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100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

A Healthy Start to a Healthy Year

By Vicki Rackner MD

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Can your mind help your body keep your New Year's resolutions?
Mounting evidence says, *Yes.*

The evolving field of psycho-neuroimmunology, or the study of the mind-body connection – often considered fringe beliefs – could help you keep your resolutions. This intriguing subject of scientific inquiry is still shrouded in mystery.

Just as an experiment, put aside your skepticism, pretend that these ideas could be explained by science, and consider how you could harness their power to promote your health.

Placebo Effect

When new medications are tested, one group gets the new medication and another group gets the *sugar pill* or placebo. Why do this? Study after study shows that if you think you're taking real medicine, your body will respond as if it actually did get the active ingredient, even if it's a sugar pill. Somehow the belief in the power of the medicine creates the desired outcome of lowered blood pressure or heart rate or weight loss in about a third of people. Is this science? Yes. Is this mind-body medicine? Yes.

Let your beliefs help your body achieve your desired goals. If regular exercise is your goal, tell yourself, *I'm invigorated by my daily 20 minute walk.* The placebo effect suggests that your belief that you have more energy with regular exercise makes it so.

Nocebo Effect

In November 1998, a teacher noticed a *gasoline-like* smell in her classroom, and soon thereafter she had a headache, nausea and dizziness. Given the concern about a toxic environmental substance, the school was evacuated and closed for 5 days. Almost 200 students and teachers were seen in the ER for similar symptoms. But no environmental cause was ever identified. One explanation is that the belief that a toxic exposure occurred led to the symptoms, or the nocebo effect. This is the flip side of the placebo effect.

I reflected on this study as I was waiting with my son for his turn in the dental chair. He repeated, *It's going to hurt; it's going to hurt.* I suggested to him that he might be better served by saying, *It's going to be fine; it's going to be fine.*

Has the nocebo effect undermined your New Year's resolutions in the past? Barry saw this in action last March as he told himself, *I hate to exercise.* He made a commitment to daily walks in January and talked himself out of them before the winter snow melted.

Harness the power of the placebo effect and minimize the nocebo effect this year, even if your resolution is something challenging like smoking cessation. In years past you might have told yourself, *This never works. I'll never be a non-smoker.* Consider replacing that thought with, *In the past it didn't work. Now I keep my promises.*

Gelotology

It's the study of humor and its effects on the human body. Researchers are asking the question, *Is laughter good medicine?*

You know from your own experience that laughter breaks stress and tension. Evidence suggests that laughter enhances the function of your immune system and stimulates pleasure centers in the brain.

You always have the choice about whether to laugh or cry. Ann remembered that as she completed an interview for the job of her dreams. She bought a new suit that made her feel like she already had the job. It wasn't until she left the group interview that she discovered the toilet paper stuck in the waist of her skirt streaming behind her like a tail. After an initial rush of

embarrassment she laughed.

Prayer

We are a deeply religious nation, and many of my patients use prayer as a source of strength and comfort. Can prayer promote healing? Growing evidence from well-respected clinical studies suggests it can, although not enough evidence for the medical community to conclude that prayer is good for health.

What kind of evidence would you need to use prayer as part of your health regimen? Interestingly, you would consider the same factors whether you're re-considering Vioxx or Naproxen (recently found to cause heart problems) or Aryurvedic remedies (recently found to be associated with toxic levels of heavy metals). What are the desired benefits, and what are the risks?

What harm could prayer do? We doctors get concerned when patients forgo conventional therapy that has proven benefit for therapies like prayer or shark cartilage that do not have proven value. Consider using mind-body therapies such as prayer together with proven medical treatment. Now, shark cartilage is another matter – and simply not proven at all.

Gratitude and giving

Some interesting, if preliminary, studies suggest that the expression of gratitude and the act of giving increase brain serotonin levels, the same chemical change antidepressant medication helps. That might support your own experience of feeling better as you reach out to the tsunami victims or express gratitude for the health and safety of those you love and the extraordinary richness of your life.

You have the power to carry out your New Year's resolutions, whether it's achieving greater physical, financial or spiritual health. Who knows—maybe one day with greater understanding of the mind-body connection, your doctor may prescribe the power of your mind to help you get there.

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The Importance of Healthy Dog Treats

By John Schwartz

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It wasn't so many years ago when dog treats consisted more or less solely of milk bones, fatty biscuits, and table scraps. Not many options, and virtually none that were healthy. Well, times have definitely changed! Nowadays, savvy pet owners choose dog treats that include greenies, healthy biscuits, and gourmet bones.

Not only are there more options for now, the quality has improved significantly in recent years as well. And with the Internet boom, finding the best biscuits and bones for your puppy is as easy as tapping a few keystrokes.

It's important to note that many pet owners are now advocates of healthier dog treats for monetary reasons as well. They realize that, while they tend to cost more, healthy treats and food actually save money in the long run. A healthier diet over a lifetime results in less disease and illness in senior dogs, which means a smaller vet bill.

It's never too early to start feeding healthy dog treats. Puppy training often includes using a treat to reward good behavior. In one session alone, you might give your little trainee 6-10 rewards, maybe even more. Make them healthy biscuits, cookies, or bones, and you'll be giving your pet a nutritious foundation for a better life.

Experiment with several different kinds of dog treats and you'll quickly learn which are your puppy's favorites. Unlike humans when we diet, dogs seem to enjoy the healthier biscuits and bones every bit as much as the "bad" ones. If only we were so lucky!

John Schwartz is the owner and webmaster of <http://puppies-dogs-supplies.com>. He lives in East Texas with his wife, Shannon, who is the director of a dog rescue 'no kill' shelter.



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