too.³

In other words, when you're not getting enough zinc, more than one of your body's most effective means of clearing cancer goes completely defunct.

The “Goldilocks effect” strikes again

Zinc's powers of prevention aren't limited to head, neck, and esophageal cancers. Healthy levels appear to play a protective role against colon, bladder, kidney, and nonmelanoma skin cancers, too.⁴⁻⁶

But its most profound benefit may be in cases of prostate and breast cancer. In fact, one 2012 study showed that, among carriers of the lethal BRCA-1 gene, women with higher zinc levels were significantly less likely to develop breast cancer.⁷

Its role in prostate cancer is a little bit trickier. On one hand, studies show that men with this disease tend to have significantly lower levels of zinc than healthy men. And clinical trials suggest that supplementation could stop prostate cancer's growth and spread.⁸

On the other hand, the Health Professionals Follow-up Study revealed an *increase* in prostate cancer risk at dosages higher than 100 mg per day.⁹ (But not at dosages below that.)

The reason for this—at least, in part—appears to trace back to the p53 protein I mentioned above. Research shows that excessive zinc can impact the activity of this important tumor suppressor just as negatively as low levels do. Making this a classic case of “too much of a good thing.”

This shouldn't scare men off from zinc supplementation, though. Overdosing on zinc isn't exactly easy to do. Especially not at the current recommended intakes of just 8 mg for women and 11 mg for men. And given the staggering rates of deficiency in American seniors, there's little question where the bigger risk in this population lies.

The common thread tying inflammation to immunity rot

About 40 percent of Americans over age 65 have

dangerously low zinc levels. There are a couple of reasons for this—not least of which is that older people just don't seem to use or absorb zinc as well as younger people. According to the authors of one 2015 study, this presents a dangerous “double whammy” for older adults.

These researchers found that zinc deficiency increases inflammation by way of malfunctioning immune cells.¹⁰ And this suggests that low zinc could also be a driving force behind the age-related phenomenon known as immunosenescence—or as I like to call it, “immunity rot.”

Immunity rot refers to the gradual erosion of your immune defenses with age. It's the reason why seniors are more susceptible to threats like flu, pneumonia, and shingles. And not surprisingly, chronic inflammation is one of the hallmarks of this insidious condition.

As I've said many times before, runaway inflammation is the culprit behind virtually every age-related disease imaginable. Not just cancer, but Alzheimer's, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, fatty liver... and the list goes on. And it just so happens that research has tied zinc deficiency to every one of these leading killers, too.¹¹

Nevertheless, conventional medicine is notorious for ignoring zinc's importance. So your doctor isn't likely to be proactive about assessing your status. But there is a

test available. It's called an RBC mineral screening. And it measures the levels of zinc, magnesium, potassium, chromium, copper, manganese, and calcium you have in your blood.

“Normal” zinc levels often vary greatly from lab to lab, but you want yours to be well within the upper “normal” range. And if you find your zinc levels are low, getting a boost is simple.

First of all, make sure to include plenty of high-zinc foods in your daily diet. (You have a lot of options—including red meat, eggs, nuts, and shellfish—all A-List Diet approved, of course.)

But because your body can't store this trace mineral very efficiently—and especially if you're over 60—I urge you to supplement with at least 30 mg of zinc per day, as well, along with 1 mg of copper.

To a healthier you,



Fred Pescatore, M.D.

Citations for all articles in this issue available online at www.DrPescatore.com

News Brief

The essential daily vitamin duo for unbeatable health year-round

Spring has sprung, and longer days are here to stay. But as I remind you every year, all that extra sunshine *doesn't* mean you can ditch your vitamin D supplement.

Unless you're spending 20 minutes a day in a swimsuit under the South Florida sun, you still need that daily dose of D to keep your levels where they should be. And for best results, you should add a dose of magnesium to go with it.

That was the takeaway of a recent review in the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.¹ This study found that vitamin D stays inactive in your body without sufficient levels of magnesium to support its metabolism.

Which means that, for *half* the American population, a whole lot of lifesaving vitamin D is going straight into storage without ever being used. (And that's a generous estimate—some sources cite that number as being closer to 80 percent.)

The fact of the matter is, like vitamin D deficiency, magnesium deficiency is now epidemic. (In fact, given this new information, these twin epidemics appear to go hand-in-hand.) The Standard American Diet—packed with processed foods, refined grains, unhealthy fats, and sugar—is woefully lacking in this essential nutrient.

But even people who do fill up on magnesium-rich foods—like almonds, spinach, broccoli, and pumpkin seeds—are likely to come up short. Because the soil in our industrialized farms is simply too depleted to grow crops with the same mineral content it used to.

That should be reason enough to add it to your daily regimen. But if you still need more convincing, I'm happy to throw in a few more reasons (because there's really no shortage of them)...

Magnesium plays a key role in a number of vital systems. It protects your bones, nerves, immune system, and your heart health, too. Research even shows it can cut your risk of death *in half*.

As always, I recommend a minimum of 2,000 to 5,000 IU of vitamin D3 every day, regardless of the season. If you don't get outside much for whatever reason, I suggest upping that daily dosage to 10,000 IU. (I know that sounds high, but IU's are miniscule measurements...and you can never really get too much of this wonderful nutrient.)

Start chasing your daily vitamin D with magnesium—I typically recommend highly absorbable magnesium orotate (32 mg a day) or taurate (125 mg)—and there's a good chance that's all you'll ever need.

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