

Anti-aging Treatments: Hype or Reality?

If you have been exposed to any media or advertising, then chances are you have been exposed to bits that tout new and often expensive treatments and supplements to delay or even prevent aging. But the question is can you trust these ads and sometimes sensational news reports?

The search for the literal fountain of youth failed centuries ago, without finding any springs or water that restore youth or vitality. Then many failed anti-aging treatment attempts followed, some even using extreme methods with toxic compounds and herbals that ended up shortening rather than extending life. Unfortunately even as of today, no compound, supplement or drug has shown any consistent ability to prolong human life in large-scale human clinical trials.

However, a breakthrough occurred in the 1930s when research confirmed that life-extension was possible in rats using a method of permanent calorie restriction. Observational human studies do show a probable link between calorie consumption and longevity. These studies estimate that in order to gain 4.5 years of extra life, one would have to make a permanent calorie reduction of 15% starting at age 25, compared to an average diet adjusted for age, gender and body mass.

Unfortunately, the field of anti-aging medications, supplements and compounds has not fared so well, where excitement and let-downs have occurred in predictable cycles, with each new supplement or medication gaining notoriety, but only to be followed by lack of real and reliable results. Then the old batch of supplements are supplanted by new ads or news spots for a new and more fashionable supplement.

For example, during the height of the resveratrol frenzy in 2003, several well-known TV science and physician personalities touted it as a miraculous anti-aging compound. The buzz was created when 2 well-respected medical journals, *Nature* and *Science* published data that resveratrol may extend the life of yeast organisms on a Petri dish, which is far removed from a true human trial. Since then, no convincing advancement has been made using resveratrol (or a related compound called pterostilbene) to significantly reverse aging.

Other examples of yet-unproven supplements and treatments include human growth hormone, stem cells, nicotinamide (including nicotinamide mononucleotide and nicotinamide riboside), rapamycin, acarbose, vitamin K2, coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) and metformin. So far, robust human data for safety and efficacy are lacking for all these.

However, the formation of two companies recently are notable for their deep funding and fresh approach to anti-aging therapies. One is Calico Labs formed in 2013 by tech billionaire and Google cofounder, Larry Page, a company looking for anti-aging breakthroughs with the help of machine-learning and other advanced computing methods to comb for genetic patterns, molecular targets and immune system changes associated with aging and disease.

In September of this year, it was reported that Jeff Bezos, the former CEO of Amazon will be backing a company called Altos Labs. One aim of this new company is to try to harness cellular reprogramming, selectively turning genes on and off to transform old cells into younger-acting cells. This kind of transformation already occurs in human reproduction when a fertilized egg that is decades old is miraculously transformed into an embryo at the start of life itself, using a set of preprogrammed signals and switches.

The bottom line:

Until the breakthroughs come from the companies above and other new sources, the best advice is probably to use the already proven paradigms of longevity by imitating the lifestyles of those who have lived the longest.

For example, Jeanne Louise Calment passed away on August 4, 1997 at the age of 122, setting the world record for longevity which has not been surpassed.

She was not known to take any dietary or anti-aging supplements, and the only dietary secret that Jean Louise Calment admitted to was a diet rich in olive oil, with some daily chocolate. She was also known to have led a low stress life with plenty of physical activity (tennis, bicycling, swimming, and roller-skating). In fact, she took up fencing lessons at the age of 85.

By and large, the body of medical literature supports natural ways of improving longevity and quality of life by working on what has been called the four pillars of good health:

1. proper sleep,
2. hydration and nutrition,
3. exercise, and
4. stress management (when our busy lives will allow...).

If you require more information about stopping, changing or adding supplements or about revamping your lifestyle for wellness and healthy aging, please consult your personal physician (as individual circumstances and requirements vary from person to person).

Administrative update:

We are excited to announce the addition of our first specialist at NTPHP.

Riteesha Reddy, MD joins our Dallas location on January 1, 2022. Dr. Reddy is a board certified rheumatologist with additional fellowship training in integrative medicine and board certification in lifestyle medicine. Her clinical experience, attention to detail, and additional training allow her to not only provide up-to-date rheumatology care but also incorporate a focus on optimizing nutrition, physical activity, sleep, and social/emotional well-being as components of overall health. Information can be found on www.ntphp.com

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Park Cities Office
8215 Westchester Drive
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Las Colinas Office
440 West I-635
Suite 405
Irving, Texas 75063
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HEALTHY HABITS

“Squash” The Habit

Written by: Sarah Tannen, RDN, CSOWM, LDN

Let's “Squash the Habit” of eating unhealthy around the Holidays! Start incorporating some winter “super-foods” with many nutrition benefits to stay healthy well into the new year.

Winter squash is naturally low in fat and calories, tastes great, and is versatile in many recipes. Not only is winter squash packed with fiber, but it is rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. A diet high in antioxidants, such as beta-carotene, has been shown to help prevent chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Eating foods high in vitamin C and Vitamin A can be supportive to your immune system and keep you from getting sick. Winter squash is a low glycemic food which can be a great way to cut down on carbohydrates and improve blood sugar management. No wonder it is called a “super-food”.

Winter squash includes pumpkin, acorn squash, butternut squash, spaghetti squash, hubbard squash, kabocha squash, sweet dumpling squash, delicata squash and buttercup squash. You can roast them, boil them, mash them, or make a soup out of them. They are great sides for a healthy “carb-like” swap.

Check out this fun and tasty recipe using a spaghetti squash in place of your typical rice/pasta. While spaghetti squash does not taste like pasta, it still gives you the mouth feel of pasta. Spaghetti squash has 42 calories, 2.2 grams fiber, 1 gram protein, and 10 grams carbs per one cup.

Burrito Spaghetti Squash Boats (Recipe from: Delish US)

Ingredients:

For Spaghetti Squash:

- 2 medium spaghetti squash, halved, seeds removed
- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. cumin

For Filling:

- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb. ground beef

For Filling (continued):

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 tbsp. taco seasoning mix
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 (15-oz.) can black beans
- 1 1/2 c. chopped cherry tomatoes
- 1 c. corn, canned and drained or frozen
- 1 c. shredded Monterey jack
- 1/2 c. shredded cheddar
- 2 tbsp. freshly chopped cilantro (optional)

Instructions: Preheat oven to 400°. Drizzle cut sides of spaghetti squash with oil and season with salt, chili powder, and cumin. Place cut side down on a large, rimmed baking sheet. Roast until tender, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool slightly. Using a fork, break up squash strands. Meanwhile, make filling: In a large skillet over medium heat, heat olive oil. Add onion and cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute more. Add ground beef, breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon. Cook until beef is no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Drain fat. Stir in taco seasoning, then season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in black beans, cherry tomatoes, and corn. Fill each spaghetti squash with beef mixture and top with cheeses. Return to oven to melt cheese, 5 minutes. Garnish with cilantro & serve.