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## Holiday Heart Attack Syndrome

### What It Is, Why It Happens, and How You Can Re-Energize Your Aging Heart

Fatal heart attacks skyrocket at a time when people should be happy.

The overall number of heart attacks goes up, the number of *fatal* heart attacks also goes up, and so does the number of strokes and fatal strokes.

One study found **33% more heart attack and stroke deaths during the holiday season**,<sup>1</sup> and I call it “Holiday Heart Attack Syndrome.”

The question is, why does it happen?

Part of the problem is holiday stress. Stress acts like a trigger, or “detonator” that can set off a catastrophic event during tough times.

Sometimes you’re in a stressful position where you need more oxygen than your heart and lungs can supply. That’s an instant heart attack.

Other times, a stressful event can cause a rupture in the buildup of hardened plaque in your blood vessels.

The holidays are connected because it’s a tipping point. A time when a buildup of stress and frustration can set off a disaster.

Today, I’ll show you how to get at the root of the problem and defuse the underlying cause. Not only will that strengthen the pumping power of your heart, it will help take the threat of heart attacks off the table for good.

First, let me tell you what does not cause Holiday Heart Attack Syndrome.

People presume it’s from eating fat, having high cholesterol, and eating too much candy.

But you don’t have a heart attack because you ate a bad diet for those few days. That’s not what causes it. Yet heart attacks during exciting and stressful times like the holidays are a real risk.

So I want to tell you something that most doctors are not going to know:

The real reason for these deadly heart attacks and strokes is **inflammation** and **oxidation**.

Inflammation caused by the modern environment of inflammatory foods, toxins, and stress is silently damaging your arteries. Those pipes are supposed to be a supple, moving part of your adaptive anatomy, aligned with your physiology. Inflammation changes them into fragile, old pipes.

Those pipes begin to rust (oxidation), and with more inflammation, the pressure builds and builds... with more stress... more oxidation... more inflammation. They build throughout the year. Until eventually, at the most intense, stressful time of year, a weak spot bursts!

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And you're a victim of Holiday Heart Attack Syndrome.

How can you prevent deadly inflammation from getting to you?

In a minute, I'll show you a few unconventional ways to improve your heart health by getting rid of the toxins that help cause inflammation, and strengthening the cells in your heart and blood vessels so you can free up oxygen delivery.

Even if you have a family history, I can help you. These methods are safe, proven and effective.

But first I want to help you identify the cause of deadly inflammation and oxidation.

### **“Softening” of the Arteries**

Modern medicine still focuses on talking to you about things that build up hard cholesterol plaque. And they're very insistent on prescribing drugs to try to lower cholesterol.

Cholesterol is just about the only thing standard cardiologists look for.

But they're looking at the wrong thing.

What they should be focusing on is soft plaque.

I'm talking about the danger from lesions caused by inflammation inside the artery wall – the linings of your blood vessels.

Picture a small blister filled with gooey lipids that's just under the lining of your artery. Inflammation can burst it open, punching a hole in the artery wall. When your body forms a blood clot to try and heal itself, it can cause a sudden and very dangerous heart attack or stroke.

Problem is, most people have no idea they're inflamed.

Those young, healthy-looking people who die from heart attacks never knew what was happening.

What makes matters worse is that people don't know the symptoms of a heart attack, and doctors often misdiagnose them.

So instead of using standard medicine's approach of looking at cholesterol, I'm going to help you reduce inflammation, and look for markers of inflammation you may not have heard of, but that can predict higher risk for heart attack.

This is especially important if you're a woman, because women don't have the typical symptoms we've all been told constitute a heart attack.

## **Alert for Women: Before You Take That Calcium Supplement, Read This!**

I have some news for you that goes against almost everything you've seen or heard from mainstream medical sources.

Women should not be taking calcium supplements for their bone health... it's causing heart attacks.

A recent study found women who take supplemental calcium have up to a 31% greater risk of heart attack and 20% higher risk for stroke.<sup>1</sup>

A review done by the British Medical Journal carefully looked at 11 calcium supplementation studies and found almost the same exact risk: Taking more than 500 mg of calcium a day increased heart attacks by 31 percent.<sup>2</sup>

Another study followed 1,471 women over five years. Half took 1 gram of calcium a day, and half took a placebo.<sup>3</sup>

The women assigned to take calcium supplements were more than twice as likely to have heart attacks compared with those who took a placebo.

Those supplementing with calcium were also more likely to have more than one heart attack.

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No chest pains, shortness of breath, or pain running down their arms.

The typical movie or TV scene that depicts a heart attack is someone clutching their chest or having trouble breathing. And those symptoms do happen, but mostly to men.

For women, *there are usually almost no symptoms at all.*

For instance, women hardly ever have pain. Women feel only chest pressure or a vague uncomfortable feeling that increases. Or a slight pain in the shoulder.

Also, women tend to just suck it up and assume they're having a bad day. They have some nausea and feel exhausted and assume it's stress...

If you do go to the doctor, you're unlikely to say "I'm having a heart attack." And your doctor might not recognize the symptoms either. Women get numbness, palpitations, a headache and nausea and break out in a cold sweat.

Doctors often diagnose this as anxiety.

So it becomes even more dangerous for women because the symptoms are often ignored.

There's one statistic I saw that says women are more than twice as likely to miss a heart attack as a man. And half of all women who have a heart attack never call 911.

If you're a woman, a sudden cardiac event can look like anything but something that resembles heart attack symptoms. Often, women don't ever know they have deadly inflammation, and die before they ever find out.

So first, let me give you my two-step plan to reduce inflammation in your tissues and at the cellular level, and remove the toxins and waste that's causing inflammation so you can reduce your risk and never have to worry about heart attacks again, at the holidays or any other time.

## **Your Action Plan for Lowering Inflammation, Part 1**

I've written to you often about the telomere because I believe we've cracked open and exposed the major mechanism by which your body controls the aging process. Your DNA orchestrates this program that controls the forces of aging, and we can now intervene in it.

But did you know your heart is particularly sensitive to telomere shortening? And short telomeres could lead to a heart attack.

You see, heart muscle cells are very high-energy and burn a lot of metabolic fuel. After they burn the fuel – like with anything that produces energy – there's some waste left over.

In your heart, that metabolic waste includes free radicals.

Why is that important?

Telomeres are very sensitive to free radical attacks. You know we doctors have fancy words for everything, so you might have read about free radical attacks being called "oxidative stress" or "oxidative damage."

Whatever you want to call it, this cell damage shortens your telomeres and makes heart cells older and weaker ... and more prone to heart attack. <sup>2</sup>

In one study, researchers looked at almost 15,000 initially healthy men and followed them for about 4 years. Then they looked at the telomeres of 337 people who had a heart attack (myocardial infarction, or MI) and compared them with 337 matched people who did not.

As you can see in the chart on the next page, the average telomere length of those who had a heart attack was significantly shorter than that of the people who had no heart incidents. <sup>3</sup>

Overall, for those who have shorter telomeres, the risk of heart attack went up by 62%.

A batch of other new studies confirms this as well...

Researchers investigated the first long-term connection between telomeres and heart health over the span of two decades. The team of doctors at a research hospital in Denmark followed almost 20,000 people for 19 years.

The people with short telomeres had a...

- 50% increased risk of heart attack
- 25% increased risk of early death

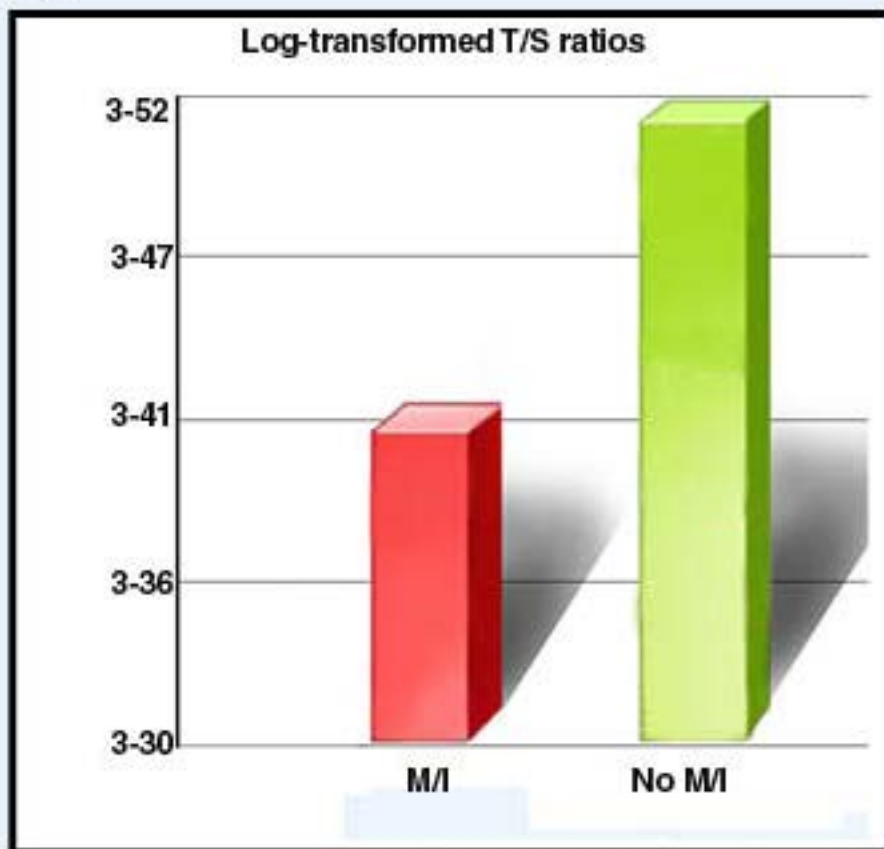
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# Telomere Length & Heart Attacks

Study of 674 men

Measured mean telomere repeat copy number to single gene copy number (T/S ratio)

Found that decreased T/S ratio was associated with a huge jump in risk of heart attack



Zee R, Michaud S, Germer S, Ridker P, "Association of shorter mean telomere length with risk of incident myocardial infarction; a prospective, nested case control approach." *Clin Chim Acta*. 2009;403(1-2):139- 41.

Another study found an alarming increase in heart attack risk. This time, people with the shortest telomeres had an increased risk between 280% and 320%!<sup>4</sup>

Telomere protection and lowering inflammation are so essential to protecting against heart attack that during the day I recommend you get a mix of the following three powerful heat healers to maintain your telomeres, power up your heart muscles, and lower inflammation in your heart:

## **Ingredient #1: DNA secret to preventing heart attacks**

There are a lot of ways to lengthen telomeres, and quite a few nutrients that can help you. I'll keep writing to you more about them in the coming months.

But the nutrients that help your heart and also lengthen telomeres are the B-vitamins. Specifically, **folate**.

You might know folate or folic acid as vitamin B9. It plays a crucial role in protecting telomeres.

Studies show those with the highest folic acid levels have longer telomeres.<sup>5</sup> And people with low folate have shorter ones.<sup>6</sup>

Folate also restores the action of telomerase, the enzyme that rebuilds the telomere.<sup>5</sup>

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How do you get folate? Most people get synthetic folate from junk food like processed grain products the government has ordered to be fortified with it, since they are mostly void of nutrients.

This fake folate is in breads, cereals, flours, cornmeal, and pasta. I don't think you should be eating those processed foods at all. They're high on the glycemic index, and defeat the purpose of lengthening your telomeres to prevent heart attacks in the first place.

Most people don't know the natural foods that provide real folate. Calf's liver is one of the richest sources with 215 mcg in just 3 ounces. Dairy, poultry, meat, eggs, and seafood are other good choices.

Among vegetables, dark leafy greens are a good source. Especially try spinach, broccoli, asparagus and brussels sprouts. Lentils and beans will also give you a good amount.

You can also take a folic acid supplement. I recommend getting 800 micrograms per day for your telomeres.

## **Ingredient #2: "Berry" good heart healer**

Preventing inflammation was a big topic of conversation at this past week's World Congress on Anti-Aging. The other doctors and I talked about the huge problem with inflammation we see in people who visit our practices. It's the same all over the world.

One of the unique ways of stopping inflammation that I mentioned to my fellow doctors was with **anthocyanins**.<sup>7</sup>

These are plant nutrients that come mostly from red and blue fruits like blueberries, strawberries and also more exotic berries from around the world.

Researchers looked at evidence from the famous Nurse's Health Study, a study that's continually followed 121,700 female nurses between ages 35 and 50 for more than 30 years now.

What they found was a huge decrease in heart attacks the more berries the women ate.

Part of the reason anthocyanins work is not because of their antioxidant properties. Anthocyanins appear to directly protect heart cells to stop damage.<sup>9</sup>

Other studies show that it only takes one month of eating anthocyanin-rich strawberries to increase heart protection and reduce blood clotting factors<sup>10</sup> (which help reduce stroke and heart attack risk).

A little-known berry that is very high in anthocyanins is the aronia berry. They grow either black or red, with the red being a bit sweeter. But the black/blue have more anthocyanins.



**Aronia looks like a blueberry, but grows on a bush. It's also very high in heart-attack preventive anthocyanins.**

You can get aronia (*Aronia Melanocarpa*) as a powder, or an extract, through a supplement.

## **Ingredient #3: Unique and powerful heart nutrient**

When your heart cells need energy, there's one nutrient I turn to that's both a powerful antioxidant and an energy booster.

It's called **PQQ** and it works harder and for longer than any other antioxidant. It's so stable and strong it works for thousands of antioxidant cycles.<sup>11</sup>

No one else is talking about PQQ, and it's mostly because they don't know about it.

Unless you're reading scientific journals you may not have heard of it. They're certainly not teaching this in nutrition classes, and you're not going to find out about it from your doctor.

In animal studies PQQ helped heart muscle cells beat oxidative stress. It did it by boosting mitochondria numbers.<sup>12</sup>

I believe that someday PQQ will be classified as an essential micronutrient. It's that important to your heart. So to help you get more PQQ, here's what you can do right now:

1. Your body can't produce PQQ on its own. You can get PQQ in some foods, but the problem is, most people don't know which ones they are, and that includes doctors and nutritionists.
2. The food with the most PQQ is natto. Natto is the Japanese fermented soy product (without all the processed soy waste like there is in Western soy foods).
3. Eggs are the next best food for PQQ, which is one of the reasons eggs are a perfect food.
4. The herb parsley has some PQQ.
5. Kiwi, a fruit with lots of healthy fat, also has a small amount of PQQ.
6. Green tea has PQQ in it, to go along with its other health benefits.
7. Beyond that, you get some in green peppers, and whiskey.

Also, you can get PQQ in supplement form. You need 10 mg a day for your heart. It's also a good idea to combine it with CoQ10, which is the fuel mitochondria use. If you take CoQ10, make sure you get the kind your body absorbs best, ubiquinol.

## Your Action Plan for Lowering Inflammation, Part 2

To get at the underlying problem of inflammation and heart disease, you need to clean out and remove the toxins that irritate and inflame your cells, tissues, and organs.

So at night, I give my patients an easy way to detoxify blood and ease inflammation that only takes a matter of minutes to use.

I'm talking about **activated charcoal**.

Hospitals consider this so effective they carry it in emergency rooms to treat poison victims because it transports toxins away from organs like the heart and straight out of the body.

Taken orally, it has the ability to extract and neutralize many times its own weight in gases, heavy metals, toxins, poisons, and other chemicals.

Just a tiny amount the size of a postage stamp can absorb up to 4 tennis courts worth of toxins!

It saves thousands of lives every year.

But it does so much more.

Activated charcoal keeps poisons and toxins from being absorbed into your body, and helps remove the ones already in your system.

Taking activated charcoal can help wipe out decades of toxic heavy metals that may have been accumulating in your body. Harmful metals like arsenic, copper, mercury, and lead.

***And removing these toxins will give your heart more energy and restore its pumping power. It will also lower your risk of heart attack and stroke.***

Activated charcoal has the well-earned reputation of being a universal antidote. It absorbs and removes harmful chemicals in your body and countless poisonous substances before they can cause harm.

Very few doctors care or realize just how powerful activated charcoal is as a detoxifier. Mainstream medicine often depicts detox believers as wacko, left-wing tree huggers who don't know what they're doing. Some doctors believe detoxification does little or no good – and is possibly harmful.

But I believe it's the single best supplement for enhancing detoxification. And it could one day save your life.

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Don't confuse activated charcoal with charcoal briquettes for barbecuing. Those contain toxic chemicals and carcinogens.

Activated charcoal is an all-natural, vegetable form of carbon that's completely safe. It comes from burning natural substances – like coconuts or certain woods – without using chemicals in the process. Once burned, the shells and wood are ground up into powders (and sometimes made into tablets).

Because it's in powdered form, you can take it just like you would your favorite protein drink. It's also easy to find, relatively inexpensive, and easy to take.

## How Activated Charcoal Works

Activated charcoal attracts toxins and poisons in your body through a process called adsorption.

Adsorption – not to be confused with absorption – is the electrical attraction of toxins to the surfaces of the charcoal particles. The charcoal itself is not absorbed by your body. So the toxins that are attached to the charcoal eventually exit your body via the bowels.

You could say the charcoal simply attracts these bad guys, then escorts them out without leaving any harmful parts behind.

Most poisons in your body are attracted to charcoal – even prescription drugs. Since your body reacts to most prescription drugs as toxins (that's why there are so many side effects to meds), activated charcoal taken orally will often adsorb prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs, too.

This is a good thing in the case of overdose patients. The activated charcoal will fight the poisoning from a medication overdose. That's why every emergency room carries it. It is also used in many different detox programs to help absorb the chronic accumulation of drugs in the body. And prescription drugs – which tend to be toxic – will be absorbed and removed by activated charcoal.<sup>13, 14</sup>

The controversy about ingesting activated charcoal is based on the notion that it also robs the body of nutrients. There is some truth to that. Taking too much activated charcoal could lead to a mineral deficiency. So don't overdo it.

I'm going to give you my guidelines to make sure you don't interfere with mineral absorption.

## The Best Way to Use Activated Charcoal

### Take it orally as part of a regular detox program.

Charcoal is safe to regularly consume. Toxicology studies have proven that activated charcoal is basically harmless. Ingesting high dosages does not interfere with sleep, appetite, or cause any major problems.

I regularly use charcoal as part of my personal detoxification plan and recommend making it a major part of your plan, too. It's best to take a liquid preparation, because tablets take too long to dissolve and release the activated charcoal. As a result, they're not as effective.

Take 20 grams a day of powdered activated charcoal mixed with water over a period of two or three months. Take two hours before eating a big meal. (Food can disrupt the detox activity of the charcoal.)

You can find activated charcoal at your local health food store. I recommend getting it in bulk sizes of one pound (454 grams) or more. ■

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## Why Cavemen Never Got the Blues

Depression is very real, but it's often difficult to treat and diagnose.  
And more people are suffering than ever before.

During the holiday season, more patients come to me with symptoms of depression than at any other time of year. Dealing with travel, family, and old memories—and all the emotions that come with it—can push feelings of anxiety and depression to the surface.

But here's the thing...

Our ancient ancestors never suffered from what we know as depression.

When you look at the history of Native Americans, for example, the majority of North American tribes did not even have a word for depression. And that's true of most native cultures.

How is that possible?

For one, native cultures had a very supportive family environment. There was no such thing as "loneliness," or "alienation."

And of course, they lived in a balanced environment.

You've heard me talk about native cultures having full access to the vitamins and nutrients we need for robust health. But there was something else they had in abundance.

***Higher levels of oxygen.***

Most doctors never consider this.

Environmental researchers conclude that the level of oxygen in the earth's atmosphere has declined by over a third since ancient times, ***and in polluted cities by more than 50 percent.***

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There are three primary reasons for the problem:

- Carbon emissions produced by the burning of fossil fuels
- Global pollution
- The rampant destruction of trees and rain forests.

Our civilization's combined technologies consume nearly 20 times the amount of oxygen that would normally be consumed by the earth's present population.

And when you starve your brain of oxygen, things like anger, frustration, depression, and anxiety become commonplace.

Here's how it works.

Combustion of carbons and hydrocarbon fuels creates carbon dioxide, which binds to, and locks up huge amounts of free oxygen.

According to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego, concentrations of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide in the global atmosphere are now surpassing 400 parts per million for the first time in human history.<sup>1</sup>

And we're not just talking about the last hundred years.

New evidence from ice core samples, published by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) show CO<sub>2</sub> levels are far higher than anything our planet has experienced in over 650,000 years!<sup>2</sup>

And remember: CO<sub>2</sub> binds to hemoglobin in your red blood cells.

Hemoglobin is the "carrier" that delivers oxygen to your cells. But CO<sub>2</sub> shuts down those carriers, making it impossible for oxygen to get to your cells. (That's why your garage door probably has a warning sign on it, reminding you that breathing CO<sub>2</sub> from exhaust fumes can kill you. *It shuts down oxygen delivery.*)

And as the world gets contaminated, the fluids surrounding our cells and organs also get polluted, which interferes with the way our red blood cells carry oxygen to our cells.

This interference—along with the lack of key nutrients in our Standard American Diet—dramatically reduces the amount of oxygen delivered to your cells.

It's no wonder the world – and especially the U.S. – is facing growing rates of disease epidemics.

***And that includes depression.***

But there's something you can do about it.

Today, I'll show you how to increase oxygen delivery to your brain.

Not only will this help ease the feeling of anxiety and depression, it will improve your focus and sense of mental clarity.

In fact, if you're suffering from a case of the blues, you'll soon discover how to clear your mind, boost your mood, give you more energy, and help you feel better than you've felt in years.

First, let me show you what you're up against if you go to a mainstream doctor for help.

## **Duped by Drug Pushers**

It's a shame that many people think antidepressant drugs are always necessary due to a "chemical imbalance" in the brain.

They really get people to buy this... even intelligent people.

Yet it's completely meaningless to say you have an "imbalance of chemicals in the brain" and that's why you get depressed or feel stressed, sad or lonely.

Who's to make that judgment?

It's the same as throwing down bones and saying "the stars are not aligned well for you and your mood."

That's arrogant, to think that we know what the chemical balance in your brain is supposed to be, and that we can say your chemicals are out of alignment. It's voodoo.

Don't get me wrong, these serotonin reuptake inhibitors do something chemically that we have been able to prove affects mood.

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What makes these drugs bad isn't that they never have an effect. They've helped many people. What makes them bad is that they've been oversold, abused, and used in place of other, more effective and potentially natural behavioral modifiers.

Antidepressants have been given out with a lot of self-righteous, ignorant and inappropriate hijacking of your autonomy. Instead of getting involved and putting you in control by helping you solve your problem, the doctor says, "Forget about it, just take this chemical." That's wrong.

Plus, there is no scientific evidence for the "chemical imbalance" hypothesis of depression. And there's no lab test or scientific study that can show the presence or absence of mental illness.

## **"Brain Chemical" Hypothesis is a Bunch of Bunk**

"Chemical imbalance" does sound very scientific and believable. And there's a whole scientific-sounding industry that's sprung up around the idea: psychopharmacology. That's the industry devoted to making pharmaceuticals that affect the brain.

Psychopharmacology makes good use of the theory that brain chemicals (neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin) need to be tinkered with in people who are feeling down. They use it to justify their aggressive marketing and promotion of drugs to fix the problem.

And they get doctors to hand these things out like candy with no knowledge of whether the patient is actually depressed, and no understanding of the real cause.

I've found a lot of recent research that gives us evidence on this.

- The percentage of doctor visits where antidepressants were prescribed but where no psychiatric diagnosis was made is now up to 72.7 percent.<sup>3</sup>
- Only one out of every three people prescribed an antidepressant fit the criteria for being depressed. In people over 65, *only one in every 7 people taking antidepressants are clinically depressed.*<sup>4</sup>

As I mentioned, the drugs do help some people. But many people taking them either don't need them, or aren't helped by them.

When these drugs were first synthesized decades ago, most psychiatrists saw treating depression with them as a huge error.

Psychiatrists thought drugs would interfere with a person discovering the roots of what was truly affecting them. But at the time, their theories and approaches were failing. People started to look down on them as doctors. A biological explanation had to be found so that psychiatrists could remain as respected scientific and medical professionals.

After lithium was discovered to calm people with certain manias, scientists began to create the theory that a chemical imbalance was to blame for depression.

They theorized that some people have neurotransmitters that don't quite work as well as they should. Either people don't have enough of one, like dopamine, or they lose too much of another, like serotonin, both of which are "feel good" neurotransmitters.

They imagined that this caused all kinds of psychiatric conditions, and these conditions could be improved with medications that correct the imbalances.

Ever since the 1950's – called the "golden decade" of psychopharmacology – Big Pharma has continually come up with new synthetic ways to affect the brains of depressed people. And yet none of these drugs has been significantly more effective than any other.

Today, drug warning labels admit Big Pharma is in the dark themselves. The antidepressant Cymbalta's warning reads: "Although the exact mechanisms of the antidepressant, central pain inhibitory and anxiolytic actions of duloxetine in humans are unknown, these actions are believed to be related to its potentiation of serotonergic and noradrenergic activity in the CNS."<sup>5</sup>

Does that surprise you?

Here's something else that may surprise you. While these drugs have helped people, it may be because...

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## It's Only the Placebo Effect

There is a library's worth of scientific evidence that "chemical imbalance" was the wrong target, and that these drugs work no better than a placebo.

In a review of the studies given to the FDA to get approval for their antidepressants, the journal *PLOS One* found there was not a single one that had much more effect than a placebo.<sup>6</sup>

The *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* published a study that wanted to find out if pharmacological treatment was better than a placebo. Scientists at the University of Pennsylvania wrote that their clinical trial "failed to confirm that either active [drug] treatment was better than placebo."<sup>7</sup>

The prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* also published a study that looked at medication vs. placebo across a wide range of symptoms. This study, also done at UPenn, found that the difference between the benefits of an antidepressant drug vs. a placebo was nonexistent.<sup>8</sup>

The journal *JAMA Psychiatry* published another study that looked at people taking antidepressants vs a placebo using a new scale more favorable to the drugs. But it didn't clarify anything. Some people got better and some got worse. The drugs didn't work better than the placebo.<sup>9</sup>

## Nutrient Solution to Heal Your Mood (and Your Brain!)

Your mood is like the canary in the coal mine. The first thing that stops working when you're not in good health is your mood.

It's more likely that your brain is suffering from a lack of oxygen.

Your brain consumes approximately 20% of the oxygen you breathe.

Your brain depends on adequate oxygen more than any other part of your body.

Yet as you age, you lose some of your capacity to utilize oxygen. You get about 1% less efficient per year. Unless

you do something about it, oxygen deficiency becomes an issue.

So you need MORE oxygen as you get older... yet we're getting less than ever.

We've evolved over millions of years in an atmosphere with a set amount of oxygen that was constant. But in our modern world it's not always possible to get enough due to pollution, fewer plants and our deconditioned lungs.

Problem is, every cell in your body is designed to burn oxygen. It's the basic fuel for cell metabolism. Cut back on oxygen and all of those cellular processes slow down. You start to become tired or short of breath. Your cells lose the energy they need to repair DNA. Your brain literally slows down.

The brain needs a fresh supply of blood constantly because that's what brings oxygen and other nutrients into your "gray matter."

Without it, we suffer hypoxia. And the fact is, we're all suffering from hypoxia at some level in the modern world.

It's a bit like what happens when you're subjected to decreased oxygen at high altitudes. Here are just some of the things that take away oxygen and affect the brain in today's world:

- Smoking (due to high carboxyhemoglobin – 3 cigarettes are like being at 2,000 feet)
- Alcohol consumption (due to histotoxic hypoxia – 1 ounce is like being at 2,000 feet)
- Coffee (secondary to the stimulant effects of caffeine)
- Slight anemia
- Medications, such as aspirin, nitrites and sulfa
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diet
- Level of physical fitness
- Emotional state
- Baseline metabolic rate

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- Low body temperature
- Low pH (acidic pH – this makes it harder for the blood to become oxygenated)
- Soda and carbonated beverages

When these common things rob you of oxygen, it has a devastating effect on your brain.

I remember in my days working in a hospital, we had a patient, M.W., who was very depressed and anxious, had a lot of perceived stress in his life and was feeling about as bad as he could feel. We ran some tests on him and found that he was severely anemic. His brain was getting hardly any blood or oxygen at all.

We immediately sent him in for a blood transfusion. A week later he was like a new person. His depression eased. He was sunny and energetic. His skin color went from gray and ashen to healthy and bright. He could sleep again at night.

Now, most people are not likely to be anemic. But it illustrates the point that oxygen and the brain are connected. Without one, the other dies.

For example, people with lung disease – who can't get even a normal amount of oxygen to the brain – often suffer from depression.<sup>10</sup>

Also, some people who feel depressed have a part of the brain, the hippocampus, that's smaller than normal.<sup>11</sup>

In one study published in *The Journal of Neuroscience*, they looked at women who had a history of depression. On average, the hippocampus was 9% to 13% smaller in depressed women compared with those who were not depressed. The more bouts of depression a woman had, the smaller the hippocampus.

Do you know how to increase the volume of the hippocampus?

You flood it with oxygen.

These are just a few examples of how more oxygen to the brain can help ease those feelings of sadness, loneliness, depression, confusion and anxiety.

Fortunately, there are three excellent ways to get more oxygen to your brain and help ease the symptoms of depression so you can begin to feel happy, bright and energetic again.

## 1) Flood your brain with oxygen using the right kind of exertion.

About 98.5% of the oxygen in your blood is attached to hemoglobin molecules. While you're resting, hemoglobin pushes only 20 to 25 percent of that oxygen to your tissues. The rest stays in the bloodstream. It takes exercise to get hemoglobin to release oxygen to the tissues where you need it.

Cardio and aerobics can't do the job. It requires more challenging exertion.

Following my *P.A.C.E.* program pumps oxygen-rich blood to your brain up to 18 times more than light exercise.<sup>12</sup>

P.A.C.E. gives you 400% more oxygen to your lungs and nearly double the oxygen to your brain.

P.A.C.E. works because it can increase your VO2 max (maximal oxygen uptake), a measure of how fast your system can take up oxygen to enrich your blood and your brain with it.

VO2 max typically declines with age ... but there's something most doctors don't know... you can increase VO2 max.

They've always said VO2 max is unchangeable. But that's because they were looking at the wrong thing. The endurance exercises they've recommended for 50 years don't increase power. So of course you can't improve VO2 max with cardio. You need *power*, not endurance.

I usually recommend body weight exertion for *P.A.C.E.* because those movements resemble the challenges you face in your everyday life. Lifting, pulling, pushing, stepping and things like that.

Here's something you can do right now that will increase your oxygen uptake tremendously. They're two different "strike" exercises, meaning you mimic hitting something.

The first is a **Cross Knee Strike**. It's very easy to do, but also very effective.

1. Start standing with your knees slightly bent, arms bent into your body, and your hands in fists by your chin (this is called "on guard" position).

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2. Shift your weight onto your right leg, leaving just the toes of your left foot on the floor.

3. Brace your abs and lift your left knee up towards your right shoulder while you turn your right shoulder into your knee.

4. Lower your left toes back to the floor, keeping your balance on the right leg. Repeat multiple times with the left leg and then with the right, or alternate.

Second, you can modify that with the **Front Knee Lunge Strike**.

1. Start standing on guard, and slide your right leg behind your body (your right heel off the floor.)

2. Balance on your left leg with your left knee slightly bent.

3. Bend your right knee and draw it up in front of you, while you turn your upper body, slightly rounding your back, crossing your left elbow over the outside of your thigh. You're kind of punching upwards with your knee, and punching downwards with the opposite elbow.

4. Hold for one count and then slowly lower, returning your right leg to start position. Repeat multiple times with the right leg, and then with the left, or alternate.

To make it a true PACE workout, make it progressive. That means slightly more intensity with each set of strikes. And remember, this should be fun. You don't have to do a regimented number of movements, and you don't have to do a strictly time yourself, but it will increase your lung power and oxygen uptake to your brain, easing feelings of anxiety, sadness and stress.

## 2) Beat depression with hyperbaric oxygen

High atmospheric pressure combined with high oxygen causes very rapid and substantial angiogenesis – the formation of new blood vessels – in tissues.

In your brain, this “hyperbaric” oxygen does the same thing for brain cells. It causes an increase in “neural plasticity.” That means you get regrowth, better survival and integration of new brain cells, more neurite outgrowth for better brain connections, and synaptogenesis, the creation of new pathways for connections.<sup>13</sup> It has an incredible effect against depressive states.

Normally, red blood cells transport oxygen through the body. That's why increased blood flow is essential for oxygen delivery. But with hyperbaric oxygen treatment (known as HBOT) oxygen is directly dissolved into all of the body's fluids. Plasma, the central nervous system fluids, the lymph, and the bone. It can get carried to all the places where oxygen might not reach.

This gives your body a huge boost in healing. Immune cells can kill more bacteria, new blood vessels grow, and the body can support its own healing process better.

A study in the *Journal of Neurotrauma* found that for military veterans who have suffered traumatic stress, depression and have thoughts of suicide, just one month of HBOT improved brain blood flow, cognition, lessened trauma symptoms, and improved their quality of life.<sup>14</sup>

- Oxygen eased depression in 93% of veterans with depressive symptoms.
- 87% of those complaining of headaches improved after receiving hyperbaric oxygen
- Hyperbaric Oxygen improved sleep for 75% who had trouble sleeping.
- HBOT lessened mood swings, irritability, and impulsivity.
- And 64% of veterans were able to go off their medications after HBOT.

One of the reasons hyperbaric oxygen works so well has to do with an area of the brain called the hippocampus. As I mentioned, research shows that the hippocampus is smaller in some depressed people. Stress plays a role in depression, and it may be because stress suppresses production of new neurons in the hippocampus.

Hyperbaric oxygen can reverse that suppression. Even the folks at Harvard report that new research suggests mood improves as these nerves grow and form new connections.<sup>15</sup>

In one of my favorite books on the benefits of hyperbaric oxygen, “Doc, I want My Brain Back,” Dan Greathouse details his 22 year journey to finally finding hyperbaric oxygen and having it cure his brain.

*Continued on the next page...*

Another book, “The Oxygen Revolution” by Dr. Paul Harch (author of the veterans study,) and Virginia McCullough, talks about how our brains become “tired” after being assaulted by 5-7,000 new chemicals each year. These deplete us of oxygen and make it harder to absorb it.

Dr. Harch has been able to reverse hypoxia by increasing blood flow to the brain with hyperbaric oxygen.

You can get hyperbaric oxygen therapy at many hospitals and at famous healing centers like Johns Hopkins and the Cleveland Clinic, but at those places, they use it mostly for post-surgical wound healing. You can’t go there electively.

Fortunately, there are a few places you can go to get hyperbaric therapy if you choose to do so.

The Duke Center for Hyperbaric Medicine is one ([dukedivmedicine.org](http://dukedivmedicine.org)). Duke is the only hyperbaric facility in the Mid-Atlantic Region staffed with physicians who are all board certified in the specialty of Hyperbaric Medicine.

I’ve also joined the International Hyperbaric Medical Association and I’m adding on two new rooms at my Wellness Center that will have brand new hyperbaric oxygen chambers.

If you want to know more, here are all the resources you need to find a hyperbaric therapy provider near you. Each of these sites has links, resources, providers and information:

- International Hyperbaric Medical Association – [hyperbaricmedicalassociation.org](http://hyperbaricmedicalassociation.org)
- American College of Hyperbaric Medicine – [hyperbaricmedicine.org](http://hyperbaricmedicine.org)
- European Underwater and Baromedical Society – [eubs.org](http://eubs.org)

### **3) Boost oxygen to your brain with oxytocin.**

One thing that is true about the brain and brain chemicals is that stressful or traumatic life events or psychological stresses do cause alterations in the brain’s network of neurotransmitters and neuromodulators.

There’s no way to measure an “imbalance” as the drug dictocrats want you to believe.

But there is one chemical produced in the brain that actually increases blood flow and oxygen uptake in the brain.

It’s called oxytocin, and in my research into the oxygen delivery benefits of this compound, I found a little-known study out of Russia.

Researchers were looking into oxytocin and discovered that it’s an effective “anti-hypoxic.”<sup>16</sup>

In fact, in animal studies, they’ve found that one of the ways the brain tries to protect itself from hypoxia is to release this neurotransmitting compound, to maintain oxygen and avoid injury.<sup>17</sup>

Maybe the extra oxygen is why this compound gives you a sense of optimism, and people with low levels often suffer from depression.

In fact, it’s involved in almost everything we do when it comes to how we feel about ourselves and others.

It can improve your social memory, recognition, human attachment, sexual behavior, parental nurturing, aggression, human bonding, trust and so much more.

- Oxytocin is responsible for optimism, self-esteem and “mastery” – the belief that you’re in control of your own life.
- Oxytocin fosters our sense of attachment to others and in many people also enhances positive memories of close relationships.
- Low oxytocin is associated with major depression.
- Oxytocin can help ease the fear of public speaking.
- Oxytocin can block the “deer in the headlights” response.
- Oxytocin can expand your mind, literally: It stimulates brain cell growth and protects against stress.
- Oxytocin can help you win friends and influence people.

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In one study done by Belgian researchers, depressed people were given intranasal oxytocin. After just 4 weeks they all had significantly reduced scores on the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale.<sup>18</sup>

If you want to feel better right away using a 100% natural compound that your body already produces, you can do two things:

## #1: Make Some

You can teach your body to produce more oxytocin naturally, by choosing activities that promote its release.

**The best way to increase natural oxytocin production is to meditate** – Studies show that meditators can cultivate positive emotions and engage in mindful behavior with others, which releases oxytocin.<sup>17</sup>

Here's a unique type of meditation called IBMT, or Integrative Body-Mind Training<sup>20</sup> that can help you release oxytocin:

First, sit someplace comfortable and quiet, with your back straight but relaxed. Close your eyes, and let your thoughts flow freely. You don't have to empty your mind. Follow your breathing, and try to sense any tension in your face. A furrowed eyebrow or a change in breathing cadence means you are getting stuck on a thought. The trick is to both let go of your thoughts and allow them to be there at the same time. This way of being with your thoughts, coupled with proper breathing and posture, brings you body-mind harmony and can help rewire your brain to promote oxytocin release.

**Note:** Another way to increase oxytocin is intense exertion, which I described earlier. So it gives you the dual benefit of flooding your body with oxygen, and increasing oxytocin, which give your brain even more oxygen benefits.

## #2: Supplement

There are several ways to supplement oxytocin to raise your levels. Keep in mind, low oxytocin can cause poor microcirculation, and when you supplement, it will sometimes warm your ears, nose, hands and feet as your circulation starts to improve.

But the flushing is nothing to be scared of. It's a bit like what you get from taking niacin to lower cholesterol. It's simply your body responding with a feeling of relief.

You can get more oxytocin by:

- **Direct Injection** – Traditionally, oxytocin has been given by injection through a prescription from your doctor.

The doses usually start at around 10 ml and go up from there. This is a good method, but maybe not the most practical way for everyone.

- **Breathe It In** – A clinically proven way to take oxytocin is by nasal inhaler. Nasal oxytocin is completely safe, and significantly increases oxytocin in the blood. If you take it in doses of between 18-40 IU over the short term, there have been no adverse outcomes in any studies.<sup>21</sup>

- **Take Some Drops** – You can also get oxytocin in oral dose forms. One option is sublingual oxytocin drops. These are dissolved under the tongue. Several companies make these formulas, and you can purchase them online without a prescription.

- **Go Sublingual** – There is a dissolvable tablet that goes under the tongue that will increase oxytocin.

Belmar pharmacy in Colorado has come up with a proprietary system they say could deliver oxytocin to your lymphatic network intact, so that you can absorb it.

Belmar says their test shows you get good levels at 3 hours after you ingest the tablet, and your oxytocin will stay increased for up to 8 hours. It takes about 15-20 minutes to feel the effect.

I'm also researching other way to deliver oxytocin, including topically. ■

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# The Stretching Myth

## Stand Tall and Strong Your Entire Life with These Three “True” Stretches That Will Anti-Age Your Spine and Joints

I’m putting the science of anti-aging to work for my patients. They’re now living younger for longer by reversing the age of their body systems one by one.

I believe it’s possible to get better with age, and I’m proving it at my wellness center.

- No one believed it was possible to make lungs grow younger. Yet I’ve proven it by increasing VO2 Max, a measure of the youthful capacity of your lungs to deliver oxygen. My patient Bill T. is 64, yet he has the lungpower of a 39-year-old.
- Doctors also thought that you were stuck with your genes, and that genetics was your destiny. Now we can reverse the biological age of your DNA helping you avoid disease and stay youthful. My patient Michael M. is 60, and has the clinically documented “neurological age” of a 44-year old.
- We can also make your heart stronger, your memory better and your eyesight sharper as you age. The real age of my heart has come all the way down to 25.

None of this was thought to be possible just a few years ago, but we’re doing it.

My next focus is reversing the age of another body system... one that can make you lose height, hunch up and become bent over.

No one believes that the loss of height and flexibility that occurs with aging is reversible.

But I have evidence that it is.

In working with my own patients I’ve found that not only is height loss preventable but you can reverse it once it’s occurred.

You need the right combination of stretching, nutritional supplementation, and hormone replacement.

We’re using several anti-aging stretching techniques at my new center to reverse height loss, including cervical traction and inversion tables.

But even if you can’t come to my clinic and don’t have access to those specialty devices, I can still help you stand taller, with more flexibility and strength, starting right now.

Today I want to get you started on your way to anti-aging your spine and joints with stretching.

But I’m not talking about loosening up your body or joints. In fact, doing that might do more damage than help.

Let me explain...

### “Eccentric” stretching

Our unnatural environment – the way we all work and live – has us sitting hunched forward too often, for far longer than we were designed to.

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This causes us to be in a “flexion” position for most of the time. Leaning forward in the car, hunched over at our desks, looking down at our mobile devices...

When you're in that position for a long time, it can give you a lot of discomfort. But you're also taking a shortening of muscles and joints – that resulted from an abnormal posture that you weren't meant to be in – and making it worse over time.

In many cases, this can cause a tremendous amount of discomfort and soreness.

On top of that, everyday stresses cause us to tense and tighten up, putting our bodies into those same flexion positions that are uncomfortable and harmful.

However, the solution to that problem is not to “stretch” yourself further in that direction.

I'm going to show you what you should do in a minute, but first, let me ask you this: Do you see animals stretching?

No. And look at how agile and physically capable they are.

There's no evidence that stretching every joint in every direction helps at all. As a matter of fact, studies show common stretches can have a negative effect no matter how old you are, or how fit you are. And the negative effects piled up even more the longer people in the studies held their stretches.<sup>1</sup>

You only need stretching because you live in an unnatural environment. So any stretching you do must help reverse the effect it's having on your body.

What you really want to do are some very specific stretches that combat the problems of the modern world.

What are those?

- When you sit too long, it causes a flexion contracture of the hip. So you don't need to stretch it more in the same direction to “loosen” it. What you need to do is stretch the hip the opposite way.
- We sit with our shoulders slumped forward, or internally rotated, almost all the time. So you don't need a stretch that takes your shoulders farther in that direction. You need external rotation.

- Our spines are stuck in flexion too, so you need to stretch your spine in the other direction to offset this unnatural position.

These are the three things that need stretching a lot. The front of the hip, the front of the shoulder, and your whole spine from your coccyx to your cranium.

Extension or “eccentric” stretches get you back to the natural positions your body would have been in if you weren't in an abnormal environment.

That's not to say we don't lose some flexibility as we age. But you accelerate the loss if you sit at a desk all day.

## The myth of “loose” joints

What we try to do at my wellness center is reverse these effects. But even with inversion tables and other equipment I don't recommend passive stretches that put stress on the ligaments connecting the bones of a joint and make things worse.

Contrary to popular belief, you don't want loose joints. The tighter they are, the more stable and strong they are. The stronger they are, the less likely they are to suffer injury and allow you to shrink with age.

Fitness gurus sometimes recommend excessive stretching of up to 45 minutes daily. Some have an obsessive-compulsive tendency with their stretching routines. I often see programs to “stretch out your joints.”

But passive stretching does nothing to keep your joints healthy. My colleague Bob Arnot, M.D. hit it right on the head when he said “Stretches make a poor warm-up. Studies have shown that they create more injuries than they prevent when muscles are cold and stiff. A muscle shouldn't be stretched until it's warm and pliable.”<sup>2</sup>

## The Restoring Stretches

Instead of doing common or even exotic stretches to “loosen” up, here are the three stretches you can use to offset the unnatural environment you are in and restore balance to your body.

- 1. Shoulder Stretch:** These are the joints and muscles that are constantly in flexion – slumped and hunched forward during our everyday lives.

You need to stretch and develop these muscles, because they are very susceptible to injury. And tight shoulder muscles contribute to back and neck pain, especially if your head and shoulders droop forward. But the main thing is, you need to offset the forward flex with a 90 degree shoulder extension.

**How To:** Stand in an open doorway. Raising your arm to a 90-degree angle with palm facing out, press your hand and shoulder against the wall and doorjamb. You should feel the wall against your armpit, but at first, you may not be able to quite get there. Slowly increase the tension as you push forward. Hold for a 10 count.



Then repeat with the other arm. You can also do this with both arms at the same time, if it's comfortable, as you can see in the photo.

**Reverse Shoulder Stretch:** Here's a variation you can use to keep these muscles and joints from shortening from other types of forward rotational work like lifting, throwing, running, walking, jumping, and swimming.

**How To:** Stand upright and clasp your hands together behind your back. Keep your arms straight and slowly lift your hands upward. A little bit at a time is fine, just try to stretch a bit farther each time as you lengthen the muscles and reverse the effects of constant flexion.

**2. Back Stretch:** Stretching your back gives you more mobility, and can help maintain your spine and your height. Plus, it helps to eliminate back pain by improving posture. But you don't want to stretch your back by leaning forward into a flexion position like you're in most of the day. You want to lengthen and restore the muscles and joints through "eccentric" movement – going the

opposite way.

**How To:** Lie on your back and keep one leg flat on the ground. Use your hands to bring your other knee into your chest. Repeat with the other leg.

This one may seem – because it's bringing your leg forward towards you – as though it's more flexion. But what you're really doing is elongating the spine and back muscles instead of bending them forward. This gives you the extension you need to offset the forward bending we do much of the day.

**3. Hip Stretch:** Most doctors will tell you the cause of your pain is where you feel it. But that's not always the case. Especially when you're talking about back pain.

You see, when it comes to chronic back pain, you may be surprised to know that the problem may not have anything to do with your back.

In most cases, the source of back pain is due to muscle, tendon or ligament imbalances that cause your back to be pulled out of alignment. And this pulling and tension results in pain.

Your body is filled with tendons that attach your muscles to your bones. There are also ligaments that attach bones to bones. And as you age the muscles in your body shorten, and your joints lose their range of motion. These shortened muscles stretch out your ligaments and tendons and can cause your bones to fall out of alignment.

This misalignment puts undue pressure on nerves and tissue, resulting in back problems.

The good news is that there's one stretch you can do on your own to tighten your joints and help improve your back pain. And it takes only a couple minutes a day. It's called a hip flexor stretch.

**How To:**

1. Stand up straight with your right foot forward and left foot back.
2. Keep both feet flat on the floor.
3. Put your hands on your hips and keep your back and hips in straight alignment.



4. Push forward with your hips, while maintaining your erect posture. Slowly, push your hips forward only until you feel a comfortable level of tension.
5. Hold for 10 seconds.
6. Then switch sides by reversing your leg stance and repeat.

I've seen many of my patients improve their lower back pain by just doing this one exercise. And it will keep your hips aligned and strong to support your weight, and keep you upright and walking tall. ■

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## Al Sears, M.D.



Al Sears, M.D., is a medical doctor and one of the nation's first board-certified anti-aging physicians. As a board-certified clinical nutritionist, strength coach, ACE-certified fitness trainer and author, Dr. Sears enjoys a worldwide readership and has appeared on more than 50 national radio programs, ABC News, CNN and ESPN.

In 2010, Dr. Sears unveiled his proven anti-aging strategies in ***Reset Your Biological Clock***. As the first U.S. doctor licensed to administer a groundbreaking DNA therapy that activates the gene that regulates telomerase, Dr.

Sears made history by bringing telomere biology to the general public.

Dr. Sears shocked the fitness world by revealing the dangers of aerobics, "cardio" and long-distance running in his book, ***PACE: The 12-Minute Fitness Revolution***.

In 2004, Dr. Sears was one of the first doctors to document the true cause of heart disease and expose the misguided and often fatal drugs-and-surgery approach to heart health.

In ***The Doctor's Heart Cure***, Dr. Sears outlines the easy-to-follow solution that effectively eliminates your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke.

An avid lecturer, Dr. Sears regularly speaks at conferences sponsored by the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine (A4M), the American College for the Advancement of Medicine (ACAM) and the Age Management Medicine Group (AMMG).



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## Share Your Story With Me

I've made it my personal mission to bring you back hidden and forgotten cures from around the world, and return to your body what's missing from our modern environment so you can live a full life without worry.

I often hear great things about my books, special reports, and products from patients who come in to my clinic.

But I'd love to hear from you, too.

[Click here to take a moment to share your thoughts with me.](#)

**The information and material provided in this letter are for educational purposes only and any recommendations are not intended to replace the advice of your physician. You are encouraged to seek advice from a competent medical professional before acting on any recommendations in this publication.**