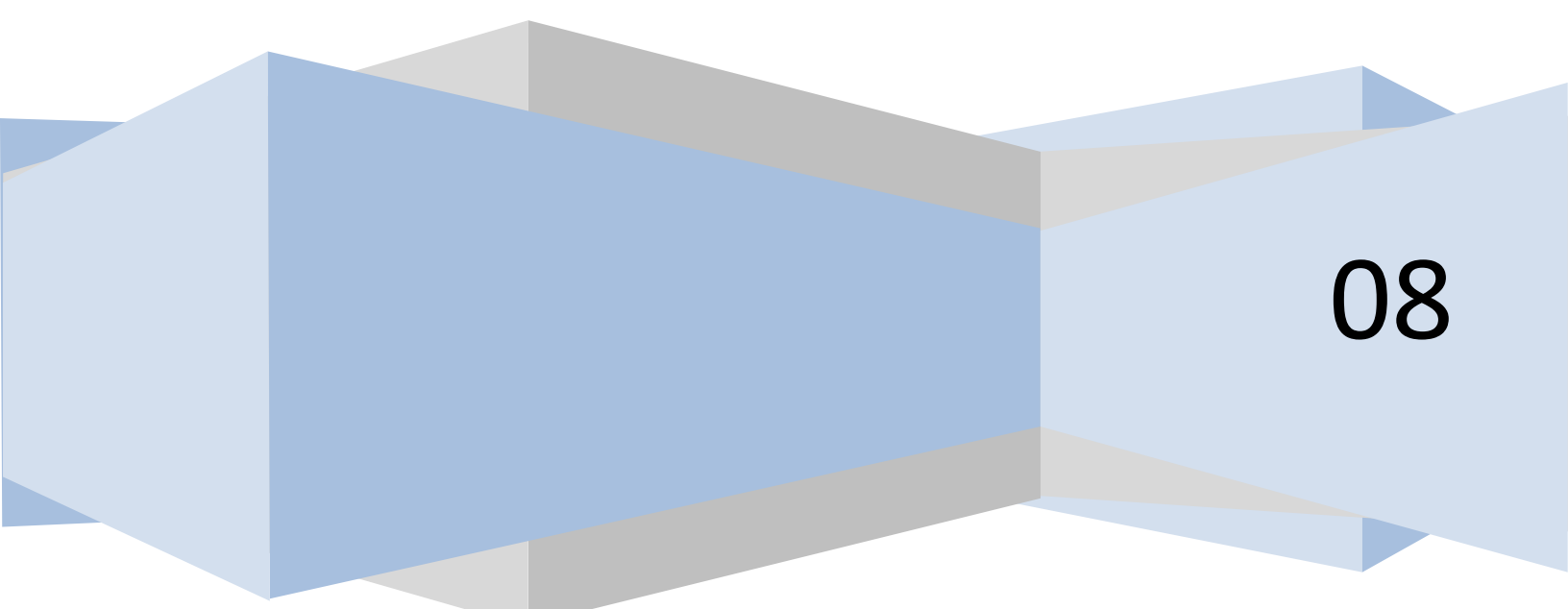


# 9 Most Common Mistakes that Patients Make When Seeking Pain Relief

[www.get-drug-free-pain-relief.com](http://www.get-drug-free-pain-relief.com)

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Pain relief may seem like a pill away to many people when they are hurting. Most people reach for an over-the-counter pain reliever (OTC) to numb the pain.

Battling pain is essentially battling prostaglandin, the cause of inflammation. OTC's are rather effective at negating the effects of prostaglandin, the cause of your pain.

While using pain relievers may be a very short-term, viable option, medicating pain with anti-inflammatory medications without making nutritional or postural changes is not sustainable.

Have you ever wondered, "Why does my pain keep coming back?"

Your pain may keep returning because many foods in the typical American diet ALSO produce prostaglandin in the body. So pain relievers in the absence of other strategies to combat prostaglandin can lead to a chronic state that recurs or doesn't resolve.

This can be especially alarming because numerous scientific journals link usage of pain relievers, whether acetaminophen or NSAIDs, to an increased risk of cancer, stomach bleeding, heart disease and high blood pressure. That is, the more doses and the more often the pain relievers are consumed, the more likely those chronic, degenerative and potentially deadly diseases occur.

**Take for instance:**

- Death from Ulcers

36,500 deaths occur each year in the US due to stomach bleeding from taking over-the-counter or prescription pain relievers (New England Journal of Medicine June 17, 1999 Wolfe, Lichtenstein & Singh)

- First Heart Attack

Use of any NSAIDs to relieve pain leads to a 40% increased risk of having a first heart attack (European Heart Journal 5/26/2006)

- Breast Cancer Risk

Using **ibuprofen** daily for 5 years or more led to 50% increased risk of breast cancer over those who didn't use it (Journal of the National Cancer Institute Vol. 97 No. 11 805-12)

Using **aspirin** daily for 5 years or more led to 80% increased risk of breast cancer over those who didn't use it (Journal of the National Cancer Institute Vol. 97 No. 11 805-12)

- Heart-Related Deaths

Taking **pain relievers** for 6 months or more **DOUBLES** the risk of heart attack and stroke or other heart-related deaths. Specifically, **ibuprofen** saw a 300% increased risk over non-users. (American Association for Cancer Research in Anaheim/Associated Press 4/19/2005)

- High Blood Pressure Risk

Older women taking 500 mg/day of **acetaminophen** saw a 93% increased risk of high blood pressure over women who didn't take acetaminophen.

Older women taking 500 mg/day of **ibuprofen** saw a 78% increased risk of high blood pressure over women who didn't take ibuprofen

In younger women who took the same **acetaminophen** dose as above, they saw a 99% increased risk of high blood pressure over women who didn't. (Hypertension Sept. 2005 46:500)

Sadly, using pain relievers as an ongoing strategy for pain relief increases your risk for cancer, heart disease and high blood pressure. So in this book we will explore some drug-free ways to decrease inflammation through diet and nutrition, alternative therapy, correct posture and exercise.

## **MISTAKE #1**

**The patient relies solely on their primary care doctor for treatment of pain relief**

For patients who want quick results, a prescription may be fastest, for the doctor AND for the patient.

But with doctors' patient loads and managed care contracts, there can be precious-little time at a doctor's visit to convey all of the aspects of the patient's history that could be addressed to help relieve pain.

So for the patient who KNOWS they don't want a drug-oriented solution, they will often-times be disappointed with that first trip to their primary care doctor's office.

Alternative therapy providers often spend more time with their patients to understand the background issues that play into the patient's condition.

But frequently, patients must route themselves to such a practitioner because most physicians will not suggest a referral outside of the medical field.

At best, most physicians would be in agreement with a patient who suggests trying an alternative practitioner. But other physicians may be quite antagonistic about it.

The medical physician's expertise lies with drugs. However, the reliance on drugs to relieve pain has been repeatedly shown to correlate with serious, deadly diseases later in life.

Take for instance the Vioxx fiasco. Vioxx was a blockbuster prescription pain reliever for Merck. The British Medical Journal (BMJ) (12/4/2004) reported that Merck scientists were seriously discussing a potential heart attack risk with using Vioxx as early as November 1996.

According to that BMJ article, a culture of intimidation and fear permeates the FDA making it difficult for drug safety officers to protect the public. Vioxx ultimately was pulled off the shelves after an estimated 88,000 to 139,000 Americans had heart attacks or strokes as a result of taking Vioxx.

One of the FDA's own agency experts, Dr. David Graham, testified in Senate hearings that the approval of Vioxx by the US Food and Drug Administration led to the single greatest drug catastrophe in the history of the world.

So the "quick fix" today is increasingly leading to a heavier burden on the healthcare delivery system, and more importantly, YOUR HEALTH, tomorrow.

## MISTAKE #2

### Patient Eats a Diet with Many Foods That Promote Pain

Did you know that you probably eat foods every day that make your pain worse? Certain kinds of sugars and fats dump right into the inflammation pathway to make MORE prostaglandin. More prostaglandin means more pain and disease. There's so much research about prostaglandin that there is a medical journal devoted to researching it.

The typical American diet is booby-trapped at every meal with refined or processed ingredients that promote inflammation. It is this slow erosion of health, meal-by-meal, that leads to pain as well as many chronic degenerative diseases.

#### Too many vegetable oils

Some fats are considered essential. They are known as the essential fatty acids (EFA). Some are much more prevalent in the American diet than others.

The most prevalent of fats in the typical American diet come from vegetable oils. These are known as "omega 6" essential fatty acids. In some countries, people actually have deficiencies of this EFA.

However we do not need to worry about supplementing our diet with this fat in America. You will find them listed on the ingredients of almost any pre-packaged product you can find at the grocery store!

Omega 6's derive from plants like corn, cotton, canola, safflower and soy. They are **not** saturated fats like butter or lard. If you look at the molecular structure of butter, it is "saturated". That is, every "spoke" on every carbon has hydrogens attached to it.

But Omega 6's have 2 hydrogens missing from their carbons. This makes them "unsaturated". That is, you could plug 2 more hydrogens back into the molecule to turn it back into butter.

But their significance to pain is this: omega 6 vegetable oil, called linoleic acid, is 3 reactions away from being **prostaglandin** inside the body. So the

more vegetable oils that you consume, the more likely they are to end up in the “pain pathway”.

So you probably noticed that all of those Omega 6’s I mentioned were liquids when they are sitting in your pantry. Do you think food manufacturers could use those kinds of oils very successfully to package and shelve their products?

### Trans Fats

Imagine this: you make a cake at home and put it in an air-tight Tupperware. How long do you think that cake will be edible?

If you live in Denver like me, then maybe a week (that is, if you can restrain yourself from eating the whole thing before then!) But when I lived on the east coast where there is a lot more humidity, a cake was more likely to get funky even sooner.

So can you imagine what food manufacturers would do if their snack cakes and chips and candy bars would only last on the shelf for a week? First of all, their products would probably spoil before they arrived to the store, wouldn’t they?

So food manufacturers developed a process to add a hydrogen BACK into those vegetable oils. It makes that liquidy omega 6 oil into a stiffer fat that won’t spoil (as fast anyway). This is called a “**partially-hydrogenated oil.**” This process requires a heavy metal to get the hydrogen back on there. And the end product is a molecule which is twisted out of its organic shape.

Recognize what this is? It’s a “**trans-fat**”. These are the very worst fats you could ever consume. Remember how I said they are kind of stiff so they can sit there on the shelf wrapped in cellophane for weeks on end? Those same properties get incorporated into the covering of individual cells throughout your body.

This has wide and far-reaching consequences for MANY aspects of your health: mood, hormones, immunity, pain! Think of the covering of an individual cell as a liquidy, flexible layer. That layer is designed to separate the contents of your cell from the rest of the environment around it.

Sometimes things need to get into the cell. And sometimes things need to get out. So there is this system kind of like a ferry. The ferry (really a glob of protein) sits amongst the fats of that liquidy, flexible cell layer.

When you eat consume lots of trans fats, stiff, twisted fats get used instead of the liquidy, flexible ones. Remember trans fats were kind of stiff?

The stiffness of the trans fats alters the “ferry’s” structure which keeps its passenger from being able to hook on. The “ferry” and its incoming or outgoing passenger are like two puzzle pieces that hook together.

When there is a predominance of omega 6 fats in the diet, the ferry’s passenger isn’t as able to deliver critical messages to the DNA or to other cells elsewhere.

Have you ever noticed how many products you use say “partially hydrogenated soybean/cottonseed/corn oil”? It’s the first ingredient of Coffeemate! Even worse, a heavy metal is used to get that hydrogen back on there. So these kinds of fats have many evil aspects to them:

- they are tainted with heavy metal due to the hydrogenation process
- they have a “twisted” molecular shape the body doesn’t recognize
- solvents are used to extract the oil from the plant (unless the product specifically says “pressed”, like through a screen to “squish” the oil out of the plant), leaving traces of harsh chemicals behind

And just so you know: in 1996, it became mandatory for food companies to label trans fat content. But there is a loophole: if the serving size contains 500 mg or LESS, then the label can say “0 g trans fats.”

There’s some fuzzy math for you: 500 mg = 0! Products merely had to change the size of their servings to legitimately list their product as “0 g trans fats.”

In the ongoing Nurses’ Health Study of 80,000 women, it was found that a 2% increase in **trans fat** calories translated into DOUBLE the risk for coronary disease!

If you stuck to a 2000 calorie per day diet, that is ONLY 40 calories of trans fat. The Institute of Medicine, a branch of the National Academy of

Sciences, declared in this article there is no safe amount of trans fat in the diet. ([San Francisco Chronicle](#) 1/30/2002 by Kim Severson)

Another alarming statistic about trans fats relates to **French fries**: merely one extra serving of French fries per week given to 3-5 year olds led to a 27% increased chance of breast cancer later on in life. Hot dogs, on the other, hand did not correlate with an increased risk. ([International Journal of Cancer](#) 8/10/05 Michaels, Rosner et al Harvard Medical School)

So beware of ANY product listing hydrogenated oil. The label could be deceiving due to food-labeling standards. [The Trans Fat Solution](#) provides guidance for cooking and shopping to avoid trans fats.

Merely eliminating trans fats from your diet will take you far towards achieving your goals of pain relief. You will get the extra added benefit of overall improved health, too!

### Simple Carbohydrates

Because there is a general knowledge of diabetes, most people are aware that eating sugar triggers the production of insulin. It's insulin's job to come in and use up the sugar. The more sugar that is consumed, the more insulin is produced.

Higher sugar levels relate to a measurement called the glycemic index. So if a food has a high glycemic index, then it is considered to produce a high amount of insulin.

Foods that have higher glycemic indexes are the typical bad foods: white sugar, white flour. Samples include enriched bread, donuts, bagels, pasta, white bread in general (rolls, pastries, etc.)

This is very important because a higher glycemic index with its higher insulin level stimulates the reaction which is 2 steps away from prostaglandin in the inflammation pathway.

So a diet with chronic refined simple carbs is going to keep the cycle of pain going. In my opinion, this is one of the most insidious aspects of seeking pain relief. Pain relievers stop one of the reactions in making prostaglandin. But meal after meal stimulates it all over again.

This doesn't even touch on the links of prostaglandin to chronic disease because prostaglandin production is responsible for more than pain. There are mountains of research that link it to decreased immune system, degeneration, heart disease, mood disorders, sunburn, and most importantly, cancer.

I feel patients can make HUGE strides in their pain levels and overall health by cutting back on refined sugars and flours as well as omega 6 oils and trans fats.

If you dovetail that with a healthy dose of omega 3 fish oils and antioxidants, you will be taking very positive steps towards managing your pain and disease levels.

### Meat

I hate to confirm what you might have been wondering. But meat also increases inflammation. The muscle and fat in meat, eggs and organ meats contain arachidonic acid (AA). And AA is one step away from prostaglandin in the inflammation pathway.

The carbohydrate-fattening of animals with grains (usually corn or soy) stimulates insulin production just like it does in humans. That causes inflammation products to be stored in their fat and muscle. Red meat tends to have more fat, thus more inflammation products than other meats.

Some side effects besides pain that can result from excessive amounts of arachidonic acid are chronic fatigue, poor or restless sleep, difficulty awakening or grogginess on wakening, brittle hair, thin, brittle nails, constipation and dry flaking skin.

The authors of [Protein Power](#) also cite sensitivity to arachidonic acid as a contributing factor to diabetes and high blood pressure. They suggest eliminating animal sources of arachidonic acid for a few weeks to note if there are improvements in insulin management or blood pressure.

[Scroll through this link for a tip on reducing the fat, and thus arachidonic acid, from a steak or roast while making it juicier at the same time.](#)

Range-fed, grass-fed and wild game are significantly healthier to eat. Their meat is harder to find and sure to be more expensive. But the authors of [Protein Power](#) say that individuals with arachidonic acid sensitivity should do better on these meats than with commercial feed lot animals.

So for immediate pain management, try cutting back on your meat consumption. Buy the leanest portions, trim fat off before cooking and drain off any cooked fat. And don't cook with animal fat (lard, left-over bacon grease, etc.)

For eggs, buy free-range which are usually available at most markets. Depending on your pain levels, consider going red-meat free for a couple of weeks. Eat free-range chicken in the meanwhile and see how things go. If you have the fortitude, go meat-free for a short time. Add back in free-range or wild game.

#### High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)

I will admit that this category is a bit of a weakness for even me. I have a bit of a Coca Cola habit. But I have scaled it back dramatically. When I did, it helped me to lose 20 stubborn pounds that wouldn't budge with working out alone.

[Fat Land explains the mechanism behind high fructose corn syrup and how it could be responsible for 15 pounds of your fat!](#)

But I digress: we are talking about pain relief. And this guy, HFCS, is worse than refined sugar. It happens to be a man-made sweetener. It stimulates insulin production just like sugar or white flour. But for some reason, its structure allows it to sit in the spot that insulin needs to go (on insulin's receptor site.)

This means that ALL of the insulin produced by HFCS is roaming around looking for someplace to go. So it all ends up in that step I mentioned above: stimulating the step that is two reactions away from prostaglandin in the inflammation pathway.

You should really be aware of this ingredient in your food purchases. It is the number one ingredient on Yoplait yogurts; soft drinks; bottled teas; many juices.

It is insidious—it is stimulating the inflammation and pain pathway. And there are mechanisms described in [Fat Land](#) that explain how this packs on the weight, too. Give up HFCS in beverages for a month and do nothing else. See how your pain or weight changes!

While you are seeking pain relief for the “here-and-now”, you should know that any steps you take towards improving your diet will reduce inflammation so that your pain levels CAN improve.

With all of these suggestions, it’s all about balance. You might find red meat is a much bigger aggravating factor to your pain than the next guy who finds that cutting out his daily donuts or soft drinks gives him more relief.

If you only cut down on soft drinks but eat red meat two times a day, though, just realize you might not have gone far enough.

Where you can’t eliminate, don’t beat yourself up. But see if things are changing. It might give you the reality to go further and eliminate one or more of the foods we have discussed.

This will make your body more receptive to whatever non-drug treatment you pursue.

I realize that none of the food items we’ve talked about are probably news to you that they are unhealthy. You probably never realized their link to flaring up pain due to the inflammation pathway link.

And I feel that by empowering you with the KNOWLEDGE of how your food is really affecting you, that it will give you the determinism to make important dietary changes beyond just being told, “Sugar and fat is bad for you.”

I hope it's becoming obvious how any step you take that keeps you off of pain relievers also helps you lower your cumulative risk for disease. Nice bonus isn't it??

### **MISTAKE #3**

#### **Patient Makes Pain Worse Every Hour at Work Due to Bad Sitting Posture**

Many people have a job that requires a lot of sitting. Whether their job requires them to work at a desk or drive a vehicle, chronic bad sitting posture makes them more prone to painful conditions.

Most people have never been taught the actual mechanics of proper sitting. There is merely the general consensus that you should "sit up straight."

However, there are simple strategies you can use so that you don't have to "remember".

A researcher at the University of Colorado found that 90% of the brain's energy is spent maintaining your posture against the force of gravity. That means the other 10% has to carry out all of the other functions of the body!

Can you see how you might not have any extra to spare for "remembering" to have good posture?

Check out my posture video for demonstrations on how to properly set up your chair

Also read the following articles ????. Order form for DVD

### **Mistake #4**

#### **Patient Doesn't Know About Natural Anti-Inflammatories or How to Properly Use Them**

The two ingredients found in cold-water fish are actually nature's anti-inflammatories. However, many patients have a "hang-up" about taking

fish oil and so don't include it in their vitamin regimen. Or many others who DO include it don't know the effective dosage, ratio of antioxidants that are required for proper metabolism, or about their product's purity.

Fish oils have proven so effective, that researchers at the University of Pittsburgh found that when non-surgical neck or back patients were given between 1200-2400 mg of omega 3 oils, that almost 60% of them were pleased enough with the pain-relieving qualities to discontinue their NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatories) (Surgical Neurology 65 April 2006 326-331). The patients were on the fish oil for an average of 75 days and began the first two weeks on the higher dose and reduced their dose for the remainder of the study.

So you see most people would make several mistakes in this category alone:

- a. Taking too small of a dose. Patients take the "recommended" dose on the bottle--usually 2 pills. Most store brands contain well under 1000 mg for 2 pills, when at least 1200 mg was used in the above study.

Consider taking a brand that gets a bigger dose in fewer pills. Nutriwest gets you 1350 mg in 3 pills, a healthy dose according to this study. A bottle of 90 capsules lasts you one month. <http://www.nutriwest.com>

- b. Most patients do not take the fish pills consistently enough to ever get a result. Did you ever start taking them and forget why you started and then just stop?? The above study was for 2 ½ months. If you ran out of your initial bottle you probably didn't make it to 2 ½ months.
- c. Many patients give up because they can't handle the taste on their lips or the fish burp.

Refrigerate your fish pills to reduce the chance of burping. Take them at bedtime so you're not aware of the fish burp. Take a gallbladder homeopathic remedy to handle the cause of the fish burp. <http://www.nutriwest.com> how to order??

- d. Most patients do not take enough antioxidants with the fish pills for proper metabolism. The special chemical bonds in the fish oils that make them so fluid and well-suited for your body are also very unstable.

The antioxidants balance out that instability. In fact, you would be WORSE off if you only consumed the fish oils WITHOUT enough antioxidants. So never skip your antioxidants (vitamins C, B & E).

Nutriwest makes an anti-oxidant co-factors that is designed to go with their fish oil formula. Then you don't have to worry about your multi vitamin not having enough. <http://www.nutriwest.com>

- e. Most generic brands are not molecularly-distilled for impurities like PCB's that contaminate every fish population on the planet. Without molecular distillation to purify the oil, you could be concentrating high doses of the carcinogen called PCB's.

Pharmaceutical-grade fish oils are the best you can buy and will be molecularly-distilled for mercury, PCB's and dioxins. Nutriwest is a pharmaceutical-grade fish oil. <http://www.nutriwest.com>

- f. Most patients do not know the correct ratios of the two ingredients that come from fish. The two ingredients are EPA and DHA. There are MANY studies in the literature that support supplementing with as high of an EPA content as possible. *EPA directly stops one of the steps in the inflammatory pathway.* This is vitally important for pain relief. It goes head-to-head in stopping the products we discussed in the food section that lead to inflammation.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dr. Barry Sears, MD advocates twice as much EPA to DHA for adults in his book [The Anti-Inflammation Zone: Reversing the Silent Epidemic That's Destroying Our Health](#). It is also advocated by Dr. Stoll MD of Harvard in his book [The Omega 3 Connection: The Groundbreaking Antidepressant Diet](#).

Many store brand formulas are only 3:2. That happens to be the naturally-occurring ratio. But once again, a HIGH ratio of EPA is recommended, especially to get the most effective pain relief.

Some brands of fish oils have whacky ratios that have no relation to proper metabolism. Wholesale club brands, for instance, are the worst of all worlds: bad ratios, low amounts of active ingredients and lack of purity.

- g. Patients were **WRONGLY** told that the omega 3's in FLAX will convert over into EPA found in fish.

While it is TRUE that a small portion of flax omega 3's can convert to EPA, it is a very inefficient pathway. Only 8-10% of flax can convert to EPA. So you would have to take huge quantities of flax oil to get a therapeutic amount of EPA. In fact, taking 6.3 g of flax for 2 years would not allow you to make adequate EPA and DHA. (Current Opinion in Clinical Nutrition and Metabolic Care Vol. 7(2) March 2004 pp 131-136)

There are also studies indicating men should take flax oil in moderation as there are links to prostate cancer with high doses of flax oil. Other studies show flax seeds can be consumed without limit, however.

- h. Patients are misled into supplementing with an Omega 3-6-9 product. You must know that Omega 9 is oleic acid—that is—olive oil. If you just add olive oil in your everyday cooking, it is not necessary to supplement with this fat.

It is the easiest thing to heat your pans with olive oil instead of butter or canned non-stick sprays. Add it to your boiling water for pasta. I LOVE to cook eggs in it. No need to add milk to scrambled eggs. The eggs are quite moist when cooked over low heat with olive oil.

Omega 3's have been studied against omega 9's. And omega 9's don't offer the pain relieving qualities or heart protection that omega 3's offer. In my opinion, it is a waste of money to buy a supplement with omega 9.

As for Omega 6's: Vegetable oils are omega 6's (also called linoleic acids). Safflower, soy, corn, canola, sunflower, cottonseed are all omega 6 oils. They are so prevalent in our diet that you never need to supplement with them, at least in this country.

They ARE essential. But our food supply is so overburdened with them that it is actually necessary to LIMIT them in your diet.

Most omega 6's dump right INTO the inflammatory pathway!! Please promise me you will never buy a supplement that has soy or corn oil.

The only omega 6 you will ever need to supplement with is a special one. It is technically *gamma* linoleic acid (GLA).

Your skin cannot convert the vegetable oils (linoleic acid) into GLA. So get GLA into your fat supplement with **borage oil, black currant seed oil** or **evening primrose oil**. Because it is helpful for the skin, it is considered a "beauty" supplement. In [Healthy Fats for Life](#), the author says that GLA should be supplemented in the same ratio as flax.

Nutriwest's Complete Omega 3 Essentials contain twice as much EPA as DHA. It also contains borage oil for the GLA fat. They also include an equal amount of flax as GLA. So it really is a complete source of oils. Plus it does NOT contain any wasteful olive oil or inflammation-provoking vegetable oils.

With 3 capsules a day of Nutriwest Complete Essentials, you get:

- 1350 mg of omega 3 fish oils
- 2 to 1 ratio of EPA to DHA
- 150 mg of flax oil
- 150 mg of essential GLA for your skin
- no inflammation-promoting omega 6 fatty acids
- no wasteful omega 9 oils
- molecularly-distilled
- pharmaceutical-grade

[\(Reference: Healthy Fats for Life by Vanderhaeghe\)](#)

I have searched the vitamin store shelves for a similar product. If the ratio of EPA to DHA is good, it doesn't contain GLA. Most products require at least one additional pill to get the same dose. Many require 3 additional pills to get Nutriwest's 1350 mg dose!

Brands that claim they are purified are not as pure as Nutriwest *unless* they say molecularly-distilled for dioxins and PCB's. You absolutely would not want to concentrate those toxins in your body.

I have looked at brands with cheaper per/bottle prices. But when you calculate the actual DOSE you need to take, you will find that you go through one bottle very quickly. Many brands end up being even more expensive than Nutriwest. So I stick with it and continue to recommend it to my patients as the most complete, quality product for the value.

## **MISTAKE #5**

### **Patient Uses the Wrong Pillow for Sleeping**

Many people know when they have had a funky night of sleep because when they wake up in the morning, things are sore, pinching or even painful. My experience has shown me that most people have no data about how to set up a pillow to support their body.

Cervical pillows come in all shapes and sizes. They usually have a curved out area for your head to lie on while the neck area is a little thicker. Some cervical pillows are skinnier on one side and fatter on the other.

Despite different thicknesses of cervical pillows that are available, there is one piece of data that makes many of them unworkable: the material of the pillow compresses to one degree or another and that causes you to lose spinal support as the night wears on.

This lack of support accounts for odd twists and pressure points that shouldn't exist. This fact holds true whether you are a side-sleeper or a back sleeper.

(I KNOW you weren't wondering about stomach sleepers, were you?? You should never, ever sleep on your stomach! That leads to terrible twisting and pressure through the lower neck joints. That position almost guarantees a recurring pain problem. If you see a chiropractor, they will love you because you will help pay for their kid's college tuition 😊 People who insist on sleeping on their stomach need this data worse than anyone!)

Anyway, back to correct pillow setup. You own a common household item that can be used to substitute for compressible pillows: bath towels. Start with approximately 3 folded bath towels. They should measure approximately the width of your shoulder to the base of your neck.

The beauty of using bath towels is they are completely adjustable at any time. Merely peel back one or two layers of towels to get the ideal height for comfort. The stack of towels SHOULDN' T feel hard on your head or ear. Add or subtract one layer and re-test if it does.

For those people who sleep on their back: use a hand towel and fold several times for the "just right" thickness to support your neck. Don't roll it into a cylinder though.

You will get the best results with these pillow tips when used with a firm mattress. Note this: a firm mattress with a cushy pillow top doesn't work as well.

Tempurpedic mattresses may work well if the mattress is newer. But after a couple of years, the material breaks down and a firm pillow setup cannot make up for the fact your body is sinking into the mattress.

Since we're talking about mattresses, I will tell you that slightly more than half of patients I have surveyed love their Select Comfort Air mattresses. Slightly less than half of them don't like it. The air mattress is not a perfect solution—probably because it is not a solid surface.

Another aspect to be aware about the Select Comfort bed is the motors break periodically and there is only a pro-rated amount of warranty coverage. Like the warranty you get on tire treads—you pay the portion of the repair based on how long you have owned it.

And several patients report their mattress naturally loses air throughout the week and they need to re-pump their desired firmness. So if the motor breaks, the mattress will become useless unless you fix it.

Check out my posture video for demonstrations on how to set up your pillow. Order form for DVD

## **MISTAKE #6**

### **Patient Exercises the Wrong Muscles to Relieve Pain**

Most people think they should work their abdominal muscles and low back muscles to strengthen their backs for pain relief.

However many people are unaware of their overall bad posture and how that is linked to their back pain.

To understand what I mean, let's quickly look at the mechanics of your back bones (vertebrae) and the attached muscles. You have muscles that pull vertebrae left; muscles that pull vertebrae right. You also have muscles that pull vertebrae forward (towards your belly button.)

But you don't have any muscles that can pull your vertebrae backwards. So when bones get out of place, your body is able to fix quite a few misalignments on its own. However, there is one direction that the body can't fix because there is no muscle to pull in that direction.

The body can't fix vertebrae that get stuck forward. So visualize someone with slumped forward posture. Most people think slumping is due to laziness. In fact, the body's inability to fix that forward misalignment is why you get slumped.

Slumping forward causes the low back muscles to tighten up to keep your body upright. Many patients who come in with low back pain as their main complaint have very notable slumped posture. That is, their head is protruding forward and/or they have a rounded upper back (the beginnings of that "hump" that your grandmother had).

So in my office it is necessary to address slumped posture with a certain kind of adjustment that allows the vertebrae to go BACKWARDS. It is different than traditional chiropractic adjustments. Traditional chiropractic adjustments usually have you lie down on your tummy and push on the back, from back to front.

This is different than in my office where you are standing up against the wall. With some leverage behind you, it allows the vertebrae to slide

backwards. Posture is better immediately. [Visit my chiropractic website for more information about this structural correction method used to improve posture and decrease pain.](#)

The benefit of improving slumped posture is your low back muscles can relax and stop causing pressure on the disc as well as muscles and nerves.

So any exercise that strengthens the frame so that you are less likely to get slumped posture is necessary in helping with back pain.

There are several groups of muscles that PULL the trunk forward: pec muscles in the chest; biceps muscles in the arms; abdominal muscles; psoas muscles in the hips. But do you know what muscles pull the shoulders BACKWARDS?

A small group of muscles called rhomboids. They aren't a very large muscle group, compared to the ones that were just mentioned.

Doing rowing exercises targets these muscles for strengthening. Add this simple strengthening exercise to your protocol to make your upper back less prone to getting out of place from bad posture while sitting.

There are very few activities that naturally use this muscle group so they are usually weak and full of knots in most people. Knots are more likely when a muscle is weak and stretched.

You really don't need to stretch this muscle group. It gets PLENTY of stretching from the typical person's chronic sitting posture. All of those muscles on the front of your body tend to pull it forward.

To complement strengthening the rhomboids, add in stretches to the pec muscles and abs. This is best accomplished by extending one's back over an exercise ball and slowly walking the spinal vertebrae over the ball while focusing the stretch through the armpits, the pecs, the belly and the groin.

Light strengthening of abs and low back muscles is desirable. However, many patients usually have tight low back muscles already and additional strengthening could exacerbate low back pain.

Rather, focus on other postural muscles like trapezius and latissimus. Those muscles are similar to the rhomboids in that many people do not naturally use them in their regular activity. They are chronically weak and if you've ever noticed knots in the tops of your shoulders, you will understand what happens to weak, stretched-out muscles.

Light strengthening of the traps will make them more resistant to wear-and-tear of bad posture.

Strengthening of the postural muscles helps prevent slumped posture. Reducing slumped posture will reduce strain on the skeleton that causes pain throughout the body.

Check out my posture video for demonstrations of strengthening rhomboids, traps and stretching pecs and abs with low-tech equipment like a Swiss ball and theraband. Order form for DVD

## **MISTAKE #7**

### **Patient Wears Shoes that Make Pain Worse**

I have consulted with hundreds of people about their shoes in conjunction with helping them with their pain. And I can tell you that many people fail to get pain relief because of misconceptions about "supportive" shoes.

There is a normal structural alignment of the foot, skeleton and spine. While most people aren't perfect, once people are misaligned to a certain degree, it can lead to pain.

Wearing orthotics to correct only the arch of the foot neglects the misalignments of the whole skeleton.

My experience with orthotics is that patients who have used them do not get predictable results with pain relief. Some people get relief of their back or foot pain with orthotics. Other people's pain gets worse with them. And some people must wear their orthotics every minute to maintain their relief-- even during a midnight trip to the potty (an actual patient's story)!

There is certain data about supportive shoes that can help you get pain relief, not just in the foot, but throughout the body, as long as your shoes support the whole skeleton, not just the arch bones.

Check out my posture video for demonstrations on the features of shoes that need to be addressed to ensure good support and what supports can maximize your support. Order form for DVD

Click for articles about shoes??

## **MISTAKE #8**

### **Patient Consumes Sugar-Free Products that Make Pain Worse**

#### Nutrasweet

Aspartame (the active ingredient in Nutrasweet—i.e. Equal, diet soft drinks) can replicate many symptoms for which people seek pain relief. This link shows [92 different symptoms reported to the FDA by the Department of Health and Human Services in 1995](#).

The major symptom reported is headaches. But also note that neurological symptoms were frequently reported as well as dizziness, numbness & tingling and sleep problems.

Artificial sweeteners are an easy item to remove from the diet to aid with pain relief. There is no nutritional value and every reason to discontinue it without a second thought!

FDA maintains that aspartame is safe for the food supply. But a well-documented study in the [European Journal of Oncology](#) (Vol. 10 No. 2 2005)

showed otherwise. [Check this link for an in-depth look at the FDA's antics in keeping aspartame on the market.](#)

I have to warn you that it is a bit hard to confront how something as toxic as aspartame is permitted in the food supply. But when you consider the money at stake for corporations, you will not believe the lengths that will be pursued to preserve profits and a sense of safety.

In the link above, pretty far down in the text, Dr. Russell Blaylock, the author of [The Taste That Kills](#), mentions that because of the way mice and rats in the studies metabolize aspartame compared to humans, we are actually 2 times more sensitive than rats and 7 times more sensitive than mice to having a seizure from aspartame. Something to keep in mind with the following study!

Lab rats were fed aspartame over the course of their lives in an amount equivalent to what a human would typically consume, adjusted for the rat's body size (20 mg/kg of body weight). They were allowed to die a natural death.

Rats who consumed the LOWEST amounts of aspartame had a 62% increased risk of lymphoma and leukemia.

Alarming enough, when another group of rats was fed methanol over the course of their lifetimes, their rates of lymphoma and leukemia increased by the same rate as rats which were fed aspartame.

Why would the researchers compare aspartame to methanol, you are probably wondering?? Because aspartame breaks down into aspartic acid, methanol and phenylalanine in the gastrointestinal tract of rodents and humans.

Methanol is not something you want to be ingesting, is it? According to Wikipedia, methanol is wood alcohol that is used as antifreeze, solvent, and fuel. Then methanol metabolizes into formic acid and formaldehyde (an embalming agent!)

Additionally, aspartic acid causes injury to neurons due to overstimulation of receptors for amino acids and can lead to stroke, hypoglycemia, epilepsy, Huntington's disease, ADD, dementia, Alzheimers and Lou Gherig's disease. ([New England Journal of Medicine](#) Lipton & Rosenberg 330(9): 613-622 1994)

Briefly, I wanted to tell you about a patient whose wife has a rare kind of thyroid cancer. She is quite young, in her 30's. She is living with it. My patient has been very concerned because she drinks diet Coke by the 2 liter daily. She refuses to quit drinking it. But at one point, he told me she did cut back quite a bit.

At her next cancer checkup, whatever they measure was smaller for the first time in all of her checkups. But that wasn't enough to convince her to quit. So she continues, despite having 2 small children to raise.

I don't understand how a person can pursue treatments and diagnostics that are enough to break the bank on a person's life savings, yet be unwilling to give up a \$1/day habit that is shown to promote cancer like wildfire?

Check [Dr. Blaylock's book](#) for further information about aspartame's link to causing cancer, and promoting it once you have it.

Eliminating aspartame from your diet is so important for getting relief from your pain that I INSISTED it have its own category outside of the food category. It is also critical for reducing your risk for nasty, incurable diseases later in life!

### Splenda

There isn't as much research about this artificial sweetener as there is for aspartame. But you should know that sucralose (which is the chemical sweetener in Splenda) is a sugar molecule with three chlorines attached.

The manufacturers claim it is no more harmful than the chlorines that are in sodium chloride. That's like saying there's nothing wrong with consuming the chlorine in hydrochloric acid!

It's just marketing, not science. Chlorines cause more free radicals in the body than any other element except fluorine. It's NOT a by-product that you want to be exposed to. And you definitely don't want to expose children or pregnant women to it!

Sucralose can cause sluggishness, fatigue, make legs feel like lead weights, mood swings, severe cramps, intense pain, painful bowel movements,

bloating, dizziness, confusion, brain fog, diarrhea, nausea and joint pain. (Reference: [Splenda: Is it Safe or Not? Janet Starr Hull](#))

It is found in nearly 4,000 food, beverage and health-care products, including diet drinks, ice cream, protein bars, vitamins and toothpaste. It is also found in gum, OTC drugs and salad dressings.

Janet Starr Hull's book [Splenda: Is It Safe or Not?](#) makes the case for not using artificial sweeteners.

### Stevia

A good alternative to Splenda, saccharin and Nutrasweet is stevia. It is a natural herbal sweetener. It is 300 times sweeter than sugar. It has been used for hundreds of years in South America as a sweetener.

It can't be patented so you won't find big commercial interests like Monsanto promoting it. Instead of the "little blue packet" (like Equal) stevia comes in the "little green packet" as marketed by Sweet Leaf. You can also buy it in a bottle of liquid.

It's available at traditional grocery stores in the Denver market as well as health food markets. Look in the aisle with artificial sweeteners. I haven't explored if smaller towns carry it.

Consider ordering from Steve at [www.stevia-extract-sweetener.com](http://www.stevia-extract-sweetener.com) for a quality product that apparently tastes better than the store brands. He even has stevia plants for sale—you can plant your own and harvest the leaves for your own home-grown sweetener.

At least swap out the Equal in your coffee and tea with this product to cut back on your aspartame intake overnight.

For a diet soft drink alternative, try sparkling waters. I love to have a "bubbly water" and I buy the store brand of canned bubbly water for something to stick in the refrigerator that satisfies my urge for carbonation. Add a stevia packet for sweetening, though I like it just fine without.

At restaurants, I order club soda with lime. It might take a bit of acquiring the taste. But I like it as an alternative to plain water myself. Splurge once in awhile on better brands. Calistoga sparkling water is a tasty brand available in the Denver market.

Dr. Hull recommends [The Stevia Cookbook](#) for those who need to cook without sugar and want to avoid artificial sweeteners. I admit I don't cook much and haven't tried the book myself. But the index has quite a few yummy sounding recipes!

The bottom line for artificial sweeteners is this: medicating over the top of a slew of diet drinks, Equal in your coffee or tea, gelatins, yogurt and other "diet" products each day is exposing you to a creditable risk of disease while *continuing the cycle of pain*.

## MISTAKE #9

### **Patient Uses Statin Drugs to Lower their Cholesterol**

If you are struggling with ongoing aches and pains, strains and sprains, and just aren't responding to treatment protocols, whether its drugs, chiropractic, massage or exercise, AND you are taking drugs to lower cholesterol then you MUST know this information and talk to your doctor about it.

I know that if anything is going to upset you that this item is the most likely to put you on the defensive. That's because everyone "knows" you shouldn't have high cholesterol so that you don't have heart or stroke problems. It is just one of those common knowledge things like "brush your teeth after every meal."

What you haven't been told is this: the manufacturers of the class of drugs which lower cholesterol—called "statins"—rake in \$25 billion a year from statin drugs alone ([Reference: Selling Sickness](#) by Moynihan).

There is a vested financial interest towards keeping you on your statins, so let's just clear the air about that fact. Statins are a BLOCKBUSTER product. Great for making stock investors happy. Not great for your health as you are going to see!

You will be surprised to know that only 50% of all people who die suddenly from cardiac causes don't even have a history of heart disease. ([New England Journal of Medicine](#) Vol. 346 No. 15 111-8 April 11, 2002)

Thus, half of all deaths do not have an indicator like high cholesterol. That is the first misleading thing about medicating with statins that must be considered.

What about statin's proven record of preventing cardiovascular deaths? The most-cited study for statin effectiveness goes like this: a group of 100 people were on statins; another group of 100 people weren't on it. The group on statin drugs had 2 cardiovascular deaths.

Three people died in the group that didn't take the drug. The statistics are stated to say there was a 50% better outcome from using statins (50% being the difference between 2 and 3 deaths. One death is 50% of 2!)

Do you see that the difference from 3 deaths to 2 deaths is actually very small? It's really only a 1% difference in mortality. So the purported benefit is actually very small.

And when you consider that consuming statins causes a 1600% increased chance of peripheral neuropathy, is it any wonder you need to take a hard look at continuing this medication? (Neurology May 2002)

There are MANY problems that statins cause in your blood chemistry. Without overwhelming you with a biochemistry lesson that will make your head spin, let's understand what statins do.

Glucose (the smallest unit of sugar) is metabolized to a product called acetyl-CoA. It takes 32 steps to turn acetyl-CoA into cholesterol. Statin drugs inhibit product #3 from being converted to product #4 in the pathway. So nothing after product #4 gets made.

Now you have 28 other compounds after product #4 being interfered with. Seems a little drastic, don't you think?

In addition to that, cholesterol is the main ingredient for steroid hormones. Limiting its production will limit the precursors needed for:

- 7 more steps to produce bile acids
- 7 more steps to produce aldosterone
- 8 more steps to produce estrogen
- 6 more steps to produce cortisol

- 7 more steps to produce testosterone (Reference: [Metabolism at a Glance](#) by J.G. Salway 2004)

What is especially noteworthy about statins and pain is the interference of Acetyl CoA's ability to make enough energy for the cell's needs. The energy unit for the cell is called ATP and it is severely limited in the presence of statins due to the pathway described above.

Collagen, the elastic-like product in musculoskeletal tissue, requires lots of ATP. When there is a shortage of ATP, collagen is weak and falls apart. You will be more prone to muscle tears and strains. Thus you will be more prone to pain and not likely to heal well once you are injured.

As a chiropractor, I have documented DRASTIC improvements several times over with patients once they removed themselves from their statin protocol. The difference is like night and day.

Patients who never improved began to improve. Other patients who had reached a plateau for a long time began new levels of improvement once statin therapy was stopped.

Mind you, statins cause some damage and extra vitamin and mineral supplementation should be included to boost all of those cycles back to a normal level so healing can begin. Just quitting the drug is one part of it. Replacing depleted good guys is the other part of it.

Finally, if you and your doctor really want to measure your risk for cardiovascular events, research in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) points to a marker in the blood called C-reactive protein (CRP) as superior to LDL cholesterol in predicting cardiovascular risk. ([NEJM](#) Vol. 347 No. 20 Nov. 14, 2002 pp. 1557-1565)

Authors of this article comment that LDL cholesterol levels have been the focus of current guidelines because of its importance of forming plaques on the inner linings of the arteries.

But these authors go on to say that clot formation often occurs in the ABSENCE of high LDL's. CRP levels mark overall inflammation throughout the body and correlate for an overall risk of disease including heart attack, stroke, sudden cardiac death, and peripheral arterial disease.

It can be measured inexpensively with “high-sensitivity assay” and are stable over long periods, without fluctuations throughout the day like other testing.

But the authors also comment that correlating LDL and CRP levels provided better prognosis than either test alone because it identified high risks better than screening for either one alone.

Besides CRP, there is another test that can be beneficial in determining overall bodily inflammation and risk for disease (including cardiovascular events).

It is the ratio of omega 6's to EPA. The test is called SIP: silent inflammation profile. [Dr. Barry Sears' book explains the details behind SIP, or silent inflammation profile.](#) Your doctor can go to [www.siptesting.com](http://www.siptesting.com) for assistance with ordering this blood test.

[A very healthy SIP measurement is 1.5-3.](#) SIP measurements above 10 need immediate correction. Schizophrenics have a SIP of 70! All of the dietary and omega 3 suggestions I have made are effective at changing this ratio while taking statins would have little to no effect.

So at this point, I hope I have convinced you to open up talks about alternatives to statins with your doctor. But I'm sure you are feeling scared that if your cholesterol isn't managed, that you will be more prone to having a cardiovascular event, right? After all, that was the whole reason you began this drug therapy.

You are in luck, because there is abundant research that points to omega 3 fatty acids providing significant heart protection (yes, our old fish oil friend):

- Omega 3's reduced the chance of cardiovascular death by 32% while statins only reduced it by 22% (a 44% difference). ([Archives of Internal Medicine](#) April 11, 2005; pp. 725-730)
- Omega 3's reduced death from all reasons by 23% while statins only reduced it by 13% (a 32% difference) ([Archives of Internal Medicine](#) April 11, 2005; pp. 725-730)

- Compelling evidence from studies, investigations and trials show 3 dietary strategies that are effective at preventing heart disease:
  - Substitute unsaturated fats for saturated and trans fats (Review [foods](#) to refresh your memory on what these are)
  - Increase consumption of omega 3 fatty acids from fish or plants (Review the [Omega 3](#) section for what to look for)
  - Consume a diet high in fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains and low in refined grains
  - Reference: [Journal of the American Medical Association](#) Vol. 288, No. 20, Nov. 27, 2002, pp 2569-2578
  
- Men with the highest levels of omega 3 fatty acids in their blood had **81% reduced risk** of cardiovascular event as compared to men with the lowest amounts of omega 3 fatty acids in their blood. ([New England Journal of Medicine](#) Vol. 346, No. 15, 1113-8 April 11, 2002)
  
- Patients who had already suffered one heart attack had a 41% lower risk of dying from cardiovascular events after only 3 months at a low dose of 1g per day of omega 3's [Note: these authors consider 1g a low dose] ([Circulation](#) 2002; 105: 1897-1903 April 23, 2002)
  
- Coronary heart disease is the most common cause of death in the US.
  - Consuming 4g a day of omega 3 fatty acids reduces high triglycerides by 25-30%
  - Healthy people should take about 1.2 g a day of omega 3's
  - Because mercury in fish might lessen the protective effect, fish oil supplements should be mercury-free
  - Reference: [British Medical Journal](#) 2004; 328: 30-35 January 3, 2004
  
- **Fun Fact:** Consuming omega 3 fish oils is 800% more effective at preventing sudden cardiac death than having an AED defibrillator machine on-hand in all public areas and homes. *About 75% of the reduction in deaths would occur from apparently healthy individuals supplementing with omega 3's.* ([American Journal of Preventive Medicine](#) Vol. 31, Issue 4, October 2006, p. 316)

Have I belabored the point enough about not needing statins, but rather, needing omega 3's to reduce your risk of cardiovascular events? Did you read Mistake #34 about using natural anti-inflammatories? If not, [read that now](#). Then order your pharmaceutical-grade **Omega 3's and anti-oxidants**.

[For more info about cholesterol side effects and additional studies visit Dr. Duane Graveline's website about statins.](#) This site belongs to Dr. Duane Graveline MD, a retired physician and astronaut. He presents similar findings as we've already discussed. [Or you can get his book to learn more details about the statin culture in traditional medicine.](#)

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I would love to hear back from you after you have tried some of the strategies and tips I have outlined.

Now that I have all of this written out, I intend on getting this succinct info into the hands of my patients. It's truly hard to convey everything I know to each and every patient to help them with their pain relief.

Chances are we can never meet or work together. But you have an edge on all of the people who are paying me for my help!

When the time comes and if you are ready to explore the natural inflammation-fighting effects of chiropractic adjustments, I can only imagine the advanced results you would get by following the tips in this book before starting care.

And even though I personally have a structural correction focus in my office, I believe you would obtain great results with pain relief no matter what kind of chiropractor you picked.

All of the mistakes that I have described truly sabotage my patients' efforts at getting the best results. If you take these ideas and work them into your diet, your supplement routine and your posture/exercise routine, I feel confident in saying that you will get better pain relief than any drug you

have ever tried. And you might even get better relief than patients who continue to ignore their diet, drugs and supplements.

I am hoping the best for you in protection from pain while also protecting your long-term health.

Please feel free to email this e-book to friends you know who could be helped with the suggestions provided.

[Email me your feedback](#) so I know how to focus my future efforts, whether it is reviewing the latest research and updating you or making a suggestion about a good supplement or posture support product.

Come back to the website regularly. It will be a continual work-in-progress as there will always be new research on health and nutrition to get to you!

Yours in Health,

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