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Dr. John A. McDougall's

To Your Health

Are you safe from mad-cow disease?

Carefully examine what you eat for hidden ingredients

The media coverage is ubiquitous, the images startling. Few can easily forget the footage of hundreds of dead animals being bulldozed into piles, the shots of cows staggering helplessly in their pens, the tragedy of unnecessary human deaths. The mad-cow disease and foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks have whipped people across the globe into a frenzy—and there's no end in sight.

But this horror may have a silver lining. These images, played over and over again on our TV screens and splashed across our newspapers, have made many people think twice. "*Should I be eating meat?*" It's a question worth asking. And while I'm sorry that it's taken a crisis like this to raise the issue, I will take advantage of the open dialogue.

That's the language used to describe these events: *Crisis. Epidemic. Catastrophe.* And, certainly, it's a serious thing. But let's look at the numbers: 89 people worldwide have died of *variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease*, the human form of mad-cow, since it was first diagnosed 15 years ago.¹ That works out to about six deaths per year. Put in perspective, many more people die from being struck by lightning! And compare it to the following: According to data from the World Health Organization, *cardiovascular diseases accounted for almost 15 million deaths worldwide in just one year.* And, according to statistics from the American Heart Association, cardiovascular disease claimed 949,619 lives in one year in the United States ALONE.

Millions are dying every year...not from mad-cow but from heart disease!

Any loss of human life is a tragedy—and the 89 deaths associated with mad-cow are certainly 89 too many. Even sadder, those deaths were completely preventable and unnecessary. But so are the *millions* of deaths each year from heart disease. Eating animal products contributes to nearly all of those deaths as surely as it does to death from mad-cow. And the real tragedy? The world still hasn't gotten *that* message!

I'm not trying to minimize the seriousness of mad-cow. It is a real threat—and it is not the only one out there. There are countless opportunities for viral and bacterial contamination in the production of animal products. Just recently, we learned that pigs can carry the hepatitis E virus (HEV).² The deadly *E. coli* bacteria have long been associated with improperly handled meats. Sixty percent of dairy herds in the U.S. are infected with the bovine AIDS virus called Bovine Immuno Deficiency virus or BIV.³ The factory, farming, and cost-cutting practices that brought us mad-cow are widespread—and, despite reforms, I doubt that we've seen the last of their disastrous effects.

And over the years, there have been numerous frightening events stemming from animal consumption: In Hong Kong (1997), several people died from the dreaded "bird-flu" disease that came from chickens. In 1918, the killer flu epidemic that killed so many millions is said to have originated in American pigs.

It has to make you wonder—which animal is harboring tomorrow's health crisis?

Many people used the mad-cow scare as a reason to give up red meat. I'm certainly happy about that, but there's no reason to believe that other meat sources are safer. Despite the name, mad-cow can affect other animals. In late March, the U.S. Department of Agriculture seized a herd of sheep in Vermont that tested positive for the infectious agent. And foot-and-mouth disease affects all animals with cloven feet—among them sheep, cows, and pigs. Authorities assure us that foot-and-mouth does not pose a threat to humans, *but, with the track record at hand, are you willing to take the chance?*

Could animal viruses cause cancer?

That's another possibility, reported on recently in the *Lancet*. Studies have found that human viruses can cause cancer in animals and that there's enough evidence to warrant studying the possibility of the reverse. Even when viruses are transmitted across species lines within the animal kingdom, cancer can develop. Here's an example: When the human virus

¹ Newsweek, Feb. 26, 2001:22-27

² J Clin Microbiology, 39:918-923, 2001

³ AIDS, 6:759-776, 1992

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Dr. John A. McDougall's To Your Health

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Editor: John A. McDougall, M.D.	Customer Service Specialist: Ron Ramsey
Publisher: Jenny Thompson	Copy Editor: Ken Danz
Associate Publisher: Risa Ford	Research Manager: John Probst
Editorial Director: Karen M. Reddel	Editorial Associate: Amanda L. Ross
Associate Editor: Jennifer Taylor Arnold	Designer: Ramsey Brisueño

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Our mission: For over 27 years, Dr. John McDougall has been fighting to bring nutrition to the forefront of mainstream medicine. Frustrated by the establishment's resistance to logic and to years of evidence from his clinic, he set out to educate health-conscious people about the medicinal qualities of food for the treatment and prevention of many of today's most threatening diseases. He is dedicated to teaching you how to transform your life and to achieve optimum health and appearance by using the life-giving foods that were designed for your body. In addition, each month he will bring you news of his latest healing and weight-loss discoveries.

strain *BK polyomavirus* is introduced in hamsters, mice, or rats, the animals develop brain tumors, fibrosarcomas, and lymphomas. When the bovine virus *BPV-1 papillomavirus* is introduced in horses, donkeys, and newborn rodents, they develop tumors in flesh, muscle, and connective tissues.⁴ After carefully examining the existing evidence, the *Lancet* article suggests that there is more than enough reason to pursue this possible animal → human cancer connection.

The cancer connection is still a theory. But when considered alongside recent events, it's enough to make you think twice. And combined with what we know for sure about the dangers of animal products, it's *more* than enough reason to change the way you eat. We know that animal products are full of fat and cholesterol that clog our arteries and excess proteins that overtax our organs. We know about the toxins stored in animal tissues and about the antibiotics and hormones used to promote growth. We've known these things for years, but maybe, just maybe, this latest crisis will be enough to push people over the fence.

Why mad-cow disease could be the *best* thing ever to happen to world health

In the end, this disease could end up *saving* hundreds of thousands of lives. People all over the world are giving up animal products to protect themselves from it. Whether they're aware of it or not, their choice could also mean they never die from heart disease, cancer, or any of a whole host of other health threats.

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Could your supplements put you at risk for mad-cow?

That's the message from a Maryland physician's letter to the *New England Journal of Medicine*. His study of herbal-supplement ingredients found that common brands contain as many as 17 different bovine organs: the brain, spleen, lung, liver, pancreas, prostate, heart, and others. And while these ingredients *are* listed on the label, they are often difficult for the average layperson to decipher. For example, an ingredient listed as "orchis" is really bull's testicle, while "thymus," in plain English, could mean bovine lymphoid tissue. You also need to watch out for "amino acids," which are building blocks of protein sometimes taken from animal sources, and "adrenaline," which is found in many medicines and is taken from the adrenal glands of hogs, sheep, and cattle. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture has cracked down on cattle imports from countries afflicted with mad-cow, the ban does not apply to animal tissues intended for use in dietary supplements.⁵

If you take dietary or herbal supplements, read the labels carefully to determine exactly what you are consuming. You should also research any unknown ingredients beforehand; you can call the manufacturer if you have questions. Also, you should throw away any supplements that contain questionable ingredients you can't figure out. Another option is to visit your local library and look through the *Consumer's Dictionary of Food Additives*; it's a very helpful guide for vegetarians!

⁴ *Lancet*, 357:381-384, 2001

⁵ *NEJM*, 343:304-305, 2000

The real secret for making brittle nails strong

It's probably not what you've been told

Lots of us were told as kids that eating gelatin would make our nails strong...and as adults, we're told that dairy products with *calcium* are the answer.

The truth? Your nails are dramatically affected by what you eat—but neither gelatin nor calcium will do them any good.

The calcium MYTH

When I tell people that they should avoid dairy products, I am often met with resistance—especially from women. I hear it all the time: “When I don’t get enough calcium, my nails get dry and brittle.”

I’ll start by reinforcing that you can get all the calcium you need from a plant-based diet—fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains absorb this valuable mineral from the ground and pass it on to you in abundance (in fact better than through pills or dairy products). But beyond that—calcium doesn’t affect nail health.

A recent article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reports that there is “no support for the idea that calcium intake alters self-reported nail quality”¹

Doctors studied the effect of calcium on 683 healthy postmenopausal women. The women were randomly assigned to take either a daily calcium supplement or a placebo for one year. At the end of the study, the majority of women in both groups reported that their nails had remained the same—or deteriorated—during the year.²

The old gelatin WIVES’ TALE

As for eating gelatin to build strong nails—it’s as true (or untrue) as any old wives’ tale! But, more importantly, you should know that gelatin is a high-protein, collagen source that comes directly from—you guessed it—the meat and leather industries! So, steer clear for your overall health and safety.

What you eat does affect your fingernails

Intriguingly, my recent research shows that your nails really do reflect what you’ve been eating—and what you’re lacking.

Look closely at your nails... they’ll tell you everything you should be “feeding” them

Thin, peeling nails, or nails with **white spots** or **ridges**, mean you need more zinc. You should incorporate more kelp, legumes, lima beans, mushrooms, pecans, brewer’s yeast, and whole grains into your meals.

Are your nails **spoon-shaped** or **fluted**? This may

signal a lack of iron and/or vitamin A. Load up on your greens, broccoli, Brussel’s sprouts, carrots, cantaloupe, and pumpkin.

Brittle nails may be a sign that you need more biotin, which is found in yeast, mushrooms, grapefruit, watermelon, bananas, and strawberries. It could also mean you need more iron—easily obtained from asparagus, broccoli, and carrots—or that you lack zinc. (See the previous list.)

Fragile nails and nails that show **horizontal** or **vertical ridges** could mean a deficiency in vitamin B. Carrots, spinach, brown rice, cantaloupe, and walnuts are good, natural sources.

Poor nail growth could mean you’re not getting enough zinc. (See previous list.)

Hangnails can be painful and look red and inflamed. You may want to try adding foods that are high in folic acid like barley, bran, legumes, lentils, and mushrooms. Vitamin C could also help: Oranges, grapefruit, broccoli, and all green vegetables are good sources.

Too much vitamin A can cause **brittle nails**, and an excess of supplemental selenium can leave you with **thickened, fragile nails**. You can see that too much of a supplemental vitamin or mineral can cause as many problems as too little. If you get your vitamins from food, this won’t be an issue.

Topical tips: Keep nails clipped short; never cut your cuticles—it invites infection; scrub nails daily with a firm nailbrush—it will improve nail health and appearance; avoid immersing your hands in detergent (use gloves!); and try rubbing vitamin E oil or aloe vera on hands and hangnails.

So how can you make sure you’re getting the right amounts of nail-healthy nutrients?

Easy! Your nails will automatically become stronger and more beautiful once you begin following a plant-based eating plan. This new strength comes from the host of vitamins and minerals found in all the delicious foods our Creator provided—fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains.

Sure, you could supplement, but, as always, the best source is the one Mother Nature provided. It’s not hard to get a healthy dose of all of these nutrients naturally. Wise food choices can make your body, as well as your nails, strong and beautiful. Why not have both? Build your meals around fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and you’ll give your body everything it needs to be beautiful inside *and* out.

¹ NEJM, 343:1817, 2000

² Ibid.

GOOD NEWS ON THE DIABETES FRONT:

Ginseng can lower blood-glucose levels by nearly 40 percent!

If you're one of the millions of people with glucose intolerance or Type II diabetes, ginseng may help you get your blood sugar under control. That's the news out of the recent alternative and complementary medicine conference sponsored by the University of Chicago.

Diabetics' blood-glucose levels plummet after taking just 3 grams of ginseng

Although ginseng had lowered blood sugar in animals in previous studies, the two new trials reported on at the conference were among the first to show its effects on humans. And the results were impressive: Diabetics saw their blood-glucose response fall by as much as 39 percent, and even non-diabetics saw effects—even at dosages as low as 3 grams!^{1,2}

To measure blood-glucose response, doctors compare the amount of glucose in your blood before a meal and after a meal. For testing purposes, patients are often given a "glucose challenge"—a sugary, syrupy drink meant to simulate the effects of a high-glucose meal. Blood-glucose levels change rapidly as a meal is digested, so test results may vary as time passes after a meal.

In these two studies, both non-diabetic patients (people with fasting blood-glucose levels below 110 mg/dl) and patients with Type II diabetes took varying dosages of American ginseng (*Panax*) at different times before a glucose challenge. Some took it at the same time as the glucose challenge as well. Doctors then assessed their blood-glucose levels at 15-minute intervals afterward, for up to two hours.

Just 3 grams of ginseng lowered diabetics' blood

glucose levels as much as 39 percent when ginseng was taken with the meal or before the meal. And among the non-diabetic participants, ginseng had similarly strong effects when taken before the meal. (No effect was seen on non-diabetics when ginseng was taken with the meal.)

Even if you haven't been diagnosed with Type II diabetes, you're wise to watch your blood-glucose levels

Studies have shown that men with fasting blood-glucose levels above 85 mg/dl have a 40 percent higher risk of dying from cardiovascular disease.³ That number is well below the "normal" threshold of 110 mg/dl but still too high for optimal health.

You can lower your glucose levels—perhaps even cure diabetes—without any supplements

I've written before about improving your insulin resistance—even curing yourself of Type II diabetes—by making changes in your eating habits and lifestyle. A food plan rich in complex carbohydrates, fruits, and vegetables will help you lose weight and lower your glucose levels. Moderate exercise is a boon, as well. But if you do need a little help as you make the transition, discuss ginseng with your doctor. A daily dose of 3 grams might help get you over the hump and on your way to a healthier life.

¹ Arch Intern Med, 160[7]: 1009-1013, 2000

² J Am Col Nutr, 19: 738-744, 2000

³ Diabetes Care, 22: 45-49, 1999

Amazing Food Cure

Low-fat, high-fiber, and infection-free!

New study finds compounds in vegetables fight bacteria better than antibiotics.

Drug-resistant staph infections are a growing problem worldwide. They occur when a bacterium in your body builds up a tolerance for the medication you're taking to fight it. Unfortunately, this bacterium can then be transmitted to others in its new "altered" form—a form that's resistant to the antibiotic you took to fight it. These "too-tough" strains are dangerous. They result in longer hospital stays, higher costs, and, in extreme cases, death. This problem occurs outside the hospital as well, because antibiotics are overprescribed and because many patients don't finish their medications.

But a new study shows there may be a more effective, natural solution. Dr. Hon-Xi and colleagues from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia found that six flavonoids (compounds found in over 4,000 fruits and

vegetables) in vegetables inhibited the growth of bacteria that were resistant to a powerful antibiotic called methicillin. In other words, the flavonoids found in plant foods can actually fight certain drug-resistant bacterial infections!¹

The good news is really twofold. First, with the growing number of infections that have become resistant to antibiotics, this could lead to new, helpful cures. Second, although you already know that eating vegetables is a good way to get your vitamins and promote overall good health, this information suggests that vegetable consumption could also protect you from common bacterial infections like strep throat, sinus infections, bladder infections, and pneumonia.

So, sit down to a meal that's packed with bacteria-fighting flavonoids, immune-boosting antioxidants, and don't forget great taste! For some new ideas see the recipes on page 5.

¹ Plant Chemicals Kill Bacteria in Lab Tests; Emma Patten-Hitt, Ph.D., www.reutershealth.com; March 26, 2001

**Boost your immune system
and fight infection with delicious
veggie-packed meals!**

TOFU VEGETABLE CASSEROLE

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Baking time: 50 minutes

Resting time: 15 minutes

Servings: 6

2 12.3-ounce packages Mori-Nu Lite tofu, extra firm
1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes
1/3 cup water
1 onion, chopped
1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
1 teaspoon bottled, minced fresh garlic
3 cups thinly sliced mushrooms
2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
1 tablespoon white miso
1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
1 teaspoon basil
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/16 teaspoon cayenne (or more to taste)
several twists freshly ground black pepper
1 2.25-ounce can sliced black olives (optional)

Place the tofu in a colander and let drain. Place the tomatoes in a bowl, add boiling water to cover, and let soak for 5 minutes. Drain, chop, and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place the water in a large nonstick frying pan. Add the onion, bell peppers, and garlic. Cook, stirring frequently for 5 minutes. Add mushrooms and continue to cook uncovered, stirring frequently, for about 10 minutes. Add sun-dried tomatoes and cook an additional 5 minutes, or until mixture begins to stick to the bottom of the pan. Remove from heat and set aside.

Place the tofu in a large bowl and mash with a potato/bean masher until well mixed. Add nutritional yeast, miso, and mustard. Mix well with a whisk until thoroughly blended. Stir in basil, salt, cayenne, and pepper. Add the cooked vegetables and the black olives, if desired. Mix well.

Mary's Corner

Recipes **OF THE MONTH**

By Mary McDougall



Scoop into a nonstick casserole dish. Flatten out evenly. Bake, uncovered, for 50 minutes. Let rest for 15 minutes before serving.

TUNISIAN SWEET POTATO STEW

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Resting time: 2 minutes

Servings: 6

1/3 cup water
1 onion, chopped
2 jalapenos, seeded and finely chopped
2 teaspoons bottled, minced fresh ginger
1 teaspoon bottled, minced fresh garlic
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground coriander
2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 14.5-ounce cans chopped tomatoes
2 14.5-ounce cans garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup green beans, cut in 1-inch pieces
1 1/2 cups vegetable broth
1/4 cup natural peanut butter
1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Place the water, onion, jalapenos, ginger, and garlic in a large pot. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Add cumin, cinnamon, red pepper, and coriander. Cook and stir for 1 minute. Add sweet potatoes, tomatoes, garbanzo beans, green beans, vegetable broth, and peanut butter. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 30 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Stir in cilantro and let rest for 2 minutes. Serve over rice or other whole grains.

**Check out the new *To Your Health* newsletter website at
www.mcdougallnewsletter.com for updates, featured articles,
and to purchase back issues and articles.**

New study confirms that NOW is the time to quit coffee

You and I both know that cutting down on coffee is a wise part of our overall health program. But it's so easy to rationalize the habit with thoughts like "Just a cup in the morning can't hurt, right?" I've had the coffee monkey on and off my back more times than I can count! But every so often, a new study comes along that reminds me of how dangerous it really can be.

A new study, published recently in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, found that cafestol, a substance found in unfiltered brews like French press and Turkish coffees, raises triglyceride and cholesterol levels, both markers for heart disease. Eight healthy young men consumed 37.5 mg of cafestol each day for two weeks; that's around 15 cups a day. I know it's much more than the average "Joe" drinks, but consider that one coffee mug equals about three regular cups of coffee from the pot. Many people aren't really so far off. And, in that short time, **their triglycerides soared by 32 percent and their total cholesterol levels increased by 15 percent.** Even worse, their levels of "bad" LDL cholesterol increased while the levels of "good" HDL cholesterol decreased.

Of course, this is not the first study to show coffee's adverse

effects on cardiovascular health. In the July 2000 issue of *TYH*, you read about how unfiltered *and* filtered coffee raise levels of homocysteine, another heart-disease marker.

Plus, past studies (see the December 1999 issue of *TYH*) have shown that all kinds of coffee—even *decaffeinated*—raise cholesterol levels. Still other research has demonstrated that coffee weakens our bones, stains our teeth, leaches vitamins from the body, and—I'm afraid the list goes on and on.

You don't need scientific studies to prove that coffee is unhealthy

If I drink coffee for more than three days in a row, I start to notice its effects. I feel anxious, with a strange sense of impending doom. I grit my teeth and clench my jaw. My blood pressure goes up. I suffer from indigestion that no antacid can relieve—and, as many a coffee drinker knows, I have to keep an eye out for the nearest bathroom!

And, I feel even worse when I *stop* drinking coffee. The throbbing headaches, lethargy, and irritability are classic symptoms of *withdrawal* from an addictive substance. You don't have to be a doctor to figure out that something like that can't be good for you—and that you're

better off without it.

You can wean yourself from coffee *without* giving up your morning indulgence

You can still enjoy a satisfying hot drink every morning. There are plenty of delicious, natural, healthy coffee alternatives; Roma, Teeccino, and Cafix are good options. You can find all of them in health-food stores. I personally enjoy herbal teas as a substitute.

For the smoothest transition, you might first try replacing your daily cup with a "lite" brew—there are several coffees on the market now that contain half the caffeine of regular blends. Then, after about a week, switch entirely to the non-coffee alternatives.

If you suffer from headaches while you're kicking the habit, an over-the-counter pain reliever should get you over the worst. Just keep reminding yourself that the withdrawal symptoms only last for a few days...and you'll feel so much better after that brief period. You may be less tense, your stomach and bones will be better off, and, don't forget—you're doing something good for your heart!

¹ Am J Clin Nutr, 73:45-52, 2001

Are you safe from mad-cow disease?

Continued from page 2

Maybe you're one of these recent converts, switching to a plant-based diet due to the infection scares. Or maybe you've eschewed animal products for years and saw the outbreaks as further evidence that you'd made the right choice. But perhaps you're part of the group that's still debating the decision and struggling with the change. I know it's a big step, but you *can* do it—and you'll thank yourself for it.

Life without animal products isn't about deprivation. It's about the safe, healthy, and delicious foods

Mother Nature intended us to eat. The best part is that what you're really giving up are the concerns you have about the safety of your food and the health of your body. And that's something you can definitely live without!

Moving? Missed an issue? Please let us know within 60 days of moving or if you have not received an issue. (International subscribers, please notify us within 90 days.) After this time period, missed issues can be purchased for US\$6.50 each. Postage costs may apply to international requests.

Back issues and individual articles can be purchased online through our new **To Your Health** website. Go to: www.mcdougallnewsletter.com and click search.

Keeping up with Dr. McDougall

Join us on a rejuvenating Costa Rican Adventure

"Pat and I really enjoyed the Costa Rica week! We'd put it right up there with our honeymoon to Maui in '86."

Charles Guittard, Dallas, TX

Join us on July 28, 2001, as we head for El Ocotol, a paradise on the northwest coast of Costa Rica. You'll stay at El Ocotol Hotel, a first-class, luxury, oceanside resort with modern rooms and views that take your breath away. The restaurant, perched atop a knoll surrounded by water on three sides and with El Ocotol's third swimming pool below, is regarded as one of Costa Rica's most picturesque spots.

Personally selected naturalists will guide us to the national parks, wildlife reserves, nearby towns, and other points of interest.

We have five daylong excursions planned for you: horseback riding or a wagon ride through the rain forest; white-water rafting; swinging through the canopy of the forest; a thrilling cable trip over a canyon; and boating up an estuary, along with snorkeling and scuba-diving. The animal and plant life are exotic. Relax or explore as much as you want.

Evening entertainment will be provided most nights during and after dinner. In addition, my wife Mary and I will be providing education on the McDougall Program. All meals are pure-vegetarian, low-fat, and delicious.

The total cost of the trip is \$1,550 per person, and it is all inclusive except for airfare to and from San Jose and airport taxes and gratuities. Make sure to ask about our special, low-cost, group-based airfares when you call to reserve your space. (Singles pay \$1,950.) For more information or reservations, call (800) 570-1654 or (909) 715-3155. Also, visit: www.drmcDougall.com.

Please refer to CST# 204 9430-50.

Regain lost health and appearance and take control of your future...

Now you can learn more about the complete McDougall Program on video tape. Get six tapes of highly entertaining, life-changing information presented by John and Mary McDougall. This exact presentation has dramatically improved the health of thousands of people and allowed them to:

- become trim for the rest of their lives (Many lose

over 10 pounds in 12 days and more than 100 pounds in less than a year!)

- discontinue their blood-pressure, diabetes, and heart medications
- free themselves from the pain of crippling arthritis, headaches, and body aches
- lower cholesterol 28-65 points in just 11 days
- avoid future health problems

Now you have a simple and effective way to help yourself

Try this program for 12 days! And invite your loved ones to participate. They may have resisted change—until now.

The regular price for this complete, life-changing set of videos is \$149.95 plus \$14 s&h. But, for a limited time, I have a special introductory offer for you. As a newsletter subscriber, you pay just \$119.95 plus \$14 s&h. Better still, if you order TODAY you'll receive a FREE bonus copy of the national best seller *The McDougall Program—Twelve Days to Dynamic Health*. This is a \$14.95 value, absolutely free if you order today! Call (800) 570-1654 or (909) 715-3155; fax (707) 538-0712, or email: drmcDougall@drmcDougall.com.

Note: This program is not available through Agora Publishing.

Transform your life for good in California's beautiful Napa Valley

Come celebrate the 15th anniversary of the McDougall Program at St. Helena Hospital in the beautiful Napa Valley of California and get a \$400 discount per person until June 29, 2001!

Celebrate our 15th Anniversary Special with a \$400 discount!

You'll change your life for the better with this 10- or 12-day live-in experience.

Program dates:

May 20 to June 1 (12-day)

July 13 to July 22 (10 day)

June 22 to July 1 (10 day)

Voted the #1 weight-loss program in America by the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine. You CAN lose weight, get your health back, and reduce or even eliminate your medications!

To sign up or receive more information, please call (800) 358-9195 or visit our web site:

www.sthelenacenterforhealth.org.

Glucosamine ALONE can improve arthritis symptoms—even stop it in its tracks—without the added, bovine-based chondroitin in the mix!

A glucosamine/chondroitin combination is a popular, natural, over-the-counter remedy that not only relieves the pain of osteoarthritis but can actually halt the progression of joint damage. As a bonus, it doesn't have the side effects—gastrointestinal and organ damage—that are associated with traditional NSAID treatments.

Now, according to a new study published in the *Lancet*, a daily 1,500 mg dose of *glucosamine sulphate* ALONE halted knee-joint-space loss and improved pain, stiffness, and mobility by 34 percent more than did a placebo.¹ Why is this good news?

Until recently, taking anything coupled with chon-

droitin, which is derived from cow cartilage, was a big turnoff for vegetarians. These days, almost everyone is leery of bovine products. All you have to do is turn on the news (or take a look at the lead article) to know the problems they're causing.

Since glucosamine is derived from seashells, there is little concern about animal rights or contamination. Even better, glucosamine alone costs about half as much as glucosamine/chondroitin combinations. You'll pay about 25 cents per 1,000 mg glucosamine capsule, compared to nearly 50 cents for the same dose of glucosamine plus chondroitin.

If you want to try glucosamine for arthritis symptoms, I recommend 1,500 mg daily (the same dosage as was used in the study). You can find the product in most health-food stores or you can buy it online. Just make sure to read ALL the ingredients carefully—you don't want chondroitin in the mix!

¹ *Lancet* 357:251-256, 2001

The doctor is in...

Doesn't my body need oil?

Q. I just started receiving your newsletter and have started reading some of the booklets that you sent with my subscription. This is excellent material, and I want to thank you for including it. However, I do have a question about the use of oil. Don't our bodies need oil to help in the work of the essential fatty acids in the body? I have read some research that would indicate that we need some oil (olive oil, flax oil, etc.) in our diets to provide these EFAs.

What is your opinion on this matter?

—F.W., Orlando, Florida

JM First, I'd like to welcome you aboard and thank you for

your question. It's one I hear frequently from patients who are just starting out on my program. And, you're right, there are oils that the body needs in order to make cell membranes, various hormones, and other substances. These oils are called *essential fatty acids*, or EFAs, and we cannot make them ourselves; they must be obtained through our food. But keep in mind that EFAs are made only by plants. Any EFAs found in animal foods are only there because the animal ate plants and then stored the fats in its tissues.

About half of all the fat in plant foods is in the form of EFAs; therefore, a plant-based diet is the best source for obtaining these nutrients. Certain plant foods such as olives, nuts, seeds (including flaxseed), avocados, and soybeans, contain large amounts of fats along with EFAs. These can be added safely to your diet as long as weight loss is not a concern for you. (Keep in mind that even fat eaten from a vegetable source can turn into the

fat you wear!) However, a diet based on starches, vegetables (especially green leafy vegetables), and fruits has an abundance of EFAs, and the concentrated sources like nuts and seeds are not necessary for maintaining good health.

I do prescribe extra vegetable fats for people who have very dry skin, arthritis, and other inflammatory diseases, but never "free oils" like flaxseed oil or olive oil. These oils have been separated from all their vitamins, minerals, fibers, antioxidants, and other phytochemicals that keep them safe and healthy. These "free oils" promote heart disease and cancer. So, remember, if you are trying to lose weight, make sure to get your EFAs from low-fat plant sources. If you're at your ideal weight and not concerned with gain, EFAs from more concentrated plant sources are OK. But remember, extra fat from any source can cause obesity, type II diabetes, and greasy skin—so don't overdo it!

John A. McDougall, M.D., graduated from the Michigan State University Medical School and completed his residency training in internal medicine at the University of Hawaii. He is a board-certified specialist in internal medicine and one of the world's leading experts on health and nutrition. As medical director of a revolutionary program at St. Helena Hospital in Napa Valley, California, he has attracted national acclaim for helping people of virtually all ages to overcome chronic illnesses and reverse life-threatening conditions. He is the author of several nationally best-selling books, including *The McDougall Plan*, *McDougall's Medicine: A Challenging Second Opinion*, *The McDougall Program: 12 Days to Dynamic Health*, *The McDougall Program for Maximum Weight Loss*, *The McDougall Program for Women*, and *The McDougall Program for a Healthy Heart*. His face will be familiar to many from his television appearances on CNN, *The Phil Donahue Show*, and other programs.