HSI HEALTH SCIENCES INSTITUTE

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The key to good health is hiding in your bone marrow:

Wake up your stem cells without stirring up controversy

by Alicia Potee

These unsung heroes of the human body have finally found their place in the sun. Unfortunately, the magnifying glass accompanying the research on stem cells has put them in the hot seat, as well. And this seat's not just hot—it's on fire. These days, even the most casual mention can get you into trouble.

But unless you're living in a plastic bubble, you'd better get used to it. Like it or not, this particular controversy is here to stay.

Perhaps you're wondering why I would even bother to bring up one of the sorest subjects in the U.S. these days. Am I trying to rub salt in the country's collective wounds?

Allow me to assuage your fears. Here at HSI, we're all about healing. So when a bottle of StemEnhance™ landed on my desk, you'd better believe I took notice. According to the formulators of this unique product—the very first of its kind to debut on the alternative health market, under a new category dubbed "stem cell enhancers"—the key to good health has been hiding in our bone marrow all along.

Packing the punch of a million microscopic healers into one convenient capsule

StemEnhance actually evolved from another supplement. You might recall the August 2005 *Members Alert*, when we told you about Aphanizomenon flos-aquae (AFA)—the aquatic superfood from Klamath Lake that took nutritive healing to another level. It's chock full of vitamins and minerals (nearly 64) and omega-3 fatty acids (excellent aids in reducing inflammation), and it even contains a molecule (called phenylethylamine, or PEA) that's known to elevate the mood, increase alertness, and alleviate depression.

In that article, we also told you about some of the studies suggesting that two of the blue-green algae's active compounds might be responsible for boosting the circulation of your own stem cells. If you ask Christian Drapeau, a scientist with years of AFA research under his belt, he'll tell you that the connection between stem cell circulation and a turn for the better in health is no coincidence. According to Drapeau, AFA's compounds have been tapping into what he believes is the human body's innate ability to heal itself.

So he was hardly shocked by the testimony that continued to pour in—reports ranging anywhere from the recovery of old injuries and the easing of painful inflammation to the reduction of symptoms associated with the most dreaded neurodegenerative diseases. Certain that they had hit something big, Drapeau and his colleague, Dr. Gitte Jensen, were bound and determined to isolate the

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HSI Health Sciences Institute

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StemEnhance™

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two compounds credited with this effect, packing the punch of a million regenerative chameleon-like characters—your very own stem cells—into one convenient capsule.

I wondered how a higher circulation of adult stem cells would result in healing of such biblical proportions. It sounded like a serious stretch to me. Sure, adult stem cells from bone marrow are used in therapies today for post-chemotherapy and radiation cancer patients. Stem cells are harvested from the patient's marrow before the damaging high-dose treatments, and re-injected later to repair a ravaged immune system. Stem cell transplants are also used in order to replace the defunct blood cells of patients with leukemia, lymphoma, and various other genetic diseases.

Whatever the example, the current use of adult stem cells is a complicated and invasive process, not accessible to the average Joe, and reserved—so far, at least—for treating only the most serious blood disorders. But are the possibilities really endless?

Drapeau believes that he and his colleague have switched on our own stem cells' superpowers with StemEnhance. And what's more, he claims that it can help everyone with healthy marrow—no matter what his or her condition.

Send your stem cells to work in as little as one hour

According to Drapeau, adult stem cells from bone marrow are much more capable than most scientists would confidently claim today. Embryonic stem cells are widely considered the more useful variety, due to their ability to morph into nearly every type of tissue in the entire body. The National Institutes of Health maintain that, while studies are still underway, adult stem cells able to give rise to all cell and tissue types have not yet been found. But Drapeau insists that they absolutely *can* serve this purpose, based on tidbits of the latest research that look remarkably promising, if still incomplete. A rebellious stance, for sure—but one worth considering.

Patented in November 2004, StemEnhance is a botanical extract of Aphanizomenon flos-aquae that, as mentioned earlier, isolates two of the algae's most essential compounds—L-Selectin ligand and polysaccharide—to make up a high-molecular-weight fraction of AFA. What that means in lay terms is this: The beneficial effects that AFA consumption has on your stem cell circulation can now be found in the form of a supplement that cuts directly to the chase. Not only does it promote your stem cells' more rapid release from the bone marrow, but it also increases their homing mechanism—that is, their ability to get to the damaged tissues that need them the most.

Isolated from its algae origins in StemEnhance, the L-Selectin ligand blocks the receptors on your stem cells that keep them anchored in your bone marrow, allowing them to enter circulation. While the exact function of the polysaccharide is unknown, it forms what Drapeau refers to as a synergy with the ligand. According to Drapeau's studies, consumption of the two components together results in approximately a 27 percent increase in stem cell circulation within an hour.[1] And that's about as soon as

you might start seeing results, because at that point, the stem cells have cleared from the blood and have supposedly made their way to their final destinations, where they take up the task of repairing your body.

While there's no solid evidence to back the conclusion that the stem cells have actually gone to work at damaged tissue sites, Drapeau believes that this is the case, based on the results of his studies on natural killer cells in response to AFA consumption. In one preliminary experiment, he worked with a breast cancer patient who had just had her brachial lymph nodes removed following a mastectomy. In general, he told me, lymphatic fluid (which is composed of red and white blood cells and a fat-and protein-based digestive substance called chyle) is very hard to study. But when there is a drain to collect fluid from swelling in this area, as after an operation, you have access to these fluids that you otherwise wouldn't.

This gave Drapeau something to go on. When natural killer cells have entered your tissues to fight a viral infection, they eventually return to your blood by way of the lymphatic fluid. If, after he fed the patient some AFA, the number of natural killer cells circulating in her blood spiked and quickly cleared, he'd know that they had visited her tissues if they showed up in her drain, into which the lymphatic fluid would empty. The high number of natural killer cells that Drapeau found in the patient's drained fluid—many more than there were before she consumed the algae, he tells me—was in keeping with his theory. Based on this one instance, Drapeau believes that the compounds in StemEnhance send our stem cells—the behavior of which seems to have mimicked natural killer cells so far—to work in the tissues as well.

New answers to an ancient problem

It's hard to say what's really happening here. Maybe Drapeau and Jensen's hunch was correct—if not entirely, at least partially. I'm reminded of a recent article I read in *The New York Times*' health pages, highlighting the role of stem cell research in regenerative therapy.[2] While many hail this technology as the hope of the future and others revile it as repugnant to the laws of both nature and ethics, there remains a small contingent that transcends the argument in favor of a much more radical theory. And this one's as old as time itself: evolution.

Consider how readily the liver repairs itself. After thousands of years of attack, whether from poisonous plants and rotten berries when we were still a hunting and gathering species or from the airborne toxins, preservatives, and pesticides of the 21st century, this organ has mastered the art of regeneration like no other in our body. We know that it can replace up to 2/3 of its own mass within two weeks, or grow and shrink to any size in order to meet its needs. Why shouldn't every organ follow this one's example? Could it be that the rest of our body has simply lost its touch?

After all, the very animals with which we share at least one identifiably regenerative gene—salamanders and zebra fish, to name a couple—are capable of replacing everything from severed limbs and spinal cords to damaged retinas and hearts. But it's not because a bunch of stem cells rush like an army to the rescue. On the contrary, the cells that are already in place revert back to their most primitive state, forming what is called a blastema, in order to reenact the birth of the missing or damaged piece. In short, the cells aren't taking orders from the surroundings that remain. As if through some bizarre bodily will to power, they *create* themselves—and the genesis of their new surroundings follows. Could it be that somewhere hidden deep within us remains the memory of this power, begging to be unleashed?

The subject polarizes scientists on every possible level, and until more is known the research will carry on and the conversation—and controversy—will continue. While most doctors and research scientists swear by the limitations of adult stem cells, so much remains in the dark. The only thing we really know is that we don't know. And while the science behind the formulators' claims might raise an eyebrow, who's to say they aren't true? I don't know if StemEnhance operates the way Drapeau says, or in some other, as yet, unknown way. But I'd ask if it really matters. Many of history's greatest breakthroughs had their roots in shockingly radical hypotheses. Besides, at the end of the day, actions always speak louder than words.

So all of this begs one important question: Does StemEnhance actually work? Well, it would appear that the answer to this question largely depends on who's volunteering it.

2 years of excruciating pain erased in 5 days

Doing my best to keep an open mind, I gave Celia Monilaws

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StemEnhance™

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of Calgary, Alberta a call. And let me tell you, she was more than happy to talk with me.

Her story begins as many do —from the bottom of a steady and heartbreaking decline. At the age of 52, Celia had suffered from fibromyalgia for 15 years and osteoarthritis for eight. A slow surrender of her favorite activities left her 150 pounds overweight. Both of her hips eventually gave out. She had been living in excruciating pain for nearly two years, unable to walk without two (yes, *two*) canes and otherwise confined to her couch. But she continued to go to work each day, adamantly steering clear of painkillers—except for once, she confessed, when she took some ibuprofen at the end of one of her worst days. She was on the waiting list for a hip replacement, each day inching closer to quitting her job.

After a close friend of hers who also happens to be a naturopath gave her StemEnhance, she told me, her life was completely changed. Within five days, like magic, she rose from bed one morning and stood to her feet—no canes, nothing. She's been walking—without even so much as a limp—ever since. For now, the hip replacement is looking like it won't even be necessary. Her nearest and dearest are in awe, she tells me, at how she's reclaimed her life. I asked her if anyone else she knew had tried it.

According to Celia, everyone —friends and family alike—wanted a bottle. After seeing her results, they expected a miracle too. Did they get one? Well, no. None quite like Celia. They did, however, notice a lot of benefits: Sleep was more sound and energy was less elusive. Blood sugar readings balanced, cholesterol levels lowered, migraine headaches, sinusitis, and nagging aches and pains just about disappeared. Not exactly miracles, but if you take the results for what they are, you've got to admit, it still sounds pretty appealing.

The recommended dosage of StemEnhance is one to two capsules twice a day along with plenty of water. Dark greens and algae can be a significant source of vitamin K, which may not be clearly stated on the label. According to Dr. Martin Milner, HSI's medical advisor, this could be an area of concern in terms of drug interactions (especially ones that thin the blood). If you're currently taking medication to treat a health condition, he recommends that you check with your doctor before using StemEnhance.

As sometimes happens with AFA, StemEnhance can cause a detoxifying reaction (headache, diarrhea, or skin eruptions). If you experience discomfort, you may want to drop your dosage and increase it incrementally, as your body adjusts. Every body is different, so experiences with StemEnhance will vary. While some notice immediate results, many find that it takes eight to 12 weeks for visible changes to occur. HSI

Citations available upon request and on the HSI website

Curb cravings, lower your blood sugar, and reverse metabolic syndrome for good with a single restorative formula

by Alicia Potee

Myrna's diagnosis was hardly the first of its kind. And although it was the first thing that sprung to mind when she was searching for an explanation, it wasn't due to all the key lime pie she'd eaten since she and her husband Harold abandoned bitter New England winters in favor of southwest Florida last year (at least not entirely). With 69 years of solid health and a host of routine annual physicals yielding no signs of decline, the news from Myrna's doctor that her blood glucose levels were dangerously high took her by complete surprise.

Whether it's the byproduct of genes, aging, or a lifetime of unhealthy habits, metabolic syndrome (that cluster of related conditions also known as insulin-resistance syndrome) clearly sits atop a slippery slope. If left unattended, the onset of Type II diabetes is a looming inevitability, as are its often-fatal complications, including heart disease, hypertension, kidney failure, neuropathy, and blindness.

But Myrna was reluctant to start popping pills as part of a frenzied regimen to rein in her sugar problem. As she put it, "I've never depended on medications before and I'm not about to start now." She planned on watching what she ate and walking every day. But she worried that it wouldn't be enough. After all, old habits die hard. And new ones can be even harder to form. Tackling the con-