

Ask Dr. Blaylock



Dr. Russell Blaylock

Attention Blaylock Readers:

Dr. Blaylock welcomes any questions or comments you would like to share.

Each month, he will select a few to be published and answered in the newsletter. Please e-mail the doctor at: askblaylock@newsmax.com

Q: I just subscribed to your wellness letter because I have been diagnosed with blood clots in my lungs and have been put on coumadin. Is there is a more natural and safe alternative?

— Angela S., San Jose, Calif.

A: Actually, Angela, there are a number of natural supplements that prevent abnormal blood clotting and improve blood flow. I find it ironic that the medical professionals use blood thinning as a reason not to take some natural supplements and then fail to recommend them when blood thinning is the goal.

It is critically important in all such hypercoagulable disorders to improve magnesium levels.

Magnesium makes blood flow through small arteries more easily, and it prevents abnormal clotting. The usual dose is 500 mg of magnesium citrate or citrate/malate twice a day on an empty stomach. You can get a time-released form from www.jigsawhealth.com. The dose is the same.

About 350 mg of ginkgo biloba a day equals an aspirin in terms of blood-thinning ability, and aged garlic extract does the same. About 250 mg of curcumin dissolved in extra-virgin olive oil three times a day also thins the blood slightly. Omega-3 oils (fish oils) thin the blood as well, while improving blood flow. A combination of magnesium and ginkgo may be adequate — that can be determined by blood studies your doctor can run. These supplements are so important because they have a great number of other health benefits. They protect the brain, act as antioxidants, strengthen the walls of blood vessels, stabilize platelets, prevent

cancer, improve blood flow and prevent heart attacks and strokes.

Many anticoagulant medications have significant side effects, and the degree of blood thinning is difficult to control. Some of these medicines can even increase the risk of leukemia.

Q: I took six meds to combat sleep and peripheral neuropathy, and so far I have discontinued all but two. I take 600 mg of ALA and four capsules of Dr. Bob Martin's "Nerve Fix." I want to find a way to get off of the sleeping and pain pills. Any suggestions? Nothing I try works.

— Theodore A., Sparks, Nev.

A: A low thyroid can result in a peripheral neuropathy (nerve damage), but you can improve thyroid function. There are better supplements made by the company Pure Encapsulation. They are called iodine and tyrosine. You can get the product at www.MyVitaNet.com. The dose is two capsules a day.

As for your peripheral neuropathy, it would depend on the cause — and there are many.

Most common are diabetes and other metabolic conditions. Others include heavy metal toxicity, autoimmune disease, diabetes, uremia, hereditary causes, and chemical exposure. In general, high-dose B vitamins (especially riboflavin 500 mg, pyridoxal-5-phosphate 50 mg, thiamine 100 mg, folate 800 ug and B-12 as methylcobalamin 5,000 ug, a day) are the most effective.

N-acetyl-L-cysteine (NAC) 500 mg a day (on an empty stomach), R-lipoic acid 25 mg (with your heaviest meal of the day), acetyl-L-carnitine 500 mg three times a day, DHA 500 mg a day and phosphotidylcholine (mixed phospholipids) 1,000 mg twice a day can be used in addition to a basic vitamin/mineral supplement.

Q: Since you have pointed out the dangers of aspartame and Splenda, what about Stevia as a sweetener?

— Maria H., Amherst, N.H.

A: Stevia, made from the honey leaf plant, is characterized by its sweet taste.

The plant grows only in a few places in the

world. Most come from China, with lesser supplies from Israel, Thailand and Central America. The sweetness primarily is derived from a chemical called stevioside, which in pure form is 100 to 200 times sweeter than sugar. The leaf (used in most brands) is about 10 to 15 times sweeter.

There was some concern when one study demonstrated that a 5 percent solution of the leaf caused infertility in male and female mice. Follow-up studies failed to confirm this. Stevia also lowers blood sugar and blood pressure, so it should be used with caution by people with reactive hypoglycemia, diabetics on insulin and hypertensives on blood pressure medication.

Steviol, a possible metabolite, has been shown to be mutagenic — that is, it increases risk of cancer. But it has not been shown that this chemical is formed in humans.

From my own personal experience and that of many others, the product Just Like Sugar is an excellent substitute.

While one diabetic physician claimed his blood sugar went out of control while taking this product, it was later disclosed that he was consuming large amounts of aspartame. At present, a university is testing the product on diabetics to settle the question. For non-diabetics, it makes an excellent sweetener.

Q: While reading your newsletter about eye care, I was especially struck by your warning about the dangers of glutamate in the retina. I have been taking a powder form of L glutamine

and am alarmed that these two substances may be related to each other. Are they?

— Joan A., Anaheim, Calif.

A: Since writing the book *Excitotoxins: The Taste That Kills*, I get that question a lot, primarily because the names sound similar.

In fact, glutamate, the excitotoxin, is formed in the body from glutamine by a special enzyme. Taking high doses of glutamine increases the production of glutamate in the brain and eye and has been shown to increase neurological damage as well as retinal damage.

It is of special concern for those with Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and ALS (Lou Gehrig's), but also any person who is at high risk for a neurological condition or has an existing neurological disorder or disease of the retina.

Glutamine became popular as a supplement since it can heal the GI tract and build muscle. Yet, the dangers to the brain and retina in susceptible people supersede any benefit you may receive from taking high doses of glutamine.

If used at all, it should only be used for short periods or by people engaged in regular muscle-building exercise programs. Muscle building exercises divert the glutamine to the muscles rather than the brain. Nevertheless, in my opinion, people with retinal or neurological diseases or injuries should avoid glutamine supplements.