The Fountain of Youth

By Linda Townsend

In the late 1970's, vitamin E was touted as "the fountain of youth." Since then, every few years that honorary title would be given to a new supplement backed by research, books would be written and read, companies would produce it as fast as possible, and hopeful people would buy it off the shelves. There is nothing wrong with natural supplements, I have taken a few myself, but somehow I just never really believed that the fountain of youth can be found in a bottle. It seemed to be as illusive as when Marco Polo searched for it, but the real fountain of youth has been found: it springs from within our own bodies by design.

In 1956, Choh Hao Li, an endocrinologist, discovered a hormone produced by the pituitary gland called the human growth hormone or hGH. Its function was first believed to regulate growth, causing children to reach adult height. Back then the hormone had to be extracted from the pituitary gland of human cadavers, each contributing only a precious few drops causing it to be very expensive and it could have side effects, even causing death in a few cases.

In 1985, a biotech company, Genentech, brought to market a genetically engineered growth hormone that has helped children grow to normal heights. The hGH gene is collected from bacteria, mammalian cells, or yeast then used inserting a cDNA gene into Ecoli with a signal sequence added for the gene to be translated and purified. Whether this sounds impressive or disturbing to you, the results were that this FDA approved hGH is a synthetic. Even so, once more of its benefits were realized, it became an expensive fad, especially among athletics and body builders.

Production of the human growth hormone lowers as we age. This decrease is associated with a myriad of conditions related to aging, as well as diseases common when the body is not able to regenerate and heal itself as efficiently as it could in its youth. These include decreased muscle mass and strength; increased body fat, especially around the waist; increased risk of heart disease; osteoporosis; low energy levels and decreased stamina; diabetes; impaired concentration and memory; anxiety and depression; and even thinning skin and winkles.

If a deficiency in hGH contributes to all those conditions, image what an increase does to reverse them! What would it be worth to you to heal as quickly and well as a child? To have the stamina to exercise and actually see gains in muscle mass even after you have plateaued for a long time? To just feel better with a clearer mind when you wake in the morning and keep it throughout your day? To reduce pain, inflammation, and allergies? To actually see the effects of increased collagen in your skin reducing wrinkles?

Would it be worth it to you enough to go through the process of encouraging the fountain of youth within? All it takes can be summed up in one word: fasting! This is where many people step on the brakes. Fasting is just not something people in general want to do and, frankly, as much as I have fasted over the last two decades, I cannot say I highly enjoy the process, but I fast regularly because I have thoroughly been amazed by the results!

From September to November, my family underwent a highly stressful time and I ended up stopping my one day each week fast, probably when I needed to continue it the most. Things improved by December, but I was already at my holiday weight and then I gained more. I was about 20 pounds over my healthy average weight and I felt it. I did not feel well most of the time. My digestion was sluggish. I woke up every morning with aches and pains, particularly an ongoing nagging pain in my hip caused by an injury resulting in inflammation. My face . . . well, I just looked older with pronounced wrinkles.

I began my annual January fast to get down to a specific weight. As I am writing this article, I am just now coming off of it. During the fast, I lost those 20 pounds, the aches and pains are gone including that hip pain, and my wrinkles have diminished to the point that again when I tell people my age, they do not believe me. I even had blood work done and I was in the green on all things, except two where just a bit off which would be typical while in a fast.

How does this happen? A great deal of research has been done on the relationship between fasting and hGH levels. Fasting for just a 24-hour period can increase hGH 13 times in women and nearly 20 times in men! Isn't that so much better and cheaper than getting a shot of synthetic hGH? Many health conscious athletes are turning to intermittent fasting to keep boosting their hGH naturally, usually fasting for a 16 to 24 hour period once or twice a week. While intermittent day fasts are more popular, fasting for five to six days causes another hGH spike even higher, which explains why a person's energy increases on the fifth to sixth day of a long fast. The longer the fast,

the more toxins can be eliminated from the body also, but be aware of that third day of the fast, it is the worst one and once you get past it, you should start to feel better (unless you are detoxifying from a heavy amount of toxins).

Toxins are the other contributing factor to premature aging and disease. That is why what we eat when not fasting is as important as fasting. While fasting to increase hGH also reduces toxins in the body, the inner fountain of youth would work even more efficiently if there were less toxins with which to contend. In other words, eat fresh organic foods as much as you can in between your fasts for the very best results. Longer fasts really cause me to feel differently about food. For one, it is as challenging to begin eating again as it was to stop, so I am far more choosy about the quality and quantity of the foods I eat. It is far easier to choose the more nutritious eats as organic, fresh, and raw over conventional and processed foods after fasting.

I believe that some form of fasting can be done by most everyone (you have to do some fasting for certain medical tests anyway), but if you are taking any medications or are under a doctor's care, please consult with your physician before fasting. Begin with short fasts, even if just one meal, to get to know how your body will respond. Even a small spike in hGH is better than chronic deficiency. I am renewing my routine to fast one day a week at least, which is actually a 36-hour fast the way I do it, but I am planning to step that up to two days a week as many weeks as I can this year. How about you? Are you ready to drink of the healthy, healing benefits from the fountain of youth within?

Linda Townsend is a freelance writer of health-related issues and can be contacted at 4biohealth@gmail.com.



Carrageenan Anyone?

seen carrageenan listed as an ingredient. What exactly is carrageenan and why are there groups advocating removing it from foods such as almond milk?

Carrageenan is a common food additive that is extracted from a red seaweed, Chondrus crispus, which is popularly known as Irish moss. Carrageenan, which has no nutritional value, has been used as a thickener and emulsifier to improve the texture of ice cream, yogurt, cottage cheese, soy and almond milk, and other processed foods. It is also found in natural lunch meats.

Joanne K. Tobacman, M.D., an associate professor of clinical medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, has conducted studies linking undegraded carrageenan—the type that is widely used in foods—with malignancies and other stomach problems. She has extensively studied the biological effects and published 18 peer-reviewed studies and she is convinced that it is harmful to our health. In April 2012, she addressed the National Organic Standards Board on this issue and urged reconsideration of the use of carrageenan in organic

In her presentation, Dr. Tobacman said that her research has shown that exposure to carrageenan causes inflammation and that when we consume processed foods containing it, we ingest enough to cause inflammation in our bodies. All forms of

Chances are that if you read labels at all you've carrageenan are capable of causing inflammation. This is bad news. We know that chronic inflammation is a root cause of many serious diseases including heart disease, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, and cancer. Drug investigators actually use carrageenan to cause inflammation in tissues in order to test the anti-inflammatory properties of new drugs. When laboratory mice are exposed to low concentrations of carrageenan for 18 days, they develop "profound" glucose intolerance and impaired insulin action, both of which can lead to diabetes.

> The Cornucopia Institute has submitted a lengthy petition to the FDA to remove carrageenan from foods. Starting in 1961, animal studies showed that degraded carrageenan was carcinogenic. The safest thing you can do is to read labels carefully and avoid foods with carrageenan.

Resources:

http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/QAA401181/Is-Carrageenan-Safe.html www.cornucopia.org

Kim Strickland earned her doctorate degree in Natural Health from Clayton College of Natural Health in 2005. She is currently a stay-at-home mother to three boys, as well as an online college mathematics professor at South University Online.

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> Editor, The Life Line c/o Life Grocery 1453 Roswell Rd. Marietta, GA 30062 770-977-9583

General Manager: Lisa Maden Operations Manager: Ronnie B. Hudson Editor: Ronnie B. Hudson

Typesetting/Layout: G. Krislyn Life Line Logo Design: Heathere Wilmoth Contributors: Dr. Joe Esposito, Dr. Susan Esposito, Ronnie B. Hudson, Kim Strickland, Linda Townsend, Sarah Townsend

The Tiger Chase Cravings

By Sarah Townsend

Do you hide in the corner, peeling back the wrapping of a chocolate bar or with an open bag of chips, just so you can feel better? We all have comfort foods, mainly sweets or something full of carbohydrates. When you feel stressed or upset, maybe you will grab some chocolate or sweet bread. Why do these sweet foods help us feel better? And why is it mainly sweets and carbohydrates?

The sugars in the carbohydrates prompt the increase of serotonin production in the brain, which is the same chemical in our body that makes us feel emotionally better.

Fat, meanwhile, simply just soothes. A study revealed a group of subjects who viewed a sad movie or listened to sad music and received an injection of saturated fat were less affected emotionally than those who received saline shots (http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/20110725/ why-comfort-foods-are-so-comforting).

However, sometimes when you are really stressed, your body does not want food. Stress involves the same natural chemicals that would be released if a wild animal were chasing you. Therefore, our stress response is there as a survival mechanism, and it is highly unlikely you would eat chips or chocolate while being chased by a tiger.

The way to stop these cravings is to focus on something else. Exercise is a great way to relieve stress, whether it is yoga or a fifteen minute walk around the block. Another idea is writing down what you feel or doing something you particularly enjoy. All these things may help you relieve stress without the need to eat comfort foods to feel better. All these things help you realize you are not being chased by the tiger or that you really even want food, therefore you do not need to eat comfort foods to feel better.

Sarah Townsend is a teenager keen on healthy living and the daughter of Linda Townsend, a regular contributor to The Life Line. You can contact her at 4biohealth@gmail.com.

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Supplements – Do I Really Need Them?

By Dr. Joe Esposito, DC, BS, DCBCN, DABCO

What's the scoop, do I really need supplements?

A vitamin, by definition, is a substance that will cause a disease if the body does not have enough of it or if the body cannot utilize what it does have. Vitamins do not produce energy on their own. Once a substance is found to meet these guidelines, it will be called a vitamin.

A vitamin will help in food metabolism and assist in releasing energy from digested food. The amount needed for good health is relatively small, so vitamins are considered micronutrients, as opposed to macronutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Vitamins will also assist in enzyme functions in the body, so you may hear them referred to as coenzymes. Nothing in the body can occur properly unless we have an enzyme in the chemical interaction.

We are born with a certain amount of basic enzyme stores and as we age, the body will use those stores to create two types of specific enzymes: Digestive enzymes, which are used to break down and digest food, and metabolic enzymes, which are used for every chemical reaction in the body. Should you deplete your enzyme stores, bodily functions will begin to malfunction or worse yet, cease all together.

Most chronic diseases can be linked in some way to enzymes and the fact they are depleted or not functioning properly due to coenzyme problems. Things that will deplete enzymes stores are stress, excessive physical exertion, fever, aging, and poor diet.

Cooking your food, whether it is a piece of meat or a carrot, will cause the body to tap into its enzyme stores to help digest the food. If your diet consists of raw foods, they will contain their own enzymes to help digest themselves and not use up your stored enzymes. In fact they will actually help replace enzyme stores that you have used up over the years. Of course, it is not recommended to eat raw animal products, but raw fruits and veggies are always the food of choice. Raw fruits and veggies will also contain the vitamins you require in a form that is easily absorbed. The form of the vitamins will be in a natural state and mixed with other vitamins and minerals that work in a symbiotic relationship to be more effective than isolated vitamins you would find in a pill.

Supplements and the RDA

RDA stands for Recommended Daily Allowance, which is the minimum amount of a vitamin required to prevent a disease from occurring in the general population. It is not what is required to obtain and maintain optimum health. In order to have vibrant health, you must consider the ODA, or Optimum Daily Allowance. Taking too little of a vitamin can cause problems, however taking too much of a vitamin can cause a condition called hypervitaminosis or too much vitamins. The symptoms of too little or too much of a vitamin are often exactly the same. The cutoff point is often a

very fine line. For example, up to 100 mg. of zinc is shown to help strengthen the immune system, but over 100 mg. of zinc may actually harm the immune system. B vitamins, when taken in an isolated form, have been shown to deplete other B vitamins. This is a very strong argument for using whole food supplements, which are supplements made from whole foods that contain a wide variety of vitamins and minerals that work synergistically to create a stronger vitamin function.

One example is concerning vitamin C and bioflavonoids. In order for bioflavonoids to work properly they must be taken along with vitamin C. Bioflavonoids appear to be helpful in fighting cancer and other diseases. Whole foods means foods that are in their natural state and are not altered. Examples are foods such as raw apples, carrots, lettuce, nuts, seeds, etc. These foods are certain to contain nutrients that likely have not yet been discovered and will likely be proven necessary for optimum health and will work with other nutrients to allow all of the nutrients to be more effective. Whole food supplements also minimize the risk of hypervitaminosis. In a world of pollution, stress, and diets consisting of more and more cooked foods, as well as decreasing caloric needs due to a more sedentary lifestyle, it is difficult to get enough high quality foods to meet our Optimum Daily Allowance. Many experts recommend a supplement to get all you need for good health. Now we are left with these questions: Which supplements are best? Are synthetic supplements just as good as natural ones?

Synthetic vs. Natural Supplements

Synthetic vitamins are vitamins produced in a laboratory from either natural or chemical sources and have undergone a conversion or chemical extraction. If you are suffering from a deficiency, synthetic vitamins will help in correcting that deficiency, but you will not get all the other benefits of vitamins found in a whole food source. There is also a risk of getting too much of the isolated vitamin. Manufacturers must use larger amounts of synthetic vitamins than natural vitamins in order to get similar responses.

Natural vitamins are vitamins which are derived from vegetable, mineral, or animal sources without any conversion or chemical alteration. This assures that the nutritional integrity remains intact. However, even natural vitamins are isolated and may not work as well as they would if they were in a whole food supplement.

Whether the vitamin is synthetic or natural, all vitamins on the market must comply with the molecular structure of vitamins described in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia, which is the national standard of all supplement manufacturers.

What is a mineral?

Minerals are inorganic, meaning they do not contain carbon, and are not of animal or vegetable

origin. They are required by the body in small amounts and have various functions. Minerals are not absorbed very well in their natural state so oftentimes manufacturers will bind them to proteins in order for them to be absorbed better. This process is called chelation and it is when an inorganic mineral is bound to an organic (meaning containing carbon) substance. Most of the time, minerals found in whole foods are naturally chelated and are easily absorbed. Calcium is an example of a mineral. A caution concerning calcium is that in one study of 70 different brands of calcium supplements on the market showed that a majority of them contained lead levels above the recommended levels. For this reason, it is wise to avoid calcium supplements that contain natural oyster shells, dolomite, and bone meal products. Not all of these will contain high levels of lead, however there are better choices.

Studies have shown that if your diet consists of mainly fruits, vegetables, grains, seeds, and nuts and you avoid high acid foods including alcohol, meat, sugar, dairy, coffee, sodas, and artificial sweeteners, you will not need a calcium supplement. The reason behind this is the seven foods listed above are acidic and your body uses calcium and other minerals to neutralize the acids. We do not need more calcium if we are eating a good, whole food diet. We just need less dangerous acid.

So, do I need supplements?

If your diet consists of a plant based menu and you avoid alcohol, meat, sugar, dairy, coffee, sodas, and artificial sweeteners, and at least 60% of your diet is raw, you probably do not need a supplement. However, it is a good idea to add a whole food supplement to your diet in order to reach your Optimum Daily Allowance. Be sure your supplements contain whole foods and don't contain artificial colors, additives, or fillers.

Dr. Joe Esposito is a chiropractor, the author of Eating Right For The Health Of It!, the syndicated radio show host of HEALTH TALK ATLANTA, and the director of Health Plus Wellness Center. He is committed to making healthy living commonplace. For further information or if you have a specific health or pain related issue and would like to set up a no charge, private consultation with him (bring a friend or family member with you and the consultation for them is also no charge) or if you would like to set up a nutritional consultation (cost is \$100,) contact him at 770-427-7387 or visit drjoeesposito.com.

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Spring Smoothies

By Susan Esposito, BS, DC, DACNB, FABES, FACFN

As we are emerging from the chill of winter, and **ORANGE** enjoying the warmth that is brought on by spring and summer, it is a great time to reintroduce smoothies into our daily routine. Many people forgo the pleasure of drinking a frozen smoothie during the winter months, preferring to enjoy warmer fare to stave off the chill from their bones. So now as the buds re-emerge on plants and trees, so may the smoothie re-emerge in our kitchens!

The term "smoothie" was first popularized on the west coast of the US in the 1930's, when, thanks to the invention of the electric blender, these yummy concoctions were first created and sold. They became widely popular in the later part of the 1900's as health food chains marketed these beverages, touting their inherent benefits due to the myriad of fruits, veggies, proteins, and other "super food" ingredients that can be added to make this highly nutritious snack or meal. They are quick and convenient and depending on the ingredients, can be used for all types of diets and health initiatives. They are commonly used as part of detox plans, weight loss plans, and body building plans, as well as numerous other specialty diets. Smoothies and their benefits are as limitless as the imagination of those who make them.

Springtime is often associated with rainbows and the return of color to our natural surroundings. So I thought I might share some tasty and healthy smoothie recipes, one for each day of the week and each representing a color of the rainbow. My only issue in preparing this list of the seven smoothies in rainbow colors, was that the last two colors (indigo and violet) are actually just two shades of purple and in my opinion, not that much different in color. So I decided that instead of using those exact colors, I would add brown as the seventh color. So the smoothie colors I will include are: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and brown. There are entire diets based around eating foods of all different colors, because the colorful foods inherently contain different healthful ingredients. This was another reason that I wanted to include smoothie recipes that were all different in color. I added brown. because I wanted to add a smoothie that included cacao, for its flavor and antioxidant benefits.

Hopefully you will enjoy drinking this springtime rainbow and reap the nutritional benefits with each glass!

RED Serves: 2 Calories: 328 each

Quinoa Banana Berry Smoothie

½ c cooked red quinoa (cook and chill)

1 frozen banana (pre-sliced)

1 c frozen raspberries

1½ c green tea (home brewed without added sweeteners is best), add more or less depending on consistency preferred.

6 ice cubes

Blend all ingredients in blender until smooth.

Calories: 144 each

Carrot Ginger Turmeric Smoothie

Carrot Juice

2 c carrots

1½ c filtered water (only if blending rather than juicing)

Smoothie

1 large ripe banana, previously peeled, sliced and frozen (more for a sweeter smoothie)

1 c (140 g) frozen or fresh pineapple

½ T fresh ginger (1 small knob, peeled)

1/4 t ground turmeric (or sub cinnamon)

½ c (120 ml) carrot juice

1 T lemon juice (1/2 small lemon)

1 c (240 ml) unsweetened almond milk

- Juice carrots or, if blending, make carrot juice by adding carrots and filtered water to a high speed blender and blending on high until completely pureed and smooth. Add more water if it has trouble blending. Scrape down sides as needed.
- Drape a large, thin dish towel over a mixing bowl and pour over the juice. Then lift up on the corners of the towel and begin twisting and squeezing the juice out until all of the liquid is extracted.
- Transfer carrot juice to a mason jar with a cover. It will keep for several days, though best when fresh.
- Add smoothie ingredients to blender and blend on high until creamy and smooth.
- Add more carrot juice or almond milk if it has trouble blending. Scrape down sides as needed.
- Taste and adjust flavors as needed, adding more banana or pineapple for sweetness, lemon for acidity, ginger for bite, and turmeric for warmth.

YELLOW (This recipe claims that it helps melt belly fat, along with 30 minutes of daily exercise, but we'll see....)

Fat Melting Yellow Smoothie

½ c pineapple

½ c mango

½ banana

¹/3 c almond milk

1 T fresh orange juice

1 t flax seeds

1 T crushed almonds

- Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth.
- For a frozen smoothie, freeze the fruit ahead

GREEN Serves: 2 Calories: 162 each

Skinnylicious Protein Smoothie

1 avocado, peeled, seeded

1 organic (sweet) apple, cored, leave peeling on the apple

1 frozen banana

1 c baby spinach, loosely packed

1 c kale loosely packed, stems removed

1 c green tea, unsweetened (home brewed is best) 8 cubes ice

- Add the above ingredients to blender and blend until smooth.
- Add less green tea for a thicker smoothie.

BLUE Serves: 2

Almond Butter and Blueberry Smoothie

1 c almond milk

1 c blueberries (strong antioxidant)

4 ice cubes, or more to taste

1 scoop vanilla protein powder

1 T almond butter, or more to taste (full of protein)

1 T chia seeds, or more if desired

- Blend all ingredients in blender until smooth.
- Substitute flax seeds for chia seeds if desired.
- Coconut milk can be substituted for almond milk if desired.

PURPLE Serves: 2 Calories: 205 each

Red Cabbage and Blueberry Purple Smoothie

2 c red cabbage, chopped

1 c blueberries, fresh or frozen

2 medium bananas, peeled

2 t chia seeds, soaked for about 10 minutes 8 oz filtered water

> Start by adding the liquid to your blender, followed by the soft fruit.

Blend on high for 30 seconds or until the smoothie is creamy.

BROWN Serves: 1 great way to start your day!

Raw Banana Cacao Breakfast Smoothie

1 frozen banana, sliced

2 medjool dates, pitted

2 T raw almond butter 2 T raw cacao powder

1 T chia seeds

1 c raw almond milk

Blend all ingredients in blender until smooth.

References:

http://skinnyms.com/quinoa-banana-berry-smoothie/ http://minimalistbaker.com/carrot-ginger-turmericsmoothie/

http://www.healthyfoodstyle.com/melt-belly-fat-likecrazy-drinking-this-delicious-smoothie-every-day/ http://skinnyms.com/skinnylicious-protein-smoothie/ http://allrecipes.com/recipe/238528/almond-butterand-blueberry-smoothie/?

http://www.incrediblesmoothies.com/recipes/redcabbage-and-blueberry-purple-smoothie-recipe/ http://mydarlingvegan.com/2014/01/raw-bananacacao-breakfast-smoothie/

Dr. Susan Esposito is a chiropractic functional neurologist and nutritionist, currently practicing in the Life Neurology Center at Life University.

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STS

- · Kale Chips Dill Pickle
- · Kale Chips Lemon Olive Oil
- Kale Chips Sea Salt

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Organic Sriracha Tortilla Chip

Kettle

- Organic Kettle Chips Jalapeno
- · Organic Kettle Chips Sea Salt Vinegar
- · Vegetable Chips Beet Parsnip Sweet Potato
- Vegetable Chips Sweet Potatoes

Kind Bar

- · Black Truffle Almond Sea Salt
- · Dark Chocolate Almond Coconut
- · Dark Chocolate Almond Mint
- Honey Roasted Nuts Sea Salt
- · Raspberry Cashew Chia

Kashi

- · Dark Chocolate Chia Cashew Bar
- · Honey Nut Baklava Bar
- · Chocolate Sea Salt Nutty Bar
- · Peanut Hemp Crunch Bar

Woodstock

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- · Organic Rice Bites Strawberry Yogurt

Schar

- · Croissant Gluten Free
- · Croissant Hazelnut Cream Gluten Free
- Artisan Baker White GF Bread

Beetnik

- · Organic Grass Fed Beef Chili
- Organic Grass Fed Beef Meatballs
- Organic Chicken Meatballs

Riley

- Organic Dog Treats Apple
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Zukes

Z Bones Carrot