



Dr. Robert Jay Rowen's

# SECOND OPINION

Vol. XII, No. 6

June 2002

## HEALTH NOTES

### Big News on Resveratrol

You know about my fondness for resveratrol for a variety of problems, from circulation to cancer. And I know how much you like it because we've received a number of testimonials from happy users of Healthy Resolve's Resveratrol Plus. Now comes compelling scientific evidence of resveratrol's power.

Researchers reported in the *British Journal of Cancer* that this natural anti-fungal agent commonly found in grapes is converted by cancer cells themselves into a known anti-cancer agent which can selectively destroy the cancer cells. Many cancer cells contain an enzyme called CYP1B1. This enzyme converts resveratrol into a closely related plant estrogen called piceatannol, which has very effective anti-cancer properties.

The same research team has shown in the past that this process is limited to cancer cells themselves, thus selectively limiting cell destruction to the cancer cells. Previously, researchers thought the enzyme was a possible cause of the development of cancer. Now they believe it might be present to help control the cancer and are looking into ways to harness its power.

**Action to take:** Resveratrol (two tablets daily) is one of the most potent cancer preventatives available in the world, harnessing the power of the cancer-cell enzyme CYP1B1. I've seen it work miracles in some cases of cancer, as have many of you. This research simply gives scientific credence to our experiences, which is wonderful. Best of all, this is NOT some-

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## New Screening Test Helps Prevent Breast Cancer

Mary painfully winced as her breast was placed on a plate, squeezed, and flattened to something more like a pancake. She was preparing to receive a "low intensity" X-ray beam called mammography. "It felt like my tissues were being ripped off my chest wall," she said afterward.

Then she was startled when the mirror revealed her well-shaped and self-supported breasts were sagging for the first time. Later she told me she would never get another mammogram despite a strong family history of breast cancer.

Mary is one of millions of women encouraged by breast-cancer "scare" infomercials to subject her breasts to the rather brutish mammography. This procedure requires mechanical flattening of the breast to get the best picture, since imaging through thick tissue will often obscure the result.

What Mary wasn't aware of was the availability of **another screening method that's highly accurate, doesn't compress the breast, doesn't use radiation, and is far superior at preventing breast cancer than mammography (which never prevents, just diagnoses the disease).** Digital infrared thermography, or thermography, observes the breasts (or other body tissues) for the radiation the tissues naturally emit.

Most people these days have watched enough television to understand infrared photography, which highlights objects with temperatures above absolute zero. Few people realize, though, that infrared photography actually picks up on the natural radiation our bodies emit to produce this heat. While most of the uses science has found for this technology are in the military realm (night vision

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thing you need to visit a doctor to get. In fact, most doctors don't know the first thing about resveratrol.

I believe you should include resveratrol in your daily regimen of supplements for overall prevention. Of course, this should further encourage you to increase your intake of fruits and vegetables, the source of all these wonderful healing compounds. It's impossible, though, to eat enough grapes to get the necessary amounts of resveratrol needed to fight cancer. So for more information on how to purchase Healthy Resolve's Resveratrol Plus, please see the enclosed insert. And if you've experienced firsthand resveratrol's healing abilities, I'd love to hear about it.

Ref: Reuters, February 26, 2002.

### Viagra's Competition Isn't Any Better

Drug companies are always in a rush to copy competitors' wares with "me too" chemicals, so you knew Viagra would have competition before long. Bayer company is now announcing its version of an impotence pill, vardenafil, which improves erectile dysfunction in up to 80 percent of men regardless of age or severity of dysfunction. Bayer expects sales of its drug to reach \$900 million. Eli Lilly is awaiting FDA

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goggles, satellite photography, etc.), new discoveries are making it invaluable for the medical arena.

The average person's body temperature is right around 98.6 degrees, thanks mostly to the metabolic and blood-vessel activity in the body. This activity is what makes thermography so valuable. While mammography uses penetrating X-rays to observe *structure*, thermography observes *function* (metabolic activity) by heat observation and detection.

Before tissue degenerates into cancer, the body's metabolic rate around the site increases. A unique aspect of cancerous tumor growth is a process called neoangiogenesis (new blood-vessel growth). As the cells multiply, they need an increased blood supply to bring in nutrients and remove waste. The increase in circulation gives off heat. An infrared-type camera can detect this heat, giving the patient and doctor an opportunity to take action *long before a tumor develops*.

This makes thermography a tremendous weapon in the fight against breast cancer!

Thermography has been around for decades, but advances in technology have led to significant improvements in imaging. In 1982, the FDA approved thermography as an adjunctive diagnostic breast-cancer screening procedure. Since then, there have been thousands of screens done and a multitude of reported studies. The results of the studies are startling. The average sensitivity (detection of disease) of breast thermography is 90 percent. The average specificity (ability to avoid false positives) is 90 percent, meaning only 10 percent of all positives will be false.

In comparison, mammography carries a sensitivity rate below 80 percent and often as low as 65 percent. Its sensitivity declines even further in women on hormone replacement therapy, as estrogen makes the breasts denser (the most common reason for failed mammograms). Estrogen is now accepted as the greatest causal risk factor for the development of cancer.

Then, in 1983, the Wisconsin Breast Cancer Detection Foundation presented findings that to this day remain undisputed. The findings showed a positive thermogram is the highest risk indicator for the future development of breast cancer. A positive thermogram carries a risk *10 times greater than having a close relative with the disease*.

One study had a patient base of 58,000 women and

specifically followed 1,527 women with initially healthy breasts and abnormal thermograms for 12 years. Of the abnormal thermogram group, 40 percent developed cancer within five years. The study concluded, "an abnormal thermogram is the most important marker for the future development of breast cancer."

Once the tumors begin to develop, thermography again proves better than mammography. A study in 1986 screened 4,716 patients with confirmed cancer, 3,305 women with biopsy-proven benign breast disease, and 8,757 general patients. Clinical examination picked up 75 percent of all tumors, but found only 50 percent of tumors less than two centimeters in size. Mammography detected 80 percent of tumors this size or smaller, but 27 percent were false positives. Thermography had an average sensitivity of 88 percent, with a false positive rate of 15 percent and picked up 85 percent of tumors less than one centimeter. Thus, it appears to have a far greater ability than mammography to detect small tumors.

These authors did conclude that none of the common screening procedures should be used alone. They should be appropriately combined for the most efficient evaluation. When the procedures are appropriately combined, you can expect the sensitivity to be around 95 percent.

With regards to survival of women with breast cancer, use of thermography appears to increase long-term survival rates by up to 61 percent (*Obstetrics and Gynecology, 1983*). The researchers concluded thermography has a "dramatic survival benefit." Thermography has also been shown to have predictive values in cancer growth: the hotter the tumor area, the faster the cell division, and the greater likelihood of metastases with shorter survival time.

Now, if I still haven't convinced you with these impressive statistics, perhaps understanding the testing procedure will. Prior to the test, the woman is asked not to engage in any activity or apply anything to the skin within a specified period of time that could affect the heat emanations from the skin. Next, a proper examination will take place in a comfortable temperature-controlled room with no drafts, where the patient will sit disrobed from the waist up for 15 minutes in order to allow her skin to acclimatize to the ambient temperature. This can get a little chilly, but it's not terribly uncomfortable.

The exam is then performed in seconds with a digital infrared camera that takes pictures from different angles and feeds the information into a computer. The images

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approval of its version called Cialis.

Bayer is the company who brought you Baychol, the cholesterol-lowering drug removed from the market after causing severe muscle disease and deaths. Bayer also manufactures expensive Cipro, which, interestingly enough, received approval for use in Anthrax, despite the fact that generic penicillin, costing pennies was ignored. Please do not be excited about competitors to Viagra. Just wait until the truth comes out about their toxic "side" effects.

Ref: Annual meeting of the Sexual Medicine Society of North America in Charleston, South Carolina December 7, 2001.

### Free Vitamin Prevents Breast Cancer

I've noticed the vast majority of people who come into my office are deficient in one of my favorite vitamins: vitamin D. Vitamin D is much more of a hormone than a vitamin, but it's a very protective hormone, and not one you want to suffer a deficiency, especially since the cost is so reasonable (your body produces it for free when it comes in contact with sunlight).

Now a recent study proves what I've always thought to be the case: A large segment of the population is deficient in the wonderful nutrient. The study measured the vitamin D levels in nearly 800 women, aged 18-35, over the course of a whole year, and conducted surveys on them for vitamin D intake. During the winter months, low vitamin D levels were not found to be related to low vitamin D intakes. About the same percentage of women (21 percent) who consumed no vitamin D had insufficient blood levels of D as did those who said they consumed vitamin D in their diets or took up to 200 IU in supplement form.

However, researchers found that women who took supplements were more likely to have higher levels of vitamin D in their blood during the summer months. They reasoned that such women were more likely to get outside and be active where sunlight could generate vitamin D

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the natural way. Race did not affect wintertime levels, but fewer white women were found to have deficiencies in the summer, suggesting that pigmentation is a factor in converting cholesterol to vitamin D. The researchers concluded most women of all countries could benefit from supplemental vitamin D.

Another study, this one in *Cancer*, looked at the incidence of breast cancer and latitude, finding that latitudes allowing for ample UV-B exposure (from sunlight) reduced breast-cancer incidence. The researchers had no doubt the lower rate of breast cancer was directly related to vitamin D generation from UV light.

**Action to take:** This isn't anything new, but it is a good reminder to get out and expose your body to sunlight, not to burn the skin, but to get modest amounts of this essential nutrient! I'm a huge fan of vitamin D and agree the majority of us are getting far too little. If you can't spend adequate time in the sunlight, or if you suffer from any ailments, I think 2,000 IU daily is a much more reasonable amount than the commonly used 200-400 IU figure proven insufficient in this study. Vitamin D may well protect us from a variety of ailments from hypertension to cancer.

### Update on IPT

Is it possible that a man with metastatic melanoma, one of the worst cancers you can develop, can be brought virtually to remission without any apparent toxicity? Believe it or not, this was just one of several cases of "terminal" cancer that was

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are either sent out or read in-house by a board-certified clinical thermologist. Some centers only offer testing, others also offer evaluation as well. Compared to a mammogram, getting a thermogram is a walk in the park.

Dr. William Amalu in California, who has an active screening clinic, sees four specific advantages for thermography:

(1) Unlike any other screening method, thermography can see developing pathology eight to 10 years before any other method. This is well in time to take corrective measures to stop or reverse the deterioration. (My research and years of clinical experience suggest that one can usually reverse precancerous cells. Once they become cancerous, you are dealing with another animal entirely.)

(2) In addition to what thermography offers postmenopausal women, it also provides a great alternative to yearly mammograms for women under 40. This is particularly important since 15 percent of all breast cancers are now occurring in women under 45. I'm also concerned about the cumulative effects of mammography's radiation on younger women who get mammograms every year for 30 or 40 years. Thermography offers younger women a wonderfully safe, comfortable, and highly effective screening method without any of the negatives.

(3) It can look at the metabolism (heat emissions) of the breasts to see if there is estrogen dominance (hormonal imbalance). Currently, the single greatest known risk factor for the future development of breast cancer is lifetime exposure to estrogen. The technology has the ability to also help in evaluating if a particular patient has a problem with hormone replacement therapy or oral contraceptives. Therefore, thermography is the single greatest tool to determine far in advance if estrogen poses significant breast-cancer risk. If so, the patient can seek help from a qualified preventive medicine physician for early corrective action (such as the use of progesterone) or other nutritional interventions.

(4) It can give a risk assessment of future development of breast cancer, far more accurately than family history or estrogen or toxin exposure, because you can see the metabolism's shift in action. If positive, it can offer you radiation-free follow up and at frequent intervals. Since it looks at function and metabolism, it can be used to assess success of early intervention before cancer develops. For example, if you're on hormone therapy and have a suspicious test, the effects of stopping the estrogen and using progesterone can be assessed. That is not the

case with mammography, which looks only at progression of structural changes.

In addition to these four benefits, thermography is an effective screening tool in fibrocystic thickened breast tissue, unlike mammography, which is compromised by this type of tissue. Lactating women also can be screened easily and women with implants now have a fine reliable screening tool that will not burst, inflict pain on, or otherwise harm the implant. The thermography reading is not obscured by the implant.

I would encourage you to visit Dr. Amalu's Web site ([www.breastthermography.com](http://www.breastthermography.com)) for further information. Doctors offering thermography can be found on this site. If there's not one near you, calling local imaging centers might help you locate a reputable thermography service. If you find a center this way, or hear of one from a friend, ask if the technician and especially the interpreter are board certified in the procedure. If they are not, don't let them image you. Just as with any health care technology, you only want personnel that are well trained providing the service. You'll also want to make sure the personnel and readers are not trained by the company that sells the device. They need to be board certified!

You can also go to [www.iact-org.org](http://www.iact-org.org) (International Academy of Clinical Thermology) to look over the qualifications of technicians and interpreters (they also provide a list of qualified centers worldwide). Thermography is a service my wife and I are now offering in Santa Rosa, California.

It's important to remember that thermography is not the end all for cancer prevention. It does miss problems, but on an average, much less than mammography. However, appropriately putting the two together seems to offer the highest sensitivity (95 percent). Since mammography is not a benign procedure (radiation, compression, etc.), it makes far more sense to do an initial screening by photographing what your body is emitting. Thermography makes the most sense in women between the ages of 30 and 50 who have hormonally active and denser breasts.

Pricing varies from center to center. The lowest I've found (including interpretation) is \$150 per screening, with the higher end over \$250.

Finally, thermography is not just an examination limited to the breast. It can detect changes in temperature, circulation, and metabolism over any external part of the body, providing evidence for the existence of pain, a

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dramatically reversed and presented at the **Insulin Potentiation Therapy (IPT)** training workshop sponsored by the International Oxidative Medicine Association in April.

Chicago's Dr. Ross Hauser presented other equally dramatic cases of several other cancers. IPT is a treatment utilizing exceptionally small amounts of chemotherapy for cancer. The toxic effects of the drugs are magnified many fold on the cancer cells by the hormone insulin, while the low dosage spares normal cells. The horrific side effects simply do not occur. Most IPT physicians are experiencing satisfying results. Simply extending life comfortably and with little, if any, toxicity beats the best of what conventional treatment has to offer.

Dr. Hauser, author of *Prolo Your Pain Away* (see [www.getprolo.com](http://www.getprolo.com) for more information on prolotherapy), now has a new book out called *Treating Cancer with Insulin Potentiation Therapy* available at [www.benuts.com](http://www.benuts.com). IPT physicians can be found at [www.iptq.org](http://www.iptq.org).

### Grass-Fed Beef Healthier Than Salmon?

A recent review of our ancestors confirms what I've said about the value of grass-fed beef. Scientists are looking at the diets of past hunter/gatherers as well as modern societies. Staffan Lindeberg, of Lund University in Sweden, for example, found that islanders in Papua New Guinea who eat yams, fruit, fish, and coconut rarely suffer from heart disease. However, the Inuit Eskimos, from my beloved Alaska, also were rather immune to vascular disease until their traditional diet of meat and animal fat was replaced by "civilized foods."

Lauren Cordain of Colorado State University in Fort Collins is one who has advocated the Paleolithic diet. Cordain and his team compared the muscle, brain, bone marrow, and fat of wild animals with those

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of cattle. They found steaks from wild animals have about two percent total fat, as opposed to the five to seven percent in lean beef. Wild tissues also contained more omega-3 fatty acids, which are abundant in oily fish and have been linked to a reduced risk of heart disease. Pasture-fed cattle have a fat content more resembling wild meat than grain fed.

**Action to take:** I've reported on this information before, but it bears repeating: Omega-3 oils are sorely deficient in our diet. Grains have a lot of omega-6 fats, so grain-fed cattle will accumulate this type of fat, which, when out of balance with omega-3, can lead to a wide variety of inflammatory conditions and heart disease. Meat eaters may be able to recapture a more normal omega 3:6 ratio by eating grass-fed beef and wild game exclusively.

Of course, non-farmed cold-water fish have an abundance of omega-3 oils for those who like fish. Remember that farmed fish are grain-fed, just like cows, and therefore, will have an unnatural and unhealthy fat content. Naturally grazed animals also have a high content of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), a fat that counteracts the inflammatory actions of its omega-6 cousins.

I just received an analysis of grass-fed beef from Grassland Beef, LLC (RR 1 Box 20, Monticello, MO 63457; toll free: 877-383-0051), which was performed at the University of Iowa. The results showed a startling 16:1 ration of omega-3 to omega-6. This is far, far superior than even Alaska's wild salmon. For those preferring meat, this is most welcome news!

Ref: Nature News Service, March 26, 2002.

### Tai Chi Exercise Benefits Arthritic Seniors

If you suffer from arthritis, you might want to try Tai Chi, a moving form of yoga and meditation combined. A randomized study evaluating the benefits of a 12-week Tai Chi exercise program found it signifi-

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serious metabolic disorder, or derangement in the nervous system. This is especially helpful when all other evaluations have failed.

## Folic Acid Reduces Vascular Disease

The medical community is rapidly discovering what integrative medicine has known for years: Folic-acid supplementation is absolutely vital for good health. It seems that there's news about the wonders of folic acid almost weekly. Now scientists have found folic-acid levels are directly related to vascular health.

In a study actually sponsored by a charity linked to a pharmaceutical company (Wellcome Trust), researchers report that only those taking the highest level of folic acid in supplement form reduced their levels of homocysteine, a vascular disease-causing chemical. The study focused on 368 men and women, ages 65-75, and showed those taking folic acid in amounts of at least 400 mcg per day reduced their homocysteine levels.

Researcher Dr. Ross Taylor, from the University of Aberdeen Medical School, said Britain's Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy recommended an extra intake of 200 mcg a day for people over 50 on top of the recommended daily allowance of 300 mcg. However, the authors were quick to point out that taking folic acid without knowing your B<sub>12</sub> status could be dangerous. The folic acid can hide the problems of a B<sub>12</sub> deficiency until there's irreversible nerve damage. The best solution, though, is to take a supplement that contains both vitamins.

I usually check folic-acid levels in people in whom I suspect folic-acid deficiency for problems such as high homocysteine. And, surprisingly, their folic-acid levels often come back very high. Until now, I've been happy to report to the patient that I didn't believe folic acid to be the problem.

However, I recently ate lunch with Dick Kunin, MD, president of the Orthomolecular Society in San Francisco. Dr. Kunin said he has found many people with high folic acid levels to be paradoxically deficient in folic acid's beneficial effects. Many people have a deficiency in an enzyme that metabolizes folic-acid into its active form, folinic acid. This enzyme, called methylenetetrahydrofo-

late reductase or MTHFR, can be measured and should be included when assessing your folic-acid physiology. If the enzyme is deficient, you cannot metabolize folic acid.

Consequently, folic acid accumulates in the blood, since it cannot be turned into its active form, folinic acid. The higher levels of folic acid lull you into a false sense of security. This is what we clinicians refer to as a false negative test. The high folic-acid levels paradoxically indicate low folate activity. In other words, you can take plenty of folic acid and have high blood levels of folate, but still be deficient in folic acid. This, in turn, can lead to high homocysteine levels and heart disease.

### Action to Take

(1) I happen to love folic acid as a supplement. I've seen a combination of it and high-dose vitamin A reverse many cases of pre-cancer. And now we're finding that adequate folic-acid supplementation can prevent colon cancer altogether. I've also seen it reduce homocysteine levels. It's critical for essential metabolic processes, many involving DNA. As a result, I recommend you take at least 400 mcg of folic acid daily.

(2) Make sure you get your vitamin B<sub>12</sub> levels checked and feel free to take B<sub>12</sub> along with the folic acid. Not only is this harmless, but quite possibly will do you a lot of good. If you're taking Healthy Resolve's Max Plus.

(3) If homocysteine levels are high and folic acid is high as well, ask your doctor to test for MTHFR. If the activity is low, then take the active form of folic acid, folinic acid, which bypasses the block. A good starting dose of folinic acid is 800 mcg.

Oh, here's an additional tidbit of information. An article in *Diabetes Care* last year revealed that high levels of insulin raise homocysteine levels. This may be another mechanism of vascular disease in adult diabetes. However, the implications of this are profound. Obesity does not always turn into diabetes, but it most often means high levels of insulin to control the carbohydrate load in the diet. Thus, those individuals who are heavier than they should be could very well have insulin intolerance — high levels of insulin — which will stimulate higher levels of homocysteine and cause vascular disease. America has an obesity epidemic. If you are heavy, you might consider a simple glucose tolerance test, an indirect test of your body's handling of carbohydrates and insulin. If abnormal, it is something that should be corrected immediately by proper diet.

Ref: Reuters, March 6, 2002.

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cantly reduced pain and improved balance, muscle strength, and physical functioning in a group of 64-year-old seniors.

The participants were divided into an experimental group receiving Tai Chi exercises and a control group. The demographics of the small study (17 experimental and 14 controls) were the same. Almost one-third (30.2 percent) of the group had left their occupations due to their pain.

After the 12-week program, the Tai Chi group reported significantly less pain and had fewer difficulties in daily living. While the control group reported no significant improvement or even worse physical functioning, the experimental group reported improvement in physical functioning. There were significant improvements in abdominal muscle strength and balance.

**Action to take:** I have extolled the virtues of exercise for heart disease, cancer, depression, and more. Now we see that there truly is no excuse for any arthritic person to remain inactive, regardless of the pain. Doing so will only speed the pain and crippling effects of the disease. All forms of physical activity will help. One of the goals of Tai Chi is to relax the mind. So in a scientific analysis of patients stricken with arthritis, this combination of gentle movement, mental focus, and yoga provided significant help. I am not at all surprised by the findings, just surprised by the numbers of folks who are missing the boat on these simple, drug- and risk-free ways to not only stabilize but improve their conditions.

Ref: *American College of Rheumatology*, January 14, 2002.

### Coming in future issues ...

- Does hypertension cause Alzheimer's? It can if you're taking these drugs....
- There's a new treatment for macular degeneration that can actually reverse the damage. I'll tell you all about it next month.

## LETTERS

Dear Reader,

Each month in the letters column, I try to answer as many of your questions about health and medicine as possible.

It's simply impossible for me to answer letters personally. Plus, I obviously can't make a diagnosis or prescribe a treatment by mail.

So if you have a question you'd like answered, send it (typed please) to:

### **Second Opinion Letters**

P.O. Box 467939  
Atlanta, GA 31146

Thank you,



**Q: Do you think hydrogen peroxide and bio-oxidation would be effective treatments for brain cancer? — Joe Greif, FL**

**A:** The most effective treatment I am aware of for brain cancer is the antineoplastons therapy developed by the brilliant Stanislaw Burzynski, MD, PhD in Houston, Texas. He may have the best results in the world for this type of cancer. Insulin Potentiation Therapy may also provide an effective means to get conventional chemotherapy agents past the blood-brain barrier, with virtually no toxicity. I don't have any proof that it would work, though. The oxidation therapies you question serve as adjunctive treatments and will likely help the quality of life. However, I would not expect either one of them alone to accomplish much. If I had brain cancer, I would be on the phone with Dr. Burzynski without delay (Burzynski Clinic, 9432 Old Katy Road, Suite 200, Houston, Texas 77055, 713-335-5697; [www.cancermed.com](http://www.cancermed.com)).

**Q:** I read in one of your reports that you can rebuild your thyroid by rubbing iodine on one's thigh or tummy about the size of a half dollar. I want to gradually withdraw myself from taking a small dose of Levoxyl. Is this therapy for real? Thank you. — Gordon, via e-mail

**A:** Great question. Actually, rubbing iodine in that fashion can also help you determine if you have an iodine deficiency as well. If the iodine mark lasts days, your body likely has enough. If it quickly disappears, then your body gobbled it up, perhaps making up for a deficiency. Iodine is indispensable for manufacturing thyroid hormone, so it will help restore your thyroid if the dysfunction was caused by iodine deficiency.

However, with all the iodized salt out on the shelf today, it's more likely your thyroid trouble is caused by other problems. I've had several patients through the years who were able to discard thyroid hormone by taking thyroid glandulars, some type of iodine, cleaning up the diet, and ridding themselves of mercury fillings followed by detoxing residual mercury.

There's no harm in trying the iodine, so give it a try. If you stop the hormone, please be careful to monitor your temperature and have an alternative-minded doctor measure your free T3 and T4 levels as well as TSH. If your temperature falls, TSH rises, or free T3 and T4 levels fall, you'd better get back on the hormone. I also need to add that I prefer desiccated thyroid to any synthetic preparation.

**Q:** I have had major problems with my back for years. It feels like my back is compressing if I sit in a hard chair and I can't stand over 20 minutes at a time without feeling the same

way. I've had X-rays done and my doctor could not find anything wrong. I wonder if my calcium is too low due to nursing for a long period of time. I also have been diagnosed with candida. I wonder if my muscles may not be doing their job. Could this have anything to do with my back pain? — N.C., Morning Sun, IA

**A:** This is a very complicated situation. Not knowing your background, I can only answer in how I might evaluate a similar case. I would start with a DEXA (bone density) scan of your spine, which gives a good indication of calcium content. Osteoporosis requires its own management.

Low calcium may be associated with osteoporosis, but deficiency of magnesium, boron, and other minerals is more likely. These minerals are necessary for calcium to be properly absorbed into the bone. Nursing does rob calcium from bones, so a DEXA scan should be performed.

You may have weakened or ruptured ligaments in your back, which could be permanently cured with prolotherapy. If the muscles are called in to "do their job" in stabilizing a joint or preventing pain, it almost always means ligaments are weak, torn, or ruptured. Then muscles tighten and spasm to protect the joint, since the ligaments are not doing it.

Candida can be associated with many symptoms including muscle pain, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, and much more. I get the feeling your problem is something else, however. I would recommend seeing a doctor from ACAM: (in CA, 949-583-7666; outside CA, 800-532-3688) or ICIM (866-464-5226) who is aware of looking for and treating causes rather than simply covering up symptoms with drugs and chemicals.