



# Natural Standard

The Authority on Integrative Medicine

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**Natural Standard** provides high quality, evidence-based information about complementary and alternative therapies, diets, exercise and nutrition. For more information, please visit [www.naturalstandard.com](http://www.naturalstandard.com).

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## New Year, New Outlook



It may be beneficial to engage in a new outlook for the new year. A new study reports that optimists may enjoy longer lives than people with a more negative outlook on the future.

Researchers at Duke University in North Carolina found that of nearly 7,000 men and women who entered the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in the 1960s, those who were optimistic in their youth had a lower risk of dying over the next 40 years than their more pessimistic peers.

According to the study, the most pessimistic study participants were 42 percent more likely to die of any cause than the most positive participants.

Study authors attribute the finding to a number of factors. They suggested that optimists are less likely to suffer from depression than are pessimists, which could affect their physical health. They may also maintain a healthier lifestyle, paying more attention to their diet and exercise habits.

The study used a standard personality test that gauges a person's tendency to be optimistic or pessimistic. Participants took the test at the beginning of the study four decades ago.

Researchers classified 1,630 participants as pessimists and 923 participants as optimists; most were judged to be somewhere between a pure optimist or pessimist.

To attain a more positive outlook on life, researchers suggested integrative therapies such as anger

management therapy and meditation to boost positive emotions.

The researchers concluded that in a model that adjusted only for sex, a measure of optimistic versus pessimistic explanatory style was a significant predictor of survival over the 40-year follow-up period such that optimists had increased longevity.

For more information on alternative practices that may increase positive emotions, please visit [Natural Standard's Health & Wellness](#) database.

Reference: 1) Brummett BH, Helms MJ, Dahlstrom WG, Siegler IC. Prediction of all-cause mortality by the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory Optimism-Pessimism Scale scores: study of a college sample during a 40-year follow-up period. *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2006 Dec;81(12):1541-4. [View Abstract](#).

## Pets for Health?



Pet owners may be less healthy than people who do not own pets, a new study reports.

Finnish researchers at the University of Turku found that despite the exercise many owners get from walking their pets, they tend to get less exercise and have a higher body mass index (BMI) than their petless counterparts.

The study examined over 21,000 working-aged people. Pet owners smoked slightly more often and exercised less often than those who didn't have pets, the researchers reported.

The study also found that 40 to 44-year-olds have the most pets while 20 to 24-year-olds have the fewest. Pet ownership is linked to slightly poorer physical health in older people, and to slightly poorer emotional health in younger people. Pet owners smoke more cigarettes but drink less alcohol than those without pets. And lastly, people reporting poor health are more likely to have pets.

The researchers noted that pets may offer health benefits that the study did not measure.

For more information on pets, particularly pet therapy and animal companionship, please visit [Natural Standard's Health & Wellness](#) database.

Reference: 1) Koivusilta L, Ojanlatva A. *PloS ONE*, December 2006; vol 1: pp e109. News release, Public Library of Science. [View Article](#).

## Destination Health: Renewing Mind, Body and Soul

Destination Health, a conference to renew mind, body and soul will take place March 11-16, 2007 at the Princeville Resort on the Garden Island of Kauai, Hawaii.

Destination Health is a unique experience that combines a luxury vacation with an opportunity for personal renewal. The conference organizers believe there are many paths to healing and that health is a cohesive balance of mind, body and soul. In keeping with this mission, interested individuals are invited to a week of education, relaxation, rejuvenation and inspiration.



During this seventh annual conference, participants will experience lectures, workshops and activities designed to empower personal journeys toward health and education. Personal goals may include wellness, enhanced medical knowledge or a renewed sense of spirituality. There will be time to learn, experience, reflect and play.

For individuals who register on or before February 16, registration is \$935; after February 16, registration is \$985 for course tuition including all activities Sunday through Friday.

For further details on registration fees or to register securely online, please visit [scrippsintegrativemedicine.org](http://scrippsintegrativemedicine.org) and click on Events & Conferences.

For more information, please call 858.587.4404, e-mail [med.edu@scrippshealth.org](mailto:med.edu@scrippshealth.org) or visit [scripps.org/conferenceservices](http://scripps.org/conferenceservices).

If you would like us to post your event(s) online, please e-mail: [news@naturalstandard.com](mailto:news@naturalstandard.com).



## Echinacea and Gut Health

Echinacea, commonly used to prevent and treat colds, may stimulate the growth of certain gut bacteria, some potentially capable of causing disease(s), a new study suggests.

Researchers at the University of Arkansas's Department of Human Environmental Sciences investigated the effects of the dietary supplement *Echinacea purpurea* on aerobic and anaerobic bacteria common to the human gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Botanical extracts have shown *in vitro* antimicrobial effects against certain pathogenic bacteria. It is uncertain if medicinal herbs have any effect against pathogenic bacteria or on the native GI microbiota.



In the study, 15 participants consumed 1,000 mg of standardized *E. purpurea* for 10 days. Faecal samples were collected at baseline, 10 days and 17 to 18 days following supplementation. Samples were tested for select aerobic and anaerobic bacteria using plate culture microbiological methods.

The study found significant increases in total aerobic bacteria, Bacteroides group and Bacteroides fragilis after *E. purpurea* exposure. Supplementation did not significantly alter the number of enteric bacteria, enterococci, lactobacilli, bifidobacteria or total anaerobic bacteria.

Researchers concluded that Echinacea supplementation may alter the GI microbiota. The health consequences associated with this change are unknown but previous research has shown increased Bacteroides concentrations associated with diarrhea, inflammatory bowel disease and increased risk of colon cancer.

Researchers suggested that additional research examine the role of Echinacea in the stimulation of Bacteroides and describe the effects of other botanical supplements to the GI microbiota.

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

1) Hill LL, Foote JC, Erickson BD, et al. Echinacea purpurea supplementation stimulates select groups of human gastrointestinal tract microbiota. J Clin Pharm Ther. 2006 Dec;31(6):599-604. [View Abstract](#).

## Alternative Eye Surgeries



LASIK and LASEK eye surgeries have comparable results, a new study reports.

Researchers at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and Harvard Medical School compared the visual and refractive outcomes of laser epithelial keratomileusis (LASEK) and laser in situ keratomileusis (LASIK) for the treatment of low to moderate myopia (nearsightedness).

LASIK refers to the use of a laser to reshape the cornea without invading the neighboring cell layers. Both LASIK and LASEK surgeries use lasers to cut flaps in the cornea to correct its shape. LASEK cuts only the outside surface of the cornea. This avoids some of the flap problems that can come with the deeper cut made during LASIK. However, LASEK recovery is usually longer and there may be more pain after surgery.

In the retrospective, nonrandomized, control-matched study, the charts of 2,257 eyes that underwent LASEK or LASIK treatment were reviewed. Patients who were 21 years of age or older having between -0.75 and -6.00 diopters (D) of myopia with up to -2.25 D of astigmatism were included. One hundred twenty-two LASEK-treated eyes were matched with 122 LASIK-treated eyes having preoperative spheres, cylinders and spherical equivalent (SE) within +/-0.50 D. Both groups had similar preoperative best spectacle-corrected visual acuity (BSCVA), laser platform and follow-up durations. Outcome measures were visual and refractive results.

No eye lost two or more lines of BSCVA (Best Spectacle-Corrected Visual Acuity) in both groups. Slight differences in the visual and refractive results between LASEK and LASIK were observed, despite the use of the same nomogram.

Researchers concluded that both procedures are safe, effective and predictable. Nomogram adjustment may be necessary for LASIK surgeons adopting surface ablation.

For more information on laser eye surgeries, please visit [Natural Standard's Health & Wellness](#) database. For more information on eye disorders, please visit [Natural Standard's Condition Center](#).

Reference: 1) Tobaigy FM, Ghanem RC, Sayegh RR, et al. A control-matched comparison of laser epithelial keratomileusis and laser in situ keratomileusis for low to moderate myopia. Am J Ophthalmol. 2006 Dec;142(6):901-8. Epub 2006 Sep 8. [View Abstract](#).

## CamExpo East

**camexpo**  
Complementary & Natural Healthcare



The Complementary and Natural Healthcare Conference (CAMEXPO East) is returning to New York City at the Marriott Marquis February 8-10.

The program will feature the latest trends, research, clinical trials and protocols in the field of complementary, alternative and integrative healthcare presented by the leading experts in their respective fields for all types of practitioners. It includes six areas of focus: Functional Medicine, Women's Health, Food-as-Medicine, Traditional Healing, Pediatric Health and Mind-Body Medicine.

Based on the evidence, speakers will assess the scientific and clinical applications for the most commonly utilized and researched modalities in integrative and alternative medicine. In order to achieve better outcomes for patients, participants will analyze new approaches to patient care that involve prevention, humanism, and healing rather than disease treatment.

Given emerging evidence in the field of Complementary Medicine, participants will apply best practices when appropriate to improve their patient's healthcare outcomes. Participants will evaluate the research, treatment opportunities, and challenges facing healthcare practitioners as they strive for better outcomes for their patients.

For more information on exhibiting or sponsorship opportunities, please visit [www.camexpoeast.com](http://www.camexpoeast.com) or contact Carmella Perrone, CAM Expo Sales Manager. Please call 914.939.3770, fax 914.939.1403 or e-mail [cperrone@divcom.com](mailto:cperrone@divcom.com).

If you would like us to post your event(s) online, please e-mail: [news@naturalstandard.com](mailto:news@naturalstandard.com).

## Nitrates for Blood Pressure



The nitrates found in many vegetables may help lower blood pressure and keep blood vessels healthy, a new study suggests.

According to the report, nitric oxide, generated by nitric oxide synthase, is a key regulator of vascular integrity. This system is dysfunctional in many cardiovascular disorders, including hypertension (high blood pressure).

Researchers at the Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences examined the effects of three-day dietary nitrate supplementation in a group of 17 healthy, non-smoking young adults.

Each participant rotated between taking a daily dose of nitrate supplement equivalent to the amount normally found in 150 to 250 grams of a nitrate-rich vegetable, such as spinach, lettuce or beetroot, for three days, and taking a placebo for a different three days.

The study found that average diastolic blood pressure was 3.7 mm Hg lower after three days of nitrate supplementation than it was after taking the placebo.

The researchers concluded that these benefits are similar to those found among healthy participants in the DASH trials and suggested that nitrates' blood-pressure-lowering effects deserve further study.

For more information on dietary supplements, please visit [Natural Standard's Herbs & Supplements](#) database. For more information on diets rich in nitrates, please visit [Natural Standard's Health & Wellness](#) database.

Reference: 1) Larsen, F. Effects of Dietary Nitrate on Blood Pressure in Healthy Volunteers. *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dec. 28, 2006; vol 355: pp 2792-2793. [View Abstract](#).

## FDA on Cloned Meat

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued three documents on the safety of animal cloning: a draft risk assessment; a proposed risk management plan; and a draft guidance for industry.

In the draft risk assessment, the FDA found meat and milk from clones of adult cattle, pigs and goats and their offspring are as safe to eat as food from conventionally bred animals.

The FDA defined an animal clone as a genetic copy of a donor animal, similar to identical twins but born at different times. The FDA also noted that cloning is not the same as genetic engineering, which involves altering, adding or deleting DNA; cloning does not change the gene sequence.



The current voluntary ban on cloned foods remains in effect pending public comment. The FDA will issue a final ruling after the public comment period closes April 2, 2007. The ban could be lifted before the end of 2007.

According to the FDA statement, it is expensive to clone animals; a cloned animal costs approximately \$20,000 to produce. Based on this figure, that FDA suggested that cloning would likely be used to copy elite breeding animals, not to create meat. However, at the end of their breeding years, cloned animals might be used for meat.

The FDA is seeking comments from the public on the three released documents for the next 90 days (as of December 28, 2006). To submit electronic comments on the three documents, please visit [www.accessdata.fda.gov](http://www.accessdata.fda.gov).

Written comments may be sent to: Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD, 20852. Comments must be received by Apr. 2, 2007 and should include the docket number 2003N-0573.

For more information, please visit [www.fda.gov/cvm](http://www.fda.gov/cvm).

Reference: 1) U.S. Food and Drug Administration. FDA press release: FDA Issues Draft Documents on the Safety of Animal Clones. Dec 28, 2006. [View Press Release](#).

## Health & Wellness Coach Weekend

Create a New Career or Income Stream By Becoming a Trained Circle of Life Coach. Come to St. Mary's Retreat House in Santa Barbara January 18-21, 2007.



Research from Stanford, Duke and other universities reveals that Health and Wellness Coaching is effective in supporting people to be successful in creating and maintaining healthy lifestyle changes. Self-care is the essence of the Circle of Life Health and Wellness Coaching Process. Utilizing a powerful body/mind focus, the Circle of Life is a coaching model that supports breakthroughs in health and well being for all populations. Take advantage of this coaching opportunity to help clients stay on track by training as a Health and Wellness Coach.

Tuition is \$1200 For information on registration including payment packages for meals, lodging and tuition, please contact Kira Jones by phone 805.640.7821 or e-mail [kira@kreatrixdesigns.com](mailto:kira@kreatrixdesigns.com).

For more information on this course, please visit [www.CircleofLife.net](http://www.CircleofLife.net).

## New Advanced Interaction Checker!



**Natural Standard** has just launched a new, advanced interaction checker!

The advanced checker includes a comprehensive, fully-referenced list of drugs, herbs, foods, labs and supplements. International brand names have been added as well as OTCs.

This crucial tool is color-coded, fast and easy to use.

We hope you enjoy this new, exciting feature!

## Inside Natural Standard



**Natural Standard** would like to welcome Julie Montalbano, PharmD: Massachusetts College of Pharmacy; Heeja Yoon, PharmD: Drake University; and Craig Coffenberg, PharmD: University of Rhode Island.

Please note that **Natural Standard's** main office has moved. Please see below for our new contact information.

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