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APRIL 2023



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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



As I write this in mid-March, the impact of KnoWEwell's acquisition of Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation (NAPC) is beginning to become clear. Not surprisingly, the effort revolves around how the two companies can leverage each other. This month, we have two "firsts" within our pages that result from this new relationship, and I want to write about them from the perspective of values and integrity.

The First First

Within this month's magazine, you'll find a 2.5-page advertisement by IBSA Pharma, a Swedish pharmaceutical company. The ad is getting published in all but one of the *Natural Awakenings* franchises across the U.S., and it represents the first placement of its kind—probably in the history of NAPC, but definitely since I've owned the Atlanta franchise.

The ad's appearance has nothing to do with KnoWEwell since the deal was initiated many months prior to the acquisition of *Natural Awakenings*. However, it is clear that given the assets of KnoWEwell, their ability to execute similar deals in the future will be enhanced significantly.

Importantly, the ad is for a pharmaceutical product. The obvious question is: Why is there a drug ad in a holistic health magazine? Since, as a publisher, I had the option to run the ad or not, I'm the only one that can answer this question for the Atlanta franchise.

The answer can be expressed in one word: bio-individuality. "Bio-individuality" essentially means one size does not fit all; what works for one person might not work for another. Indeed, I indirectly referenced the concept in last month's letter when I wrote about the terrific results I experienced from the SoftWave treatment I received for my right knee.

This magazine is, to be sure, all about holistic health, but that doesn't mean we are against mainstream medicine. I've been dedicated to seeking the truth all my life, and the truth is that, generally speaking, some conditions are more amenable to holistic approaches, while others are more amenable to allopathic and surgical approaches. This magazine stands for solutions that work for you, and by that we don't just mean treatments that reduce symptoms and causes, but those that do so with as few negative side effects as possible.

Fixing one thing while breaking another is not ideal, to say the least.

In other words, sometimes drugs will be one's best and perhaps only effective alternative. This magazine is not anti-pharmaceuticals at all; we support trying out the holistic route first, assuming there isn't a severe time constraint that demands a quick solution.

The Second First

The second "first" is the promotion of the Women's Wellness Series offered by KnoWEwell. You'll find a news brief about the series as well as a full-page house ad within these pages. The price for the event is \$59, and, full disclosure, the magazine gets a percentage of that when people use our custom URL to register for the event. What's new is that the business that owns NAPC is producing the event and will continue to produce similar events in the future. Like *Natural Awakenings*, KnoWEwell is all about holistic approaches to health, and hosting these kinds of health education events provides significant value to their customers.

As I've expressed before, I believe that the acquisition of NAPC by KnoWEwell will serve publishers well in the future, both mid-term and long-term. This magazine benefits financially from the IBSA pharmaceutical ad, and we might also benefit financially from the Women's Wellness Series. But it's important for me to say that these two "firsts" benefit our readers, too, because we will never stray from our belief in and advocacy for holistic health. We will always maintain the highest degree of journalistic integrity when it comes to presenting content to you, our valued readers.



Publisher of Natural Awakenings Atlanta since 2017, Paul Chen's professional background includes strategic planning, marketing management and qualitative research. He practices Mahayana Buddhism and kriya yoga.

Georgia Organics Awards Rigdon, Wilson and Conrad



L-R: Fred Conrad, Bobby Wilson, Mary Hart Rigdon after receiving the 2023 Barbara Petit Pollinator Award

At its annual conference and expo, held in February at the Muse Theatre in Perry, Georgia, Georgia Organics announced the winners of its 2023 Land Steward and Pollinator Awards.

"We host annual awards to recognize the often under-lauded leaders of Georgia's organic farming and food communities," says Mary Elizabeth Kidd, director of communications at Georgia Organics. Board members and the general public nominate potential Land Steward

and Pollinator Award winners annually; nominations are then reviewed and voted on by the Georgia Organics board and governance committee.

Georgia Organics created the Land Steward Award to honor those who have contributed significantly to the organic agriculture movement in Georgia. Mary Hart Rigdon, owner and dairy goat farmer of Decimal Place Farm, is the winner of the organization's 2023 Land Steward Award in recognition of her long-standing commitment to organic agriculture, dairy production and nurturing younger farmers.

The co-winners of the 2023 Barbara Petit Pollinator Award—established in honor of Georgia Organics' president from 2003 through 2009—are Bobby Wilson of Metro

Atlanta Urban Farm and Fred Conrad of Food Well Alliance. Wilson co-founded the five-acre urban farm to use as a teaching tool, an "economic empowerment" zone and a food production site for the southwest metropolitan Atlanta area. Conrad has been managing community garden programs in metro Atlanta since 1997 and has served as Community Garden Coordinator at Food Well Alliance for seven years.

"Mary, Bobby and Fred are true beacons of the Georgia farming and local food movement. Seeing them receive standing ovations from hundreds of farmers and local food leaders made this Farmers' Feast worth the wait," says Kidd. "These are the folks who are working from the ground up, pun intended, to heal the land and ensure Georgians have equitable access to locally-grown fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains and more."

Georgia Organics is a member-supported organization and the oldest statewide non-profit providing direct support to local and organic farmers. To learn more, visit georgiaorganics.org.



Jaquel Patterson



Trevor Cates



Jaclyn Chasse-Smeaton



Arti Chandra

KnoWEwell Presents Women's Wellness Series

KnoWEwell and Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation are presenting "Overcoming Stress: How to Balance It All," a virtual presentation series on women's health. The talks will occur every Tuesday in May at 8 p.m. EDT. The series is free with a one-year Explorer membership to KnoWEwell, which costs \$59.

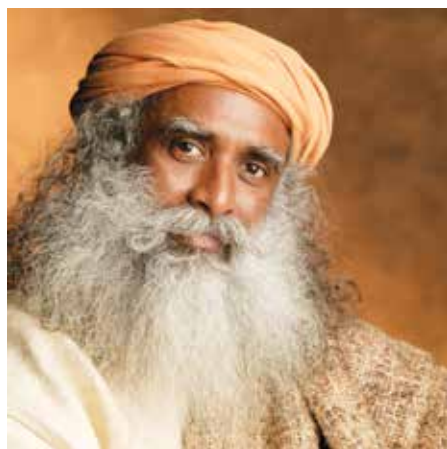
Ten female functional/integrative medical practitioners, such as naturopaths and osteopaths, will present the series, including Jaquel Patterson, ND, IFMCP; Jaclyn Chasse-Smeaton, ND; Trevor Cates, ND; and Arti Chandra, MD, MPH. Topics for the series include: "Stress and Fertility," "Stress and Libido," "The Impact of Stress on Skin," "Stress and Your Thyroid," "Cracking the Beauty Code" and "Aging Gracefully."

KnoWEwell is a web-based content and community hub focused on holistic health. Membership is open to practitioners and consumers. The annual Explorer membership provides access to a health library, all future "special series" events, content by KnoWEwell's staff and community practitioners, hundreds of courses, and community directories.

For more information and to register for the series, visit Bit.ly/naa-wws-2023.

Disclosure: KnoWEwell owns Natural Awakenings Publishing Corporation. This magazine is a franchise under the latter's umbrella and is a member of KnoWEwell's affiliate program. We receive commissions for signups to the Women's Wellness Series.

SADHGURU COMES TO ATLANTA



Sadhguru [Photo courtesy IshaFoundation]

Indian spiritual teacher Sadhguru, founder of the Isha Foundation, will be in Atlanta on June 3 and 4 to conduct the foundation's flagship Inner Engineering Completion program. It is the first time since 2019 that Sadhguru has offered the program in person in North America.

Those wishing to attend must complete the seven-session Inner Engineering Online program as a prerequisite. It covers tools for awareness, meditation and yoga practices.

The Inner Engineering Completion program will impart Shambhavi Mahamudra Kriya, a simple 21-minute energy purifying process. It is done seated on the floor or in a chair and does not require physical fitness or previous yoga practice.

Shambhavi Mahamudra has demonstrable health benefits. A study by Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center found a 41 percent reduction in stress after six weeks of practice. Still, the primary purpose of the kriya is spiritual. "The Shambhavi Mahamudra is a tool to touch the source of creation," says Sadhguru. "This is

not about being superhuman; this is about realizing that being human is super!"

The Isha Foundation is a non-profit, non-religious public service organization dedicated to raising human consciousness through yoga and meditation. Sadhguru's vision is to offer the science of inner well-being to every human being. "Engineer yourself for health and blissful well-being with the essence of yoga," he says. An author and international speaker, Sadhguru has spoken at major global forums, including the United Nations, MIT and the World Economic Forum.

The Isha event will be held at the Georgia World Congress Center, located at 285 Andrew Young International Blvd NW in Atlanta. For more information, visit InnerEngineering.Sadhguru.org/With-Sadhguru.

ESPOSITO, ELLIS AND BAR TO SPEAK AT ALIVE! EXPO

Alive! Expo, Atlanta's largest annual holistic health and green products consumer event, is returning to Cobb Galleria Centre on May 6 and 7 with a line-up of speakers on natural health and vitality.

Physical therapist Oren Bar is a featured speaker. Barr trained as a massage therapist and a paramedic before earning his physiotherapy degree at Kings College in London.

Dr. Joe Esposito is board-certified in chiropractic, orthopedics, traumatic brain injury and pain management and is double board-certified in nutrition. He is an award-winning author and has been a presence in Atlanta for nearly 40 years. He hosts *The Dr. Joe Show* on WSB Radio in Atlanta as well as the podcast, *For the Health of It*.

Dr. Marc Ellis, DC, MS, NMT, DACNB, FACFN, is the founder of Georgia Chiropractic Neurology Center in Marietta and an assistant professor at the Carrick Institute of Graduate Studies. He lectures on functional neurology nationally and internationally.

The 18th Annual Alive! Expo will take place on May 6 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and May 7 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Hall A, Cobb Galleria Centre, Two Galleria Parkway, in Atlanta. The full lecture line-up and presenter bios will be posted on AliveExpo.com in April.



Oren Bar



Dr. Joe Esposito

For more information, visit AliveExpo.com. If you would like to become a vendor or sponsor, email Info@AliveExpo.com, call the Alive! Expo office at 770-806-7492 or send a Facebook message at [Facebook.com/AliveExpo](https://www.facebook.com/AliveExpo).



Dr. Marc Ellis



Sacred Waters Celebrates 15 Years

by Noah Chen

Sacred Waters, a wellness arts studio in Fayetteville that specializes in detoxifications and colonics, is now celebrating its 15th year of business.

Owner Kelly Jorae's journey as an entrepreneur began in 1998 when she first had the idea that she could boost the wellness of friends, family and clients using natural means. That's when she opened the Herb Shop Café in downtown Atlanta. But after talking with a client that had been using over-the-counter and herbal remedies to combat constipation, Jorae was intrigued. The client told her she hadn't gotten relief until she tried a colonic. Their discussion planted a seed in Jorae's mind as she knew she wanted to investigate colon hydrotherapy. But that seed would take a few more years to grow.

In 2001, Jorae had her first child, and sold the Herb Shop Café to spend more time as a mother. For the next seven years, she alternated between staying at home full-time with her children and working part-time jobs. But in the back of her mind, she couldn't forget what many had told her about colonics. "There was a profound response I would hear from clients who had been using colon hydrotherapy," says Jorae. "It sat with me as something I would be able to offer, along with my knowledge and skills using herbal remedies."

In 2008, Jorae took an accreditation class from the International Institute for Colon Hydrotherapy. As part of the class, she received two colonics, which she described as an eye-opening experience—the service was initially uncomfortable, and the results she felt afterwards were shocking.

"I didn't realize how much brain fog I had," Jorae says. "I felt like a veil had been removed from my eyes."

Later that year, Jorae set up Sacred Waters in Fayetteville, and business started out strong. "The economy was really booming," Jorae says. "My first year in business had, for a very long time, been my best year." While the store carries many herbal remedies, the centerpiece of their services continues to be colon hydrotherapy.

Then business slowed after that first year. The profit margins on her herb business were slimming, the budgets of many Americans were tightening, and the recession finally caught up with her. But business picked up steam after Jorae began promoting Sacred Waters on the Groupon app; she sold more than 200 coupons over one weekend. However, turning the Groupon customers into repeat clients was "easier said than done."

"Some people would just want to use the Groupon and would not value the service at its regular rates," Jorae explains. "A lot of businesses were barely surviving at the time. And still you had to work really hard to show up for your customers just as though you were being paid. And in a lot of cases, you're not able to pay yourself."

Eventually, she learned to retain many customers by fostering a relationship with them.

"I go to a lot of doctors' appointments," says Stella Williams, a stylist and owner of Stella Stylz. Williams is a cancer patient and has been customer of Sacred Waters for the past four years. "You know how you go to certain places and they rush you through



their services? Or they want you to be on time, but they're never on time?" Williams asks. "[Jorae] isn't like that."

Williams describes Jorae as warm, professional and friendly, saying they are almost like family now. As for the services themselves, Williams says, "The relief of how my body feels is just wonderful," referring to how she feels after a colonic appointment. "I feel like I'm walking on clouds."

Wess Walters, another of Jorae's repeat customers, agrees with Williams. "[Jorae] does a very good job charging up the energy in the room. As soon as you walk in, you can tell work has been done. It's a very calming environment."

As her business grew, Jorae found herself growing spiritually along with it. She found colon hydrotherapy went beyond its historical uses. "It's more than just a physical release. For many it's emotional. Spiritual."

Our gut, immune system and nervous system are tied together, so a treatment like a colonic, which helps clean the colon and gut, has far-reaching effects on the rest of the body. "The goal is to create a clear flowing system," says Jorae.

Over the years, the entrepreneur has leased her location to a variety of natural health service practitioners, such as massage therapists and reiki providers, and she has sponsored classes and workshops hosted by outside speakers. "Sacred Waters is not your ordinary wellness center," she says.

Today, Jorae is pleased with the progress her business has made, but she is by no means slowing down. She now sells healing crystals, a result of her increasing awareness of her spirituality and the growing spiritual interest she notices in her customers. She continues to create and sell herbal treatments as well, such as an antiparasitic herbal remedy and nonalcoholic bitters to stimulate digestive glands.

Thanks to changes in Fayetteville and in the industry, Jorae has noticed that interest in natural health has increased and more affluent and open-minded people have been moving into the area.

She is considering expanding into a new location, now in the building stages, that offers a larger space but is still close by. 🌱

Noah Chen is an Atlanta writer and journalist who writes for a wide variety of large companies and publications.



L-R: Kelly Jorae and Sunjori Michaela
[Photo: Amelia Jackson]

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SUSTAINABLE EATING

TIPS TO SHRINK YOUR FOODPRINT

by Ana Reisdorf, MS, RD



Image courtesy of Shutterstock.com

Knowing which foods have the least environmental impact is not always easy. Organic blueberries are considered Earth-protective because no pesticides were used to grow them, but if they were shipped from California to a Florida grocery store, the transportation represents a steep carbon footprint. And if we waited too long to eat those blueberries and had to throw them away, all of the resources spent on producing those fruits were wasted.

To get a fuller picture of our food-related environmental impacts, we need to take into consideration the many variables associated with the production, transportation and consumption of food, and that's where the "foodprint" comes in—a barometer of eco-friendliness. There are many ways to calculate a foodprint; EarthDay.org/foodprints-calculators lists a few automated calculators and food quizzes that can help. Here are noteworthy examples:

- **EatLowCarbon.org** compares the carbon emissions associated with different meals—ranging from bean soup (lowest CO₂ emissions) to a Philly cheesesteak (highest).
- **FoodPrint.org** offers a questionnaire about a person's food choices and follows up with tips to reduce their foodprint.

- **FoodEmissions.com** calculates the foodprint of specific foods like dairy or seafood by asking about the origination and destination of the food to determine transportation emissions, and by asking the consumer to self-report their percentage of waste to calculate the loss of natural resources.

How to Reduce Our Foodprint

BUY RESPONSIBLY PRODUCED FOOD

When shopping for groceries, consider buying from food producers that support environmental stewardship, sustainability and regenerative farming practices in their production systems. A list of third-party certifications that can help identify responsibly manufactured foodstuffs can be found at Foodprint.org/eating-sustainably/food-label-guide.

BUY LOCAL AND IN SEASON

Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, owner of Sound Bites Nutrition, encourages her clients to eat local, seasonal produce. "[It] spares the environment, as it doesn't need to be flown across the country, reducing fuel costs," she explains, adding that local produce is generally more nutritious and cost effective.

STORE FOOD CORRECTLY

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 30 to 40 percent of the available food supply is wasted. While there are many reasons for food loss at all stages of production and delivery, consumers can have a major impact in reducing how much food is wasted.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides advice for properly storing foods in the refrigerator: leafy veggies go in the high-humidity drawer, while most fruits should be placed in the low-humidity bin. Some fruits like apples and avocados release ethylene gas and can cause nearby produce to spoil, so they should be stored separately. Wash berries just before eating them to prevent mold. Store potatoes, onion and garlic in a cool,

dry, dark and well-ventilated place. Freeze bread, meat or leftovers that won't be eaten before they spoil.

CONSUME SUSTAINABLE FOODS

According to Registered Dietitian Lauren Panoff, one way that consumers can benefit the environment is by transitioning to a more plant-predominant lifestyle. "Plant foods utilize far fewer natural resources than industrial animal agriculture, which is also one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases and drivers of Amazon deforestation," Panoff explains.

Patricia Kolesa, MS, RDN, founder of the Dietitian Dish, notes, "Plant-based proteins tend to be more affordable and can be stored longer than your animal proteins, helping reduce food waste."

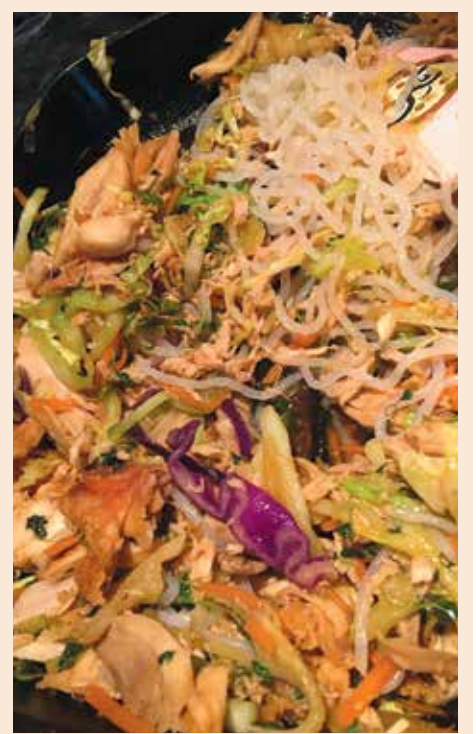
Nutritics, a food information company, offers a list of the highest-ranking foods when it comes to sustainability, consider-

ing inputs like water usage, carbon emissions or capture, land usage and nitrogen storage capabilities. Their list includes mussels, beans, lentils, peas and other legumes, mushrooms, seaweed, cereals and grains, and organic fruits and vegetables.

RESPONSIBLY DISPOSE OF OR SHARE UNEATEN FOOD

Perfectly fresh food that the family has decided not to eat can be donated to people in need. Visit FoodPantries.org to find a nearby soup kitchen or food bank. Compost scraps and spoiled items to divert them from landfills. For composting instructions by the USDA, visit Tinyurl.com/USDAcompost.

Ana Reisdorf is a registered dietitian and freelance writer with more than 15 years of experience in the fields of nutrition and dietetics.



UNWRAPPED EGG ROLL NOODLES

YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

- 1 rotisserie chicken, shredded
- 1 cup green cabbage, finely shredded
- 1 cup purple cabbage, finely shredded
- ½ cup carrot, finely shredded
- ¼ onion, sliced
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 3 Tbsp coconut aminos
- 2 Tbsp sesame oil
- 1 tsp garlic
- Salt to taste
- Konjac noodles (optional)
- Sesame seeds

In a skillet, heat one tablespoon of sesame oil. Add the sliced onions and cook until softened. Add shredded chicken, cabbage, carrot, coconut aminos, remaining sesame oil, garlic and salt to taste. Once the cabbage has wilted and cooked, add the peanut butter. Mix in noodles.

Serve hot, sprinkled with sesame seeds. For a vegan or vegetarian alternative, omit the chicken.

Used with permission of Madiha M. Saeed, M.D.

Eco-friendly Recipes



Image courtesy of Madiha M. Saeed, M.D.

SUSHI BITES

YIELD: 10 SERVINGS

- 1½ cups cooked sushi rice, cooled
- 3 sheets nori paper

SALMON OR MUSSELS

- 1 lb boneless, skinless wild-caught sockeye salmon, cubed (can substitute with mussels)
- 2 Tbsp sesame oil
- 1 Tbsp honey or maple syrup
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- 2 Tbsp coconut amino teriyaki sauce
- Salt to taste

SPICY MAYO

- ¼ cup avocado mayo
- 2 tsp sriracha sauce
- 1 tsp coconut aminos

TOPPINGS

- ½ avocado, diced small
- 2 tsp black sesame seeds

Preheat oven to 350°. Cook rice according to package instructions and set aside to cool. Mix spicy mayo ingredients and set aside. Mix salmon ingredients and set aside. Cut each nori sheet into four equal squares.

Line a muffin pan with unbleached muffin liners. To each nori square, add about 1 tablespoon of rice and top with the salmon mixture. Transfer the filled squares to the muffin pan. Bake 15 to 17 minutes for salmon or 7 to 10 minutes for mussels. Allow the sushi bites to cool slightly and top with avocado, sesame seeds and a drizzle of spicy mayo.

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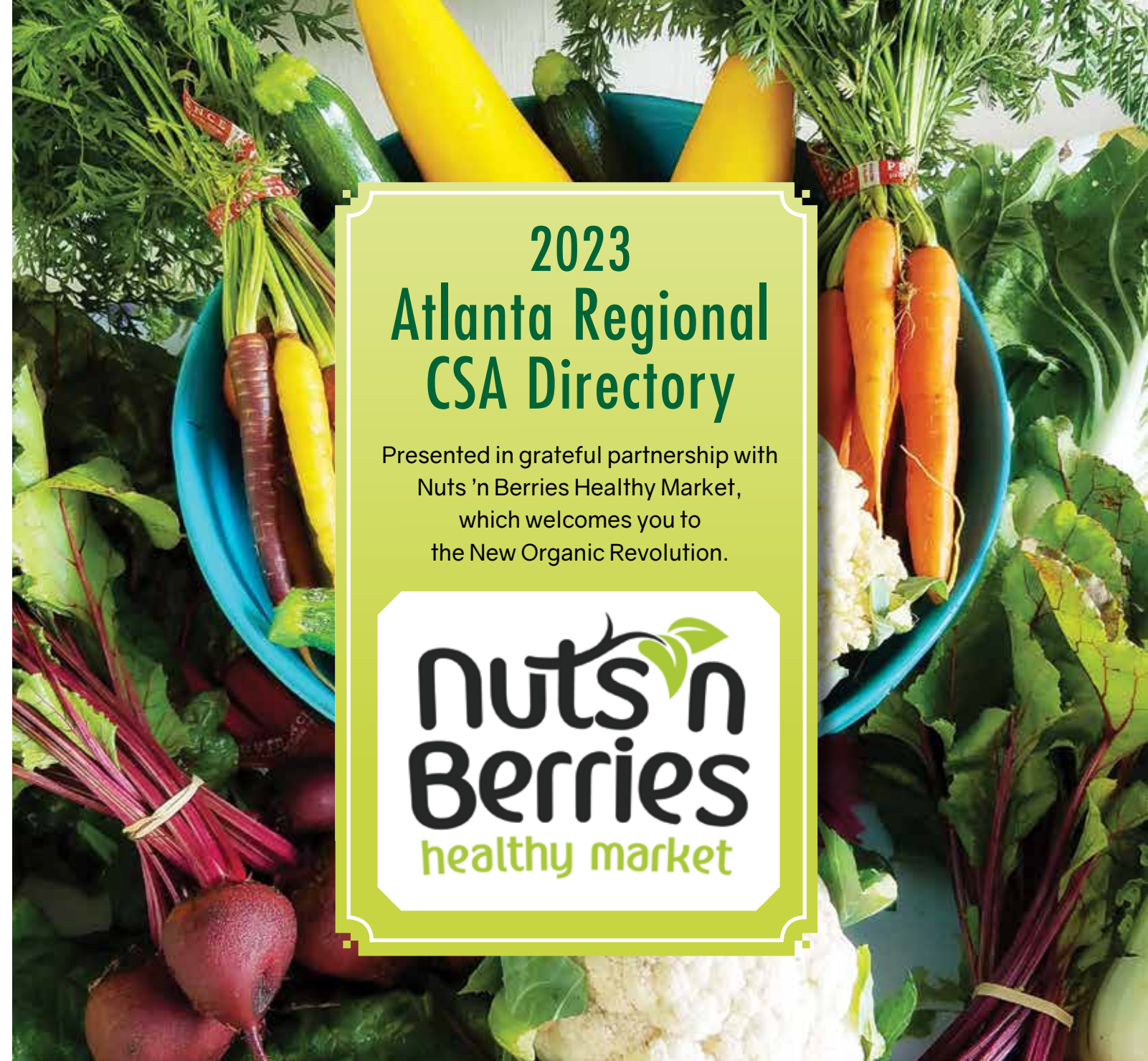
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Those who shop at CSAs benefit from the higher quality, freshness and taste of food that comes from farms that have more stringent standards than average American farms. Plus, they can learn more about where their food comes from and feel good about keeping food dollars in the regional community.

Joining a CSA usually involves subscribing to a farm and receiving fruits, vegetables and other products throughout the growing season in return. Some CSAs require a payment up front while others also offer single purchase of baskets or boxes without a subscription to the CSA.

Special thanks to Nuts 'n Berries Healthy Market for supporting this presentation of Atlanta CSAs for our readers.



Atlanta Harvest

Subscription Season: All year.
Subscription Plan: One-time shares only.
Share Prices: \$25 to \$100 per box delivered weekly, biweekly or monthly.
Pickup Location: Atlanta, Decatur, Avondale Estates and Stone Mountain. Delivery is also available.
Notes: All animals are organically fed and pasture raised. You can skip, reschedule or change delivery location.
Website: AtlantaHarvest.com

Carlton Farms

Next Subscription Season: May 2023
Subscription Plans: Buy in weekly or as needed.
Share Prices: \$30 per share
Pickup Locations: Marietta, Woodstock, Dunwoody, Buford, Cumming, Alpharetta/Roswell, East Atlanta Village and Rome.
Drop-Off Locations: Kennesaw and Tucker.
Notes: Dairy, eggs, meat, fish, vegetables and pantry items. Home delivery and “mobile market” are available in some areas.
Website: CarltonFarm.com

Farmers Fresh

Subscription Season: Currently taking reservations.
Subscription Plan: Weekly or bi-weekly shares.
Share Prices: \$29, \$36, \$52 per one or two weeks.
Pickup Locations: There are many locations in the area including Buckhead, Marietta, Vinings and more. Home delivery, a la carte, and online market options also available.
Notes: A cooperative of 50+ sustainable growers and producers in West Georgia and East Alabama. Add-ons include cheeses, coffee, dairy, fruit packs, meats and more.
Website: FarmersFreshCSA.com

Fresh Harvest

Subscription Season: All year.
Subscription Plan: None. Sign up for weekly basket delivery. Cancel any time.
Share Prices: \$33 to \$79 per week.
Pickup Locations: Delivered to your door.
Notes: Produce is sourced from more than 12 organic farms.
Website: FreshHarvestGA.com

Love Is Love Farm

Subscription Season: All year. Currently has a waiting list.
Subscription Plan: Full season.
Share Prices: \$499 and \$338 for the season.
Pickup Locations: Atlanta, Decatur and Mansfield.
 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, 1190 W Druid Hills Drive NE, Atlanta.
Notes: Certified organic. Add-on options include meat, eggs, bread and coffee. Accepts and doubles SNAP payments. Egg, coffee and meat shares also available.
Website: LoveIsLoveFarm.com

Moore Farms And Friends

Subscription Season: All year.
Subscription Plans: After \$36 annual membership, choose between their \$20, \$30 or \$40 Farmer’s Pick order, a Custom Choice order or one of their packages. Investment membership options are also available.
Investment program prices: \$500, \$1,000 and \$2,500.
Pickup Locations: Twelve sites within the perimeter. See website for full listing.
Notes: The co-op represents more than 30 farms and food producers that are either certified organic, naturally grown, sustainable or chemical-free.
Website: MooreFarmsandFriends.com

Polyculture at Gaia Gardens

Subscription Plan: May 17 through August 30.
Share Prices: \$270 bi-weekly shares and \$470 weekly shares. \$20 discount when paid by check. SNAP customers receive shares at half price.
Pickup Location: 549 Summit Drive, Decatur.
Notes: Organically grown veggies, fruits and herbs.
Email: PolyCultureProduction@gmail.com

Rise 'n Shine Farm

Subscription Season: All year.
Subscription Plan: Full season subscription. Get boxes delivered weekly, biweekly or monthly. Cancel or skip any time. Or choose one-time box through Farm Stand Program without subscription.
Prices: \$30, \$49, \$79 and \$109.
Pickup Locations: Pickup locations include Atlanta, Rome, Cartersville, Calhoun, Roswell, Decatur, Kennesaw, Marietta and Dalton. Delivery is also available.
Notes: Certified organic fruits and vegetables. Non-GMO eggs, jams, cheeses, coffee and more. Customized boxes are created for you.
Website: RiseNShineFarm.com

Roswell Farmers Market

Subscription Season: All year.
Subscription Plan: Four-week minimum purchase.

Share Prices: \$100, \$140 and \$180 per month.
Pickup Locations: Atlanta, Marietta and Roswell.
Notes: Roswell Farmers Market has its own biodynamic farm and sources from several additional biodynamic farms. Add-ons include prepared meals, local organic dairy, organic condiments, organic gluten-free breads, organic local cheese, organic nuts and more.
Website: RoswellFarmersMarket.com

Riverview Farms

Subscription Season: May through December (30 weeks).
Subscription Plan: Full season with open enrollment. The fee is prorated if you join after the start date. Options include weekly, biweekly and monthly delivery.
Share Prices: \$35 – \$40 per share. Installment plans available.
Pickup Locations: Fourteen locations including ones in Atlanta, Brookhaven, Decatur, East Cobb, Peachtree Corners and Tucker.
Notes: Riverview also offers a meat CSA for \$68.33 for a 10-lb. monthly share or \$128.33 for a 16-lb. monthly share.
Website: GrassFedCow.com

Serenbe Farm

Subscription Season: April 4 through November 7 (30 weeks).
Share Price: \$999.
Pickup Location: Serenbe Farm, 8715 Atlanta Newnan Road in Chattahoochee Hills
Notes: Certified organic produce grown using regenerative farming methods.
Website: SerenbeFarms.com

Truly Living Well

Subscription Season: All year.
Subscription Plan: 13-week memberships over four months.
Share Prices: \$195, \$250 and \$400.
Pickup Locations: Collegetown Farm, 1040 Lawton Street, Atlanta.
Notes: Produce is grown from heirloom seeds or their own seed stock. Support helps provide a living wage for their farmers and associates.
Website: TrulyLivingWell.com

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A NEW DAWN ON THE FARM FRONT

STEPPING AWAY FROM INDUSTRIALIZED AGRICULTURE

by Sandra Yeyati

We all have to eat, and the food industry is big business, with wide-ranging implications across many arenas. Because agriculture is controlled by a handful of multinational corporations, the priority to maximize profits often conflicts with what is best for human and planetary health. In many ways, our food production and consumption practices are broken or on the brink of failure.

Viable, achievable solutions to these immense challenges exist, and the emerging consensus is that regenerative organic agriculture is the key to preserving human health and helping solve the climate crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic uncovered weaknesses in the system, such as supply chain vulnerabilities, and altered human behavior as more people started cooking at home and exploring healthier lifestyle choices. The time is ripe to make positive changes to the way we grow, distribute and consume food.

The Problems With Our Current Industrial Farming Model

For decades, doctors, scientists, farmers and nonprofits at the forefront of the environmental movement have been sounding the alarm about the inherent weaknesses in the national food chain and the harmful effects of industrial agriculture. In his book *Food Fix: How to Save Our Health, Our Economy, Our Communities and Our Planet—One Bite at a Time*, Dr. Mark Hyman notes, “Food is the nexus of most of our world’s health, economic,

environmental, climate, social and even political crises. While this may seem like an exaggeration, it is not.”

In the late 1800s, American farming began to transition from small, diverse operations that produced a variety of crops and livestock to feed a family or community to an industrialized system dominated by multinational corporations that focused on maximizing yields of just a few crops, primarily corn, soy and wheat. Today, these crops overwhelmingly end up as animal feed, biofuels and cheap, processed food ingredients—a staple of the standard American diet since the 1950s.

Industrial agriculture is now the dominant food production system in this country, characterized by large-scale monoculture, heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and meat produced in confined animal feeding operations (CAFO). Most modest family farms have been forced to either get into business with a big company (contract farming) or go out of business. The Natural Resources Defense Council reports that 90 percent of the 9 billion chickens raised each year in the U.S. are grown under contract, and 57 percent of hogs are owned and slaughtered by just four companies. According to Rodale Institute, only 8 percent of farms produce more than four crops, while specialty crops like fruits, vegetables and nuts are grown on just 3 percent of cropland.

With industrial dominance comes numerous devastating consequences.

Human Health Costs

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, industrially produced food is bad for us on several fronts. Heavy pesticide use is poisoning a lot of our food, fertilizer is polluting our drinking water, junk food made of corn and soybeans has been shown to degrade our health and the overuse of antibiotics in CAFOs is accelerating the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Bioethicist Peter Singer advises, “Factory farms are breeding grounds for new viruses. We’ve had swine flu and avian flu coming out of factory farms. It’s quite possible that the next pandemic will originate there.”

Zach Bush, a triple board-certified physician and producer of the documentary *Farmer’s Footprint*, says, “Over the last 25 years, we have seen the most profound explosion of chronic disease in human history. Research from around the globe now suggests that environmental factors are contributing to a combination of genetic, neurologic, autoimmune and metabolic injuries that underpin the collapse of health in our children and adults.”

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that chronic physical and mental health conditions account for 90 percent of the nation’s \$4.1 trillion in annual health care expenditures. Obesity affects 20 percent of children and 42 percent of adults. More than 850,000 Americans die of heart disease or stroke annually, and 37 million have diabetes. Each year, more than 1.7 million people are diagnosed with cancer, while 600,000 succumb to the disease.

“Most of those diseases are caused by our industrial diet, which means they are avoidable if we transform the food we grow, the food we produce and the food we eat. Eleven million people die every year from a bad diet,” Hyman asserts.

Solutions Using Regenerative Organic Farming

Led by the Regenerative Organic Alliance, which includes organizations and brands such as Rodale Institute, Dr. Bronner’s and Patagonia, the Regenerative Organic Certified (ROC) standard helps consumers make informed choices about their food purchases. Its three pillars—soil health, animal

welfare and social fairness—are designed to ameliorate the problems associated with conventional agriculture.

Soil Health Equals Planetary and Human Health

Chemical-heavy farming practices employed by conventional agriculture deplete topsoil, draining it of all its organic matter—the very microbiome needed to nourish the plants we grow and ultimately nourish us. In 2014, Maria-Helena Semedo, of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organiza-

tion, said that if current farming practices continue, we have only 60 years of harvest left. The clock is ticking.

Farming techniques proposed by the ROA are designed to continually rebuild soil. They are proven by years of science done at Rodale Institute and practical results achieved by regenerative organic farmers already growing food this way. “On the farm that we operate here at the Institute, we know that Native Americans were farming this land 8,000 to 10,000 years ago. We’d like to be farming this land 8,000 to 10,000 years from

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now. We probably won't be using tractors or diesel fuel, but we will be using the soil," says Rodale Institute CEO Jeff Moyer.

Under ROC standards that include a variety of rotating crops, cover crops, no tillage, no synthetic inputs of any kind, no genetically modified seeds and staggered grazing by animals, farms become biodiverse ecosystems with organically rich soil that absorbs water, doesn't erode over time and produces safe, nutritious food. As J.I. Rodale said, "Healthy soil equals healthy food equals healthy people."

Healthy soil draws carbon from the atmosphere deep into the ground, and that is a boost for our fight against climate change. "Regenerative organic farming has a very positive impact on climate, because we're sequestering more carbon than we are emitting," Moyer explains. "Under its current production model, agriculture is part of the problem. If it's part of the problem, then it can and should be part of the solution. That's the whole premise behind the [ROC] standard itself—treating agriculture as one of the primary tools that we're going to use as a society to improve our relationship with the planet."

Animal Welfare

Under the ROC model, animals must be raised in a humane way that frees them from discomfort, fear, distress, hunger, pain, injury and disease, while also being able to express normal behavior. To achieve these aims, they need to be taken out of CAFOs and reintegrated into farmland, so that they are pasture-raised and grass-fed, creating meat that is more nutritious and less diseased without chemical interventions.

"We're integrating animals onto the cropland, with livestock, chickens, sheep and hogs. Imagine what the Great Plains of the United States was 500 years ago. You had bison, elk, deer, rabbits, wolves and myriad different birds, because the birds always followed the migrating animals. We're trying to mimic that to a small degree on our ranch," says North Dakota farmer Gabe Brown, who started transitioning into regenerative organic practices in the mid-1990s and wrote an influential book on the subject, *Dirt to Soil: One Family's Journey into Regenerative Agriculture*.

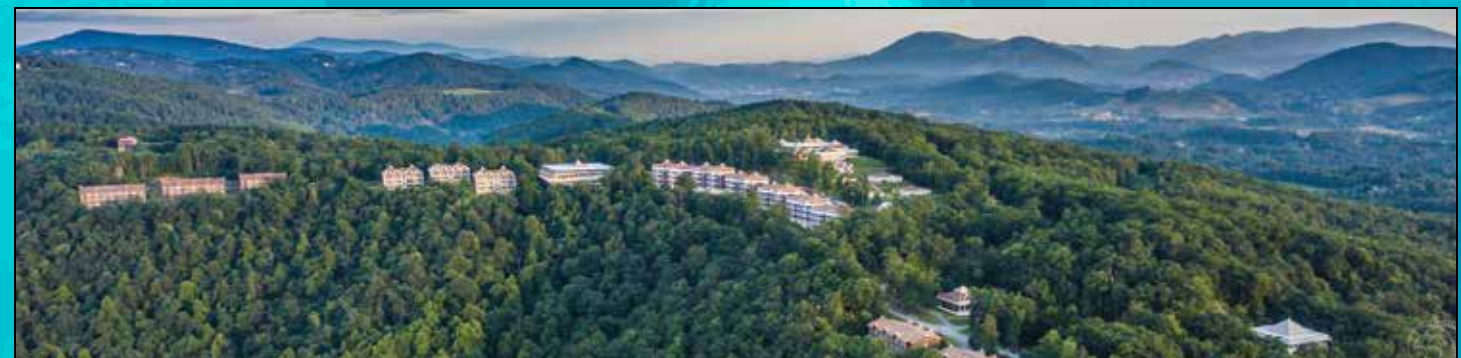
Social Fairness and Farming Resilience

Taking care of the farmers and workers that plant, raise, harvest and transport our food is not just the right thing to do, it also creates a system that is more stable and resilient, says Graham Christensen, a Nebraska farmer and president of GC Resolve. "There are serious issues with how the big agricultural companies are treating workers. We saw horrible situations with COVID in the meatpacking plants and how the workers were being treated. This is just one of the many reasons that this over-centralized, monopolized system is affecting people in bad ways," he says. "Regenerative organic farming requires more hands-on work, which creates jobs. Structural changes in the food production system to decentralize agriculture in favor of regional markets comprised of smaller farms would allow for more equity and better management of the ecosystem." 🌱

Sandra Yeyati is national editor of Natural Awakenings magazine.

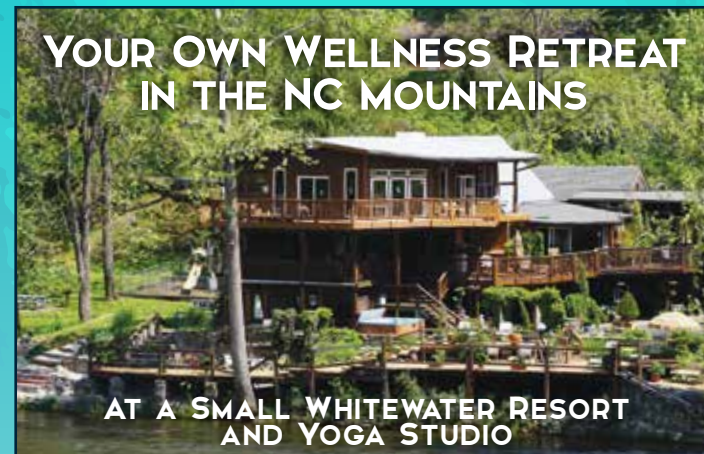


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SELF-CARE FOR KAPHA DOSHA

by Jaya Ramamurthy

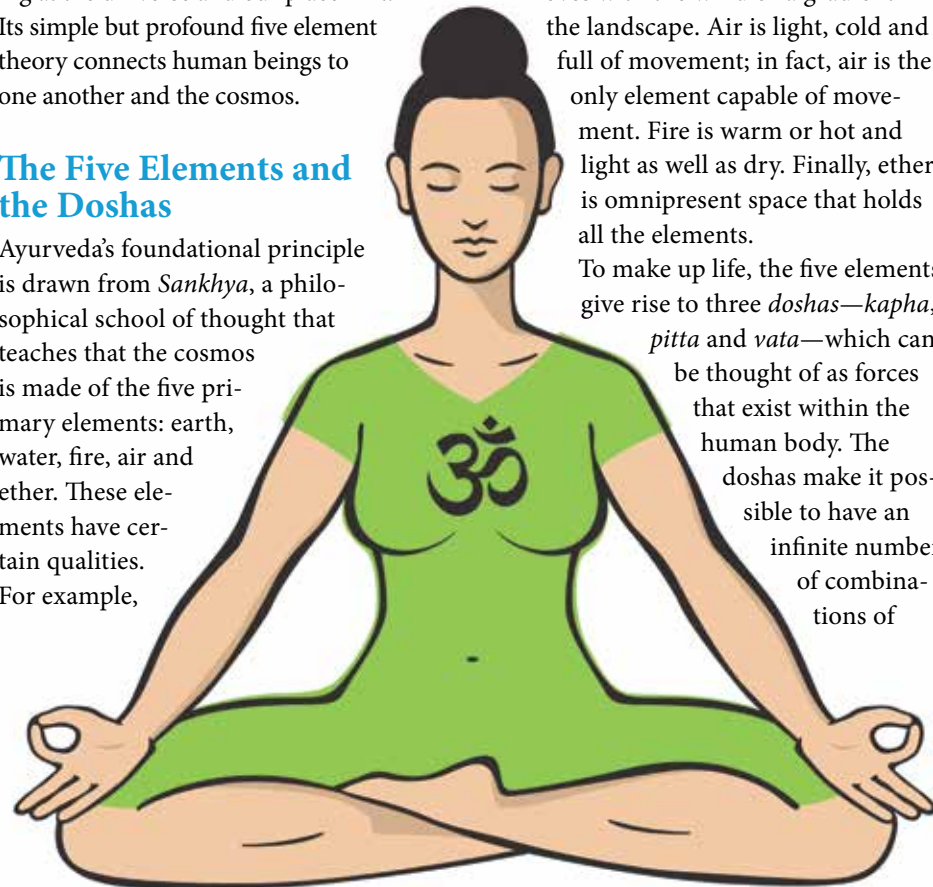
In 2019, we kicked off this magazine's deep dive into Ayurveda, the world's oldest system of health enhancement and maintenance, with a three-part series. Then, in 2020 and 2021, we published a series of four articles providing Ayurvedic advice about staying healthy in the four seasons of the year. This article is the second in our latest three-part series by Ayurvedic clinical specialist Jaya Ramamurthy that takes a deeper look at Ayurveda's three doshas—the three energies that comprise everyone's physical, emotional and behavioral makeup. Here, we delve into the kapha dosha. [Go to bit.ly/naa-ayurveda-t to see all of our Ayurveda articles to date.—Ed.]

Originating several millennia ago in the Indian subcontinent, Ayurveda is much more than just a medical system for treating and preventing illness. It is a worldview—a way of looking at the universe and our place in it. Its simple but profound five element theory connects human beings to one another and the cosmos.

The Five Elements and the Doshas

Ayurveda's foundational principle is drawn from *Sankhya*, a philosophical school of thought that teaches that the cosmos is made of the five primary elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. These elements have certain qualities. For example,

earth, the densest element, is described as heavy, static, cold and dry—like a sandy beach at low tide at night. Water, on the other hand, is cold, heavy and wet with no inherent movement of its own. It moves with the wind or a gradient in the landscape. Air is light, cold and full of movement; in fact, air is the only element capable of movement. Fire is warm or hot and light as well as dry. Finally, ether is omnipresent space that holds all the elements. To make up life, the five elements give rise to three *doshas*—*kapha*, *pitta* and *vata*—which can be thought of as forces that exist within the human body. The doshas make it possible to have an infinite number of combinations of



the five elements, and that means no two people are exactly alike.

For example, earth and water combine to make a life form, such as a cell of the human body, and the combination is called the kapha dosha. The pitta dosha is the combination of water and fire, which, together, make cellular or metabolic processes. For example, on the most subtle level, digestive enzymes can be abstracted to be fire encapsulated by water. The combination of air and ether creates movement and is called the vata dosha. The three doshas can be thought of as forces that exist within the human body—they cannot be measured, but they can be observed.

Ayurveda's principles are simple: when

layered on, similar qualities will increase, and opposite qualities will balance each other. This becomes clear as we examine the kapha dosha.

The Kapha Profile

The nature of kapha is static, cool, heavy, moist, soft, dense, flowing and cloudy.

Kapha people are loving, caring, compassionate, calm and mostly sanguine in nature. They might need some time to learn new concepts, but once learned, they usually have great retention. Kapha people are patient, loyal and reliable. They are great at maintaining relationships and valuing connection over anything else. Kapha types can be affected by silence and by a cloudy climate, and when they're

disturbed, they might withdraw and get quiet. Once they are angered, it might take them some time to forget and forgive.

When imbalanced, kapha types get stuck, unable to see a different approach or path. They can become overly attached or possessive and even lethargic.

Since water and earth are its predominant elements, a kapha body type is more substantial than all the other types; kapha people can be large and are often heavy. It is not easy to see their bone structure and predominant joints. The face tends to be round and facial features are prominent. For example, kapha eyes are large, and the nose and lips are pronounced. Palms and feet are thick with thick fingers and toes.

The kapha gait is steady; kapha skin

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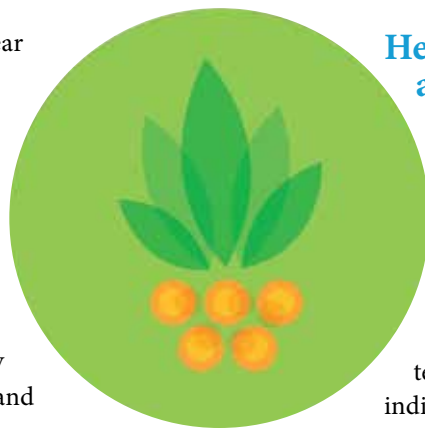
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tends to be moist, clear and smooth; and kapha hair tends to be thick and lustrous. Kapha people have a sweet voice and a thick, meaty tongue. As a rule, those with a kapha body type find it easy to gain body weight and difficult to lose it.

Kapha people have a steady, easygoing appetite. They are not easily discomfited by a missed meal, usually rolling with the change in routine. If they have digestive issues, they can be prone to nausea or fullness. Kapha people do not have trouble falling or staying asleep and tend to sleep in a lot. Their day is characterized by steady and stable energy, and they have a strong sex drive. Changes in outside temperatures do not usually bother them; however, they do not like high humidity because of the water element already present in their nature.



Health Challenges and Tips for Kapha

Kapha disorders tend to be those of stagnation and mucus or fluid retentive. Respiratory diseases, sinus problems, nausea, excess body weight and depression tend to plague the kapha individual.

The biggest challenge for kapha types is to make sure that robust activity is built into the day without large periods of rest or inactivity.

Kapha types must eat lightly and in accordance with their appetite, and they must lead active lives. Since moistness and heaviness are already predominant for them, easy-to-digest foods are key. Plenty of fresh vegetables and greens and light meals focused

around plant-based proteins are very useful for this body type. This ensures easy digestion and no heaviness. Kapha types tend to get hungry only later in the day, usually when the sun peaks. A light breakfast, such as a piece of toast, is ideal for this type. Eating the heaviest meal when most hungry—around midday—and refraining from a heavy dinner keeps kaphas from gaining unwanted weight.

Kaphas don't usually suffer the ill effects of caffeine or alcohol since they can withstand the stimulatory effects of these substances.

Kapha types benefit from dry brushing, or *garshana*, which helps keep the lymph moving and cleansed because it helps fight fat accumulation, i.e., cellulite, keeping the skin clear and smooth.

Kapha types ride out the seasonal changes well, but excess humidity, especially when combined

with cold, can aggravate kapha disorders. To bring about balance, focus on the opposite qualities—warm, light, dry and mobile. It is especially valuable to do this during the kapha time of the day, which is 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., and during the spring season, which is the kapha time of year. It is also especially beneficial for infants and children, for that is the kapha time of life.

Daily self-care routines like dry brushing in the mornings and evenings will nourish a kapha person at this time of year. Kaphas benefit from avoiding all heavy and cold foods, such as dairy, fried foods, heavy meats and cold beverages. Such foods can provoke excess water in the body, resulting in mucus, fullness and heaviness. It's best for kaphas to focus on warm, light, fresh, nourishing meals made with spring's seasonal produce; they naturally counteract kapha.

For example, spring's fresh berries and bitter greens are very cleansing. Include a small portion of healthy fats, such as ghee, and avoid all oils and nuts. Foods that incorporate warming and clearing spices and herbs such as ginger, turmeric, black

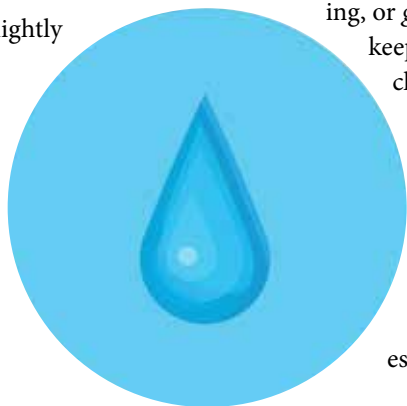
pepper and small amounts of cayenne pepper are seasonally appropriate. When roasted, powdered and used in preparing savory foods, cumin and coriander seeds regulate the appetite and ensure proper digestion.

For a personalized kapha balancing protocol, consult an Ayurvedic practitioner. Ayurveda encourages us to tune in and pay attention to the state of our body-mind intuitively. This subtle observation is valuable to help pivot and adjust to the season's rhythms. An Ayurvedic lifestyle goes a long way to not only help us prevent disease but to thrive and flourish along life's path, no matter where we find ourselves. 🌱



Photo: Dorna Pleisch

Jaya Ramamurthy, whose Indian roots inspired her to share the restorative wellness offered by Ayurveda's healthcare methods, is a state-certified clinical Ayurveda specialist in private practice. Reach her at AyurWellness@gmail.com or AyurJaya.com.



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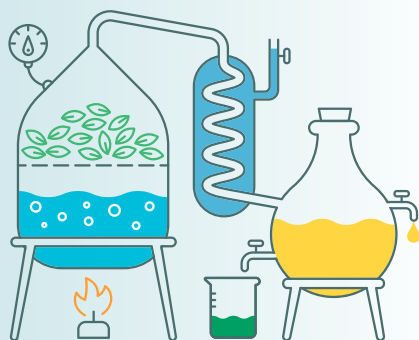
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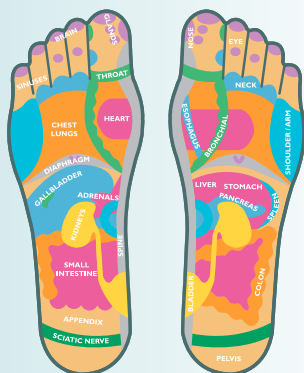
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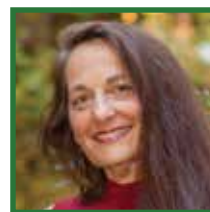
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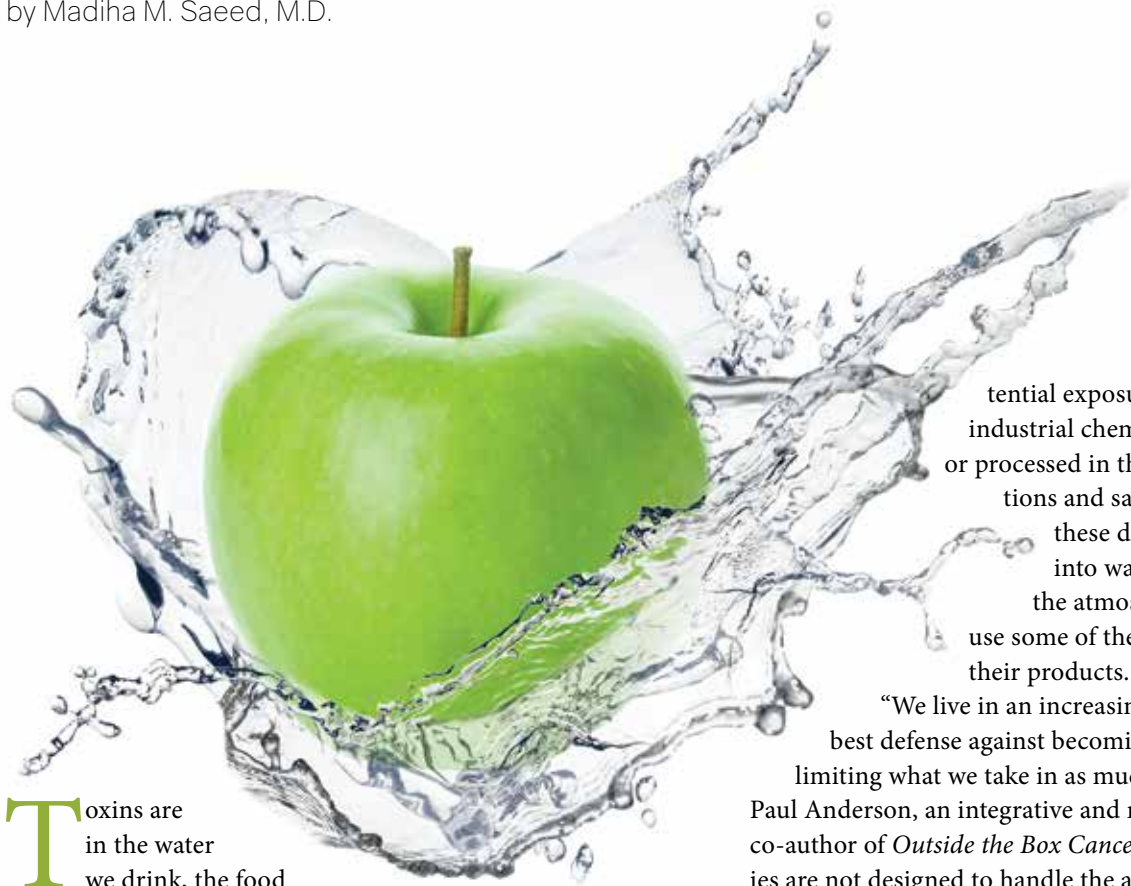
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TOXIC OVERLOAD

HOW TO CLEAN OUR WATER, FOOD AND INDOOR AIR

by Madiha M. Saeed, M.D.



Toxins are in the water we drink, the food we eat and the air we breathe.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Chemical Substances Control Inventory shows the magnitude of our po-

tential exposure, listing more than 86,000 industrial chemicals that are manufactured or processed in this country. Despite regulations and safety protocols, a number of these dangerous compounds run off into waterways or are released into the atmosphere. Food manufacturers use some of them to preserve or beautify their products.

“We live in an increasingly toxic world, and the best defense against becoming overwhelmed by toxins is limiting what we take in as much as possible,” emphasizes Paul Anderson, an integrative and naturopathic clinician and co-author of *Outside the Box Cancer Therapies*. While our bodies are not designed to handle the accumulation of industrial chemicals, pesticides, pharmaceuticals and radiation that seep into our personal space, we can take measures to reduce the assault and protect our health.

Filter Drinking Water

“For the health-conscious individual, toxins in the water are a top threat often overlooked or inadequately addressed,” says Rajka Milanovic Galbraith, an Illinois-based functional medicine practitioner, noting that drinking water is packed with chemicals like per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances (also known as “forever chemicals,”) solvents, pesticides, metals, bleach and radiological contaminants such as uranium and cesium. These substances can cause cancer, reproductive health concerns, and kidney and liver problems.

“I have treated hundreds of patients who have restored their health and are already eating and living clean by properly filtering their water, but sometimes, even when using a very expen-

sive water filtration system, people will still find high levels of contaminants like MTBE [methyl tertiary-butyl ether], an additive in unleaded gasoline that is banned in several states,” Galbraith says. “Reverse osmosis typically filters most hazardous chemicals from your water, but they can be pricier. An inexpensive alternative are the filters from Clearly Filtered, which reportedly remove 99 percent of MTBE, among many other chemicals.”

“Everyone should try to filter their water with any means available, from a carbon block pitcher to the most aggressive method using a reverse osmosis water filter under their sink. Given the state of municipal—and well—water and the amount we need to clean our bodies and brains every day over a lifetime,

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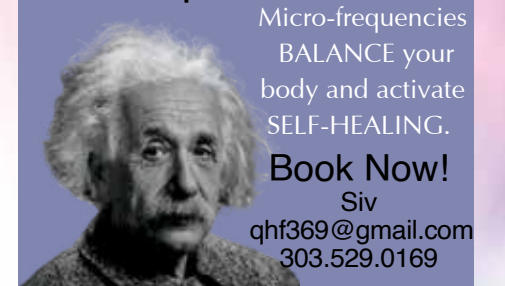
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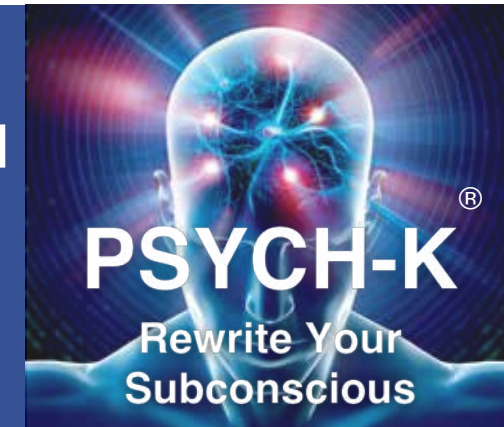
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we need to get this right," advises Aly Cohen, M.D., an integrative rheumatologist, founder of The Smart Human and co-author of *Non-Toxic: Guide to Living Healthy in a Chemical World*.

Read Food Labels

"For the individual newer on their health journey, I would say food additives are the 'hidden' environmental exposure that is a serious cause for concern, contributing to autoimmune diseases and from a metabolic standpoint, think weight gain, obesity, pre-diabetes and diabetes," Galbraith says. "These additives are used to increase palatability, shelf life and texture and can include some you may have heard of, like sucralose, citrate and carrageenan, and others you may not have, like carboxymethylcellulose and polysorbate-80. Carrageenan is common in many nondairy milk alternatives that have made their way into coffee shops."

According to Galbraith, the most effective way to steer clear of food additives is to avoid or greatly minimize the consumption of highly processed foods. She recommends eating whole foods, especially for those dealing with chronic health issues or experiencing signs or symptoms of an ailment. She also encourages people to read food labels and avoid products with artificial colors, carrageenan, butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), monosodium glutamate (MSG), nitrates and nitrites, polysorbate 80, propyl gallate, propylparaben, methylparaben, sodium benzoate, potassium benzoate, tert-Butylhydroquinone (TBHQ) and titanium dioxide.

"You are what you eat!" Cohen ex-

claims. "Eating clean food, without synthetic chemicals that break down the protective microbiome of the gut, is critical to the health of our immune system and our mental health, so we should try to eat whole, unprocessed foods that are USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] Certified Organic whenever possible."

Improve Indoor Air

According to the EPA, "Americans, on average, spend approximately 90 percent of their time indoors, where the concentrations of some pollutants are often two to five times higher than typical outdoor concentrations." The Environmental Working Group offers a comprehensive blueprint at ewg.org/healthyhomeguide that identifies dangerous chemicals found indoors (from lead, asbestos and flame retardants to volatile organic compounds, antimicrobial agents and radon) and recommends actions to clean up our sanctuaries.

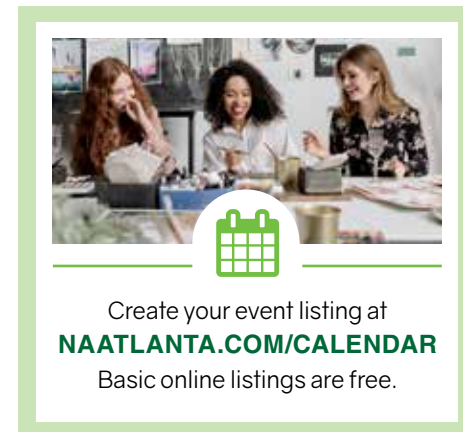
"We can lower our toxic burden by decreasing the chemicals in the air that we breathe, and that begins by reducing the junk we bring into our homes," Cohen remarks. "Start by removing air fresheners, perfumes, bug sprays, scented cleaning and laundry products, and by opening the windows daily, adding lots of plants and possibly adding an air filter for those who live in cities and areas with poor air quality."

Madiha Saeed is a holistic, functional and integrative doctor in Naperville, Illinois, and director of education for Documenting Hope and KnowEwell.



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KID-APPROVED AUTISM DIETS

STRATEGIES TO OPTIMIZE NUTRITION AND ACCEPTANCE

by Ana Reisdorf, MS, RD

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is characterized by challenges with social interaction and communication. For parents of children with autism, learning to manage this condition requires a multidimensional approach, including consideration of food and nutrition. A personalized, nutritious diet can help manage behavioral problems, health risks and quality of life for kids with autism.

Beth Lambert, executive director of Epidemic Answers, says, “Once you come to understand autism as a whole-body condition, rather than just a brain-based or genetic condition, you start to understand the importance of nutrition in treatment and symptom management.” Not only does a nutritious diet help maintain brain balance, it also helps address many of the nutrition-related concerns that children with autism face, such as food sensitivities and allergies, digestive disruptions, sensory issues with textures and nutrient deficiencies. Each of these issues can impact a child’s behavior.

An essential piece of the autism and diet connection is gut health. Gaby McPherson, MS, RDN, LDN, at Fruitful Nutrition says, “Because a child’s gut health is linked to their brain health, it’s crucial to boost their gut function to reduce these symptoms that can impact their behaviors. Who wants to go around with a tummy ache and constipation every day?”

Yaffi Lvova, RDN, author of *Beyond a Bite: Playful Sensory Food Exploration for ASD and Neurodivergent Kids*, advises that individual abilities also should be considered when developing a nutrition plan. “Autistic children often have sensory sensitivities that make it difficult to eat certain (sometimes many) foods,” she says.

Therapeutic Diets

Many therapeutic diets have been evaluated for children with autism. Most involve the elimination of one or more foods, which can be challenging for a child that already has difficulty getting a wide variety of nutrients.

A popular option is the gluten- and casein-free diet. Gluten is the protein found in wheat, barley and rye. Casein is a protein found in milk and other dairy products. While some children with autism may be sensitive to gluten or dairy, this is not a one-size-fits-all approach, and there is mixed data in support of this regimen.

Another choice is the specific carbohydrate diet (SCD), which involves limiting certain carbohydrates, processed foods, most dairy, sugar and more, with the goal of reducing food sensitivities and improving the gut microbiome. Mixed outcomes have been reported with this diet due in part to its elimination of high-fiber foods that may be beneficial for brain health. McPherson explains, “Gut bacteria digest (or ferment) fiber in the large intestines to produce short-chain fatty acids, which are known to improve brain health significantly.”

The Feingold diet is another approach that eliminates artificial flavors, sweeteners, preservatives and salicylates. Salicylates are compounds found in certain fruits and vegetables. While there is some evidence that food dyes may play a role in children’s behavior, most studies on this diet have not demonstrated a significant impact on ASD symptoms.

Personalized Nutrition

Instead of following a specific therapeutic diet, most experts now understand that a diet for ASD needs to be personalized to each child. It is ideal to work with a registered dietitian that can address nutrient and feeding concerns and is trained to make individualized recommendations. A primary area to focus on, according to Lambert, is correcting vitamin deficiencies, which may play a role in improving behavioral and digestive challenges. Nutrients of concern include zinc, vitamin D, calcium, magnesium and essential fatty acids.

McPherson also relates that fiber should be at the forefront of any diet to address digestive concerns. “While many children on the spectrum may strongly prefer foods like chips, crackers, bread or white pastas, these foods tend to be lack-

ing in fiber,” she says. “Good sources of fiber are split peas, multigrain breads and pears.”

A registered dietitian can also help families evaluate whether a diet is working. Lvova says, “It can be challenging to see whether a specific diet is working or not. When a change is made, the parents and caregivers often pay more attention in order to see if there is a difference, and the child responds positively to the change in attention. By keeping expect-

tations realistic and ensuring a relaxed mealtime atmosphere, your child will have the best chance to meet their nutritional needs.” Ultimately, the goal is to make meals a positive experience for the child, with less emotional investment on which foods they can or cannot eat. 🍌

Ana Reisdorf is a registered dietitian and freelance writer with more than 15 years of experience in the fields of nutrition and dietetics.

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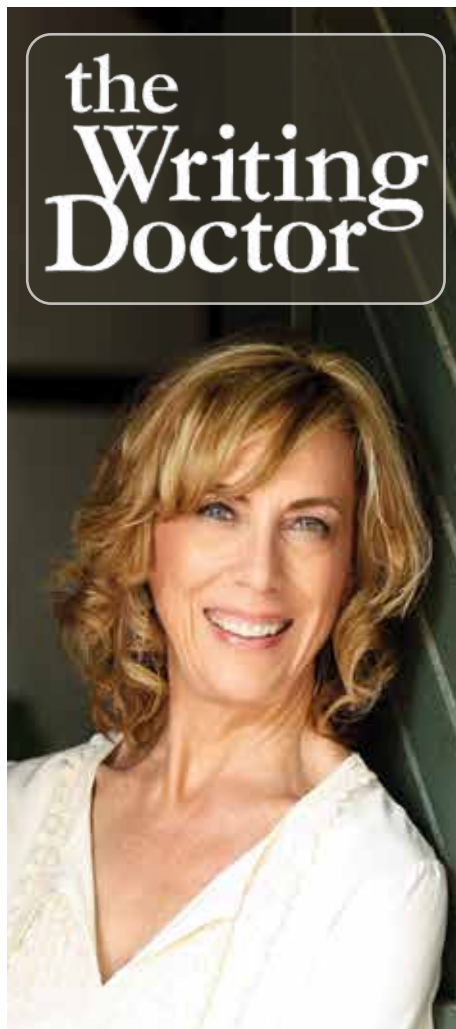
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NATURAL PET

OUTDOOR SAFETY FOR PETS

HELPFUL TIPS TO NAVIGATE HAZARDS

by Paige Cerulli

With nicer spring weather, pets will likely spend more time outside. Whether lounging in the backyard, taking a walk around the neighborhood or venturing out to a dog park, our awareness of potential dangers is important. Despite the risks, there is no reason to keep pets cooped up. With diligence, protecting our furry best friends can become second nature as we safely enjoy the great outdoors together with our pets.

Home and Yard

A fenced yard might seem like a safe space for pets, but that is not always the case. "Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are just a few of the toxic substances that could be in a pet owner's yard," explains veterinarian Alex Schechter, of Burrwood Veterinary, in Royal Oak, Michigan. "These substances can harm dogs and cats if they are consumed or come into contact with a pet's skin."

A 2013 study published in *Environmental Research* found that dogs exposed to

professionally applied lawn care pesticides had a 70 percent higher risk of developing canine malignant lymphoma than dogs that were not exposed to these products.

Schechter recommends that pet owners choose non-chemical lawn management methods that are safe for pets, like neem oil or diatomaceous earth. "Reduce the use of chemicals by using organic farming practices or natural fertilizers," he says.

Veterinarian Dwight Alleyne, an advisor at Betterpet, cautions that a yard might be home to plants that are poisonous to pets. "Some of these plants could include lilies, sago palms, tulips and oleander," he advises. "It is important for pet owners who have a backyard to be able to identify any potential hazards before leaving their pet out unattended."

Neighbors' Yards

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, mouse or rat poison is a popular pest control choice that kills by causing excessive bleeding. Use of this

product can be extremely dangerous to pets if they ingest either a poisoned rodent or the poison itself. Schechter warns, "If you see bait stations or dead rats, those areas may have been treated with a rodenticide." He advises pet owners to have a conversation with their neighbors, suggesting the use of snap or electronic traps as more humane and less toxic alternatives.

Driveways

Coal tar sealants used on driveways contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) that, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, may pass through skin or be inhaled. In large amounts, PAHs can irritate eyes and breathing, and several PAHs are carcinogenic in humans. Avoid sealing driveways with any coal tar products. When out for walks, pet owners should keep their dogs off other driveways, as well.

Outdoor Excursions

Dog parks carry several risks, including exposure to intestinal parasites. A 2020 study found that 85 percent of the 288 dog parks sampled had at least one dog infected with gastrointestinal parasites like Giardia, hookworms, whipworms or roundworms. These parasites can be transmitted when dogs eat or sniff poop.

"It is recommended that your dog is on a monthly heartworm preventative, which can help protect against common parasites that they may encounter," says Alleyne. If a dog regularly visits dog parks, a vet can perform a fecal exam to identify and treat any intestinal parasites that the dog may have contracted.

When visiting ponds and lakes, beware of blue-green algae bacteria, which commonly proliferate in freshwater bodies, particularly during summer months. Dogs can ingest algae by playing in or drinking the water, or when licking their paws. In large quantities, algae can be toxic to dogs (and humans). Because algae are not always visible, keeping dogs leashed around bodies of fresh water is best.

Paige Cerulli is a freelance writer in Western Massachusetts specializing in the health and care of pets.

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YOUNG ACTIVISTS PURSUE CLIMATE JUSTICE AND GREEN LIVING

by Sheila Julson



Born in the mid-to-late 1990s up to the early 2010s, Generation Z environmental activists agree that urgent action is needed to achieve climate justice, and they're willing to do what it takes to get results. "Climate and environmental justice and environmental racism are very big concerns among youth, whether or not they are youth of color. It's not just about energy, water or air—it's also very much about people," says Ana Garcia-Doyle, executive director of One Earth Collective. The Chicago nonprofit inspires action, facilitates learning and promotes environmental justice through annual programs like the One Earth Film Festival and One Earth Youth Voices, a summit designed to give voice to the next generation's environmental concerns.

Teens Take Charge

Marin Chalmers, a sophomore at Oak Park River Forest High School, in Illinois, and member of One Earth's Youth Advisory Council, has been participating in the One Earth Young Filmmakers contest since the seventh grade. Her short documentary, *Sondaica*, is about wildlife and ecosystems.

Chalmers credits One Earth with helping her connect with people that normally would not be involved with climate activism. Her peers share in the understanding that there's a climate crisis. "The Earth is breaking," she explains. "We need to fix it. Everybody needs to do a better job of taking action." Getting people to pay attention is challenging, Chalmers

laments, especially given America's overwhelming dependence on automobiles and the lack of public transportation. "A lot of people want to help, but just don't know how," she notes. "Some people don't have the financial ability to make environmentally sound choices."

Although individual action can help mitigate climate change, 16-year-old Sebastian Delgado, a Revolutionary Youth Action League (ROYAL) volunteer, blames polluting, profit-driven corporations for the climate crisis. "The biggest threat to our climate and people of color is capitalism," he explains. "We need a new economic system that's not based on profit."

ROYAL volunteers like Delgado collaborated with Marlene Brito-Millán, Ph.D., an ecology assistant professor at Loyola University Chicago, and Dr. Bryan Ramson, a nuclear physicist and research associate at Fermilab, to craft a social justice plan that incorporates climate town hall meetings to raise awareness and develop action plans. According to Delgado, even when concerned citizens contact their elected representatives, leaders can be slow to act. "Climate change has been happening for decades, and we're still dealing with the same issues," he remarks, adding that bold ideas and unwavering action are needed when government officials won't listen to their constituents.

Greening Urban Areas

In Austin, a predominantly Black neighborhood on the west side of Chicago, two 20-year-olds, Cortez Dean and Ethan Horne, work at paid internships in an urban farming program called Austin Grown, which raises chickens and maintains gardens with vegetables and native pollinators.

A collaboration between One Earth Collective and BUILD Chicago, a nationally respected youth development organization, Austin Grown serves urban communities where fruits and vegetables are hard to find. The organization also offers gardening and healthy eating classes to the public.

Dean is learning firsthand how climate change adversely affects farms, gardens and forests where food and medicinal

plants are grown. During a summer heat wave, he witnessed a sewer pipe explode, filling his neighborhood with a powerful stench, and he worries that aging infrastructure will contaminate their drinking water.

"People assume there's time to solve climate change, but we're not slowing things down. There's a lot of work to be done," Horne says, noting that food deserts disproportionately affect communities of color. "There are lots of areas with no grocery stores, or stores that only offer chips and candy, but no fruits and vegetables."

Dean and Horne concur that gardening provides needed green infrastructure and nutritional food to underserved populations. "I didn't fully understand climate change until I put my hands into the soil. When you do that, you'll see Earth for what it is—and the damage we've done to it," Dean says.

Activism on University Campuses

Originally from Waukesha County, Wisconsin, 21-year-old Grace Arnold feels lucky to have attended two schools with strong environmental programs and student engagement. At the University of Vermont, she participated in marches against fossil fuels and joined lively discussions about climate-related racism at the Social Justice Coalition. Now a student at University of Texas at Austin, she is enrolled in environmental studies classes and notes, "Students are forming environmental clubs. I'm grateful to again be surrounded by people trying to get their voices heard."

Arnold was a social media volunteer for Plastic-Free MKE, a Milwaukee-based organization dedicated to reducing single-use plastic waste. She credits social media as a powerful tool that helps her generation reach people and organize activism. "Climate change is intertwined with social, economic and political issues," she relates. "But small actions can make big impacts—and voting is a powerful thing." 🌱

Sheila Julson is a freelance writer and contributor to Natural Awakenings magazine.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Publicize your event! This section hosts free and paid listings. Each month, we select a limited number of events — they must have broad appeal and cost no more than \$20 to attend — to list for free. Otherwise, basic listings are \$35 and enhanced listings are \$75.

Submit free listings to calendar@naAtlanta.com and paid listings to ads@naAtlanta.com.



Earth Day is April 22. Look for the green leaf for events that celebrate Earth Day.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

Natural Egg Dyeing – 10am-12pm. Drop-in family program. Certain plants contain powerful dyes that create stunning colors. Join us in this interactive program to learn more about these plants and decorate 3 vibrant eggs. \$6/child plus Garden admission. Atlanta Botanical Garden, 1345 Piedmont Ave NE, Atlanta. AtlantaBG.org.

Easter Block Party – 11am-1pm. Kids, bring your Easter baskets for the Egg Hunt. Enjoy family photos with the Easter Bunny, games, DJ and line dancing. Bring a lawn chair and a family picnic. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4

Online: Transmission Meditation – 7:30pm. A meditation to help the world. Sponsored by Share International USA SE Region. Free. Via Eventbrite. Info: 770-302-2208 or Info-SE@ShareInternational.us. Register: [Tinyurl.com/yn7378za](https://tinyurl.com/yn7378za).

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

Earth Day Bird Walk – 8:30-10am. Join us for a bird walk and learn about the urban domiciles of the region's birds. You'll pair up with an expert leader to observe birds on Georgia Tech's campus. The Kendeda Building, 422 Ferst Dr, Atlanta. EarthDay.GATech.edu.

FRIDAY, APRIL 7

New Thought Good Friday Service – 12pm. Unity Atlanta Church hosts multiple participating Atlanta area New Thought Ministries. This service will be held in person in the Sanctuary and will include the Seven Last Words and special music. All invited. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

How to Garden to Attract Birds and Other Wildlife – 10-11:30am. Trecia-Neal discusses the amazing anatomy of birds, how we classify birds, easy tips to identify common birds in your yard, and most importantly, ways to improve your habitat to attract birds. Free/member, \$10/nonmember.

erages. Love offering. Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

TUESDAY, APRIL 18

Earth Day Org Fair and Celebration – 11am-1pm. Join the Georgia Tech Office of Sustainability as we close our Earth Month festivities with an org fair and celebration. The Kendeda Building, 422 Ferst Dr, Atlanta. EarthDay.GATech.edu.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19

Remote Healing for the Third Eye Chakra Up to the Higher Consciousness – 2:30-3:15pm. Jamie will look at strengthening the third eye, crown, and higher consciousness chakras. \$20. Register: [JamieButlerMedium.com](https://jamiebutlermedium.com).

FRIDAY, APRIL 21

Glow in the Park – Apr 21-22. 5-10pm, Fri; 2-10pm, Sat. Social outdoor event where food, retail, and educational vendors offer a variety of fresh, local street foods, arts and crafts, and other culturally relevant and family-friendly fare. Free. 350 Town Center Ave. Suwanee. AtNightMarket.org.

The Power to be Happy – 6:30-7:45pm. Visiting Guest Teacher, Kadam Michelle will explain how we can improve the quality of our life through changing our mind. By tapping into this potential for lasting inner peace, we can make deep and genuine happiness our everyday reality. Free. Kadampa Meditation Center GA, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 22

Campbellton Community Garden – 9am-12pm. Come help Atlanta turn an empty lot into a food-producing asset and green space for the community. Volunteers typically do weeding, mulching, bed preparation, planting and other tasks and projects. Register: [HandsOnAtlanta.org](https://handsonatlanta.org).

Sunshine, Feel the Vibes, and Get Your Hands Dirty on an Urban Farm – 9am-1pm. Join Truly Living Well to work in teams to assist with basic farm chores, such as mulching pathways, turning and weeding garden beds, sifting soil and working the compost. Register: [HandsonAtlanta.org](https://handsonatlanta.org).

Earth Day at Atlanta Botanic Garden – 10am-12pm. Fun and engaging family activities celebrating nature and the beautiful plants all around. Free with Garden Admission. Atlanta Botanical Garden, 1345 Piedmont Ave NE, Atlanta. AtlantaBG.org.

EarthDayFest – 12-6pm. Featuring 20+ vendors, live DJ, free yoga with Sanskrit Moon and more. East Atlanta Village Farmers Market, 572 Stokeswood Ave, Atlanta. More info: [Tinyurl.com/5fed7r6u](https://tinyurl.com/5fed7r6u).

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

The Nature Club Dine and Discover – 7-9pm. Join Nature Club back in person for an exciting speaker on the natural world. \$10/general, \$5/CNC Members. CNC, 9135 Willeo Rd, Roswell. ChattNatureCenter.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

Atlanta Arts, Vegan, and Vegetarian Festival – 12-7pm. Features a pop-up market, food vendors serving vegan and vegetarian options, live music and art demonstrations. Leashed pets welcome. Admission free. Westside Park, 1660 Johnson Rd NW, Atlanta. BringFido.com/event/46377.

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Alive! Expo – May 6-7. 10am-6pm, Sat; 11am-5pm, Sun. The only Green Living Event in Atlanta and the Southeast. Interactive demos, live health lectures and kids' activities. Learn how to integrate natural products and green living into daily life. Cobb Galleria Centre, Two Galleria Pkwy, Atlanta. AliveExpo.com.

FRI-SAT, JUNE 3-4

Inner Engineering Completion Program – June 3-4, Georgia World Congress Center. A unique opportunity to receive life-transforming tools from Sadhguru during the program. "This is not about being superhuman — this is about realizing that being human is super!" Early bird discount ends April 25. innerengineering.com

ONGOING

Sundays

A Course in Miracles: Practicing the Presence – 8:45-10:30am. This virtual weekly study group aims at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence. Facilitator: Michael Wilkinson. An open and ongoing class. All welcome. Drop-in any time. New people are very welcome to join. Via Zoom. Unity Atlanta Church: 770-441-0585. Register: MWilkinson@leadstrat.com. UnityAtl.org.

Online & In-Person Sunday Experience – 9am, Adult Study; 9:30am, Meditation; 10am, Music; 10:30am, Service. Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta, 3107 Clairmont Rd, Ste A, Atlanta. More info: slc-atlanta.org.

Red Clay Sangha Sunday Morning Service – 9am, meditation; 10:30-11:30am, service & dharma discussion. Via Zoom or in person. 3420 W Hospital Ave, Ste 102, Chamblee. More info: [RedClaySangha.org](https://redclaysangha.org).

Online: NWUUC – 10am. Via Zoom. Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation: 770-955-1408 or nwuuc.org.

SRF Atlanta Meditation Service – 10-10:45am. An opportunity to meet with other truth-seekers to commune with God and share spiritual fellowship. 4000 King Springs Rd, Smyrna. 770-434-7200. srfatlanta.org.

Meditation Open House – 10-11:30am. Discussion at 11:30am and tea at 12pm. Meditation instruction available from 10-11am for those new to the practice. Atlanta Shambhala Center, 1447 Church St, Decatur. More info: [Atlanta.Shambhala.org](https://atlanta.shambhala.org).

Second Sunday Sober Bike Ride – 10:30am. 2nd Sun. Brings together people from all walks of sober living who are seeking fun and active ways to connect with likeminded people. BTA Bicycle Tours of Atlanta will provide a bike at no charge if needed. Bicycle Tours of Atlanta, 659 Auburn Ave NE, Atlanta. Register: [Tinyurl.com/yjzutfj4](https://tinyurl.com/yjzutfj4).

One World Spiritual Center Sunday Service – 11am. To watch: OneWorldSpiritualCenter.net.

Unity Atlanta Sunday Services – 11am. Attend in-person or watch via live stream. 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Online: UUCA Service – 11am. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta: uuca.org/live.

SRF Atlanta Reading and Inspirational Service – 11am-12pm. An opportunity to meet with other truth-seekers to commune with God and share spiritual fellowship. 4000 King Springs Rd, Smyrna. 770-434-7200. srfatlanta.org.

Sunday Morning Talks and Discussion – 11am-12pm. With Vedanta Center of Atlanta via Zoom. To watch: [VedantaAtlanta.org](https://vedantaatlanta.org).

Unity North Online & In-Person Sunday Service – 11:15am. 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. More info: UnityNorth.org.

Meditation Classes – 4-5pm, Level I; 5-6pm, Level II. All religions, all ages and all people. Learn how to meditate for spiritual enlightenment. \$15. 5161 Brook Hollow Parkway, Ste 220/225, Norcross. Register, Andrea: 404-557-4306. MeditationWellnessClub@gmail.com. MeditationWellnessClub.com.

Mondays

Meditation & Modern Buddhism – 7:30-9pm. With Resident Teacher, Gen Kelsang Norden. Talks, guided meditation, discussion and Q&A. All welcome. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Gentle Hatha Yoga – 6:30-7:30pm. With yoga instructor Carol Romero. The spiritual focus is the number one aspect in her teaching of yoga. Bring own mat. No previous experience necessary and no need to pre-register. \$12/walk-in, \$50/5 classes (valid for 12 wks). Unity Atlanta Church, 3597 Parkway Ln, Peachtree Corners. 770-441-0585. UnityAtl.org.

Tuesdays

Online Meditation Open House – 7pm. A 30-min meditation and a 30-min discussion via Zoom. To watch: Atlanta.Shambhala.org.

The Paradigm Shift – 7-8pm. 1st & 3rd Tues. Join international speaker, teacher and Atlanta-based chiropractor, Dr. Wade Port for the latest in self-care strategies. Free. The Well

of Roswell, 900 Old Roswell Lakes Pkwy, Ste 300, Roswell. TheWellOfRoswell.com.

Twin Hearts Meditation – 7-8:30pm. A short, guided meditation blessing the Earth with loving kindness, peace and good will. Donation. Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta, 3107 Clairmont Rd, Unit A, Atlanta. 404-417-0008. Meetup.com/Twin-Hearts-Meditation.

Metro Atlanta Sierra Club Meeting – 7:30pm. 2nd Tues. More info: SierraClub.org/georgia/atlanta.

Wednesdays

30-Minute Guided Meditation – 12:15pm. Be guided through a simple yet powerful meditation that gives rise to an experience of mental peace and wellbeing. No experience necessary. Beginners welcome. \$5. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Decatur Farmers Market – Thru Nov 15. 4-7pm. First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairmont Ave, Decatur. 404-373-1653. cfmatl.org/Decatur.

Weekly Wednesday Meditation Class – 7-8:30pm. Open to all levels. Experience true inner peace. With the Venerable Nicholas Thannissaro of the Georgia Meditation Center via Zoom. Toregister: MeditationCircle.org.

She Recovers Foundation Atlanta Sharing Circle – 7:30-8:30pm. 2nd Wed. Come join us as we support one another on our journey to wholeness. We are all recovering from something. With Allison Stanley. Free. The Well of Roswell, 900 Old Roswell Lakes Pkwy, Ste 300, Roswell. 770-778-2051. TheWellOfRoswell.com.

Thursdays

Tai Chi & Qigong – 9:30am. For beginners. \$7/at door. Meets in The Jefferson Parks and Recreation Dept, 2495 Old Pendergrass Rd, Jefferson. 678-510-9573. CarolOsborne.org.

The First Georgia Dowsters – 6pm. 1st Thurs. Discuss all things dowsing. Host guest speakers each month teaching new and exciting developments within the dowsing community. \$5/nonmember, free/member. Heart Soul and Art, 1470 Roswell Rd, Marietta. Pre-registration required: Heart-Soul-And-Art.square.site.

Dunwoody Beekeeping Club – 6:30-7:30pm. 1st Thurs. Meeting features a program, followed by a question and answer session with the ability to meet and learn from other local beekeepers. Free. 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. DunwoodyNature.org.

Meditation Fundamentals – 6:30-7:30pm. Suitable for complete beginners. Get a practical introduction to meditation and includes topics such as the benefits of meditation, mindfulness, good posture, types of meditation, and how to start a daily meditation practice. In-person & online. \$15. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Twin Hearts Meditation – 7pm. This meditation is an act of service. We use divine energy to

blessthe planet, our loved ones and every part of our life. With Atlanta Pranic Healing Center via Zoom. To watch: AtlPranicHealing.com.

Fridays

Qigong Exercises & Meditations – 12–12:45pm. 1st & 3rd. Led by Master Cheng, who has been teaching in Atlanta since 1976. Free/ member, \$8/nonmember. Tai Chi Association, 3079 Midway Rd, Decatur. More info & registration: Tai-Chi-Association.com.

Meditation Classes – 6pm, Level I; 7pm, Level II. See Sun listing. 5161 Brook Hollow Parkway, Ste 220/225, Norcross. Register, Andrea: 404-557-4306. MeditationWellnessClub@gmail.com. MeditationWellnessClub.com.

Prayers for World Peace – 6:30-7:15pm. Includes a guided meditation, a short teaching and chanted prayers for world peace. No experience necessary. All welcome. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Saturdays

Free Saturday Meditations – 8-8:30am. A guided meditation to start your day with a positive state of mind and carry that inner light with you for the rest of the day. No prior meditation experience necessary; all welcome. Kadampa Meditation Center Georgia, 741 Edgewood NE, Atlanta. 678-453-6753. MeditationInGeorgia.org.

Morningside Farmers Market – 8-11:30am. Year-round. Offers organic produce, bread, pastries, grains, meat, honey, along with chef pop-ups, prepared foods, coffee, in-season fruits, and locally produced crafts. Morningside Presbyterian, 1411 N Morningside Dr NE, Atlanta. MorningsideMarket.com.

Dunwoody Nature Center Saturday Volunteers – 9am-12pm. 2nd Sat. For anyone in the community who wishes to volunteer. A wonderful way to start off your weekend in nature and service. To promote social distancing, sign-up is mandatory; limited to 24 people. 5343 Roberts Dr, Dunwoody. 770-394-3322. DunwoodyNature.org.

Oakhurst Farmers Market – 9am-1pm. Year-round. Fresh produce, meat, baked treats, and more. Additional offerings include live music and chef demonstrations featuring seasonal recipes. Masks required. Sceptre Brewing Arts, 630 E Lake Dr, Decatur. cfmatl.org/oakhurst.

Free Online Guided Meditation for All – 9:45-11am. Will go over basics and guided meditation. No prior experience is needed. Classes meant to come together and meditate and learn little by little. Via Zoom. Register: Tinyurl.com/y3x5yy2s.

Reiki Share Group – 3:30-5:30pm. Last Sat. A gathering of like-minded reiki practitioners who participate in group healing treatments on each other. \$21. Healing Hands Reiki & Spiritual Development, Inc, 27 Waddell St, Ste A, Atlanta. Tinyurl.com/2rykarft.

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Thyroid medication: why less really is more

by Dr. Raquel Espinol

Introduction

The thyroid gland regulates metabolism by releasing hormones called thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3). When the thyroid underperforms, it causes everything in your body to work less efficiently. This is known as hypothyroidism. Hypothyroidism affects more than 30 million American adults and is five to eight times more common in females.¹ By conservative estimates, one in eight women will develop hypothyroidism.¹

The most common cause of hypothyroidism is an autoimmune disease called Hashimoto's thyroiditis. This makes up 75-85% of hypothyroid cases. Oftentimes, people with Hashimoto's struggle to find a medication or treatment plan that works for them and continue to suffer through symptoms like:

- Fatigue
- Feeling cold
- Losing hair
- Gaining weight
- Depression

While there are many treatment options for hypothyroidism, not all are created equal. **Selecting the most appropriate one is vital to managing this disease.**

Thyroid hormones: T3 and T4

The two hormones to remember are T4 (thyroxine) and T3 (triiodothyronine). T4 circulates throughout your bloodstream and is stored in your tissues until needed. Once your body finds a need, it converts T4 into T3. Establishing the exact levels of T4 and T3, and determining if the conversion process is working normally, are critical to designing the best treatment approach.

While most healthcare providers understand the critical nature of T4 to T3 conversion, many fail to recognize the factors that affect this process. These include:

- Nutritional deficiencies/excesses
- Autoimmune diseases
- Gastrointestinal diseases such as celiac disease, acid reflux, or irritable bowel syndrome
- Use of interfering medications like proton pump inhibitors (Nexium® and Prevacid®, for example) or H2 blockers (Tagamet®, for example), which inhibit the dissolution and absorption of thyroid hormone tablets
- The body's own obstacles to converting T4 to T3

Some people continue to suffer from hypothyroid symptoms despite being on medication for years. But with some effort, **patients can work with their doctor to find an approach that works for them.**

What can interfere with hypothyroid therapy?

Some commonly used prescription drugs that can interfere with thyroid medication absorption and efficacy:

- Antacids
- Lithium
- Amiodarone
- Antibiotics
- Antidepressants
- Dopamine agonists
- Colestipol
- Cholestyramine
- Estrogen, testosterone

Some commonly used nutraceuticals that can interfere with the absorption of thyroid medicines:

- Iron
- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Chromium picolinate

Some foods that can interfere with absorption of medication:

- Soy products
- High-fiber/high-bran foods
- Calcium-enriched foods/beverages

Digestive complications or diseases such as celiac disease, autoimmune gastritis, and irritable bowel syndrome can also complicate thyroid hormone therapy.

Make sure to discuss with your doctor all of your medical conditions, medications (both prescription and nonprescription), and nutritional supplements before starting or switching thyroid hormone therapy.



Dr. Raquel Espinol graduated with honors and received her doctorate in naturopathic medicine from Sonoran University of Health Sciences (formerly Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine). She struggled with her own thyroid condition, which was not successfully managed until she discovered naturopathic medicine and worked with a naturopathic doctor to control her condition. This firsthand success inspired her to pursue a career in naturopathic medicine specializing in thyroid diseases.

Dr. Espinol works with men and women addressing thyroid conditions, hormone imbalances, and weight loss. She is licensed to practice in Arizona, California, Oregon, Washington, Utah, and Montana.

Common choices for treating hypothyroidism

The most common treatments for hypothyroidism include T4 monotherapy with levothyroxine, natural desiccated thyroid (NDT) aka "glandular thyroid," and a regimen of T4 and T3 medications taken together. Figuring out the best option for you may take some time. See the accompanying chart for pros/cons of commonly used hypothyroidism therapies.

T4 monotherapy

Pros:

- Current standard of care for hypothyroidism
- Proven safe and effective
- Available at all pharmacies
- Usually low cost

Cons:

- GI conditions, medications, sensitivities to excipients/inactive ingredients in tablet formulations can interfere with absorption and tolerability

Natural desiccated thyroid (NDT)

Pros:

- Contains both key thyroid hormones: T4 and T3
- An option for people who need supplemental T3

Cons:

- Derived from thyroid glands of pigs – an issue for vegans
- NDT therapies are tablets that contain excipients or "fillers"
- The T4:T3 ratio contained in NDT tablets is 5:1 – different than the normal human ratio of these hormones
- Can lead to cardiac problems like rapid heartbeat, insomnia, and feelings of anxiety
- It comes from pigs and may contain porcine antigens, which may be problematic for some people
- Not all pharmacies carry NDT products. Not all insurance carriers pay for them

Combined T4 and T3 medication therapy

Pros:

- Consistent potency
- Can be an option for those in need of supplemental T3
- Available at most pharmacies

Cons:

- Two separate medicines that need to be taken daily. T4 is taken once a day; T3 may be recommended in multiple daily doses
- Some insurance plans may require two medication copays
- T3 can be risky for some patients with cardiovascular conditions. Some patients can experience heart palpitations and other side effects

Malabsorption and drug underperformance

Most thyroid hormone therapies come in tablet form. These contain inactive ingredients such as wheat starch (gluten), talc, lactose, sugars, and dyes that help hold the tablet together, but also can impede the absorption of their active ingredient, which results in suboptimal or inconsistent levels of thyroid hormones. When this happens, many patients often believe they need to change medication rather than address the factors that contribute to their therapy's poor performance. They turn to their physician for new therapies in the hope that these can provide long hoped-for relief from their symptoms.²

Nutritional support

Nutrition can play a role in managing hypothyroidism. However, few patients can treat hypothyroidism with nutritional supplements alone. Some examples of helpful nutritional supplements include inositol, nigella, B vitamins, and selenium. However, excess amounts of certain nutritional supplements can also lead to hyperthyroidism or hypothyroidism. Always tell your physician about all drugs and supplements that you are currently taking as well as your soy, fiber, and non-animal product intake.

Thyroid treatment: sometimes less is more

Less is often more when it comes to hypothyroid treatment. Tirosint®-SOL (levothyroxine sodium) oral solution is a unique liquid hypothyroid medication made with only three ingredients. It contains no fillers or other ingredients that can irritate your stomach or lead to poor drug absorption. Because it's a liquid, it doesn't need to dissolve in your stomach like a tablet or capsule before your body starts to absorb it. It's not made with any ingredients sourced from animals, and it's easy to swallow and comes in precise monodose ampules that can be conveniently stored for travel. You can pour it into a glass of water and drink it, or you can squeeze the contents of the ampule directly into your mouth.

Since Tirosint-SOL consists of just water, glycerol, and levothyroxine, it's a very simple yet effective solution for treating hypothyroidism. This is important to me. Additionally, I want to ensure my patients have consistent access to the thyroid medication that works best for them. That being said, Tirosint-SOL has a generous coupon program and low-cost mail-order option to help patients without insurance or with high insurance copays/deductibles. These can be found on the product's website.

So, which treatment is right for you?

Share your answers to the following with your physicians so they can work with you to pick the right option for you:

- Have you been treated for hypothyroidism and are dissatisfied with the results?
- Do you want a simpler approach?
- Do you need a drug that is free of excipients like gluten, dyes, lactose, and preservatives?
- Do you have gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) or another GI condition?
- Problems swallowing?

Please see Important Safety Information on page 47 and Full Prescribing Information at [TirosintSOL.com](https://www.tirosint.com).

References: 1. American Thyroid Association Website. <https://www.thyroid.org/media-main/press-room/>. Accessed December 8, 2022. 2. McMillan M, et al. Results of the CONTROL Surveillance Project. *Drugs in R&D*. 2015;16(1):53-68.





An Offer of Comfort

by Rev. Jennifer L. Sacks

Early in my career, I developed a hard shell. It was a protective layer, like Teflon, to shield my sensitive nature. Because of that shell, I sometimes acted without integrity. It was easier than sharing my heart.

While editor of an association newspaper, I hired Sheila and appreciated her smarts and quick wit. She wrote quickly and asked hard questions better than I did. She got accolades, and our readership grew.

When Shelia's mother became ill, she didn't speak much about her feelings, but her work slipped. She began to miss deadlines. Several times, I asked her to get focused. And even though she tried, her anger seeped into conversations with our boss and with some of her sources. So I reprimanded her.

One day, Sheila asked me for some time off. I asked her to finish her assignments first, and she said she'd try. She met her deadlines, but the articles needed rewrites. I got aggravated. I had my own deadlines now, including fixing her incomplete work. When Shelia returned to the office, she gave me her resignation, saying only that her mother had died. In my own self-absorption, I didn't offer comfort.

Several years later, my father went into hospice. By then, I was an untenured teacher in an upper-middle-class school system. My supervisor often pressured me, constantly entering my classroom to critique my lessons.

When my father died, I was numb and overwhelmed by grief. Our relationship had been difficult, and I needed time to process the past and heal. After a couple of weeks off, I returned to school. My colleagues offered comfort and encouragement, but my supervisor acted as if nothing had happened. Her constant hounding continued.

One night, I dreamt that a woman was walking toward me, pointing and shouting words I couldn't hear. As I awoke, I realized the woman was Sheila.

"Oh, my, God," I thought. "My supervisor is treating me the way I treated Sheila." I clutched my heart, sobbing and praying for forgiveness for myself—and from Sheila, wherever she was.

Poet Kahlil Gibran wrote that our pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses our understanding. As I grieved, I realized that I had denied Sheila the comfort I needed for myself. I resolved to keep my heart open and be more compassionate.

Opportunities to do just that showed up every week. Even in a prominent school district, students have pain they hold within their shells. So, the day Marley got into a fight

with another classmate, I was calm. His father had died a while ago, and his mother was now in hospice.

"Hey, Marley," I said. "Let's go outside for a minute."

"I don't need to," he said.

"Come on. Just for a minute."

When we left the classroom, Marley stared at the ground.

"I guess everything feels really tough right now," I said.

Marley kicked the floor. "That jerk just won't let up."

"I think I get it," I said. "He doesn't understand. And you really want to say, 'Back the bleep off, man! My mother's dying!'"

Marley nodded; his eyes filled with tears. "Yup. That's what I want to say."

Marley's mother died not long after that. He took leave from school, then dropped out. I sent some cards to his home address but never heard back.

A year later, I was in Best Buy, purchasing a Christmas present, and I saw Marley.

"Ms. Sacks!" he shouted and threw his arms around me. Marley told me he was working there full-time, he'd completed his GED, and he was applying to community college to study computer programming. He asked how I was and what was happening at school.

"I really appreciate you, Ms. Sacks," he said. "You were the only one who really understood."

In the Bible's Beatitudes, Jesus says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." I would add that we also can be comforters. By feeling my own sorrow and learning from my missteps, my shell broke open so I could share my heart. In this season of renewal, of passing over and rising up, I'm eternally grateful for the comfort that offers us all new life. [Ed: Names have been changed for privacy.] ☪



Senior minister of Unity Atlanta Church in Peachtree Corners, Rev. Jennifer L. Sacks is a preacher, writer and spiritual leader. She holds a

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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

WARNING: NOT FOR THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY OR FOR WEIGHT LOSS

- Thyroid hormones, including TIROSINT-SOL, either alone or with other therapeutic agents, should not be used for the treatment of obesity or for weight loss.
- In euthyroid patients, doses within the range of daily hormonal requirements are ineffective for weight reduction.
- Larger doses may produce serious or even life-threatening manifestations of toxicity, particularly when given in association with sympathomimetic amines such as those used for their anorectic effects.

Contraindications

- Hypersensitivity to glycerol
- Uncorrected adrenal insufficiency

Warnings and Precautions

- Cardiac adverse reactions in the elderly and in patients with underlying cardiovascular disease: Initiate TIROSINT-SOL at less than the full replacement dose because of the increased risk of cardiac adverse reactions, including atrial fibrillation
- Myxedema coma: Do not use oral thyroid hormone drug products to treat myxedema coma
- Acute adrenal crisis in patients with concomitant adrenal insufficiency: Treat with replacement glucocorticoids prior to initiation of TIROSINT-SOL treatment

- Prevention of hyperthyroidism or incomplete treatment of hypothyroidism: Proper dose titration and careful monitoring is critical to prevent the persistence of hypothyroidism or the development of hyperthyroidism
- Worsening of diabetic control: Therapy in patients with diabetes mellitus may worsen glycemic control and result in increased antidiabetic agent or insulin requirements. Carefully monitor glycemic control after starting, changing, or discontinuing thyroid hormone therapy
- Decreased bone mineral density associated with thyroid hormone over-replacement: Over-replacement can increase bone reabsorption and decrease bone mineral density. Give the lowest effective dose

Limitations of Use

- Not indicated for suppression of benign thyroid nodules and nontoxic diffuse goiter in iodine-sufficient patients
- Not indicated for treatment of transient hypothyroidism during the recovery phase of subacute thyroiditis

Adverse Reactions

Adverse reactions associated with TIROSINT-SOL are primarily those of hyperthyroidism due to therapeutic overdosage including: arrhythmias, myocardial infarction, dyspnea, muscle spasm, headache, nervousness, irritability, insomnia, tremors, muscle weakness, increased appetite, weight loss, diarrhea, heat intolerance, menstrual irregularities, and skin rash

For Full Prescribing Information, including Boxed Warning, visit www.TirosintSOL.com



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