

**Included in this issue:**

**(Feature) “What you should know about Melanoma” - Mt. Sinai Today**  
**” Foods for Thought” – fighting brain fog**  
**“Senolytics” – a key to cellular anti-aging?**

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### *Homecoming*

This is the first issue of the IAT newsletter that we have published since 2020. It was one of the early casualties of the onset of COVID, resulting in large part, from reduced staff and realigning priorities to meet the looming health and business crisis. So, we would like to start off here by offering warm thanks to our clients, patients and friends for their unwavering faith in and support of ElixirSpa throughout the nearly three most challenging and too often tragic years in memory. The steady return of so many of you, each making your way back within your own comfort zone, has been nothing less than remarkable. We also consider ourselves to be immeasurably fortunate throughout this period to have seen an extraordinarily brisk wave of newcomers. They got to us via the very thoughtful referrals of clients, inquiries around town, visits to our website and through conversations on chat platforms. It's a very vibrant new population, interested in making substantive changes/improvements in the health and appearance of their skin and turning their attention to specific health and overall personal wellbeing interests –both physical and emotional. We could not be more pleased that they sought us out for sound information, trustworthy guidance and thoughtful, individual care. We welcome them to our family. To those who have not yet reached the point of being able to cross the “threshold”, we want you to know that we miss you, think about you and anxiously anticipate the time when we will be able to take care of you again. Meanwhile, until your “homecoming”, we wish you and your family peace, good health and safe keeping.

### **Foods for Thought**



So many of us experience what we might call a kind of brain fog; forgetting some of the simplest things, names, words, thoughts, where we left our keys. ‘Want to best nourish your brain to improve function, focus and help stave off cognitive decline? Here is an arsenal of food choices containing a wealth of nutrients, shown in study after study, that can support brain health now and as we age. Some may surprise you.

**Celery** - contains the plant compound luteolin; reduces brain inflammation and is a factor in preventing memory loss.

**Crab** –contains the amino acid phenylalanine, important for the production of the brain stimulating neurotransmitter *dopamine*. It may also help to prevent Parkinson's disease.

**Garbanzo beans** - source of magnesium citrate; improves blood flow and helps brain cell receptors transmit messages faster.

**Turmeric** -the flavor component in curry, it contains the powerful anti-inflammatory nutrient curcumin. Research shows that curcumin improves memory and helps new brain cells to grow through neuro-genesis

**Walnuts** - provides plant based Omega 3 fats, as well as antioxidants and phytosterols

that can boost brain function and healing.

**Coffee and dark chocolate** – (*not milk chocolate; high in fat/low in benefits*)

The constituents, caffeine and antioxidants, may slow the progression of Alzheimer's and help patients deal with their condition. The best chocolate contains at least 70% cacao.

**Coconut oil (extra virgin)** – Despite getting a bad rap for years, virgin coconut oil touts no cholesterol or trans-fats, and is naturally anti-inflammatory, helping to support memory as we age.

**Beets** - a root vegetable that supplies iron, reduces inflammation and increase blood flow to the brain. The natural nitrates in beets, as well as

antioxidants, make them a highly nutritious brain food. **Bone broth** – Contains glycine and proline, amino acids which can improve memory in addition to reducing inflammation in many parts of the body including joints, digestive system and the brain.... and don't forget, it has high levels of collagen, likely to benefit skin health and appearance.



### Senolytics

“Zombie cells”, or by their more scientific name, senescent cells, are aged cells that have reached the end of their functional life cycle, but hang around, refusing to die off. They can no longer grow or divide and because of their dysfunction, can cause damage to surrounding tissues, giving off compounds that instigate systemic inflammation. Accordingly, they are a major factor in age-related disease and actually advance the aging process. **Senolytics** are compounds capable of destroying senescent cells. Along with providing a bulwark against the aging process, they offer significant benefits such as fighting numerous diseases and disorders including heart disease, cancer, obesity and metabolic disorders (like diabetes II). An early senolytic identified was the polyphenol\* **quercetin**. It was found to have characteristic senolytic properties and when used in combination with **dasatinib**, a chemotherapy drug, enhanced its performance in treatment of certain cancers. More recently, another flavonoid, **fisetin** has been shown to be a more potent senolytic than quercetin, Early research, including that by the Mayo Clinic, suggest the superior efficacy of fisetin on certain cancers, even as a stand alone therapy, thus eliminating the potential risks that accompany cancer drugs.

Further, a study comparing ten plant-derived compounds, found fisetin to be the most effective at eliminating senescent cells. Modest quantities of Fisetin are found in fruits and vegetables such as apples, grapes and onions, with the greatest concentration in strawberries.

*\* Polyphenols in food can prevent inflammation in older people by positively altering intestinal microbiota.*



### JoJo's View:

I have been talking to our clients for years about the importance of protecting skin from the harmful ultra-violet rays of the sun. In tandem, we routinely are working with our folks, using laser (or more specifically OPL – Optimized Pulsed Light) and medium depth peels to restore the vibrancy and overall healthy appearance that everyone seeks and so admires when they see it either on themselves or others. Keep in mind, though, continuing to damage the skin through the years, only to repair it seasonally, will work just so long. Eventually, the skin will lose its ability to improve, even with the most effective treatments. Now, here we are again in a new sun season and while you may have heard it all before, it is serious enough to bear repeating. So, we've tapped into a piece from Mt. Sinai Hospital that focuses on one of the more serious consequences of ultra-violet ray exposure from the skin.

**Read more beginning on pg. 3.**

### Life's Simple 7 – Lower the risk of dementia

Seven cardiovascular and brain health factors, dubbed by the American Heart Association as “Life's Simple 7”, have been linked to lower incidence of dementia overall and possibly among individuals with the



highest genetic risk. The Simple 7 are: **being active, eating better, losing weight, not smoking, maintaining healthy blood pressure, controlling cholesterol, and reducing blood sugar.** And should we be surprised these same lifestyle habits also bear on skin health & appearance among numerous other aspects of long term wellness. The study, published in *Neurology*®, the journal of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN), followed thousands of patients over a 30 year span.

### The Lowly Mushroom – or is it?



Lovers of stuffed mushrooms, chicken marsala, mushroom omelets or a mushroom-topped burger or steak, might not think that the tasty fungus cloaks a powerful defense against aging and disease; specifically, **L-ergothioneine**. This amino acid, which the body cannot produce and the accumulation of which depletes with age, predominates in cells subject to the highest risk of oxidative stress and inflammation; bone marrow, blood, liver, brain, eye lens **and skin**. Research is finding that higher levels in the blood of L-ergothioneine may lead to lower rates of cardiovascular disease, cognitive decline, Parkinson's disease, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), overall frailty and death from any cause. In fact studies indicate that countries with the highest intake of this amino acid (largely from mushroom consumption) enjoy notably greater longevity. Italy (with an estimated life expectancy of 83 years) tops the list in a comparison of European and American consumption of L-ergothioneine and correlating longevity. France, Ireland and Finland fall just below Italy in the lower 80s. The United States brings up the rear (78 years).

**So, mushroom up, America!**

## What you should know about Melanoma

from;  **Today**

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer, there being more cases of it than all other cancers combined. More than 5 million people in the United States are diagnosed with skin cancers each year. One in five people in the United States will develop a skin cancer by the age of 70. Most of these cancers are caught before they spread and they are treated with surgical removal in the doctor's office.

About 200,000 people are diagnosed each year with melanoma, a type of skin cancer that develops when melanocytes (the cells that give the skin its tan or brown color) start to grow out of control. Melanoma is a more dangerous form of skin cancer because it can spread to other parts of your body.

“Unlike with many other cancers, patients and doctors have an advantage over skin cancer, in that we can see it with the naked eye,” says Dr. Jesse Lewin, Assistant Professor of Dermatology, Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai Hospital. “We don't need invasive tests to look for these types of cancers; we just need to partner with our patients and be on the lookout for new and changing lesions, which are the earliest sign of skin cancer. The other advantage is our ability to reduce the risk of skin cancer by protecting ourselves from the sun.”

### Who can get melanoma?

Melanoma affects more men than women. People of any skin color can get skin cancer, however those with lighter skin are at greater overall risk. Those at higher risk for developing melanoma include:

- People with more than 50 moles or with atypical moles, which are often larger and have more ragged or blurred borders that are not easy to see
- People who are sensitive to the sun, which includes those who sunburn easily, or have natural blonde or red hair
- People with a personal or family history of melanoma

### Is the risk different for people with darker skin tones?

Melanoma in patients with darker skin tones is often diagnosed in its later stages, when it's more difficult to treat. One reason is that people with darker skin types are more prone to developing skin cancer on non-exposed skin with less pigment, and these are places that people tend not think about as they are not exposed to the sun. Up to 75 percent of tumors occur on the palms, soles, in the mouth, and under the nails.

## **What are the early signs of melanoma?**

Some of the early signs include changes in the size, shape, or color of an existing mole or a new brown or black lesion with irregular borders, multiple colors, and asymmetry. Between 20 and 30 percent of melanomas occur in existing moles, while 70 to 80 percent are found on apparently normal skin.

Most melanoma cells still make melanin (brown pigment), so melanomas are usually brown or black. But some melanomas do not make melanin and can appear pink, tan, or even white. This variety highlights the importance of seeing your dermatologist for periodic skin cancer screening exams.

Melanomas can develop anywhere on your skin, but they are more likely to start on the chest and back in men, and on the legs in women. The neck and face are other common sites. In about half of cases, patients discover these melanomas themselves. The best way to detect melanoma is to look for a change in the size, shape or color of an existing mole or other skin lesion.

## **How can I avoid getting melanoma?**

There are some risk factors that you cannot change like your skin type, age, and family history. But there are ways to lower your risk of skin cancer.

The majority of skin cancers are caused by ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and tanning beds, so the most important thing you can do to reduce your risk of developing skin cancer is take steps to protect yourself from these exposures.

Studies show that having five or more sunburns doubles your risk for melanoma. This is why it is particularly important to educate and protect children and adolescents from the sun. People who first use a tanning bed before age 35 increase their risk for melanoma by 75 percent.

Here are some tips:

- Use sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or above. A nickel-sized dollop of sunscreen is enough for your face. One ounce of sunscreen can cover your whole body but needs to be reapplied every two hours. One study found that regular daily use of an SPF 15 or higher sunscreen reduces the risk of developing melanoma by 50 percent. Your face is especially vulnerable to sun damage as it is exposed to the sun year-round.
- You are vulnerable to sunlight all year round, not just when at the beach. So consider using a moisturizer with sunscreen every day all year.
- When outside, wear protective clothing, a wide brimmed hat, and UV-blocking sunglasses. Seek shade. If possible, avoid the sun during peak sun hours (10 am to 4 pm).

- Avoid tanning beds.

As with all cancers, early detection is key to successful treatment. So, be sure to get a full body check from your dermatologist periodically, check yourself regularly especially during and after periods of exposure and report changes in skin appearance to your dermatologist as you discover them.

