

TAKE CARE

■ **Diabetes medication linked to bladder cancer risk.** The Food and Drug Administration has found that people with diabetes who take *pioglitazone* (Actos) for one year or longer have a 40% increased risk for bladder cancer. If you are taking pioglitazone, speak to your doctor about changing medications...or work with a holistic doctor to treat diabetes naturally.

The FDA Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program.

■ **Wrinkles can predict women's bone fracture risk.** We usually think of wrinkles as a sign of aging, but researchers at Yale School of Medicine believe that the severity of wrinkles also may indicate bone mineral density in menopausal women. *Reason:* Bones and skin share common proteins. The researchers found that the worse the wrinkles (severity and distribution throughout the body), the greater the risk for low bone density and bone fracture risk. If wrinkles are an indicator of bone health, they may tell you that your bone density needs to be checked.

Lubna Pal, et al., "Skin Wrinkling and Rigidity Are Predictive of Bone Mineral Density in Early Postmenopausal Women" presented at the Endocrine Society Meeting in Boston in June 2011.

■ **Brisk walking may reduce prostate cancer progression.** Researchers from the University of California, San Francisco, and Harvard School of Public Health found that men diagnosed with early-stage prostate cancer who walked briskly for at least three miles per hour for three hours or more weekly were 57% less likely to need a second round of treatment (treatment type was not specified in this study) or show any progression of the disease than those who walked for less time or more slowly. To benefit,

the exercise needed to be vigorous enough to elevate the heart rate—another example of physical activity having a positive effect on disease.

E. L. Richman, et al., "Physical Activity After Diagnosis and Risk of Prostate Cancer Progression: Data from the Cancer of the Prostate Strategic Urologic Research Endeavor," *Cancer Research* (2011).

■ **Psychotherapy changes brain activity.** McMaster University researchers in Canada measured brain activity with electroencephalograms (EEGs) in patients with social anxiety disorder who had participated in 12 weekly

sessions of group cognitive behavior therapy. They found that the easing of symptoms was reflected in the patients' EEGs. This

study is one more step in establishing the beneficial neurological effects of psychotherapy.

V. Miskovic, et al., "Changes in EEG Cross-Frequency During Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Social Anxiety Disorder," *Psychological Science* (2011).

Help for low-back pain

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At home I serve the kind of food I know the story behind.

—Michael Pollan, American author and food activist (1955 –)

HEALTH EFFECTS

Mindfulness Makes More of Everyday Life

Do you rush through chores, distracting yourself by thinking about other things? What if you took a different approach to a chore such as washing the dishes? What if you slowed down and immersed yourself in the sensory experience of being at the sink? Many people are surprised to discover that they can enrich their lives by becoming more mindful throughout the day.

Mindfulness is good for our health because it relaxes us and helps to reduce stress. To transform even the most mundane chore like dishwashing into a more meaningful experience, our editors spoke with Ronald Alexander, PhD, a clinical psychotherapist who is executive director of the OpenMind Training Institute in Santa Monica, California, and author of *Wise Mind, Open Mind: Finding Purpose and Meaning in Times of Crisis, Loss and Change* (New Harbinger, www.RonaldAlexander.com). Here is what you need to know...

Focus on what you're doing. Taking dishwashing as an example, use your senses. Notice how heavy each pot feels...how the water feels on your skin. Breathe deeply while you work. Look on the kitchen countertop, and take pleasure in the small things around you—a vase that you picked out on a trip or a spice that you especially like.

Feel curious, feel alive. Being engaged in what you're doing with all your senses makes any task seem less tedious. You are open to what's around you...you feel curious...and you feel alive.

Free your mind from stressful thoughts. When you heighten your senses in this way, you may find yourself in a state of pleasant concentration, which is called being "in the flow." In this mind-set, it is difficult to have unpleasant thoughts. This kind of "awareness" also enhances your creativity and intuition. The dishes are clean—and you feel better for having washed them.

BOTTOM LINE Natural Healing

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