

# Health & Views

Newsletter for expat Sri Lankans & other, globally

August 2019

2<sup>nd</sup> issue

Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy



## When you can't sleep next to your partner

Here's how to get a better night's sleep together. [Read more](#)



## Go Organic?

Organic foods are usually good for the environment. But they're often hard on your wallet: The USDA found the costs of organic fruits and vegetables typically run more than 20% higher than conventional produce. Sometimes the difference is much higher, especially for things like organic milk and eggs. Are they worth the extra expense? In some cases, yes. It may lower your exposure to chemicals and artificial ingredients. In others, it may not be healthier than buying conventionally grown products. Some basic information can help you make the smartest choices for your budget and the health of your family.

Contd next page

## Too Much Fiber

Foods high in this healthy carb, like whole grains and vegetables, are good for digestion. But if you start eating lots of them, your digestive system may have trouble adjusting. The result: gas and bloating. So step up the amount of fiber you eat gradually.



[Causes of Insulin Resistance](#)



## Lamb mulligatawny recipe

A rich and nourishing soup, perfect for the cooler months. [Read more](#)

[Scientists brew beer drunk by Egyptians 5,000 yrs ago](#)

Scientists say they have recreated the taste of ancient beers that Egyptians drank 5,000 years ago. The research began with shards of pottery used to produce beer & mead in antiquity, which still had yeast specimens stuck inside. Scientists examined the yeast colonies settled in the pottery's nano-pores, & were able to resurrect the yeast to create beer.

## What to know about the GGT test

Doctors use the GGT test to diagnose liver problems. Doctors will measure GGT if they suspect damage to the liver or bile ducts, chronic alcohol abuse, or certain bone diseases.

In the GGT (gamma-glutamyl transferase) test, a healthcare professional measures the levels of GGT in a sample of blood. High levels of GGT in the blood can indicate damage to the liver or bile ducts. Normal ranges suggest that there is no liver damage.

This article looks at the purpose and procedure of the GGT test, normal GGT ranges, and what abnormal ranges can mean.

[What to know about the GGT test](#)

## INVITATION

*"To mark the 5th death anniversary of Mr. Sam Wijesinha  
Former Chair of the SLFI Human Rights Task Force"*

The Sri Lanka Foundation Institute  
Together with the ESME Trust

Invites you to a lecture by  
**Dr Sarath Amunugama, MP**  
On

'Parliament and the President'

on Friday August 30th 2019  
At 5.00 P.M.

at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute Main Auditorium  
No 100, Padanama Mawatha, Independence Square, Colombo 07

The lecture will be preceded by a screening of  
an interview with Mr. Sam Wijesinha in the series  
**The Past in Another Country**

RSVP - Dr. Wijayantha Ukwatta 0717518074  
Mr. Shehan Mihindukula 0759930801  
wijayanthau@yahoo.com  
rajiva.wijesinha@googlemail.com

### Why does cancer exist at all? The answer may lie in deep time

Cancer has touched most of our lives, taking down friends in their prime and plaguing the older years of loved ones. But — from a biological perspective — why?

[More ➤](#)

### The best way to treat your dry, cracked lips this winter

Windy and cold days with low humidity cause serious water loss from our lips — and nobody wants to smooch a pair of chapped chops.

[More ➤](#)

[https://gallery.mailchimp.com/3bea046bd8680837e8404fbad/files/0e24b808-5652-4ecb-824b-900285e50c96/What\\_should\\_be\\_the\\_normal\\_Blood\\_Pressure\\_for\\_a\\_Sri\\_Lankan.pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/3bea046bd8680837e8404fbad/files/0e24b808-5652-4ecb-824b-900285e50c96/What_should_be_the_normal_Blood_Pressure_for_a_Sri_Lankan.pdf)

### **How Limiting Sugar Intake Can Prevent Kidney Stones**

Excessive sugar and salt consumption may increase the risk of kidney stone formation in susceptible individuals. [Read more...](#)

### Opinion: Would you have surgery to delay menopause? Read this first

A procedure promising to put menopause on hold for 20 years, and allow women to delay having babies, is being offered. But don't get too excited, write Karin Hammarberg and Luk Rombauts.



### How much protein do we need to maintain healthy muscle mass as we get older?

Not as much as you might think, although it's recommended Australians over 70 increase their protein intake in order to better maintain their muscles as they get older.



### **Surprising Sources of Hidden Sugar**

Sugar can hide in the foods you least suspect. See where sugar may be hiding and find options that are better for your health and your diet.

[READ MORE](#)

## **Don't Let Diabetes Steal Your Vision**

Haven't seen your eye doctor in a while? Here's why you should get a vision check sooner rather than later.

[Read More >](#)

## **The Link Between Diabetes and Gout**

When you have diabetes, you're more likely to have this form of arthritis. Here's what you need to know.

[Read More >](#)

## **This is why you get the runs after drinking**

Feeling queasy after a night out? Take a look at why. [Read more](#)

## **Is caffeine getting a bad rap?**

Take a look at the facts behind that cup of coffee. [Read more](#)

## **7 Alzheimer's Disease Stages and Symptoms**

Learn to spot these seven stages and symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Find out what to expect from each stage. [Read more...](#)



### **Your Diet and Depression**

While there is no specific food that can prevent or treat depression, a healthy diet may help.

[Read more...](#)



### **SLIDE SHOW**

### **Don't Overlook ADHD**

Most people don't associate adults with ADHD, but it is quite common in adults. [Read more...](#)

## **The Most Disabling Mental Illness**

Causes, signs, and treatments for schizophrenia. Learn about types such as paranoid schizophrenia, catatonic schizophrenia, and disorganized schizophrenia.

[READ MORE](#)

## **How healthy are Australian men?**

Let's take a closer look at the health habits of Australian men. [Read more](#)

## **Is there a link between loneliness and Alzheimer's?**

Examining the research on loneliness and Alzheimer's in the elderly. [Read more](#)

## **Complications of Diabetes**

Managing your blood sugar can help you avoid major problems throughout your body, even in places you might not expect.

[Read More >](#)

## **Pros and Cons of Medical Marijuana**

It can help treat a number of conditions, but long-term use may have side effects. Here's what you need to know.

[Read More >](#)



## **How Much Fat Is Unhealthy?**

Experts have redefined the role of fat in healthy eating. Know the various types of fat.

[READ MORE](#)

Continuing from front page

# What “Organic” Means

The term refers to the way a food is grown, handled, and processed. These practices are meant to protect the environment. The government has strict standards for its “USDA Organic” seal: Produce must be grown without the use of most conventional pesticides, fertilizers that aren’t naturally made, sewage sludge, radiation, and genetically modified organisms. Animals can’t be given antibiotics or hormones.

## Organic label

### Understand Labels

The labeling can be confusing. The government oversees the use of these terms:

100 Percent Organic: All the ingredients are certified organic.

Organic: At least 95% of the ingredients are certified organic.

Made With Organic Ingredients: At least 70% of the ingredients are certified organic.

Other labels, such as “all-natural” and “farm-raised,” aren’t regulated, so they don’t mean much.

## The Truth About Pesticides

This may come as a surprise, but organic food isn’t necessarily pesticide-free. Organic farmers aren’t allowed to use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides. But they can apply ones made from natural ingredients, which can still be dangerous for your health. If your diet includes a variety of produce, you’re less likely to get a big dose of one single pesticide.

o chemicals and artificial ingredients. In others, it may not be healthier than buying conventionally grown products. Some basic information can help you make the smartest choices for your budget and the health of your family.

dangerous for your health.

## Beef: Buy Organic

Cows raised on non-organic farms are often given sex hormones, such as estrogen and testosterone, so they’ll grow faster. Some experts believe that these hormones may trigger early puberty in girls, while others argue it doesn’t have any effect. Some families buy organic meats for this reason. Some research shows it may have more heart-healthy omega-3 fats. But more studies are needed.

WebMD

# Citrus Fruits

Because they’re high in fiber, they can give some folks an upset stomach. Go easy on oranges, grapefruit, and other citrus fruits if your belly doesn’t feel right.



# Poultry and Pork: Buy Organic

Organic poultry and pigs are given food that is free of synthetic pesticides and fertilizer. They also don’t get antibiotics, which is a common practice on conventional farms. Experts agree that the regular use of these drugs can lead to dangerous antibiotic-resistant bacteria. If you buy conventional meat, trim off the fat and skin. That’s where pesticide hides

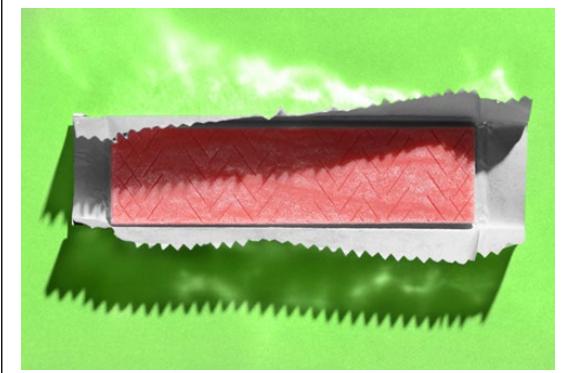
# Worst Foods for Digestion

## Fried Foods



They’re high in fat and can bring on diarrhea. Rich sauces, fatty cuts of meat, and buttery or creamy desserts can cause problems, too. Choose roasted or baked foods and light sauces that feature vegetables instead of butter or cream.

# Artificial Sugar



Chew too much sugar-free gum made with sorbitol and you might get cramps and diarrhea. Food made with this artificial sweetener can cause the same problems.

The FDA warns that you might get diarrhea if you eat 50 or more grams a day of sorbitol, though even much lower amounts reportedly cause trouble for some people.

## [How long will a person with stage 4 colon cancer live?](#) ←

The 5-year relative survival rate for stage 4 colon cancer is 14%. Many factors determine the life expectancy of a person with this condition. Learn more here.

## [What to know about detox drinks](#)

Detox drinks do not remove toxins from the body. However, some drinks are very beneficial and can promote overall good health. Learn more about detox drinks here.

## Beans

They're loaded with healthy protein and fiber, but they also have hard-to-digest sugars that cause gas and cramping. Your body doesn't have enzymes that can break them down. Bacteria in your gut do the work instead, giving off gas in the process.

Try this tip to get rid of some of the troublesome sugars: Soak dried beans for at least 4 hours and pour off the water before cooking.

## 'Mediterranean diet may protect against depression symptoms'

Published Today

By [Maria Cohut](#)

[Fact checked](#) by Paula Field

Evidence indicates that following a Mediterranean-style diet, rich in fruit, vegetables, nuts, and cereals, can bring many health benefits, including protection against cardiovascular and metabolic problems. Now, a study also presents a link between this diet and a lower risk of depression later in life.



New research finds a link between Mediterranean-style diets and a reduced depression risk later in life.

Mediterranean diets feature meals that are high in vegetables, legumes, nuts, fruit, whole grains, with less fish, dairy, and poultry-based foods, and as little red meat as possible.

Moreover, people who follow Mediterranean-style diets use [olive oil](#) for cooking, which is a good source of monosaturated fat.

Anecdotally, this is a healthful, nutritious diet, and many studies seem to support this claim. In recent years, researchers have shown that Mediterranean diets can significantly [reduce cardiovascular risk](#), may [slow down bone loss](#) in [osteoporosis](#), promote [anticancer mechanisms](#), and [support brain health](#).

Some research has even found an association between Mediterranean-style diets and a [reduced risk of depression](#).

## ['Mediterranean diet may protect against depression symptoms'](#)

## [Prostate Problems to Watch for as You Age](#) ←

# Explained: the toxic threat in everyday products, from toys to plastic

Thousands of potentially harmful chemicals are in products ranging from electronics to medical equipment and carpets in the US

Synthetic chemicals are in nearly everything we touch and consume. But some chemicals can be potentially harmful and a number of experts are anxious about possible long-term health effects of our everyday exposure. They say US regulations could be stronger.

One of those who is concerned is [Leo Trasande](#) of NYU Langone Health, an expert in children's environmental health and [author](#) of Sicker Fatter Poorer, which is about the threat of hormone-disrupting chemicals.

Of the more than 40,000 chemicals used in consumer products in the US, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, less than 1% have been rigorously tested for human safety.

Consumers can't know about them all, but Trasande says it's good to be aware of five groups of synthetic chemicals: pesticides, phthalates, flame retardants, bisphenol (BPA) and PFAS. "You can reduce your levels of exposure to these chemicals," Trasande said. "You can't completely eliminate these exposures because some of them are on our subways, our buses, they're in environments we can't control."

Explained: the toxic threat in everyday products, from toys to plastic



# Cabbage and Its Cousins



Cruciferous vegetables, like broccoli and cabbage, have the same sugars that make beans gassy. Their high fiber can also make them hard to digest. It will be easier on your stomach if you cook them instead of eating raw. [WebMD](#)

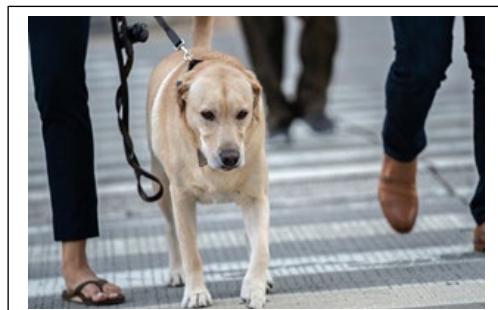
## Fructose

Foods sweetened with this -- including sodas, candy, fruit juice, and pastries -- are hard for some people to digest. That can lead to diarrhea, bloating, and cramps.

## Dog Owners Get More Exercise

Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

By GRETCHEN REYNOLDS

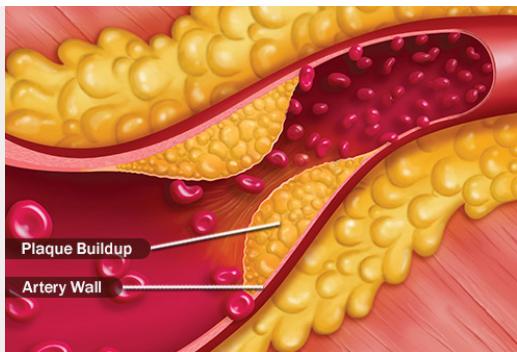


Dog owners spent close to 300 minutes each week walking with their dogs, about 200 more minutes of walking than people without dogs.



## Heart attack

When blood can't get to your heart, your heart muscle doesn't get the oxygen it needs. Without oxygen, its cells can be damaged or die. The key to recovery is to get your blood flow restored quickly. Get medical help right away if you think you're having symptoms of a heart attack.



## Causes

Over time, cholesterol and a fatty material called plaque can build up on the walls inside blood vessels that take blood to your heart, called arteries. This makes it harder for blood to flow freely. Most heart attacks happen when a piece of this plaque breaks off. A blood clot forms around the broken-off plaque, and it blocks the artery.

### Symptoms

You may feel pain, pressure, or discomfort in your chest. You could be short of breath, sweat, faint, or feel sick to your stomach. Your neck, jaw, or shoulders might hurt.

Men and women can have different symptoms. Men are more likely to break out in a cold sweat and to feel pain move down their left arm.

### Symptoms in Women

Women are more likely than men to have back or neck pain, heartburn, and shortness of breath. They tend to have stomach trouble, including feeling queasy and throwing up. They may also feel very tired, lightheaded, or dizzy. A couple of weeks before a heart attack, a woman might have flu-like symptoms and sleep problems.

## What to Do

If you or someone you're with has symptoms that might be a heart attack, call 911 right away. If it is a heart attack, you're more likely to survive if you get treated within 90 minutes. While you're on the phone, the person should chew and swallow an aspirin (unless they're allergic) to lower the risk of a blood clot. Are they unconscious? Hands-only CPR can double their chances of survival.

### Diagnosis

An EKG, which checks your heart's electrical activity, can help doctors see if you're having a heart attack. It can also show which artery is clogged or blocked.

Doctors can also diagnose a heart attack with blood tests that look for proteins that heart cells release when they die.

### Treatment

Doctors will move quickly to restore the flow of blood to your heart. You may get drugs that dissolve blood clots in your arteries.

You'll likely get a procedure called a coronary angiogram. Doctors put a thin tube with a balloon on the end through your artery. It opens up the blockage by flattening the plaque in your arteries. Most times, doctors place a small mesh tube called a stent in your artery to make sure it stays open.

### What Puts You at Risk?

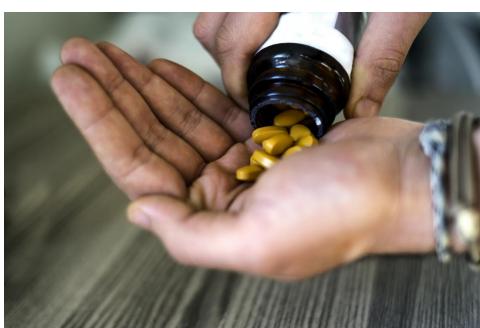
Your odds of having a heart attack go up with age, and men are more likely to have one than women. A family history of heart disease also makes one more likely. Smoking raises your chances of a heart attack. So does having high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and being obese. Stress, a lack of exercise, and depression can, too.

### Prevention

If you smoke, stop. It will immediately cut your chances of a heart attack by a third.

Get exercise and eat right. The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day, 5 days a week. Eat plenty of fruits, veggies, and whole grains to keep your arteries healthy.

# What are B vitamins?



Some people may benefit from taking B vitamin supplements.

B vitamins are important for making sure the body's cells are functioning properly. They help the body convert food into energy (metabolism), create new blood cells, and maintain healthy skin cells, brain cells, and other body tissues.

There are eight types of B vitamin, each with their own function:

[thiamin](#) (vitamin B-1)

[riboflavin](#) (vitamin B-2)

[niacin](#) (vitamin B-3)

[pantothenic acid](#) (vitamin B-5)

[vitamin B-6](#)

[biotin](#) (vitamin B-7)

[folate](#) (vitamin B-9)

[vitamin B-12](#)

Together, they are called the vitamin B complex.

[A complete guide to B vitamins](#)

[Cancer: Proton therapy has fewer side effects than X-ray radiation](#)

A first-of-its-kind study compares the cure rates and side effects of proton therapy and X-ray radiation for people with various forms of cancer.

[How the gut immune system nourishes and protects](#)

A new study in mice explains how the intestines are capable of letting nutrients through to the rest of the body while keeping harmful agents at bay.

[Veganism: Why food choice can spark rage](#)

Veganism is growing in popularity, but the movement faces resistance. Here, we ask why the decision to follow a plant-based diet makes some people angry.

# How a fruit compound may lower blood pressure

Published Friday 24 May 2019

By [Ana Sandoiu](#)

Fact checked by Gianna D'Emilio

Blueberries, red grapes, red wine, and peanuts are some of the natural sources of resveratrol — a plant compound that has received much attention in the medical community recently. New research in mice and human cells breaks down the mechanism through which resveratrol may lower blood pressure.



Red grapes and some blueberries contain resveratrol.

From protecting our neurons against [aging](#) to potentially preventing [cancer](#), a significant number of studies have recently hailed the health benefits of resveratrol.

Also, a lot of previous research has focused on the benefits of resveratrol for heart health.

Clinical [studies](#) in rats and mice have demonstrated protective effects against [stroke](#), [heart failure](#), and [hypertension](#), among other heart conditions.

[How a fruit compound may lower blood pressure](#)

[Causes and treatments for thinning hair](#)

It is normal to experience some amount of hair thinning as people age. In other cases, there may be a medical cause. This article looks at the causes, treatments, and home remedies for thinning hair.

## [Ultra-processed foods linked to death and disease — again. Should they come with a warning?](#)

Just weeks after researchers showed a cause-and-effect relationship between ultra-processed food and weight gain, two more studies have linked these foods with disease and death. So does our current focus on fat, sugar and salt need to shift?

[More >](#)

## Chicken No Better Than Beef for Your Cholesterol?

(HealthDay News) -- Flying in the face of popular belief, new research suggests both red meat and white meat can drive up your [cholesterol levels](#).

The study was conducted by researchers from the Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI), part of the University of California, San Francisco. The analysis is reportedly the first to comprehensively compare the impact that red and white meat have on [cholesterol](#).

Red meat, such as beef and lamb, has become unpopular in recent years because of its association with [heart disease](#), and government nutrition guidelines have encouraged consumers to eat poultry as a healthier alternative, the researchers noted. "When we planned this study, we expected red meat to have a more adverse effect on blood cholesterol levels than white meat, but we were surprised that this was not the case," said study senior author Dr. Ronald Krauss. "Their effects on cholesterol are identical when saturated fat levels are equivalent."

[READ MORE](#)



[More >](#)

## [Vaginal discharge is healthy. Unnecessary 'female hygiene' products are not](#)

Knowing what's going on inside your underwear is private, but understanding what happens down there is important for your health, and staying "fresh" is not always best.

[More >](#)

## [Another Use for Beta Blockers? Curbing A-fib](#)

HealthDay News) -- People whose heart rhythm problems stem from [stress](#) and anger may benefit from taking beta blocker [drugs](#), a new study suggests.

[Atrial fibrillation \(a-fib\)](#) is a common type of heart rhythm disorder sometimes triggered by [stress](#) and negative emotions.

[Beta blockers](#) are drugs that block the effects of adrenaline and related substances.

"While patients often describe anger or stress triggering their emotions, our data show that this is more than just anecdote. Here, we show that beta blockers can block the deleterious effects of emotion in those prone to emotion-triggered [[a-fib](#)]," said lead investigator Dr. Rachel Lampert. She's a professor of internal medicine (cardiology) at Yale School of Medicine.

The study included 95 patients with a history of [a-fib](#) who were diagnosed and/or treated for the condition at the emergency departments of Yale New Haven Hospital or the nearby Hospital of Saint Raphael, in Connecticut.

[Read more](#)

[Another Use for Beta Blockers? Curbing A-fib](#)

[Potentially Fatal Buildup of Proteins in the Heart](#) 

## 14 Non-Drug Migraine Treatments

Applying gentle pressure to the head can help ease the pain. Other techniques to try...

[VIEW SLIDE SHOW](#)

[The Stages of Lung Cancer](#) 

[10 Things to Know About Breast Cancer](#) 

[Understanding Adult-Onset Diabetes](#) 

## Many Dietary Supplements Dangerous for Teens

HealthDay News) -- While taking vitamins may be fine for teens and young adults, supplements for weight loss, muscle-building and added energy may trigger severe medical problems, new research suggests.

Regulations to keep these potentially harmful products out of the hands of young people are urgently needed, the study authors said.

"The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration] has issued countless warnings about supplements sold for weight loss, muscle-building or sport performance, sexual function and energy, and we know these products are widely marketed to and used by young people," said lead author Flora Or. She is a researcher with Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders, in Boston.

For the study, Or's team looked at FDA reports of medical problems associated with these supplements among people aged 25 and younger between January 2004 and April 2015. The investigators compared these reports with reports made for vitamins.

In all, nearly 1,000 incidents were reported, of which 40% involved a severe medical problem, including hospitalization and death, the researchers said.

Read more

[Many Dietary Supplements Dangerous for Teens](#)

## Cancer Death Rates Down, Heart Disease Death Rates Up for American Adults

(HealthDay News) -- Cancer deaths among middle-aged adults are falling in the United States, but heart disease deaths have increased in recent years, a new federal government report released Thursday finds.

From 1999 to 2017, there was a 19% drop in cancer deaths among adults aged 45 to 64. Heart disease deaths in this age group fell 22% between 1999 and 2011, but increased 4% by 2017, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CNN reported.

Both women and men had similar patterns of decline in cancer deaths and recent rises in heart disease deaths. The largest increase (12%) in heart disease deaths was in white women, while Hispanic women had a decline. Blacks had the highest rates among women, and blacks had the largest increase among men, CNN reported.

During the study period, cancer death rates were still higher than heart disease death rates.

Cancer and heart disease are the leading causes of death among middle-aged Americans, accounting for about half of all deaths, according to the CDC. Read more

- [Cancer Death Rates Down, Heart Disease Up](#)



Copyright © 2019 HealthDay. All rights reserved.

## Staving off dementia when you have mild cognitive impairment

Will I get dementia? That common question takes on urgency if you have mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a slight but noticeable change in memory and thinking skills. But the progression from MCI to dementia is not automatic. In fact, MCI is not always permanent. "It depends on the underlying cause," says Dr. Joel Salinas, a neurologist at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital.

[Read more >](#)

Compiled, edited published by Dr Harold Gunatillake  
To unsubscribe [email:haroldgunatillake1@gmail.com](mailto:haroldgunatillake1@gmail.com)

Dr Gunatillake-Health editor is a member of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore. Member of the Australian Association of Cosmetic Surgery. Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (UK), Corresponding Fellow of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery, Member of the International Societies of Cosmetic surgery, Fellow of the International College of Surgery (US), Australian diplomat for the International Society of Plastic, Aesthetic & Reconstructive Surgery, Board member of the International Society of Aesthetic Surgery, Member of the American Academy of Aesthetic & Restorative Surgery, Life Member of the College of Surgeons, Sri Lanka, Bachelor of Medicine & Surgery (Cey). Government scholar to UK for higher studies and training.