

Rethinking Elimination

Thoughts about how well your body is eliminating don't really make it to the top of your list unless you are faced with a sudden change of too much or not enough. It turns out that your elimination should get as much attention as what you are feeding yourself each day. That is because how your body eliminates is actually a very clear barometer of your health.

Imbalances in the organs that clean your body negatively impact your immune system

I talk a lot about elimination in my practice and I admit I am a bit obsessed, but for good reasons! Time and time again I see radical health shifts occur simply by improving the frequency and quality of bowel movements, urination and, in women, menstruation. What is particularly interesting is that when these shifts are made in children, all secondary symptoms just heal.

The restoration of optimal elimination for adults is more complex because the years of built-up waste damages tissues. When change is made however, the shift towards healing is apparent and significant.

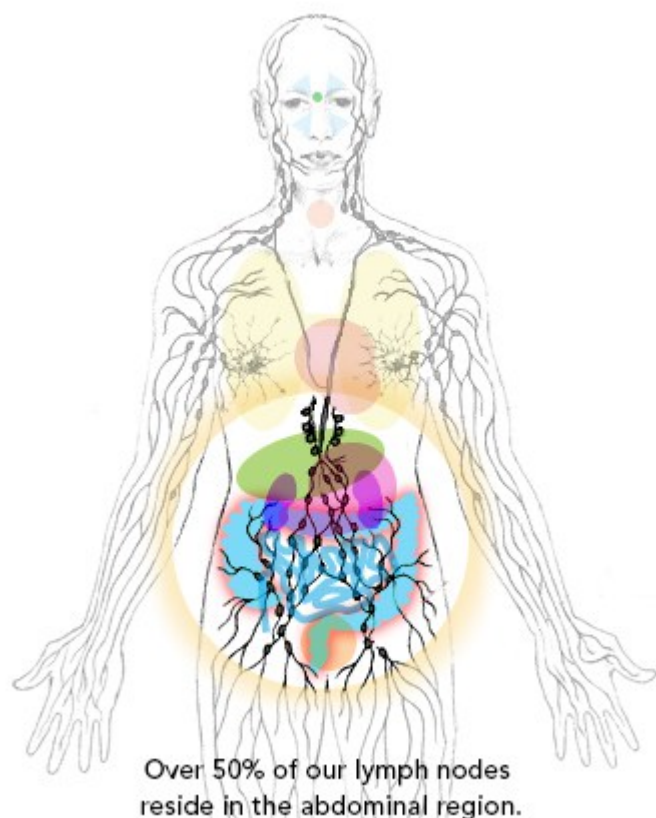
Important to note:

1. Elimination patterns that you have come to believe are "just how you are" can and should be shifted.
2. Other secondary symptoms such as migraines and asthma cannot be healed until this occurs (see this article on secondary symptoms of poor elimination)

Bowel Movements

Let's take a look at healthy bowel elimination. Our bowels should clean twice a day and optimally every time you eat a meal. Those of you with a diet high in raw fruits and

vegetables may already experience this type of elimination pattern. While there are many individualized reasons why your bowels may not clean efficiently, we can be sure one factor pertains to lymphatic stagnation in this region and another pertains to your diet. Just take a look here at all the lymphatic vessels and organs in this region.



Over 50% of our lymph nodes reside in our abdominal region. The lymph fluid carries away the acidic wastes from digestion.

When the lymph is stagnant, so is bowel activity. Your diet directly influences lymph movement, so eating high-alkaline foods to stimulate the elimination of acids is one of the best things you can do for your well-being.

What about over-active bowels? Simply put, the body is working overtime encouraging your bowels to dump the acidic wastes which are not being processed by your kidneys.

Urination

Signs of urinary distress are usually quite obvious. Frequent urging, involuntary urination, painful urination, and night waking to urinate are all symptoms to raise concern. All are signs that the kidneys are overworking. In my practice, I most often see that when these symptoms appear the bowels are not doing their job. When bowel elimination is optimized these symptoms typically resolve themselves.

Menstruation

Women are fortunate in that they have a third method of elimination which engages the lymphatic system and helps the body clean itself. However, painful periods, spotting, no period or irregular periods are all symptoms of weaknesses in other organ systems and should be taken into top consideration when assessing your health. Blocking that flow or reducing it through the use of hormonal birth control methods not only puts increased responsibilities on the bowels and kidneys to eliminate acid wastes, but causes a variety of secondary symptoms due to the toxic build-up.

Answers for You

Simply put, we are living in an environment and leading lifestyles that our bodies were never designed to handle. The natural correction would be to make the necessary modifications so that these align. That means returning to eating, working, and living in a way that support the functions of the body we have. It means eating whole foods as close as possible to their natural state, taking breaks from our chairs and getting exercise outdoors in nature, and turning off the constant stimulation and noise of the world when we can.

The human body has not changed in the last three generations,

our lifestyles, however, have changed dramatically. Just one generation ago we did not sit in chairs working in front of a screen 8-10 hours a day. Two generations ago fast and processed foods simply did not exist, families cooked real food together at home. Three generations ago they likely grew their own food in gardens and the gardening process provided exercise, sunshine and time in nature!

Because of the natural processes of our body, functions such as elimination often need support, and that is exactly what Gemmotherapy extracts can offer. The inclusion of meristem cells, the part of the plant with the ability to regenerate tissue, gently restores the organs of elimination. You can read more about Gemmotherapy [here](#).

This post was originally posted on September 23, 2014. Updated on February 16, 2018

A New Mom's Story Part III

Over the past weeks I have had the pleasure of co-authoring with longtime client Jane Catherine Sherman. Jane Catherine, like all new moms, discovered there were some surprises in store for her and her husband as they integrated a new family member into their two career household. The challenges they faced involved food and how to integrate the sometimes conflicting messages heard from their pediatrician, family members, and their homeopath while responding to the responses from their sweet daughter.

In the first installment of this series Jane Catherine shares their experience with formula and the surprising solution they

discovered. In today's article she shares what happens when they are advised by their pediatrician, like all parents of one year olds, to begin the standard issue whole milk. Having reactions to formula was one thing but all toddlers need whole milk, right?

Enjoy!

– Lauren

Feeding Baby Part 3: The Great Milk Debate

We were not a dairy free household, so when my pediatrician told me to start my daughter on whole milk I didn't think twice about it. Yes, she did have issues with formula but my husband and I were fine with milk so it seemed like a natural choice. Besides, whole milk is meant to be the perfect food especially for picky toddlers – full of protein, calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B-12.



The first few weeks all went well, but then we started to notice a definite change in her digestion – more gas, bellyaches and painful constipation. We immediately started

the Fig and Walnut Gemmotherapy protocol just as we had done when she was on formula. Unfortunately, this time it wasn't enough. Her digestive system was already so inflamed that her symptoms kept getting worse. The constant runny nose started next followed by congestion and cough. We started a different Gemmotherapy protocol to combat the "cold" symptoms, which helped her heal each time she got sick. But, what we didn't realize was that it was the dairy in her diet that caused these symptoms.



The final straw for me came was when she was diagnosed with croup and had a choking cough so terrible it would bring any mom to tears. Until that point, it had not even occurred to us that it could all be from the whole milk we had added to her diet. We just thought that these were normal toddler sicknesses and growing pains. However, by this time we had progressed from adding only whole milk to include yogurt and cheese also in her diet – all typical toddler staples.

We met with Lauren to discuss the croup diagnosis we had

received. She made it clear that, from her perspective, the dairy in our daughter's diet was the root cause of these problems and with the appropriate Gemmotherapy protocol and removal of dairy, she would be much better. We immediately replaced the whole milk with almond milk. This decision was definitely met by an onslaught of questions from our family. Where will she get her calcium? Where will she get the fat and vitamins? Whole milk is good for babies. There is no way that's the cause. The same questions and concerns ran through my head, but I knew in my gut I was making the right decision.

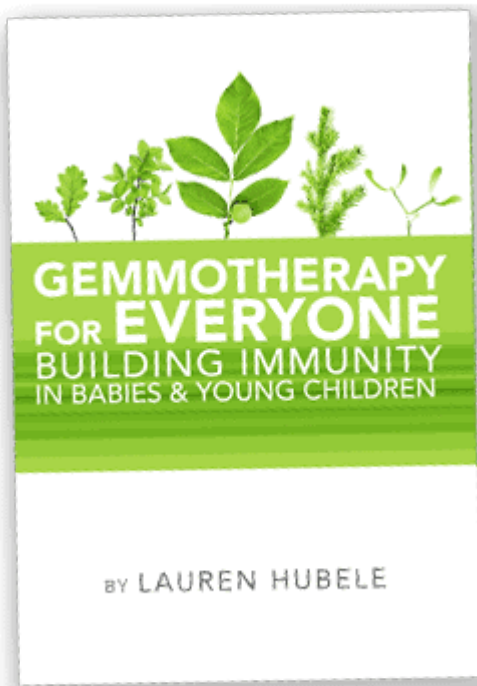
Confirmation to me that we had made the right choice was the fact that almost overnight, my daughter's symptoms improved. The rash on her face was the first to clear up followed by less gas and no constipation. The cough and congestion took a bit longer, but once it cleared up it hasn't returned. We had spent a lot of time and energy with humidifiers, easy breathing rubs, eucalyptus oil, and sleeping upright in a chair, anything that would help her breathe and be comfortable. Now she's been clear for over a month despite our crazy hot and cold weather.

To make sure she got all the same vitamins she would be getting from whole milk, we chose organic unsweetened almond milk fortified with calcium and vitamin D. I've seen some recipes for making your own fortified almond milk, which may be my next venture when I have more time. We also increased the amount of calcium enriched foods and fat in her diet including oranges, dried figs, almond butter, white beans and broccoli. This white bean hummus recipe is a fan favorite around our house. The white beans are easier than chickpeas to digest. I also substitute roasted garlic for fresh since fresh garlic can also upset some stomachs. It's also great for "hiding" other healthy foods she may not want to eat that day.



If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about feeding babies and toddlers and keeping them symptom free I'd love to hear from you. Guiding new moms and families is one of the favorite parts of my job. Are you new to the Gemmotherapy products mentioned in this series? If so here is an article to get you started.

Be sure to join us next week as we share the final installment of Jane Catherine's story. You'll appreciate hearing where all this has led them as a family.



Gemmotherapy for Everyone: Building Immunity In Babies & Young Children

This book is full of easy to use Gemmotherapy protocols for everything from colic and sinus congestion to skin conditions and ear infections. An indispensable guide for anyone caring for young ones.

Buy the Book

Living Well Series: Ditching

Dairy

The value of removing dairy from our family diet honestly never registered on my radar for the first twelve years of my post cancer health journey. Then, in the summer of 2013, I paid a visit to the busy family practice clinic of my mentor, and now dear friend, Dr. Sorina Soescu.

In addition to our vegetarian diet, the widespread research on inflammatory diets and cancer prompted my family to eliminate gluten containing grains in 2009. Assuming at that point we had resolved all of our food related symptoms I put our daily eating habits on auto pilot. That is until the big AHA moment or should I say moments, associated with my first ever experience of a raw diet.

First Hand Experience

Being away from home and family no doubt heightened the awareness of my experiences. My only focus of the time was the cases presented in Dr. Soescu's practice and the spiritual, mental, and physical experiences of eating a raw fruit meal each morning. Because my hosts stayed raw all day until dinner, so did I and after a few short days this is what I noticed:

- Morning energy like never before
- The absence of post nasal drainage
- The absence of an afternoon dip in energy
- The absence of bloating
- Deeper sleep
- Optimized bowel elimination

Now, there is no doubt in my mind that these results were due

to the combined effect of a raw meal to start my day and the lack of dairy products. This article however, is just about ditching dairy and you can read more about fruit for breakfast [here](#).

Having struggled with sinusitis my entire life, I honestly thought I had been symptom free for years until I woke up the first morning in Romania without sinus drainage. I'm sharing this not because it's such a dramatic outcome, but actually because it seems rather benign and that's the point. I had lived with symptoms on a daily basis that didn't even register because they had become so normal. Could that be true for you? Joachim, my husband, refers to this as the fish/water phenomena. Ask a fish how the water is and your answer will be, "what water?"

Makes you wonder what "water" you swim in day after day that is accepted but not acknowledged. It could very well be that the inflammatory responses you are living with or have accepted could be improved in the absence of dairy in your diet.

The Whys

And this brings me back to the purpose of this blog and three reasons why I'd like you to consider ditching dairy.

1. The evidence proves dairy consumption contributes to many chronic symptoms, here are a few:

Milk and Adolescent Acne

Milk and Chronic Disease

Milk and Prostate Cancer

2. You will feel better! It's remarkable how much discomfort we are willing to tolerate in order to maintain our lifestyle and how much energy we gain from resolving them.

3. Environmentally, the dairy industry takes a huge toll on our planet. Here's two studies that everyone needs to read:

The dairy industry's impact in California

Yale Environment report on Wisconsin dairy farms.

Getting Started

Back to my revelation in Romania. While I certainly caught my family by surprise when I returned ready to make this big shift in our diet, they did get on board for the following reasons:

- First to support my personal health journey
- Then the research they read was more than convincing
- Once the change was made they experienced their own benefits of resolved symptoms

Maybe going cold turkey as my family did in August 2013 is a bit daunting. How about trying this step by step approach offered by Dr. Oz? Oz's 28 day challenge calls for the removal of one dairy food type from your diet each week. And for you cheese addicts out there, you can hang on to it until week four.

Some of my clients have found success with eliminating dairy products by the meal. Beginning each day with my suggested all fruit breakfast provides you with a head start. Then, for a week or two focus on lunch, becoming aware of where it sneaks into your diet. Dinner does require more effort as you will be rethinking family favorites. I suggest attempting one new recipe a week and possibly do that on the weekend when you can allow yourself more time.

So what do you say? The new year is the perfect opportunity to take on a new challenge and the return on your investment is

substantial.

Living Well Series: Stage One—Optimize Elimination and Let the Healing Begin!

Regardless of your list of symptoms, the road map to natural healing will always begin with optimizing elimination. Optimizing Elimination is Stage One in the path to restoring immunity that I teach my clients and practitioners.

Why is this true?

When your physical body's ability to clean is compromised, your natural ability to heal (immunity) is also compromised. This is particularly clear in babies and children but equally true for adults.

We know a lot about the body and its workings, but the function of elimination is often overlooked as a likely root-cause of symptoms. Learning more about how your body cleans will bring your awareness to what might not be working for you. Noticing and taking action before chronic symptoms develop, is essential for your health now and in years to come.

Before we discuss what might compromise the body's ability to clean, let's look at some of the key players. While there is a complex system of excretory organs for this purpose, we are going to simply look at the organs and systems directly involved in producing and eliminating urine and stool.

How does a body clean?

First, let's consider how the body cleans from the food we digest.

As food passes through the mouth it enters the pharynx. Important to note is that the pharynx plays a vital role for both the digestive system and the respiratory system. It is a passageway for both air and food. Because of the physical connection present between the two systems, inflammation or mucus produced in one can easily pass to the other through the pharynx.

The esophagus is a long muscular tube that pushes food into the stomach. Important to note here is the ring shaped muscle at the opening of the stomach. This ring is called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). When digestion/elimination process is compromised in any way, this muscle may not have the ability to hold back digestive acids and reflux occurs.

Using acids and enzymes to break down food, the stomach acts as a mixer and grinder turning the consistency to liquid or paste. Taking acid blockers to suppress reflux changes this perfect balance and adversely affects the absorption of nutrients that will occur in the digestion process next.

Workings of the Small Intestine

Further on, the small intestine is responsible for breaking down the paste/liquid from the stomach using enzymes produced by the pancreas and bile from the liver (stored in the gallbladder). This is where the nutrients are absorbed into the bloodstream, and the remaining waste moves on. The small intestine also relies on a healthy population of bacterial microbes to prevent pathogens in food from taking hold and supports the immune response. An imbalance of the bacterial microbes will result in a lowered immune response and greater

susceptibility to foodborne illnesses.

Finally, the undigested waste is moved to the large intestines (bowel or colon) which is the storage organ for the undigested waste products. Parts of the large intestine take on the responsibility of absorption of leftover vitamins, water, and salt. When the large intestine is full, stool should pass through into the rectum to be emptied. When this doesn't happen on a regular basis, the entire interrelated system can be adversely affected leading to a variety of disruptions.

Metabolic waste

Digesting food is only part of the body's cleaning process. There are also waste by-products from tissue cleansing and regeneration that are continually produced, managed by the lymphatic and circulatory systems. These fluids are referred to as metabolic waste. The lymphatic and circulatory systems perform interrelated tasks delivering the waste to the liver where it is filtered and then transported to the kidneys through the circulatory system.

Serving a multi-functional role is the liver, responsible for breaking down toxic substances, chemicals, pharmaceutical medications, and byproducts of the body's own metabolic process, such as ammonia, into urea. This urea moves on to the kidneys, eventually becoming urine.

Then there is the urinary system, filtering and removing the liquid waste. The urinary system and large intestine, also called the bowel, have their own interactive communication system, signaling one to take over in the work of reducing acidic waste when the other is at its limit.

The ureter, bladder, and urethra team together to move the waste fluid from the kidneys, store it, and discharge it as urine.

Adrenal glands

Playing an accessory but critical role in keeping the body clean are the adrenal glands. The adrenals sit on top of the kidneys and are made up of two parts, the medulla and the cortex, each with its own function. The medulla secretes the hormone adrenaline, which helps the body adjust during high stress situations by increasing heart rate and speeding up blood flow. The cortex produces cortisol, which reduces inflammation within the body. The role of the cortex is of particular interest here as the resolving of inflammation is critical in the cleaning process.

As you can see, keeping the body clean along with the production of urine and stool requires an entire system. Every organ is critical and if one is not performing optimally, the others will be directly affected and must compensate. When this happens, the perfect system loses its effectiveness and its ability to remove waste products is greatly reduced.

Symptoms to note

An important sign that your elimination is not optimized are symptoms of the body cleaning through alternate exits. These exits are utilized when, over time, the buildup of waste product creates an inflammatory state and the body needs to look for other ways to clean. The most common of these tend to be eyes, nose, ears, lungs, and skin and, in women of menstruating age, the uterus/vagina.

Here are some common symptoms that indicate your body is cleaning through emergency exits:

- Eye(s): discharge
- Ear(s): discharge, drainage, blockage, itchiness,
- Sinus(es): congestion, drainage

- Bronchial/Lungs: cough, croup, bronchial spasms, obstructed breathing
- Skin: acne, eczema, canker sores, cold sores, fever blisters, mouth or gum sores, rashes
- Genital: yeast overgrowth, warts
- Vagina: discharge, yeast, heavy menstrual flow or cramping (if a menstruating female)
- Anus: discharge, mucus, burning, itching, rash

So given this cleaning process, what is optimal bowel elimination?

- Bowels: 2-3 formed movements spread throughout the day;
- Urination: no night time urination and daytime frequency every 2-3 hours;
- Uterus: (for women who are fertile) 27-29 day cycle, bleeding 4-5 days that does not start and stop, pain free or minor discomfort only, no mid cycle spotting.

How do I improve mine?

So what therapies do I use during Stage One to open elimination?

1.I ask clients to begin to increase the raw plant-based items in their diets, starting with an all-fruit cleansing meal for breakfast to jump start lymphatic activity and elimination.

2.I also suggest a Gemmotherapy protocol that is individualized according to one's current elimination, level of vitality, and state of inflammation.

Lauren's Kitchen: My Favorite Dairy Free Hacks



Summer is probably the easiest time to ditch dairy as the appeal for “creamy and rich” certainly lessens when the temps and humidity creep up. Having said that, I fully believe this is not an either or proposition. You can have creamy and rich AND be dairy free, it will just come from plant based sources.

While switching what you put in your coffee or tea and what you give the kids to drink can be fairly straight forward, maneuvering in this new territory when preparing meals can, at first, pose a challenge. Stocking your kitchen with some basics and having a few handy substitutions in your repertoire will allow you a good deal of flexibility in your cooking as well as permit you to continue using your tried and true recipes.

Here are some of the Hubele Family favorites from a variety of sources you may want to check out. I hope they inspire you to make the leap!

Coconut yogurt replaces crème fraich



Katy Salter, blogger for The Debrief, sings the praises of coconut yogurt in place of crème fraiche which is a staple in most European kitchens. She found that it can be served with deserts as well as to make savory dips and dressings by adding lemon, seas salt and herbs. It can be bought at most grocery stores or you can certainly DIY it.

Whipped coconut milk replaces whipped cream

Coconut milk saves the day here. By placing a can in the fridge for several hours and then spooning out the thick top

to whip, you can create delectable cream for desserts. The remainder can be used in smoothies, soups or curries. I suggest keeping a can or two in the fridge this way you will always be prepared. Want to give this a test run? May I suggest making this incredible parfait by Delish Knowledge.

Cashew cream replaces whole cream

An easy recipe for cashew cream is one of the most powerful tools that any vegan home cook can have in his or her arsenal. This simple cashew cream can be modified according to the application; add a bit of sugar for desserts, or lemon and sea salt for savory dishes.



Makes 2 1/2 – 3 cups (can easily be halved)

2 cups raw cashews

1 cup cold water, plus more as needed

1/2 – 3/4 teaspoons sea salt (optional)

1-2 tablespoons lemon juice (optional)

2 tablespoons evaporated cane juice, demerara sugar, or maple syrup (optional)

Here are the full instructions.

“Cheezy” sauce replaces cheese sauce



While there are countless recipes out there, this is a family favorite because it is simple and has only 5 ingredients. It can be made ahead or in batches if you a cheese sauce kind of family.

3/4 cup unsweetened, organic unflavored almond milk (I prefer Califia Farms)

6 tbsp nutritional yeast (Bob's Red Mill makes one you can find most grocery stores or bulk food stores)

1 tbsp Earth Balance or other non-dairy buttery spread

1 tbsp all purpose flour (replace with brown or sweet rice flour for GF)

2 tsp Dijon mustard

1/4 tsp garlic powder

1/4 tsp onion powder, we replace with a scallion or a tablespoon of a small chopped shallot

1/2 tsp kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Here are the full instructions.

Hemp seeds replaces cream in dressings

While there are several plant based ingredients that will make your salad dressing creamy, my go-to these days happens to be hemp seeds. I love the powerhouse of nutritional benefits they provide and since we sub cashews and coconut for many other uses, it gives me an opportunity to mix it up a bit.



Here are the ingredients to make a standard hemb-based dressing in a blender, but you will certainly want to read further for several variations offered by Veggie Voyager.

2 T hemp seeds

1/3 cup citrus juice, lemon, lime, orange, or combination

1/2 cup olive oil

1 scallion

Salt & Pepper to taste

What's All the Fuss About Dairy?

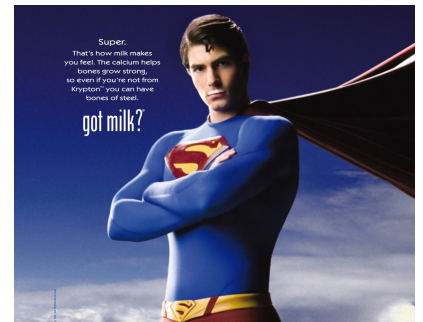
Last week I shared the case of Doug, with seasonal allergies, who, along with a protocol to improve his elimination and clean up his digestive tract, gave up eating dairy products. After a month, Doug's symptoms went away. Once he finished his protocol he stayed off dairy to curb the inflammation and hasn't had any symptoms for two years.

While eating dairy did not cause Doug's condition it certainly was keeping him from healing.

Daily I talk with people who could benefit from removing dairy from their diets, but the truth is, most are unwilling to take that step. Why is that so? I'm not the only practitioner searching for this answer, but here are a few things I have discovered in my effort to understand this dilemma.



In the face of growing evidence that dairy is just not a benefit to one's health, most people continue to consume milk, yoghurt, and cheese at alarming rates. The average American consumes 33 lbs of cheese a year, which is triple the amount they did in 1970. This increase continues on while scientific studies state countless chronic conditions from cancer to arthritis to sinusitis are aggravated by dairy products. So, we find individuals searching for help for their symptoms from one health practitioner to another while their answer may be no further than controlling what is in their kitchen.



What is equally true is the need to consume dairy products is culturally engrained in the American diet. Forty years ago the U.S. Dairy industry began quite a series of ad campaigns that are still deeply imprinted in our minds. "Milk does a body good" is apparently a very hard slogan to turn off.

Finally, the truth is dairy products are addictive. The protein casein breaks down into casomorphines when digested and actually creates a desire for more. Anyone who has taken even a sliver of manchego cheese knows just how hard it is not to have just one more bite. So now you know it's not only about how good it tastes, but how good it makes you feel—at least in the moment. Hear out Dr. Joel Kahn on 6 Foods that

Behave like Addictive Drugs.

So what do we do with this information? Here are my suggestions:

1. Recognize that what we have been told by the dairy industry for the past 30-40 was actually for the benefit of their industry, not our bodies. No doubt they have had an incredible marketing team, but the truth for many of us is that dairy consumption can cause more harm than benefit. Here is more about this subject by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.
2. If your letting go of those old beliefs about dairy requires more facts and data to make your decisions, here are some for you to process:
 - Animal Proteins and Cancer
 - Dairy and Parkinson Risk
 - Dairy and inflammation
 - Dairy and Heart Disease
 - Dairy and Sinusitis
3. For you experiential learners out there I say try this for yourself. Take the month of November and begin Dr. Oz's very simple 28 day challenge that removes one set of dairy products per week, then give yourself another month completely off the products and see what you notice.