



Dr. Sears'

CONFIDENTIAL CURES

Your Guide to Truth and Lies in
Medicine from Around the World

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Issue 1

Cancer Killer Found in Tropical Tree Leaf And You Can Use It Now

I found it growing right in the front yard of the house I built for my friend in Jamaica. She gave me the fruit and made a tea from the leaves for my breakfast of salt fish and ackee. My friend and organic farmer, Westi, showed me his tree with fruit on it growing in his garden on his father's land in Ubud, Bali. I've seen it growing wild in the jungles of Peru and Brazil and in small-town backyards in the mountains of Ecuador.

It was like seeing an old friend when I ran into the tree again on my trip to Africa this year. The traditional herbalist who became my friend there, Dr. David Mawanda, proudly showed me leaves he had harvested from the tree and how they use it traditionally in East Central Africa to kill cancer.

I'm talking about the *Annona muricata* tree. This is the tree that produces the delicious tropical fruit the soursop.

Something as simple as a tea made from the leaves of a fruit tree kills cancer? So why don't all doctor's use this cancer-blasting tea?

You might think that it would make big news when the National Cancer Institute documented their findings about soursop's anti-cancer power. Except that they ONLY wrote about it in their own internal documents and never officially published their findings.

You might also conclude that mainstream medicine doesn't want you to know anything about this one...

Nature makes it, so it can't be patented. And the bigwigs at Big Pharma and their partners at the FDA continue to do a pretty good job – not at serving you, but

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This soursop fruit was almost ripe enough for me to pick and eat right off my friend Westi's tree in Bali, the Malaysian paradise.



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at serving each other. They have a common interest to do their best to make sure no one breathes a word about *any* natural cure they can't monopolize for their own power and profit.

Meanwhile, I'm here to point out that in this case they're behaving like hypocrites! They are saying one thing in public, but behind the scenes the drug companies are feverishly trying for *seven years* to make a synthetic version of this cancer-blaster ... and couldn't duplicate the power of the soursop tree.

They're still trying, creating things in their labs like "symmetrical bivalent mimetic" and "c-9 epimer" drugs. These try to act like the compounds in natural soursop.

But so far since they can't beat the real thing, they have no interest in telling you about it – even as millions die every year of dreaded cancers.

Now let me show you why this is so important:

Extracts from the leaves, seeds, fruit and stem of the soursop tree kill 12 different kinds of cancer cells.

The key to the anti-cancer power of the soursop (*Annona muricata*) tree is a family of plant nutrients called *annonaceous acetogenins*.

These compounds pull the plug on the energy source

for the cancer cells themselves. This is one smart strategy that nature has come up with for you and me. I wish I could take credit for it because it is brilliant. You see, without metabolic energy, the cancer cells can't fight back. And... they can't reproduce.¹

But these are naturally occurring plant components. They're not created in a lab. And they've been used for thousands of years in warm climates all over the world to treat diseases including cancers.

The "powers that be" want you to think drugs are always better, but drugs are only tested for a year or two. Plants and herbs have been used to heal people for all of human history... and they're still the only form of medicine for 80% of the world's population.

They want you to think of medicine as something you buy. But in Africa, Jamaica, Peru, Bali and many other places I've traveled, they've used traditional medicines from plants all their lives.

For them, it's natural to get what you need right from your own backyard.

It's only after scientists get wind that something is effective that they begin to study it...

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Cancer-Fighting Treasure Trove

When I was in Africa I visited herbalists in Kenya, The Congo, Tanzania, South Africa, Rwanda and Uganda and learned a lot about herbs, and got better information than what I had before.

They are a lot more aggressive, and have more impressive accounts of treating serious problems with plants and herbs, and especially treating cancer.

A big portion of all the herbs I learned about in Africa are anti-cancer herbs.

I saw amazing pictures of the resolution of advanced cancers. Breast cancer, skin cancer, prostate cancer... Kaposi's sarcoma...

One picture shows the person with cancer, and the next picture shows the same person healed.

I'll be writing a book about what I saw there, and in all my travels around the world. I'm going to call it "Cancer Cures from Around the World."

And as a **Confidential Cures** subscriber, you'll get the excerpts and stories first!



Modern Medicine Clueless about the World's Healing Plants

In fact, when I was in Malaysia, I was reading a scientific journal called the *Journal of Asian Natural Products Research*. In it, I found so much medical eye-opening research on the entire soursop tree family. It is so medicinally potent.²

From my perspective traveling to varied cultures, modern medicine has studied only a very small portion of the world's plants for their medicinal value. I consider the Annonacea family so important for its anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-skin disease, anti-inflammatory, and HIV- and cancer-fighting power, I have been tracking their use throughout my travels.

You will see more evidence about some of these related trees from me soon.

Meanwhile, there's plenty of evidence to prove that soursop shuts down cancer cells at the source...

Current Science Proves Soursop's Cancer Killing Power

The acetogenins in soursop extracts are effective against lung carcinoma cell lines, human breast solid tumor lines, prostate adeno-carcinoma, pancreatic carcinoma cell lines, colon cancer, hepato-carcinoma, human lymphoma cell lines and multi-drug resistant human breast cancer cells.

- Purdue University noted that an encapsulated extract has been effectively used by certain cancer patients as a botanical anti-cancer supplement.³
- Researchers in Taiwan reported that acetogenins and annonacins have a devastating impact on ovarian, cervical, breast, bladder and skin cancer cell lines.⁴
- In another study, researchers took acetogenins from the leaves and the seeds of the fruit and showed they were toxic to liver cancer cells.⁵
- One acetogenin found in the soursop tree was so poisonous to colon cancer cells that it killed them at 10,000 times the potency of the ant-cancer drug adriamycin.⁶

- The fruit's extracts also stop the growth of human breast cancer cells. It downregulates something called epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) *in vitro* and in mice. In one study by as much as 56%.⁷ It also inhibited tumor growth.

This is very important because EGFR is known as an "oncogene" – a gene that contributes to the production of cancer. Breast cancer patients often have an overexpression, or a lot of, EGFR. And it's associated with a poor prognosis and drug resistance.

By downregulating EGFR, soursop could be the key to protecting against breast cancer and surviving it. It could also be a doorway that allows additional treatments to cure the disease.

That's good news because cancers like this now kill more Americans between the ages of 45 and 65 than heart disease.

Which makes it hard to rationalize why we don't use this natural cancer fighter...

And, I've uncovered more to this story: Like the fact that it's not just one or two compounds in soursop that wipe out cancer.

Get this: What do you think our creaky mainstream medical machine did in response to the fact that when 14 different acetogenins were tested against cancer, 13 out of the 14 were more potent against multi-drug-resistant cancer cells than all the three standard drugs – Adriamycin, Vincristine and Vinblastine?

Well, they continued to use only these horribly toxic and obscenely expensive drugs.

And Annona compounds are uniquely cancer-specific... they leave healthy cells completely untouched.

I'm excited to tell you that I've seen and documented many kinds of this potent plant family. I even have some growing in my back yard. But, so far, the soursop has the most medicinal value.

I have to admit feeling a little jealous at first when I went to Bali and saw my friend Westi and his wife Lelir had

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a beautiful, luscious and productive soursop tree growing wild... because despite a lot of TLC my soursop died after high winds from Hurricane Irene this summer.

My experience with growing other Annonas is not so great either. If it gets below about 40 degrees, the leaves get damaged. Lower than that and the tree dies, but that's a story for another letter.

I have grown the fruit. Besides being exceptionally delicious, the fruit has easily absorbed proteins, healthy fats, vitamins B and C, and minerals, especially potassium and phosphorous.

It also protects cells, is anti-fungal, is a decongestant, and aids digestion.

Interestingly, Dr. Mawanda told me that in Africa, Ugandan tribes still call the soursop fruit simply "heart."

It's used by traditional healers as a heart tonic. One of the reasons soursop works so well for this usage is its *oxoarpophine alkaloids*, which dilate blood vessels and lower blood pressure.

So enough talk. Let's get to the action:

Get Soursop's Cancer-Fighting Power for Yourself

Places with a large Caribbean or Puerto Rican community will usually have soursop available in their locally owned markets.

If you go to one, remember that soursop fruit is covered with little "spines," and you can tell the fruit is ripe when the spikes break off easily.

You can get the packaged fruit pulp at many natural foods grocers, but avoid any with added ingredients or that are processed.

To get the leaves and stems you'll probably have to do a little searching. Unless you live someplace at least as warm as South Florida, you won't be able to grow a tree outside. But you can still get the leaves and stems online, both powdered and fresh. I recommend you use the leaves and get them as fresh as possible.

Here's my recipe for brewing up a cup of tea from fresh soursop the way my herbalist friend does for me when I'm

in Jamaica.

- First boil one cup of water.
- Then tear two or three soursop leaves into three pieces each.
- Put the leaves into your tea cup or glass and pour the boiling water on it.
- Cover for 30 minutes (called drawing the tea).
- Add honey to sweeten and enjoy.

You can also buy the extract of soursop leaf and stem (the tree is also called graviola) in a capsule form. They will usually contain from 500 milligrams up to 1.8 grams each. Take from 1 to 2 grams per day.

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Get The Oxygen Boost That Could Save Your Life

This is the most important thing you can do...

I wanted to talk to you about it in your first issue of this newsletter because it's the most fundamental and basic nutrient of all.

You can live for a month or two without food, you can live without water for days, but you can't live for more than a couple of minutes without oxygen.

Not only is it the most urgent, but it's the most basic need of your body.

Yet if you follow the advice of the people who tell you to do aerobics and cardio, you're being robbed of oxygen.

They don't understand the harm they're doing. Because if you do what they tell you to do, your heart will shrink, your lungs will become weak and you'll be wrecking your ability to oxygenate your body with every mile.

The good news is, it's not too late. You can retrain your body and rebuild your heart and lungs...

And you get there by doing the opposite of what conventional fitness wisdom tells you to do.

Why is this so fundamental for your health? Because how well you breathe determines how long you'll live better than anything else I've ever tested.

The medical journal *Chest* did a 29-year follow up to the Buffalo Health Study, which looked at over 1,100 people up to age 89. They found that **the better your lungs work, the less likely you are to die of any cause.** The correlation was even stronger for heart disease.¹

Aerobics is NOT Exercise

The problem is that modern advice has you replacing our native intensity of exertion with duration. Essentially, it has you giving up your natural level of physical activity for an unnaturally long workout. They tell you endurance is the key, when it's really killing you faster. Because it mimics the stress we're already under.



Think about it. Your days are already filled with constant busyness and stress.

And you're taught to make it worse with aerobics and cardio. This is the worst fitness mistake in history.

In fact, the word "aerobics" is meaningless. It doesn't even describe a system of exercise. "Aerobic" and "anaerobic" are words that describe pathways for creating energy for your body.

The aerobic system can use nutrients to produce energy as long as there's oxygen present. To get energy through the anaerobic system, you use glucose. Long-duration exercise like aerobics uses only the aerobic system of creating energy. Higher intensity exercise also makes energy through the anaerobic pathway.

In the aerobics world, they tell you never to cross the aerobic threshold and start using your anaerobic system to get energy. This means they never want you to go from medium to high intensity. Conventional aerobics wisdom says to always stay at medium output so you can go as long as possible.

But if you never cross the aerobic energy threshold

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and use your anaerobic energy system at the same time, you never give your body the signal to grow stronger and increase the amount of oxygen your body can get.

To get your cardiopulmonary system working so that you can deliver the most oxygen possible to your blood, you have to exercise *beyond* the zone where you're only getting energy from your aerobic system.

This is where the beneficial changes start to happen. That's when your heart and lungs realize they can't get blood and oxygen out to your tissues as fast as you're asking them to. So they make an adaptive response by increasing reserve capacity to grow more powerful.

But that can only happen if you switch to progressively intense exertion, where you are working at greater than the medium capacity of aerobics and cardio.

Let me show you how...

A Few Minutes A Day Beats Hours of Endurance Training

In 1970, a man named Arthur Jones developed what would become the famous Nautilus weight training machine. But Jones believed that special equipment was not required to build strength; just pre-stretching, and unlimited speed of movement.

In 1975, he conducted "Project Total Conditioning" at the West Point Military Academy. The study was designed to test soldiers and find the consequences of a short duration, high-intensity strength training program.

Over 6 weeks, they put the cadets through 17 workout sessions. By the 17th session, they had improved their strength by an average of 60% from where they started. And these were military cadets already in good physical condition.²

Even more impressive was the fact that over the six-week study, cadets exercised for a total of only eight and a half hours each. That's an average of only a few minutes a day.

This prompted Captain James Peterson, who ran and documented the West Point project, to say: "The study made it clear that high intensity training is the most efficient conditioning method known... It offers increases in size

and strength, as well as cardiovascular improvement."

Since then, there have been dozens of studies linking exercise intensity with cardiopulmonary benefits.

And it seems like every month there are brand new studies to back up this link.

For example in one study researchers in Oregon put women with fibromyalgia into two exercise groups. One walked at low intensity for 20 minutes, the other did high intensity Nordic walking (long strides with ski poles) for 20 minutes.

After exercising only twice a week for 15 weeks, the high intensity group had a huge improvement in cardiopulmonary strength.³ Their hearts and lungs had grown more powerful, even though they were exercising only two times a week, simply by *increasing the intensity of their exertion*.

An Italian study looked at the fitness regimens of elite soccer players. The soccer stars spent only 8% of their time doing high intensity training. But researchers discovered that it was *ONLY* this part of their training that improved the power of their cardiopulmonary systems.

The authors themselves wrote, "Only the time spent at high intensity was related to changes in ... fitness. ... It stresses the effectiveness of the high-intensity training."

More Oxygen Means More Power

To trigger your adaptive response and take in more oxygen, all you need to do is increase the challenge a tiny bit each time you work out.

During your workout, you ask your lungs to give you a little bit more oxygen than they can provide. The difference between the oxygen you need and the oxygen you get is your oxygen debt.

Creating this oxygen debt means you are also asking your body for more energy than your aerobic system alone can provide. At this point, you'll be training your body to use your anaerobic system for energy, too.

You can't sustain exercise with your anaerobic system for very long. But when you exert yourself this way, you are successfully triggering your adaptive response to make your

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lungs grow stronger and deliver more oxygen to your blood.

And, by being progressive – challenging your limits a little more each day – you force your body to make adaptive changes and respond by growing stronger to meet the challenge.

You may already know this, but I call this style of brief but progressively intense exertion P.A.C.E. It stands for Progressively Accelerating Cardiopulmonary Exertion.

You do it in three easy steps:

1. Pick Your Favorite – Whether it's in a pool, on a bike, on an elliptical machine or on the ground, the beauty of it is that you can work out P.A.C.E. style almost any way you can think of. Just keep the exertion brief, rest in between and increase the intensity a tiny bit each time.

One piece of equipment I don't recommend, however, is the treadmill. Because the belt under you is moving and you are not, treadmills force your body into unnatural movements. Your brain has to unlearn almost everything it's been programmed to know about motion. Stick to movements that are more natural to you.



Whether it's in a pool, on a bike, on an elliptical machine or on the ground, the beauty of it is that you can work out P.A.C.E. style almost any way you can think of.

2. Three Sets Is Best – In our research into P.A.C.E., we've found that a progressive challenge works best when you start with three "sets," or periods of exertion.

- The first is a warm-up set that lasts from 4-6 minutes.
- The second is a ramp-up set that should last for 4 minutes. You exert yourself to the point where you could still talk, but you're out of breath.
- The third is for peak exertion. It should only last from 2-4 minutes, and you should be pumping hard enough by the end that you could only grunt a word or two if you had to.

This is just a basic outline for how you might begin a P.A.C.E. workout. To mix it up and put some variety into the challenge, you can increase the pace of each set, add a set, use resistance, or change instruments.

3. Ready, Set... GO! – Don't get on a bike and try to imitate an Olympic athlete right away. Working out with intensity can mean pedaling slowly if you've chosen a bike, or doing low-impact jumping jacks if you're just starting. Or, you could walk slowly, then rest. Walk a little faster, then rest. And for the third set, you want to walk as fast as you can, which may still not be that fast. But that's OK. What's important is that you monitor your perceived challenge.

And if you increase that challenge just a little bit during that last set each day you exercise, you'll be building powerful lungs and a strong heart that can deliver huge amounts of life-giving oxygen.

One example might be that if you're in fairly good shape, you might get on an elliptical machine and churn at about 35% of your capacity for 4 minutes to warm up. Then recover fully. Then go at it 65% for 6 minutes, and recover. For your last set, pump hard, but go as hard as you can for the whole last 30 seconds and don't let up. This will create

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an oxygen debt, and force your heart and lungs to adapt from low-power to high output.

The beauty of this method is that you can apply it to any type of exercise or piece of equipment. Or you can just use your body. Spinning, running, working out with a kettle bell or simply doing jump squats or jumping jacks... you can do them all in this way.

One of my favorite ways to do P.A.C.E. doesn't require any equipment at all. I do P.A.C.E. push-ups.

I sometimes do regular push-ups from my hands and toes. Then to change it up, I might do a warm-up set from my knees, the ramp-up set on an incline, and the peak set with my feet propped up so I'm on a decline.

Plus, I can move my arms farther apart to work my triceps muscles, or closer together to work my chest harder. But whatever I choose, I always use the P.A.C.E. method – progressive intensity, followed by rest for recovery.

Make sure you recover fully between each set. Your recovery time will help you tell how fit you're becoming and how strong your lungs are.

After a few weeks, you should notice that it doesn't take long for your heart rate to return to normal after a set of exertion, no matter what it is. This means you are becoming more fit and delivering more oxygen to your body faster.

It's also important to have your total exertion time last no more than 12-15 minutes. Remember, you're not training your heart for minimum power over a long time. You're trying to get back your lungpower.

And when you do, you'll be giving your body the oxygen you need to save your life.

In the next article, I'll show you two of the most powerful ways I know to help your body use all that oxygen...

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Are Your Cells Suffocating?

I've climbed to some of the highest and most remote places a human can get to ... from the highest point on the equator in Ecuador to the top of the Andes Mountains in Peru...

I've climbed to the highest natural peak in Arizona at more than 12,000 feet to the highest walkable point on earth at almost 20,000 feet.

So I know a little bit about altitude, and the importance of getting oxygen to your tissues.

There are really two aspects to this. One is your cardiopulmonary system that oxygenates your blood, and the other is the metabolic exchange, and getting the oxygen into your tissues.

In your other article today I told you about the best way to get oxygen into your blood and out to your organs.

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Mount Cotacachi in Ecuador is 16,200 feet up. The highest active volcano in the world, it's also the highest point on the equator and the farthest spot from the center of the Earth.

Now I'm going to tell you how to get more oxygen out of your blood and into the tissues where it does its work.

The reason this is important is that oxygen is your most important healer. It's your most effective detox agent, a crucial blood cleanser, your strongest antibiotic and the lead orchestrator of your immune system.

The more oxygen you have, the better your lungs can breathe, the stronger your heart beats and the faster your brain thinks.

Oxygen transport from your lungs to your cells also plays a huge role in giving you energy. Every cell uses oxygen to make the energy that keeps you going and lets you do all the things you want to do every day.

So if you can use oxygen in your everyday life the same way you can where the air is thin, like at the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, climbing that flight of stairs is going to be easy for you.

Remembering things will be easier.

Your thinking will get faster.

And you'll have strength and stamina to spare.

That's why I'm going to give you two easy ways to get more oxygen into every cell in your body so you can improve your oxygenation ...

I have to admit, though... to say the air is "thin" at 19,350 feet is an understatement.

When I got to the top, at first all I could see were the clouds and mist below us. When the clouds gave way, a slice of African savannah, with green ribbons tracking gorges and rivers, peeked through in the distance.

I stood there at the summit and looked east and west ... I felt like I was like looking from one end of the Earth to other.

I thought about the steep switchbacks we'd just conquered. The pounding hail on the side of our rickety shelter at the camp last night. The ice-cold gale-force winds blowing up from the glacier below the peak.

It was grueling, but I'd smiled all the way up to the top.

Mount Kilimanjaro is no joke. One of my colleagues

who went with me doesn't remember the majestic scenery. Or the exhilaration of reaching the summit. But he does remember the effects of altitude from the climb. He later recalled in his blog that it was "six days of living hell."

I really can't say for sure why I never felt pain or even got that tired, but I'm not kidding when I say I felt great. Maybe has more to do with my health. Maybe it's purely attitude. But whatever the reason, I am grateful. It's just great to be able to make a climb like that without being too much affected by the lack of oxygen.

And I try to give this gift to my patients whenever I can.

Because oxygen is a very important issue that I work on with my patients to help them stay strong and independent for life.

The Most Important Healer

When you can't get enough oxygen into your body, life isn't as good.

Have you ever opened the refrigerator door and just stood there, staring at everything for a few minutes before being able to get what you wanted?

Do your muscles tend to "cramp up," getting stiff and achy? Some of my patients complain they're not as quick-witted as they once were.

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The air is thin and cold at 20,000 feet on top of Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest walkable point on Earth. But I'm still smiling!

These are just some mild symptoms of not being able to use oxygen well in your cells. You could also experience poor athletic performance, have poor hearing or weak muscles.

If it gets bad enough, your adrenal glands and thyroid gland pump out more of their hormones to try to get more fuel to your cells. But while this will give you a bit of energy, it is not the kind of energy that feels good. It's a "fight-or-flight" kind of energy that feels stressful and depletes your body even more.

Your nerve cells and brain cells have no way to make energy besides using oxygen, and they suffer the most. You start to think more slowly, even to the point of being unable to follow normal conversation.

You have slowed reaction time and it might be difficult to drive. You start to do everything in slow motion, and take a long time to "think about it" before you can do the next thing.

Using oxygen better will help you in your everyday life to stay sharp, strong and agile.

But there's more to the story. And if you're like me and you travel at all, you're going to want to know this.

Now, I live in Florida and it's about as close to sea level as you get. Not a lot of altitude unless you're climbing to the top of a palm tree.

Altitude sickness is a condition that usually comes at the worst time: while on vacation. Skiing, hiking, or any other activity in higher altitudes can cause dizziness, headache, nausea and cough.

If this happens to you when you travel, you might just be experiencing mild altitude sickness.

So anywhere I go I benefit from a little extra help. Part of that I get by doing my P.A.C.E. workouts. I've made it a point to keep my lungs young. P.A.C.E. helps me have the lung capacity of a 25-year-old, and I turned 56 last month.

But I also have a couple of secrets I'm going to share with you that can help you to use oxygen better so you can

live your life the way you want to, with no limitations.

Better Performance, More Energy

The first of these oxygenation powerhouses is something I first used when I climbed in the Andes Mountains in Peru, in an area the locals called *Puna*, over 10,000 feet up.

It's a native root that helped me get used to the thin mountain air.

I was the only one in our party who didn't get what the locals call *soroche*, or altitude sickness.

I used it again when I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa, and I was the only one on that expedition who didn't get altitude sickness.

The root I used is called **maca**, and it turns out that not only does the plant it comes from adapt to high altitude, but when you eat it, the root passes that ability on to you.

It does more than just help you adjust to altitude, though. Peruvian maca has the remarkable property of improving oxygen transport in your body. This increases endurance, energy levels, and mental clarity.

Part of the reason maca is so effective at improving the way you use oxygen is its malic acid. It helps cells use sugar for fuel when oxygen levels are low.

Living high up in the Andes is tough, and oxygen is scarce. At 14,000 feet, your oxygen levels are going to be low. Maca is also rich in iron, which you need to make blood and facilitate oxygen transport.

But even if you're not climbing up into high altitude, you can benefit from maca during other activities.

Maca would be great to use before you go skiing. Or you can use it before you work out.

Ancient Peruvians fed maca to their armies to improve endurance and stamina.

Or how about if you go snorkeling? If you take maca, you can go down deeper in the water because your body is



Maca Root

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going to get better oxygenation.

Even if you're just going on vacation with the kids, maca will help you keep up.

Athletes are starting to use maca. It helps you not only use oxygen better to improve performance, but it helps you produce stable energy for long periods of time, instead of just a temporary lift like you get from caffeine.

In one study, they gave trained male cyclists a 40-km time trial before and after 14 days of supplementation with maca. The cyclists were able to significantly improve on their initial time after taking maca.¹

I found that the locals in Peru eat the root as food now. They bake it and roast it... it's considered a treat.

But during the height of the Incan empire, maca was considered so powerful it was reserved exclusively for royalty. In fact, Incans would often pay their royals in maca.

When the Spanish colonized the Andes, their livestock was not doing very well until the locals suggested feeding the animals maca. The results were so dramatic that the Conquistadors gave it to their horses.²

Maca seems to have been forgotten by the rest of the world since then, even though the locals still grow it and use it to survive up there in the mountains where most people wouldn't stand a chance.

Peruvian medical doctors – some of whom I met while I was there – say that maca can also regulate your hormones. This helps you recover from tired glands that try to produce energy in the absence of enough oxygen – critical for your health, energy and stamina.

And you can now get raw, organic maca root at specialty stores and on the web. They also sell maca powder extract. Be sure to get Peruvian maca, grown in high altitudes in the Andes Mountains, or it will not have the oxygen-facilitating properties the root develops when it grows in its native environment.

You can add the dried and crushed maca powder to rum or other alcoholic drinks to give them a bit of a butterscotch flavor.

My favorite way to use maca extract is in a homemade fruit smoothie. Some frozen bananas, strawberries, ice,



Here I am in a field of maca high in the Andes in Peru. Peruvian maca can only grow between 11,000 and 14,000 feet, and most of the harvest is sun- and wind-dried for up to two months, and stored for later use.

a little orange juice and some maca powder makes an incredible morning drink.

Maca supplements are also available as liquid extracts. You can mix them into your favorite drink, or put the drops directly on your tongue.

To supplement with maca extract in capsule form, I recommend up to 500 mg per day.

Ancient Remedies are Better than Drugs

Studies show that about 25% of travelers who venture from sea level to only 5,000 feet or more – not even as high as Denver, Colorado – will experience some form of altitude sickness. At elevations above 9,000 feet, over 50% of people will become ill.

As you go up in altitude, the atmosphere contains less and less oxygen. If you have lots of time and climb slowly, the decreased oxygen probably won't affect you because your body has the time to adjust.

However, most people don't have the benefit of unlimited time. So your body could become deprived of oxygen if you go up too quickly.

Another problem is that at higher elevations, fluid moves out of the blood and into body tissues to counteract the lower oxygen content of the air. As the blood thickens, the lack of water in the body interferes with efficient distribution of nutrients and oxygen and impedes the

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elimination of toxic wastes.

The result is the headache, fatigue and malaise, as well as extreme thirst.

Many travelers take Diamox prior to mountaineering. Diamox causes some people to feel nauseated and can cause flushing, rashes, thirst or drowsiness. Another drug, dexamethasone, has also been used to prevent AMS, but the results have been mixed, and its side effects include ulcers, cataracts and depression.³

A better solution is an herb, *Ginkgo biloba*. It's the best treatment I know of for altitude sickness.

You've probably heard of ginkgo for its use in improving memory. It's a tree used by the Chinese for thousands of years. Ginkgo improves blood circulation and allows the brain to tolerate low oxygen levels. Two major studies show that Ginkgo has powerful affects for treating low oxygen.

The Pike's Peak study involved 40 men who previously had experienced AMS. The men were taken rapidly from 4,957 feet to 14,110 feet. Five days earlier, half of the men took a placebo and the other half took ginkgo. Those who took ginkgo had half the incidence of AMS symptoms. People who took ginkgo and still experienced AMS had far milder symptoms.⁴

Another study done in Hawaii in 2002 was the first to show that one day of pretreatment with ginkgo significantly reduced the severity of altitude sickness prior to a rapid ascent from sea level.

This study was double blind, randomized, and placebo-controlled... the gold standard in medicine. 26 people who lived at sea level like I do took ginkgo or a placebo 24 hours before ascending Mauna Kea, in Hawaii. They were taken to the summit (13,700 feet) in 3 hours. Those taking ginkgo

had significantly less intense symptoms than those taking the placebo.⁵

I recommend ginkgo supplements to improve oxygenation. If you're going into higher altitude, take a bigger dose – 325 to 500 mg of ginkgo for five days before.

For regular use, take 60 mg a day for five days on and two days off.

You can get *Ginkgo biloba* in extract form at your local pharmacy, health food store, and on the Internet. But be sure to look at the label. Make certain it contains a standardized amount of ginkgo's active ingredients, flavone glycosides and terpene lactones. There should be at least 24% flavone glycosides and 6% terpene lactones.

I don't recommend ginkgo for long-term memory boosting in healthy people. And remember, one of ginkgo's mechanisms of action is blood thinning. If your doctor has prescribed a blood thinner talk to him before taking ginkgo. Better yet, question him on why you are taking harsh drugs when there are natural alternatives.



Ginkgo Biloba

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