MALADY
makeover

Joint Care's Natural Alternative

Prolotherapy injects new life into chronic pain management.

Do you have a bad back, creaky knees, an achy shoulder or pain in your neck? If so, you're not alone. An estimated 76 million Americans suffer from some form of chronic musculoskeletal pain due to osteoarthritis, herniated discs and back problems, tendonitis, sports injuries, degenerated joints and various other conditions. As tendons stretch, ligaments fray and cartilage breaks down, classic symptoms show up; the resulting aches and pains, stiffness, and loss of mobility can put a significant dent in your quality of life—even cause permanent disability.

Prolotherapy is a natural treatment that just might be the solution to your pain problems. With origins that predate conventional symptom-treating drugs by decades, it addresses the root cause of pain by using an injection to stimulate the body's inherent natural healing process. Through the formation of new connective tissue and strengthening of existing tissue, supporters of prolotherapy claim it can permanently eliminate the pain associated with musculoskeletal conditions while restoring flexibility, stability and function to weakened joints.

A Necessary Alternative

Prolotherapy may be poised for a surge given the controversy surrounding conventional answers to unrelieved pain: As the baby boomer population ages and becomes more pain-prone, the drug industry has responded by releasing powerful prescription COX-2 inhibitors and other *non-steroidal anti-inflammatories* (NSAIDs). These medications fail to address the root causes of chronic soreness but have been remarkably effective in treating it—and so the number of prescriptions has skyrocketed to over 60 million a year, generating billions of dollars in profits.

But time has revealed that drug companies might have rushed to market too quickly. In 2004, Vioxx, the industry-leading NSAID, was pulled from shelves due to concerns over dangerous potential side effects in some users: By the FDA's own estimation, Vioxx had likely caused over 100,000 heart attacks over the course of its five years on the market. One by one, other NSAIDs have also been associated with side effect risks, including cardiovascular, gastrointestinal and renal complications—leaving sufferers seeking alternative pain management solutions.

In many ways, prolotherapy is the opposite of pharmaceutical treatments for musculoskeletal pain. "Prolotherapy versus the pharmaceutical industry is a David-and-Goliath situation," explains Dr. Mark Wheaton, prolotherapy expert, instructor and contributing author of *Prolo Your Sports Injuries Away! Curing Sports Injuries & Enhancing Athletic Performance with Prolotherapy* (Beulah Land Press). "High-priced drugs promise a lot but deliver very little; they don't heal anything. Prolotherapy is so powerful. People can get excellent results in pain and function, which is a permanent cure... not just masking pain, like what drugs do."

So how does it work? In prolotherapy, a small amount of a minor irritant—such as sugar water, dextrose solution or cod liver oil—is

precisely injected around weak or painful joints and ligaments. The body responds with controlled, localized inflammation. Though inflammation gets a well-deserved bad rap when it runs rampant, appropriate inflammation is also the body's first response to injury and first step to healing. As prolotherapy introduces inflammation to a targeted area, it focuses the body's healing energies where they are needed most. Repair commences, as the body releases growth factors that lead to development of a new collagen matrix. The body's construction crew shows up at the prolotherapy-designated work site and lays down new ligament and tendon fibers. Ultimately, prolotherapy repairs damage by re-growing healthy, flexible and fresh connective tissue.

> Most people see improvements from prolotherapy. "It is 14 months since my last treatment," says one patient, "and I am still completely pain-free, with more range of motion than [before my] surgery."

Raw Materials

Of course, this internal construction crew needs building materials—that's where proper nutrition comes in. Wheaton puts prolotherapy patients on a supplement regimen that includes the amino acids **L-arginine** and **L-cysteine**, **vitamin C**, the minerals **magnesium** and **manganese**, the organic sulfur compound **MSM** and the herbs **gotu kola** and **horsetail**, among other healing substances. "These ingredients help with synthesis of collagen, which makes up ligaments," Wheaton explains. "With this nutrition, you're giving the body something to work with."

Wheaton also employs **glucosamine** and **chondroitin** in conjunction with prolotherapy. "Both scientific and mainstream literature show that glucosamine and chondroitin do as good a job or better of controlling moderate to severe arthritis pain than anti-inflammatory drugs," he says, "without the side effects." Another supplement that complements prolotherapy is the enzyme **bromelain**, derived from pineapples, which Wheaton uses to modulate the inflammatory response so critical to prolotherapy's healing action.

The response can be staggering: About 85% to 90% of all prolotherapy patients experience significant improvements. Take Alan Swanson, who underwent wrist surgery 13 years ago that degenerated into severe arthritis. "The orthopedic surgeon said that my only options were either to fuse the wrist or remove a row of bones with a 70% chance things would grow back together," he says. "I decided to try prolotherapy instead. It is now 14 months since my last prolotherapy treatment to my wrist and I am still completely pain-free, with more range of motion than I have had since the surgery."

Prolotherapy is not a quick fix; it requires several treatments that can take up to a year. But for those who embrace it, a year of prolotherapy shots is preferable to a lifetime of prescription drugs—especially since it delivers permanent, organic results. "Prolotherapy is a true healing modality," Wheaton concludes. "That's why I put prolotherapy ahead of any other form of pain or joint management, without question."

—Patrick Dougherty

The Good Scoop

Make your own ice cream for a healthier summertime treat.

It starts with surreptitiously slipping a pint into a shopping cart and inevitably ends with a feeding frenzy freezer raid under the cloak of night. Guilty pleasure-seekers cannot resist ice cream's sweet, silky satisfaction—and while many will linger over choosing a flavor, few will take the time to examine ice cream's ingredients. If they did, they might be surprised to find high-fructose corn syrup, mysterious preservatives, indigestible thickeners, artificial colors and flavors, emulsifier chemicals and dreaded *trans* fats. As it turns out, calories might be the least of ice cream's caveats.

Thankfully, it's possible to enjoy natural, organic and even (gasp!) *healthy* ice cream without any of these undesirable ingredients—especially if you're willing to roll up your sleeves and make your own. Purchasing an ice cream maker is a prerequisite, but quality models are available for under $50. Over time the appliance pays for itself; more importantly, it enables complete ice cream ingredient control—opening limitless possibilities for unique flavor creations and healthy customizations.

For example, throw in any combination of organic raspberries, strawberries, cherries, pineapple, mangoes or bananas for unique tutti-frutti ice cream flavors that deliver colorful fruits' healthy phytonutrients. Ditch empty refined sugar calories for nutritive sweeteners such as agave nectar, molasses or maple syrup; or try stevia, a non-caloric natural sweetener. Use your favorite organic cream or experiment with tofu and soy milk as your ice cream base.

Even those who follow a non-dairy or vegan lifestyle can still indulge in decadent frozen treats. In his book *Vice Cream* (Celestial Arts), author Jeff Rogers outlines innovative techniques for creating vegan and raw-food ice creams using nut milks, natural sweeteners and a cornucopia of healthy, natural ingredients. The following *Vice Cream* recipe—packed with the powerful antioxidant activity of blueberries—shows that with a few modifications, you can indulge in a classic summertime treat with a (mostly) guilt-free conscience.

—Patrick Dougherty

ET Recipe

Vegan Blueberry "Vice Cream"

- 22 oz fresh organic blueberries, plus 1/2 cup chopped blueberries
- 1 cup organic cashews or cashew pieces
- 1 cup maple syrup
- 1 tbsp alcohol-free vanilla flavor
- 1/8 tsp alcohol-free almond flavor

1. Run the whole blueberries through a juicer to make 2 cups of juice. (If you don't want to go to the trouble of juicing the berries, increase the chopped blueberries to 1 cup, the cashews to 1 1/2 cups, and add 1 1/2 cups water. The taste won't be as intense, but it will still be delicious.)
2. Combine the juice, cashews, maple syrup and both flavorings in a blender and mix on high until silky smooth, at least 1 minute. Place the blender in the freezer for 40 minutes to 1 hour or in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour or overnight, until well chilled.
3. Place the chopped blueberries in the freezer to chill.
4. Pour the blueberry juice mixture into an ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. Remove the cover and blade from the maker and fold in the chopped blueberries, distributing evenly. Serve immediately or transfer to airtight containers and store in the freezer until ready to serve.

Serves 8. Analysis per serving: 256 calories, 3.3g protein, 8.4g fat (1.6g saturated), 3g fiber, 44g carbohydrates

Recipe courtesy of Vice Cream *by Jeff Rogers (Celestial Arts, www.tenspeed.com)*

NHA/WASHINGTON update*

An Industry of Integrity

Supplement manufacturers protect consumers' health freedom.

Amidst the never-ending barrage of underhanded, sneaky gambits designed to tear our health freedom away, it's sometimes easy to take for granted that we are still free to take nutritional supplements. We are free to go to our local health food store and purchase vitamin C in a high potency, free to take herbal supplements that we feel can improve our health, free to take any nutrition we choose into our bodies. Health freedom is ours because in the early 1990s, the natural products industry—galvanized by the Nutritional Health Alliance health freedom advocacy group's orchestration—united to help enable the passage of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA).

DSHEA preserved our right to health freedom by classifying supplements as a class of foods. Under this classification, supplements were rightly liberated from requiring FDA approval, unless they were proven to be dangerous or adulterated. DSHEA struck such a powerful chord with the American public that its passage was impossible to deny—more citizens wrote letters to Congress on DSHEA than on any other piece of legislation in US history. Thanks to the efforts of the NHA, the natural products industry and millions of citizens, democracy in its truest form was carried out—as the American public's vehement desire for health freedom was realized in DSHEA.

Today, the natural products industry continues its dedication to evolving its own practices and protecting health freedom for consumers. New Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) legislation for the nutritional supplements industry has arrived, and supplement manufacturers are embracing these updated GMP regulations. Once the new GMP regulations are officially announced, manufacturers will modify their practices (if necessary) to comply, and the industry will move forward as one that is quite capable of policing itself, without any assistance from the FDA.

Health Renaissance

The American public's appreciation of the natural products industry's efforts is evident in the escalating natural health revolution. As if smelling salts have been snapped under the nose of a sleeping giant, the American public has awakened and is now seeing through the fog of health dictatorship and reactive medicine with crystal-clear vision.

Never before has the public been so health conscious—so in tune with the importance of nutrition, the dangers of toxicity and the shortcomings of synthetic drugs. A massive consciousness shift is underway, as preventive care—including nutrition, diet, exercise and mental balance—moves to the fore. Now people look askance at the FDA's advice because they are aware that this flawed organization has grossly mismanaged America's health for decades. More than ever, people are seeking organic foods, green homes and eco-friendly cars, treating planetary health with the reverence it deserves. Americans are defying low-end RDAs and taking nutrition as they see fit, buying vitamins, minerals and herbal supplements in record quantities. Not just any supplements; consumers are increasingly seeking out superior supplements that are natural in origin—because they understand that nature resonates with true health.

DSHEA launched a revolution, but the battle for health freedom is not over. The best way to say "thank you" to those who fought to implement DSHEA is to continue their fight—defend DSHEA and all it represents for future generations. To maintain the positive momentum of the natural health revolution, we must stay focused on our goals. Tell your friends and neighbors—it is the strength of the American public as a whole that will ensure that health freedom triumphs over tyranny. Please join the Nutritional Health Alliance at www.nha2007.com so we can unite as one powerful voice for health freedom! ■

*This editorial is a public service announcement sponsored by the Nutritional Health Alliance (NHA).

Mariel's Personal Best

By Patrick Dougherty

After a lifetime of chasing health and happiness, **Mariel Hemingway** has discovered the secret to well-being... but she's not going to tell you what it is. In her new book, the actress explains why creating your own path to good health is the only way to go.

A negative thought is attacking Mariel Hemingway. In a convincing pantomime, she grabs her own shoulders and thrashes about, wrestling with inner demons in an elegant Manhattan tea room. "We believe thoughts are doing this, that they're grabbing on and controlling us," Hemingway explains through the struggle. "The fact of the matter is, you can just go like this," She pauses, deliberately removing her hands from her shoulders. "If you believe in a negative thought long

enough, it can create disease and anxiety... but you can let go of negative beliefs if you have a lifestyle that supports you."

In her new book, *Mariel Hemingway's Healthy Living from the Inside Out: Every Woman's Guide to Real Beauty, Renewed Energy, and a Radiant Life* (HarperCollins), Hemingway provides insight on how to create that supportive lifestyle through positive change across four synergistic sections: food, exercise, silence and home. Amidst her holistic program's practical tips, nutritious recipes and personal anecdotes, Hemingway intersperses Zen-like philosophical musings that form an organic whole: Be kind to yourself. Use intuition to choose the right foods. Exercise with intention. Find your spiritual center. Throw out perfection. Practice mindfulness. Live in the present.

Though Hemingway may humbly demur at the suggestion that she is an authority, the results of her thoughtfully crafted program are undeniable. Casually dressed in a crisp white button-down shirt and blue jeans, she is a healthy portrait of youthful beauty and positive energy. Hemingway is warm, friendly and quick to laugh—especially at her own jokes. But Hemingway's path to joy has been anything but smooth. She speaks openly of her work to release her own negative energies and transcend the self-destructive behaviors that many associate with her lineage. "As you develop in your spirituality and your awareness as a human being, certain things don't serve you anymore," she muses between sips of herbal tea. "Your spirit wants to get rid of them." In food, exercise, silence and home, Hemingway has created a peaceful space to do just that.

Rather than just another instruction manual, Hemingway offers her book as a template, encouraging the reader to actively create her or his own individualized wellness program. On the surface, Hemingway's approach is refreshing; at its core, her philosophy is revolutionary—steering the pursuit of holistic health into realms of self-exploration, intuitive wisdom and personal health responsibility on an integrated level. *Energy Times* sat down with the Academy Award-nominated actress—next to be seen in the historical Cape Cod romantic comedy *Chatham*—to discuss her book, her healthy lifestyle philosophy and the new Hemingway legacy.

"I cook very simply, but I lay a beautiful table. Not grand, but I take the time to find different colors, put flowers out, light a candle. I do this for my family and for myself because I like the ritual of it."

Energy Times: **Can you discuss the holistic approach of *Mariel Hemingway's Healthy Living from the Inside Out*?**

Mariel Hemingway: There are books about food, there are books about exercise, but there's nothing that says to really change your life, you have to look at your life as a whole. We have to live in a home; we have to eat. We don't necessarily have to exercise or find silence, but if you do all four things together it has the capacity to truly change you at a deep level, especially if you do small bits of it at a time. The whole point of the book is that this is about you and finding what works for you—not what works for me, 'cause what works for me is pretty peculiar. I know it works for me, but it doesn't work for my husband. So it's about finding that balance; how do I create a home that just makes me feel good, that brings me peace.

ET: **Your book is uniquely interactive; you want the reader to create their own path to wellness, rather than just listen to you.**

MH: Exactly. In fact, don't listen to me—my ways probably won't work for you. What makes the book interactive is that I ask a series of questions; have you done this, do you do that, how do you feel when you eat this, when you try a new food, what works for you, what doesn't. You have to experiment. You're the artist, you're painting your own health picture, so you use different colors. If a color doesn't work so well in your painting, you can always pull back on that color. The book is interactive in the sense that you become the instigator of your own choices. It's about participating in your own healing.

ET: **You emphasize eating healthy, organic, nutritious foods; at the same time, you advise being kind to yourself if you stray from that path.**

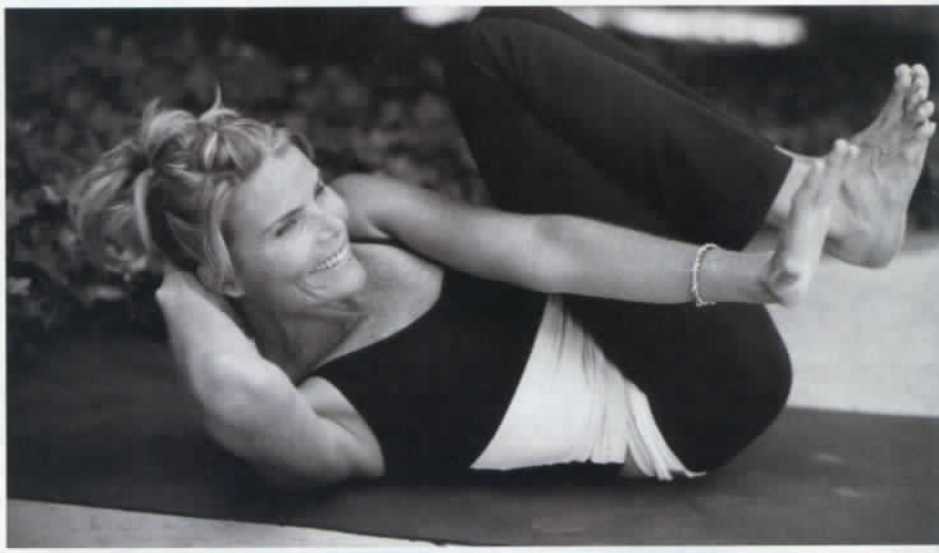
MH: Our way of eating is so bloody important, but we just don't eat real food—in this country especially. The book is about finding your true center; this applies to food as well. Where is your center of health, when do you feel the most energetic? I try to guide you towards getting rid of what I call the "noisy foods"; the caffeine, sugar, processed foods, diet sodas, chemical foods. Once those are gone, you kind of play with your diet by observing how you feel. Am I a person who needs a lot of protein? Or maybe I am more vegetarian? Maybe I need this, that or the other thing. Once you find your center, it's OK if once a week you give yourself permission to have cake. It doesn't mean "Oh, I had cake, I might as well eat the whole thing and then I'm off track. I'm a bad person. Screw it; I'll start next month, next year, whatever, I hate myself anyway." It's about understanding that nothing you do is bad; the next choice you make is a better choice, a different choice. You're always one meal away from making a better choice for your body, just like you're always a couple minutes of silence away from getting grounded and centered.

ET: **Can you explain "noisy foods" a little more?**

MH: Junk foods are noisy by their very nature: they're high in sugar, usually containing a lot of preservatives and chemicals; all of these ingredients create chemical noise in the brain. You can see this with caffeine; obviously we get jacked up. We love the feeling, but maybe it's not the best for us. Diet drinks, processed foods, white flour, any food that's denatured...when the nature is taken away from it, it causes chemical reactions in the brain that throw hormonal levels and brain chemistry off balance. When you're off-balance like that, you can't get to your true center. That's noise and that's what noisy food does. That's why I encourage people...I don't say cut your caffeine completely, but do cut back because you will notice that there will be a clarity to your thinking. There's a distraction that happens from the chemicals we take in and so the less noisy food, the less distracting food, the less chemically induced food that we have, the more clarity we'll have—enabling us to make better choices.

ET: **In your book, you advocate "slow food" as a healthy alternative to our fast food culture.**

MH: Yes! We're so led to believe that we have no time, we're rushing, we're doing. We've created that nonsense to believe because we're eating crazy food that makes us feel rushed and stressed. We rush into the house after a long day at work and say, "What do I make for my family for dinner? I'll go into the freezer, pull something out, throw it into the microwave, throw it at my kids. Then we'll turn the television on and we'll all just zone out while we eat." Those calories mean nothing to your body; you're not being nourished in any way—especially spiritually—as a family or as a person. So I make food. I don't take a long time; I make a salad, I grill a piece of fish or a piece of chicken for my husband, I just take time to make something real. It does not have to be elaborate, but I do it. I always see the Buddhists' plain and simple way of life, that doing the simple tasks with intention and from my point of view, with love, changes everything about the meal. It will have an effect on your family that is



"With exercise, I take a yogic attitude . . . you'll get far more benefit from your movement and exercise if you do it with intention and total focus—because you can do it in half the time."

really wonderful. If you put intention into food, it becomes your medicine, it becomes your healing, it becomes your way to love yourself.

ET: **In your holistic philosophy, food and home overlap.**

MH: In my home I'm a good cook—not a fabulous cook. I cook very simply, but I lay a beautiful table. Not grand, but I take the time to find different colors, put flowers out, light a candle. I do this for my family and for myself because I like the ritual of it; I think it slows us down to have rituals. I never use a microwave anymore; I think it's very unhealthy for food. I think it does something chemically, I actually think it changes the cellular structure of food, changes something that's healthy into this nothingness that doesn't do anything good or bad; it's just kind of "blah." If I need to heat something up, I turn my oven on and you know what? It takes ten more minutes, it really doesn't take that much more time.

ET: **Do you feel that this mindful intention slows down time or creates more time?**

MH: Yes, I really do. Here's the deal: if you slow down, if you're actually present and you're doing what you're doing when you're doing it...you drink that water and you're actually drinking that water, you listen to me and I listen to you and we're having this exchange...time doesn't matter. It just becomes what we're doing now. Being present gives you time. Being in silence gives you time because it slows down the organs, it calms the brain; the neurons kind of settle, everything just gets a little bit more soft. And in softening our energy, we suddenly have more ability to focus on the things we're doing—so we feel as though we have more time. Maybe we're not scientifically getting more time, but we've given our bodies and our minds the illusion of more space because we become calmer.

ET: **How do you approach exercise?**

"The book is interactive in the sense that you become the instigator of your own choices. It's about participating in your own healing."

MH: I do yoga and with exercise, I take a yogic attitude—it's about doing exercise with intention. If I'm going to exercise I'm going to do it without the "stuff"; MP3 players, cell phones, television monitors. It doesn't mean you never go into the gym and listen to some music and zone out, but the truth is you'll get far more benefit from your movement and exercise if you do it with intention and total focus—because you can do it in half the time. If you set out and you say, "Today, I'm going to breathe deeper and my intention is to really oxygenate my blood," or "I'm going to feel more connected"...if you exercise with that intention, your body changes.

ET: **As part of your personal silence program, you sometimes meditate for eight straight hours. What is that like?**

MH: You go through every emotion, you resist it. That's why I talk about resistance. Can I let go of my resistance to being in silence, can I let go of my resistance to eating "good for me" food, can I let go of my resistance to being healthy in anything? At first you start out and say "OK, I'm going to do this," and then it's all about trying to control it. Two hours in you start to feel pain—physical pain—and then you try to get rid of that. You're trying, trying, trying. It usually takes about four hours to quit trying. You think nothing's working and then you kind of settle in and you realize it's about not trying; it's about giving up control, it's about being honest with yourself and being totally present. It's very hard. It takes many years for you to get to a place where you realize this is about being present and allowing thoughts, allowing pain and other energies to come and then simply observe them: "Oh, look at that." They only come because your ego wants to attach itself to something and mess you up. I'm convinced your mind just wants to see if you can handle those negative thoughts, so I embrace them. First you must embrace all of the negative in order to let the more positive stuff come through; more positive energy, more connection to spirit, to presence, whatever you believe in, it's a positive.

ET: **You said that we all have the same problems in different wrapping paper, we're all plagued by universal concern. Is that a symptom of a larger societal issue?**

MH: Well I think we're symptomatic of the chaos. We've created the chaos because we believe in the chaos; I think our inherent human nature is that we're genetically trained to believe we don't deserve to be loved, that we don't deserve happiness. So we're always seeking it out. But if we really got it, we probably would mess it up because we don't really believe we deserve it. There is something, some voice, somewhere that's saying "no," and that's what drives Americans to strive for more, get more and more things to anesthetize the pain. When they

get more things and it doesn't quite do it, they want to get even more things. We are a "do more" society; that's why I try to help guide people to do less multi-tasking, do one thing and do it well because that's what being present is. I'm not trying to promote any kind of spiritual belief system, but to be present... that's when you start to feel joy. There are no problems in the present, only solutions and actions.

ET: **Intuition is a key part of your program. Why do you think people have become so detached from intuition they have to be reminded, even retrained to listen to that power?**

MH: I think first of all, we're not trained to believe in it. We're not conditioned—especially in this kind of society—to trust ourselves. That's what is empowering about the book. I'm saying, you know exactly what's right for you, you just don't know that you know. I'm saying I know exactly what's right for me, I know what healthful things I need to do. I figured out that I *do* know. But it took me going to every doctor and healer, trying *everything*. I gave my energy to a lot of people in order to tell me what to do because I didn't want to take responsibility for it for myself. And when it wouldn't work I'd find a new thing, a new place to go, a new doctor, a new something because I think we're predisposed to not believe in ourselves, to really think that we don't know what's right for us—but we *do* know. It's about uncovering. Sitting in silence can help. If you're present, you will make good choices; if you're not present you're going to make choices that people hand to you.

ET: **You have a history of promoting this personal health responsibility, especially in your work to uphold Americans' free access to vitamins and supplements.**

MH: There is a tremendous power in self-healing through our ability to make choices in vitamins and supplements. Yet there's a whole load of pharmaceutical garbage out there, too. The fact of the matter is, we're Americans and we need to be able to make those choices on our own because they're still selling us big ads, you know. Merck wants us to buy this anti-inflammatory something and stuff for our heart and cholesterol junk medicine. I love all those side effect warnings: "May cause symptoms of insanity" but other than that it's all good. So if we're being pushed to do those things, then we have the right to make healthful choices. Why should that be taken away? The FDA is so influenced by drug companies; it's big business. Big business is not going to go away. But don't take my other health food choices away.

ET: **Can you talk about how you established yourself as "Mariel" as opposed to just a member of a family legacy?**

MH: Well, I've never been anybody else but Mariel Hemingway so it's not such a big surprise, it's not like "Whoa, I'm Mariel Hemingway, a part of this legacy!" Yet, for much of my life it lived, especially before writing my first book. Then I realized that it's less about finding Mariel through my silence; it's more about finding how interconnected I am with you and with him and with everybody in the world. It doesn't mean that I'm not me, but it makes me more of everybody—I'm regular. Sitting in silence just reminds me of the problems that we all have; the same problems in different wrapping paper.

ET: **You talk about the Hemingway Legacy at a couple of points in the book in terms of overindulgence, but it seems as if you're reversing that. What is the new Hemingway legacy?**

MH: I'm glad that you think that's the case, because it was a motivation for me. I was scared to death that I was going to pass obsessive-compulsive behavior, overindulgence, alcoholism, suicide and the list goes on...on to my kids. Some of those things I believed were part of me, but I would say that finally, in my life, I don't believe they're a part of me. You know, people used to say to me "the Hemingway curse" and in the back of my mind, I was scared to death that it was true. The fact of the matter is that through lifestyle, through silence, through all these different changes I've made, my life experience has made me realize that that was just a thought. The Legacy was something that I said "Oh, I don't need that," and I don't. I can honestly say I don't believe that it exists for me anymore and I can honestly say that I don't think that I've passed it on. You know, my kids have their own problems, but I haven't given them a big load of crap that wasn't theirs to take on into the world. I had to free myself from it. I think there's always one or two people in the family that has to pry away and get rid of those old belief systems. If you could be that person it's great. There's a liberation in that, there's a freedom in realizing it's only belief that keeps you doing things that don't serve you. It's only belief. ■

> "Nothing you do is bad; the next choice you make is a better choice, a different choice."

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Omnivore vs. Vegan

By Patrick Dougherty

Are we supposed to consume animal products? Or is veganism our next big evolutionary leap? Whether you believe beef is what's for dinner or meat is murder, the truth behind your lifestyle choice may define your health. Here, two experts face off in this debate for the ages . . . which side will you choose?

Imagine a vegan is shipwrecked on a remote tropical island. Suddenly, the luxury of choosing foods that suit vegan beliefs is replaced with the necessity of finding any food that is available. While seaweed, edible roots and the occasional coconut might offer temporary plant-based sustenance, a starving vegan would eventually also turn to fishing, hunting for wild boars, collecting eggs and scavenging for grubs. Holding aloft a wriggling, freshly speared fish, which ordinarily might trigger revulsion in a vegan, would now bring gratification for protein, healthy essential fatty acids, food energy and a full belly. In a natural world such as this pristine desert isle, a compelling argument supports the consumption of animal products: survival.

Back in the increasingly unnatural civilized world, however, the argument for eating animals weakens. A bountiful food supply has exaggerated our instinctual, survival-driven omnivorous urges to dangerous excess.

Meeting the overwhelming demand for animal products are massive factory farming operations, driven to maximize profits by producing as much milk, eggs and meat as possible. The steps taken to achieve this end, including cheap animal feed, poor animal living conditions and use of antibiotics and growth hormones, yield animal products that are deficient in natural nutrition but abundant in disease-promoting saturated fats, omega-6 fatty acids, toxins and residual antibiotics and hormones. Particularly at risk are those carnivorous souls who forego the valuable phytonutrients found in antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables for a steady diet of meat, eggs and dairy products.

Even more distressing than just the personal health risks are the environmental risks animal product overconsumption presents to our planet. Giant factory farming operations are notorious for depleting significant resources and generating pollution, while commercial fishing practices are so destructive that some experts believe 90% of the ocean's edible species may be gone by the year 2048. The modern world's factory animal farming and gluttonous meat consumption is unsustainable, ethically questionable and unnatural.

Factory farming-driven overindulgence may be wrong—but what about the act of eating meat in itself? Native Americans' hunting traditions offer an example of how eating meat can be pure and natural. The hunt required skill, exercise, physical strength and patience. The meat it yielded was more nutritive, coming from free-roaming, grass-fed wild animals. The hunters would treat these animals with respect; Choctaw tribe hunters would ritualistically utter before killing their prey, "Deer, I am sorry to hurt you. But the people are hungry." In such a context, eating meat appears to be sustainable, healthy and even ethically justifiable.

Such age-old beliefs are now coming full circle, as evidenced by an increasing disdain for factory farming and rising demand for grass-fed and humanely raised livestock, and for more sustainable animal farming practices. Despite this shift, casual observations reveal that for many, the animal consumption debate is still up in the air. Consider the vegetarian wearing leather, the self-proclaimed animal lover gnawing on a chicken leg and the enthusiastic carnivore who could never muster the nerve to kill a cow.

Puzzling indeed is the stalemate of this intricate debate—so *Energy Times* has turned the omnivore versus vegan issue over to the experts.

In this corner, as our omnivore representative, we have Kaayla T. Daniel, PhD, CCN, a board-certified clinical nutritionist, speaker, seminar leader and member of the Board of Directors of the Weston A. Price Foundation (www.westonaprice.org).

In the other corner, here's passionate vegan Hope Ferdowsian, MD, MPH, an internist, preventive medicine and public health specialist, and director of the Washington Center for Clinical Research, a subsidiary of the not-for-profit Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (www.pcrm.org).

Both doctors are educated, esteemed and experienced—yet both hold diametrically opposed viewpoints on the place of animal products in our diet. The debate rages on:

Dr. Daniel

Mother Nature designed human beings to thrive on omnivorous diets. Traditional cultures from around the world prove that we can best achieve optimum health and maximum longevity from a diet rich in animal fats and proteins, not just fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and grains.

Veganism—a strict form of vegetarianism which includes no animal products whatsoever—is a modern experiment, well-intentioned but misguided. Short-term, vegan diets can be cleansing and healing. Long-term, they often lead to serious deficiencies of vitamins, minerals, fatty acids and amino acids, putting vegans at risk for malnutrition, digestive distress, thyroid disorders, immune system breakdown, allergies... even heart disease and cancer.

It is simply wrong to blame animal foods for the diseases of modern civilization as the 20th century saw a decline in the consumption of meat, dairy and butter consumption but a sharp increase in the consumption of sugar, corn syrup, white flour, liquid and partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, artificial flavorings, preservatives and other known health hazards of processed, packaged and fast foods.

All health problems associated with animal products—as well as cruelty to animals and threats to the environment—are the result of factory farming and other commercial and non-sustainable farming practices.

Dr. Ferdowsian

A growing number of people suffer from overweight and related diseases, forcing us to look closely at the foods that we eat. Over one billion people worldwide are overweight, now matching the number of people who are underweight. Responding to the obesity epidemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that people consume low-fat, high-fiber, plant-based foods, while avoiding saturated, animal-based fats. Animal products are high in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol, compared with plant foods, increasing the risk for diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

In contrast with the WHO recommendations, world meat production has increased over 10 times the population growth rate in the last three decades. As a physician, I see the opportunity for many of my patients

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to improve their health by making simple dietary changes. I often tell my patients about how research, including one study funded by the National Institutes of Health, has shown that a low-fat, vegan diet can reverse heart disease, improve diabetes and help with weight loss. In fact, the American Dietetic Association has established that appropriately planned vegan diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate and "provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases." People who follow a vegan diet need to ensure that they obtain enough vitamin B12, either by eating foods fortified with B12 (including some plant milks, soy products and breakfast cereals) or by taking supplements (see below).

If more people were to follow a vegan diet, we might also see tremendous improvements in the environment. Animal farming is responsible for nearly 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and it is the leading cause of deforestation. As informed individuals, we can make thoughtful decisions about the foods that we eat that will influence our own lives, the lives of animals and the environment.

Dr. Daniel The obesity epidemic is a recent phenomenon caused by excess consumption of the sugar, starchy carbohydrates and vegetable oils found in packaged, processed and fast foods. According to *JAMA*, the obesity rate jumped 8.6% from 1994 to 1999, years in which low-fat foods were heavily promoted as the tickets to good health. When we get the variety of fats we need—including healthy saturated fats such as butter and coconut oil—we feel satiated, making us far less likely to binge.

Contrary to popular belief, science does not support the idea that saturated fat and cholesterol contribute to diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Anatomy and physiology textbooks give many reasons why our bodies not only need fat, but saturated fat. Without the structure provided by saturated fat, cell membranes function poorly, resulting in nutritional deprivation, toxic waste buildup and disease promotion at the cellular level. Cholesterol too is essential—at least if we desire plenty of sex hormones and "feel good" neurotransmitters. Indeed, low total cholesterol levels (below 180) are linked to fatigue, cancer, autoimmune disorders, depression, anxiety and suicide. What's more, cholesterol is a poor marker of heart disease risk. As famed heart surgeon Michael DeBakey MD put it, "There is no definite correlation between serum cholesterol levels and the nature and extent of atherosclerotic disease."

Dr. Ferdowsian offers the American Dietetic Association's position on veganism as proof that a plant-based diet is adequate. Advice from the ADA is hardly credible, given its long-standing opposition to health foods and supplements, and cheerleading for the processed food industry.

I share Dr. Ferdowsian's concerns about the effects of factory farming. However, the solution is not veganism, but environmentally friendly, mixed-use farms, on which organic farmers cultivate fruits, vegetables and grains while humanely raising animals for dairy, eggs and meat.

Dr. Ferdowsian It is difficult to ignore the "epidemiological transition" in the global burden of disease, with the shift from infectious to chronic illnesses. In the last three decades, average energy intake in the United States has increased, including the percentage of caloric intake attributed to refined carbohydrates. However, absolute fat intake has also increased. One gram

Supplementation to Suit

No matter whether you are a hardcore vegan or an adamant omnivore, smart supplementation can make your preferred way of eating that much healthier. The first item in either case is a high-quality **multivitamin/mineral** to help make up for those occasions when time constraints keep you from dining the way you should. What else you take will depend on your diet.

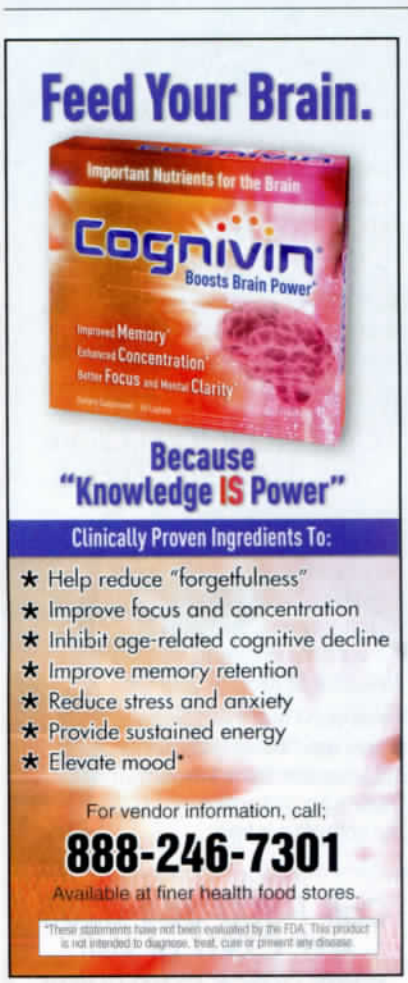
Vitamin B12 is the most notable of the nutrients that can be scarce in a vegan meal plan. Daniel suggests also taking **vitamins B2** and **B6**; all three are essential to energy production. Then add **vitamins A** and **D**; A beefs up immunity and promotes skin and eye health, while D helps build strong teeth and bones, and is coming up big in cancer prevention. Plant foods, most notably flax seed, contain an omega-3 fatty acid called LN; however, many people don't have the enzymes that convert LN into **DHA** and **EPA**, which are found in fish oil; they help support both heart and brain health…and that's just for starters. Among the minerals, Daniel says that both **calcium** and **zinc** can be wanting in a vegan diet, as can the uber-nutrient **coenzyme Q10**.

Omnivores—especially dyed-in-the-wool meat lovers—can find themselves running short on *phytonutrients*, the colorful chemicals that give plants their health benefits. These include **lycopene**, found in tomatoes and watermelon; **resveratrol**, found in grapes (although most supplements use Japanese knotweed); **anthocyanins**, found in such superfruits as açai, mangosteen and goji (see page 18); **lutein**, found in mango and squash (see page 52); **quercetin**, found in most fruits and vegetables; **chlorophyll**, found in green foods such as barley grass; and **sulforaphane**, found in broccoli. A convenient way to get your daily phytonutrients is through whole-food concentrates that include plants from throughout the color spectrum.

of fat contains more than twice as many calories as one gram of carbohydrate. Dietary patterns in Japan and China have followed similar trends, corresponding to increased obesity and heart disease rates.

According to the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization, excess fat intake, particularly saturated fat, is associated with higher risk of heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and certain cancers. Scientific studies have shown that meat intake is associated with breast and colon cancer, whereas dairy intake has been linked with prostate cancer.

Fruits, vegetables, legumes and grains have no cholesterol and are low in fat, high in fiber and rich in cancer-fighting chemicals. All animal products contain saturated fat and cholesterol and are devoid of fiber. There are no established minimum recommendations for cholesterol and saturated fat consumption. Unfortunately, mixed farming systems are not ideal. Animals such as cows produce greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, regardless of how they are raised. Like dogs and cats, animals used in farming are sentient beings and exhibit fear, distress, anticipation, grief and empathy. Animals used in food production cry out when they and their companions are separated or killed. The bottom line is that eating animal products is not necessary to human health and, for many, it poses a significant risk. Choosing to follow a vegan diet is a healthy and ethical choice that benefits humans, the environment and the animals.



Dr. Daniel Dr. Ferdowsian's claims are not borne out by the historical and anthropological evidence. In his 1945 book *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*, Weston A. Price, DDS, documented the radiant good health and freedom from chronic disease enjoyed by people eating traditional, nutrient-dense, omnivorous diets free of sugar, white flour, pasteurized milk, partially hydrogenated fats and other modern food product ingredients. Dr. Price searched the world for a culture in which plant foods "without the use of animal products, were capable of providing all of the requirements of the body for growth and for maintenance of good health and a high state of physical efficiency." Sadly, he reported "no group that was building and maintaining good bodies exclusively on plant foods" although several were "endeavoring to do so with marked evidence of failure."

Modern lab tests confirm Dr. Price's findings. Vegans routinely come up deficient in vitamins A, D, K, B2, B6 and B12; the sulfur-containing amino acids methionine, cysteine and taurine; DHA and EFA fatty acids; and calcium, zinc, carnitine and CoQ10. Although the human body is theoretically capable of converting beta carotene into vitamin A, and omega 3 fatty acids into DHA and EPA, few people are healthy enough to do. Sunlight might produce sufficient vitamin D—provided you are naked and live in the tropics.

Finally, Dr. Ferdowsian pleads that we become vegan for the sake of animals. This too defies common sense. Are we to let the world's cows, sheep, goats, chicken, pigs and other livestock die off? Or must we support them all as pets? Sadly, neither would restore the balance of our planet's ecosystem. The true threat to our environment is not animals—which have been covering the earth with manure and emissions for tens of thousands of years—but the globalization and industrialization of agriculture with its unconscionable factory farming practices, toxic use of pesticides, herbicides and commercial fertilizers, plundering of natural resources and bankrupting of small farmers and cottage industries.

Dr. Ferdowsian There is plenty of evidence to support the view that a vegan diet is healthful and appropriate for human health. Population-based studies and clinical trials have repeatedly demonstrated that plant-based diets rich in fruits, vegetables, legumes and grains decrease the risk for multiple medical problems, including overweight and obesity, diabetes, heart disease, gynecological disorders, kidney disease, and breast, prostate and colon cancer. In contrast, consuming animal products has been linked with cardiovascular disease, several forms of cancer, foodborne illnesses, autoimmune disorders, numerous gastrointestinal diseases and many other health problems.

Millions of people around the world follow a plant-based diet. People who follow a vegetarian or vegan diet consume higher levels of fiber, magnesium, potassium, folate, antioxidants such as vitamins C and E, and phytochemicals.

Some of the world's top athletes, such as ultramarathon champion Scott Jurek and professional Ironman triathlete Brendan Brazier, follow a vegan diet. Olympian Carl Lewis has

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attributed his best year of track competition to a vegan diet.

Eating animal products is culturally rather than anatomically or physiologically dictated. From an evolutionary perspective, we can look to our closest relatives—other primates—who are for the most part herbivores. Our teeth and digestive tracts also tell the story.

I share Dr. Daniel's condemnation of factory farms. Unfortunately, domesticated animals used in farming exist primarily because of a demand established by humans who consume meat, dairy and eggs. As to the fate of farmed animals when we move to plant-based diets, it is a valid question but ancillary to the immediate health, environmental and moral arguments for choosing not to kill animals to eat them.

The progressive elimination of the demand for animal products would obviate current intensive breeding practices. As we move towards a society that subsists on a plant-based diet, we will gradually restore a more ecologically balanced environment.

Dr. Daniel Humans are omnivores, equipped with a mixed feeder's teeth and digestive system. Although vegetarian diets rich in raw dairy products from pastured cows and other animals have nourished many peoples around the world, no culture has ever voluntarily gone vegan.

The fact that vegans must supplement with B12 (or risk neurological damage) is itself strong evidence that this style of eating is unnatural. Indeed, few vegans maintain their health for long without an extensive supplement regimen. Science strongly supports the health benefits of vegetables, but the evidence for vegan diets is inconsistent and contradictory at best. Sadly, veganism won't even help our planet. Only 11% of the land can be farmed, a percentage that cannot be increased without deforestation, irrigation, chemical fertilizers and other destructive ecological practices. Old-fashioned organic mixed-use farms are the key to personal and planetary health.

Dr. Ferdowsian Many of us wonder what steps we can take to make a difference in the world. Choosing to follow a vegan diet is a simple way to improve the condition of the environment, human health and the lives of other animals. The consumption of animal products has been conclusively linked to heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis and many other diseases. On the other hand, eating a plant-based diet can reverse heart disease and diabetes, prevent several forms of cancer and prolong cancer survival.

Eating animal products is one of the biggest threats to the environment. The use of animals in agriculture accelerates global warming, water and air pollution and soil erosion. Animal agriculture production accounts for 70% of all agricultural land use and 30% of the planet's land surface area. One kilogram of beef requires 100,000 liters of water to produce, whereas a kilogram of soybean requires 2,000 liters of water.

If we all followed a vegetarian diet, we could produce enough food to feed the entire world. The choice to follow a vegan diet is informed by science and ethical obligations to ourselves, the environment, other animals and future generations. The great news is that we don't have to compromise one for the other. ■

Where do you stand?

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