



Dr. Sears'

CONFIDENTIAL CURES

Your Guide to Truth and Lies in Medicine from Around the World

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The Anti-Aging Secret of SOD

One second ago, a powerful antioxidant enzyme in your body chased out a cancer-triggering toxin that was spawned by your own cells.

Then it neutralized the inflammation caused by the toxin — the kind of inflammation that causes chronic illness, like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, Parkinson’s and arthritis.

Along the way, it also protected your DNA.

I’m talking about your body’s most powerful natural antioxidant enzyme — *superoxide dismutase (SOD)*.

I call it the forgotten anti-aging enzyme.

Most people have never heard of SOD, yet it’s your body’s primary internal defense. Low SOD levels have been implicated in more than 60 degenerative diseases.

But the hidden “miracle” effect of SOD is its anti-aging power, because it also preserves and protects your telomeres, the protective caps at the ends of each strand of your DNA.

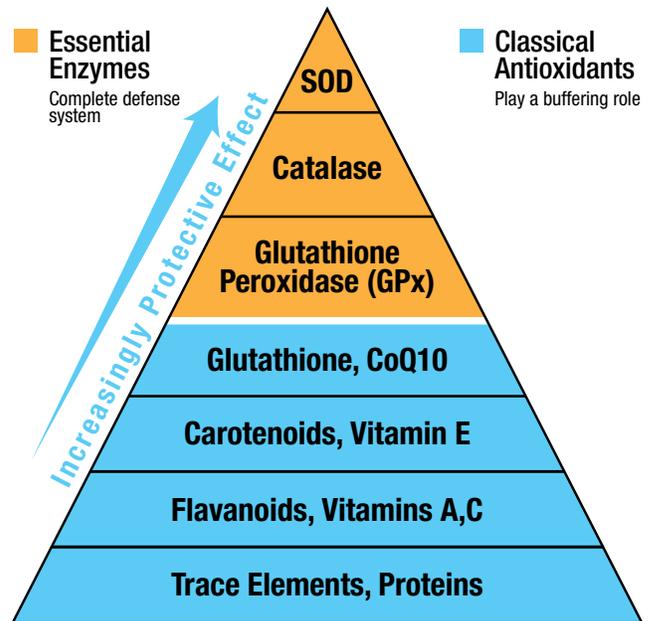
The longer your telomeres, the younger your cells act. The shorter your telomeres, the more prone you are to disease and “old age.”

SOD stops the cellular damage that causes your telomeres to shorten in the first place.

But there’s a problem.

Your SOD levels decline naturally as you age^{1,2} — but the environmental toxins that attack you don’t. Each time you inhale pollution, cigarette smoke,

THE ANTIOXIDANT PYRAMID



Among all antioxidants, SOD is your most powerful internal defense system against cell damage from our toxic environment.

consume polluted drinking water or food, or take pharmaceuticals, you’re increasing cell damage and lowering your SOD levels.

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Without enough of this vital anti-oxidant enzyme, your body quickly succumbs to age and disease

Researchers have been working for almost 50 years to find a way to get more SOD into your body. But until very recently, they couldn't find one.

And now, thanks to advances in nutritional engineering, boosting your SOD levels is easy. Here at the ***Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine***, I recommend it to all my patients, and I've included SOD in a number of my products.

*In this **Confidential Cures** article, you'll learn about the incredible anti-aging power of SOD, and the ONLY TWO WAYS you can boost your levels.*

But first, let's take a closer look at why SOD is so important to keeping you strong, mobile, independent and youthful for the rest of your life.

The War Against Oxidation

Oxygen is essential for life, but its use comes at a price to all air-breathing animals.

To make the energy that powers your body, your cells "burn" oxygen and the nutrients you consume from food. But as a natural byproduct of this combustion process, they also create certain "rogue" oxygen molecules. These are highly toxic.

Called reactive oxygen species (ROS), or free radicals, these are atoms that contain unpaired electrons. That means they indiscriminately pick up electrons from other atoms in other cells, converting them into secondary free radicals.

This starts destructive chain reactions that cause a widening circle of damage, disease and accelerated aging in your body.

*The most reactive of these free radicals, and therefore the most damaging, is the highly reactive **superoxide** radicals.*

Superoxide free radicals burn holes in cell membranes, destroy enzymes, proteins, fats, DNA molecules, alter the way cells code genetic material and cause inflammatory reactions.

It is estimated that each of your cells suffers about 10,000 "hits" a day from free radicals.

Some of the diseases linked to out-of-control free radical activity include:

- Arthritis;
- Cancer;
- Heart disease;
- Premature aging;
- Peptic ulcers;
- Gastritis;
- Acid reflux;
- IBS;
- Liver disease;
- Even the breakdown of your immune system.

Superoxide dismutase is found in all animals — from the smallest fruit flies to whales and elephants — that live in the presence of oxygen, even including some anaerobic bacteria.

SOD neutralizes the superoxide free radical by transforming it into a chemical molecule called *hydrogen peroxide*, a less harmful oxygen-based free radical. This transformation is called "dismutation" — hence SOD's chemical name, superoxide dismutase.

Other enzymes — like catalase and glutathione — take over the job to finish off the free radicals, but SOD remains "on site" to extinguish the fiery rampage of inflammation that follows.

Your Body's Own Anti-Aging Secret

Scientists have known for many years that SOD is the first and strongest natural antioxidant enzyme mobilized by your cells for defense — and that it plays a critical role in reducing oxidative damage and inflammation. But only recently has its potency as an anti-aging powerhouse been recognized.

SOD is Mother Nature's anti-aging secret.

Researchers have discovered that animals with the highest levels of SOD have the longest lifespans. In animal trials, SOD extended lifespan by up to 50%.³

But when scientists studied the yelloweye rockfish (*Sebastes ruberrimus*) from southeastern Alaska — also known as the *centenarian rockfish* for its longevity — they found something else.

Not only did they discover that, unlike humans, SOD levels in rockfish do not go down as they age⁴ — but, along with their longevity, they don't get old.

Instead, they get what scientists call *negligible senescence-chronological aging*. In other words, they continue to grow and reproduce after reaching maturity, but show no evidence of age deterioration. In fact, the rate at which they reproduce increases with age.

Some sea turtles, which have been known to live to 400 years, produce twice as much SOD as humans.

SOD's power to fight off free radicals is second to none. Compared with vitamin C, itself a powerful antioxidant, SOD is *3,500 times stronger*.⁵

Animal studies have also shown that “supplementing” with SOD can also increase lifespan and *healthspan*.

Researchers from Harvard gave SOD to tiny nematode worms and they lived between 50% and 100% longer than normal, according to research published in *Science* journal.⁶

In another study published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, researchers genetically engineered fruit flies to have double the amount of SOD, and the fruit flies *lived twice as long*.^{7,8}

That would be like the average American living to over 116 years old!

As an anti-aging doctor, I believe that number is easily within our reach.

SOD Protects Your Telomeres

If you're a regular reader, you'll know that central to aging are your telomeres, those tiny pieces of genetic code at the end of each strand of DNA.

They are your biological clock.

Each time your cells divide, a tiny bit of each telomere gets used up. Over time, your telomeres get shorter and shorter until your DNA can no longer make correct copies, and the cell stops working.

That's how you become old. It makes your cells act older and weaker.

Multiple studies show that the oxidative stress on cells caused by free radicals has a devastating impact on your telomeres.^{9,10,11,12}

Even mild oxidative stress has been shown to shorten telomeres.¹³

You see, free radicals not only attack and shorten your telomeres themselves, but they also cut off the supply of *telomerase*, the enzyme that “rebuilds” your telomeres.

Over time your telomeres fray away to nothing, leaving your chromosomes and all of your DNA exposed to further damage, leading the cell to stop functioning and stop dividing.

When the ravages of free superoxide radicals are left unchecked by low SOD levels, the attack on your telomeres will likely result in accelerated aging and the chronic diseases that send your health on a downward spiral.

But the reverse is also true. Studies show that when you raise your SOD levels, your body responds by increasing its production of telomerase.

A German study published in 2002 proved that higher levels of SOD slowed telomere shortening.¹⁴

In other words, SOD slows the aging process.

SOD Keeps Your Skin Youthful

You can see the first signs of low SOD in the mirror. It's the reason why some people “look their age” and others don't.

The “lucky” ones may even smoke, drink and eat junk food — and they still don't look their age. Other

folks take great care of themselves, but they look much older than their years.

One of the main reasons for these great differences is SOD.

You see, as you age and your SOD levels fall, these highly toxic superoxide free radicals gradually damage collagen, the structural protein that forms your skin's "scaffolding." Healthy collagen is responsible for the skin's elasticity and your youthful appearance.

Low SOD is what produces the outward signs of aging, such as skin wrinkling and sagging. SOD is found in both the dermis and the epidermis of your skin, and is key to the production of healthy skin-building cells.

That's why you find SOD in so many topical anti-wrinkle skin creams — even though most of them don't work, because they contain SOD that's *not* bioavailable. In a minute, I'll tell you about which kind of SOD *is* bioavailable.

Ordinary antioxidants aren't much use against superoxide radicals. Only SOD is strong enough to really neutralize them.

Extensive research published in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* by scientists at the University of Aarhus in Denmark reveals that SOD binds directly to collagen, repairing any damage and protecting it from oxidation and breakdown.¹⁵

There Are Only Two Known Ways to Boost SOD Levels

Now, you may be thinking: *Why not just take a supplement containing SOD? Or eat foods containing SOD?*

The problem is, SOD is a large and delicate molecule. It's too big to be absorbed directly into your body and, even if it were able, it's so fragile that it can't survive the trip through your digestive system. So you could eat SOD all day and it wouldn't help.

Until recently, that was a serious problem. But in an incredible leap in nutritional engineering, a

research team in France discovered a way to produce bioavailable SOD.

They got their big break after investigating why certain types of cantaloupe melons stayed ripe three to four times longer than the average melon.

The answer, of course, was that these cantaloupes had much higher levels of SOD.

After years of experimenting, they discovered that if they wrapped SOD from these super cantaloupes in a protective coating made from an ordinary wheat protein called *gliadin*, it made its way through the digestive tract without being damaged. And once it passes through, the SOD is absorbed by your small intestine — with all its power intact.

BREAKTHROUGH IN ANTI-AGING RESEARCH			
SOD Rich Source of Melon Used in Vital Factors	 1 Day	 6 Days	 9 Days
Standard Melon Variety	 1 Day	 6 Days	 9 Days

Like animals, the melon species with the most SOD live the longest.

Multiple human and animal studies now show that the SOD/gliadin combination boosts your body's SOD and dramatically reduces oxidative damage in cells, protecting against free radicals and inflammation as well as telomere and DNA damage.^{16,17}

*When you choose a SOD supplement, make sure it contains the patented form developed by the French researchers. It's called **GliSODin**. It comes in pill form.*

I recommend taking 250-500 mg of GliSODin per day.

GliSODin has also been shown to boost levels of *Catalase*, another of your body's primary antioxidant enzymes that completes the detoxification process that SOD started.

I know of only one other way to increase SOD levels...

South Africans have known about the benefits of SOD for generations — even before it was “discovered.”

The African herbal tea, *rooibos* — or red tea, as it's sometimes called — is the only proven way of increasing your SOD levels by eating or drinking.

Outsiders didn't hear about rooibos until the 20th century, but it has been used as a herbal remedy in South Africa for hundreds of years to treat headaches, insomnia, asthma, eczema, bone weakness, hypertension, allergies and premature aging.

Several animal studies also show that rooibos boosts levels and increases the activity of SOD.^{18,19}

Rooibos tea is naturally caffeine-free. It has a nutty, mildly sweet flavor that tastes good with honey or lemon.

To get the full anti-aging benefit of rooibos, I recommend drinking six cups a day.

The tea is easy to make in a few simple steps. For one cup:

- Bring 8 ounces of water to a full boil in a kettle.
- Add 1 to 1½ rounded teaspoons of rooibos leaves to the kettle. You probably won't find rooibos on your grocery store shelf, but it's easy to order the herb online.
- Let the brew steep for about 5 minutes.
- Pour through a tea strainer into your cup and enjoy.

I have also added a bioavailable form of rooibos to one of my supplements.

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Mitochondria – The Other Half of the Aging Equation

More than 40 years ago the discovery of telomeres changed everything we thought we knew about aging and heart health.

These little countdown clocks protect the DNA in your cells. They shorten with each cell division. And the shorter they get the faster you develop the signs of aging.

Control telomeres and you could control aging.

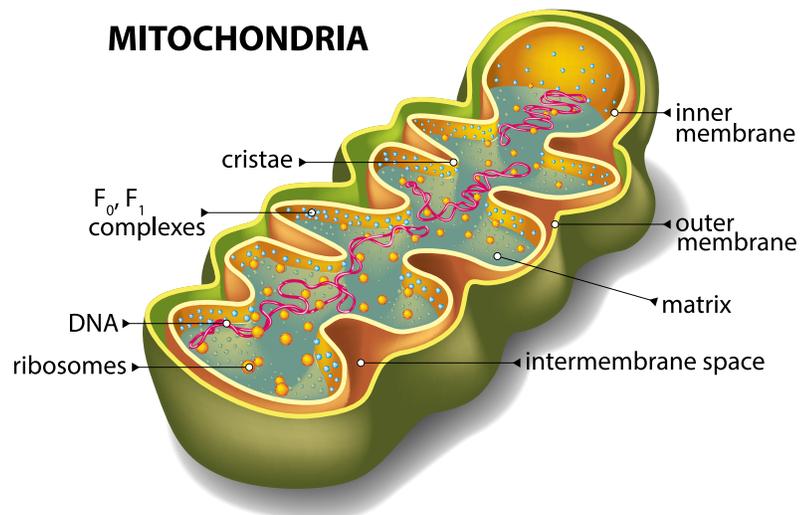
And it works. For years patients at the *Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine* have been able to measure, protect, and lengthen their telomeres. Thousands of people have successfully slowed down and even reversed the aging process.

But exciting new research reveals that telomeres are only HALF the story when it comes to aging.

Besides telomeres, your cells also contain tiny organelles called **mitochondria**. These tiny structures are part of your body's nanotechnology. They act like batteries to provide the energy your cells need to function.

Your body is filled with millions of these tiny organelles. They control your body's master energy system, which lets you see, hear and feel. They beat your heart, stimulate your sex drive and allow you to think. They power every function and organ in your body.

In short, mitochondria not only provide your body with energy, they control the health of your tissues, your muscles, your organs and your skin.



Your mitochondria are the “batteries” that provide the energy your cells need to function.

These are the power plants that turn fuel into energy. At the same time they filter the cellular “sludge” that leaves your cells bloated and ineffective.

And mitochondria have their own DNA and their own impact on the aging process.

Telomeres protect the DNA *inside* the nucleus of each cell in your body. But the mitochondria's DNA is *outside* of the cell nucleus and beyond the reach of telomeres.

These tiny engines are so important I have a special name for them. I call them **the other half of the anti-aging equation**.

Every one of your cells has at least one of these power plants. The average cell has 200. And cells for “energy hungry” organs like your heart and brain can have over 10,000.

But your mitochondria become weaker as you get older, and then they die off. You lose your capacity to make energy and your physical and mental performance declines with your aging.^{1,2,3}

In addition, the more energy these little engines put out, the more waste products they produce. Oxidation breaks down mitochondria so they don't run as well, or produce as much power. In fact, they are the primary site for the production of free radicals that produce oxidation. And that means they damage their own DNA.

That DNA damage causes the mitochondria to misfire. Your cellular energy takes a dive. And research shows this malfunction is the root of many chronic diseases of aging, including:

- strokes, heart disease, and coronary artery disease;
- dementia, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease;
- schizophrenia and bipolar disease;
- epilepsy, migraines, and nerve pain;
- loss of muscle control and balance;
- chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia;
- blindness;
- diabetes;
- hepatitis C and cirrhosis.⁴

If you keep your mitochondria healthy, your body will have all the energy it will ever need to stay strong and ward off the diseases of aging.

But as you age you have fewer of these engines, and they are undersized and degraded. Unless you do something about it, you get all the energy-sapping consequences of aging.

Feeling weak and having a lack of energy production from the degrading of your mitochondria is called “**bioenergetic aging**.”

Bioenergetic aging brings about a constant decline in your body's ability to generate the energy you need to do even simple things.

Australian scientist Anthony Linnane observed this in a groundbreaking study. He looked at human

mitochondria and compared the boundless energy of a child with that of an older person. When he looked at photographs of aging cells, he was shocked to find that less than 5% of the mitochondrial DNA from the muscle tissue of a 90-year-old subject was intact.^{5,6}

Over 95% of the mitochondria had degraded — they got worse and lost power!

In other words, degenerating mitochondria is an early sign of aging.⁷

Regenerating Your Mitochondria

The good news is we have now found a way to reverse this process of degrading mitochondria.

You do it through **mitochondrial biogenesis**.

What that means is that you help your body make new cellular power plants — new mitochondria — while you also renew the power of your existing ones.

This is very important because if you don't replace and renew your mitochondria, you could lose your ability to generate any energy.

Our primal ancestors regularly tapped into the body's ability to regenerate mitochondria. Because they were hunter-gatherers they couldn't always predict when their next meal would be. Some days they had very little to eat. Other days they feasted.

But that periodic hunger didn't drain their energy. It increased their energy. Bouts of food shortages kicked up the energy production in their mitochondria.

Research shows that high intensity exertion naturally creates more energy-producing mitochondria, especially in the brain and heart.⁸ That is why just one session of intense exercise like the P.A.C.E. program can make you feel more energetic fast.

In other words, the harsh life that our primal ancestors had — with periods of fasting and intense exertion — triggered energy bursts by boosting mitochondrial biogenesis.

We lead a much easier life than our ancestors. We have access to abundant calories all the time. But

in a way we have been robbed of our natural way of rebooting our energy.

That is all changing thanks to two super nutrients that increase your mitochondria and boost their energy output.

Two Super Nutrients for Mitochondria

Here at the *Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine*, I help patients strengthen their bodies to increase their “healthspan” so they can live life to its fullest with a two-step process.

The first step is to protect and lengthen telomeres. My patients who follow my telomere protocol are “biologically younger” and stronger... their minds are sharp... their immune systems are like iron... and they feel strong and vibrant again.

The second step is making sure you have *plenty of healthy mitochondria with the power to produce robust energy*.

For more than a decade now, I’ve been boosting my patients’ mitochondria with two super-nutrients — **CoQ10** and *pyrroloquinoline quinone*, or **PQQ**.

I was one of the first to realize Coenzyme Q10 provides the “spark” your mitochondria need to function. It is one of the first things I recommend to my patients. CoQ10 was also the first super nutrient we identified to have an immediate connection to mitochondrial health.

I noticed an immediate and startling change in my patients who took it. They had greater energy, stamina and strength than ever before.

CoQ10 is essential for your cells’ mitochondria.

Energy production at the cellular level begins when the body turns the food we eat into nutrients (glucose, amino acids, and fatty acids) the mitochondria can use to produce energy. Within the cells, the mitochondria manufacture ATP (adenosine triphosphate). ATP is literally your body’s source of energy. ATP is the fuel cells burn to perform their tasks.

To make energy, the mitochondria use plenty of CoQ10. This is essential to keep the powerhouses of the cells — the mitochondria — working efficiently. In this way, CoQ10 provides a virtual “Fountain of Youth” for your cells.

When cells run out of CoQ10, the mitochondria simply cannot produce enough energy to meet the body’s demands. When the body is well stocked with CoQ10, it can operate efficiently.

When stockpiles of CoQ10 run low, the mitochondria are less efficient and they may produce adenosine diphosphate (ADP), which is a less potent fuel.

Over time, running your body on cheap fuel takes its toll, damaging the mitochondria and contributing to a growing sense of fatigue, weakness, and eventually, disease.

When your body is young, your mitochondria work tirelessly to produce the abundant energy associated with youth. Over the years, however, your mitochondria age and show signs of wear and tear, just as the rest of the body does. And when this happens, your mitochondria can grow “hard” and less efficient at producing ATP.

When your mitochondria break down, they produce less energy. If this happens long enough, you experience chronic fatigue. This systemic energy crisis can compromise the immune system as a whole, leaving your body more vulnerable to attack from bacteria, viruses, and additional pathogens.

A number of studies found that people who suffer from ailments associated with aging — including cardiovascular disease, Parkinson’s disease, and Alzheimer’s disease — all tend to have abnormally low levels of CoQ10 and high levels of mitochondria failure.

My clinic has measured hundreds, if not thousands, of CoQ10 levels with some surprising results:

- Young people (in their twenties and younger) almost always have adequate levels of CoQ10.
- CoQ10 deficiencies are common in people in their 40s and beyond.

- Long-duration endurance exercisers tend to have lower levels of CoQ10.
- Deficiencies in CoQ10 are very common in patients with heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, or low HDL cholesterols.
- CoQ10 levels are often low in those avoiding red meat and extremely low in strict vegans.

If you are in one of these categories, CoQ10 supplements can make a dramatic difference in your energy level and cardiovascular health.

CoQ10 sparks your aging mitochondria to make more energy. It also acts as a potent free radical scavenger. It soaks up oxidized molecules before they can cause damage.

But CoQ10 doesn't quite finish the job. The key to staying young is having MORE mitochondria that are healthy enough to actually produce energy. That requires PQQ.

PQQ is a coenzyme like CoQ10. It acts as the catalyst inside your cells helping you make new mitochondria. Then CoQ10 helps each individual mitochondria make more energy.

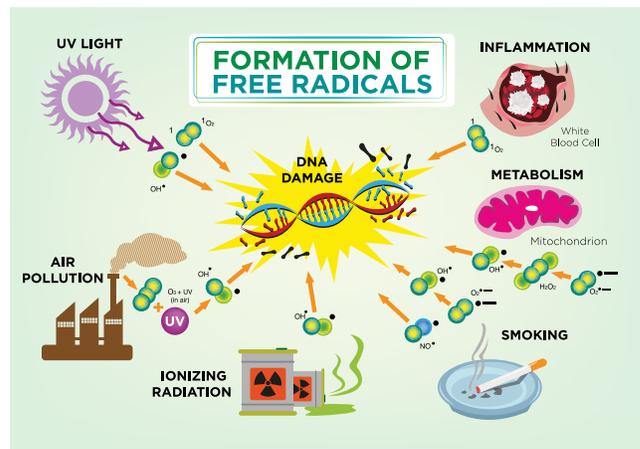
Researchers at the University of California at Davis fed mice a diet supplemented with PQQ, and they grew a staggering number of new mitochondria in just eight weeks.⁹

In other animal studies PQQ helped heart muscle cells heal damage from oxidative stress. It did it by boosting mitochondria numbers.¹⁰

At the same time, PQQ stimulates production of nerve growth factor (NGF), which triggers the growth of new brain cells and branching of nerve cells.^{11,12} NGF is crucial in repairing damage caused by strokes.

PQQ is a remarkably strong antioxidant. It shields the mitochondria in your heart from the stress of making all that energy day in and day out.

And that is a good thing, because mitochondria are fragile. They don't just degrade with the passing of



Your mitochondria are vulnerable to the environment. But powerful antioxidants like PQQ can neutralize the damage caused by free radicals.

the years. Mitochondria are especially vulnerable to our environment because they don't have all the DNA protection and repair functions the rest of the cell does.

This worsening of your mitochondrial performance is most evident in the heart cells (cardiomyocytes), brain cells (neurons) and muscle cells (myocytes).

PQQ neutralizes free radicals that damage and kill off your mitochondria. That makes PQQ's role as "protector" of mitochondria just as important as its ability to make new ones.

In one study five men and five women took a single dose of around 10 to 15 milligrams of PQQ. Then researchers measured changes in their antioxidant capacity. Over the next two days, PQQ significantly reduced their markers for oxidative stress.¹³

Even better, in a second part of the study, the people got daily PQQ for three days. All of them had increases in metabolites showing their mitochondria were working much more efficiently. They got more energy with less effort. Which means PQQ is like a whole-body energy tune-up.

Plus, PQQ works harder and longer than any other antioxidant. It is so stable and strong it works for thousands of antioxidant cycles.¹⁴ Other related antioxidants break down quickly. But PQQ keeps right on protecting you hundreds of times longer.

That all adds up to more energy. This amazing nutrient can triple... even quadruple... your energy in just a few days.

Here's what you can do right now to energize your heart with PQQ:

1. Your body can't produce PQQ on its own. But you can get some from PQQ-rich foods like parsley, green peppers, kiwi fruit, papaya, and the fermented (naturally produced, not processed) soy food called natto that the Japanese love to eat. These foods have about two to three micrograms in a 100 gram serving. Green tea has about double that amount in an eight-ounce cup.

COMMON PQQ-RICH FOODS	
Serving Size: 100 Grams (or 3.5 Ounces)	PQQ (Micrograms)
Kiwi fruit	2.74
Sweet green peppers	2.80
Carrots	1.68
Potatoes	1.66
Cabbage	1.63
Sweet potatoes	1.33
Bananas	1.26

2. These foods will give you some PQQ, but to build a lot of new mitochondria, you will want to supplement.

Studies using 10 to 20 milligrams per day of PQQ show extraordinary results. That is a good place to start. You'll want to be careful because most PQQ supplements on the market right now only give you a fraction of that amount. The reason is that PQQ is expensive, and many supplement makers want to get away with giving you either lower quality or a lower dose. Make sure you're getting enough to make a difference in how you feel.

3. Take PQQ when you wake up in the morning or at least early in the day. It doesn't matter if you take it with or without food.

4. I also recommend taking PQQ *with* CoQ10 — not in place of it. CoQ10 is still critical. It helps all your mitochondria — the new and the old — pump out more energy. I recommend taking at least a full 10 milligrams of PQQ along with a full 50 milligrams of ubiquinol CoQ10 to give you the best energy-generating combination for your heart.

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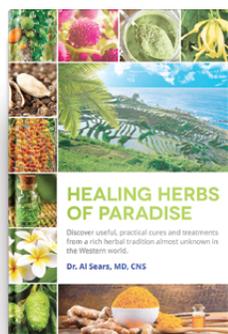
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Healing Herbs of Paradise:

A Sneak Peek at the Best Book I've Ever Written

*After five long years, my book **Healing Herbs of Paradise** is finally complete. It's beautiful — and by far the best book I've ever written. Within its pages, you'll find at least 403 real, practical cures to help you and your family live a more active, healthy and vibrant life.*



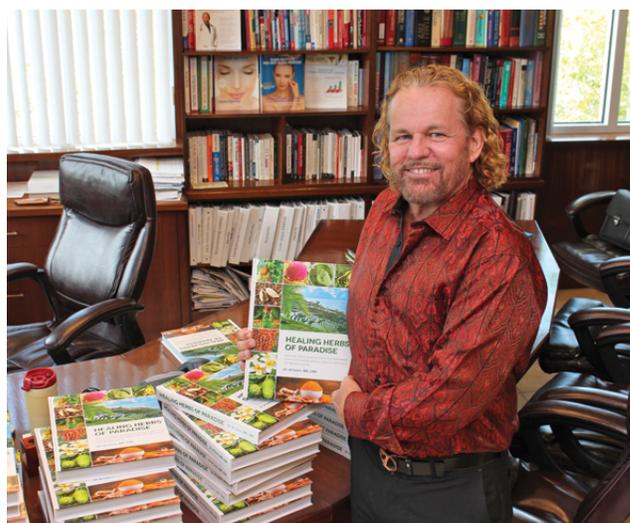
Each of the more than 30 chapters focuses on an herb or food from Bali's Garden of Eden. Many chapters also include recipes for herbal teas and other healing preparations.

This book was a labor of love for me. And it would not have been possible without the help of two very special people — my friends in Bali, a young couple named Westi and Lelir. Lelir comes from a long line of traditional healers — five generations. Westi grows herbs and has dedicated his life to preserving Bali's herbal knowledge for future generations. Together, they know more about cultivating, preparing and using Bali's traditional herbs than anyone else on Earth.

*I'm so proud of **Healing Herbs of Paradise** that I wanted to feature it in this month's issue of **Confidential Cures**. That's why I've included a full chapter from the book. But because you're a loyal reader, I've included bonus information in this article... extra information I just couldn't fit in the book. I hope you enjoy it.*

The Magic of Bali

I knew I wanted to visit Bali ever since I was a little boy. My father had been to Bali during World War II, and he was enchanted with the island. But he never felt like he could accurately describe its unique



*The secrets to Bali's "jamu medicine" are all together in my new book, **Healing Herbs of Paradise**. I was so excited when the first shipment arrived at my office my staff and I celebrated with a feast that included coconut water, fresh mango and food seasoned with countless herbs found in the book.*

culture and beauty. He said it was something you had to experience for yourself.

I decided right then and there that one day I would.

I've made five trips to Bali over the years. And I now understand why my father fell in love with it. It's truly one of Earth's unique places.

It's an ancient culture that has drawn from its neighbors, yet retains a flavor that is all its own. Bali has its own language, its own customs... and its own healing system. One that's been passed down from generation to generation.

But few places on Earth are immune to influence from the West — and Bali is no exception. Western medicine has been pushing Bali's healing traditions into the background. And they are in danger of being lost forever.

That would be a tragedy.

Westi and Lelir are committed to preserving this rich healing tradition. So am I. It's too valuable to lose. There is healing power in just about every single thing that grows on Bali — from the incredible fruits and magnificent flowers to the humblest of weeds.

Today I'm going to tell you about one of those "humble weeds" — and all of the amazing ways it can improve your health.

Wood Sorrel — Prevent Heart Attacks with Humble “Weed”

Western scientists like to say, “A weed is a plant for which no useful purpose has yet been found.”

If any of them visited Bali, they'd change their minds in a hurry.

The flowers I saw growing everywhere made Bali the lushest, most tropical paradise I'd ever visited. And many of them are considered “weeds” by Western standards.

Many of these weeds are not only ornamentally beautiful, but they have a lot of healing properties as well. Too bad Western science puts zero faith in what nature has provided for us... at least, not until they can make a synthetic drug out of it.

For example, I don't put any faith in any of the heart drugs out there... I've tried them all and stopped using each of them.

They do more harm than good.

Statins deplete your heart's cellular energy and steal its power to pump. And they come with potentially fatal side effects, such as liver dysfunction and acute kidney failure.

If you take statins, you may also have to deal with cataracts, depression, suicidal thoughts, weight gain, sexual impotency and severe muscle weakness.^{1,2}

And beta-blockers actually *decrease* your cardiac output by blocking hormones that allow your heart to beat faster and harder. And the side effects range



The people of Bali know the incredible healing power of wood sorrel. They've been using it as a heart tonic, as well as for other medicinal purposes, for generations.

from constant fatigue and shortness of breath to depression and erectile dysfunction.

Meanwhile, there's a plant that grows up and down the ancient walls around Bali that's a good example of a powerhouse heart healer ignored by the West.

A research team in India studied the effects of *Oxalis corniculata* — creeping wood sorrel — on animals' hearts. What they found was that an extract of the plant could prevent heart attacks.³

First, they gave the animals a chemical that caused heart attacks. Then they pre-treated a second group of animals for 30 days with the plant extract. When they gave this second group the chemical, it didn't cause the heart attacks.

Instead, the extract lowered their cholesterol levels, triggered greater antioxidant activity and lowered inflammation.

Creeping wood sorrel also raised the animals' vitamin C levels and their concentration of glutathione, one of the body's most powerful anti-inflammatory antioxidants.

The wood sorrel's leaves are a rich source of vitamin C. A few hundred years ago, traveling sailors would eat wood sorrel to avoid getting scurvy!

It also contains a good amount of vitamin A, iron, vitamin B2 and fiber.

On Bali, wood sorrel is best known for its heart-healing properties. But Lelir told me about some other traditional uses for creeping wood sorrel, aside from its use as a heart tonic.

Wound Healing From the Walls — a Note From Lelir

(Oxalis corniculata)

Balinese name: Semanggi

My introduction to herbs came early. Both my parents were herbalists. They used herbs to treat almost all our childhood problems. And our neighbors often depended on my parents for health advice and treatment.

When I was very young, my father sometimes took me along to visit patients. These were usually follow-up visits... non-emergencies where he would change dressings or check on a patient's progress.

One patient visit stands out in my mind because of a strange request my father made. The patient had cut himself badly while working in the rice field, and my father was treating his wound to prevent infection and speed the healing process.

As he examined the wound's progress, my father turned to me. "Go pick some of the flowers growing on the wall outside," he said.

In those days, most homes in Bali were still built using traditional materials. Roofs were mostly made of thatch and walls were made of bamboo, stone or earth.

Sure enough, growing up — and out of — the man's earthen walls was a plant with vine-like stems, three-lobed leaves and delicate yellow blossoms. So I picked a few and brought them to my father.

He boiled the flowers — leaves, stems and all — in some water. Then he thoroughly washed

the man's wound with the water when it had cooled. "This will help the cut stay clean and healthy," he told the man. "It will also help it heal faster."

This was my introduction to semanggi, or creeping wood sorrel. In the years to come, I would see my parents use it for several complaints — both external and internal.

In fact, creeping wood sorrel is one of my favorite mild herbs. I use it to make an antiseptic wash... just the way my father did when I was a little girl.

This is what Westi and I used for our son when he was very young and got a rash. The sorrel wash is very soothing and kills any bacteria that may be causing the rash.

It's also effective for boils and other eruptions of the skin.

I also make a tea from creeping wood sorrel. It's really the same as the wash. I just wash a small handful of the flowers — including roots, leaves and stems — and boil them in a cup or two of water.

Then I strain out the flowers. This tea is good for reducing fevers and soothing the urinary tract.

Because it's healing to the urinary tract, many women add small amounts of the leaves and flowers to salads as a preventative. The leaves have a pleasant lemony flavor and they're quite high in vitamin C.

Creeping wood sorrel grows easily in almost any shady wooded area. And it's quite widespread — even growing in North America. It grows so well, it's often considered a weed — overtaking gardens and lawns.

Historically, heart attacks have been rare in Bali. Perhaps creeping wood sorrel is one reason why.

— Lelir

My Own Research and Discoveries

When visiting with Westi and Lelir, I often ate very fresh foods with the addition of herbs. In salads there was always a little wood sorrel added. This humble, little leaved plant grows very unassumingly. It creeps along the ground or on a wall, almost unnoticeable.

Often the humble little plants you barely take notice of have some very health-promoting qualities. Especially for people who live in the tropics.

Creeping wood sorrel has antimicrobial effects that are worth noting. For one thing, it has been shown to kill *Giardia lamblia*, which causes diarrhea in humans. Researchers were looking for natural compounds in the battle of giardia infections (giardiasis) and they found it in this unassuming little plant.⁴

People often get exposure to *Giardia lamblia* while traveling to foreign countries and drinking local water. It is associated with poor quality of the water.

The symptoms associated with giardiasis are feeling of cramps, bloating, nausea and bouts of watery, loose stools. Definitely not something you want to have while visiting a foreign country.

I think the locals are smart to put some creeping wood sorrel in many salad-type dishes. It can ensure that their visitors will be protected and have a more pleasant visit.

Along those same lines, it protects against amebiasis,⁵ which is a disease caused by the parasite *Entamoeba histolytica*. This is normally associated with poor sanitary conditions. People don't always notice the symptoms of this disease, so prevention is important.

Gastric ulcers are another area where science is catching up with what the natives have known about this plant.⁶ The old saying, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" comes to mind when thinking of this plant.

A Powerful Enemy of Free Radicals

Creeping wood sorrel also has some powerful free radical scavenging effects. There was research done to see how an extract from wood sorrel protects lungs. What they found was that the extract prevented some serious alterations in a variety of enzyme systems in the lungs, in a dose-dependent manner.

The scientist noted that the reason it did this was because of the intrinsic properties within the extract that scavenges free radicals.⁷

Aging kidneys are becoming all too prevalent in our Western society, but a study done on rats showed that an extract of creeping sorrel could have a powerful effect on preventing damage to kidneys.

They found that using an extract of creeping sorrel helped reverse the markers associated with the damage. The researchers concluded that the treatment caused a significant recovery. They believe that it was because of the antioxidant effects of the phenolic compounds in creeping wood sorrel.⁸

Beyond Bali ... Wood Sorrel Around the World

Wood sorrel grows in abundance throughout India, and has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for thousands of years.

One of wood sorrel's most common uses in Ayurveda is for treating fever. Ayurvedic healers also use it for treating hemorrhoids and diarrhea.

The Native Americans also knew about the sorrel's potent healing powers.

The Kiowa tribe, who migrated from western Montana to the Southern Plains before eventually settling in Oklahoma, chewed on wood sorrel to alleviate thirst during long trips. Today, knowledgeable hikers do the same.

The Cherokee ate wood sorrel to treat sore throats and mouth sores. The Iroquois ingested it to help ease cramps, fever and nausea.



It's believed that wood sorrel, and not clover, is the "true shamrock."

And for the Algonquins, it was considered an aphrodisiac!⁹

Wood sorrel — and other plants in the sorrel family — grow throughout the world. If you're familiar with the story of St. Patrick, legend has it that he used the wood sorrel leaf to explain the Holy Trinity to the ancient Irish. In fact, the wood sorrel is considered the "true shamrock."

And lots of people throughout America may know the humble sorrel by one of its common nicknames — "sour grass."

It's been called that because sorrel has a sour taste that's similar to lemons. It's a distinctive flavor that's easily recognizable. Some people pulverize the dried leaves and flowers and use the powder to make a refreshing "lemonade"-type drink. I've tried it, and I prefer it with a small bit of honey stirred in to sweeten it up a bit.

Where to Find Wood Sorrel

Many variations of wood sorrel grow throughout the world, but they're all very similar. This humble heart-healer can be found in the United States and throughout parts of Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. Although the leaves, flowers and stems appear fragile and delicate, the wood sorrel is a hardy

perennial. Probably the only places in the world where it can't grow are in the North and South Poles!

Chances are, you've probably seen it poking through the cracks in a sidewalk or in a weedy, unkempt lawn. They thrive in woody forests and alongside trails, as well as in gardens and in flower beds. If you're a gardener, I'd be willing to bet you've pulled out — and thrown away — your share of wood sorrel!

You can order wood sorrel seeds over the internet from online nurseries and plant them almost anywhere. It's an easy plant to cultivate. Wood sorrel starts blooming in mid-spring and continues to produce flowers through mid-fall. Once planted, there's no maintenance. When the seed pods are dry, they burst open at the slightest touch and can scatter their seeds up to 10 feet away!

Preparations

Abscess

Grind fresh sorrel leaves and add a little hot water, just enough to turn into a paste. Apply paste to area twice a day.

Diarrhea

Take one sorrel leaf, and boil it into buttermilk. Drink once a day.

Warts

Mix an equal quantity of sorrel leaf extract and onion juice. Apply to infected area once a day.

Insomnia

Mix an equal quantity of sorrel leaf extract and castor oil. Heat the mixture up to remove moisture and then let it cool. Apply mixture onto the scalp at night.

Mouth sores and swollen gums

Chew a handful of fresh leaves until the leaves turn into a paste. Discard.

For skin irritations or small lacerations

Boil leaves in water. Strain leaves and let water cool. Soak a rag in the water and apply to affected area to reduce swelling and to soothe irritation.

Other uses

Add leaves to salad to give it a zesty kick.

While wood sorrel is safe for most people, it should be avoided by those with kidney or urinary disease, as well as gout sufferers, because of its high oxalic acid content.

*This is just a small sample of what you'll find in my new book, **Healing Herbs of Paradise**. I only have a limited number of copies available, so if you'd like one, place your order as soon as possible.*

*[Click here](#) to order online, or call **866-792-1035**.*

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The information provided in this letter is 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 medical professional before acting on any recommendations in this publication.



AL SEARS, MD

Al Sears, MD, CNS, 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 Ageless Heart Manual: Advanced Strategies to Reverse Heart Disease and Restore Your Heart's Pumping Power*, 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).