

## BETTER WAYS

**Better shoes for arthritis.** *New finding:* In a study of 16 adults with knee osteoarthritis, clogs and foot-stabilizing shoes (athletic shoes) put significantly more stress on the knees than flat walking shoes, flip-flops and walking barefoot. *Theory:* Shoes that promote a natural foot motion may allow better transfer of the body's impact as the foot hits the ground.

Najia Shakoor, MD, assistant professor of internal medicine, section of rheumatology, Rush Medical College, Chicago.

**Better mammography.** *New finding:* In a study of 42,760 women, digital mammographies (which take electronic images of the breast and store them in a computer) yielded more accurate results than standard film mammography for women younger than age 50 who were premenopausal or perimenopausal <DEF TK> and had dense breast tissue (characterized by more glands and less fat). For other women in the study, there was no significant difference in accuracy between the two screening methods. *Theory:* Digital mammography images can be magnified or otherwise manipulated <CK> for more accurate readings. *Self-defense:* If you are a premenopausal or perimenopausal woman under age 50 with dense breasts, ask your doctor to refer you to an imaging center that uses digital mammography.

Etta D. Pisano, MD, professor of radiology and biomedical engineering, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

**Better exercise for lung disease patients.** In a study of 98 patients with severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, those who did interval training (alternating 20-second and 40-second bouts of high-intensity and low-intensity exercise) were nearly twice as likely after five weeks to stick with their program as those who performed continuous, high-intensity exercise sessions. *If you have COPD:* Ask your doctor if interval training is an option for you.

Milo A. Puhon, MD, PhD, department of medicine, Horten Centre, University Hospital, Zurich, Switzerland.

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# Optimal Cancer Recovery

Simple ways to maximize the healing effects of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

**W**hen a person is diagnosed with cancer, conventional doctors typically recommend surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation.

**Latest development:** A growing body of research shows that complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies benefit cancer patients in a number of ways, such as by reducing the toxicities and other adverse effects of conventional cancer treatments. Integrative cancer centers can now be found at major US medical institutions, such as Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.\*

## AN ATTACK ON CANCER CELLS

Normal cells divide in a predictable and orderly fashion—for example, in the growth of a fetus or in the healing of wounds. When the DNA within cells is damaged—due to genetic abnormalities, for example, or lifestyle factors, such as smoking or getting too much sun exposure—the cells may become cancerous.

The cornerstone of integrative cancer care is to mobilize the body's natural ability to stimulate *apoptosis*—the death of cancer cells. Most patients still require surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation. The integrative component—including dietary changes and the use of supplements simultaneously with conventional treatments—im-

proves the patient's odds of living a longer and healthier life by altering the body processes closely linked with cancer.

## IMPROVED IMMUNITY

The immune system is the first line of defense against cancer. For example, natural killer cells produce an estimated 100 biochemical poisons that attack foreign proteins, including those on the surface of cancer cells.\*\*

*Key recommendations...*

**Load up on antioxidants.** The average cell is subjected to 10,000 daily assaults from free radicals (unstable, negatively charged molecules that can harm DNA), and the resulting damage can overwhelm the ability of immune T cells (including natural killer cells) to destroy cancer cells.

**Recommended:** Antioxidant-rich fresh produce (at least five servings daily) and supplements, such as vitamin C (1,000 mg to 2,000 mg daily), selenium (100 mcg to 200 mcg daily) and zinc (30 mg to 45 mg daily).

**Take mushroom extracts.** When scientists recently reviewed the results from 31 randomized clinical trials in Japan, Korea and China,

*\*\*Important:* Patients should consult an integrative health-care practitioner before taking any new supplements.

*Bottom Line/Health* interviewed Lise Alschuler, ND, president of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians. She is a board-certified naturopathic oncologist with a private practice in Scottsdale, Arizona, and is coauthor of *Definitive Guide to Cancer: An Integrative Approach to Prevention, Treatment, and Healing* (Celestial Arts).

\*To find a center near you, TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK TK

## KNOW-IT-ALL

■ **NIGHT NOISE RAISES BLOOD PRESSURE** even if it doesn't wake you up. So-called "noise events"—such as an aircraft flying overhead or a partner's snoring—can raise systolic pressure (top number), an average of up to 6.2 points and diastolic (bottom number) pressure by 7.4 points. ■ **COMPUTERS DIAGNOSE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE** with up to 96% accuracy, compared with the 86% accuracy rate for diagnosis by physicians. Computers can analyze a magnetic-resonance imaging (MRI) scan and detect characteristic Alzheimer's brain changes. ■ **"STOMACH FLU" VACCINE?** The stomach flu virus, like the virus that causes influenza, could be vulnerable to vaccines—an important new finding because there's no treatment for the infection, which can lead to dehydration and sometimes cause death. ■ **BETTER DIAGNOSIS FOR DEPRESSION.** Researchers have discovered that a brain protein changes location in patients with depression—a "biomarker" that could be used to diagnose depression and quickly track the effects of medication. ■ **WEIGHT-LOSS TIP FROM THE FRENCH.** Most French people don't gain as much weight as Americans because the French rely more on "internal cues," such as a feeling of fullness, to know when to stop eating. People (French or American) who are overweight are more likely to depend on external signals, such as the end of a TV show. ■ **NEW OVARIAN CANCER TEST** is 99% accurate. Previous tests, which checked for certain proteins, recognized only 15% to 20% of new ovarian tumors. The new blood test, in clinical trials, could result in much earlier diagnosis and treatment. Ovarian cancer, three times deadlier than breast cancer, is usually discovered at an advanced stage. ■ **SURPRISING BRAIN BOOSTER.** *New finding:* Injections of umbilical cord blood cells appear to stimulate the development of new brain cells in rats—a finding that could lead to treatments for age-related mental declines.

■ Imperial College London ■ Wellcome Trust  
■ University of North Carolina School of Public Health ■ University of Illinois at Chicago  
■ Cornell Food & Brand Lab ■ Yale School of Medicine ■ University of South Florida Health.

they found that the use of mushroom extracts (which contain a chemical compound that stimulates the immune system to destroy tumors) significantly improved survival rates for patients with malignancies of the stomach, colon, esophagus or breast.

A widely recommended medicinal mushroom is *Coriolus versicolor*...or its chemical compound, PSK. *Typical dose:* 3,000 mg daily.

### CONTROL HORMONES

All cells have *hormone receptors*, molecular sites where hormones attach and cause biochemical reactions. One of the primary reactions is growth, which can be dangerous if a cell is cancerous.

Hormone-dependent cancers—such as some forms of breast cancer as well as many ovarian and prostate cancers—are most likely to be stimulated by certain hormones. But other cancers, such as malignancies of TK and TK, are also influenced by hormones, particularly estrogen and cortisol, that compromise immunity or directly stimulate the growth of tumor cells. *My advice...*

■ **Consume phytoestrogens.** The estrogen-like compounds in plants (phytoestrogens) can reduce the potentially carcinogenic effects of estrogen in the body. Phytoestrogens occupy the estrogen receptor sites, thereby preventing the body's estrogens from binding to those sites. Foods such as soy and flaxseed are rich in phytoestrogens. Amount TK

■ **Caution:** Women with a previous or current diagnosis of breast or ovarian cancer should talk to their doctors before consuming high doses of phytoestrogens—because in such cases, they may trigger the growth of estrogen-dependent cancer cells.

■ **Eat leafy greens.** They promote the health of hormone-producing glands, including the thyroid gland, and support the liver's detoxification of hormones. *Recommended:* At least one cup of leafy greens daily.

■ **Eat organic.** Many of the herbicides and pesticides used in commercial produce have strong hormonal and genotoxic (damaging to DNA) effects that can increase the risk of getting or having a recurrence of cancers of the breast, kidney, lung, prostate and blood (such as leukemia).

■ **Exercise regularly.** It regulates the body's production of cortisol and other stress hormones, which, if elevated for too long, have cancer-causing effects. Amount TK

### REMOVE TOXINS

The body is constantly removing potentially carcinogenic toxins, such as benzene (a solvent). Most detoxification takes place in the liver. About 30% of Americans are known as "slow detoxifiers"—with or without cancer. <CK>

One of the best herbs for detoxification is green tea. It supports the liver's elimination of toxins. Drink TK cups of green tea daily.

### More from Dr. Alschuler...

## Curb Chemo Side Effects

Chemotherapy, a standard part of conventional cancer therapy, often causes side effects that can be treated with supplements. *For example...*

■ **Melatonin**, 20 mg nightly, is a hormone that has been shown in several human trials to reduce chemotherapy side effects, such as immune suppression and decreased appetite, while also improving response to those drugs. *Caution:* TK

■ **Ginger**, 500 mg (in capsules) as needed, is an herb that may help reduce chemotherapy-induced nausea. Ginger also can be consumed in tea form.

■ **Glutamine**, an amino acid, 10 g to 30 g daily, can reduce numbness and tingling in the hands and feet (peripheral neuropathy) that can be caused by certain chemotherapy drugs (such as the *taxanes*).