



Natural Standard

The Authority on Integrative Medicine

Copyright © 2009 Natural Standard

December 2009

Natural Standard provides high-quality, evidence-based information about complementary and alternative therapies, diets, exercise and nutrition. For more information, please visit www.naturalstandard.com.

Natural Standard Launches Sports Medicine Database



Natural Standard launched a new Sports Medicine database this month to help meet the unique needs of athletes, coaches, trainers and healthcare providers.

Now, readers have quick access to information about common sports injuries, such as fractures and sprains. The review articles feature conventional and integrative therapies, rehabilitation programs and prevention techniques, highlighting the available evidence of effectiveness and safety data.

Individuals can also find out which therapies or products may have performance-enhancing effects and whether or not they are safe. For example, strong evidence suggests that creatine may increase lean body mass and strength. However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advises consumers to consult their healthcare providers before using creatine. The safety of high doses is unclear, and supplementation may be unsafe in people with kidney problems, bipolar disorder or in those who are dehydrated.

Subscribers can also learn how fat is stored in the body and how to maximize weight loss with proper nutrition, healthy diets and various exercise routines.

For easy navigation, the topics are organized into 11 categories:

- Amino acids
- Antioxidants
- Athletic Performance Enhancement
- Bath & Body
- Cell Metabolism
- Exercise Recovery
- Muscle Building
- Sports Supplements
- Sports-Related Conditions
- Weight Loss & Fat Burners
- Workout Routines

In This Issue

[**Natural Standard Launches Sports Medicine Database**](#)
[**Natural Standard on the Radio**](#)
[**Pycnogenol® for Retinopathy**](#)
[**Natural Standard Makes Headlines**](#)
[**Fatty Acids and Ulcerative Colitis**](#)
[**Complimentary Webinars**](#)
[**Magnet, Copper Bracelets May Not Help Arthritis**](#)
[**Stem Cells for Heart Attack Survivors**](#)
[**Journal of Dietary Supplements**](#)
[**Inside Natural Standard**](#)

To learn more about various sports medicine topics, please visit www.naturalstandard.com.



Natural Standard on the Radio

Dr. Catherine (Kate) Ulbricht, co-founder of **Natural Standard** Research Collaboration and Senior Attending Pharmacist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, will be a guest speaker on several upcoming radio shows.

Dr. Ulbricht will discuss the founding of **Natural Standard** and how it has evolved to become the authority on integrative medicine. This evidence-based resource provides unbiased information about all types of integrative therapies, including foods, herbs, supplements, diets and modalities. The mission of the collaboration is to help clinicians and consumers make safer, more informed decisions about healthcare.



Dr. Ulbricht will also discuss the latest **Natural Standard** publications, including [Herbal Pharmacotherapy: An Evidence-Based Approach](#). This book offers practical guidance on herbal therapies for medical conditions and will be an essential part of herbal pharmacy core curricula for all healthcare disciplines.

Listeners will also learn about academic rotations that are available to students from all disciplines. In these rotations, healthcare trainees learn how to analyze clinical trials on complementary and alternative therapies. Students also attend herbal classes and visit numerous sites to shadow practitioners and learn about various healing modalities, such as yoga, tai chi and qi gong.

The upcoming broadcasts include:

- **Herbally Yours:** Tune in to Nassau County Community College Radio, WUSB 90.3 FM on December 16, 2009, at 12:00 p.m. (EST) & December 20, 2009, at 10:30 p.m. (EST).
- **The Natural Nurse:** Visit www.progressiveradionetwork.com, Gary Null's Progressive Radio Network, on December 21, 2009, at 1 p.m. (EST). This hour-long simulcast will also be archived on the site.
- **Natural Alternatives:** Tune in to Stony Brook University Radio, WUSB 90.1 FM or visit www.wusb.fm on February 5, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. (EST). This hour-long broadcast will be archived on the site for one week.

To comment on this story, please [click here](#) to enter **Natural Standard's** blog.



Pycnogenol® for Retinopathy



Pycnogenol®, a patented extract made from French maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*), may help prevent eye problems associated with diabetes, researchers report.

One of the most common complications of diabetes is retinopathy. This disease occurs when the small blood vessels in the retina (located in the back of the eye) become damaged. The retina sends visual images to the brain, where they are perceived. Because the blood vessels supply the retina with oxygen, retinopathy may result in partial or complete vision loss. As retinopathy advances, the lack of oxygen may cause abnormal new blood vessels to grow into the retina, which may further damage the retina and worsen vision loss. In fact, diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness among American adults.

Earlier research suggested that Pycnogenol® may help prevent or slow the progression of diabetic retinopathy. It has been theorized that compounds in Pycnogenol® may stick to proteins in blood vessel walls to create a sealing effect. However, results were limited by a small sample size and unclear methodology.

The current study included 46 patients with diabetes and early-stage retinopathy. At this stage, there is only minor leakage from blood vessels into the retina, and damage is often reversible. Blood glucose levels were well-controlled with antidiabetic medications. The participants were randomly assigned to receive either 150 milligrams of Pycnogenol® or placebo daily for three months.

By the end of the study, patients in the Pycnogenol® group subjectively reported significant improvements in vision. Visual acuity, measured with the Snellen chart, improved from 14/20 at the beginning of the study to 17/20 after supplementation. Pycnogenol® treatment also led to significant improvements in retinal swelling and blood flow velocity in the retinal blood vessels.

No such beneficial effects were reported in the control group.

The authors suggest that these beneficial effects may be attributed to the antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and capillary-protective effects of Pycnogenol®.

Although promising, additional research is needed to determine the safety and effectiveness of Pycnogenol® for diabetic retinopathy.

For more information about integrative therapies for diabetic retinopathy, please visit **Natural Standard's** [Comparative Effectiveness](#) database.

To comment on this story, please [click here](#) to enter **Natural Standard's** blog.

References:

1. **Natural Standard:** The Authority on Integrative Medicine. www.naturalstandard.com
2. Steigerwalt R, Belcaro G, Cesarone MR, et al. Pycnogenol((R)) Improves Microcirculation, Retinal Edema and Visual Acuity in Early Diabetic Retinopathy. J Ocul Pharmacol Ther. 2009 Nov 16. [View Abstract](#)



Natural Standard Makes Headlines

The top story on the [Boston Healing Blog](#) highlights **Natural Standard** as a premier resource for evidence-based information about integrative medicine.

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) continues to gain popularity in the United States. In 2007, Americans spent nearly \$34 billion out of pocket on CAM, according to the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). However, without reliable sources of information, individuals may find it difficult to determine which therapies are safe and effective. **Natural Standard** Research Collaboration rigorously reviews scientific data to provide objective information about therapies, thereby helping people make more informed and safer therapeutic decisions.



The Boston Healing Blog is sponsored by Massage Therapy Works and features the latest articles about natural living and complementary medicine in Greater Boston.

Massage Therapy Works, Inc., is located in the heart of Davis Square in Somerville, Mass. The practice is open seven days a week and includes 16 licensed professional therapists who treat a variety of medical conditions, including chronic pain and stress.

Massage Therapy Works also offers acupuncture, craniosacral therapy, Ayurvedic medicine, shiatsu, Chinese bodywork, structural integration, rehab myotherapy and more.

For more information about Massage Therapy Works, please visit www.massagetherapyworks.com.

Fatty Acids and Ulcerative Colitis



Fatty acid consumption may influence a person's risk of developing an inflammatory bowel disease called ulcerative colitis, researchers report.

Ulcerative colitis is a persistent condition that typically causes diarrhea, abdominal pain, decreased appetite and weight loss. Although the cause remains unknown, researchers suspect that the disease involves a complex interaction of factors, including heredity, the immune system and diet.

Researchers analyzed data from more than 200,000 adults who participated in the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC). The participants completed food frequency questionnaires and were monitored for the development of ulcerative colitis.

During an average follow-up period of four years, 126 people developed ulcerative colitis.

A diet rich in a type of omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acid called linoleic acid was associated with an increased risk of the disease. Linoleic acid is found in some margarines, red meat and cooking oils. The authors found that people who ate the most linoleic acid (13-38 grams daily) were 2.5 times more likely to develop ulcerative colitis than those who ate the least amount (2-8 grams daily).

The body converts linoleic acid into arachidonic acid, which may then be transformed into pro-inflammatory molecules. Elevated levels of these inflammatory molecules have been found in the colons of patients with ulcerative colitis.

In contrast, a high intake of the omega-3 fatty acid docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) was linked to a lower risk of ulcerative colitis. This fatty acid is found in fatty fish (such as mackerel and herring) and fish oil supplements. People who ate the most DHA were 77 percent less likely to develop ulcerative colitis than those who ate the least amount.

However, this study is limited by its design. Additional controlled trials are needed to fully understand the potential relationship between fatty acids and ulcerative colitis.

Although there is currently no cure for ulcerative colitis, several medications, including anti-inflammatories and immunosuppressants, are available to help alleviate symptoms. Various integrative therapies have also been studied as potential treatment options. For instance, good evidence suggests that various types of probiotics may help prevent relapses of ulcerative colitis.

For more information about integrative therapies for ulcerative colitis, please visit [Natural Standard's Comparative Effectiveness](#) database.

To comment on this story, please [click here](#) to enter [Natural Standard's](#) blog.

References:

1. **Natural Standard:** The Authority on Integrative Medicine. www.naturalstandard.com
2. IBD in EPIC Study Investigators, Tjønneland A, Overvad K, et al. Linoleic acid, a dietary n-6 polyunsaturated fatty acid, and the aetiology of ulcerative colitis: a nested case-control study within a European prospective cohort study. *Gut*. 2009 Dec;58(12):1606-11. [View Abstract](#)

Complimentary Webinars

Natural Standard is offering a series of upcoming complimentary webinars on integrative medicine. **Natural Standard** offers these webinars as an impartial and informational public service. All webinars are recorded and archived at www.naturalstandard.com/webinars.

To comment on a recent webinar or to suggest future webinar topics, please [click here](#) to enter **Natural Standard's** blog.



Sage

Presented by: Nicole Jordan, PharmDc, University of Connecticut

Using the **Natural Standard** Clinical Bottom Line monograph as a guide, Nicole Jordan, PharmDc, will discuss the available evidence concerning the therapeutic effectiveness of sage in a variety of conditions. Complimentary access is available December 1-31, 2009.

Mediterranean Diet

Presented by: Enrico Forte, President and co-founder of the Mediterranean Book Association

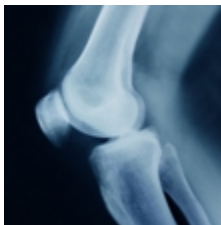
Enrico Forte will discuss how to integrate the principles of the Mediterranean diet into an overall healthy lifestyle. Complimentary access is available January 1-31, 2010.

Pregnancy and Integrative Therapies

Presented by: Elizabeth R. B. Higdon, PharmDc, University of Wyoming

Using the **Natural Standard** database on integrative medicine as a guide, Elizabeth Higdon, PharmDc, will discuss the available evidence concerning alternative therapies and their application during pregnancy. Complimentary access is available January 1-31, 2010.

Magnet, Copper Bracelets May Not Help Arthritis



Magnet and copper bracelets may not improve symptoms of osteoarthritis, researchers report in the journal *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*.

Although magnet therapy has gained popularity in recent years, there is a lack of evidence supporting its use for arthritis. Research on the effectiveness of copper bracelets is also limited, although it has historically been used to treat the condition.

In the 16-week-long study, 45 patients with osteoarthritis were randomly assigned to wear a magnetic wrist strap, weak magnetic wrist strap, de-magnetized wrist strap or copper bracelet for four weeks. After each treatment period, the participants rotated groups so that they were able to try each device.

The researchers recorded medication use and measured pain, disability and joint stiffness based on the WOMAC® Osteoarthritis Index. The McGill Pain Questionnaire-Pain Rating Index (PRI) and a pain visual analogue scale (VAS) were also administered to further assess pain.

The authors found that magnetic and copper bracelets did not significantly affect pain, stiffness or disability associated with osteoarthritis.

For more information about magnet therapy or copper, please visit **Natural Standard's** [Health & Wellness](#) and [Foods, Herbs & Supplements](#) databases.

To comment on this story, please [click here](#) to enter **Natural Standard's** blog.

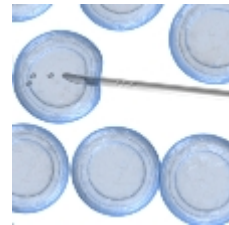
References:

1. **Natural Standard:** The Authority on Integrative Medicine. www.naturalstandard.com
2. Richmond SJ, Brown SR, Campion PD, et al. Therapeutic effects of magnetic and copper bracelets in osteoarthritis: a randomised placebo-controlled crossover trial. *Complement Ther Med.* 2009 Oct-Dec;17(5-6):249-56. [View Abstract](#)

Stem Cells for Heart Attack Survivors

New evidence suggests that adult stem cells may help repair heart tissue that has been damaged by a heart attack.

In the phase I study, researchers collected adult mesenchymal stem cells from the bone marrow of healthy donors. Then the drug manufacturer Osiris Therapeutics purified the stem cells into a formula (Prochymal[®]) that could be injected into patients. Unlike many other biological therapies, the donor mesenchymal stem cells do not need to match the blood type of the recipient.



The study included 53 adults who had heart attacks in the previous 10 days. The participants were randomly assigned to receive an infusion of either Prochymal[®] or placebo.

During the two-year follow-up period, echocardiograms and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans were performed to evaluate heart function. Pulmonary function tests were performed to evaluate lung function.

According to the authors, patients in the stem cell group were four times more likely to have improved overall heart function compared to the control group. Their hearts pumped more efficiently and had 25 percent fewer irregular heartbeats than the control group. Lung function also improved in the stem cell group. There were no reports of toxicity or other serious side effects.

The authors suspect that the stem cells may facilitate the growth of new blood vessels, which bring blood to the heart.

Although promising, additional research is warranted in this area. The researchers are now recruiting patients for the second phase of the study.

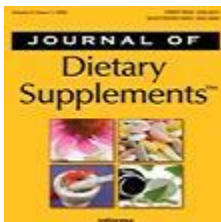
For more information about different types of stem cells, please visit **Natural Standard's** [Genomics & Proteomics](#) database.

To comment on this story, please [click here](#) to enter **Natural Standard's** blog.

References:

1. Hare JM, Traverse JH, Henry TD, et al. A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, dose-escalation study of intravenous adult human mesenchymal stem cells (prochymal) after acute myocardial infarction. *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 2009 Dec 8;54(24):2277-86. [View Abstract](#)
2. **Natural Standard:** The Authority on Integrative Medicine. www.naturalstandard.com

Journal of Dietary Supplements



Natural Standard Research Collaboration invites researchers to submit articles to *Journal of Dietary Supplements (JDS)* – an international peer-reviewed forum for original research and review articles that focus on vitamins, minerals, herbs and other substances that make up the multibillion-dollar dietary supplement industry. The journal addresses important issues that meet a broad range of interests, not only in integrative healthcare, but also in academic, regulatory and industrial sectors.

The journal has a new online submission system available at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/wjds>. Please note that the text should be uploaded as a Microsoft Word file. All tables and figures should be submitted as separate digital files. Full instructions for uploading submissions will appear online.

Natural Standard subscribers are eligible to receive a 60 percent discount on a one-year subscription to the journal. Subscribers will receive four issues for \$100.

Natural Standard also invites *JDS* authors to present their findings in webinars, which will be posted on the **Natural Standard** Web site (www.naturalstandard.com/webinars).

Chief editor Catherine Ulbricht is the co-founder of **Natural Standard**, an international research collaboration that aggregates and synthesizes data on complementary and alternative therapies. Dr. Wendy Chao is Associate Editor of the publication. The distinguished [editorial board](#) includes the following internationally known scientists:

Brent A. Bauer, MD, FACP

Director, Complementary and Integrative Medicine Program
Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN

Mark Blumenthal

Founder & Executive Director
American Botanical Council, Austin, TX

William Benda, MD

Assistant Clinical Professor
Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of California San Francisco

Board of Trustees
American Holistic Medical Association

Board of Directors
American Association of Naturopathic Physicians

Edzard Ernst, MD, PhD, FRCP, FRCP (Edin.)

Professor of Complementary Medicine
Peninsula Medical School, Exeter, UK

Bradly Jacobs, MD, MPH

Founder and Director
Institute of Healthy Living, Sausalito, CA

Karta Purkh S. Khalsa, CD-N, RH

Botanical Medicine
Bastyr University, Eugene, OR

For more information, please e-mail jds@naturalstandard.com.

Welcome!

Natural Standard would like to welcome Dan Fields to the team. We would also like to welcome the following PharmD candidates: Kendra Knebel from St. John Fisher College; Jeong-min (Jenny) Ym from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and Gene Pelikhov from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.



Students from all disciplines are invited to train with **Natural Standard** Research Collaboration. Rotations are available either locally in our Somerville, Mass., office or through virtual distance-learning modules. Healthcare trainees learn how to analyze clinical trials on complementary and alternative therapies. Students also attend herbal classes and travel to numerous sites to shadow clinical practitioners and participate in various healing modalities, such as yoga, tai chi and qi gong.

This rotation appeals to students who enjoy reading, writing, journal club, statistics and academic work. Participants enter an immersion program similar to a co-op experience and receive attribution for their publications. For more information, please [click here](#) or e-mail info@naturalstandard.com.

Natural Standard Handheld/Desktop Version:



Natural Standard subscribers are eligible to receive free handheld and desktop versions of the database for one year plus a 15 percent discount on Skyscape references.

With the handheld version, individuals can quickly access evidence-based information about integrative therapies, including herbs, supplements, alternative modalities, exercise and nutrition. This decision-support tool also cross-indexes with all of Skyscape's 500+ clinical, drug and diagnostic references.

The desktop version contains consolidated data on effectiveness, side effects, interactions, dosing, pregnancy, breastfeeding, historical background, practitioner accreditation, theory and safety. Individual subscriptions are also available for both handheld and desktop versions.

Simply e-mail info@naturalstandard.com and provide a complete e-mail address list of authorized subscribers who are interested in taking advantage of this special offer. Subscribers will receive personal codes to activate their handheld/desktop versions.

To receive a 15 percent discount on additional Skyscape references, please visit www.skyscape.com/naturalstandard and enter discount code: 93821.

Quick Links:

- [Natural Standard Homepage](#)
- [Natural Standard Handheld Version](#)
- [Journal of Dietary Supplements](#)
- [Natural Standard Books](#)

Contact: news@naturalstandard.com