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Dr. David G. Williams

The Real Weight Loss Shake

At the risk of sounding like the minister who's preaching to the choir again...getting older certainly comes with its share of challenges. This can be particularly true when it comes to getting enough exercise.

I'm a firm believer in the many benefits of exercise. Not a day goes by that some research study doesn't uncover another beneficial aspect linked to exercise. After hearing how regular exercise can help prevent heart disease, cancer, diabetes, depression, and dozens of other problems, everyone, by now, is aware of just how important exercise can be. The latest studies even show it can slow the aging process. Exercise increases the body's amount of telomerase—enzymes that repair and lengthen telomeres, the DNA-protein complexes at the end of chromosomes that directly affect how quickly cells age.

At this point I don't think anyone disputes the need for exercise, nor how it improves the quality and length of one's life. The problem for many people, however, is that they very often have problems that can prevent them from exercising. I'm not talking about a lack of desire or willpower, but rather physical ailments. And this can be particularly problematic as someone gets older.

Someone elderly who's already overweight, has a problem in a knee, hip, or lower back, has a history of stroke, or has been sedentary for some time might not have the ability to take even a short walk. Exercise sounds great, but if you don't have the stability to make it safely across the room, or if the simplest efforts result in severe pain, it may not be an option. It's a "catch-22" situation. If you don't exercise you'll continue to gain weight, become more immobile, and have a higher risk of disease and early death. If you force yourself to exercise and thereby cause more damage, it can lead to more pain, immobility, and additional weight gain—and a higher risk of disease and early death.

We see this happen all the time with individuals after a stroke, or a fall and the accompanying hip fracture, or fluid retention in the lower extremities due to diabetes, or debilitating pain from severe arthritis in the knee joint, or any one of a dozen different problems.

Unfortunately, the standard answer has always been go on a diet, lose any excess weight, and then start exercising. In an ideal world this might work, but in the real world it rarely happens. For one, most diets result in only temporary weight loss. Even worse, continued dieting can permanently disrupt your metabolic rate.

The Weight Loss Combination

Our bodies have a natural metabolic set point, which helps control what should be our "normal" weight. When you gain weight, your body increases its metabolism to bring you back to the normal weight. When you lose weight, your body slows your metabolism to help maintain your normal weight. The human body naturally tries to maintain stability as a matter of survival. It's designed to help us through periods of feast and famine. Research has shown that the body interprets rapid weight loss much the same as it does famine.



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You will observe with concern how long a useful truth may be known, and exist, before it is generally received and practiced on. — Benjamin Franklin

Studies have repeatedly shown that dieting without exercise results in huge amounts of lean muscle loss. Dieting with exercise, however, prevents muscle loss.

The latest study compared the overall effects of various forms of weight loss in 64 overweight or obese individuals ages 60 to 75. Some lost weight by exercise only, some by diet only, and others using exercise and diet. (The exercise wasn't that intense: either walking on a treadmill or riding an exercise bike.)

Those who combined diet and exercise not only lost more fat, but also retained more muscle. Dieting alone resulted in muscle loss and a decrease in metabolism. Muscle tissue, as opposed to fat, is always in a state of tension—using energy, which, in turn, raises your metabolic rate. When you look solely at the bathroom scale, you may see a weight loss, but what the scale doesn't show is that you may actually be fatter due to a loss of muscle tissue and not fat cells. And if that weren't bad enough, we now know that excess fat cells produce proteins called cytokines that trigger chronic inflammation—which has been directly linked to increases in cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, stroke, et cetera. (*J Appl Physiol* 08;105:825)

Muscle loss triggers a decrease in your metabolic rate, resulting in the storage of fat for energy reserves. This explains why crash diets work only in the short term, and after the diet excess weight returns even though you may be eating less food that you originally were. Every repeat of a new crash diet lowers your metabolic rate a little and makes it more difficult to keep the weight off. Once you get started on the diet roller coaster it gets harder and harder to get the weight off.

The only answer is to combine some form of exercise when you diet.

Scientists are well aware of these problems, and are constantly working on finding a magic pill that will promote weight loss without the need for exercise. In the last couple of months researchers at the Salk Institute reported on such a pill that increased the same fat-burning process that occurs during exercise. Research

is in the very preliminary stages, and so far the drug's effects have been studied only in rats. Like all of the miracle weight-loss drugs before it, I suspect this one will also come with a long list of possible dangerous side effects when everything is said and done.

There is currently another potential solution to this exercise dilemma, which continues to be overlooked.

Good Vibes From the Sea

I've been writing about, recommending, and personally utilizing various forms of "vibrational" therapy for over 20 years.

If you spend the time and trouble to uncover and analyze research from around the world, there's an amazing amount of data that illustrate the benefits of exposing the human body to certain vibrational frequencies. One such benefit is the reduction of fat storage in the body. Not surprisingly, most of this research has been conducted outside of the US, where non-drug and non-surgical techniques can still get a fair shake.

Vibrational frequencies are the proposed basis of numerous therapies, many of which are still considered controversial by conventional medicine. The healing effects of homeopathy, crystal therapy, radionics, meditation mantras, music, drumming, chanting, samvahan, vibrational massage, chakra balancing, color therapy, therapeutic touch, and even prayer have all been associated with changing the vibrational states of human energy fields.

Scientists believe that the often remarkable results seen in dolphin-assisted healing are related to vibrational changes that take place due to the strong ultrasonic emissions the animals produce. Research has shown that the ultrasonic blast emitted by dolphins is four times as powerful as that produced by therapeutic medical devices, and when delivered through the water the conduction rates are 60 times more efficient than when traveling through air.

Although the complete phenomenon isn't yet fully understood, stories of positive results from "swimming"



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with dolphins have been circulating for centuries. Even the aboriginal tribes I've spoken with in Australia tell tales of the healing miracles of dolphins.

The US Navy has demonstrated that the sonar system of dolphins is so sophisticated that it can easily penetrate up to a yard of mud and sand and clearly distinguish between the size of a dime and that of a penny. Those who have swum with dolphins report the sensation of being ultrasonically "scanned" with sound waves. They "feel a sound" that resonates in their bones, then travels through the spine and seems to focus on damaged or diseased areas. For some reason, dolphins seem to focus their ultrasonic emissions on areas that are damaged and in need of repair.

Good Vibes From the Land

If you've been a subscriber for a while you might also remember the report I did on the effects that vibration from humming had on one's sinuses. If you have chronic sinus problems it's a simple technique that can prove to be a godsend, particularly when combined with the inhalation of various vitamins like B12, the use of nasal washes like Xlear, or the taking of minerals such as iodine, et cetera. Researchers found that during humming the sinuses produced 15 times more nitric oxide (NO) than is produced during normal breathing. NO dilates capillary beds and increases blood flow to an area. Also, the added effect of increasing the exchange of gas in the sinuses was dramatic, to say the least. During normal exhalation, without humming, the normal gas exchange rate was 4 percent, compared to 98 percent during just one exhalation during humming. Introducing clean, fresh air into your sinuses may help keep them healthy. (*Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 02;166:131-132)

You may also remember the studies with cats. Problems that are commonly found in dogs are practically nonexistent cats; they rarely experience surgical complications, hip dysplasia, arthritis, joint disease, bone cancer, or breathing problems. Research suggests the healing frequency of their purring protects against these problems. There's an old saying among veterinarians referring to this well-known fact: "If you put a cat and a bunch of broken bones in the same room, the bones will heal." (*J Am Vet Med Assoc* 87;191:1399-1403) (*J Am Vet Med Assoc* 99;214:1336-1341) (*Can Vet J* 96;37:672-678) (*J Am Vet Med Assoc* 96;208:1882-1886)

Cats have been found to purr at a vibrational frequency of either 25 or 50 hertz (Hz). And this just happens to be the same frequency range that can elicit healing effects, reduce chronic and acute pain, and decrease fat storage. And just recently, it's been discovered that exposure to this frequency appears to elicit many of the same benefits associated with exercise in humans.

Shake, Rattle, and Roll

Although vibration doesn't appear to remove fat cells, the latest research in both animals and humans indicates that simply standing on a platform, vibrating at the right frequency, causes the formation of more bone mass and less fat. Fat, muscle, and bone are formed from the same variety of stem cell. It appears that certain vibrations cause the creation of bone rather than fat, possibly in an effort to help stabilize the body from the vibrational stress. [*Editor's note: See News to Use on page 134 for more about the formation of fat cells.*]

When compared to those not using the therapy, mice placed on a vibrating platform for only 15 minutes a day, five days a week had an increase of bone marrow stem

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VITAMIN D FOR KIDS

Question: I'm a young mother with three children, and after reading the articles you write in the newsletter I want to make sure my kids are getting enough vitamin D. Could you give me some general dosage guidelines to go by?

—Sara O.
Madison, Wisconsin

Answer: There's definitely a lot of confusion on what constitutes the proper dose of vitamin D. Based on the research I've studied and the actual clinical work, a dose of 1,000 IU/day for breast-fed infants and 600 IU/day for bottle-fed infants appears to be a good starting point. For older children 1,000 IU/day for every 25 pounds of body weight is the dose being recommended by the nonprofit Vitamin D Council, which has a lot of experience in this area. Again, however, if it's in the middle of summer and your children spend every day in the full sun, these dosages may be adjusted downward somewhat.

These dosages are safe and could be very beneficial at preventing several common health problems associated with our younger population.

Many children will find their asthma problems disappear in 30 to 60 days after getting on vitamin D supplements. This isn't unexpected when you consider that vitamin D plays such a key role in immune system function and in the proper development of the lungs during pregnancy. Researchers have found that children born to mothers with higher vitamin D levels have a 40 percent lower risk of developing asthma by the time they reach 3 to 5 years of age. (*J Allergy Clin Immunol* 07;120:1031–1035)

A new study out of Japan further highlights the importance of adequate vitamin D consumption during

cell production of 37 percent, suppressed production of belly fat of 28 percent, and an increase in bone volume in their legs of 11 percent.

In a similar clinical study of a group of women with osteopenia (the first step of osteoporosis when bone begins to thin), the use of vibration therapy 15 minutes a day for 5 days a week resulted in an increase in spinal bone mass and kept the amount of belly fat the same. Women not using the vibration showed a continued loss of spinal bone and an increased gain of belly fat. (*J Bone Miner Res* 08;Aug 20[E-pub])

It important to note that visceral fat, or belly fat, is a different type of fat than that found in other parts of the body. The amount of visceral fat a person carries has been directly associated with metabolic syndrome, which is basically a group of cardiovascular risk factors that result from insulin resistance. Metabolic syndrome

pregnancy. A soft spot on the top of the head of newborns (called craniotabes) is an increasingly common condition that doesn't get much attention. It has routinely been considered a normal phenomenon that doesn't require any treatment. Researchers now know it is due to a vitamin D deficiency in the mother during pregnancy. It stands to reason that babies born with the problem who are then breast-fed are at a greater danger of developing problems like infections, diabetes, bone density problems, pediatric cardiomyopathy, asthma, and numerous other problems. (*J Clin Endocrinol Metab* 08;93:1784–1788)



Earlier studies in the 1930s also found that higher dosages of vitamin D (5,000 IU to 14,000 IU per day) in teenagers could be a big help in resolving acne problems. Acne conditions tend to show dramatic improvement during increased sun exposure in the summer, at least partly due to an increase in vitamin D production. (And the decrease in vitamin D production we routinely see during the winter months, and at higher latitudes, has been linked to the higher blood pressure and increases in diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and influenza during that period of the year.)

There is also growing evidence that you can decrease dental cavities in children by increasing their vitamin D levels.

Although I've been speaking primarily about children, it's important to keep in mind that anyone with these same problems could benefit by increasing their vitamin D consumption. It may not happen overnight, however. With chronic vitamin D deficiency it may take several months to restore levels to normal.

typically results in increased cholesterol levels, heart and artery disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and obesity. Reducing abdominal or belly fat can have a very profound effect on your health. [*Editor's note: For more about the effects of metabolic syndrome, and ways to combat it, see the Subscriber Center of the Alternatives Web site, www.drdauidwilliams.com.*]

Power Your Way to Health

My first exposure to the benefits of whole-body vibration (WBV), came from some Russian doctors I worked with in the mid-1980s. Much of their research stemmed from their space program in the 1960s, when they were searching for methods of preserving bone and muscle mass of their cosmonauts in the zero-gravity of space. Later I began to utilize WBV in my personal workouts when the vibration platform PowerPlate became avail-

able in this country. I still use the PowerPlate regularly, and there are dozens of *Alternatives* subscribers who have had remarkable results using theirs as well. The list of health benefits derived from its use increases each year as more and more research becomes available.

As health professionals gradually learn just how effective the PowerPlate can be, I suspect we'll begin to see more and more of these units in nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and hospitals. Those of you who purchased PowerPlate machines as I did years ago paid a higher cost, but are way ahead of the game in health benefits. Newer home units are less costly than the original commercial units, which will make them more affordable to more and more people. Even so, they aren't cheap at nearly \$2,000—or much more for the professional models.

I'm certainly not one for recommending every gadget that comes along. A device like the PowerPlate isn't something everybody desperately needs. But for many it can be worth every cent if they take advantage of what it can do for their long-term health and well-being. Used consistently and correctly it has the potential to restore mobility, help with weight loss, reduce pain, and possibly even eliminate the need for many types of medications. It requires a time investment of only a few minutes a day, two or three days a week. And unlike many other types of therapy, it can be used safely by the elderly and the disabled, and in the privacy of one's home.

Vibration therapy is one area that I've kept a close eye on for years, and the list of benefits it provides just continues to grow. It's a therapy that's not getting much publicity, but it's one you should definitely know about. Here's just a brief overview of some areas where the latest research has shown it can be helpful.

Bone density

Much of the original research focused on how short sessions of vibration in the range of 30 to 50 hertz (which equates to vibrations or oscillations per second) created a piezoelectric force in bone tissue causing an increase in bone strength and density.

Piezoelectricity is a microcurrent created by mineral crystals when they are deformed under pressure. Old camera flashbulbs and some handheld pain-relief devices work on a similar principle: A lever strikes the crystal and generates a small amount of electric current.

As your bones flex, the mineral crystals generate a positive charge as they are compressed and a negative charge as the pressure is released. The electrical charges have two effects. First, osteoclasts, cells that break down bone, are stimulated by a positive electrical charge. Osteoblasts, cells that rebuild bone, are stimulated by

a negative charge. The constant flexing of bone as you exercise (or stand on a vibrating platform) attracts both of the cell types needed to create healthy bone.

Second, ions of the main minerals in bone, calcium and magnesium, are positively charged, so they are attracted to the same negative charge as the osteoblasts. The single charge activates both the building blocks of bone and the mechanism to use them.

Solutions were being sought on how to deal with the fact that early astronauts lost as much as 20 percent of their bone mass after just eight days in space. This is a prime example of how lack of gravity or the inability to exercise can quickly take its toll. Based on years of research, vibration therapy has proven to be particularly beneficial in bone loss like that associated with osteopenia and osteoporosis. It's important to remember also that as many as 30 percent of those in nursing homes are there due to hip fractures and *fractures from osteoporosis result in more deaths in women than ovarian and breast cancer combined.* (*Br Med J* 96;312:570–572)

Joint pain reduction and postural stability

It should come as no surprise that when you improve muscle strength and circulation in and around the joints, it results in less pain and more stability. The fact that vibration therapy does this explains why so many professional sports teams implement these machines in their training programs. You find PowerPlate machines in the training facilities of football teams like the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, baseball clubs like the New York Mets, and hockey squads like the Anaheim Ducks. Professional sports franchises are constantly looking for any therapy or program that will prevent injuries and speed up the recovery time of their players. Vibration therapy has been a very valuable tool for them.

Neurological disease or damage

There are dozens of diseases involving nerve destruction, which results in the loss of muscle control and muscle wasting. Paraplegia, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and Parkinson's are just a few examples. Vibration therapy is a proven method of stimulating muscles *locally* that the brain can no longer control. This is one of the primary reasons I started using this type of therapy a couple of decades ago. In simple terms it can help keep the muscle alive and well when a connection to the brain has been lost. It can minimize muscle atrophy (wasting) and oftentimes helps in the reconstruction and/or retraining of the nerve signal.

One recent study, focusing specifically on Parkinson's, found that WBV helped significantly in the improve-

(Vibration therapy continued on page 135)



NEWS TO USE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

A Weighty Problem in Children

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN—For years now, I've been warning of the dangers of childhood obesity. Changes in eating habits and activity patterns have led to an entire generation that's at risk of a lifetime of debilitating diseases related to excess weight. A study just released by the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm indicates that the problem may be more dire than even I had imagined.

Researchers led by Kirsty Spalding, PhD, found that an individual's number of fat cells is fairly well determined during childhood. There's an annual turnover of about 10 percent, but for most people the number stays constant throughout life. Overweight people have undergone a period of rapid increase in the number of fat cells (known as adipocytes) at about age 2, and reach their full adult level by about age 16.5. Non-overweight people experience that period of rapid increase at about age 6, and reach their full adult level around age 18.5. (*Nature* 08; 453:783–787)

This constant number of cells goes a long way toward explaining why it's so hard for some people to lose weight, and why many people find that after they've worked so hard to take weight off, it seems to reappear as if by magic.

Having a high number of fat cells doesn't mean that a person is fated to be overweight for their entire life. Individual fat cells expand or contract as they take in or lose fatty acids. The average adult has about 30 billion fat cells that, together, hold perhaps 30 pounds of fat. A single fat cell can store as much as 1.5 micrograms of fat, but it can also shrink down to contain practically none.

Once fat cells reach their capacity, they begin to divide and increase in number, so it is possible to add more. It's essentially impossible to reduce their number, however. Instead, you need to focus on keeping those fat cells as empty as possible by doing all the things you already know to do: eating properly; getting plenty of exercise and sleep; reducing your stress level; et cetera.

The best solution, obviously, is to not have to deal with the problem in the first place. When I was a youngster, there simply wasn't as much to do indoors. Any kid who stayed in all the time was obviously sick. Today, there's more than enough to keep a child occupied fulltime. However you do it, turn that child around and push them out the door for some fresh air, sunshine, and activity. Couch potato kids turn into mashed potato adults.

As a side note, I'd imagine that the constant pounding and vibration kids get from just being on the move support the production of healthier bone and less fat. See this month's main article for the details.

Water for Weight Loss

BERLIN, GERMANY—If you're looking for a cost-free, "easy to implement" weight loss tip, try water.

In two separate studies, researchers found that within 10 minutes of drinking 500 mL (about a pint) of water, metabolic rates in both men and women begin to increase as much as 24 to 30 percent.

They don't fully understand why this occurs, but it appears to be related to osmotic pressure changes since other drinks don't elicit the same effects. (*J Clin Endocrinol Metab* 03;88:6015–6019) (*J Clin Endocrinol Metab* 07;92:3334–3337)

Although these changes begin to peak at about 60 minutes before dropping back to normal, over the period of a year if you drank this much water every day upon rising it could result in burning an extra 17,400 calories—for a loss of five pounds. For the best results I would suggest consuming the additional water first thing in the morning on an empty stomach.

Honey on the Inside, Too

CHANDIGARH, INDIA—It seems like I've been on a honey kick lately. I suppose that's mostly because for years I've been convinced of the therapeutic value of honey for what seems like just about any condition you can think of. Honey is particularly good for treating the skin, as I've written several times before. It's more effective than any antibiotic you can name at clearing up the killer bacteria known as MRSA, and its effects on wounds and skin ulcers are nothing short of miraculous. The type that appears to be most effective is from a New Zealand tree known as the manuka.

Now researchers at the Chandigarh Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research have discovered that eating regular doses of manuka honey can help in cases of inflammatory bowel disease and ulcerative colitis. They induced the digestive ailments in experimental rats, then fed the animals manuka honey. At examination, the rats that received the honey showed greatly reduced levels of inflammation in the bowel, and improved values for cell changes and antioxidant levels. (*Indian J Exp Biol* 08;46:583–590) (*Phytother Res* 08;E-pub ahead of print. PMID: 18688794)

The dose used in the studies was 5 grams per kilogram of body weight daily. (The rats didn't weigh a kilogram, though.) For a 100-pound person this would work out to about half a pound of manuka honey a day, obviously a huge (and costly) amount for a person to be consuming regularly. I would suggest starting with a much smaller amount, a teaspoon a day, to see what effect the honey has on you. You can increase the amount if needed. Let me know the results.

HEALTH HINTS FROM READERS



A HOT CURE FOR COLDS

Now that winter is here I'd like to share my sore throat cure. I don't remember ever seeing you mention it in the newsletter.

I mix 1/8 teaspoon of cayenne pepper in about 1/2 cup of warm water and use it as a gargle. At first I do this several times the first day I feel a sore throat coming on. Occasionally I have to use it on the second day but most of the time the problem is cured on the first day.

It doesn't burn like you think it would. Just try to keep the liquid off your lips. I always let a little go down my throat but I'm not sure that's necessary. It's never failed for me.

via e-mail]

Cayenne pepper contains the compound capsaicin, which helps stop the transmission of pain impulses. This may help explain how it stops the pain associated with a sore throat and why capsaicin cream is effective at soothing painful arthritic joints and stopping headaches. It also increases local circulation to the area, which provides a soothing, warming effect. I would suggest, however, that if someone is trying it as a gargle for the first time that they start with 1/16 of a teaspoon instead of 1/8 teaspoon. The strength can always be increased.

You can also try adding cayenne and a little honey to a cup of your favorite hot tea for treating a sore throat.

It's also well established that cinnamon has strong antimicrobial properties. Adding either the powder or a couple of drops of oil to hot tea is another way to clear colds, throat infections, and the accompanying soreness.

At their latest count, researchers have discovered that there are over 200 different viruses that can cause the common cold. Finding a medication that would protect against each of these is going to be difficult to say the least. And prescribing an antibiotic for a viral problem is worthless since they're effective against bacterial infections only. Other than fighting a cold with things like the nasal wash Xlear, elderberry extract, eucalyptus vapors, et cetera, as soon as it starts, you must concentrate on keeping your immune system in top shape with diet, supplements, exercise, and getting plenty of rest. And don't forget to take precautions to avoid contact with these viruses.

Avoid Colds in the First Place

Based on some faulty research, most of us have been led to believe that getting chilled has nothing to do with getting a cold. That's not the case. Chilling anywhere on the body triggers a reflex reduction in blood flow to the nasal passages, making the area more vulnerable to invasion by pathogens. So, first of all, it's important to not get overly chilled. (This explains how you can get a

cold in summer when forced to go back and forth repeatedly between the outside heat and a much colder air-conditioned area.)

Adults average somewhere between two and four colds a year, but children experience six to ten. So the next obvious step for preventing a cold is to avoid children, particularly when they are infected. This is easier said than done, particularly if you have children or grandchildren in the house. To put it bluntly, cold and flu viruses are transferred through nasal excretions (snot) and saliva. It takes about 10 minutes for a normal small child to spread whatever resides in his/her mouth and nose to every surface and object in the room. Put 20 of them in a closed room at school and the idea of sharing takes on a whole new meaning.

Children are one of the primary reasons frequent hand washing during the cold and flu season is so important. Coughing and sneezing are a couple of others.

The probability of contracting a viral infection, whether cold-related or something more serious like bird flu, is primarily influenced by the strength of your immune system. And, in this day and age, a strong immune system is a top priority. That's why I continue to stress the importance of a varied diet and a quality multi-vitamin/mineral complex, as well as additional selenium and vitamin D.

(Vibration therapy continued from page 133)

ment of both equilibrium and gait. (*Arch Phys Med Rehabil* 08;89:399-403)

Improved fitness levels

With just a little extra exertion, according to a Finnish study reported at the 12th Annual Congress of the European College of Sports Medicine, WBV can provide effects similar to that of traditional fitness exercises, by performing squats, deep squats, and lunges on the vibrating platform rather than just standing still.

Lymphatic drainage

You could probably label the effects of WBV as a "mechanical massage" when it comes to lymphatic drainage. Without any outside effort, the thousands of muscle contractions taking place pump the lymphatic fluid out of the area, reducing fluid buildup—resulting in a localized detoxification process and a lessening of the load on the immune system. [Editor's note: For more about the benefits of lymphatic drainage and a procedure for doing it yourself, see Vol. 11, No. 7 and Vol. 11, No. 8 of *Alternatives*.

For your convenience, those two issues, and a shorter summary, are located in the Subscriber Center of the *Alternatives* Web site, www.drdauidwilliams.com.]

Over the years I've heard dozens of other benefits associated with using vibration therapy devices like the PowerPlate. Some of these claims can be substantiated from small clinical trials while others can't. I mention these not only because they're interesting, but also because I wouldn't be surprised to see them proven true as more research becomes available.

Individuals and therapists have reported WBV therapy has helped control incontinence, improve infertility, stabilize hormone production, eliminate chronic fatigue, improve skin tone, and reduce depression and cellulite.

Putting Vibration in Your Life

There are a few different vibration therapy or WBV machines on the market nowadays. My personal experience has been pretty much limited to the one called PowerPlate. It was one of the very first to be introduced in this country from Europe. PowerPlate dominates the sports and fitness market. Another brand under the name Galileo, from the company Orthometrix, seems to be more prominent in rehab facilities and medical research institutes. There are few others, but I'm uncertain of how they are being built, their reliability, research supporting them, what frequencies they operate at, et cetera. Research suggests that most of the beneficial effects occur at between 30 and 50 hertz.

PowerPlate machines are available from the manufacturer, PowerPlate USA. You can contact them over the Internet at us.powerplate.com (note there's no *www*) or by phone at 877-877-5283. The My3 model is the one I would recommend; it's compact enough to fit in a corner, but sturdy enough to last.

Orthometrix machines are available from the company at www.orthometrix.net or 877-249-4229. Their personal model is called the VibraFlex Home Edition.

Vibration therapy isn't generally recommended under certain circumstances such as pregnancy, or in individuals with epilepsy, acute migraine problems, or those

prone to blood clots or with severe diabetes. If you have a fresh fracture or recently placed metal pins or bolts, vibration therapy shouldn't be utilized. And it would be best to check with your doctor first if you have serious heart or vascular disease.

Dozens of different exercises can be performed on a machine like the PowerPlate; these are described in the training literature that comes with the machines. Remarkable benefits can be obtained by doing nothing more than standing on the machine for 10 minutes a day, three days a week. As one progresses other routines can be added and made as challenging as desired.

Again, I'm not suggesting that everyone needs to invest in a WBV machine. It may be a bit of "overkill" for most people in good health who already exercise regularly. But it really can be a godsend for someone who is unable to exercise due to disabilities, immobility, or even a lack of time. If you have a chance to try a PowerPlate or other WBV machine at the local gym or rehab center, however, don't pass it up. The health benefits can be enormous. The amount of progress obtained compared to the small amount of effort expended will surprise you.

Take care,



P.S. You may have noticed over the past few months an increase in the amount of information available in the *Alternatives* Subscriber Center. The team at Mountain Home Publishing is working on a number of improvements and additions that will appear over the next several months, including a comprehensive index to all back issues and the last five years of *Alternatives* available as printable files.

I encourage you to visit the *Alternatives* Web site, www.drdauidwilliams.com. For those of you who don't have a computer at home, you can get access at your local public library or community center. A librarian or guide will be happy to walk you through the steps of getting access to the Subscriber Center.

If you have questions or comments for Dr. Williams, please send them to the mail or e-mail addresses listed to the right. Of course, practical and ethical constraints prevent him from answering personal medical questions by mail or e-mail, but he'll answer as many as he can in the Mailbox section of *Alternatives*. For our part, we'll do our best to direct you to his issues, reports, and products related to the subject of your interest.

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