Dear Health Enthusiast

How to increase your energy? How to defeat inflammation? How to have a vibrant skin? Find the answers to all those questions!

Wildwood Lifestyle Center & Hospital

FEATURED ARTICLES

Seven Ways to Increase Energy
Don’t have enough energy? Check out your power plants!

Ten Ways to Defeat Inflammation
If you have a chronic disease—arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, atherosclerosis, cancer, obesity, these science-validated suggestions will help you because inflammation fuels most chronic diseases like these. Here are ten ways to defeat it.
Twelve Lifestyle Tips for Vibrant Skin

The skin is a vital organ. Indeed, with a total area of about 20 square feet, it is the largest organ of our bodies. We cannot live without it. One square inch of skin is composed of...

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Seven Ways to Increase Energy

Don’t have enough energy? Check out your power plants! Inside all cells are power generators called mitochondria. They take the glucose we get from eating carbohydrates or the fatty acids we obtain from eating fats and very economically produce ATP, the major energy currency molecule in the body. How can we increase their efficiency?

1. Get daily vigorous exercise to tolerance. Just two months of vigorous exercise doubles the number of mitochondria in skeletal muscles. Physical activity determines the relative number and volume (size) of mitochondria in the skeletal muscles on a day-to-day basis. Two days of bed rest will decrease the number of mitochondria in your skeletal muscles by 10%. The more power houses you have, the more energetic you are.

2. Stay hydrated. Dehydration decreases the efficiency of mitochondria in the brain.

3. Watch your sugar and fat intake. Any diet high in sugar and/or fat will eventually lead to an impaired function of the mitochondria. The frequent consumption of fried foods, for example, results in damage to the double membrane of the mitochondria in brain cells. When this occurs, free radicals, which are so important in energy production inside the mitochondria, leak out and damage the brain cells!

4. Skip second helpings if necessary. Wise calorie restriction improves mitochondrial performance in brown adipose (fat) tissue and brain, muscle, and kidney cells. It also increases the number of mitochondria. In contrast, obesity may contribute to mitochondrial dysfunction in the heart and skeletal muscles, because it reduces the ability of the mitochondria to burn fat in the skeletal muscles.

5. Eat red grapes and blueberries. The phytochemical resveratrol in these foods also increases the number of mitochondria.

6. Get enough sleep. Deep sleep increases the production of growth hormone from the pituitary gland. This hormone improves the synthesis of mitochondria in the heart muscle and skeletal muscles.

7. Breathe deeply ten times every hour. Deep breathing is a vital lifestyle practice because the power plants need oxygen to release most of the energy from ATP.

If these seven suggestions do not help you, consult your physician as lab work is in order. Low thyroid hormones, anemia, elevated blood sugar, a low level of vitamin D, and a variety of other conditions sap energy. If you need help in incorporating these suggestions into your life, consider coming to Wildwood Lifestyle Center. We can help.

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Ten Ways to Defeat Inflammation

Ten Ways to Defeat Inflammation

If you have a chronic disease—arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, atherosclerosis, cancer, obesity, these science-validated suggestions will help you because inflammation fuels most chronic diseases like these. Here are ten ways to defeat it.

1. Adopt a well-balanced plant based diet. The typical Western diet (characterized by higher intakes of red and processed meats, sweets, desserts, French fries, and refined grains) increases inflammatory markers in the blood. In contrast, the regular consumption of a prudent diet of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and monounsaturated fats reduces inflammation.

2. Drastically reduce soft and sweetened drinks. The average American drinks 216 liters of soft drinks annually. Low to moderate consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages increased bad cholesterol (LDL) levels, blood glucose levels, and an inflammatory marker (hsCRP) in healthy young men in just three weeks.

3. Think color:
   Eat red grapes, berries, and cherries. These fruits are loaded with anti-inflammatory phytochemicals. Flavonoids found in blueberries and cranberries protect our small blood vessels from inflammatory assaults and improve mental performance by increasing antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activity within the brain.
   Strawberries significantly reduce the natural rise of inflammation that occurs after a high fat meal and improves the body’s ability to respond to insulin.

4. Eat a green vegetable and celery daily. Chlorophyll and magnesium in these foods combat inflammation. Want a great anti-inflammatory vegetable with pain-reducing properties? Eat celery. Medical botanist James Duke points out that celery contains two dozen analgesic compounds and more than two dozen anti-inflammatory phytochemicals. Don’t like raw celery? Use it liberally in soups, legume dishes, and entrées. A veggie cocktail of half carrot juice and half celery is excellent.

5. Lose weight if obese. Low-muscle mass combined with high body fat triggers inflammatory problems. Fat cells are actually endocrine cells that make an arsenal of chemicals, many of which, if produced in excess, promote inflammation. The good news is that steady, gradual weight loss helps to reduce inflammation even before ideal weight is achieved.

6. Be sure your vitamin D level is normal. As many as 50% of North Americans and Western Europeans are either deficient or have insufficient levels of vitamin D hormone, calcitriol. This is dangerous because this hormone combats inflammation and free radical damage. It also fights cancer. Sunscreen blocks vitamin D production in skin when it is exposed to the sunlight.

7. Get adequate, good quality sleep. Even reducing a normal sleep time of eight hours by 25% encourages inflammation. Deficient sleep increases inflammation. Losing sleep for even part of one night can trigger one of the major cellular pathways that produces tissue-damaging inflammation which could contribute to autoimmune disease like rheumatoid arthritis. It also increases the risk of cardiovascular disease by increasing at least three inflammatory markers involved in atherosclerosis.

8. Engage in daily moderate exercise. Moderate exercise thickens the adrenal gland cortices which produce the anti-inflammatory hormone cortisol. This valuable hormone tightens up the cell membranes making them more resistant to inflammatory compounds. Resistant training reduces inflammation in obese, post menopausal women. Regular, moderate exercise also increases anti-inflammatory compounds in the elderly.

9. Develop sound mental health. Depression and chronic anxiety promote inflammation. By cultivating an attitude of gratitude, replacing distorted thought patterns with healthy thoughts and by accepting our limitations that we can not change, we reduce our stress.

10. Control for chronic disease. Keep blood sugar and blood pressure within normal ranges. Uncontrolled chronic disease generates more free radical damage and inflammation. Work with your doctor to reduce this damage.

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Twelve Lifestyle Tips for Vibrant Skin

The skin is a vital organ. Indeed, with a total area of about 20 square feet, it is the largest organ of our bodies. We cannot live without it. One square inch of skin is composed of 19 million cells, 625 sweat glands, 90 oil glands, 65 hair follicles, 19,000 sensory cells, and 4 meters of blood vessels. The skin protects, provides immunity, excretes, breathes, and is involved in thermal balance. The outer part of the epidermis helps maintain fluid balance. How can we keep it healthy and slow down its aging?

1. **Don’t smoke.** Not only does nicotine reduce blood flow to the skin and thereby compromise the nutrition going to the skin, smoking cigarettes also decreases the efficiency with which the skin can regenerate itself. Smoking a single cigarette can reduce blood flow to the fingers by 24%. This constriction of the skin’s blood vessels can last up to 90 minutes. Smoking makes the skin more prone to wrinkles.

2. **Reduce your risk of type diabetes.** When blood glucose gets high, the body loses fluid, and consequently the skin becomes dry and itchy. If the skin becomes dry enough to crack, germs are liable to enter and cause infection. About one third of people with diabetes will develop skin problems sometime during their lives.

3. **Pay careful attention to your diet.** Flavonoids in berries and citrus have been associated with lower risk for skin damage and melanoma. Vitamin E from nuts, seeds, and greens helps to protect the cell membranes in skin from free radical damage. Carotenoids found in dark leafy greens and orange fruits and vegetables also provide antioxidant protection for the skin. Lycopene in tomatoes seems to be the most protective antioxidant for skin.

4. **Limit your sugar consumption.** Frequent consumption of sugar can damage skin by generating advanced glycation end-products (AGES). Glycation occurs as sugar attaches itself to proteins to form these harmful molecules. As AGES accumulate, they damage the collagen and elastin, the proteins in skin that make it elastic. AGES also transform the collagen fibers so they become more fragile. Consequently, the skin loses its elasticity and becomes more vulnerable to wrinkles.

5. **Prevent sunburn and skin cancer.** Sun exposure damages the skin’s collagen and leads to lines, freckles, wrinkles, and red, visible blood vessels in the skin.

6. **Skip caffeine and alcohol.** Both caffeine and alcohol dehydrate the skin. Alcohol depletes vitamin A which is so necessary for skin health. Excessive drinking causes the blood vessels in your skin to lose their tone.

7. **Regular exercise improves blood flow to the skin.** This is true even if the person has type 2 diabetes. As blood flow to the skin increases, more nutrients and oxygen are carried to the skin.

8. **Get sufficient, regular sleep.** Puffy eyes and more fine lines are obvious signs that we don’t get enough sleep. During deep sleep, the pituitary gland releases growth hormone. This valuable hormone improves protein synthesis in the skin and elsewhere in body. By promoting its premature aging, chronic sleep deprivation not only makes the skin more susceptible to bacterial infections, but also encourages skin disorders related to immune dysfunction. Accumulating deficit of sleep actually inhibits the production of collagen in the skin. Women who do not get enough sleep also experience greater water loss from the skin.

9. **Learn to manage stress.** Stress compromises the ability of the skin to act as a needed barrier to harmful microorganisms and dehydration. The skin’s ability to heal wounds quickly and effectively is essential to good health. We now know that stress can slow the rate of wound healing. Stress creates frown lines and makes us look older. Prolonged stress, via excess cortisol, interferes with the ability of the skin to regenerate and also reduce collagen formation as well as breaking down collagen. Even perceived stress hurts the skin. For example, among healthy males, greater perceived stress 2 weeks before and on the day of getting a punch biopsy wound predicted slower healing from 7 to 21 days. Stress makes the skin more vulnerable to infections. Compounding the influence of stress, infected wounds heal more slowly and are more likely to result in scarring.

10. **Learn how to manage conflict.** Studies show that conflict slows wound healing in the skin.

11. **Nurture and moisturize it.** Good skin hygiene reduces the risk for infection and inflammation. Use gentle soap. Beware of ceramides in soaps and lotions that undesirably coat the skin.

Dry skin can come from natural aging. Dryness in the skin triggers the release of inflammatory chemicals in the skin. The natural pH of the skin also shifts.
Consequently the skin’s antibacterial capacity is reduced. Dry air dries the skin. Hot showers or baths without applying a moisturizer or emollient dries the skin, especially in older individuals. If your skin is dry, you may apply a natural moisturizer after your bath or shower. Virgin olive oil is a good moisturizer. Be careful when you apply any oil or lotion to your feet– you don’t want to slide. Coconut oil helps to heal minor skin irritations.

12. Consult with your doctor. Deficiency in essential fatty acids promotes dryness in the skin. An “essential” fatty acid is one that the body does not make, so it is essential for us to eat foods that have them. If your skin is dry, check your intake of omega-3 fats. Low levels of the thyroid hormones, autoimmune disease, food allergies, chronic kidney disease are a few examples of medical conditions that can contribute to dry skin. Dry skin coupled by itching or a rash should be evaluated by a physician. Know the signs and symptoms of skin cancer. Report to a dermatologist any suspicious lesion or mole.

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