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E. EXCEL'S WORLD



October – December 2023

Life Is Greatly Different Because of E. Excel

Diamond Masters Shih Shu-Chen and Hung Wen-Chen



**Shih Shu-Chen and
Hung Wen-Chen**

From: Taiwan

Strengths and Hobbies:

Cooking, reading, exercising

Dream: To travel the world with E. Excel

Traveled with E. Excel to:

Western United States, Bali, Hawaii, Kyoto, Osaka, Bintan, Sabah, Shanghai, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, Australia, Macau, Hong Kong, Beijing, Dubai, Hokkaido, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Nagoya, Canada, Royal Caribbean Cruise, Vietnam, India, Sanya, Spain, Penang, Phuket

With years of experience in E. Excel, newly promoted Diamond Master Shih Shu-Chen orchestrates her E. Excel career akin to a duck gracefully skimming across water. While the duck exudes an aura of tranquility on the water's surface, a dive beneath unveils the relentless paddling of its webbed feet. "It doesn't matter if you're not fast, the important thing is to keep progressing every day." Remaining steadfast to her own rhythm, Shu-Chen has steadily carved out her own path at E. Excel.

It is hard to imagine that Shu-Chen, who spoke eloquently during the interview, once worked in an enclosed army environment before taking up the E. Excel career on a full-time basis. At that time, she was a contract employee but was unfortunately laid off during a downsizing of military personnel. Finding a new job at nearly age 40 was not easy! She felt helpless and was burdened with mortgage payments, household expenses, and her children's tuition fees. She embraced the opportunity of an E. Excel career, giving herself a chance, and ultimately changing the course of her life.

"I often find myself reminiscing about the days when we distributed leaflets door-to-door, back in those days of no Internet. Back then, there were no online courses, and to attend Dr. Jau-Fei Chen's lectures, I'd drive and pick up fellow E. Excellers along the way. To contact fellow E. Excellers, I had to return home to call them, and they might not even be home." This past Shu-Chen recounted must be unimaginable to those who have recently joined E. Excel. But going through such tough times cultivated in Shu-Chen a spirit of diligence and endurance.

"In this day and age, the Internet has dissolved all geographic barriers, and online courses offer the freedom to learn anytime and anywhere. People can communicate with each other anytime, thanks to mobile phones. Through video calls, physical distance between people becomes nearly inconsequential. With a phone in hand, you can buy products online from official websites and send messages on social media, eliminating the need for individual interaction. Thanks to Google Maps, you won't get lost when visiting fellow E. Excellers in other cities and counties. Such convenience in communication also makes providing after-sales service easier." By leveraging advanced technology, Shu-Chen has increased her effectiveness in managing her E. Excel career today!

"The launch of the new product *OiiOii* provided me with a golden opportunity to take my E. Excel career to the next level, propelling me to the rank of Diamond Master! I'm very grateful to Dr. Jau-Fei Chen, who has been working tirelessly to share Nutritional Immunology and develop new products over the years. Our collective mission is to share with more people the fantastic concept of Nutritional Immunology and extend the reach of such great products." Shu-Chen takes great pride in contributing to this shared endeavor.



When asked about the secret to her successful career management, Shu-Chen shared openly, “Having firsthand experience with the products is crucial for sharing about them with others in a deeper and more persuasive way. I also have a secret weapon—years of accrued experience. This involves documenting and organizing various instances of sharing across many years. The database includes product experience sharing, strategies for overcoming challenges, fellow E. Excellers’ secrets to their success, and methods for stress relief. Whenever fellow E. Excellers seek help, I can readily extract relevant cases from the database!”

Reflecting on her greatest sense of achievement at E. Excel, Shu-Chen thought for a moment before replying, “Thanks to E. Excel, I no longer have to ask my husband for money. Instead, I can be a giver and contribute. That feels wonderful!” The E. Excel career has granted Shu-Chen financial independence. She added proudly that she supported her children’s education up to graduate school; her son is now an R&D engineer at a listed company, while her daughter is a teacher. Shu-Chen has paid off her mortgage and even bought a second property—a storefront. These accomplishments are the results of her dedicated efforts at E. Excel over the years!

“Never give up if you’re doing the right thing, and your persistence will lead you to success.” Such is Shu-Chen’s philosophy of success. “When I came into contact with E. Excel years ago, the authenticity of Nutritional Immunology resonated with me. Being able to safeguard my family’s health made me devote myself to the E. Excel career without any regrets. This persistence has made me who I am today. When I met up with old colleagues from the military, they looked upon me enviously. They remarked on my enduring physique and my transformation into a cheerful, chatty, and energetic individual—a stark contrast to their lives centered around a fixed salary and waiting for retirement.”

For Shu-Chen, infusing the E. Excel career into her everyday life brings her the greatest joy, especially since she is the same age as Dr. Jau-Fei Chen. “I’m really happy to be able to grow old with Dr. Jau-Fei Chen! Upon joining E. Excel, the most significant change has been in my persona; it’s not merely a shift but a genuine metamorphosis! I’ve changed from feeling inferior to embracing confidence; from being shy to being chatty. Without E. Excel, I wouldn’t be where I am now.

“The countries I’ve visited with E. Excel are too many to be counted on both hands. The most unforgettable memory was the first time I went abroad—to the Western United States. Every time I win an incentive trip challenge, I get the opportunity to bring along my family; this wouldn’t have been possible during my time in the military. What’s more, government employees were required to coordinate their leaves with colleagues, not to mention traveling with them.” The strong sense of happiness that Shu-Chen exudes can be easily felt in her words!

In a traditional industry, someone of Shu-Chen’s age might be on the cusp of retirement, but Shu-Chen has transcended these norms. Not only has she become a Diamond Master—E. Excel’s highest rank—but she has also set goals for her future. “I’ll continue to work hard to bring new blood into the team. I’d like to win the incentive trip challenge every year and travel the world with E. Excel!” With a wealth of experience and extraordinary confidence, Shu-Chen will always shine brilliantly in E. Excel.

Life Motto—“Success always belongs to those who keep running.”

Overcoming Failure Leads to the Path Toward Success

Diamond Master Ou Chen-Yuan



Ou Chen-Yuan

From: Taiwan

Strengths and Hobbies: Enjoying healthy cuisine

Dream: To travel around the world, help more people gain health, and let my family lead a different life

Traveled with E. Excel to: Royal Caribbean Cruise, Vietnam, India, Sanya, Spain, Penang, Phuket

Life is full of surprises. It is from the process of bouncing back from hitting rock bottom that one truly grasps the stark contrast between life's peaks and valleys. In the span of just a few years, newly promoted Diamond Master Ou Chen-Yuan has experienced these ups and downs.

Seven years ago, when Chen-Yuan first encountered E. Excel, he held a stable government job maintaining streetlights—a job often referred to as an “iron rice bowl” due to its stability. With a house, a car, frequent international travel, and daily Qigong practice to stay healthy, he lived a comfortable life as a well-off bachelor. His only concern at that time was his octogenarian mother, who had suddenly developed an autoimmune condition.

Chen-Yuan recalled, “At first, we didn't know what the problem was. After multiple examinations, the cause was finally pinpointed—a malfunctioning immune system. It's heart-wrenching to watch my mom's gradual deterioration day after day, marked by symptoms like dry mouth, difficulty swallowing, and weight loss. We tried various supplements and explored every possible way to help her, but our efforts were in vain. It wasn't until my friend Li-Chun shared E. Excel's Nutritional Immunology with me that our luck began to change.” He added, “I didn't dare to have high hopes and initially introduced my mother to simple powdered drinks as a supplement to plant-based nutrition. To my surprise, E. Excel's products exceeded my expectations—they're backed by great science and are convenient to use. My mom's condition improved in a short time. Although my mom had lost her appetite, she insisted on consuming E. Excel's products! I was overjoyed! I could finally let go of the heavy burden weighing on my heart. I proactively joined E. Excel, delving deeper into Nutritional Immunology.”

Just as Chen-Yuan was rejoicing over his mother's restored health and the return of stability in his life, he fell victim to a carefully orchestrated scam revolving around his family's land! Completely unaware of the risk, he emptied his savings, borrowed money from friends, and even took out a bank loan. It was not until later that he realized he had been deceived. Overnight, he lost everything! A wave of emotions—self-reproach, regret, anger, and panic—surged over him, rendering him sleepless for countless nights. He openly admitted that if it were not for his good health, bolstered by the help of E. Excel products, he would not have been able to endure that period of his life.

Reflecting on the harrowing incident that happened three years ago, the usually cheerful Chen-Yuan fell silent for a while and could not choke back his sobs.



"There were many moments when I felt utterly hopeless and didn't want to work hard anymore. But every time I thought about my elderly mom, I'd pull myself together temporarily. That painful feeling of despair tormented me endlessly." Chen-Yuan continued with gratitude, "During those years, if it weren't for fellow E. Excellers who accompanied me like family, encouraged me, and never gave up on me, I wouldn't be where I am today! I'm especially grateful to Li-Chun, Ming-Chang, and Wan-Hsuan. They brought me along to do volunteer work and share about Nutritional Immunology to help others when I felt most helpless. This made me realize that I still had the capacity to contribute and aspire to something meaningful. They gave me courage and hope, and I embraced the E. Excel career as an opportunity to begin anew!"

Always enthusiastic, helpful, and health-conscious, when Chen-Yuan first encountered E. Excel's great products years ago, he actively started learning and sharing Nutritional Immunology. Despite not being a full-time E. Exceller, he quickly became a Pearl Master, and only stopped pursuing higher ranks because he found comfort in an easier life. "In the past, I shared Nutritional Immunology because it's my nature to share good things with others! Now, it has evolved from a mere interest into a full-fledged career that redefines the values of my life! I once heard Dr. Jau-Fei Chen speak at an online event at a time when I was feeling down, 'Want to succeed? Then burn your boat! Success comes from full commitment. When you eliminate the option of retreat, your sole focus becomes forging a new path ahead.' Those words revitalized me! Just as Dr. Jau-Fei Chen said, 'Only those without umbrellas run in the rain!' Now, I've neither a boat nor an umbrella. Shouldn't I run ahead with all my strength?"

Determined to rise above his despair, Chen-Yuan retired early and used his entire pension to pay off his debts. Having truly "burned his boat," he committed himself to the E. Excel career wholeheartedly. He said thoughtfully, "I've learned to accept my losses and simplify my life. I've embraced a newfound sense of happiness. I've made it my mission to share Nutritional Immunology, which has brought health to my family and those in need. Drawing inspiration from successful E. Excellers as my role models, I strive to always keep learning and adjusting. A strong mind and sense of determination can truly give one great power! This year, Dr. Jau-Fei Chen's best gift to me is the new product *OiiOii*. It not only represents a new dimension of health but has also helped me reach the ranks of Jade Master and Diamond Master in one go!"

Looking back on those times when he was in the abyss of despair, Chen-Yuan could never have imagined he would reach the peak of success again! He could never have imagined that this year would see him embarking on international travels with E. Excel and stepping aboard a world-class luxury cruise ship, where he would sail the seas and have crazy fun with fellow E. Excellers! At the end of the interview, Chen-Yuan was overcome with emotion. With utmost sincerity, he said, "Whether we feel as if we're in heaven or hell lies in our thoughts. Now, I'm deeply grateful every day for the fellow E. Excellers who lit the lamp of hope for me in my darkest moments! In the past, I used to maintain streetlights to bring light to passers-by, and now, I wish to extend a helping hand and bring hope to more people through E. Excel's Nutritional Immunology!"

Life Motto—"Face your fear bravely. Transcend yourself and make life more beautiful!"

E. Excel Adds Value to Life

Diamond Master Wu Fu-Lin



Wu Fu-Lin

From: Taiwan

Strengths and Hobbies:

Volunteering, learning, traveling, singing

Dream: To have extraordinary freedom

Traveled with E. Excel to:

Royal Caribbean Cruise, Penang, Phuket

"Everything works out for the best!" aptly describes newly promoted Diamond Master Wu Fu-Lin's encounter with E. Excel. Despite not joining E. Excel right after graduation, two decades spent working in traditional industries deepened her belief that E. Excel is a career that harmoniously blends health and wisdom, provides a work-life balance, and can be a legacy that is passed down to future generations.

As a businessman's daughter, Fu-Lin understood from a young age that entrepreneurship was her path to financial success. Thus, upon entering society, she started a wholesale footwear business and a clothing store.

"At that time, I needed to have a daily influx of cash to feel like I was making money. However, all my hard work—working day and night—left me in poor health and with no family time! One day, as I was lying on the emergency room bed, the gravity of the situation hit me, and I thought, 'The rest of my life is precious, don't waste it.' I asked myself, how many more decades do I have left? What kind of life do I want in the future? What kind of person do I want to become?"

Recalling the moment that brought her to E. Excel, Fu-Lin said, "I came to know of E. Excel products due to my son's allergies. Initially, I didn't consider pursuing the E. Excel career because of my existing business. It wasn't until I fell ill that I truly grasped the value of good health. At my sickbed, my mother said to me, 'Beyond caring for your family, you need to take care of yourself—that's true filial piety.' That left a deep impression on me, and I finally understood what 'Filial piety begins with taking care of your own body' meant." Motivated by her mother's words, Fu-Lin decided to take a chance on herself, learning Nutritional Immunology and embarking on her E. Excel career.

"I learned from fellow E. Exceller Ming-Chang that choice is more important than effort. When I was younger, I chose to work in a traditional industry, while Ming-Chang chose the E. Excel career. Twenty years down the road, our achievements diverged significantly. It becomes evident that once you make a wrong choice, no matter how hard you work, you can't surpass the achievements and results that come from making the right choice." Although Fu-Lin started the E. Excel career later in life, she displayed remarkable courage in altering her course, and she set a clear goal at the outset: to reach the highest rank of E. Excel—Diamond Master. Beaming with pride, Fu-Lin proclaimed, "I did it!"

How did Fu-Lin do it? To motivate herself, she plays Eason Chan's song *Trust in My Unlimited Potential* every morning when she wakes up. "The lyrics are well-written and are like a reflection of myself, 'I hear my breath telling me to do my best. Create beautiful memories from life's experiences... I believe in doing my best. I believe I'm a miracle...' The lyrics fill me with positive energy, empowering me to go all out and forge ahead bravely." Fu-Lin believes that miracles belong to those who have unwavering faith, and opportunities are reserved for those who are prepared.



"Maintaining the right mindset is important to success, but it's the commitment to continuous learning with an open mind that truly unlocks one's potential. I make it a practice to meditate often, clearing my thoughts, and engage in self-reflection and self-adjustment. This way, I'm ready for every new beginning!" Fu-Lin is a diligent learner and leads by example. She constantly reminds herself that to better serve and help others, she must continually enhance her own capabilities.

"During the pandemic, when social distancing became the norm and virus transmission was a prevalent concern, I still continued my daily routine, checking in on fellow E. Excellers. Once, I needed some *NOCO*. The fellow E. Exceller I visited handed me an unopened bottle of *NOCO* without hesitation, saying, 'You need it more, we cannot do without you.'" Deeply moved, Fu-Lin realized then her value in the hearts of fellow E. Excellers.

In Fu-Lin's heart, E. Excel transcends its identity as a mere company. "Dr. Jau-Fei Chen imparts not only health insights but also invaluable wisdom on nurturing our relationships with our children. She tells us not to be overbearing helicopter moms. Instead, she encourages mothers to work hard and embark on their own journeys of learning and personal growth, thus becoming exemplary role models for their children. This allows me to be both a teacher and a friend to my daughter. My daughter also learns at E. Excel, and she has become a health management expert among her peers during her school years." Even Fu-Lin's 70-year-old mother learns at E. Excel, attending every class and meeting, and diligently takes notes.

"To make E. Excel not just a personal legacy but a family business" is Fu-Lin's important mission assigned by her mother. Fu-Lin hopes, "After becoming a Diamond Master, I've a broader vision. Leading a team is like cultivating a garden—one must work hard to sow the seeds, nurture their growth, and ultimately watch them bloom, flourish, and bear fruit. I hope my garden will be adorned with various footprints, just like the painting my daughter, who loves to paint, once gifted me—a large diamond on top with numerous small diamonds under it." This is Fu-Lin's future goal—achieving success by helping even more people succeed.

Regarding switching from a traditional business to the E. Excel career, Fu-Lin said with heartfelt emotion, "In the past, I did the same thing day in, day out. Life was monotonous, lacking in direction and quality. But after joining E. Excel, every day has been a source of excitement. I help others with their health, I'm always learning, and I've fellow E. Excellers who are like family. I'm filled with gratitude and joy." Sharing her own experiences with newly joined E. Excellers, Fu-Lin advises, "If you can run, don't settle for a slow walk. Life is finite, don't waste it. Dare to step out of your comfort zone, embrace life's challenges, cultivate a cheerful and wise heart, and happiness will come your way."

Life Motto—"Miracles belong to those who have unwavering faith."

Beauty and Health Go Hand in Hand

Diamond Master Wu Yi-Hsuan



Wu Yi-Hsuan

From: Taiwan

Strengths and Hobbies: Having aesthetic sensitivity, enjoying delicacies

Dream: To have a large house for my three-generation family to live together

Traveled with E. Excel to: Royal Caribbean Cruise, Penang, Phuket

Compared to many people, Yi-Hsuan, the newly promoted Diamond Master, is fortunate to not have squandered her youth before discovering her passion in life. Drawn to the beauty industry, her talent and hard work led her to establish her own nail salon at the age of 24. Talking about her nail salon, Yi-Hsuan shared enthusiastically, "Creating nail art is fun. Each nail is like a mini canvas, and when the painting is done, seeing my customers' satisfied smile makes me happy! However, this job can take a toll on one's health. My eyes need to stay focused for a long time, and I often had to endure hours without restroom breaks during peak business periods. To accommodate customers' schedules, I frequently worked late into the night. During the infancy of my two children, I could hardly take care of them and had to rely on a 24-hour nanny, thus missing out on precious memories with my children."

Like the classic movie line, "Sooner or later, you'll have to pay for what you've done," Yi-Hsuan's body eventually set off alarm bells, signaling that it was time for a change. Her skin started looking rough and dull. This led to Yi-Hsuan getting to know E. Excel, "Initially, I thought some simple vitamin B complex pills would suffice. But after trying just one pill, I immediately changed my mind because it tasted unnatural. It was my customer, Pei-Ju, who introduced me to E. Excel, emphasizing its commitment to plant-based nutrition. She also asked Shu-Min to help me further understand Nutritional Immunology." Yi-Hsuan, who loves beauty, added with a smile, "I was already halfway convinced by Shu-Min's own radiant appearance and well-maintained physique, thanks to her E. Excel regimen. Later, I was invited to attend the launch of the new product *Phytotime*, and for the first time, I met the beautiful and wise Dr. Jau-Fei Chen, who explained in detail the benefits of plant-based nutrition. It was so fascinating that I attended both morning and afternoon sessions. Right there and then, I made up my mind to change!"

Generous Yi-Hsuan shared Nutritional Immunology with her staff and customers. "After switching from unhealthy takeaways and bubble tea to a varied plant-based diet with *Triflora*, the first people to notice the improvement in my complexion were the customers I interacted with face to face. Many of them were curious and asked me about my secret, eventually following my lead in changing their diets. Gradually, my staff, including beauticians and lash artists, and loyal customers, all started to see improvements in their skin from the inside out! I decided to provide E. Excel products to my customers so that they can enjoy healthy and guilt-free drinks."

What is Yi-Hsuan's secret to running her E. Excel business successfully? Yi-Hsuan answered without hesitation, "E. Excel not only has great food products but also fantastic skincare products, which complement my salon perfectly! Most of my customers are young women who seek health and beauty. I'm happy to introduce to them the goodness of E. Excel's Elemente skincare products and the wholesomeness of plant-based nutrition!"



In recent years, the launch of every new E. Excel product has generated significant buzz! When *PlusO2* was launched, it helped me achieve Pearl Master rank. Then, with the introduction of the *PlusO2 Scalp Balance* and *Elemente Fog Moisturizer*, I achieved Jade Master rank. This year, thanks to the new product *OliOli*, I became a Diamond Master! Don't miss out on the opportunity that every new E. Excel product brings!"

How did Yi-Hsuan navigate the challenges of the pandemic? She laughed and said lightly, "During the pandemic, there were regulations that prohibited indoor gatherings of more than five people. As my staff and I already constituted five people, no customers were allowed into my salon! I'm really grateful that I still had the E. Excel business running! All seminars and training sessions were conducted online. I remember there's one online class with a limit of 500 participants. When registration opened, everyone rushed to log in and the response was so overwhelming that the system accidentally kicked the instructor out! The incident, while amusing, underscored a larger point: during the pandemic, people recognized that Nutritional Immunology is a straightforward and authentic science. They were more enthusiastic and eager to learn about it and achieve good health."

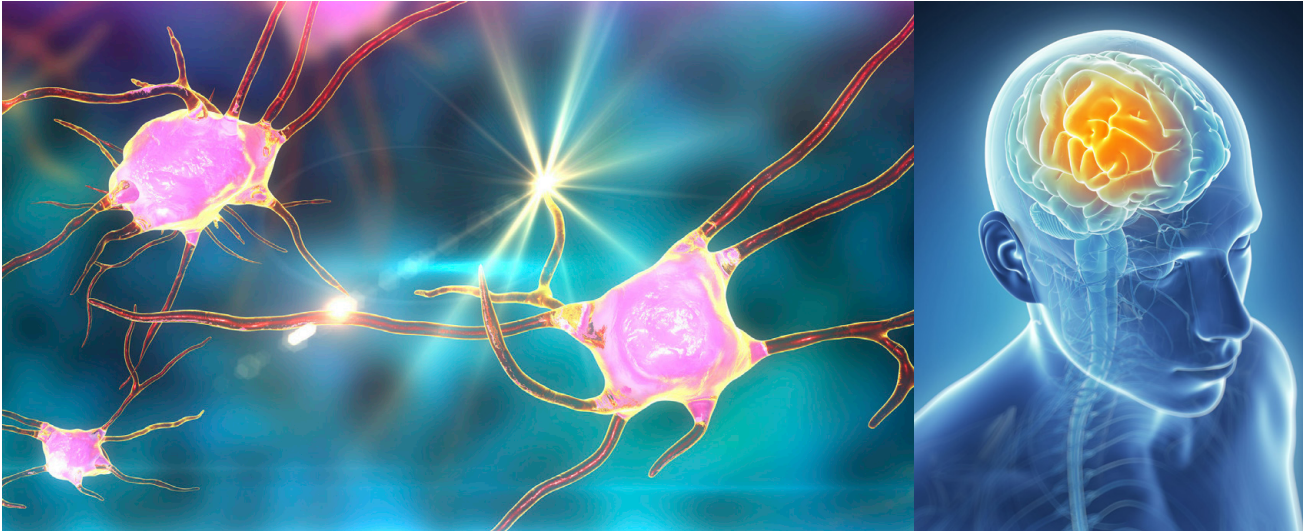
Yi-Hsuan is her own boss, be it at her nail salon or her E. Excel business. The difference lies in her attire: at her nail salon, she dresses comfortably to facilitate her work, while when at E. Excel, she prefers a professional look. "I really enjoy coming to E. Excel each time, dressing up in formal attire and applying delicate makeup. It makes an impression on my husband and brings the positive energy of beauty to the teammates! I'm fortunate to have mentors within E. Excel who are positive, highly disciplined, and lead by example. Just like Dr. Jau-Fei Chen, they're all my best role models! Through reading and sharing during the weekly reading club, I've greatly enhanced my knowledge of health and honed my interpersonal skills."

During this year's Royal Caribbean cruise, using her beauty expertise, Yi-Hsuan helped Shu-Min and herself win the "Best Dress" award at the Southeast Asian style-themed tea party! Yi-Hsuan gets along pretty well with her sister-in-law, so she encouraged her sister-in-law to join the cruise incentive trip challenge together, and they both won the challenge. When talking about the cruise, Yi-Hsuan could not contain her excitement, "Due to the pandemic, this year's cruise trip was my first time traveling with E. Excel, and everything was a pleasant surprise! My sister-in-law and I were so lucky and thrilled to bump into the amiable Dr. Jau-Fei Chen outside a café while onboard!"

Yi-Hsuan, who is a positive thinker, considers herself a happy person. "I often feel that my wishes can be fulfilled. With the right mindset, I can live the life I want. Making the right choices will lead to good results. Next, I hope to help more people become lucky like I did—guiding them toward the same fulfilling journey of the E. Excel career!"

Life Motto—"Having a dream only means you're thinking; fulfilling it means you're capable."

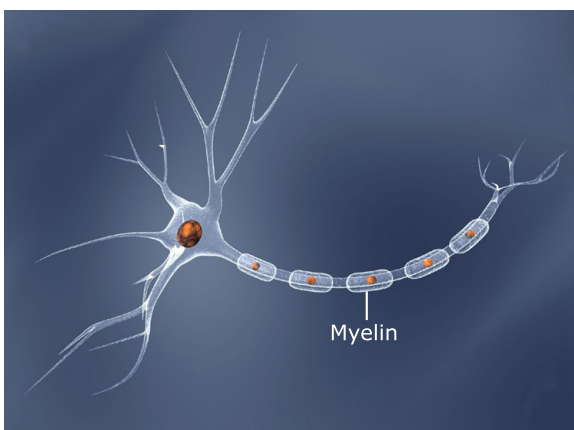
The Brain



The human brain is a remarkable organ that serves as the central computer, controlling all activities of the body. It regulates vital functions such as organ activity, thoughts, emotions, vision, breathing, and even the heartbeat. Understanding how the brain talks to the body is crucial for comprehending its functions and potential disorders.

The Brain's Molecular Maestros: Hormones and Neurons

Hormones and neurons serve as the brain's messengers. Neurons transmit signals directly, while hormones act as wireless messengers, reaching specific organs. These messages allow organs to interpret and derive meaning. Neurons, on the other hand, are specialized nerve cells that transmit information through electrical signals. They form a complex network enabling our ability to think, feel, and process information, akin to a biological computer.

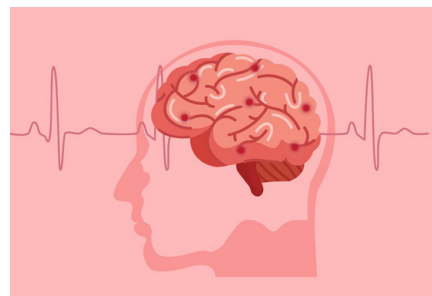


NeuroVelocity: Supercharging Nerve Signals with Myelin

Some nerves in your body are super long, stretching over a whole meter! They need to be lightning-fast to bring you those instant reactions you love. How? Enter the myelin sheath. It wraps around the nerve and acts like an armor, protecting and insulating it. It is like a race car track for signals! There are also clever gaps in the myelin sheath that help generate new action potentials, turbocharging signal transmission. But here is the twist: if the myelin gets damaged or goes missing, it can cause serious neurological issues, like multiple sclerosis.

Even Aged Brains Regenerate

Hold on to your neurons, because here is some mind-blowing news: our brains have the ability to generate brand new brain cells! It is called neurogenesis, and it is like a superhero power for repairing damage and tackling brain diseases. When our adult brain cells get injured, they can turn back time and transform into a younger, more flexible state. They start growing and forming new connections, bringing lost functions back to life. Neurogenesis also boosts our learning, memory, and information-processing skills. It is like the brain's own "reset and upgrade" button. This incredible process fights brain shrinkage and injuries, helping our brains bounce back and adapt like champions. It is a glimmer of hope for treating neurological conditions that seemed incurable.



The Brain Does Not Mature Until Around the Age of 25

Turning 18 does not instantly make someone a full-fledged adult in the ways that matter. The brain takes its sweet time to mature, with the prefrontal cortex—the brain's CEO—being the last to develop. It controls things like judgment, problem-solving, impulse control, and personality. So, do not fret if you still feel a bit like a kid even after blowing out those 18 candles!

The Brain Changes As It Ages

As we age, our brains shrink and become more susceptible to memory loss and dementia. Childhood is a crucial time for building neural connections, and the brain reaches a whopping 90% of its adult size by age six. However, after our 40s, our brains start pulling a disappearing act, shrinking by about 5% per decade. This shrinkage affects important brain parts like the frontal lobe and hippocampus, messing with our cognition and memory. Less cortical density means slower thinking, and changes in neurotransmitter systems mess with our brains' mojo.



The Brain Can Adapt

Fear not! Even when faced with injury or trauma, the brain can adapt and overcome. It recruits other brain areas and unlocks hidden abilities, like acquiring savant syndrome. Imagine getting hit on the head and suddenly becoming an artistic genius or having a photographic memory. Even people born blind can repurpose brain regions to enhance their hearing and touch abilities.

All this is thanks to neuroplasticity—the brain's ability to change and grow. With repetition and practice, it can forge new pathways and recover lost functions. So, keep challenging your brain, because it is capable of incredible feats!





Brain Foods

Proper nourishment is like rocket fuel for your brain, especially during early childhood when it is growing at warp speed. A nutritious diet is key to avoiding cognitive and behavioral deficits. Enter the omega-3 fatty acids! These powerhouses are brain fuel for kids, supporting neurotransmitter function and battling inflammation. They even show potential in taming the wild attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and battling Alzheimer's disease.

ADHD symptoms might arise when brain cells struggle with those all-important neurotransmitters. But fear not! Omega-3s may help those brain messengers do their job while fighting off inflammation. Some studies suggest that upping omega-3 intake could be the secret for better focus and improved symptoms in ADHD. One study found that omega-3 improved symptoms in a quarter of kids and teens with ADHD after three months, and by six months, half had improvements. In fact, research has uncovered that people with Alzheimer's have lower levels of the omega-3 fatty acid docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) in their brains. Consuming plenty of DHA can actually slash your risk of getting Alzheimer's. It is like an armor for your brain!



Nature has it all figured out! Nuts, seeds, and other plant foods provide a treasure trove of omega-3s. Chia seeds, kiwi fruit seeds, dragon fruit seeds, walnuts, and even macadamia nuts are some plant-based options. Although the omega-3s in plant foods exist mostly in the form of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), the human body can partially convert ALA to DHA and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). Munch away and start that omega-3 intake early for maximum benefits!

As we grow older, we must continue to nourish our brains. Inadequate nutrition leads to brain fog and potential damage. A balanced, nutrient-rich diet with brain foods like vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, and omega-3 fatty acids is essential. Ongoing research explores specialty brain foods like maitake mushroom and lion's mane mushroom, ginseng, and ashitaba for nerve growth and cognitive improvement. These extraordinary ingredients are also under the spotlight for their brain-boosting powers.

The Brain-Gut Connection

The gut microbiome, a bustling community of tiny organisms in your digestive tract, has a say in your brain's well-being. The gut and brain are connected through neural, endocrine, and immune pathways. Imbalances in gut bacteria can contribute to mental illnesses like depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. A healthy gut microbiome reduces anxiety, stress, and fights depression.

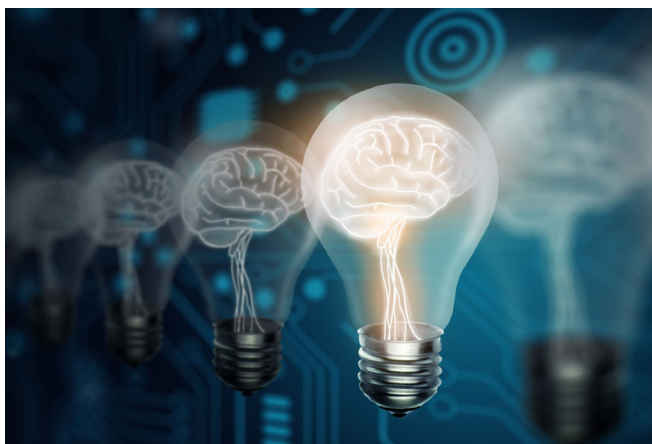
Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder. Autistic children often have gastrointestinal issues, and their gut microbiome differs from neurotypical children. Studies show that the gut microbiome affects behavior, as seen in mice transplants. Transplanting microbes from non-autistic donors to autistic children has shown promise in improving autism behaviors.

While scientists keep digging deeper, one thing is clear: taking care of your gut can lead to brain benefits.



Use It or Lose It!

Activities like playing an instrument, learning a language, and exercise have profound effects on the brain. They improve cognitive function, communication between brain hemispheres, and memory. These activities also reduce the risk of cognitive decline. You are not stuck with the same IQ for life! IQ is not fixed and can change throughout life, influenced by factors such as nutrition, learning, and experiences. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle, engaging in ongoing learning, and embracing new experiences can enhance cognitive abilities at any age.



Fun Brain Facts

We use more than 10% of our brain!

The myth that we only use 10% of our brains is so popular that it even has its own Hollywood movie. However, studies using various imaging techniques looking at the brains have shown that we do use a significant part of our brains throughout the day. Multiple areas of the brain are active during different activities, and all these areas work together to ensure we can function.

No one is either “left-brained” or “right-brained.”

Brain functions and abilities are not always strictly confined to one brain hemisphere. Both hemispheres of the brain work together and contribute to our thought processes. People are a mix of skills rather than being “left-brained” or “right-brained.”

We are all born premature.

While other animals, such as horses, are born with the ability to walk, human babies are born helpless! Evolutionary pressures favor intelligence and big brains, but this was in direct conflict with narrow pelvises. So there needed to be a balance between intelligence and the biggest brain possible and still be able to pass through the pelvis during birth. This means that babies are born with immature brains, as mature brains are too big to pass through. The immature brains mean babies are born helpless and not even able to walk. But they make up for it over time as their brain develops more!

Our brains are wrinkly for a reason.

Did you know other intelligent animals, like monkeys and dolphins, also have wrinkly brains? The folds in the brain, known as the gyri, and the grooves, known as the sulci, are there to increase the surface area of the brain within the limited space of the skull. The increased surface area means more neural connections, which means better information processing and high cognitive skills.



Your IQ is not fixed.

IQ can change over time. It is not fixed or static. Neuroscientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have found that different types of intelligence peak at different ages. For example, short-term memory might peak in one’s early 30s, but emotional perception peaks in one’s 40s or 50s. Vocabulary can peak in one’s 60s! Each facet of intelligence, such as social and emotional intelligence and executive function, peaks at different ages.

Brain-training games are not the shortcut to becoming a genius!

Some folks swear by brain-training games, while others roll their eyes. Turns out, it all depends on the game and how seriously you take it. There are no magic games for instant brain upgrades. The real secret? Keep learning new stuff and challenge yourself every day. Let us embrace the joy of learning and let our brains do a happy dance along the way!

Mozart is not the secret to baby geniuses.

While there is no concrete evidence linking classical music to brain development, it is still a fun and enjoyable activity for both you and your little one. Infants might actually recognize the tunes you played during pregnancy, giving them a sense of familiarity. Plus, playing music you enjoy during pregnancy can help create a safe and healthy space, so let the melodies fill the air.



Ditch multitasking.

Multitasking negatively affects brain performance. It divides attention, causing decreased focus and efficiency, and increased errors. The brain needs time to engage fully with a task and allocate cognitive resources. Multitasking prevents giving full attention, resulting in decreased overall performance. Instead, prioritize single-task focus for better brain function. Your brain will thank you!

Video games can help increase brain power!

Game on! Turns out, video games are not just fun, they are brain-boosters too. Science shows they enhance memory, motor skills, and cognitive abilities. Picture this: a group of 9-year-olds and 10-year-olds who played video games were put to the test and guess what? They outshined the non-gamers in attention, impulse control, and memory. Their brains even had increased activity in parts of the brain associated with attention and memory.

Amnesia is more than a dramatic plot device.

Very rarely does amnesia happen like it does in TV dramas. It is not as simple as wiping the slate clean and moving forward. Our brains rely on past experiences to function properly, like knowing how to drive to the mall or even basic tasks like washing our faces. Without past memories, our ability to function is compromised. Forgetting the past means losing touch with the present. While TV plots often depict amnesia as someone getting hit by a car and magically functioning without their past, that is not how it works in reality. For some people with amnesia, they do not forget the past, but forget the present. For example, you may remember who Kennedy is, but if I ask you who the current president is, you would not have that information. Amnesia is far more complex and impactful than a Hollywood storyline would suggest.



Your brain needs a vacation too!

Just like your body, your brain also needs quality R & R! Excessive stress harms memory, attention, and problem-solving skills. By reducing stress, you can see improvements in these areas. Vacations enhance mood, well-being, and cognitive flexibility, while new environments and activities boost creativity!



Laughter is good for the brain.

Laughter triggers the release of endorphins—the natural feel-good hormones in the body, and help reduce stress. It can help with attention, focus, and creativity. When we laugh, we stimulate different areas of the brain, such as the prefrontal cortex, the part responsible for executive functions like decision-making.

Exercise your body, for the sake of your brain.

Physical exercise, not just mental exercise, is needed for your brain. It can increase blood flow and oxygen delivery to the brain, which helps nourish brain cells, providing them with what they need for optimal functioning.

Helmets do not prevent concussions.

While helmets play a crucial role in protecting the head from severe injuries, it is important to recognize that they do not provide complete prevention against concussions. Concussions can occur even when wearing a helmet due to the nature of how they happen. Your brain is floating in liquid in your skull. Any sudden impact to the head or body can result in the brain moving rapidly inside your skull and bashing itself against the inner walls. So, while a helmet can stop you from cracking your head open like an egg, it does not stop your brain from turning into scrambled egg on the inside.

Your brain guzzles a significant portion of your energy!

The brain is only about 2% of the total body weight but consumes about 20% of the body's oxygen and energy supply!



The Lifelong Learning article is contributed by Dr. EE Zhang, MBChB.

Burn the Boat



Determination plays a pivotal role in the journey toward success and personal fulfillment. It is the unwavering commitment to our goals that propel us forward, even in the face of challenges. The significance of determination in achieving greatness cannot be overemphasized. What most prominently stands in opposition to that commitment is a way out—a path of retreat, alternative routes, options, and choices.

There are times to consider alternatives, but greatness eventually requires a solid commitment to a single goal. That commitment is made long before the outcome is certain and success is guaranteed, and that commitment must be made as a prerequisite to—not in reaction to—the vanquishing of great obstacles that stand between you and your goals.

If you want to take the island, then burn your boats.

In the early 1500s, the European nations were conquering and colonizing the “New World,” or the American continent. A man named Hernán Cortés led an expedition into what would become modern-day Mexico. He led a small party of about 500 men into the heart of a foreign empire and conquered it. Legend tells of Cortés landing on the foreign shore, the expedition facing death from the natives and division amongst themselves. He made a bold decision there—he ordered his men to burn their ships. By destroying their only means of retreat, Cortés sent a powerful message to his soldiers: there was no turning back. They had to conquer the land and succeed or perish. They conquered all of Mexico in two years.

Legend or not, the concept of burning the boat illustrates a powerful principle. Sometimes, extraordinary focus and energy come at the price of extraordinary commitment. What did this small band of men achieve in the land of Mexico, and how did they achieve it? The Aztec Empire was vast and powerful but also old and decadent.



It was rich and political. The conquest is a story of bravery, treachery, greed, and tragedy. But it is also the story of a band of men stretching every resource they had to its limits against the large empire that could afford to compromise every step of the way. The Aztecs had options. They could lose a battle or two. They could give up a town here or a village there. Cortés had only one choice: win and keep winning. Cortés and his men did not have the boats in the back of their minds because they had burned their boats.

Most of us keep our boats around, just in case. Just in case this is not for me, just in case I change my mind, just in case it does not work out. It is good to be careful in life but only to a certain degree. What if our boats are holding us back?



When failure is an option, we will not fight hard to succeed. We will not endure the pain, uncertainty, and risks necessary to take on something bigger than ourselves and actually come out on top. For example, imagine climbing a cliff but with a safety net ready to catch you if you fall. How far would you push yourself to grab that one last rock before your arms give out? How wide would you stretch your legs if it means the difference between life or death—reaching the top or falling to your death? Often what is missing in our lives is the willingness to burn our boats and commit to the things we have decided to pursue.

When you buy something big, something bigger than you can afford, you have to put some money down as a deposit to get the transaction started. Retail store owners understand this inherently. Before their business makes a penny, they must lease the property, secure inventory, hire staff, and pay the bills, sometimes for years, before they turn a profit. The store owners have burned their boats just for a chance at the island.

If you want to achieve something bigger than what you have done before, you will have to make a deposit upfront. That is burning your boat, and it comes in many forms. It might be as small as using some of your leisure time and money to make business cards for your entrepreneurial business. It might be reducing your standard of living for a time to build up savings to invest in your business. It might be as serious as quitting your day job and living off your savings while focusing your whole effort on growing your business. No matter what level your commitment is at, risk will always be involved.



Commitment

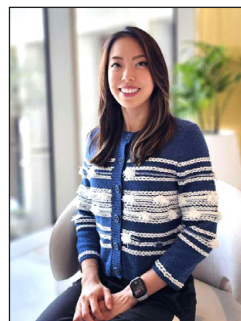
However, it is not all about the risk. There is a reward in simply deciding to commit. That is why people devote their lives to climbing mountains without safety nets. That is why ordinary people bet their life savings on opening a business. A life in full pursuit of something big instills a sense of determination and drive. It is a state of embracing the unknown, trusting our inner voice, and finding innovative solutions. Every brush with death makes the eventual triumph that much sweeter. Mistakes hurt deeply but also teach deeply, and we must grow stronger to endure the pressure. The prize is worth it, but so is the journey.



To be sure, boldness alone cannot get you the victory. Blind commitment will only lead to dead ends. But say that you did find something worth committing to. What now stands between you and success is your will to burn your boats and commit to conquering the island.

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Commitment is the cornerstone of success, allowing us to overcome obstacles, achieve our goals, and fulfill our deepest aspirations. By burning the boat and committing fully to our decisions, we ignite a fire within ourselves that cannot be extinguished. For some of us, it is time to conquer the island and not look back.



The Professional Development article is contributed by Elei Zhang, JD.

Knowledge is power. Knowledge is instrumental to value-creation and is a critical asset in life. It is in many ways the primary instrument of progress and innovation. However, knowledge can be messy, particularly when false. Today, information spreads rapidly and comprehensively, and websites and social media outlets are easy access points for false information.

We're here to help discern fact from fiction. Knowledge becomes powerful in the right culture—collectively sharing in the truth and continually seeking progress and ideas. Building the right knowledge base is neither a short-term effort nor a one-off project. It is a lifelong process of discovery.

Bursting Pregnancy Myths



For first-time moms-to-be, the journey of pregnancy often comes with a flood of advice from various sources—parents, sisters, in-laws, friends, and well-meaning acquaintances. Amidst this abundance of information, it can be challenging to discern fact from fiction, leaving expectant mothers unsure of what to believe. Whether you find yourself giving advice or are the soon-to-be mom seeking clarity, it is essential to separate the truth from the sea of myths and misbeliefs surrounding pregnancy.

Myth: Mother's food cravings can predict the gender of her baby.

Truth: Got food cravings? According to old wives' tales, your food cravings might be a hint of your baby's gender. Craving steaks and salty snacks? It is a boy, they say. But if you are all about dairy and sweets, it is supposedly a girl. Well, let us not rely on cravings alone to predict the baby's gender or we would be in trouble! Luckily, ultrasound is the real deal when it comes to gender prediction.

Myth: You can tell the gender of the baby from the shape of the pregnant belly.

Truth: People may think that the shape of the belly, the mother's face, the baby's activity level, and even the fetal heart rate hold the secrets to the baby's gender, but these features are about as reliable as a broken crystal ball. So, if you are dying to know the gender, skip the guesswork and go straight for the ultimate truth serum: the glorious ultrasound!



Myth: You should give your cats and dogs away when you are pregnant.

Truth: One of the privileges of pregnancy is that you get a free pass from scooping the cat's litter box! Toxoplasmosis, an infection caused by the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* found in cat poop, increases the risk of miscarriage and stillbirth. This makes cat poop a no-no for pregnant women to handle. However, dog poop does not pose the same issues, so you are not off the hook for that. Fear not, fellow pet lovers! You can still shower your feline friend with cuddles and embrace your doggo without a worry. In fact, having pets around during pregnancy has been suggested to potentially reduce the baby's risk of allergies. So, rejoice and keep those furry companions by your side. It is a win-win for you and the future sneeze-free baby!

Myth: You need to eat for two when you are pregnant.

Truth: While it is important to nourish the bun in the oven, that does not mean you get to indulge every craving. The truth is, overeating during pregnancy can lead to excessive weight gain and potential health complications, such as gestational diabetes. Your baby's needs are modest; just about 300 extra calories in the early stages, and about 450 extra calories in the third trimester. For many of us, we are already consuming extra calories, without a pregnancy. So, if you go all out and eat for two, that big belly is not going to be just because of the baby.

Myth: Eating peanuts and dairy can make the baby allergic to them.

Truth: Unless you have a personal allergy to peanuts or milk, it is perfectly safe to eat them during pregnancy. In fact, some studies have even suggested that mothers who consume peanuts during pregnancy may lower the risk of their baby developing peanut allergies. It is important to note that the key concern during pregnancy is avoiding foods that pose a risk of harmful microbes or food poisoning, such as raw or undercooked foods. So peanut butter toast? Sure! But sushi? Unfortunately, not for a while.



Myth: When you are pregnant, you should not have hot baths.

Truth: It is perfectly fine and safe to enjoy a warm bath while pregnant. The key is to avoid turning into a human lobster. We are talking about comfortably warm baths, not basically lava. You should not raise your body temperature to above 38°C as it increases the risk of neural tube defects, a type of birth defect, in the early stages of pregnancy. However, the baby is only vulnerable to this in the first six weeks. After the first trimester, getting into a hot tub or a sauna is mostly safe for the baby. Of course, remember to stay hydrated, avoid slippery situations (no running around in the bathroom please), and keep the hot tub clean to avoid any germs.

Myth: When you are pregnant, you should not dye your hair.

Truth: The chemicals found in hair dyes are generally considered safe to use during pregnancy. While some studies suggest a potential risk with high exposure to certain chemicals, the level of exposure from typical hair dye use is minimal. It is always a good idea, however, to take precautions. If you are a hairdresser, make sure to wear gloves when using hair dye and work in a well-ventilated space to minimize any potential risks.



Myth: You should not exercise while pregnant.

Truth: Most exercises that you engaged in before pregnancy can be safe during pregnancy as well. However, it is always a good idea to consult with your doctor if you are unsure. While exercising, it is important to avoid activities that could put you at risk of falling or injury, such as circus acrobatics and kickboxing. Also try to avoid lying flat on your back, so certain yoga poses should be avoided. However, it is generally recommended that pregnant women engage in regular exercise as it offers numerous benefits. Exercise can help maintain a healthy weight, improve mood and energy levels, promote better sleep, and even help with the labor and delivery process. So, staying active during pregnancy is often encouraged, but it is crucial to prioritize your safety.

Myth: Morning sickness only happens in the morning.

Truth: Despite its name, morning sickness can strike at any hour of the day. It is like a surprise party with no respect for your schedule. While it is more common in the morning for many pregnant women, it is important to note that it can happen any time of the day or night. Additionally, the severity and duration of morning sickness can vary from person to person and from pregnancy to pregnancy. Generally, it tends to improve after the first three months, but some special people get an extended invitation to this party.



Myth: It is unsafe to hang washing on the line while pregnant.

Truth: Your arms are not magically tied to your baby’s umbilical cord. There is no invisible string pulling your baby like a puppet. Pregnant women can confidently go about their daily tasks, including conquering mountains of laundry.

Myth: It is not safe to drink coffee or tea while pregnant.

Truth: Let us spill the beans! Pregnant women can still enjoy their daily cup of coffee or tea. But hold on, caffeine fiends—there is an upper limit. The general guideline is that it is safe to consume up to 200 mg of caffeine per day during pregnancy. That means about two cups of brewed coffee, or about four to six cups of green tea. It is important to note that caffeine content can vary depending on the type and size of the drink, and some foods, like chocolate, also contain caffeine, so it is a good idea to be mindful of your overall caffeine intake.

Myth: One glass of wine while pregnant is okay.

Truth: It is understandable that the temptation to have just one glass of wine or a few sips of alcohol during pregnancy can arise, but it is crucial to understand the risks involved. Multiple reputable organizations, such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, emphasize that no amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy. Consuming alcohol while pregnant is known to be the leading cause of birth defects and can increase the likelihood of miscarriage or stillbirth.

Myth: Flying while pregnant can cause a miscarriage.

Truth: In general, it is safe to fly while you are pregnant. However, many airlines will not allow you to board the plane if you are more than 36 weeks pregnant. Unsurprisingly, airlines do not want you to deliver in the air. As with any long flight, whether pregnant or not, it is important to take certain precautions. First, remember to stand up and strut down the aisle occasionally to prevent the sneaky blood clots that may form if you sit for too long. Staying hydrated and wearing compression stockings can also improve circulation. Bon voyage!

There are treasure troves of mysteries in nature waiting to be discovered and explored. Countless scientists have devoted themselves to unraveling them in the hopes of improving human health and wellbeing. Their work is vital to understanding and treating disease.

We bring you their research findings in our goal to enrich and expand public knowledge.

Psyllium Husk (*Plantago ovata*)



Psyllium Is Better Than Traditional Laxatives

Psyllium outperforms docusate sodium as a laxative, particularly for those with chronic constipation. As a bulk-forming laxative, psyllium adds volume to stools and stimulates intestinal contractions. Additionally, it increases water content in the stool, facilitating the passage of hard stools. In a study of 170 participants with chronic constipation, psyllium supplementation significantly improved constipation symptoms, increased bowel movements, and enhanced overall quality of life. Compared to the placebo group, the psyllium group reported greater satisfaction with their bowel habits, highlighting its effectiveness in alleviating constipation and improving well-being. Notably, psyllium is the sole fiber recommended by the American College of Gastroenterology for treating constipation and irritable bowel syndrome.

McRorie JW, Daggy BP, Morel JG, Diersing PS, Miner PB, Robinson M. Psyllium is superior to docusate sodium for treatment of chronic constipation. *Aliment Pharmacol Ther.* 1998;12(5):491-497. doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2036.1998.00336.x

Psyllium Is Better Than Other Fibers for Relieving Constipation

There are many different dietary fibers, but not all have an effect on stool. Fermentable fibers, such as inulin and fructo-oligosaccharides, do not affect stool weight. Coarse insoluble fibers, such as wheat bran, only add to the dry mass of the stool, and can actually have a stool-hardening effect that can worsen constipation. Psyllium, on the other hand, both increases stool bulk and the stool water content, resulting in bulkier softer stool that is easier to pass.

McRorie JW, Gibb RD, Sloan KJ, McKeown NM. Psyllium: the gel-forming nonfermented isolated fiber that delivers multiple fiber-related health benefits. *Nutrition Today.* 7/8 2021;56(4):169-182. doi.org/10.1097/NT.0000000000000489

Diarrhea Can Be Relieved With Psyllium

With its remarkable water-holding capacity, psyllium forms a gel that can effectively address both diarrhea and irregular bowel movements. In a study comparing psyllium, calcium polycarbophil, wheat bran, and placebo, only psyllium demonstrated significant improvements in stool consistency. Another study pitted psyllium against loperamide, an antidiarrheal drug, revealing that while both reduced stool frequency, psyllium had the greater impact on reducing urgency and enhancing stool consistency.

McRorie JW, Gibb RD, Sloan KJ, McKeown NM. Psyllium: the gel-forming nonfermented isolated fiber that delivers multiple fiber-related health benefits. *Nutrition Today*. 7/8 2021;56(4):169–182. doi.org/10.1097/NT.0000000000000489



Psyllium May Help With Irritable Bowel Syndrome

In patients with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), fiber, particularly psyllium, has shown promising results in reducing inflammation. Not all dietary fibers are equally effective in alleviating IBS symptoms. Psyllium stands out as an effective option. A study involving children with IBS revealed a significant reduction in IBS severity scoring scale and a higher remission rate in the psyllium group compared to the placebo group. Psyllium demonstrates its potential as a beneficial fiber in alleviating IBS symptoms and reducing inflammation.

Garg P. Inflammation in irritable bowel syndrome (IBS): role of psyllium fiber supplementation in decreasing inflammation and physiological management of IBS. *Turk J Gastroenterol*. 2021;32(1):108–110. doi.org/10.5152/tjg.2020.20229

Menon J, Thapa BR, Kumari R, Puttaiah Kadyada S, Rana S, Lal SB. Efficacy of oral psyllium in pediatric irritable bowel syndrome: a double-blind randomized control trial. *J Pediatr Gastroenterol Nutr*. 2023;76(1):14–19. doi.org/10.1097/MPG.0000000000003622



Reduce Bowel Inflammation With Psyllium

Psyllium may have anti-inflammatory effects by activating the farnesoid X receptor (FXR). A mouse model study explored the potential benefits of psyllium for inflammatory bowel diseases like ulcerative colitis. The researchers tested various types of fiber and found that psyllium had a protective effect against colitis, while other fibers exacerbated the condition.

Sutherby R. Study finds psyllium fiber protective against ulcerative colitis. *Managed Healthcare Executive*. March 13, 2023. Accessed August 7, 2023. <https://www.managedhealthcareexecutive.com/view/study-finds-psyllium-fiber-protective-against-ulcerative-colitis>

Improve the Diversity of Gut Bacteria With Psyllium

A study found that psyllium supplementation significantly increased the abundance of certain beneficial bacteria. It also led to increased levels of short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs), particularly butyrate, which is known for its positive effects on gut health. These findings suggest that psyllium supplementation can positively modulate the gut microbiota and promote the production of beneficial SCFAs, highlighting psyllium's potential as a dietary intervention for improving gut health.

Jalanka J, Major G, Murray K, et al. The effect of psyllium husk on intestinal microbiota in constipated patients and healthy controls. *Int J Mol Sci.* 2019;20(2):433. doi.org/10.3390/ijms20020433



Psyllium May Be Effective for Lowering Cholesterol Levels

Primary hypercholesterolemia is characterized by high levels of cholesterol and LDL cholesterol ("bad" cholesterol) in the blood. A study on psyllium husk fiber as a dietary adjunct for individuals with primary hypercholesterolemia revealed significant reductions in serum total and LDL-cholesterol concentrations. Administering just 5.1 g of psyllium twice daily proved to be an effective complement to diet therapy. These findings suggest that psyllium can serve as an alternative or supplementary treatment, potentially reducing the need for medication in some patients. Psyllium is well-tolerated and provides additional benefits in lowering cholesterol levels, particularly in patients with mild-to-moderate hypercholesterolemia.

Anderson JW, Davidson MH, Blonde L, et al. Long-term cholesterol-lowering effects of psyllium as an adjunct to diet therapy in the treatment of hypercholesterolemia. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 2000;71(6):1433–1438. doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/71.6.1433

Petchetti L, Frishman WH, Petrillo R, Raju K. Nutraceuticals in cardiovascular disease: psyllium. *Cardiol Rev.* 2007;15(3):116–122. doi.org/10.1097/01.crd.0000242964.74467.27

Lower Blood Pressure With More Fiber

Psyllium supplementation has shown promising results in reducing blood pressure (BP) and improving cardiovascular health. Clinical trials and meta-analyses have demonstrated psyllium's ability to lower both systolic BP and diastolic BP. Psyllium achieves this by inhibiting angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) activity, which regulates the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (RAAS) responsible for BP regulation. Furthermore, psyllium's diuretic properties, improvement of endothelial function, weight control, and prevention of cardiac hypertrophy contribute to its antihypertensive effects. These findings support considering psyllium supplementation as a treatment or adjunctive therapy for hypertension, offering beneficial effects without reported side effects.

Clark CCT, Salek M, Aghabagheri E, Jafarnejad S. The effect of psyllium supplementation on blood pressure: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Korean J Intern Med.* 2020;35(6):1385–1399. doi.org/10.3904/kjim.2019.049

Chen C, Shang C, Xin L, et al. Beneficial effects of psyllium on the prevention and treatment of cardiometabolic diseases. *Food Funct.* 2022;13(14):7473–7486. doi.org/10.1039/d2fo00560c

Protect the Heart with Psyllium

A study conducted a pooled analysis of 10 prospective cohort studies to examine the association between dietary fiber intake and the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD). The results showed that higher dietary fiber intake was associated with a decreased risk of CHD. Each 10 gram per day increment of total dietary fiber was linked to a 14% decrease in the risk of all coronary events and a 27% decrease in the risk of coronary death.

Pereira MA, O'Reilly E, Augustsson K, et al. Dietary fiber and risk of coronary heart disease: a pooled analysis of cohort studies. *Arch Intern Med.* 2004;164(4):370–376. doi.org/10.1001/archinte.164.4.370



Psyllium Helps Keep You Feeling Full

Psyllium promotes satiety and weight loss by delaying hunger and reducing energy intake. Two clinical trials were conducted to investigate the effects of psyllium on satiety. The trials measured hunger, desire to eat, and satiety levels using visual analog scales. Results showed that psyllium supplementation led to decreased hunger and desire to eat as well as increased fullness between meals compared to placebo. These findings indicate that psyllium supplementation contributes to increased fullness and reduced hunger between meals.

Brum JM, Gibb RD, Peters JC, Mattes RD. Satiety effects of psyllium in healthy volunteers. *Appetite.* 2016;105:27–36. doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2016.04.041



Make Weight Loss Easier with Psyllium

Studies have found that psyllium resulted in greater sustained weight loss over six months than that provided by a restricted diet alone. It also led to a significant reduction in waist circumference. Overall, the clinical evidence suggests that psyllium can contribute to modest weight loss when added to a regular or high-fiber diet.

McRorie JW, Gibb RD, Sloan KJ, McKeown NM. Psyllium: the gel-forming nonfermented isolated fiber that delivers multiple fiber-related health benefits. *Nutrition Today.* 7/8 2021;56(4):169–182. doi.org/10.1097/NT.0000000000000489

Psyllium May Help Control Blood Sugar

Psyllium husk fiber demonstrates significant improvements in anthropometric measurements, glycemic control indicators, and insulin sensitivity in individuals with type 2 diabetes. It effectively reduces fasting blood glucose, HbA1c, insulin, and C-peptide levels, contributing to improved glycemic control. The soluble fiber in psyllium reduces glucose absorption, delays intestinal transit time, and enhances insulin sensitivity. Psyllium reduces postprandial blood sugar spikes and improves cell sensitivity to insulin. Additionally, studies reveal that psyllium improves glycemic control and lipid profiles in men with type 2 diabetes and high cholesterol. Taken before meals, psyllium leads to lower postprandial serum glucose values.

Abutair AS, Naser IA, Hamed AT. Soluble fibers from psyllium improve glycemic response and body weight among diabetes type 2 patients (randomized control trial). *Nutr J.* 2016;15(1):86. doi.org/10.1186/s12937-016-0207-4

Anderson JW, Allgood LD, Turner J, Oeltgen PR, Daggy BP. Effects of psyllium on glucose and serum lipid responses in men with type 2 diabetes and hypercholesterolemia. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 1999;70(4):466–473. doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/70.4.466



Scientific research requires judgments based on professional knowledge and rigorous implementation processes. These processes consist of complex methods, any small change in which can affect the results drastically. We have provided you short summations of the research for ease of understanding. Do not use this as a basis for self-diagnosis or self-treatment.



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