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THE CATCH-ALL CURE OR JUST JUICE?

CELERY JUICE, THE NEWEST FAD

Every couple years, a new "healthy" food or drink makes its rounds through celebrity social media accounts. Some of them are okay and actually have health benefits, but others are outright dangerous. Over the past few years, it appears that celery juice is one of the latest health fads purported to help with weight loss, skin health, digestive issues, and more. Some claims even border on the miraculous. So, how many of them are true?

Celery juice is what the name suggests: celery stalks that are juiced into a drinkable liquid. Proponents of the trend suggest drinking 16 ounces every day to break down fat in the liver. Celery is very nutritious and contains flavonoids, which aid against inflammation, and nitrates, which promote heart health. Celery is also

relatively low in calories (85 calories per 16 ounces of juice), which means that if you drink it in place of another beverage, like soda or a sugary coffee drink, it could aid in weight loss.

Some downsides to celery juice, however, are the loss of fiber and the high amounts of sodium. Celery stalks are rich in fiber, and juicing them removes this nutrient. A 16-ounce portion of celery juice also contains around 400mg of sodium, which is roughly 17% of the recommended daily amount. If you already consume sodium excessively, like many Americans, drinking celery juice might not be good for you.

In summation, drinking celery juice certainly isn't dangerous and could even have some positive effects



on your health, but it's far from a miracle cure. It should also be noted that none of the claims made by the self-proclaimed celery juice creator, Anthony William, have any basis in science. William, who describes himself as a "medical medium," holds no degree related to health care.

The bottom line with celery juice, much like any purported single-food solution to all that ails a person, is that even if it's healthy for you, the only ways to a truly healthier lifestyle are through a better overall diet and plenty of exercise. No one should expect celery juice to substitute for that.



SNORING LIKE A MAMA BEAR DURING PREGNANCY?

IT'S TIME TO SEE THE DENTIST!



Hey there, readers! Are you ready for pregnancy and dentistry, part two? Last month, we talked about the relationship between gum disease and delivery complications. This month I want to dive even deeper and talk about airway issues in pregnant women.

As you may know from past newsletters, my team and I have a special focus in helping people with sleep apnea and other airway problems. Even for someone who isn't pregnant, airway issues can do a lot of harm because they decrease the flow of oxygen to the brain. This can lower your immune system, make it harder to sleep, and leave you feeling exhausted in the morning. In addition, it increases the risk of having a cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and even Alzheimer's.

In fact, studies show that people with untreated airway issues die prematurely (an average of 8-10 years earlier than their counterparts without airway issues). Because of the immense risk, I have incorporated this field of medicine and dentistry into my practice and apply it to the care of all patients. Unfortunately, not many people are aware of this issue, and even health care providers in this field are lacking. For example, as of this writing, I am the only dentist who is board-certified in dental sleep medicine in Somerset County. I know that there are many people who

require help, and this needs to change. I am hoping that bringing awareness to the public will help drive this change and increase the number of available, qualified clinicians. For pregnant women, the risks associated with sleep apnea are doubled because anything that hurts a pregnant mom also hurts her baby! Despite that, airway issues in pregnant women often go untreated.

Why is that? Well, the main reason is that snoring is seen as a normal thing that pops up late in pregnancy. People often dismiss it as a simple side effect of a woman's belly or sleeping position, but actually it's a dangerous indicator that her airway is partially or fully blocked. That's a big red flag, because it means she won't get the high-quality rest or healthy amount of oxygen she needs. These are two things pregnant women already struggle with because having a big belly makes it tough to sleep, but airway issues make them much more concerning.

The crux of the matter is this: If you don't have enough oxygen for yourself, how are you going to grow a tiny human? The answer is that you can't, or at least you can't do it as well. When a pregnant woman can't breathe properly, the lack of oxygen hinders the growth and development of her baby. Studies have linked airway issues in pregnant mothers as an increased risk factor to ADHD and autism as well as premature labor and low birth weight.

Airway issues have also been found to increase risk of a pregnancy complication called preeclampsia. One of the key characteristics of preeclampsia is high blood pressure, which is one of the body's responses to a lack of oxygen. When there isn't enough oxygen getting to a pregnant woman's brain, her body will respond by increasing her blood pressure to boost circulation. Preeclampsia is painful, and it can have dire consequences for both moms and babies. In severe cases, it can cause seizures, brain injuries, permanent organ damage in pregnant women and trigger delivery prematurely.

All of these possibilities are really scary, but luckily, there's a quick and easy way to resolve most airway issues. If the red flag of snoring pops up, all you need to do is take a trip to the dentist! My team and I are experts at opening up the airway, and we can usually do it with the combination of positional therapy and an oral appliance. This is the same process we'd go through to treat anyone for airway issues, but for pregnant moms, we move at lightning speed. Every night untreated matters, so we can actually send the mom home with an immediate custom-modified temporary appliance the day of the appointment. This gives her, her partner, and us peace of mind!

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WHY PHYSICAL THERAPY SHOULD BE YOUR FIRST RESORT WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE A MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURY

For most people, October is all about pumpkin spice, apple cider, candy, and Halloween costumes. However, October is also a noteworthy month for physical therapists because it's National Physical Therapy Month, a time of year that celebrates and raises awareness about the benefits of physical therapy. In a world where everyone is quick to take a pill or schedule a surgery to mask their symptoms, National Physical Therapy Month is a great time to highlight why PT is one of the best methods of injury recovery.

Almost any way you slice it, physical therapy is an incredibly cost-effective way to recover from a musculoskeletal injury. One study, commissioned by the Alliance for Physical Therapy Quality and Innovation (APTQI), found that patients who utilized physical therapy as their first means of lower back pain recovery saved nearly \$1,000 when compared to the group who used injections as their first means of recovery. Those savings jumped to over \$12,000 when compared to the average cost of turning to surgery as a first resort.

That's not just the case for patients with lower back pain, however. According to another study done by ATI Physical Therapy, My Health First Network, Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS), and Greenville Health System (GHS), 70% of patients that opted to use physical therapy as a means for spine,



shoulder, and knee pain didn't need any additional imaging, prescription medication, or visits to their physician. The sooner you start physical therapy, the sooner you recover and the less you have to spend on health care costs.

While there are still some cases where surgery and prescription medications are necessary for healing musculoskeletal injuries, more often than not, going to physical therapy first can help you heal faster and save money in the long run. So, if you're dealing with chronic pain and don't know how to stop it, connect with us today!

DOES VITAMIN D HELP OUR BONES AND OUR MUSCLES? A PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN BENEFIT OF VITAMIN D

As the weather cools and the days get shorter, we can't rely as much on the sun for our daily dose of vitamin D. The primary function of vitamin D is regulating the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. These nutrients are necessary for strengthening our bones and teeth, which becomes increasingly important as we age and our bones naturally become more brittle. While these benefits of vitamin D are well documented, did you know that getting your daily dose of vitamin D can also contribute to healthier muscles?

A few years ago, researchers published a study that seemed to show that vitamin D could potentially help people gain muscle mass. While the research team said their results weren't conclusive, their findings were certainly interesting.



Vitamin D enters the body in an inactive form. It doesn't become active until it comes in contact with the right enzymes in either the liver or the kidneys. To learn more about what factors affect this vitamin's rate of absorption and activation in the body, researchers observed the levels of inactive vitamin D in 116 women ages 20-74. What they found was that women with higher muscle mass had lower levels of inactive vitamin D, while women with lower muscle mass had higher levels of inactive vitamin D.

The conclusion researchers drew was that active vitamin D might help optimize muscle strength. While that conclusion is not ironclad, vitamin D's other well-known benefits still make it worth getting your daily dose. It can aid weight loss, enhance mood, support cardiovascular health, boost the immune system, and strengthen bones, among many other benefits. So, its potential muscle-boosting properties are just another reason to get more vitamin D.

To get more of this important vitamin in your diet, try adding salmon, mushrooms, and even canned tuna to your menu. Also, as winter approaches, it might be time to start taking a vitamin D supplement. Whether you're 20 or 74 years old, it's never too late to find ways to strengthen your muscles.

HOW TO STOP PROCRASTINATING AT BEDTIME AND GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Though there are very real medical conditions, such as insomnia and sleep apnea, that deprive people of sleep, the reason most of us probably don't get enough sleep is simply because we put off our bedtime. Instead of getting into bed, we opt to check off another item on our to-do list or watch another episode of our favorite show. This is sometimes called "bedtime procrastination." We all know a good night's sleep is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, so how can we stop putting it off?

A good place to start is by keeping track of your day. The human mind isn't meant to internalize checklists and task reminders, so use your phone or journal as a scheduling assistant. However you decide to keep track, make sure to give yourself a set amount of time to accomplish your tasks, like letting yourself watch TV for just one hour or blocking out three hours to help your kids with their homework. It might even help to set alarms on your watch or on



your phone to let you know when your time is up on any of your activities.

Another big part is creating an environment that is conducive to a good night's sleep, and that starts with turning your electronic devices off well before you get under the covers. Smartphone screens, computer screens, and even some energy-efficient lightbulbs emit blue light, which reduces the production of melatonin, the hormone that tells your body it's time to go to bed. Instead of looking at your phone, try reading a book before going

to sleep. If your screens prove to be too big of a draw for you when bedtime comes, it might be a good idea to move your devices to another room so they're out of sight and out of mind.

Finally, don't get discouraged if you don't start getting better sleep right away. Setting up good bedtime routines takes time. But if you stick with it — and maybe have someone else in your household hold you accountable to your commitments — you'll start to get better sleep and have more energy to take on the day in no time.

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If you're currently pregnant and worried you might not be getting enough oxygen, give our office a call today. I can screen you for airway issues and let you know how likely it is that you might be at risk. We work with sleep physicians and your obstetrician to ensure that you are getting the proper care. And if you're reading this and you *aren't* pregnant, please pass this newsletter along to someone who is — you just might help change the trajectory of a child's life!

To your great smiles and better health,

Dr. Michelle Weddle



CLASSIC PUMPKIN SOUP

Inspired by MinimalistBaker.com

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 shallots, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 1/4 cups pumpkin purée (homemade or canned)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup canned light coconut milk
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, sauté olive oil, shallots, and garlic for 2-3 minutes.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and bring to a simmer.
3. Transfer the soup to a blender and purée. Pour the blended soup back into the pan.
4. Cook over medium-low heat for 5-10 minutes. Taste and add additional seasoning as desired, then serve!