



# The Younger You

Monthly newsletter about Wellness, Science, and a Physician-led revolution



**Andrew Clary, DO**

Dr. Clary has always had special interest in coaching, educating, and speaking about both nutrition and lifestyle. He has a professional interest and training in both spine care and nutrition (receiving his Bachelor of Science in Applied Nutrition before medical school) and continues a lifelong journey of learning. He is always looking for ways to inspire, grow, and benefit others with even small daily changes.



**Anthony Sterk, PA-C**

Anthony Sterk is a hardworking, meticulous, and dedicated provider. He is Physician Assistant and has been working in Orthopedic Spine specialty the past 4 years. He has a drive to continue learning new and innovative ways to help patients achieve their goals. His passions include running, hiking outdoors, and spending time with his family.

## DIET

It's understood beans cause some gastrointestinal changes. It's not just gas we're talking about, but the fermentation that takes place. Yes, beer lovers, the process that turns sugar into alcohol similarly happens in your gut when eating more beans. It's widely accepted that dense areas of centenarians (research done in "Blue Zone" regions of those living to be 100+ years old) eat a lot of beans. Harvard-run studies argue beans decrease risks for cancer and stave off diabetes because you're full for longer. Basically, when you eat beans regularly (pinto, kidney, black, doesn't matter) your gut biota changes (the good bugs in your gut that work for you to process food and actually even have immune properties. The more you eat, the less gas you produce as the gut changes. In future articles we will delve into TMAO, a byproduct in the gut of those who eat meat and may have negative health consequences. Bean-heavy and vegetarian-focused diets produce basically zero of this cardiac toxin.

## LIFESTYLE

Easy for a newsletter or magazine to say, but sleep is VERY important. It's estimated that US employees cost the national workforce 100 billion dollars in lost revenue due to underproduction due to sleeping less than 6-7 hours per night. Interestingly, aside from decreasing "blue light" (triggering rays emitted from TV, tablet, and phone screens), it should help to get regular exercise outside of work (an hour per day of moderate exertion) and cut out caffeine as much as possible for the entire day (did I hear a gasp?) Even alcohol, a sedative, taken long term before bed decreases the overall quality of sleep (decreases time in REM.) More on this in future newsletters.

## this issue

MAR 2020

Preventative Care, Memory, Lifestyle, Diet, Favorite Quotes, Regenerative Medicine

## PREVENTATIVE CARE

Most people are aware that injuries and strenuous activities can lead to spine injuries. However, there are studies that indicate medical comorbidities can also lead to spine degradation, particularly disc degeneration. Multiple studies demonstrate that narrowing of the blood vessels can lead to disc degeneration. The discs naturally receive less blood flow on a normal physiologic basis. The most common culprit of disc degeneration is high cholesterol, as this can ultimately lead to artery plaque formation (atherosclerosis) and narrowing of the arteries. This is well demonstrated in the low back, and in theory this translates throughout the remainder of the spine. If cholesterol is too high, simple diet changes or exercise can improve these numbers. However some high cholesterol is genetic and medications need to be used. One simple preventative action that you can take today is to have your annual physical with your primary physician to review cholesterol levels.

- Anthony



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## Favorite Quotes and Thoughts on Life

A lot of my patients know this, but I'm a big nonfiction reader. I read this great quote from Wiston Churchill from a biography of his that inspired me to live a life that's more full and satisfying: Georges Clemenceau (French Prime Minister 1914) "A life of storm, from beginning to end, fighting all the way, never a pause, never a truce, never a rest." How flattering is that description? Truly, there's something to exploring your interests and doing so with an intensity and fervor that you don't look back and wonder "what if". Churchill himself was fascinating in that he was in politics for 60+ years and easily could have fallen into obscurity but never felt satisfied with his worldly contributions while he felt sharp and able.

## REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

We will have future references on spine usages and successes, but I wanted to highlight that regenerative therapies are often useful for painful knee osteoarthritis. Both platelet rich plasma (PRP) and bone marrow aspirate concentrate (BMAC) are discussed as potential options in most patients who do not want to seek a knee replacement, often due to a variety of reasons. There are some who have such severe knee arthritis that even stem cell won't be worth a consideration (lateral compartment grade 4 OA) but with tailored treatments there may be creative options.

We focus on the problem areas and treat those. Arthritis is not exactly the same in every case, so there is a need to be specific to the presenting ailment. It's not uncommon for us to focus treatment on the back of the kneecap (patella), intracapsular (inside of the knee joint), and medial or lateral meniscus in the same person to get relief. I believe this approach makes us in large part successful. More to come in future newsletters.

## MEMORY

Dementia is a scary diagnosis. Once diagnosed, the average life expectancy is only about four years (there is wide variability.) Memory loss, behavioral changes, and even appetite can be affected. Sorry to say, but research shows that Sudoku and crossword puzzles do NOT decrease the risk for dementia.

You know what has been shown to help? The sauna. Yes, no joke. A study a few years ago out of Finland says the more sauna usage per week (I took away sessions as short as 20 minutes, 4+ days per week) actually DIRECTLY correlates with decreasing risk for dementia over time. You need to check with your doctor before doing this, but it may be something to consider.

Also, I argue that having conversations and getting out and interacting with people is a lot more taxing on the brain to keep appropriate language, word finding, and behavior. Research has shown that having a strong social circle even starting in your 50s or 60s decreases dementia risk.