



Dr. John A. McDougall's

To Your Health

The eight best-selling drugs in the U.S.—and the food cures that could put them out of business

If you're feeling pinched in the pocketbook lately, it's not just higher energy costs. A new study by the National Institute for Health Care Management finds that consumer spending on prescription drugs has been rising *six times faster than the average cost of living*. And more than \$10 million of that cost increase is attributable to just eight categories of drugs.¹

Chances are you or someone you know takes at least one of them. They're drugs to treat common conditions like high cholesterol, arthritis, chronic pain, depression, ulcers, high blood pressure, diabetes, and respiratory allergies.

Some might see this report as good news—the magic of pharmaceutical science at work. But there's no real magic at work here except *a magical rise in drug company revenues*. These drugs do little to cure the intended conditions and have the potential to do serious harm.

Most troubling of all—they are, in most cases, completely unnecessary! Every one of these eight conditions can be addressed—and erased—with food!

Load up on nature's mood lifter—complex carbs

The best-selling drug category in 2000 was anti-depressants, accounting for \$10.4 billion in sales. That's a lot of depressed people. And the *really* sad thing about it is that many of them can lift their spirits quickly, easily, and cheaply—just with the foods they eat.

It's true—studies have shown that what you eat can significantly impact the secretion of the neurotransmitter *serotonin*. This brain chemical is responsible for your mood—more serotonin makes you feel calm, peaceful, and content, while less serotonin makes you anxious, moody, and gloomy. Studies have proven that foods rich in complex carbohydrates, like beans and whole grains, trigger the release of serotonin.

On the other hand, meals high in protein, particularly animal protein, can inhibit serotonin.² Focusing on the right foods can have a significant impact on

your mood. When combined with exercise, proper sleep, and reducing stimulants like alcohol and caffeine, you'll increase your ability to completely eliminate the need for antidepressants for good.

Avoid foods that trigger excess stomach acid

The second class of drugs on the list is antiulceratives—drugs used to treat gastric ulcers and other gastrointestinal problems. Antiulceratives work by controlling excess acid in your stomach. What most people don't realize is that the excess acid is often a byproduct of eating the wrong kinds of foods.

One major offender here is coffee, even decaf. It's the alkaloids in coffee, not the caffeine, that cause the problem. Animal products are also triggers. Dairy products and meats cause the stomach to secrete a lot of acid in order to digest the excess protein effectively.³ Even some plant foods can aggravate a sensitive stomach, so, if you still have problems, try eliminating common irritants like onions, green pepper, cucumbers, radishes, fruit juices, and hot sauces.

On the other hand, many plant foods are naturally alkaline—meaning that they neutralize acids. Fruits like bananas (which thicken the stomach lining) and figs; vegetables like cabbage, broccoli, corn, and turnips; and complex carbohydrates like beans and whole grains will naturally take care of any excess acids in your stomach and relieve stomach pain.⁴

Some people are given these drugs not to relieve ulcers but because of acid reflux. Excess weight tends to push acid up out of the stomach and into the esophagus, causing heartburn and burning acid reflux. Losing weight through healthy eating and exercise can help here.

Build your meals around NO-cholesterol plant foods

Cholesterol-lowering drugs raked in \$8.2 billion dollars in 2000. The average prescription of a cholesterol-lowering drug costs \$83.22. But the good news is...it's totally unnecessary! Just think of what you could buy with that money.

¹ Prescription Drug Expenditures in 2000: The Upward Trend Continues, The National Institute for Health Care Management Research and Educational Foundation, May 2001

² Am J Obstet Gynecol, 161:1,228, 1989

³ Br Med J, 293:666, 1986

⁴ Carper, Jean. Food: Your Miracle Medicine. New York: Harper Collins, 1993

Dr. John A. McDougall's To Your Health

This month...

The best solution for carpal tunnel syndrome—hands down 5

Tea: An antioxidant powerhouse 6

The breast-cancer/biopsy link 7

Sun protection straight from the vine 8

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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.

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Increasing your intake of some specific foods can help even more. Soluble fibers like oatmeal and oat bran can help bind and eliminate cholesterol from the body. Garlic has also been shown to help.

If you eat foods with low to no cholesterol, your levels will go down. It's that simple. Patients on my program with cholesterol as high as 300 mg/dl routinely see their total cholesterol levels drop 65 points in just 11 days—just by eating a plant-based diet. Over time, people who follow my plan maintain their cholesterol levels around 150 mg/dl—a level that nearly guarantees safety from heart disease.

For especially stubborn cholesterol problems, *immediate-release* niacin, vitamins C and E, and activated charcoal can help. An Ayurvedic remedy called *guggulipid* has been found to be as effective as prescription cholesterol-lowering drugs without the associated risks.⁵ (See the October 2000 issue of *TYH* for more information about guggulipid and other Ayurvedic remedies.)

So, if you have high cholesterol, instead of eggs and bacon for breakfast, eat all you want of oatmeal with a little maple sugar and a bowl of fresh berries, dig in to some Spicy Mexican chili for lunch (see the McDougall All-You-Can-Eat Cookbook for the recipe or go to www.mcdougallnewsletter.com), and enjoy a bowl of Vegetable Stir-Up with garlic on rice for dinner. It's that simple—and cheap!

Fend off infections by strengthening your immune system

Americans spent \$7.8 billion on broad-spectrum antibiotics last year. Antibiotics are used to treat a wide variety of infections—but these problems wouldn't trouble you nearly as often if your body's natural defenses were stronger. And the very best weapons at your disposal for increasing your immune system's firepower are the nutrients and vitamins in your food!

Hundreds of studies have shown that fruits, vegetables, and whole grains are chock full of antioxidants, powerful molecules that protect the body from damaging free radicals that leave you more vulnerable to illness. Fruits and vegetables rich in betacarotene, such as spinach, kale, carrots, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin, are especially helpful in

⁵ *J Assoc Physicians India*, 37:323-328, 1989

Lower high cholesterol levels:

VEGETABLE STIR-UP

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Servings: 4

3-4 zucchini, sliced 1/4 inch thick
1 mild onion, cut in half, then thinly sliced
1 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
1/2 cup vegetable broth
1 clove garlic, peeled
1 inch piece fresh ginger root, peeled
3 tomatoes, cut into wedges

Place zucchini, onion and bell pepper in a wok or frying pan. Add the vegetable broth, garlic, and ginger. Cook and stir over medium heat for about 8 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook for another 2 minutes. Remove the garlic and ginger and discard. Serve at once over brown rice.

fighting infection.⁶ On the other hand, animal products can inhibit immune system functioning.

And here's the proof: Hundreds of people who follow my plan have written to tell me how rarely they get sick.

The report doesn't specify, but I'd venture a guess that a lot of the antibiotic money is spent on prescriptions for children. Much of that could be avoided in two simple steps: Breast-feed babies for at least one year, and avoid dairy products (many studies have linked dairy products with recurrent ear infections⁷). Breast-feeding passes on mothers' immunities to their babies, and gives them the complete nutrition they need to fend off infections.

Eliminate animal protein and feel arthritis pain disappear!

\$6.2 billion was spent on anti-arthritis drugs, designed to treat inflammatory diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, psoriatic arthritis, and ankylosing spondylitis. In over 27 years of working with patients, I've found that over 70 percent of people suffering from these conditions can find relief by changing the foods they eat.

The conditions above all share a single immediate cause—inflammation in a joint or connective tissue. And the inflammation is very often caused by animal protein. (See page 5 for more details.)

Cutting out animal proteins is the obvious answer. In addition, there are a number of natural anti-inflammatories, including onion, garlic, sage, pineapple, apple, black currant, and ginger.⁸ You should incorporate these into your meals throughout the day. You may also want to try supplementing with chondroitin, especially for osteoarthritis (see the May 2001 issue of *TYH*).

I've seen these techniques work for thousands of people. Nearly every letter of thanks I get mentions relief from the aches and pains that they thought were an unavoidable part of aging.

New study proves you can lower blood pressure with food

A recent study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* spells it out: Eating low-fat, low-sodium meals based on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains produces decreases equal to *or even greater than* the typical results of prescription drugs!⁹ And it does so without the nasty side effects like impotence, diarrhea, and dizziness (just to name a few), that the prescription drugs can cause.

Not only do blood-pressure medications have

Beat high blood pressure:

GARLIC-MUSTARD MASHED POTATOES

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 35-40 minutes

Servings: 8-10

3 pounds red potatoes
2 cloves garlic
1/4 cup soy or rice milk
2 tablespoons stone ground mustard

Wash potatoes and cut into chunks, do not peel. Place in a large pan, cover with water, add the whole, peeled garlic cloves, cover, bring to a boil and cook over medium heat until tender. Drain off water, add the milk, and mash with an electric beater. Add mustard and beat again until fairly smooth. Serve at once.

potentially unpleasant side effects, but they're actually only masking the real problem. High blood pressure is caused by diseased blood vessels, so prescription medications will eliminate the symptom while leaving the underlying cause untouched.

Potassium-rich foods like bananas, prunes, potatoes, and spinach can be especially helpful. As well as one of my personal favorites—garlic. So, enjoy a big plate of garlic mashed potatoes for dinner tonight with a little spinach mixed in—and a banana smoothie for dessert!

I've seen hundreds of people under my care stabilize their blood pressure in as little as 36 hours without medication. Most are able to maintain their blood pressure at levels even lower than they had while medicated—just by eating the right foods!

Give your body the food it needs to correct insulin imbalance

Use of oral diabetes drugs jumped more than 15 percent in 2000. That's no surprise, considering that Type II diabetes is one of the fastest growing diseases around. This condition, also called adult-onset diabetes, accounts for about 95 percent of today's diabetics. And it's NOT caused by an inability to produce insulin. It actually happens when your body can't effectively use the insulin it produces. This condition is often called "insulin resistance," and it's usually triggered by fat, sugar, and refined foods.

Eating whole foods low in fat and high in complex carbohydrates can restore the body's insulin balance and help you lose weight. A recent study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported that following a low-fat, plant-based diet cuts the risk of developing Type II diabetes by 58 percent!¹⁰ Chromium-rich foods like mushrooms, rhubarb, barley, and broccoli are especially helpful in regulating blood sugar levels.¹¹

Continued on page 4

⁶ Carper, Jean. op. cit.

⁷ *Otolaryngol Clin North Am*, 25(1):197-211, 1992

⁸ Carper, Jean. op. cit.

⁹ *N Engl J Med*, 344:3-10, 2001

The eight best selling drugs in the U.S.

Continued from page 3

And I've found that adopting a healthy eating strategy even *after* the diagnosis can erase the condition entirely! Most of my patients are able to restore their normal blood sugar levels without medication.

Avoid dairy products and breathe easy again

Oral antihistamines round out the report's top eight, with \$3.7 billion in sales. These are used to treat symptoms that we widely refer to as "allergies," namely chronic nasal congestion, postnasal drip, and hoarseness. In some people, this is due to seasonal conditions like pollen. But in many people, the symptoms are caused by the foods they eat. Some of the top allergy-inducing foods include dairy products, eggs, chocolate, nuts, shellfish, and seafood. Dairy, in particular, causes respiratory symptoms in many people.

In my practice, I've found that 75 percent of people can eliminate respiratory symptoms for good simply by avoiding dairy products. If that doesn't work, eliminating wheat and corn may help. For stubborn allergies, an elimination diet approach may help identify the allergen. (See my book, The McDougall Program: 12 Days to Dynamic Health or my website at www.drmcDougall.com, for complete information on the elimination diet.)

Put the pharmaceutical companies out of business—just by eating delicious foods

Taking advantage of nature's food cures can literally

Reduce stomach acid and fight high blood pressure:

BANANA SMOOTHIES

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Servings: 2

2 bananas, peeled and chunked
1 cup apple juice
1 cup frozen fruit (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, etc.)

Place all ingredients in a blender jar and process until smooth.

Hint: These may easily be varied by adding different fruits or using different juices.

transform your health!

It can also save you thousands of dollars each year, by eliminating your need for expensive drugs. The cost of one prescription of these top eight drugs averages more than \$50 a month; I'm sure you can think of better ways to spend that money! And with a new healthy approach to life, you'll have the energy and enthusiasm to enjoy it to the fullest! Your body will thank you—even if the pharmaceutical companies don't!

[You can search for more information on each of these conditions on my newsletter website, www.mcdougallnewsletter.com. You can download entire back issues there or individual articles on a pay-per-view basis. Or call reader services at (978)-514-7851.]

¹⁰ *N Engl J Med*, 344:1,343-1,350, 2001

¹¹ Carper, Jean. op. cit.

Dr. McDougall's Total Health Solution for the 21st Century—Books and Videos

Making any big change can be intimidating, and I know that switching to the McDougall Program is no exception. But now it's possible to get the encouragement and support you need at any time right in your own home. I have put together a professionally-recorded educational video series that provides the exact presentation given to participants of our 12-day live-in program at the St. Helena Hospital in California's Napa Valley.

In addition to the new video series, my books, including *The McDougall Program—12 Days to Dynamic Health*, *The New McDougall Cookbook* (which includes over 300 of our favorite, very delicious, and health-enhancing recipes), and 7 other titles, are available for your personal health

reference library.

These resources offer simple, but thorough explanations of the benefits of a plant-based diet. The regular price of the video series is US\$149.95 plus \$14 s&h. But, for a limited time, I have a special introductory offer for you, as a *To Your Health* subscriber: You pay just \$119.95 plus the \$14 s&h for the complete, life-changing set of videos. (California residents, add 7.5% sales tax). For information on book prices, as well as to order the books and video series, visit my website at www.drmcDougall.com. You may also fax (707)538-0712, mail P.O. Box 14309, Santa Rosa, CA 95402, or phone (800)570-1654 or (909)715-3155.

Note: These materials are not available through Agora Publishing

Carpal tunnel syndrome: Eliminate the pain in two weeks or less—without drugs or surgery

Chances are you or someone you know has suffered from carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). It's a common diagnosis, but one that mainstream medicine does little to address. The usual "treatment" of CTS has more to do with managing the symptoms than with erasing the root cause. Worse yet, the surgery that is reserved for the most stubborn cases brings with it serious risks and weeks of recovery time.

What most people don't know—including most doctors—is that you could be rid of the aching, burning, tingling in your hands forever with simple food cures.

Repetitive motion may not be the cause

Most people think that prolonged, repetitive hand motions, like typing at a computer, cause the wrist inflammation that leads to carpal tunnel. I'll agree that it certainly doesn't help. But there may be a more basic answer.

A study just published in the medical journal *Neurology* demonstrated that repetitive motions are not always the cause of CTS. Researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona, studied a group of employees who frequently use computers and after clinical testing found that only a small percentage had CTS—the rest of the computer-users were unaffected.¹ So what else could be going on here?

Your hand and wrist are very complex things: An awe-inspiring maze of nerves, ligaments, tendons, and bones provides it with amazing capabilities. Through the middle of it all runs the *median nerve*, running through the wrist and dispersing nerves to all five fingers.

In the narrow space inside the wrist, the median nerve runs parallel to all those tendons, ligaments, and bones. If something in there starts taking up more than its fair share of space, everything is bound to get crowded. So when a tendon or ligament becomes inflamed, pressure is put on the median nerve. As another recent study found, this causes the pain, burning, and tingling feelings in the palm and fingers of patients with CTS.²

Just like arthritis—it all goes back to inflammation

The cure for CTS is the same as it is for arthritis...based on experience and on an undeniable list of related facts: Arthritis pain and CTS are associated with inflammation, people with carpal tunnel syndrome often also have arthritis,³ and CTS is most often seen in people who are overweight. Trust me,

these are not coincidences! Arthritis, obesity, and carpal tunnel are all caused by the same thing: eating meat, eggs, and milk.

Here's why: Foods high in fat, cholesterol, and animal protein can weaken the effectiveness of the body's natural filtering system. Under optimal conditions, the intestine's protective outer wall weeds out harmful foreign proteins called *antigens*. But when the intestinal filter is weakened, those antigens can get through into the intestine. In this situation (called "leaky gut" by doctors), the invading antigens invoke an immune response. The intestine becomes inflamed, and the cycle feeds off itself: When the tissues of the intestinal wall are inflamed, it's even easier for antigens to get through.

The antigens can then spread to the bloodstream, where they travel to many different parts of the body. Wherever they go, the body perceives their threat and responds with an immune response—creating antibodies to fight the invading antigens. Sometimes, those antibodies also attack useful proteins in your body's tissues that appear similar to the foreign antigens. The result? More inflammation, and a breakdown of healthy connective tissues.

Extra weight doesn't help matters, either. Obesity can often lead to *edema*, or the retention of fluid in the tissues. In the narrow space of the wrist, excess fluid and fat can crowd the median nerve, causing the pain of carpal tunnel syndrome. This, combined with the inflammation from animal proteins, adds up to one painful problem.

Get beyond band-aid solutions and watch the symptoms disappear

Splints, exercises, ergonomic devices, steroid injections, anti-inflammatory drugs, and painkillers—they all can help, but they're band-aid solutions. Surgery can eliminate the pain, but it's a delicate procedure that requires months of recovery time and can leave you with permanent nerve damage.⁴

Starting today, build your meals around naturally low-fat plant foods, taking special care to avoid animal products, particularly dairy. If you still have problems, try eliminating wheat and corn, which also cause reactions in some people. (My book *The McDougall Program* provides step-by-step instructions for following an "elimination diet," which can help you identify your "trigger foods.") Reducing your sodium intake can also help, as excess sodium can cause more fluid retention.

¹ *Neurology*, 56(11):1,568-70, 2001

² *British Journal of General Practice*, 51:311-314, 2001

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *British Journal of General Practice*, 51:311-314, 2001

Continued on page 7

Reduce cholesterol, fight cancer, prevent arthritis, and even burn fat!

The amazing Asian miracle food

Yes, one simple, natural food can do all that—and more. It's something you can enjoy every day, even many times a day. People have been safely consuming it for thousands of years, and reams of research have explored its benefits.

So what is it? *Tea*. That's right—plain old humble tea is nature's food cure behind all these health benefits. Just look at the research. Studies have found that tea can help prevent or fight all of these common conditions:

- **Cancer:** Multiple studies have linked green and black tea with a reduced risk of many kinds of cancer, including cancer of the esophagus, pancreas, colon, rectum, stomach, and breast.¹
- **Heart attack:** People who drink one or more cups of tea per day have half the heart attack risk of those who don't drink tea at all.²
- **Osteoporosis:** Among older women, tea consumption is associated with greater bone mineral density³ and may help prevent hip fractures.⁴
- **Arthritis:** In controlled studies using laboratory animals, green tea reduced inflammatory arthritis symptoms as much as 50 percent, and signs of immune system response were markedly lower in the joints of the experimental animals.⁵
- **Obesity:** Green tea increases daily energy expenditure and encourages the body to burn fat.⁶

Impressive, huh? And that amazing list only scratches the surface.

Polyphenols in tea pack an antioxidant punch

By far the most powerful components of tea are *polyphenols*. Polyphenols (also known as *catechins*) are part of the flavonoid family, the group of plant pigments that gives fruits, vegetables, and flowers their blue, red, and purple colors. Many flavonoids have been recognized for their strong antioxidant qualities, and polyphenols are no exception. In fact, most everything on the list above can be credited to the antioxidant activity of tea polyphenols!

Polyphenols can reduce platelet clogging; inhibit the oxidation of LDL cholesterol; improve the function of the heart's *endothelium*, or lining; and inhibit cell proliferation. And just by doing their basic antioxidant duty—scavenging free radicals—polyphenols protect

tissues all over the body from serious damage.

Tea also contains phytoestrogens, which may explain its bone-density-enhancing benefits,⁷ and gallic acid, which also displays anti-mutagenic, anti-carcinogenic, and anti-inflammatory properties.⁸ All together, these compounds in tea create one of nature's most potent (and popular) food cures.

Green vs. black—which type should you drink?

Not all tea is created equal. While any kind of tea is better than a lot of other beverage choices (coffee and colas come to mind), differences in processing can maximize or minimize the natural benefits of the leaves.

For maximum benefits, drink green tea. This variety, traditionally found in Asian countries, is produced by steaming or pan-frying fresh tea leaves. Black tea, which is more common in Western countries, is produced by drying the leaves and then crushing them. These different processing methods affect the composition of polyphenols and their bioavailability in the tea. While some studies have shown benefits from black tea, most suggest that green tea provides more polyphenols.⁹ Green tea has become more popular in the West in recent years; it is now readily available at most grocery stores.

While some studies have shown benefits from black tea, most suggest that green tea provides more polyphenols.⁹ Green tea has become more popular in the West in recent years; it is now readily available at most grocery stores.

I also recommend drinking decaffeinated varieties. You can easily get all the benefits of tea *without* the caffeine, not to mention that avoiding caffeine will make you less anxious and improve the quality of your sleep.

And just how much tea should you drink for your good health? Well, many of the studies I've mentioned here focus on very high consumption—an average of around 2.4 liters, or 10 cups, of tea per day. But, then again, the Boston Area Health Study found that just one cup a day (200-250 ml) cut men's heart attack risk in half.¹⁰ I'd say, anywhere in between is bound to do some good and certainly will do no harm.

“All together, the compounds in tea create one of nature's most potent (and popular) food cures.”

¹ *J Nutr*, 130:472-478, 2000

² *Am J Epidemiol*, 149:162-167, 1999

³ *Am J Clin Nutr*, 71:1,003-1,007, 2000

⁴ *J Nutr*, 130:2,409-2,412, 2000

⁵ *Proc Natl Acad Sci U.S.A.*, 96:4,524-4,529, 1999

⁶ *Am J Clin Nutr*, 70:1,040-1,045, 1999

⁷ *J Nutr*, 130:2,409-2,412, 2000

⁸ *J Nutr*, 131:1,207-1,210, 2001

⁹ *Am J Clin Nutr*, 71:1,698-1,702, 2000

¹⁰ *Am J Epidemiol*, 149:1,162-1,167, 1999

Unnecessary biopsies may trigger cancer growth: Another reason women under 50 should avoid mammograms

That's the theory presented by Harvard Medical school doctors in a recent letter to the *Lancet*. They suggest that the damage done to tissues during a biopsy can encourage the growth of dormant pre-cancerous cells, opening the door for cancer to progress rapidly and move into more advanced stages.¹

These doctors took a close look at the results of the Canadian National Breast Screening Study, which involved women in their 40s. This is the largest such screening trial to date, with more than 50,000 participants. In this study, half of the women underwent annual mammograms and physical exams while the other half were told to follow "usual care" procedures. After an average 10 years of follow up, more women in the mammography group had died of breast cancer than in the control group.²

Biopsies—an "alarm clock" for precancerous cells

Over the 10 1/2 years of the study, the women in the intervention group underwent three times as many biopsies as did women in the control group.³

In such a large trial, researchers can pick up on trends that would not be apparent in smaller groups. The *Lancet* letter suggests that the cycle of mammograms and biopsies explains the greater number of deaths in the intervention group. Here's how it works: A mammogram shows inconclusive results, leading to an exploratory biopsy. The biopsy causes wounding to the tissues in the breast and surrounding lymph nodes. This stimulates growth factors that awaken dormant pre-cancerous cells and encourages *angiogenesis*, the development of blood vessels that fuel them.

Left alone, those dormant cells might have been kept at bay by the body's natural defenses. The women might not have developed cancer at all, or developed it in their 50s or 60s instead of in their 40s.

The letter points out that this scenario only explains about 2 percent of the cases in the trial. Still, the Harvard doctors explain, the risk is great enough to eliminate any potential benefit from early

mammograms.

So who *should* be getting mammograms?

My own, long-held conviction remains the same: Mammograms are only for women between the ages of 50 and 69—and even for this group, they're of limited benefit. There is solid research that makes me question the benefits even for this age group. An article in the *Lancet* reported that six of eight studies on mammograms showed severe bias and cannot be considered valid. The other two studies showed no benefit for women between the ages of 50 to 69.⁴ Mammograms are NOT about prevention, and they're really not about early detection, either: It can take 12 years for a tumor to grow to two millimeters—the smallest size detectable by mammograms. Twelve years is hardly early detection! For true prevention, focus on the foods you eat and the lifestyle you lead—it's never too late to start.

¹ *Lancet*, 357:1,048, 2001

² *J Natl Cancer Inst Monogr*, 22:37-41, 1997

³ *Lancet*, 357:1,048, 2001

⁴ *Lancet*, 355:129-134, 2000

Carpal tunnel syndrome

continued from page 5

Arthritis sufferers who stop eating all animal products—meat, chicken, eggs, milk, and other dairy products—see their symptoms disappear. No pain, no inflammation. Reams of research support this link, and I've seen it happen to hundreds of my patients. Animal products have also been associated with other debilitating inflammatory diseases, like lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

It's still a good idea to follow common-sense practices if you frequently perform repetitive tasks with your hands. Stretching exercises, proper posture, and frequent breaks can all help ease the strain.

For most people, these healthy changes can eliminate the pain in your hands and wrists in a week or two, sometimes even sooner! That's a whole lot quicker than you'd recover from carpal tunnel surgery!

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

Tomatoes can prevent sunburn!

New research by German and Dutch scientists tells us that *lycopene*, an antioxidant found in tomatoes, can protect our skin from harmful ultraviolet rays. In the 10-week study, nine participants consumed 16 mg of lycopene per day, in the form of 40 grams of tomato paste—that's just a little more than 2 tablespoons. Control participants took 10 grams of olive oil only. After four weeks, and again at the end of the 10 weeks, all participants exposed their backs to a sunlamp.

No significant differences were seen at week four, but by week 10, the researchers found that the participants in the lycopene group had 40 percent less redness than those in the control group.¹

Lycopene has previously been found to protect against many kinds of cancers, including prostate, mouth, stomach, colon, and rectum. Now we can add skin cancer to the list.

Tomato-based foods, including tomato juice, tomato sauce, and fresh tomatoes, are the best-known source of lycopene. But apricots, papaya, pink grapefruit, guava, and watermelon all contain lycopene, too. Remember, lycopene is a carotenoid, or plant pigment, that gives fruits and vegetables a red color. So red tomatoes contain more lycopene than yellow varieties. Plump and juicy red tomatoes are in prime season right now and are readily available in grocery stores and farmer's markets. They're also easy to grow in your own garden. Mary and I pick fresh tomatoes from our garden nearly every day to go with

just about everything—salads, sandwiches, even soups. Check out the recipe for gazpacho below—it's one of my favorites.

¹ *J Nutr*, 131:1,449-1,451, 2001

GAZPACHO

There are many variations of this delicious cold tomato soup. It is a wonderful, fast dinner for those hot August nights.

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Chilling time: 2 hours

Servings: 6

3 large ripe tomatoes, quartered
1 mild onion, coarsely chopped
1 green pepper, coarsely chopped
1 cucumber, coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped
2 cups tomato juice
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1/4 teaspoon salt
several twists freshly ground pepper

Place tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, cucumber, and garlic in a food processor. Pulse several times until vegetables are the desired consistency. Pour into a bowl, add tomato juice, vinegar and seasonings. Mix well. Cover and chill for at least 2 hours.

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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.