

# Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic Newsletter

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Dear Clifford,

Welcome to RNMC's August e-newsletter. We will be providing healthy tips, coupons and other important information in a monthly e-newsletter, so be sure to add us as a "safe sender" to your email provider. We look forward to hearing from you with requests for articles, thoughts and ideas.

Sincerely,

The Physicians at RNMC

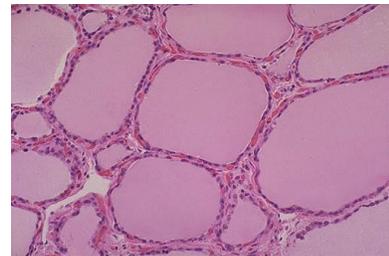
## Understanding Thyroid Function

Thomas A. Kruzel, ND

The thyroid gland plays a significant role controlling the body's metabolic rate and is in turn regulated by the pituitary and hypothalamus glands located in the brain. The thyroid gland secretes 2 forms of thyroid, termed T3 and T4. T4 is the most abundant with T3 in much smaller amounts. Both circulate attached to plasma proteins until they separate and become Free T3 and Free T4. These are the metabolically active forms and are what "turn on" the cells energy production. T4 is further converted once inside the cell to the active T3 form.

Thyroid function is influenced by a number of factors such as availability of iodine, deficiencies of nutrients such as Vitamin E, C, A, B complex, and zinc, emotions, diet pills, certain drugs, and environmental toxicities. Additionally, certain foods such as kale, cabbage, peanuts, soy flour, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, turnips and kohlrabi, if consumed in large amounts, are known to decrease thyroid function by interfering with iodine utilization.

The pituitary and hypothalamus, which regulates thyroid gland



function, also play significant roles in the regulation of other endocrine glands such as the adrenals and ovaries/testicles. This is important to note in that a significant dysfunction in one area may be the cause of glandular dysfunction in another area. For instance, low energy and fatigue can be caused by low thyroid function or be due to exhausted and over worked adrenal glands. Additionally, pituitary dysfunction which can affect thyroid function, is also seen primarily in women who have undergone multiple pregnancies.

Thyroid function tests ordered by your doctor provide somewhat of an assessment of how it is functioning. This is because serum values do not fully represent the biologically active form in the intracellular space. A screening panel that includes Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH), Total T4, Free T4, and a T3 Uptake usually forms the basis, along with a patient history and examination, of thyroid function assessment. From these tests your physician can make an educated guess as to what is happening at the cellular level. They also provide the basis for additional studies should the history suggest a thyroid disease.

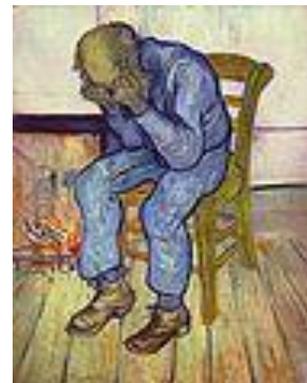
If you are on thyroid medication, periodic checks are made to assess their levels so that adjustments can be made. Certain thyroid preparations such as the synthetic forms give highly reproducible lab values but do not dissociate as well as the naturally derived preparations. Therefore, someone on them may in fact be somewhat hypothyroid clinically.

If you are unsure if your thyroid gland is functioning properly, ask your physician to check at your next visit.

## What are the Causes Fatigue and Brain Fog? By Meghna Thacker, NMD

How often have you heard of someone complaining of fatigue or how not having a good energy level? I hear this complaint in at least 8 out of 10 patients that I see in my practice, which makes this a very common complaint. Because this condition is so commonly encountered, I would like to address some of the common causes of fatigue and what can we do at our clinic to help with this.

**Sleep:** Are you having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep? Lack of adequate and restful sleep is a common cause of fatigue. Lack of sleep can make us hungry and we often crave carbohydrates due to the lack of hormones ghrelin and leptin that are made by the body during sleep. This in turn causes weight gain.



**Hormones:** If you are having symptoms of fatigue, weight gain, feeling cold all the time, salt or sweet cravings, or hair loss, it may be due to a hormone imbalance. I would recommend hormone testing for Thyroid, Adrenal and Ovarian function. These can be evaluated by a simple blood test or a specialized saliva test and based on the results and symptom pattern,

an appropriate treatment protocol will be designed for your specific needs. This may include natural hormone replacement, nutritional and herbal supplements to enhance and restore the function of the affected glands.

**Nutrition:** We offer a specialized comprehensive nutrition testing that checks for the status of individual B-vitamins, Minerals, Antioxidants and Amino Acids. This way we can pin point which specific nutrients are lacking in a particular patient and then offer individualized treatment plans. Patients also love the Energy Shots I offer at the clinic which is a mix of vitamins given intramuscularly. These are stored in the muscle tissue where they are utilized by the body at a slower more efficient rate.

**Heavy Metal Testing:** In this day and age it is almost impossible to not be affected by external environmental factors. All of us tend to accumulate this toxic burden in our bodies from our food, water and surroundings. It can be more elevated in some than others when it can become a problem and cause symptoms of fatigue and brain fog. Your Heavy Metal Toxic Load can be tested with a urine test and based on the results the patient is started on a Chelation protocol to remove them.

**Exercise:** Lack of exercise has enormous effect on our energy level as it does not maintain adequate ATP stores. As we exercise, the mitochondria in our cells produce ATP or energy. A combination of aerobic and anaerobic exercises for about 40 minutes a day is recommended.

**Diet and Lifestyle:** We are what we eat! I can't stress enough the value of making healthy dietary choices. Too much sugar or carbohydrates causes a rise in blood sugar levels that increases your insulin level and converts all that sugar into fat which is stored in the body and causes weight gain. Eating small frequent meals every few hours with some source of protein at each meal can help maintain healthy blood sugar and energy levels. It prevents energy crashes that happen after eating those high carbohydrate meals.

**Infection:** A common cause of fatigue is underlying yeast infection. A patient can be tested via a stool test if yeast is suspected and then put on a special diet and herbal protocol to get rid of the problem.

Click on the following link to see what treatments have helped this patient with her symptoms of Fatigue and Brain Fog  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liU-4lOvVS0>

## Whats New at RNMC

In case you haven't seen it, our [web site](#) has been updated. You can now view our past newsletters and articles and can pass them on to someone who might be interested.

Dr Kruzel's new book, the Natural Medicine Pediatric Home Health Advisor is available either at the office or through the [following link](#). It can also be obtained as an E-Book through Borders or Amazon.

## Whats New in the Literature

**Medical Food Linked to Memory Improvement in Mild Alzheimer's** - In a paper presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC), results from an open-label extension (OLE) trial of a medical nutrition product (Souvenaid, Nutricia/Danone) showed that memory performance continued to improve in drug-naïve patients with mild AD for up to 48 weeks. The medical food was designed to improve synaptic dysfunction associated with continuous memory improvement in patients with mild Alzheimer's disease. According to the presenters, patients receiving the drink showed significant improvement over those that received placebo and when the placebo group began getting the medical meal, they also showed improvement. The studies authors also pointed out "There was no ceiling effect," meaning that participants continued to improve.

**Comment:** When I read this article I thought WOW, medicine is finally discovering nutrition as being beneficial medicine! And then I looked at the ingredients of the "medical food" which consists of:

- Eicosapentaenoic acid, 300 mg
- Docosahexaenoic acid, 1200 mg
- Phospholipids 106 mg
- Choline, 400 mg
- Uridine monophosphate, 625 mg
- Vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol equivalents), 40 mg
- Selenium, 60 µg
- Vitamin B12, 3 µg
- Vitamin B6, 1 µg
- Folic acid, 400 µg

This product, that was developed by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, is really a combination of vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids commonly found in a number of nutraceutical products. The difference here is that this is a "medical food" with a patented combination of nutraceuticals rather than a supplement. I find it somewhat gratifying that medicine is finally catching on to the fact that good diet and nutrition is essential to the restoration and maintenance of health even if they have to patent it to get physicians to prescribe it.

**Fooling the Brain, Not a Good Idea** - Our colleague Jacob Schor, ND reviewed several studies on the effects of sugar and artificial sweeteners on the brain activity of participants through functional magnetic imaging. Not surprisingly both solutions activated a response in the brain, but it was found to be at different locations. Regular sugar triggered a stronger response than the artificial sweetener as well as engaging the dopaminergic areas in the midbrain that signals pleasantness. The conclusions that the brain knows the difference even if the participants did not were also duplicated in another study.

**Comment:** The idea around artificial sweeteners is that they taste the same as sugar but do not have the calories and therefore, one should not gain weight when consuming them, right? The fact is that while the brain knows what is real and artificial, the body's response to them is the same; it thinks that it is getting sugar when in fact it is not and secretes insulin in response. The insulin looks around for sugar and finds little or none and so causes the body to produce it. The body, thinking it is in a state of starvation produces glucose from muscle in order to meet the need. But because the brain thinks that it is in a period of starvation, the excess glucose is stored as fat so the body can withstand the next period of starvation, that in this day and age, never comes along (just think of those all night fast food places). Thus we get a lot of over weight, metabolic syndrome and type II diabetic people because we are trying to fool nature.

## Hot Spring Hydrotherapy

### By Katie Stage, ND

On a recent trip to Santa Fe, I enjoyed some time at my favorite hot springs resort, Ten Thousand Waves. Ten Thousand Waves is a Japanese style hot spring resort, and since I spent two years living in Japan, it is a special treat for me to re-experience the health benefits of Japanese style soaking.



In Japan, soaking in hot springs or mineral baths is not something special, but rather a way to maintain hygiene and relaxation. Many traditional homes do not even have an area for taking baths or showers, as residents would simply visit the hot springs, or onsen, once a day for bathing. Since Japan has an abundance of hot springs, just about every town has at least one onsen. I lived very near an active volcano called Sakurajima, and can say that soaking in the hot springs at the base of the volcano, looking out at Kinko Bay, was an experience that I will never forget!

There are a few unique aspects about Japanese hot springs. First, you always clean yourself before entering the hot spring, so every onsen will have a single sex bathing area. Clothes and personal items are stored in lockers, and then you sit on little stools and wash hair and body. Onsens have a very communal atmosphere, so usually there is someone else willing to scrub your back for you! Then you put on your robe and enter the hot spring / room of mineral baths, which are also usually sex segregated as soaking is done in the nude. Most onsen have multiple baths, each with a specific purpose: bubbly baths, warm baths, very hot baths, the "denki", or electric bath (with a mild electric current running through the water - very popular for easing arthritis pain), and many more. Dry saunas, in traditional birch or cedar, allow for detoxification through sweating. And every onsen has at least one cold bath - a deep, narrow pool of water that allows you to quickly dip your entire body in cold water. A hot soak, followed by a cold dip, is excellent for your health and extremely revitalizing. At Ten Thousand Waves, I always look

forward to at least 3 soaks on the hot springs, as well as several visits to the sauna, each followed by a cold plunge.

Naturopathic physicians and our predecessors, hygienists, have also used alternating hot and cold treatments to treat a variety of medical conditions. The heat opens up blood vessels, relaxes the tissue, and prepares the body for the cold treatment, which tones tissue, revitalizes the body, eliminates cellular waste, and has even been shown to decrease blood glucose. The combination of hot and cold applications, with electrical stimulation to nerve roots, is used in the **constitutional hydrotherapy treatments offered at Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic**. Results from a series of these treatments are generally quite stunning. However, you can also experience some of the benefits of alternating hot and cold treatments at home or at your gym.

Consider the following to increase your energy as well as heighten your body's ability to adapt to stress and fight disease. Note: if you have cardiovascular disease, diabetes, serious liver disease, or other serious medical conditions, or are pregnant, please consult with your physician before trying the following.

**Sauna:** spend 5-15 minutes in a sauna, followed by a cold shower or full-body scrub with a washcloth soaked in ice water. Repeat two times.

**Shower:** towards the end of your shower, turn the water up so it is hot but not burning. Spend 5 minutes in the hot water, followed by 30 seconds to one minute of cold water. Repeat two times, and end with the cold water.

**Hot springs:** there are abundant hot springs in Colorado, New Mexico, and even California and Arizona. Consider a hot soak followed by a cold shower or plunge in a nearby river, which is possible at some locations such as [Pagosa Springs](#).

**Time challenged:** if you don't think you have time for any of the treatments above, consider just ending your shower with a cold rinse. This will also revitalize you, and adds just a few seconds to your daily routine.

Hydrotherapy is a fantastic way of increasing your vitality - I hope you give on of the treatments above a try.

## August is Psoriasis Awareness Month

Psoriasis is a condition that affects anywhere from 2% to 4% of the population with whites being affected most often. Psoriasis is an immune-mediated inflammatory disorder of the skin resulting in a hyper proliferation of keratinocytes. This leads to the appearance of sharply demarcated erythematous papules and plaques with silvery scales. These lesions are often extremely itchy and most often



found on the scalp, elbows, and knees. Although these are typical sites, lesions can be found anywhere on the body and may cover large areas.

There are 4 main types of Psoriasis; Plaque psoriasis, Guttate psoriasis, Erythrodermic psoriasis, and Pustular psoriasis. Arthritis accompanies psoriasis in about 5% of the cases and often is seen in advance of the skin eruptions. Precipitating factors are largely unknown but there is a genetic predisposition to developing psoriasis as there is a 35% chance of developing the condition if there is a previous family history.

There are a variety of natural treatments for this condition which include, dietary changes, homeopathic medicine, ultra violet light therapy, specific nutraceuticals, and a specifically compounded healing salve.

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Thank you for being a patient with Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic. We will continue to provide you with safe, effective and affordable healthcare.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kruzal, N.D.

Rockwood Natural Medicine Clinic (RNMC) is a naturopathic family practice facility. RNMC was founded in 1991 as a primary care/family practice clinic with a mission to provide safe, sensible and effective natural medicine for the entire family. The physicians at RNMC are dedicated to educating and training the next generation of healthcare providers. For more information about RNMC, please visit [www.rockwoodnaturalmedicine.com](http://www.rockwoodnaturalmedicine.com).

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If you'd like more information about the topics in this newsletter, or to schedule an appointment with one of the clinic physicians, please call Kathleen or Joan at (480) 767-7119 or e-mail them at [RNMC9755@yahoo.com](mailto:RNMC9755@yahoo.com).

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