



## HOTSHEET

*HotSheet is a gathering of the hottest news in the alternative health industry.*

## Acupuncture an answer for back pain during pregnancy

A May 2000 study of 60 pregnant women found that acupuncture was more effective than physiotherapy for relieving pregnancy-related pelvic and back pain. The participants were divided into either the physiotherapy or the acupuncture group, and their pain was measured on a VAS scale of one to ten while they performed twelve common activities. Measurements were taken at morning and at night, and they received ten treatments in all.

**Acupuncture treatment reduced pain more effectively than physiotherapy in all activities**, and in all but one activity, acupuncture reduced pain a great deal. Relief seemed more pronounced in the evening, but both physiotherapy and acupuncture relieved morning pain as well. Average morning pain declined from 3.4 to 0.9 in the acupuncture group and from 3.7 to 2.3 in the physiotherapy group. Evening pain dropped from 7.4 to 1.7 for acupuncture patients and 6.6 to 4.5 for physiotherapy patients.

Another point of interest is the high drop-out rate among physiotherapy patients from thirty to eighteen by the end of the study, although no participants reported side effects. One possible reason for the drop-out rate among physiotherapy patients could be treatment frequency, though researchers draw no conclusions about it. Physiotherapy patients did have sessions that were twenty minutes longer, however, and their ten treatments were given over a six-

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*Rita Elkins, M.H., is the author of numerous publications dealing with natural health and nutrition topics. Some of her most popular works include Depression & Natural Medicine and the recent Soy Smart Health.*

during and after your surgery, your body will be able to heal as best it can.

Your doctor may have advised you on diet and exercise requirements, but even if he or she has not, you need to watch what you eat. In fact, up to a month before your surgery, try to cut out fatty, processed and sugared foods. Lean towards fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Consider adding vitamin and mineral supplements, as well as maintaining a good daily intake of fiber. Focus especially on vitamin C, olive leaf extract and other immune builders.

After your surgery, you will need proteins. Vegetable proteins like those in tofu are very good. Fiber is also important to prevent constipation. Stick to your whole grain, fresh vegetable diet for at least a month after surgery for best results. Also, consider purchasing a bottle of grapefruit seed extract. GSE is a wonderful antimicrobial that can be used topically, ingested or applied to surfaces like tables and counters. It is an excellent way to prevent infection.

Most importantly, spend some time relaxing or meditating to achieve a positive state of mind. Also, ask your doctor about possible drug-herb complications before you begin taking natural treatments. An article in the January 2000 issue of the *Lancet* reviews of number of

## Surgery recovery, sensitive teeth a concern

**Q:** I am going in for minor joint surgery next month and was wondering: What can I do to recover as quickly as possible?

*Melissa in Monroe, LA*

**A:** My primary piece of advice to you would be to use natural methods before and after surgery. Proper psychological preparation and immune boosting will get your body in optimal condition before surgery so that

dangerous drug-herb combinations and is available for viewing (for free) at [www.lancet.com](http://www.lancet.com).

**Q:** I have been experiencing tooth sensitivity over the last couple of weeks and although I have visited my dentist, I cannot seem to fix the problem. Do you have any suggestions?

*Michael in Scipio, UT*

**A:** You suffer from a very common problem, but it is treatable. In fact, if you recently had dental work done, your visit could be the cause of tooth sensitivity. However, if the pain you are experiencing is very intense or prolonged, you should call your dentist. It could be a nerve problem.

The most common cause of tooth sensitivity is gum recession that exposes the tooth's second layer (dentin). When the gums recede (as can happen with gum disease or aggravated gums), they leave some of the underlying roots exposed. This area has small pores that lead straight to your tooth's nerve. If you are particularly harsh when brushing your teeth, the motion of your toothbrush could be causing your gums to recede, or if you do not floss, brush your teeth properly or make regular visits to a dentist, you could be in the early stages of gingivitis and periodontal disease.

To prevent this from happening, brush gently and for at least three minutes (most people brush an average of forty-five seconds). Flossing is also essential, since it allows you to reach the 35 percent of surfaces toothbrushes can't. Cracks in the teeth, grinding your teeth and plaque on the tooth roots can also cause sensitivity.

For treating sensitivities you already have, avoid sugary and acidic foods. Consider taking vitamin C. Also, sensitivity toothpastes containing strontium chloride—like Sensodyne—help minerals in your saliva crystallize to fill pores in your roots. It is essential, however, to make brushing gently a habit, to regularly floss and visit your dentist. **TH**

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# ResearchNews

Protecting the Health of Your Family

## ANTIBIOTIC

### WHO examines new strategies for antibiotic use

In a recent *National Geographic* article about natural remedies in Madagascar, writer Joel L. Swerdlow explains why malaria outbreaks and deaths are on the rise: "In one rural hospital most of the beds, dirty foam mattresses on wood frames, were occupied by children with malaria, a disease that afflicts at least 300 million people worldwide and kills more than a million each year. . . . 'We give chloroquine until our supply runs out, then we can do little for them,' the hospital's only doctor told me. . . . He explained that synthetically manufactured chloroquine, the only antimalarial drug the doctor had, is often useless because the parasite can develop a resistance to it."

Why are drugs that once worked against diseases such as malaria no longer working and how do we stop the emerging microbe problem? These are the questions now being asked by the World Health Organization (WHO). In two recent press releases they have voiced concern not only over the state of antibiotic use and effectiveness over the last decade or so, but also measures they plan on implementing to control drug-resistant strains of various microbes.

In a June 13th press release, the WHO explains, "Increasing levels of drug resistance are threatening to erode the medical advances of recent decades." In their most recent Report on Infectious Diseases, the WHO has determined that "almost all major infectious diseases are slowly—but surely—becoming resistant to existing medicines." Although such resistances are mainly in Africa and Asia, it will not be long until the problem is truly global.

**"Increasing levels of drug resistance are threatening to erode the medical advances of recent decades."**

The WHO warns, "Regardless of where drug resistance originates, globalization, increased travel and trade ensure that these strains quickly travel elsewhere. With new DNA fingerprinting technology, scientists have been able to identify drug resistant TB strains originating in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa and track them as they increasingly reappear in patients in Western Europe and North America."

In fact, the WHO has attributed the rise in resistant strains to two basic problems—first, the overuse of antibiotics, especially in wealthier countries like the United States, and

second, the underuse of antibiotics in poorer areas

around the world. In his *National Geographic* article, Swerdlow writes, "To kill

parasites that are sensitive to chloroquine, a

patient must take 15 pills over three

days. Yet vendors at roadside stands were selling chloroquine pills one at a time—no doctors or prescriptions involved—at a price equal to much of what a manual laborer would make in a day. Many people favor the pills over the traditional remedies because their effect can be quick and dramatic. But after only a few doses, most people either run out of money or feel better, and stop . . . their bodies become factories for drug-resistant parasites."

Overuse is also a problem not only for patients who abuse antibiotics and doctors who over-prescribe them, but also for livestock. In fact, the WHO claims that at least 50 percent of all antibiotics are used for treatment and growth of animals. It is also used on foods believed to contain harmful microbes. In order to control the livestock problem, the WHO has come up with a number of guidelines enumerated in a June 13th press release.

The WHO is particularly concerned with resistant *Salmonella* and *Enterococci* strains. After meeting with over seventy human and veterinary medicine experts, the WHO recommended monitoring antimicrobial drug usage in animals, terminating (phase-out) of antimicrobials used to promote growth in animals when the drugs are also used on humans, and better licensing and prescription regulations as well as guidelines for veterinarians on better handling of antimicrobials. TH

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to-eight week period, compared with four weeks for acupuncture patients.

(Source: Acta Obstetrica Et Gynecologica Scandinavica 2000 May; 79(5): 331-5)

### Genome project breakthrough to have big impact

Scientists involved in two different projects recently announced that they have cracked the human genetic code. The discoveries, the result of ten years of study, could revolutionize the future of medicine. Scientists cracked the human genome (a compilation of 3.5 billion letters) by wresting the information from the nuclei of human cells and deconstructing the genetic information piece by piece and reassembling from beginning to end.

According to scientists, the knowledge contained in the genome (known as the Book of Life) **will open new doors to knowledge and treatments for many of today's "incurable" diseases.** However, it may be ten years before we see results of this breakthrough.

### Licorice may reduce body fat levels

Licorice, long known to be an appetite suppressant, may help reduce body fat. The finding comes from research done in Italy, in which a group of people were asked to eat chunks of licorice every day for two months.

But while the people who ate the licorice had a drop in their body fat, they did not actually lose weight, said Dr. Decio Armanini of the

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### Active Diabetics Live Longer

A study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* finds that physical activity can lower non-insulin dependent diabetics' risk of death from any cause. Researchers from the Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas looked at 1,263 men with type 2 diabetes, who were given a thorough physical and exercise test, which were used to rank their fitness levels. After 12 years of follow-up, the men were given questionnaires about their physical activity. By the end of the study, 180 of the men had died. The researchers found that the men who were the least fit were 2.1 times more likely to die from any cause than the men who were most fit.

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University of Padua, Italy.

Dr. Armanini presented a study examining the effects of licorice on body fat and weight at the 82nd annual meeting of the Endocrine Society. The reason why the people who ate the licorice did not actually lose weight was due to water retention caused by the snack. This suggests if licorice is accompanied by something that facilitates loss of water (such as a low-sodium diet), then an overall effect might be seen on weight, he said.

The researchers asked seven volunteers to eat 3.5 grams (about half a Twizzler stick in size) of licorice a day. The licorice contained actual licorice extract rather than an artificial flavoring.

**After 2 months of testing, their body fat levels had dropped, but they also experienced significant increases in water retention. Their overall weight did not change.**

The researchers suggest that the strong taste of licorice may have affected the study participants' ability to taste foods, thus curbing their food intake. The findings suggest licorice may indeed be something useful to add to weight-loss products. But it would need to be accompanied by something such as a diuretic to help get rid of the extra water. Avoiding dietary salt could also help reduce water retention.

And though these findings appear positive, people should not start eating large amounts of licorice, Armanini warned. Regular licorice eating can cause an increase in blood pressure, and should be avoided by people who have hypertension.

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## YourHealth

Protecting the Health of Your Family

## HELPFUL HONEY

## Honey promises relief from stomach ulcers

New research from New Zealand may offer help to those suffering from stomach ulcers. At Waikato University, Dr. Peter Molan and his team are studying the effects of Manuka honey on a variety of ailments, including ulcers, and are experiencing great success.

The honey they are using comes from the Manuka tree native to New Zealand. Manuka leaves have been used historically on the island to treat numerous ailments, but Dr. Molan's research suggests that the honey also has healing effects even surpassing those of other kinds of honey.

Tests reveal antiseptic and antibacterial properties that may help individuals suffering

from peptic ulcers. In particular, tests out of Waikato show the effectiveness of Manuka honey against *Staphylococcus*, *Streptococcus*, *Staphaureus* and *Helicobacter pylori*—the stomach bacteria often associated with ulcers.

Although researchers do not understand all of the reasons why Manuka honey works, they do know three characteristics of the honey that contribute to its effectiveness. The first of these characteristics, its hygroscopic nature, allows Manuka honey to draw moisture out of the wound, which encourages the separation of the dead tissue and allows for new tissue growth. The natural sugars in the honey are also

helpful because the body can use them to feed growing cells. Finally, an enzyme in the honey, glucose oxidase, gradually releases hydrogen peroxide concentrations into the wound that safely kills bacteria.

Dr. Molan recommends taking the Manuka honey on a piece of bread first thing in the morning, before lunch and dinner and once again before bed. His research also shows that it is more effective when not taken with liquids, which lower Manuka's concentrations. Taking it on bread helps to keep the honey in the stomach longer. The honey also seems to be effective on topical wounds as well as eye and throat infections. TH

## HerbSpotlight

Protecting the Health of Your Family

## TERRIFIC TURMERIC

## Turmeric beneficial for liver, digestive system

Turmeric is well known as a traditional Middle-Eastern spice, but there aren't many people who know about its medicinal virtues. Turmeric (*Circuma longa*) is a very beneficial supplement due mainly to the positive effects it has on the digestive system and the liver. Both Ayurvedic and traditional Chinese medicine considered turmeric a highly effective digestive bitter and carminative. These cultures use turmeric in staple foods, including rice and bean dishes, to improve digestion and reduce gas and bloating. Turmeric also stimulates bile production in the liver and promotes bile excretion from the gall bladder, helping the body digest fats more efficiently.

Turmeric is recommended for chronic digestive weakness and/or congestion. It can be taken as a single extract or in the form of digestive bitters, which combine turmeric with other bitter and carminative herbs. Gaia's "Sweetish Bitters" and Herb Pharm's single extract of turmeric are very palatable options. Take either of these twenty

minutes before meals, especially with meals that are high in protein and fat. Turmeric especially helps when you feel tired after meals or experience gas and bloating.

Turmeric also acts as an anti-inflammatory on mucous membranes, which coat the throat, lungs, stomach and intestines. It decreases congestion and inflammation that comes from stagnant membranes. People with irritable bowel syndrome, colitis, Crohn's disease, diarrhea and post-giardia or post salmonella can benefit from taking turmeric regularly. Turmeric also helps ease the itching and inflammation of hemorrhoids and anal fissures.

Turmeric also has beneficial effects on the liver. It shares similar protectant substances that milk thistle and artichoke leaves contain. It shrinks engorged hepatic ducts, so it's a useful treatment of liver conditions like hepatitis, cirrhosis, and jaundice. Because it's also a potent detoxifier, turmeric can relieve skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis and acne. TH

# FoodStuff

*Eat Healthy, Live Better*

VEGAN VARIETY

## Vegan dishes provide welcome variety

### Blueberry Cornmeal Pancakes

(Makes 12 four-inch pancakes)

1 cup soy milk  
1/2 cup water  
1 cup whole wheat flour  
1/2 cup yellow stone-ground cornmeal  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 cup blueberries  
canola oil (for frying)

1. Preheat oven to 200 degrees F (95 degrees C).
2. In a small bowl combine the soy milk and water.
3. In a large bowl, combine the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in the soy milk mixture just until combined. Fold in the blueberries and let the batter sit for 5 minutes.
4. Lightly oil a skillet or griddle and heat over medium heat. Pour about 1/4 cup of batter onto the hot griddle and cook until pancakes are bubbly on top and edges are slightly dry looking. Turn and cook until pancakes are browned. Transfer to a baking sheet and keep warm in the oven while cooking the remaining batter. Serve warm with syrup or jam. These pancakes taste very tasty with blueberry jam or maple syrup.

### Moroccan Potato Casserole

(Serves 6)

6 cloves garlic, peeled  
salt  
2 teaspoons paprika  
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin  
1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper  
3/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
3/4 cup chopped fresh parsley  
juice of 1 lemon  
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil  
1 1/2 pounds red potatoes, sliced 1/2 inch thick  
1 large red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1 1/2 inch squares  
1 large yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1 1/2 inch squares  
1 large green bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1 1/2 inch squares  
4 stalks celery, cut into 2 inch pieces  
1 pound tomatoes, each cut into 8 wedges  
1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil

1. Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C).
2. Combine garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt, paprika, cumin, and cayenne in a food processor bowl. Process until mixture forms a paste. Add herbs, and pulse a few times to blend. Add lemon juice, vinegar, and 2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil; blend. Season to taste with salt.
3. In a large bowl, combine potatoes, peppers, and celery. Season with salt, and toss with herb sauce. Transfer to a large shallow baking dish. Scatter tomatoes among the potato mixture. Drizzle 1 to 2 tablespoons oil over top, and cover with foil.
4. Bake for 35 minutes. Remove foil. Continue baking until vegetables are tender, 20 to 30 minutes. Serve warm.

Source: [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com)

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### Aromatherapy beneficial for epilepsy

A team of experts at a Birmingham, England hospital is using aromatherapy to help treat epilepsy. The team's research proves that natural remedies and conventional medicine can work together for the benefit of the patient.

This study, begun seven years ago when a hospital staff member started training to be an aromatherapist, **involved 200 patients and found favorable results in a majority of patients. Ten patients actually came completely off their epilepsy drugs, and only two patients out of the 200 reported an increase in their seizures.**

Hospital staffers massaged aromatic oils into the skin of the epilepsy patients to speed the transfer of the oils to the bloodstream. Because the oils are fat soluble researchers say that the skin can quickly absorb then into the bloodstream and speed them in their full potency without passing through the liver to the brain where they have the greatest effect. Researchers note that the most effective oils were camomile, lavender, jasmine and ylang ylang. Also, because camphor is known to cause convulsions, oils containing large quantities of the chemical such as sage and rosemary should be avoided.



### Public rates most popular alternative health therapies

A recent study performed by the Department of Psychology at University College in London examined how the public groups or classifies

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## Dietary Tips for the Wanna-be Vegan

1. When developing a vegan menu, it is important to incorporate a wide variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds and legumes. You are less likely to suffer a nutrient deficiency if you are consuming different kinds of foods. Next time you go to the grocery store, buy okra or artichokes instead of corn or potatoes and quinoa or buckwheat flours instead of whole wheat.
2. Probably one of the hardest parts of the vegan diet is cutting out animal products like eggs, milk, cheese, etc. Although many substitutes for these products now exist, eliminating all animal-derived products from meals, especially when dining out, can be difficult. Books do exist that elaborate on all the technical names for these animal products. Eating out is more difficult, though restaurants for vegans are sprouting up all over the U.S. and Europe. Websites and books offer more advice on dealing with problems common to vegans.
3. Soy is pretty much essential to the true vegan. Although

it may seem more important for women, given its benefits for PMS, menopause, osteoporosis and breast cancer, it's also important for men's health issues, like heart and prostate health, among other things. The American Dietetic Association and other organizations have recently come out in favor of vegan-type diets, but they emphasize that these need to be balanced and that vegans must take extra care to replenish certain nutrients obtained predominantly from animal sources. The protein content alone makes soy a must in the vegan diet.

4. Recent studies have named in particular vitamin B12 as a common deficiency in vegans. It is important to eat a regular source of B12 (like nutritional yeast) or to take B12 supplements. Other nutrients that you should pay special attention to are iron, vitamin D, calcium, zinc, linolenic acid and EFAs. Watching for deficiencies are particularly important in women who are pregnant or nursing and in children. Visit [www.vegan.com](http://www.vegan.com) for more information.

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complimentary medicine practices. A sample of nearly 600 adults rated thirty-nine somewhat familiar branches of alternative medicine on four levels, using a ten-point-scale rating.

**The most known alternative treatments were acupuncture, aromatherapy, herbal therapies, massage, hypnosis, and yoga.**

The treatments with the lowest ratings were autogenic training, ayurveda, biochemic tissue salts, chelation cell therapy and ozone therapy.



## St. John's wort may affect AIDS drugs

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland have discovered that **St. John's Wort significantly cuts blood levels of the HIV-fighting drug indinavir, in turn possibly causing treatment failure in some HIV patients.** Researchers sought to further examine the relationship between the herb and protease inhibitors in the most effective HIV-fighting drugs.

Researchers confirmed the results of past studies indicating St. John's wort and protease inhibitors—an effective class of HIV-fighting substances—use the same metabolic pathways in the body. Researchers gave indinavir and St. John's wort alone to eight HIV volunteers and found an average 60 percent decrease in indinavir levels. Upon completion of the study, researchers checked to see if any patients were taking both substances and several were. They believe that this combination may have resulted in indinavir failures in many past patients. TH



# Hot tips for summertime exercise & fitness

continued from front page

Not matter what you choose to get fit this summer, these basic rules will help you get the most out of your workout.

**1. Drink plenty of water.** Some experts even recommend drinking more than eight glasses a day, especially if you are just beginning a workout program. To figure out the amount of water you should be consuming daily, multiply your weight in pounds by 0.4 and then double it. Also, before a workout drink two glasses of water and half a glass every 20 minutes of your workout.

**2. Working out on an empty stomach** will cheat you of the energy you need to make the most out of your exercise. Even a small snack or energy drink will help. Complex carbohydrates are the best choices for foods, whether you are biking

around a lake or swimming laps at the community pool.

**3. Replace those lost electrolytes!** You lose nutrients during your workout that will need to be replaced. During and after your workout, replenish your body with an electrolyte drink. Protein shakes are also beneficial after a workout.

**4. The best fitness plans often incorporate** both strength and cardiovascular exercise. Alternating your morning jog or evening hikes with yoga or free weights classes will give you the balance you need for optimal fitness. Studies show that incorporating both types of exercise into your weekly routine benefits you more than either one alone. Of course, some summer activities may do a little bit

of both. Mountain climbers for instance get both types, especially if their climb involves before-and-after hiking.

**5. The health benefits of exercise** are more noticeable if you maintain a schedule. Especially for the beginner, planning is very important. Steady, not erratic, exercise improves fitness. Set goals and give yourself variety. Be patient with yourself. It is better to start small and consistent than overwhelm yourself and quit. Many fitness magazines this year are reminding people of the everyday work that also improves fitness. Things as small as washing the dog, doing housework and weeding the garden are helpful to. In fact, affordable watches are now available that can help you keep track of your heart rate, so now you can know exactly how many calories you burned while you were playing with the kids or washing dishes.

No matter what you're motivation for achieving better health and fitness, the benefits of exercising cannot be overestimated. Study after study has shown that exercise, when combined with a healthy diet, reduces cancer and heart disease risks, helps regulate blood sugar and cholesterol levels, counteracts the effects of depression and fatigue, as well as controlling premenstrual and menopausal symptoms—just to name a few. It's never too late to begin incorporating fitness habits into your life routine.

TH

## Get Some Sun!

Despite the negativity surrounding sun exposure in recent years, some scientists believe that the benefits of sun exposure outweigh the risks. In fact, scientists warn that most of the vitamin D we need is obtained from the sun *not our diet*. Although the idea of sun exposure as beneficial has sparked controversy, studies continue to trickle in about the benefits of sunlight as a vitamin D source. Among the research is a report on the sun and breast cancer. In the study, researchers concluded that sun-based vitamin D may lower breast cancer risks by 30 to 40 percent.

# Holistic changes can bring relief from PMS

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side effects include weight gain, blemishes and increased cancer risks.

But there is hope. Self-managing premenstrual symptoms can be the most effective way of dealing with them. Self-management is not difficult if you know what to do. It may take a few months before you start seeing results, but the relief you feel is often more long-lasting and complete because you are dealing with the body as a whole instead of just treating your symptoms.

## DAILY JOURNAL

The first step in PMS self-management is to keep a daily journal of what you are eating, what your mood is like, and what symptoms you are getting and when. Not only does this process give you a better idea of how long your PMS lasts and what symptoms emerge when, it also helps you determine necessary dietary changes. By keeping track of your diet, you will be able to see what changes you experience in type of PMS you have and its duration when you eliminate certain foods or modify your diet. It will also allow you to see changes in your appetite and possible cravings.

An important part of the journal is to write down *anything* that may make a difference, any clue to what treatment you need. Weight changes, acne outbreaks, depression, drops in self esteem, changes in sleeping patterns and breast tenderness are just a few possibilities. The key is to be consistent and specific with all of your notations and to use them when deciding on treatments.

## THE PMS DIET

PMS sufferers should plan on making numerous dietary changes. Many women only modify their diets for the two weeks before their period starts, and while these

changes are often helpful, more permanent changes to a healthier diet are often more effective. Such changes include eliminating caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, junk foods and sugar, and consuming more whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables and soy products. Eating two servings of soy a day and increasing fiber intake are very important for regulating circulating estrogen. You should also reduce your intake of red meat, dairy product, salt and saturated fat. It is also better for premenstrual women to eat six smaller meals dur-

- *Magnesium*
- *Raspberry leaf*
- *Soy isoflavones (genistein)*
- *Vitamin A*
- *Vitamin E*
- *Wild yam (progesterone)*

## EXERCISE

Studies also show that women who exercise regularly are less prone to PMS symptoms than women who don't. Even walking as little as thirty minutes a day can reduce PMS symptoms dramatically. Both aerobic exercise and weight training are recommended, and although excessive exercising has been linked to irregular or absent periods, recent research shows that active women who increase caloric intake can restore cycle regularity. A recent 2000 study also claims that regular exercise can boost sex drive in women, something that is also affected during PMS.

*"Studies also show that women who exercise regularly are less prone to PMS symptoms than women who don't. Even walking as little as thirty minutes a day can reduce PMS symptoms dramatically."*

ing the time shortly before their period rather than three large meals. Complex carbohydrate boosts can also be helpful in regulating mood and now are available in many PMS drinks.

## SUPPLEMENTS

Various studies conducted over the past thirty or so years have revealed that some symptoms of PMS can be caused by deficiencies of certain nutrients or can be relieved by certain supplements and natural products. The following is a list of some of these PMS-related products. They can usually be found in supplement combinations, which saves money and time.

- *B vitamins (especially B6)*
- *Black cohosh*
- *Calcium*
- *Dong quai*
- *Evening primrose oil (GLA)*
- *Fish oil (omega 3 fatty acids)*

## STRESS & LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Finally, as much as women might like to ignore their cycles, even with proper diet, exercise and supplementation, women are still going to experience changes in mood, energy and drive that coincide with hormonal changes in their cycle. It's natural. The best thing a woman can do is plan their life (as much as they are able) with their cyclic changes in mind. Whenever possible, save higher stress activities for another time. Some women experience higher performance, sex drives, etc. during their fertile phase, for example. Above all, give yourself more time to relax during your premenstrual phase and cut yourself a little more slack. Over time, however, the time before your period should become much more manageable and pleasant. TH

**NEXTMONTH**  
in  
**Today's**  
**HERBS**

HEALING FROM THE  
**TROPICS**  
THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO NEW BOTANICALS

## FOOD & TRAVEL

*Make the most out of your summer vacation with healthy tips for eating on the road or out of the country!*