



Natural Standard

The Authority on Integrative Medicine

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Complementary Practices in Heart Health

A new study on cardiac healing has shown that prayer, music and healing touch may speed recovery and help assure good health after surgery. Prior to undergoing angiograms or other cardiac procedures 748 participants were randomly assigned to receive either off-site intercessory prayer from a variety of religions (Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist), music, imagery and touch therapy (MIT), or no intervention. The prayer recipients were unaware they were being prayed for. Other patients underwent healing touch designed to change the energy around the body to promote healing. The rest listened to music (easy listening, classical, or country music) followed by 10 minutes of guided imagery. Results found that people who received prayer appeared no better after the heart procedure than those who did not. Prayer and MIT therapy did not have an effect on the risk of further heart complications or readmission to the hospital. Although MIT recipients were found to be 65 percent less likely to die within six months of their surgery than people who received no intervention. Researchers suggest that these alternative therapies may help speed recovery when used in conjunction with traditional methods. They add that MIT may help to reduce stress prior to and following surgery which leads to decreased inflammation and quicker healing.



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Prayer on behalf of the ill plays a prominent role across cultures around the world. It may be practiced by individuals or organized groups within the framework of organized religion or without a particular faith. Intercessory prayer refers to prayers said on behalf of a person. Intercessors can have specific objectives in mind or can appeal for the general improvement of a patient's health. Prayers said by intercessors may or may not be known to the individual. Intercessory prayers may be performed from a distance or in the presence of patients, and in some cases will involve the laying on of hands. Studies of the effects of prayer on health report variable results with most research in this area not being scientifically well designed. This is because there are many different types of prayer and religious orientations, intercessors do not always know the patients in studies and prayers are often non-specific, it is hard to design a study with placebo prayer, and there is not an accepted test to best measure outcomes. Therapeutic guided imagery is used to help patients relax and focus on images associated with their personal health issues. Experienced guided imagery practitioners use an interactive guiding style to encourage patients to find solutions to problems by exploring their existing inner resources.

For more information please visit [Natural Standard's](#) Complementary Practices database.

References: 1) Vogel JH, et al. Integrating complementary medicine into cardiovascular medicine.

Safety Review of Kava



A **Natural Standard** safety review of kava was published in July's edition of Expert Opinion on Drug Safety (EODS).

Kava beverages, made from dried roots of the perennial shrub *Piper methysticum*, have been used ceremonially and socially in the South Pacific for hundreds of years and in Europe since the 1700s. The drink is reported to have pleasant mild psychoactive effects, similar to alcoholic beverages in western societies. Recreational use of kava has spread over the last 20 years to Aboriginal communities in Australia, where it is often heavily consumed in combination with alcohol. In Fiji, kava is still used today during welcome ceremonies for local and international political and religious dignitaries. Pharmaceutical preparations of the anxiolytic herb have been withdrawn in many countries due to safety concerns.

Several well-conducted human trials and meta-analyses have demonstrated the efficacy of kava in the treatment of anxiety, with effects observed after as few as 1-2 doses, and progressive improvements over 1-4 weeks. Oral preparations are widely recommended by European physicians and natural medicine practitioners. There is widespread concern regarding the potential hepatotoxicity of kava. Many cases of liver damage have been reported in Europe, including hepatitis, cirrhosis, fulminant liver failure and death, although some researchers have challenged these reports and maintained that kava is safe in most individuals at recommended doses. The EODS review consolidates international case reports and policy changes. An improved post market surveillance program is recommended.

Multiple studies suggest that kava lessens anxiety. However, scientific evidence does not support the use of kava for any other conditions. The safety of kava use remains unclear. Clinicians and patients should understand the risks involved prior to considering use of this agent. There have been recent reports of serious liver damage or death in people using kava. It is not clear if these problems occurred at high doses or after long-term use. Therefore, kava should only be used under the supervision of a qualified healthcare provider. Kava should never be taken at doses higher than recommended, or for longer than two months. Kava should be avoided in people with liver disease, Parkinson's disease, or lung disease; in pregnant or breastfeeding women; and in children. It should not be used in people taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors or drugs that may damage the liver or cause drowsiness.

Natural Standard has collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO) Advisory Committee on Safety of Medicinal Products on a new official report on kava and hepatotoxicity. Results will be published in 2005. Because kava is not available in many areas of the world, individuals may instead turn to alternative therapies for anxiety treatment. In addition to other herbs or supplements such as lavender, a variety of modalities, including aromatherapy, relaxation therapy and yoga may help reduce anxiety without hepatic effects.

For more information on Kava, please visit **Natural Standard's** Herbs & Supplements database.

References: 1) Catherine Ulbricht, Ethan Basch, Heather Boon, Edzard Ernst, Paul Hammerness, Adrienne Rogers, David Sollars, Candy Tsourounis, Jen Woods & Stephen Bent. Safety review of kava (*Piper methysticum*) by the Natural Standard Research Collaboration. *Expert Opin. Drug Saf.* (2005) 4(4):779-794 [View Abstract](#).

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to the public about taking Liqiang 4 Dietary Supplement Capsules due to possible health risks. Liqiang 4 contains glyburide, which is a prescription drug used to lower blood sugar, but in consumers with hypoglycemia or diabetes glyburide levels can become too high. People experiencing symptoms of fatigue, excessive hunger, profuse sweating, or numbness of the extremities should discontinue use and seek medical attention. Liqiang Research Institute in China is the manufacturer marketing the product in a double pack with Liqiang 1, which is also being evaluated by the FDA for safety.

The FDA is encouraging anyone who experiences adverse effects to report them to their MedWatch program by phone 1-800-FDA-1088; by FAX 1-800-FDA-0178; by mail to MedWatch, Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD, 20857-9787; or online at www.fda.gov/medwatch/report.htm.

International CAM Healthcare Conference

Complementary & Natural Healthcare Expo

The International Complementary and Natural Healthcare Conference and Expo (CAM Expo) will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center October 7-9. The conference features the latest research in the fields of complementary and alternative healthcare and will serve as a meeting place for experts on and consumers of natural healthcare products.

Keynote speakers include: Jeffrey S. Bland PhD (Founder Institute for Functional Medicine), David Eisenberg MD, Mark Hyman MD (Editor-in-Chief, Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine), James S. Gordon MD (Founder and Director Center for Mind Body Medicine), Christine Horner MD (Board Certified Plastic Surgeon, Author and Natural Health Expert) and Morgan Spurlock (Filmmaker and Director "Super Size Me").

For more information, please visit <http://www.camexpowest.com>.

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Lorenzo's Oil for ALD



Johns Hopkins researchers have completed a study on boys with Adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD) testing the efficacy of the treatment known as Lorenzo's Oil (4:1 glyceryl trioleate-glyceryl trierucate). The trial involved 89 boys age seven or younger who had the X-ALD gene with no symptoms. The boys were followed for an average of seven years while they took Lorenzo's Oil and followed a fat restricted diet. They were tested using MRI studies and the monitoring of plasma hexacosanoic acid levels. Results showed 74 percent of the boys showed no signs of disease progression after treatment with Lorenzo's Oil. Of the boys, 24 percent developed MRI abnormalities and 11 percent developed both neurological and MRI abnormalities. These numbers indicated a large reduction in normal disease progression. Other potential treatments being studied for ALD include the cholesterol drug Lovastatin and bone marrow transplants.

Adrenoleukodystrophy is a degenerative disease caused by a build up of long-chain fatty acids (c22 to c28) leading to the destruction of the myelin sheath on nerve cells. Progression includes the loss of the ability to speak, muscle strength, coordination and eventually death. ALD is a genetic disorder that affects 200,000 people worldwide; linked to the X chromosome it takes the most severe form in males. The body is unable to break down long fat molecules, both the ones made by the body and those consumed. The build up clogs damages nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. Approximately 40 percent of all cases of ALD are childhood cerebral form (CCER). CCER is the type that Lorenzo Odone has, the Lorenzo's Oil treatment was developed for him with his case

popularized by a 1992 movie. The second form is called adrenomyeloneuropathy (AMN), represents about 40 percent of all ALD cases affecting men in their twenties similar to multiple sclerosis with gradual loss of nerve function. ALD destroys the adrenal glands and can show early onset as Addison's disease in about 10 percent of cases.

Lorenzo's oil is a combination of two fats extracted from olive oil and rapeseed oil. Rapeseed oil is made from the plant *Brassica Napus*, the rapeseed plant which is a part of the mustard family. It is used in the industrial production of fatty vegetable oils. Rapeseed Oil, also called rape oil, is considered toxic, but the same terms are used for both the fatty, fixed, edible oil and the poisonous, volatile essential oil. The part extracted for use in Lorenzo's oil to be used therapeutically is a non-toxic fat. Rapeseed oil in its natural form has had reports of emphysema, respiratory distress, anemia, constipation, irritability, and blindness in animals and humans linked to it. Rapeseed oil was the source of the chemical warfare agent mustard gas, which blistered the lungs and skins of people during World War I; French reports indicate that it was again in use during the Gulf War. The oil was widely used in animal feeds in England and Europe in the late 1980's, when it was marked as harmful. As a response to the potential dangers, American and Canadian farmers now grow genetically engineered rapeseed and market its oil as canola in thousands of processed foods. Canola means "Canadian oil" and rapidly this genetically modified rapeseed oil is replacing peanut oil in a lot of processed foods because it's cheaper and less allergenic than peanut oil.

For more information on these oils please visit [Natural Standard's Herbs & Supplements database](#).

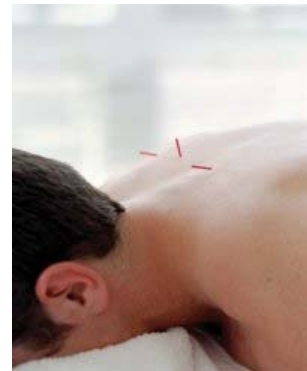
References: 1) Moser HW, Raymond GV, Lu SE, Muenz LR, Moser AB, Xu J, Jones RO, Loes DJ, Melhem ER, Dubey P, Bezman L, Brereton NH, Odone A. Follow-up of 89 Asymptomatic Patients With Adrenoleukodystrophy Treated With Lorenzo's Oil. Arch Neurol. 2005 Jul;62(7):1073-80. [View Abstract](#). 2) Wang AH, Bao XH, Xiong H, Pan H, Wu Y, Zhang YH, Shi CY, Qin J, Wu XR. [Screening for carrier and prenatal diagnosis of X-linked adrenoleukodystrophy] Zhonghua Er Ke Za Zhi. 2005 May;43(5):345-9 [View Abstract](#).

12th Annual Acupuncture Research Conference

The 12th Annual Conference of the Society for Acupuncture Research will be held at La Posada de Albuquerque in New Mexico on October 21-23. The conference provides a forum for discussion of research on Traditional Chinese Medicine between practitioners, educators and students. Abstracts are being accepted on clinical studies evaluating the therapeutic effects of acupuncture including mechanisms of action, methodological issues and epidemiological studies.

For more information, please visit <http://www.acupunctureresearch.org>.

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Fish Oil in Arrhythmia Patients



According to a recent study at the Portland, Oregon, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, fish oil does not reduce the risk of the abnormal heart rhythms- ventricular tachycardia (VT) or ventricular fibrillation (VF), in patients with implantable defibrillators. It may for some patients, even contribute to arrhythmias. Further research is needed to confirm these results.

In this randomized controlled clinical trial researchers compared patients receiving an olive oil placebo to patients who were given fish oil. The fish oil patients

experienced increased arrhythmias. Seventy-nine percent of the patients who qualified with VT (rapid heartbeat) had VT/VF (heart flutters) at the conclusion of the two-year study; 14 percent more than the placebo group. Sixty-five percent of VT/VF patients treated with fish oil had ICD (implantable cardioverter defibrillator) therapy, while 59 percent of those in the placebo group required similar therapy.

Researchers did see a 3.6 percent increased level of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) in the group taking fish oil and no increase in the placebo group. While PUFAs are thought to decrease blood lipid levels and thus ease blood flow, per the authors other ingredients in fish oil may cause changes in the heart cell walls, affecting the normal passage of electric charges that regulate heartbeats.

Please visit [Natural Standard's Herbs & Supplements database](#) to learn more about the use of fish oil in other healthcare conditions.

References: 1) Raitt MH, Connor WE, Morris C, Kron J, Halperin B, Chugh SS, McClelland J, Cook J, MacMurdy K, Swenson R, Connor SL, Gerhard G, Kraemer DF, Oseran D, Marchant C, Calhoun D, Shnider R, McAnulty J. Fish oil supplementation and risk of ventricular tachycardia and ventricular fibrillation in patients with implantable defibrillators: a randomized controlled trial. JAMA. 2005 Jun 15;293(23):2884-91 [View Abstract](#).

Pomegranate Juice may be Neuroprotective

Pomegranate juice diminished brain tissue loss in the neonatal mouse brain in a study published in the Journal of Pediatric Research. Recent developments in biology have found that a diet rich in polyphenols can provide anti-aging properties and neuroprotection in sufferers of ischemia and Alzheimer's disease. This idea was applied to neonatal hypoxic-ischemic brain injury in this study done by researchers in the Division of Neonatology at the University of Washington. The trial, performed on mice, provided pregnant mothers with pomegranate juice, which is known for its high



polyphenol content. In the last third of pregnancy and the period of litter suckling, the mother mice were provided with pomegranate juice or controls of plain water, sugar water and vitamin C water. At seven days old the pups underwent unilateral carotid ligation followed by 8 percent oxygen for 45 minutes. Results showed a 60 percent decrease in brain tissue loss and diminished caspase-3 activation by 84 percent in the hippocampus and 64 percent in the cortex. The mice pups from the litters that received pomegranate juice also had levels of ellagic acid in their system. Ellagic acid is a phenolic compound that has been tested for its anti-carcinogen and anti-mutagen effects.

Hypoxia ischemia is caused by decreased blood flow and oxygen to an infant's developing brain it is often linked to premature birth, brain tissue loss, seizures and mobility problems. About two out of every 1,000 full-term human births and in a very high percentage of premature babies experience hypoxia ischemia. Researchers suggest that women interested in the neuroprotective effects of red wine could possibly substitute pomegranate juice during pregnancy to receive the same effects without the harmful effects of the alcohol.

Other fruits rich in polyphenols include: strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, red raspberries, grapes and green tea. For more information on pomegranate and polyphenols please visit [Natural Standard's Herbs & Supplements database](#).

References: 1) Loren DJ, Seeram NP, Schulman RN, Holtzman DM Maternal dietary supplementation with pomegranate juice is neuroprotective in an animal model of neonatal hypoxic-ischemic brain injury. *Pediatr Res*. 2005 Jun;57(6):858-64. Epub 2005 Mar 17 [View Abstract](#).

Apple Cider Vinegar



Natural Standard published an Apple Cider Vinegar review in July issue of the [International Journal of Naturopathic Medicine](#).

Apple cider vinegar (ACV) is prepared by pulverizing apples into a slurry of juice and pulp. Yeast and sugars are added to the slurry to begin the fermentation process. Yeast converts the sugars into alcohol, which is then oxidized by the acetobacter species of bacteria to acetic acid. The sour taste of apple cider vinegar is from the acetic acid content, which also

creates the acidity.

Apple cider vinegar has been used alone and in combination with other agents for numerous health conditions. For example, in combination with grapefruit and kelp, apple cider vinegar has been used orally for weight loss. Notably, during the diet "craze" of the 1970s, proponents suggested that a combination of apple cider, kelp, vitamin B6, and lecithin could "trick" the body's metabolism into burning fat faster. With the ban of ephedra many people are looking for alternative weight loss products. Claims of preventing viral and bacterial infections, as well as allergic reactions to pollen, dander and dust stem from the proposed ability of apple cider vinegar to prevent alkalization of the body. However, there is insufficient scientific evidence to form a clear conclusion about the efficacy or safety of apple cider vinegar for this or any other specific health condition. There may be long-term risks associated with the acidity of apple cider vinegar, including lowered potassium levels (hypokalemia) or diminished bone mineral density. Apple cider vinegar has been used as a flavoring agent and as a household sanitizer.

For more information about ACV and other therapies please visit **Natural Standard's** Herbs & Supplements database.

References: 1) Lhotta K, Hofle G, Gasser R, Finkenstedt G. Hypokalemia, hyperreninemia and osteoporosis in a patient ingesting large amounts of cider vinegar. *Nephron*. 1998 Oct;80(2):242-3 [View Abstract](#).

Inside Natural Standard



New Team Member: **Natural Standard** is pleased to welcome Vernon Hickey to the Business Development team.

Natural Standard also has several students doing academic rotations including: Chi Dam, Tamara Milkin, Lisa Wendt, Olaitan Akinade and Martha A. Maguire. In addition, Adam McLean and Trihn Nguyen from England will be joining us starting in August through the [International Pharmacist Student Federation \(ISPF\)](#). We welcome trainees of all disciplines to participate in local or virtual rotations.

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