

# Airmeith's Musings

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## Safe Fun in the Sun Nutrition Offers UV Shield

Sharron Leonard

**B**ecause sunlight activates the synthesis of vitamin D, a nutrient that works with vitamin A to build strong bones and good eyesight it is essential for health. Furthermore, bright light, specifically sunshine, can improve your mood and help ward off depression. But all things in moderation. Overexposure to UV rays can cause potentially extensive damage to the skin, an all-too-common occurrence. "Skin cancer is now considered epidemic throughout the nation", according to The Centers for Disease Control Prevention. "Over on million residents in the United States are expected to get skin cancer this year more people than the collective total of all who will get cancers of the breast, prostate, lung and colon. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight causes 90 percent of the skin cancer cases." And this overexposure may double the risk of melanoma, a type of skin cancer that causes more that 80 percent of skin cancer deaths.

UV rays cause oxidative damage and can actually change the skin's DNA cellular structure, creating highly unstable and toxic molecules. These are known as free radicals and can lead to malignancies. Sunscreen, adequate coverage and sunglasses have long been recommended to avoid this damage, but diverse studies some suggest some promising supplemental strategies for UV protection from the inside out. Certain nutrients and a low-fat diet have shown specific anti-cancer properties.

## What Is Reiki?

Understanding Energy Work

**A** type of energy bodywork, reiki (pronounced ray-key) relies on three ancient belief in the life force energy, referred to as chi, that flows through all things. This life force runs throughout pathways in the body called meridians, nourishing organs and cells and supporting vital functions. When this energy is disrupted by negative thoughts, feelings or actions, illness and disease result. A reiki practitioner's hands hover just above a person's body, sensing the affected areas and infusing them with positive



*A colorful diet can help provide sun protection from the inside out.*

### Free Radical Control

Antioxidants have long been known to neutralize free radicals and render them inactive, protecting cellular structure. Powerful antioxidants include vitamin C (citrus fruits, strawberries, broccoli, tomatoes), vitamin E (asparagus, raw nuts and seeds, spinach), beta-carotene (yellow and orange vegetables) as well as the minerals zinc (shell fish, legumes, whole-grain foods) and selenium (nuts, whole-wheat bread, oatmeal). A recent study published in the Journal Continued on page 2

flow. This raises the energetic vibration and breaks up the negativity to heal, clear and restore the natural flow of the life force. The reiki practitioner, trained to access and serve as a channel for the life energy, places his hands on or just above the client's body and uses a passive touch that some client's experience with warmth or tingling. The hands remain in position for 3-5 minutes, alternately covering 10-12 positions over the body.

Continued on page 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Cultivating a Gardening Habit	3
Health Benefits of Ginger	3
Scoop on Meditation	4



### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *A colorful diet can help provide sun protection from the inside out.*
- *UV rays cause oxidative damage and can actually change the skin's DNA.*
- *Reiki balances subtle but vital energy.*
- *Meditation is simple to do yet profound in its results.*
- *The ginger plant has many medicinal uses.*
- *Gardening is a great workout.*

## What is Reiki?

Continued from page 1

Thought to be Tibetan Buddhist in origin, the practice of reiki is comprised of three levels of training. Through this training, the practitioner learns how to access energy flow through the hands to heal. Completion of the third and highest level of training results in the title of reiki master. Reiki is used to accelerate healing, assist the body in cleansing toxins, balance the flow of subtle energy by releasing blockages, and help the client contact the healer within.

According to [www.reiki.org](http://www.reiki.org), reiki is beginning to gain acceptance as a meaningful and cost-effective way to improve patient care in hospitals and clinics across America. In an interview on the website, Dr. David Guillion, an

oncologist at Martin General Hospital in California, says, “I feel we need to do whatever is in our power to help the patient. We provide state of the art medicine in our office, but healing is a multidimensional process. I endorse the idea that there is a potential healing that can take place utilizing energy.” For information, contact Airmeith Bodyworks.



*Reiki balances subtle but vital energy.*

## Safe Fun in the Sun

Continued from page 1

of Investigative Dermatology demonstrates that lutein and zeaxanthin, plant pigments found in predominately green leafy vegetables, also have strong antioxidant properties that diminish the effects of UV irradiation by reducing the acute inflammatory responses. Lutein and zeaxanthin-rich foods include green, green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, broccoli and turnips as well as corn and egg yolks.

As long ago as 1991, studies have shown green tea consumption and topical application afford protection against skin tumors. More recent research corroborates these result and points to the polyphenols I green tea, which contain antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. In additions, one major element in green tea, epigallocate-3-gallate (EGCG), is thought to stop production of an enzyme required for cancer cell growth. Several cups of green tea might be a worthwhile addition to your daily routine.

Avoiding fatty foods may also provide benefit. Studies suggest that a low-fat diet can reduce the incidence of premalignant lesions called actinic keratosis. To maintain a low-fat diet, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends that you get most of your calories from organic, whole foods such as grains, fruits, and vegetables and to avoid foods high in saturated

fats. For more information, visit [www.health.gov/dietary\\_guidelines/](http://www.health.gov/dietary_guidelines/).

### Know the Index

Even though it is helpful to counteract damage to your skin through nutrition, it remains vital to shield yourself from the sun’s invisible UV rays and avoid them when they’re at their most intense. The UV index, a measurement of ultra-violet sun radiation, can assist in exposure. This forecast of UV intensity ranges from a nighttime low of 0 to a very sunny 10-plus. It is greatest when the sun hits its apex (noon), then rapidly decreases as the sun moves across the afternoon sky. The higher the UV Index, the shorter the time for skin damage to occur. To determine the UV Index in your area, check your local newspaper, TV and radio news broadcasts, or you can visit [www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s website. This rating allows you to determine your geographic risk and, in turn, the level of adequate sun protection needed.

Regardless of your sun-screening defenses, always be vigilant about checking your skin for possible signs of melanoma. “When melanoma is detected in its early stage, surgical removal cures the disease in most

cases,” according to the American Academy of Dermatology. “If the disease has spread to lymph nodes, the 5-year survival rate is 30-40 percent. If the disease has spread to distant organs, the 5-year survival rate is 12 percent.”

Melanoma appears as a pre-existing mole that changes, or as a new mole on previously unaffected/clear skin. Performing skin self-exams every few months and knowing the characteristics to look for in any mole identified will enhance early detection and reduce risk. For more information on early detection, visit [www.Skincancer.org](http://www.Skincancer.org).

Don’t forget common sense practices:

- Avoid long-term sun exposure and wear a hat, sunglasses, and protective clothing.
- Apply sunscreen with SPF of 30 or above.
- Avoid artificial tanning devices.
- Be aware of sun exposure year-round

With a few protective measures, you can continue to enjoy fun in the sun safely. Wear your sunscreen—in winter months as well as the summer — seek shade, cover up with sleeves and pants, and don’t forget your hat!

## Cultivating a Gardening Habit

### Discover the Health Benefits of Yard Work

Feeling the need to exercise, clean up your diet, meditate? Want to be more creative, get out and meet people, enjoy the outdoors, and slow down? There's one activity in which you can accomplish all of these objectives: gardening.

#### *Encouraging Exercise*

Studies show that vigorous digging burns 500 calories an hour, weeding burns 210 calories, and mowing the lawn burns 400 calories. As a moderate exercise, gardening has been found to decrease the risk of heart disease and diabetes, and a study at the University of Arkansas found that gardening was almost as effective as weight lifting in reducing the risk for osteoporosis in women. So instead of taking that indoor aerobics class this summer, try mowing the lawn or planting a herb garden.

As with any exercise regimen, the key is to start at a comfortable pace and gradually work your way up to

longer, more difficult activities. Your heart rate should be about the same as when you take a brisk walk.

#### *Improving Your Diet*

Gardening will also likely help you eat better. Research shows that people who grow gardens eat more vegetables and fruits than those who don't. Growing fresh herbs, even in a container on the deck or balcony, is another great way to add flavor and freshness to home-cooked meals and an incentive to try new recipes.

#### *Boosting Your Social Life*

Gardening can also be quite social. Whether at a garden club, a community garden, or an online forum, people love to share ideas, solve common problems, and connect through mutual interests.

#### *Easing Stress*

And finally, gardening is a great way to manage stress. Spending time outside and tuning in to the rhythms of nature,

we're reminded to be patient, slow down, and breathe the fresh air. Whether growing flowers, vegetables, or herbs, a garden reminds us of our connection to life and the abundance that nature so freely gives.



*Gardening burns calories and improves diet.*

## Health Benefits of Ginger

### Easing Nausea, Joint Pain, and Allergies

This pungent spice is found in cuisine around the globe, but ginger has also been used for more than 2,500 years for its medical properties. The ancient Chinese knew that it aided in absorption of many herbal preparations and they prescribed it extensively as a digestive tonic.

A native root of southeast Asia, ginger is a potent ally in the treatment of nausea, motion sickness, and joint pain. Current research confirms ginger's efficacy as an anti-inflammatory, GI calmer, and anti-histamine. The active ingredients found in ginger — gingerols and shogaols — lower levels of prostaglandins, the chemicals responsible for pain and inflammation in joints and muscles. By reducing prostaglandins, ginger can even have a positive effect on the heart health and circulation because chronic, systemic inflammation increases the risk of heart attack and blood vessel compromise.

Ginger comes in several forms. Fresh and dried ginger is available in supermarkets for use in cooking. It's also available in prepackaged tea, crystallized, and topical oil.



*Ginger Plant in Flower*

#### **Recommended Uses**

##### *Motion Sickness and Nausea*

Most medications for nausea and

motion sickness work to calm the nervous system and can cause drowsiness and dry mouth. On the other hand, ginger calms the digestive tract directly and has been shown to reduce nausea after surgery and chemotherapy. For motion sickness, take 100 mg two hours before departure and every four hours afterwards or as needed.

##### *Arthritis and Muscle Aches*

Massage ginger oil into affected areas and/or take up to 1g of powdered ginger daily to reduce inflammation.

##### *Colds and Allergies*

Drink up to 4 cups of ginger tea daily or enjoy authentic ginger ale (made from real ginger).

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*Meditating Buddha on a Sea of Herbs in Airmeith Bodyworks Relaxation Area*

## The Scoop on Meditation

A Simple Practice with Profound Benefits

People who meditate regularly appear internally and externally five to 10 years younger than their non-meditating peers, according to author Deepak Chopra. That's good news for the estimated 10 million people who practice meditation on an ongoing basis and experience that resulting calm it cultivates.

The rich benefits come from doing something that looks like nothing: Sitting still, being quiet, and breathing deeply. Meditation works simply but profoundly by defusing the onslaughts of life — a racing mind, busyness, deadlines, commutes, all of which have physiological effects on well-being. Meditations calms the nervous system, decreases metabolic rate, hate rate, and blood pressure, and lowers levels of cholesterol, stress hormones, and free radicals. It also has a direct effect on breathing, slowing

and deepening respiration so more oxygen circulates throughout the body. Not only that, meditation is said to lessen feelings of anxiety and depression and improve memory and concentration.; it all culminates in slowing the aging process, as Chopra notes.

voted time.

How to begin? Wear comfortable, unrestricted clothes, sit on a cushion or chair with your back straight (think once again, comfort), rest your hands on your legs, let your eyes go soft and out of focus or close them, breathe slowly and deeply, and — the hardest part — attempt to empty your mind of thoughts and quiet the internal dialogue. When thought flit through your mind, let them pass without judging them and come back to your focus (your mantra, counting, etc.) and breathing.

Start with this sitting meditation technique for five minutes a day, and add on time as you get more at ease with the process. For more information on techniques and benefits, check out [www.abcmof-meditation.com](http://www.abcmof-meditation.com)

*Holding on to anger is like  
grasping a hot coal with the intent  
of throwing it at someone else;  
you're the one who gets burned.*

*-Buddha*

There are many meditation techniques, including focusing on a mantra, a sacred word or phrase, or your breath. But the basic intent of all meditation is focus and attention. And it doesn't take hours a day in an ashram to meditate effectively. Benefits kick in with even a short period of de-