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## Q & A

### The Ultimate Relaxant, Plus . . .

Q Tell me about theanine-I have read that it helps to relax you. Can I take theanine if I have high blood pressure?

A Theanine is an amino acid found in green tea. It helps to produce a calming effect in the brain and induces a feeling of relaxation and well-being. Best of all, it does all of this without causing drowsiness. In fact, studies have shown that theanine enhances the ability to learn and remember. One of the other benefits of this amino acid is that it helps to lower blood pressure naturally, by enhancing GABA in the brain. According to a study at the Laboratory of Nutritional Biochemistry, School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University of Shizuoka, Yada, Japan, when theanine was given to genetically hypertensive rats, blood pressure was reduced significantly, so it may actually help your blood pressure condition while aiding in relaxation. Do not stop taking anti-hypertensive drugs if you take theanine. Consult with your physician if you want to try to lower the dose of your high blood pressure medication while taking theanine.



Q What is the difference between policosanol and octacosanol? Your site lists octacosanol as an athletic performance enhancer, and policosanol under cardiovascular, mostly to lower LDL. Isn't octacosanol part of policosanol?

A Octacosanol is an active ingredient found in wheat germ oil. Octacosanol is usually derived from wheat germ and is reported to increase stamina. Policosanol is a supplement that can normalize cholesterol as well as or better than drugs, without side effects. Policosanol can lower LDL cholesterol as much as 20% and raise protective HDL cholesterol by 10%. Policosanol is derived from a group of long-chain alcohols extracted from the sugar cane. These compounds are collectively called policosanol, one of which is a molecule called octacosanol.

Q Are you aware of any studies relating to oral curcumin and serum cholesterol levels?

A There are several studies on the beneficial effects of oral curcumin intake and cholesterol reduction. According to the Indian J Physiology Pharmacology [Oct 1992, 36 (4) p239-43], administration of curcumin was found to significantly lower serum and tissue cholesterol levels. Also, oral administration of curcumin decreased lipid peroxidation, indicating the use of curcumin helps in conditions associated with peroxide induced injury such as liver damage and arterial diseases. In the journal of Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry (Netherlands) [1997, 166/1-2 (169-175)], rats were fed a diet of 0.5% curcumin for eight weeks. Cholesterol, specifically the LDL-VLDL fraction, was lowered. There was also a decrease in blood triglycerides and phospholipids. In a parallel study, diabetic animals were fed a high cholesterol diet; in this case curcumin still lowered cholesterol blood levels. These studies and many others can be found on this web site.

Q I have a concern about your natural prostate formula: saw palmetto (and perhaps pygeum) is a 5-alpha reductase inhibitor and prevents the formation of DHT. In reading some of your articles, I have been led to believe that aromatization of testosterone into estriol is a major cause of BPH and perhaps DHT. My concern is that DHT is said to be the source of male (and female) libido and the real "masculine" hormone. I am in my early 70's and need all the DHT I can get. Do I really want to take a reductase inhibitor (s)?

A There is no doubt that high levels of DHT (dihydrotestosterone) can cause BPH (benign prostatic hypertrophy), since DHT activates growth factors that stimulate cell proliferation. But an imbalance between the levels of estrogen and testosterone also causes BPH. In older men, the ratio of free estradiol compared to free testosterone is almost twice as high. Also, a protein called SHBG has the capability to evoke BPH. When a hormone attaches to its special binding site in a cell, it sends a signal to that cell. In the case of BPH, androgens signal cells to proliferate, causing prostate growth. Researchers have shown that messages sent to prostate cells by androgens can also be sent along an alternative signaling pathway, by estrogens. The estrogens send this signal to the sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG) that is already bound to the cell membrane. So estradiol is now able to activate pathways that are normally considered androgen responsive only. And like DHT and estrogen, SHBG also increases with age, which is like having an increase in androgen receptor sites. The natural prostate formula contains three herbs to address each one of these factors. Saw palmetto acts on the primary signaling pathway, by limiting DHT activity; nettle root and pygeum act through alternative signaling pathways in the prostate cell, like inhibiting SHBG binding and reducing the conversion of androgens to estrogens. These last two factors are a plus for the libido. If you are still concerned that your DHT is too low, the best thing to do is to get a blood test and have your DHT and free testosterone measured.



Q What role, if any, does Cox-2 inhibition play in the case of lymphoma?

A Cox-2 inhibitors are not effective on lymphomas because lymphomas do not express the Cox-2 enzyme. Standard tumors like those found in colon cancer contain the Cox-2 enzyme that converts arachidonic acid to Prostaglandin E2 (PGE2). PGE2 is a fuel cancer cells use for growth. Lymphoma generally responds well to conventional treatment methods of chemotherapy and radiation therapy because they target the immune system. The Foundation has a protocol for lymphoma/leukemia.

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