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# Health Freedom Network Newsletter

ISSUE #369

[www.HealthFreedomNetwork.com](http://www.HealthFreedomNetwork.com)

## Sweet But Never Silent

# Health Freedom Network

By Alexandra Jamieson

*Editor's note: The Health Freedom Network expressly exists to assist in the open and candid expression of health and wellness info. This would certainly include having to clue your medical doctor in on what should be their expertise. This month we're proud to have this contribution from renowned speaker and author Alexandra Jamieson. Way to go Alex!*

Last week I took my 3-and-a-half-year-old son to a new pediatrician. I had heard good things about this office, including that the doctors were open to holistic ways of treating children and that they didn't balk at parents who wanted to explore an al-

ternative vaccination schedule. I was really surprised when I noticed a bowl of Splenda-sweetened, artificially colored lollipops in the examination room. I was wide-eyed and gulped when the very nice, very capable, and respectful doctor offered one to my son when he was finished with his exam.

I wrote a letter to the doctor and plan on taking it, along with some of the wonderful, naturally colored and sweetened lollipops from <http://www.naturalcandystore.com/>, by her office.

### Here is what I wrote:

Dear Dr. XX,  
My son and I truly enjoyed our first visit to your office last week. He was obviously very comfortable with you and your staff, and I appreciated how respectful everyone was in speaking with him and asking him to participate in various tests. He loved the toys, of course, and it was so generous of your office to give us tokens to ride the

horse out front – he had wanted to ride it for ages!

Just to give you an idea of what I do for a living, and where my head is at most of the time, I work as a food and health writer and as a Holistic Health Counselor. Most of my clients are parents and often have children with health concerns and learning disabilities.

In researching various aspects of vegan living, I have come across mountains of information about snack foods and candy. Because many kids in my child's school have food allergies and sensitivities, there has been a lot of conversation between parents and the staff about what types of treats we may bring in to share.

Much of the research regarding candy and food colorings has led parents to request that all treats listing *artificial flavors*, *artificial colors*, and *artificial sweeteners* like Splenda be kept

*continued on next page.*

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## Sweet But Never Silent: *continued from page 1*

at home. I am more comfortable offering my son the occasional treat colored with natural food dyes and naturally sweetened.

I thought you might like to try a couple of products that I have found. Both of the local health food stores in our neighborhood carry these items; they can

be found online as well.

Sincerely,  
Alexandra Jamieson

If you run into a similar experience, let me know. And feel free to copy-and-paste my letter!

Alexandra Jamieson is the

author of *The Great American Detox Diet*, *Living Vegan For Dummies*, and *Vegan Cooking For Dummies*. She's been featured on numerous TV shows like "Oprah" and movies such as "Super Size Me." For more on Alex please go to [www.NutritionForEmpoweredWomen.com](http://www.NutritionForEmpoweredWomen.com)

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# A Woman's Heart



Contrary to popular belief, heart disease affects just as many women as men. In fact, one out of every two women will develop – and die from – heart disease in her life. This makes heart disease more of a threat to a woman's health than breast cancer and all other forms of cancer combined. After menopause, a woman's risk of heart disease rises sharply. The symptoms of a heart attack tend to be different for a woman than for a man; instead of the "classic" male heart attack signs of chest pressure, radiating pain down the arm, and/or shortness of breath, women's heart attacks are more likely to present as profound fatigue, nausea, dizziness, backache, and/or a vague feeling of being unwell.

While there have been great advances in the treatment and survival of women with heart disease, it seems much preferable to *prevent* problems in the first place (or lessen the chance of recurrence) with the use of diet and lifestyle changes that strengthen the heart and blood vessels.

A heart-healthy diet (for both women and men) is based on whole-grains, vegetables, fruits, fish, lean protein, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products. Avoid all sources of trans fat (common label tip-off: partially hydrogenated vegetable oils), minimize saturated fat, and aim for less than 300 mg of cholesterol and less than 2,300 mg of sodium each day.

Taking supplements of the heart-healthy B-vitamins, chiefly vitamin B6, vitamin B12, and folic acid, reduce homocysteine levels, an independent risk factor for heart disease and stroke that is increasingly viewed as more important than cholesterol. Omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil are another way to stave off heart disease.

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### Disclaimer:

This newsletter contains the opinions of the Health Freedom Network. It is not intended to be used as medical advice. All opinions are believed to be accurate at the time of publishing. Many medical experts have differing opinions. If you do anything recommended in this newsletter without the supervision of a licensed health practitioner, you do so at your own risk. The publishers of this

newsletter present this information for educational and informational purposes only. No attempt is being made to prescribe any medical treatment or diagnose any medical disorder.

Yours in Health,  
Sandra Oshiro, Editor

# Medicinal Mushrooms

Mushrooms have been used to treat human diseases for more than 5,000 years. It's only relatively recently, however, that modern science is systematically working to discover exactly how medicinal mushrooms protect human health, including the incredible news that mushrooms can prevent cancer.

Certain specialty mushrooms – including agaricus (*Agaricus blazei* Murrill), maitake (*Grifola frondosa*), and shiitake (*Lentinan edodes*) – contain a compound called beta glucan, which is a fiber-like complex sugar. Beta glucan serves as quite the pick-me-up for the immune system. All sorts of immune system cells, from macrophages, interferon, and T cells to natural killer cells perk up and do their job a bit better when beta glucan is around, which is important since one of the immune system's jobs is to monitor the body for pre-cancerous changes.

The agaricus mushroom hails from Brazil, where it has a long history of being used in the food supply, as well as in folk medicine. Animals fed this mushroom live longer and many studies document its skills in cancer prevention. The maitake mushroom is native

to Japan; research indicates that, although maitake doesn't kill cancer cells directly, it does protect the body from cancer by stimulating immune cells that, in turn, fight off cancerous cells. Some experts believe that maitake may help inhibit tumors that are already growing, as well as prevent the initiation of new cancers. Shiitake mushrooms, while native to Asia, are now cultivated and readily found around the world. A potent extract derived from shiitake, called LEM (lentinus edodes mycelium) counteracts tumor growth.

Mushrooms are available in a variety of forms, including fresh, dried, powdered, tinctures, capsules/tablets, or tea. Consuming the whole, dried mushrooms (the "fruiting body") is the traditional way to use agaricus, maitake, and shiitake. However, the other forms can sometimes be more convenient, and are certainly viable choices. In fact, medicinal mushrooms are increasingly easy to find in even mainstream grocery stores and can be incorporated into any recipe calling for mushrooms.



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# When “Too Much” is Actually “Just Right”

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National nutritional surveys continue to report the sad fact that most Americans fall short when it comes to getting optimal (or even adequate) amounts of essential vitamins and minerals, including as many as half of all adults not getting enough vitamin D. Too little of this vitamin not only puts bone health at risk, it also boosts the risk

of heart attacks and strokes. Nevertheless, mainstream news coverage persists in sending the misguided message that dietary supplements are dangerous.

Just how often do vitamins and minerals cause problems from people taking too much of them? According to a recent study commissioned by the Food and Drug Administration,

problems are few and far between. When all supplement-related calls to poison control were tracked over a one-year period, there were only 275 calls related to dietary supplements. Of these, 59% had no symptoms and most of the calls with symptoms involved caffeine or yohimbe. Only one case, over the course of that year, involved a vitamin or mineral (it happened to be vitamin E in a combination product that was potentially involved in higher-than-expected post-operative bleeding).

Not only are current dietary supplements generally safe in the amounts available in today's marketplace, several vitamins and minerals are actually safe in amounts far exceeding those okayed by government agencies. Vitamin D is a case in point. The upper intake level for vitamin D established by the Institute of Medicine in 1997 is 2,000 IU per day. Research since then shows that vitamin D toxicity is very unlikely until vitamin D intake surpasses 10,000 IU per day. In fact, many experts urge adults to supplement with 2,000 IU per day of vitamin D, which ironically is the amount deemed “unsafe” by the government organization.



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# Pre-Diabetes: A Call to Action

A chronic health problem like type 2 diabetes does not develop overnight. Rather it tiptoes into your body and you may not generally notice any symptoms until the disease is well established. It's time to listen carefully, because there are many subtle clues and signs – called pre-diabetes – that can alert the savvy person to the fact that diabetes is coming. Consider pre-diabetes an opportunity to change your health outlook for the better.

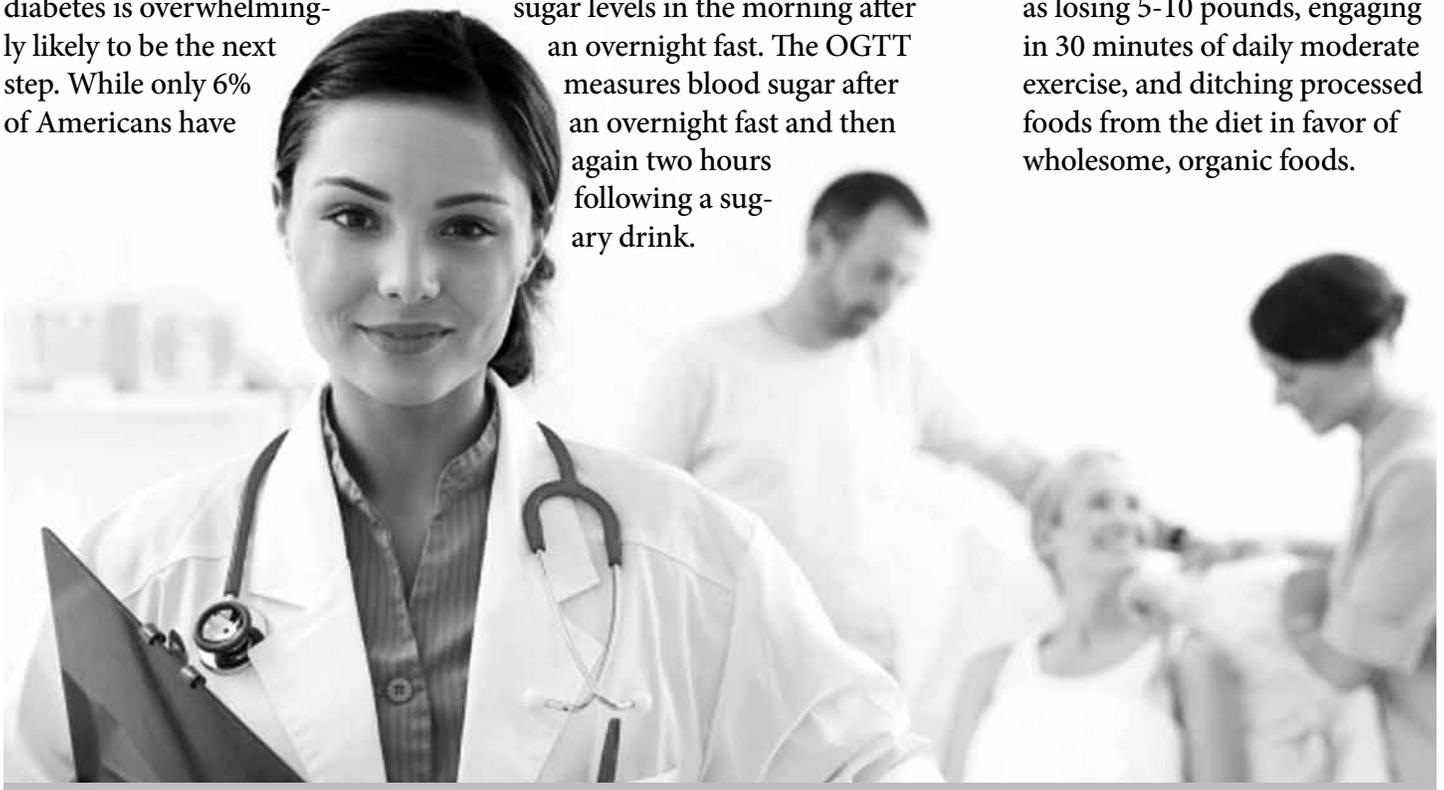
Pre-diabetes is when blood sugar levels rise higher than normal, but not quite high enough for the diagnosis of diabetes. If pre-diabetes is not treated properly, diabetes is overwhelmingly likely to be the next step. While only 6% of Americans have

diabetes, an alarming 40% of adults age 40-74 are pre-diabetic.

Everyone over the age of 45 should get a blood sugar test to detect diabetes or pre-diabetes. Those younger than 45 who have the following risk factors should get the test sooner: overweight, high blood pressure, low HDL cholesterol, high triglycerides, a family history of diabetes, a history of gestational diabetes, or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds. There are two tests to detect pre-diabetes or diabetes: the fasting plasma glucose test (FPG) and the oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT). The FPG test measures blood sugar levels in the morning after an overnight fast. The OGTT measures blood sugar after an overnight fast and then again two hours following a sugary drink.

With the FPG test, normal blood sugar is less than 100 mg/dl. Pre-diabetes ranges from 100 to 125 mg/dl, and diabetes is diagnosed as levels rise above 126 mg/dl. The numbers for the OGTT are slightly different. Blood sugar after drinking the sugary beverage is normal if it's below 140 mg/dl; pre-diabetes is in the range of 140-199 mg/dl; and diabetes is present if blood sugar rises above 200 mg/dl.

Learning that you have pre-diabetes might sound scary, but it is actually a wonderful opportunity to delay or even entirely prevent developing diabetes. Reversing pre-diabetes is often as simple as losing 5-10 pounds, engaging in 30 minutes of daily moderate exercise, and ditching processed foods from the diet in favor of wholesome, organic foods.



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# The Plastics Threat

An insidious and nasty chemical called bisphenol A (BPA) can be found in much of the packaging of foods on the grocery store shelves. Unfortunately, BPA doesn't stay put in the food packaging; it leaches into the foods and drinks it surrounds and from there it's a quick jump to get into the human body where it wreaks havoc on the hormone system.

Once in the body, BPA then starts some really scary stuff: it can change genetic makeup, meddle with reproduction, increase the risk of breast and prostate cancer, encourage the growth of fat cells, slow down metabolism, and even alter brain chemistry to create attention problems. In addition, people with the highest levels of BPA are the most likely to have heart disease and as BPA levels rise, so does the odds of diabetes and liver problems.

The Food and Drug Administration admits that BPA represents a health risk, however there are currently no regulations in place to reduce BPA in the U.S. food supply. Fortunately, numerous manufacturers are phasing out this chemical or offering alternative packaging. Consumers can protect themselves from BPA by seeking out products labeled BPA-free. Not every product packaging will state whether or not it contains BPA. More likely culprits for containing BPA include: plastics (especially number 7), 3- and 5-gallon water bottles, canned foods and soups, plastic cutlery, and dental sealants and composite fillings. Safer choices would be glass, porcelain, or stainless steel containers, plastics numbered 1, 2, 4, or 5, and Tetra Pak cartons.



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# Growing Appetite for Organics



For many shoppers, price has been the biggest obstacle to switching to organics, but the cost of organic and conventional foods is starting to converge. Currently the fastest growing sector of the food industry, organics are poised to grow to a \$23 billion business in the next few years. As organic foods move mainstream, lower prices are predicted to accompany this wider acceptance. As more growers and manufacturers enter the organics market, the supply is finally catching up to demand.

Recently, a study published in the journal *Agribusiness* took a closer look at one prominent category of the organic marketplace: produce. According to the study's researchers, the price of organic fruits and vegetables is expected to drop significantly in the near future and be on par with the price of conventionally grown produce. Consumers stand to benefit tremendously from this, with organics finally being within reach of the budgets of more households. Wal-Mart and other big chain stores jumped on the organics bandwagon in recent years and now their prices on organic and conventional fruits and vegetables are often comparable. Whole Foods Market, a long-time supporter of organics, recently noted that three out of four adults purchase organic foods; furthermore, the number and variety of organic products in each customer's grocery basket continues to increase.

Underlying the increased sales and availability of organics is the growing awareness that organic foods are healthier (since they do not contain pesticide residues and other toxins found in conventionally grown foods) and nutritionally superior. It's never been easier or more affordable to "go organic" than it is right now!



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# Get to Know Açáí



- Açáí berries from the Amazon contain high levels of antioxidants called anthocyanins.
- Antioxidants in açáí counteract free radical damage, increase longevity, bolster immune function, lower cholesterol, regulate blood pressure, and fight cancer.
- Açáí, which looks and tastes similar to blueberry juice (with an undertone of chocolate), is a great add-in to smoothies.

## 5 Must-See Sites

MinuteCancerCure.com

CancerCureBottle.com

VitalVelvet.com

PacificRimShop.com

CoralReefRemedy.com

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