

The Nutrition Reporter™

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EXTRA

The independent newsletter that reports vitamin, mineral, and food therapies

A Review of Recent Health Books

This August supplement to *The Nutrition Reporter*™ focuses on recently published nutrition and health books. To order any of these books, follow the link to Amazon at www.feedyourgenesright.com.

Adventures in Psychiatry, by Abram Hoffer, MD, PhD (KOS Publishing, 2005, \$25) This book is the scientific memoir of Dr. Abram Hoffer, one of the pioneers in nutritional therapy for mental illness. I have known Dr. Hoffer for 30 years and have always been impressed by his insights, clarity of thought, and how he has followed his instincts – rather than selling out to Big Pharma the way so many conventional physicians and psychiatrists have. His memoir tracks his curiosity, his discoveries, and the often negative responses from medical orthodoxy. Hoffer and his colleagues were the first to publish a double-blind clinical trial in the field of psychiatry, which happened to prove that high-dose vitamins B3 and C helps schizophrenics recover. The book relates what really is an adventure, and it is an important historical document as well. Especially interesting are Dr. Hoffer's recollections about the many people he knew, including Aldous Huxley (author of *Brave New World*) and Bill Wilson (founder of Alcoholics Anonymous). I encourage everyone to read this fine book.

Healing Night: The Science and Spirit of Sleeping, Dreaming, and Awakening, by Rubin R. Naiman, PhD (Syren Book Co., 2006, \$14.95) Dr. Naiman is a sleep and dream specialist at the University of Arizona, and this book is an eloquent exploration of our common "psychospiritual night blindness." Sleeping, dreaming, and awakening is more than simply "crashing" after a hard and tiring day. With an almost poetic style in his prose, Naiman delves into what happens when we sleep and dream, following both scientific and spiritual threads of thought. It is about, as he writes, "restoring a sense of sacredness to our nights and night consciousness." The book honors sleep as part of our natural rhythm of consciousness. Just as many psychologists have suggested that we be more "mindful" in our lives, Naiman suggests that we develop greater "night-

mindedness." This is a book that feeds the soul.

Overcoming Sleep Disorders Naturally, by Laurel Vukovic, MSW (Basic Health Publications, 2005, \$14.95) Between working long hours, drinking too much coffee, and dealing with excessive stress, millions of people do not get adequate restful sleep. Often, they opt for synthetic solutions, such as sleeping pills that can be addictive or induce bizarre behavior (such as waking in the middle of the night to gorge on food). I regard Laurel Vukovic as one of the foremost herbalists in the United States, and in this book she provides an overview of sleep problems with specific advice on lifestyle, dietary, and nutritional supplements to improve quality sleep.

Let's Eat Out! Your Passport to Living Gluten and Allergy Free, by Kim Koeller and Robert La France (R&R Publishing, 2005, \$24.95) Food allergies and sensitivities are common. For example, gluten sensitivity in the form of celiac disease affects approximately one in 100 people, and less severe forms of gluten sensitivity may affect half of all Americans. Gluten (a protein in wheat, rye, and barley) is omnipresent in processed foods, as are dairy and sugars. This book is really a defensive guide that identifies hundreds of often unexpected sources of food allergens in restaurant meals. It focuses on 10 common food allergens, including corn, dairy, eggs, fish, gluten, peanuts, shellfish, soy, tree nuts, and wheat. The authors have also produced three pocket-size books (\$6.95 each) on American and Mexican foods, French and Italian, and Asian foods. A fourth pocket-size book is a multi-lingual phrase book related to food and allergies. The large book is practically an encyclopedic reference; the pocket-size ones are easily slipped into your pocket when you go out to dinner or travel overseas. You'll find more info at www.rnrpublishing.com

Treating and Beating Anxiety and Depression with Orthomolecular Medicine, by Rodger H. Murphree, DC (Harrison and Hampton, 2005, \$14.95) Anxiety and depression have become modern-day plagues. Poor eating habits fail to provide the

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nutritional building blocks of our neurotransmitters. Meanwhile, prescription drugs suppress symptoms and do not correct the underlying causes of anxiety and depression – and they commonly have disastrous side effects, including erectile dysfunction and suicide. Dr. Murphree has written an easy-to-understand and easy-to-apply handbook for using supplements to correct these two common mood disorders.

7-Syndrome Healing: Supplement Essentials for the Mind and Body, by Marcia Zimmerman and Jayson Kroner (Nutrition Solution Pubs, 2006, \$16.95)

This book focuses on seven common sources of illness: stress, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, poor immune function, malabsorption, hormone imbalances, and bone and joint disorders. It is an excellent discussion of some of the most common illnesses people face, and it provides great information about the supplements useful in correcting these health problems. While I strongly favor the use of nutritional supplements in prevention, treatment, and self-treatment, this book is weakened by two serious omissions: one is not including cancer among the syndromes, and the other is giving eating habits limited attention. Still, the book provides a wealth of information if you suffer from or are at risk of any one of the seven syndromes. In many ways, it is seven books in one, with superb advice for using supplements.

Nutritional Genomics, by Jim Kaput, PhD, and Raymond Rodriguez, PhD (Wiley, 2006, \$89.95) This book consists of papers and lectures presented at a nutritional genomics symposium held at the University of California, Davis, in 2004. Having attended this conference and also written a consumer book on the subject (*Feed Your Genes Right*), I was pleased to see the presentations expanded upon in this book. *Nutritional Genomics* contains a wealth of information about the rapidly advancing knowledge of how nutrition and genes interact. However, it is a scientific book – intended for researchers and people who are technically minded.

How to Live Longer and Feel Better, by Linus Pauling, PhD (Oregon State University Press, 1986, 2006, \$19.95) Some books are classics – words and ideas that we continue to marvel over years after they were written and published. This is true of so many of the writings and insights of two-time Nobel laureate Linus Pauling. His 1968 paper on orthomolecular medicine defines the rationale behind vitamin supplementation (a free copy of the article is at www.orthomed.org). Similarly, Pauling's *How to Live Longer and Feel Better* is one of those eternal books. It was originally published in 1986, and this

20th anniversary edition has been published through the auspices of the Linus Pauling Institute, now located at Oregon State University. The book includes a new introduction, as well as annotations that bring much of what Pauling originally wrote up to date. But all else remains the same, including Pauling's clear prose and his discussion of the nutritional treatment of many diseases. At the end of the book, he provides this advice in capital letters: "Take the optimum supplementary amount of each of the essential vitamins every day."

A-Z Guide to Drug-Herb-Vitamin Interactions, second edition, edited by Alan R. Gaby, MD. (Three Rivers Press/Healthnotes, 2006, \$22.95) In recent years, there has been a flurry of books and medical journal articles on drug, herb, and vitamin interactions. Often, these books and articles capitalize on and promote unnecessary fears about how vitamin and herbal supplements might alter the effects of medications. The truth is that vitamin absorption and utilization almost always suffer far more from this clash than do drugs. The reason is that drugs alter normal biochemical pathways, and drug makers do not always understand how their products work. As one example, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), such as Prozac, were long thought to simply maintain higher brain levels of serotonin. Recent research, however, has found that these drugs stimulate the production of brain cells (with potentially good and bad consequences). Another truth is that everything we consume interacts – grapefruit will amplify the effects of some drugs, St. John's wort will decrease drug activity, and garlic is a mild anti-coagulant. In this well-organized *A-Z Guide*, Dr. Alan Gaby provides a calm, comprehensive description of interactions, organized first by drug and then by herb and vitamin. This is a superb reference for both consumers and physicians. It is also worthwhile skimming, if for no other reason than to appreciate the dangers of common over-the-counter and prescription drugs.

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