

# Health & Views

January  
2<sup>nd</sup> issue

2023

Health Newsletter for ex-pat Sri Lankans,  
globally



**Lack of vitamin B6 can cause this rash on your face.**

Signs that you lack B6 can show up on your skin. Your body goes through chemical changes. That most often leads to a scaly, itchy rash, usually on your face, called seborrheic dermatitis. The rash may get more and more obvious with time. If you have a minor shortage, the symptoms could take months or years to show up.



**Signs you are not getting enough vitamin B6**

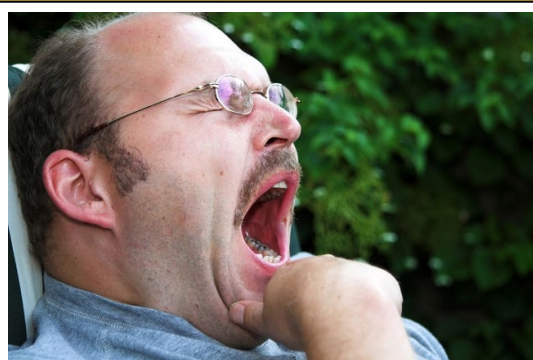


This hard-working vitamin holds many big jobs. It affects your mood, appetite, sleep, and thinking. You need it to fight off infections, turn food into energy, and help your blood carry oxygen to all corners of your body. While it's actually rare to run low, you really can't afford to do so.



**If you get dry cracked lips?**

Your mouth could be a good place to spot any shortage of B6. Your lips might be scaly, and the corners could be cracked. Your tongue might swell.



**Flagging Energy**

If your body is very low on B6 (which is rare), you can get anemia, which is too few red blood cells. That would make you feel tired and weak. Anemia can also come from not having enough iron in your body. Shortages of other vitamins, like B12 and folate, also may cause it.

Seniors may run low on B6 if they don't eat enough food or because their bodies don't absorb nutrients as well as before. Kidney disease and other conditions that keep your small intestine from taking in nutrients also can be culprits. So can alcohol abuse. Some prescription medicines can also cause you to not have enough B6. If your doctor prescribes a new medicine, don't hesitate to ask about its overall effect on your body.



**Numbness in your hands may be due to lack of B6**

Do your fingers tingle? Do your feet feel numb? The culprit may be a nerve disorder called peripheral neuropathy. Lack of B6 may help trigger it. It and other B vitamins like B12 are essential to keep your nerves healthy.

## Diabetes and your heart



If you have type 2 diabetes, show your heart some extra love. High blood sugar damages your nerves and blood vessels, which can lead to heart failure and heart attack, among other health problems. But taking the right steps to manage diabetes and keep your heart healthy can make a big difference. Control your blood sugar and manage other risk factors to protect your heart. Smart lifestyle and diet changes can help you do both.



## Control Blood Pressure

People with type 2 diabetes often have other conditions that make heart problems more likely. High blood pressure is one of them. This means your blood moves through your vessels with too much force and your heart works too hard. Keep track of your blood pressure with a home monitor so you know if it's trending too high. Typical goals for people with type 2 diabetes are to keep readings under 140/90 or 130/80. Ask your doctor what's right for you.

## Control your cholesterol

Type 2 often means you have too much of the bad kind of cholesterol, or LDL, especially a small, dense kind. You also have low levels of good cholesterol (HDL) and too many triglycerides. High cholesterol can clog your arteries, cause inflammation, and lead to a heart disease. Total cholesterol over 200 mg/dL is too high. Your doctor may suggest medicine to treat high cholesterol and triglycerides, but healthy habits, like a proper diet and exercise, are essential, too.

## Exercise does wonders to your heart



Exercise does wonders for your heart health and your diabetes. It helps lower blood pressure, keeps cholesterol levels in check, and controls blood sugar. For most people, a good goal is 30 minutes a day of moderate activity -- like walking -- 5 days a week. But if you're new to exercise, check with your doctor on how to start. Activity can make your blood sugar go too low, especially if you take insulin or another diabetes medicine. Learn the signs of hypoglycemia and what to do if it happens.



## Anti-inflammatory Foods

A healthy diet helps lower inflammation, manage blood sugar, protects your heart and blood vessels, and can help you lose weight. Some eating plans, like the DASH and Mediterranean diets, are smart ways to manage diabetes and help your heart. They include:

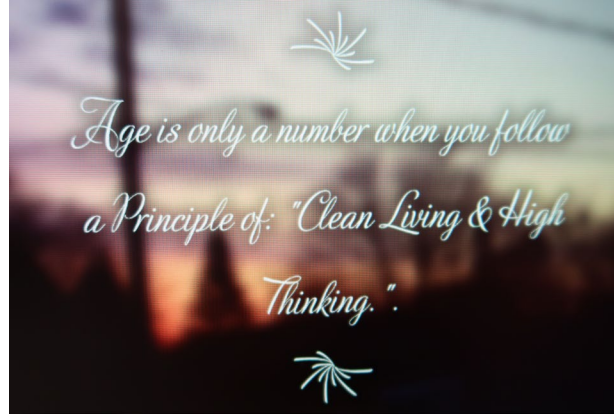
- **Lean proteins like fish and skinless chicken**
- **Fresh fruit and veggies, especially non-starchy ones like leafy greens**
- **Beans, legumes, nuts**
- **Whole grains**
- **Healthy fats like olive oil**
- **Low-fat dairy**

Of course, avoid sugary drinks and sweets most of the time. Limit fast food.

Salt makes your body hang on to extra water. This raises blood pressure and strains your blood vessels, heart, and other organs. Most of the sodium we eat doesn't come from the saltshaker. More than 70% is "hidden" in restaurants or processed foods like cold cuts, pizza, and even bread. Check labels. Choose foods with less than 400 milligrams of sodium per serving.

Salt can hurt your heart

Sent by Noor Rahim-Canada



## Adding peanuts, spices to diet may improve gut health in weeks

According to two new studies, adding a handful of peanuts and a teaspoon of herbs and spices to one's diet could help improve gut health in 4–6 weeks.

[READ ON](#) →

## Is it possible to dissolve cataracts naturally?

Written by Adam Rowden on December 5, 2022

There is no natural cure for cataracts. However, animal research is ongoing into nonsurgical treatments for the condition. Learn more here about possible treatments.

[READ ON](#) →

## How physios and occupational therapists are helping long COVID sufferers

Clarice Tang, Western Sydney University; Karen Liu, Western Sydney University

We're still learning about long COVID - but working with a physio or occupational therapist on goal-setting could help you get back into your usual routine.

## How Bad Is It to Pick Your Nose?

The dry winter air might make the mucus in your nose uncooperative—but read this before you pick.



[Read More](#) >



FEATURED

## 15 Reasons Your Hands Are Shaking

Find out the possible causes of tremors in your hands, such as essential tremors, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, and overactive thyroid. Learn what you can do about it.

[READ MORE](#)

## The most expensive drug in the world

The US Food and Drug Administration has [approved Hemgenix, the first gene therapy for the blood-clotting disorder haemophilia B](#). Its price tag of US\$3.5 million makes it the world's most expensive drug, but it could save the US health-care system millions for every person treated by eliminating the need for regular injections of factor IX, a protein involved in blood clotting. For the 15% of people with haemophilia who could benefit, "you can pretty much forget about haemophilia" in day-to-day life, says Edward Tuddenham, who helped to design the viral vector in Hemgenix.

[Nature | 4 min read](#)



SLIDESHOW

## Immune System Problems

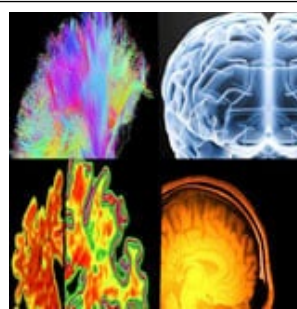
Your immune system should fight off disease and help your body heal. But if your immune system is underactive... [Read more...](#)



SLIDESHOW

## Lower Your Blood Pressure Naturally

Can you lower your high blood pressure immediately? Explore 9 ways that can help protect your arteries from... [Read more...](#)



SLIDESHOW

## How Conditions Change Your Brain

The brain doesn't always stay the same. Mental disorders, health issues, and lifestyle habits can alter the way it looks and works. [Read more...](#)



HEART HEALTH

## 8 Causes of Chest Pain That Aren't a Heart Attack



## Can 'Ultra-Processed' Foods Harm Your Brain?

Chips, pizza, cookies! A diet full of ultra-processed foods have been linked to an increased risk of heart disease, metabolic syndrome, and obesity. Could it reduce your brainpower, too?

[READ MORE](#)

## World leaders: show up for biodiversity

The 15th United Nations Biodiversity Conference, COP15, opens today in Montreal, Canada. “Biodiversity is hoping for its Paris moment,” says a *Nature* editorial, referring to the momentous 2015 Paris climate agreement, which set a crucial goal to seek to limit warming to 1.5–2 °C above pre-industrial levels. At the time, the opening ceremony of the Paris conference held the record for the largest number of world leaders ever to attend a United Nations event in a single day — more than 150. [The editorial calls for world leaders to make a similar show of support in Montreal](#) that empowers national negotiators to reach a strong deal.

[Nature | 5 min read](#)

### NUTRITION

## Are Air Fryers Actually Healthy? Here's What a Nutritionist Says



### MENTAL HEALTH

## How Women Experience ADHD and Its Symptoms



### LUNG CONDITIONS

## 3 Main Pneumonia Causes to Know, According to Doctors

### SKINCARE

## How to Handle Dry Skin in Winter and Other Seasonal Skin Issues



### MIND & BODY

## 8 Things That Can Cause a Blood Taste in Your Mouth

### CANCER

## From Prep to Recovery—Everything You Need to Know About Getting a Colonoscopy



### NEWS

## More Than 1 Billion Young People May Be at Risk for Hearing Loss From 'Unsafe Listening'



## What Is Glycosuria?

Glycosuria is when you have glucose, or sugar, in your urine. Learn about the causes, symptoms, and treatment options.

[Go >](#)

## 11 Foods That Help Calm Anxiety

As much as you may want to, you can't make yourself feel better with a bowl of mashed potatoes or ice cream. These other foods, though, may help boost your mood.



[Read More](#)

## Eye Care for People With Diabetes

To keep your vision sharp, you'll want to take great care of your health so you can avoid problems related to diabetes.

Over time, high blood sugar can damage the tiny blood vessels in your eyes. That can lead to a condition called diabetic retinopathy. High blood sugar can also lead to cataracts and glaucoma, which happen earlier and more often when you have diabetes.

Use these seven tips to take charge of your disease and protect your eyes:

**Schedule appointments** with your eye doctor at least once a year so they can spot any problem early and treat it. During your exam, your eye doctor will use special drops to widen (dilate) your pupils and check the blood vessels in your eyes for early signs of damage.

**Keep your blood sugar under control.** If you do that, you can slow any damage to the tiny blood vessels in your eyes. Several times a year, you should have an A1c blood test. It shows your blood sugar levels over the past 2 or 3 months. Your result should be around 7% or less.

**Keep high blood pressure in check.** It can lead to eye disease, too. If you have high blood pressure and diabetes, you need to be even more careful about your health. Ask your doctor to check your blood pressure at every visit. For most people with diabetes, it should be less than 130/80.

**Check your cholesterol levels.** All it takes is a blood test to find out how much "bad" LDL and "good" HDL cholesterol you have. Too much LDL is linked to blood vessel damage.

**Eat for wellness.** Go for fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. If that's a big change for you, you can get ideas and encouragement from a nutritionist. You can also ask your doctor's advice about when you should eat and how much is OK if you take insulin.

**Move more.** Exercise can have a big influence on blood sugar. If you use insulin or medication to lower your blood sugar, ask your doctor when you should check your levels before and during your workouts. Also ask what type of workout you should do.

## When Should I Call the Eye Doctor?

Pick up the phone if you have any visual problems or notice any changes in your sight.

Get medical care ASAP if you have any of these symptoms:

- Blurry vision
- Black spots
- Flashes of light
- Any loss of sight in one or both eyes



## How Cold Weather May Help You Catch a Cold

By Dan Robitzski

Warm nasal cells mount stronger defenses against cold-causing coronaviruses and rhinoviruses than those exposed to cooler temperatures, an in vitro experiment finds.

## Worst Foods for High Blood Pressure

Limiting your sodium intake is a critical step in preventing and treating high blood pressure. And these foods have much more than you might think.

[Read More](#)

## Is Wine Really Good for You?

In moderation, wine can help lower your blood pressure, manage blood sugar, and reduce inflammation. But do the risks outweigh the rewards?

[Read More](#)

## Rheumatoid Arthritis Warning Signs

Early, aggressive treatment is key to fighting RA, but it can be challenging to diagnose. Here's what to look for.

[Read More](#)

## Few Americans Understand Alcohol's Impact on Cancer Risk

Compiled, edited & published by  
**Dr Harold Gunatillake** Compiled edited & published by  
**Dr Harold Gunatillake OAM**  
 To unsubscribe email:  
[haroldgunatillake1@gmail.com](mailto:haroldgunatillake1@gmail.com)  
**Dr Harold 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 & Bachelor of Surgery (Cey). Government scholar for higher studies in the UK.**