



Alan Inglis, M.D.

HEALTH REVELATIONS

from America's Country Doctor

You could be playing host to a silent, but deadly guest—high blood sugar. Give it the boot!

You may have early signs of type 2 diabetes and not even know it. Even more frightening? Neither does your doctor!

Turns out, he's probably looking at the wrong warning signs, which means you could be at far more risk than you or he realize.

Too many doctors wait for a fasting glucose level of 125, which clinches the type 2 diabetes diagnosis. But that's too late! The disease process has already begun. And, you're well on your way to a life of heart disease, nerve damage, slow healing wounds and possible amputation, cataracts, kidney failure and accelerated aging. In fact, the real reason seniors end up in nursing homes isn't because of Alzheimer's or osteoporosis—it's because of high blood sugar, which slowly destroys every organ and tissue in your body.

So why do most doctors wait until it's too late? Because that's what they've been programmed to do. You see, once your blood sugar skyrockets to 125, they can *finally* "treat" you with a prescription drug. That's after-the-fact medicine. Instead, I begin to treat my patients

with proven natural approaches long before they hit that dreaded 125 mark, so we can stop the progression of diabetes before it's too late.

A clean bill of health— who are they kidding?

Take Jerry, for instance. He's in his 50s, and he came to me for the first time because he had just received some alarming news: He has an accelerated risk for diabetes.

About six months ago, Jerry went to see his regular doctor because he'd been suffering from fatigue, brain fog, bloating, feeling sleepy after meals, weight gain around the middle and mild depression—all classic symptoms of insulin resistance leading up to diabetes. His doctor gave him a simple glucose test, and the results came back: His level was 105.

His doctor told him not to worry—he didn't have diabetes yet. He was advised to eat fewer fats and junk food, and to get some exercise. When his fasting glucose level reached 125 and he was actually diabetic, the doctor assured him that he'd be able to treat it with some great drugs...

Wait, *what?*

Ready to detonate

Jerry said he felt as if a ticking time bomb was inside of him. He's right.

You don't wake up one day in your 50s with a case of diabetes. The disease process—the actual pathological changes in your body tissues—starts ten to twenty years earlier.

As it turns out, your risk of diabetes (what we call prediabetes) starts at a fasting blood glucose level of 75. For each point above that number, your risk of developing diabetes increases. Between 70 and 90, the increased risk is actually very gradual—but then begins to accelerate above 90. The actual disease process—the damaging changes to your tissues—starts a decade or more before you actually develop any disease complications such as heart disease, nerve, eye or kidney damage, or slowly healing wounds. By the time your fasting glucose is 125, or even 100 or more, the horse is out of the barn.

At a fasting glucose of 75, your risk has begun and you may already be on the slippery slope—especially

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if you have a family history of diabetes or heart disease. You still have some control—if only your doctor were trained to halt the progression of illness rather than just wait for it to rear its ugly head so he can strike it with his pharmaceutical sword.

If your doctor is giving you only a simple fasting test, that's just not enough. Insist upon the two-hour glucose test, which measures your blood glucose two hours after you have eaten a meal or a pre-measured serving of sugar water. Less than 120 is ideal. You should also know your fasting and two-hour insulin levels. Although your blood sugar levels may look "OK," high insulin levels signal that the pancreas is working overtime to keep your blood sugar levels down—an early indicator of disease. A fasting insulin of five and a two-hour insulin of less than 30 are optimal.

Once you have this highly destructive disease, you'll need to manage it for the rest of your life.

It can very quickly become a runaway train in your body. Sugar will gnaw through your cell walls, ultimately destroying your kidneys, eyes, arteries, and veins, aging you well before your time. This is called "glycation." Your nerve cells—no longer receiving proper nourishment—cause your circulation to grind to a crawl. This causes nerve damage that will leave your extremities feeling tingly, numb, and even painful—and could eventually lead to amputation. As your immune system weakens, cuts or wounds take their sweet time healing. A high level of insulin itself causes trouble, especially high blood pressure—a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

Diabetes mellitus is the scientific name for what we casually refer to as "high blood sugar." Or, as my grandparents would say, "He's got the sugar." Mellitus literally translates as 'honey sweet,' though this is surely no one's term of endearment.

Type 2 diabetes occurs when your body's cells no longer

respond to the effects of insulin. Insulin transports sugar from the blood into the cell where it gets burned up as energy. Initially, your pancreas produces high levels of insulin to make this happen. Over the years, the pancreas tires out and can't keep up, producing less and less insulin. As a result, blood sugar levels gradually increase. Refined carbohydrates such as cakes, cookies, and bread accelerate the process and lead to an overstressed pancreas. Carbs break down into glucose and require insulin in order to enter cells and give them this source of energy.

This disease is heavily influenced by lifestyle and can now claim as its very own that infamous word "epidemic." There's a senator in Australia who has termed the underlying cause of diabetes as being an "obesinogenic" environment, leading to the diabetes epidemic in his own country. Our lifestyles are catching up with us—and not for the better.

Incredibly, type 2 diabetes accounts for over 90 percent of all the cases of diabetes! Its onset is

HEALTH REVELATIONS

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Health Revelations is published monthly for \$74 per year by 702 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Postmaster: Send address changes to Health Revelations, 702 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. To contact customer service, call (915)849-4609 (9a.m.-5p.m. Monday through Friday EST) or via e-mail at countrydoctor@HealthierNews.com. Send subscription cancellations to 702 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. Products discussed are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

mostly in overweight folks over the age of 40. Due to junk food diets and lack of exercise, type 2 diabetes is now showing up in obese pre-teens as well!

Are your best interests being served?

Your doctor is doing the best he can, right? His best just isn't good enough if he can't halt early stage diabetes. He's telling you to watch the fats and keep away from the sweets. But what does that mean, and how do you apply that in your world when you are at the grocery store or looking at the menu in a diner? More on that in a moment.

Unfortunately, your doctor—with the handful of hours of nutritional training he received in med school (I sure hope he wasn't absent that day!)—may be leading you right into the proverbial brick wall. He's looking at the point where he can pull out his prescription pad. After all, does anyone get paid if diabetes is prevented from going full-blown? No, not much! On the other hand, limb amputation results in generous reimbursement for surgeons.

Meanwhile, your doctor is ignoring a marvelous variety of natural healing molecules that the human body has had many thousands of years to adapt to and learn how to utilize—in the form of food. The body has had eons of experience in responding to the balanced, healing messages contained in natural whole foods. In turn, those thousands of different

nutrients in whole foods work together in an amazing symphony-like team effort that helps to give the body what it needs when it needs it.

Contrast that with what your doctor writes down on a prescription pad: Molecules that were created in a laboratory a few short years ago and then aggressively marketed by an overpaid salesperson to your doctor! Not exactly underwritten by Mother Nature—whom I trust for providing healthy wisdom. She just doesn't have the same vested interest as the drug companies.

“Leave your drugs in the chemist's pot if you can heal the patient with food.” - Hippocrates

It makes scientific sense to rely on the wisdom of food to supply us with our primary health-supporting nutrients and to be conscious of what we place in our mouths. The good news is that you can delay or halt the progression of diabetes—through exercise and nutrition alone. The actual hard science data shows that an appropriate lifestyle works better than drugs—without the side effects.

For example, many doctors are prescribing Actos and Avandia to slow the progression of type 2 diabetes. Here's the problem: Both have been found to result in weight gain, and can also precipitate heart failure in susceptible individuals. They also can cause peripheral edema (swollen legs and ankles).

Let me break that down for you: Many diabetics already have heart problems. Also, isn't being overweight one of the risk factors of type 2 diabetes? Sounds to me as if the addition of a drug does little other than perpetuate a vicious cycle of illness, rather than liberate you from it the way good foods and exercise can.

Doctors also prescribe a class of drug called sulfonylureas (e.g. Glyburide, Glipizide). They'll lower your blood sugar. They also flog the pancreas into making more and more insulin to keep sugar levels down, exhausting it prematurely so that you need to go onto injectable insulin years earlier than otherwise. By the way, studies show people on these drugs die sooner. It just doesn't make good sense to use these drugs!

However, once off the drug map, most doctors flounder. There just aren't any drug reps out there touting the benefits of healthy lifestyle options, so they have fallen from medical focus. With proven lifestyle interventions, you wouldn't need a cycle-of-illness drug. But that just wouldn't do anything for the bottom line philosophy of mainstream medicine.

Break the cycle

Big Pharma's bottom line? That's for them to worry about—not you! Staying healthy is your concern, so let's put our attention there.

I'd like to give you a whole treatise on nutrition, but instead I'll

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TOP 10 BRAIN-BOOSTING SUPPLEMENTS TO FUEL YOUR 3-POUND ROCKET

Hardly a day goes by that I don't have a patient say to me, "Doc, my memory's just not what it used to be. Do you think I'm getting Alzheimer's disease?"

My short answer is generally "No." You see, the irony is that the folks most likely to notice the "problem" in themselves are the most mentally active—a group at lower risk for the disease in the first place.

But the fear is understandable. I've seen the disease up close and personal, and it's a terrible, personality-robbing—and eventually fatal—condition. In fact, it's thought that in some cases so much brain function is lost that people may literally forget to breathe!

Fortunately, for most of us a little age-related memory loss can be normal and by no means is a sure sign that Alzheimer's is next. Oftentimes, there's a stress component that can wreak havoc with your powers of attention. Address the stress: Get adequate sleep, perform breathing exercises, meditate, and exercise. That combination can put a "bad" memory back into excellent working order in a mere matter of months.

And please don't neglect what you put into your body. There are a number of supplements, or "neutraceuticals," that are quite valuable for brain fitness. They have the potential to protect the brain

by slowing down the deterioration of tissue and function with age. They can also produce a "perking up" effect in people by boosting their mood and brain energy.

Although it's not listed below, I want to mention vitamin D. Maintaining a healthy level is essential to proper brain functioning. Called the "sunlight vitamin," it's not really a vitamin but an important regulatory hormone and powerful antioxidant that you can get just by being outside. Vitamin D supports a healthy mood and proper brain functioning. For maximum benefit, keep your levels at 1,000 to 2,000 IUs daily, unless you live in a sunny southern climate.

1 Huperzine-A

Derived from Chinese club moss—a traditional Chinese herb—this compound helps prevent the breakdown of the important brain neurotransmitter acetylcholine. Many studies suggest that it works better than Aricept (donepezil)—the common and expensive prescription drug that works the same way. Aricept commonly causes nausea, diarrhea, loss of appetite, fatigue, insomnia and muscle cramps. A key benefit of Chinese club moss is its lower risk of side effects. Chinese club moss should not be used if you have epilepsy, as it can increase the risk of seizures for epileptics. It's currently under

study in the U.S., and I'll keep you posted as trial results become available. In the meantime, I advise you to use it only under professional supervision. It's commonly used in doses of 50 micrograms twice a day, although doses that are four to eight times that are currently being studied.

2 Vinpocetine

In Europe and Japan, this extract of the periwinkle plant is used to treat stroke patients, but it's not for everyone. It works best for people with memory problems who have a history of diabetes and/or heart disease (vascular dementia) and it results from impaired blood flow to the brain. Vinpocetine improves blood flow and oxygen delivery to your brain. I also recommend you take this under the supervision of a professional. The usual dose is 2.5 to 5 mg twice a day. Please note: It should not be used with the blood thinner Coumadin.

3 Phosphatidyl serine

Can't remember where you put your car keys? Phosphatidyl serine (PS) may be the answer. It's a fatty substance that accumulates in the fatty cell membrane, helping cells communicate effectively with one another. It also supports normal energy production. One study showed significant everyday improvement over 12 weeks in otherwise healthy folks diagnosed

with normal “age-related” memory problems. PS levels decline with age, so you would benefit from taking this supplement—100 to 200 mg a day. Allow a month or so to see results.

4 Acetyl-L-carnitine

This is a key player in your brain cell’s mitochondria—the “powerhouse” of the cell. Acetyl-L-carnitine (ALC) helps turn fat into energy and removes cellular waste. It’s turned into the neurotransmitter acetylcholine—which is used by brain cells to communicate with one another. Levels of carnitine decline with age and can be especially low in the brains of Alzheimer’s patients. By supplementing in mid-life, you’ll help prevent brain degeneration later in life. Take 400 to 800 mg a day.

5 Alpha lipoic acid

There is emerging evidence that alpha lipoic acid (ALA), teaming up with acetyl-L-carnitine, does an effective job at revving up brain-energy production and reducing free radical damage to the brain. ALA is known as the “king of antioxidants,” boosting levels of glutathione—an important brain antioxidant that declines with age and is poorly absorbed from foods. ALA can also function as a chelating agent by gently removing excess amounts of toxic metals such as iron. You can find it paired with acetyl-L-carnitine in a supplement called Juvenon. On its own, use 100 to 200 mg a day.

6 Coenzyme Q₁₀

Coenzyme Q₁₀, like acetyl-L-carnitine, is involved in the production of energy in the mitochondria—your cell’s little energy factories. The brain has a high concentration of Co-Q₁₀, and levels decline with age. This may be the main cause of decline in mental function that otherwise healthy individuals experience. Co-Q₁₀ is also a powerful antioxidant, protecting your cells from free radical damage. This important nutrient can be depleted by taking one of dozens of commonly prescribed drugs (such as antidepressants and cholesterol-lowering drugs). I recommend 50 to 100 mg a day in any of the “gel cap” or “fast-absorption” formulations.

7 Ginkgo biloba

This is one of the best-studied herbs in the world. Ginkgo improves blood flow to the brain and is full of protective flavonoid antioxidants. It is especially helpful for people with moderate to severe memory problems or who are at high risk for dementia. In Germany, it is used as a prescription drug for treating problems with brain function. Ginkgo is less likely to show an obvious benefit in healthy brains, though it may help prevent memory decline. Look for a product with the special German pharmaceutical extract Egb761. Take 80 mg three times per day. I like Ginkgold from Nature’s Way.

8 Essential fatty acids

If you want healthy brain

functioning, it’s essential you get enough omega-3 fatty acids. A delicate fatty membrane surrounds each of your brain cells. The condition of this membrane determines how well your brain will function overall—including your mood, memory, and ability to think. The omega-3s you consume are incorporated into your cell membranes, supporting optimal function. Avoid unhealthy trans fats (think hydrogenated) and too many pro-inflammatory omega-6 fats (found mainly in the soy oil used in processed foods)—they counteract the very thing you’re trying to achieve—healthy brain functioning!

It’s no accident that fish, which is full of omega-3s, has historically been known as “brain food.” For maximum benefit, enjoy salmon, sardines, mackerel or herring two to three times a week. Include at least 1,000 mg total EPA and DHA—healthy omega-3s from fish oil—in your supplement program.

9 Vitamin E

Remember what I said above about the fatty membrane that surrounds every cell? That’s where vitamin E does its job. It neutralizes harmful free radicals and protects that delicate membrane from damage. Vitamin E is actually eight different substances that work together best in your body as a team, made up of four tocopherols and four tocotrienols for an extra antioxidant boost. To keep things in balance, stick to vitamin E with “mixed tocopherols” or ideally, a full complex vitamin

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summarize some key points for you. In May's newsletter, I talked to you about the glycemic index. (Go to: <http://www.healthrevelations.com>).

This is a healthy way to guide your food choices. There are foods you should be eating on a daily basis—whole foods that are still close-to-nature, but there are others you simply need to avoid (best case scenario)—overly processed foods. At the very minimum, they would need to be carefully balanced. I'm not saying that it's going to rain down fire and brimstone on your head if you eat certain foods, but keep your priority in focus: Halting the progression of diabetes. And chewing on the nutritional equivalent of Styrofoam versus nutrient-rich foods just won't cut it in your master plan.

To keep your glucose levels stable, use the glycemic index as your guide. Stick to the rainbow when it comes to nutrition in order to best accomplish this. Colorful, natural foods indicate the presence of micronutrients, which are vita-

mins your body can't produce—or at least enough of them—on its own. And without them, your body isn't able to break down macronutrients (protein, carbohydrates, and fat) into energy.

Foods to avoid include sugar, white flour products, white rice, and pasta. Notice how all of those are of a whitish color? Think of them as being anemic, which they are—lacking in important disease-fighting nutrients. Slide those off of your plate to make room for foods like dark berries, fish, cruciferous vegetables, nuts, seeds, and whole grains (such as oat bran).

L-carnosine is an interesting antioxidant amino acid that controls levels that help keep sugar molecules from glomming onto your cells and accelerating the disease and aging process. It's found naturally in lean beef, poultry, and seafood. If you supplement (there's a brand by Jarrow) take 250 to 500 mg per day. Taking it as few as 3 to 4 times a week can slow down the disease process.

Omega-3 essential fatty acids have been shown to stabilize blood sugar due to their beneficial effect on insulin resistance. It can help delay diabetes progression. Get them naturally from fish sources such as mackerel, salmon, herring and sardines. If you don't care for fish, take a supplement: 2 to 3 grams total EPA plus DHA.

Remember Jerry? Like most of my patients, he's heard all about how bad junk food is, to watch his weight, and all the other great "advice" that he's heard along the way. He just wasn't sure how to go about it. We had a long talk and are working to get his symptoms under control. Jerry now takes a daily walk, and he bought a pedometer to measure his progress. He's retraining his taste buds: Learning to enjoy the freshest fruits and vegetables he can find, trying whole grains for the first time, such as brown rice, quinoa, and barley, and limiting the amount of processed foods he consumes. His glucose level is down into the 90s, a big improvement and a realistic goal for most folks in his condition. **HR**

10 top brain boosters

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E with all eight types. For optimum brain support, take 200 to 400 IUs per day. I recommend New Chapter's E Food Complex.

10 B vitamins

Of the B vitamins, folate and B₁₂ are especially

important. If you're getting too little folate, it could result in a high homocysteine level (above 9), which is associated with an increased risk of dementia. Too little B₁₂ can also promote dementia. Blood B₁₂ levels are unreliable measures of your true B₁₂ status, so have your methylmalonic acid (MMA) level checked. MMA

builds up if you don't have enough B₁₂, so a high MMA level would indicate a B₁₂ deficiency. If you're deficient, you'll need dosages tailored to your needs by your doctor. All multivitamins have a full complement of B vitamins. You can also find them in nuts, beans, whole grains, lean meats, poultry, and organ meats. **HR**

An Aztec treasure—better than gold!

About half a millennium ago, the Conquistadors paused in their bloody pillaging of the Aztec empire just long enough to notice a tiny botanical treasure. They carried it back to Spain, where a few centuries later, Linnaeus—the distinguished botanist—named it *Salvia hispanica*. It had been found growing wild in Spain and was mistakenly thought to be a native species of that country.

The Spaniards were more interested in gold than in a “lowly” plant, but in my opinion, they were misguided. If they had truly understood the properties of the unassuming little seed this plant produces, they might have ranked it above gold—the way the Aztecs did!

You see, the Aztecs—being an agricultural society—recognized a good thing when they saw it. To them, it was as important a crop as corn or beans. The Aztecs prized it because it was packed with nutrition, giving it to their runners to sustain them on long trips.

So where has it been all this time?

It never really left—it was just lying low. *Salba* has continued to be consumed in areas of Mexico and Central America and even in some southwestern states in our country. It just wasn't being widely cultivated. But with the Functional Foods Movement, a search was started for foods that provided a medicinal benefit beyond just a source of nutrition. One of the pioneering members of

that movement was Dr. Vladimir Vuksan, a researcher at the University of Toronto. He conducted the first long-term study of the health benefits of *Salvia hispanica*.

Salvia hispanica produces mostly black seeds—but a few white ones, as well. Tests were run on the seeds, and the results showed that the white seeds were all the researchers could have ever dreamed of in terms of nutrients. These white seeds have been renamed *Salba*—a combination of the botanical name “*salvia hispanica*” and the Latin name for white, “Alba”. *Salba* is now being grown commercially in Peru—thanks to its sub-tropical climate, which is a necessity for its growth.

Salba is packed with the types of healthy nutrients I'm always telling you about—many of which are often found to be lacking in the standard American diet. To begin with, *Salba* is the richest whole food source of plant-based omega-3s found in nature—with more of this healthy fat per ounce than even flaxseed. And when it comes to fiber, *Salba* packs a wallop—even more than wheat bran—which can aid in weight control. Fiber helps you feel full longer, maximizing the sense of satisfaction you get from your meals.

Salba is also high in calcium—and is a much better source of this mineral than milk, which has high fat content and poor digestibility as strikes against it. In fact, calcium from milk has never been

shown to be associated with reduced bone fracture risk, as we've all been raised to believe! Quite the opposite: European countries with higher dairy intake suffer a higher bone fracture rate than countries with a lower intake.

The calcium in *Salba* is balanced in a natural 2-to-1 ratio with magnesium, another mineral found wanting in most American diets. Magnesium plays a key role in over 100 important reactions in the body, such as metabolism, cellular energy, and nerve functioning.

In addition, you'll find three times the iron in *Salba* than you will in spinach. In case you're worried about iron overload, it's not possible to overdose on the plant-based form of iron—called non-heme. Your body knows to absorb only the amount of non-heme iron that it needs.

I recommend *Salba* especially to diabetics and cardiac patients, because of the promising research that is being done. For diabetics, it contains glucose-control properties—it has been found to lower blood glucose and postprandial glycemia. For cardiac patients, the omega-3 content can help lower blood pressure and balance out cholesterol levels.

As with any whole food, I suggest adding it to your repertoire. I recommend two tablespoons a day. I personally add it to my morning oatmeal. It can also be sprinkled into yogurt, salads and baked goods. **HR**

Your Questions Answered

Put this workhorse in your stable

Q. *I'm a healthy 48-year-old guy, and I enjoy reading about a variety of health topics. Here and there, I'll come across a reference to selenium. It seems researchers are interested in it for different reasons. What is it, what does it do, how much of it should I be getting, and from where?*

—J. Blauvelt, Spokane, WA

A. You've come across the workhorse mineral! And an essential little mineral it is. "Essential" means that your body can't produce it, so you need to get it from your diet. The average American (poor) diet is estimated to contain 50 percent of the RDA (70 micrograms for guys and 55 micrograms for women).

Getting sufficient amounts of selenium from your diet could be a challenge. In some areas, the selenium content of soil has been depleted, leading to deficient levels in the plants that are grown in that soil. So at least in this instance, we are fortunate that foods are grown and then distributed widely in the United States. It helps to minimize this issue and the subsequent risk of deficiency in our diets. You could also be the source of your own deficiency, merely by not eating well.

By supporting DNA repair, selenium helps prevent cancer and can actually suppress tumor growth. Medical researchers are interested in its ability to protect against prostate cancer. There is currently a study going on

through 2113 with the National Institute of Health measuring the roles of selenium and vitamin E in preventing cancer. This study—which includes over 30,000 men—is looking at 200 micrograms of selenium a day with and without 400 units of vitamin E and the effects on cancer. Pre-clinical trials have provided evidence that these two nutrients working together are an effective preventive measure.

Selenium also helps to prevent heart disease. It's one of a group of antioxidants that can work to combat free radicals and the oxidative stress they can cause, which also gives it an important role in general immune system function. Without sufficient antioxidants, LDL "bad" cholesterol becomes oxidized and leads to a plaque build-up in the arteries.

One important function is its collaboration with Vitamin E, working as a key part of one of the body's vital free radical neutralizers—the antioxidant glutathione peroxidase.

This little mineral is also involved in thyroid function. Low levels slow down the transformation of the storage form of thyroid hormone (T4) to the active form (T3). This can result in fatigue, depression, dry skin, constipation and difficulty losing weight—common symptoms of a sluggish thyroid.

Researchers have also found that people who suffer from rheumatoid arthritis had reduced levels of selenium in their blood. Selenium can help relieve the symptoms associated with rheumatoid arthritis, thanks to its antioxidant properties that fight the free radicals responsible for

damaging healthy tissue.

This workhorse also takes on the task of reducing heavy metal toxicity. For example, mercury, when bound to selenium, is essentially harmless in the body.

Selenium is found in meats and seafood—especially shellfish, such as lobster, clams, oysters, and crabs. It can also be found in a variety of vegetables, whole grains, and even in apple cider vinegar!

Another source of selenium is Brazil nuts, which can be very high in selenium content—so are best reserved as an occasional treat. Just three of these nuts can provide your selenium needs for a whole day.

Toxicity is rare, but you need to be aware of it. "Selenosis" can result in hair loss, an upset stomach, white blotchy nails, fatigue, irritability, and even mild nerve damage. There has been a "tolerable upper limit intake level" (UL) set at 400 micrograms a day. Even so, experts believe that toxicity is only a risk at 900 micrograms or more a day.

There is no reason for most people to take more than 200 micrograms a day in supplement form. Don't let anyone tell you that everyone gets enough in their diet and that supplements are unnecessary. It's simply not true.

The text contained herein does not constitute medical advice. Health Revelations advises that you consult your own physician before acting on any recommendations contained within this publication.

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