

*Dr. Jonathan V. Wright's*

# NUTRITION & HEALING

## Inhale your way to pain relief with “Dr. Fitt’s” arthritis formula

*By Jonathan V. Wright, M.D.*

My colleague and friend Roby Mitchell, M.D., is an ex-Marine, and looks it: With his shaved head and a physique that can really only be described as “buff,” Dr. Mitchell isn’t what most people expect a doctor to look like. But he has a successful practice in Amarillo, TX and hosts a weekly radio program called “Dr. Fitt.” He also created one of the most spectacularly successful arthritis treatments I’ve ever come across.

In fact, just a few months ago, it helped one of my patients, Jeff, avoid knee-replacement surgery.

*From barely able to walk to riding a bicycle in just 3 weeks.*

Six years ago, he started noticing more stiffness in his knees. All that time, he tried to push through it: He tried taking MSM, glucosamine, and niacinamide, and he switched from jogging and bicycling to rowing, weightlifting, and swimming to lessen the impact he was putting on his joints with regular exercise. But even so, his arthritis continued to get worse.

It got so bad that his left leg couldn’t even straighten out the whole way—it actually had 45° less range of motion than his right leg. He also had great difficulty placing weight on his knees when getting out of bed, could stand up for only a few minutes at a time, and needed a handrail to climb steps.

When it got to that point, we decided to start him on a six-session program using Dr. Mitchell’s arthritis formula.

On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, less than three

*“Less than three weeks after he started his sessions, Jeff rode his bicycle several miles to the Tahoma Clinic.”*

weeks after he started his sessions, Jeff rode his bicycle several miles to the Tahoma Clinic. He enthusiastically showed us that he could move both knee joints without pain and straighten out his left leg the whole way again. He said that he still uses a rub-in pain reliever during the day, but much less than he did before.

So, as you can see, Dr. Mitchell’s therapy really works. As he’ll tell you, his treatment “was one of those inventions born from necessity.” And not just for his own arthritis-suffering patients.

*Swimming with sharks leads to an arthritis breakthrough.*

While growing up, Dr. Mitchell played lots of basketball on concrete playgrounds. In high school, he took up karate and ultimately earned his black belt. In college he added long distance running and triathlons to the list. So it’s not a big shock that by the time he was 35, he started noticing stiffness in his joints when he woke up in the morning.

“I was still predominantly practicing conventional medicine, so I took the NSAID ‘flavor of the month’ and promptly developed gut pain,” he told me. Not knowing any better, he just put up with the stiffness and pain, which did get a little better with exercise.

Dr. Mitchell was an emergency room doctor at the time and also noticed his body was starting to

change. “My blood pressure was 140/90, my gut was hanging over my belt despite consistent exercise, my recovery time from workouts was getting longer—I was getting old.” Then he admitted a 37 year-old man who’d had a heart attack, and he decided it was time for a change.

He started looking up nutritional therapies, for both himself and his patients. He read *The Arthritis Cure*, which explained glucosamine and the science behind it. He tried it himself for two months, but it didn’t make a difference—at least not in supplement form. So he visited his compounding pharmacist, had glucosamine made into an injectable form, gave it to himself, and was completely pain free within two weeks. He was even able to go back to running.

He started giving glucosamine injections to his patients, and approximately 70% of them had improvement. It was good, but not good enough, so he kept looking. He added chondroitin to the injection, and that increased the success rate to about 80%. After awhile he added MSM to the injection mixture, which boosted the number of people who responded up to 90%.

That’s a pretty good success rate for any treatment, but Dr. Mitchell still wasn’t satisfied. He wanted to develop a formula that was easier to use than injections, so he put his glucosamine-chondroitin-MSM mixture into DMSO for topical use. He and his patients found it less effective than the injections, but people who

couldn't get shots still got a degree of benefit.

Then, on a trip to Australia, he went on a shark dive with a veterinarian friend of his who told him to look into pentosan sulfate, a natural molecule derived from beech trees. Pentosan sulfate has been used with great success in Australia for osteoarthritis in dogs and horses. The veterinarian gave Dr. Mitchell a vial to try.

He added the pentosan sulfate to his injectable formula, and things finally took off. He says that this one addition made the formula work "over 99% of the time." He couldn't believe that a therapy this effective was virtually unknown, so he did more research on it. He found the definitive article on pentosan sulfate written by Peter Ghosh, D.Sc., Ph.D., the director of the Institute for Bone and Joint Research.\*

Dr. Ghosh's comprehensive review notes that pentosan sulfate has at least three basic actions. It promotes "build-up" activity and inhibits "breakdown" activity in cartilage cells. Second, pentosan sulfate improves bio-synthesis of high molecular weight hyaluronan, a key component of joint fluid. And finally, it increases blood flow through the capillaries that serve the cartilage cells themselves. If you increase blood flow to these cells, they're more likely to stay healthy and arthritis-free; there's increasing suspicion that poor blood flow itself may be a major contributor to osteoarthritis.

### *Inhaler inspiration achieves phenomenal results.*

But all his reading just got Dr. Mitchell more frustrated. He'd seen what pentosan sulfate did in the few patients he treated with it, but he couldn't get it in the United States. Then he made a fortunate discovery: Pentosan had been "approved" in the USA in a capsule form for the treatment of an entirely unrelated problem. And once a treatment is approved for any purpose, it can legally be used for other purposes.

Unfortunately pentosan sulfate is very poorly absorbed from the

gastrointestinal tract, so oral supplements wouldn't do the trick. So Dr. Mitchell and his compounding pharmacist developed a DMSO "rub-in" form; it worked well for many people, but not as well as the injectable type.

About that time, I heard from Dr. Mitchell about his pentosan formula and asked some of my osteoarthritis patients to try it. It worked, but really wasn't anything overly impressive, so we continued using it along with other natural arthritis treatments.

In the meantime, Dr. Mitchell kept brainstorming ideas for increasing pentosan's absorption. I'm not sure how he came up with the idea (he jokes that it was sheer "inspiration"), but he decided to try breathing it in. The compounding pharmacy made the formula, supplied the inhalers, and that's what Dr. Mitchell and I have been using ever since—with those spectacular results he'd be searching for all those years.

I mentioned Jeff's success with this pentosan formula at the beginning of this article. In his own words: "I noticed within a few minutes after the first treatments that my knees seemed to move more freely. The effect was much like what one would expect from supplying lubrication oil to a rusty hinge."

### *Making motorcycling ---and just plain moving--- bearable again*

Dr. Mitchell has had the same sort of results. In one case, he treated a woman who'd been in a motorized wheelchair for 10 years because of her osteoarthritis. After a week inhaling the pentosan sulfate solution, she was walking with a cane, which she only needed because her leg muscles were so weak from sitting in the wheelchair. Later, Dr. Mitchell had her eliminate sugar and grains from her diet, use bio-identical hormones, and go on an exercise program. In a few months, she was challenging friends to footraces.

The last person I'll tell you about is Bill, a gentleman I first saw in

June 2001 when he was 55. He came in primarily about a weight problem, but he was also a very active baseball player and mentioned that his right hip had started "hurting a little" a couple of months before.

By November, he's lost 45 pounds following the nutritional and supplement program we set up for him and was feeling much better—except for his hip, which he said still hurt a little. In March 2002, all his other symptoms had improved even further, again except for his hip, which hurt even more. He said it "felt like a dagger" when he shifted directions suddenly while running. We decided that even though the pain wasn't severe most of the time, he should have it x-rayed.

The x-ray showed he had severe osteoarthritis. He'd already tried glucosamine, but, given the results of this x-ray, it wasn't a surprise it hadn't helped. Over the next two years, he tried a few different natural therapies, but nothing really gave him lasting relief.

Last spring, he was on the verge of canceling a motorcycle trip through the Pyrenees he and his wife had been planning for and looking forward to for years because the pain was so bad. I recommended he give inhaled pentosan a try before calling his travel agent to cancel.

After two courses of treatments and three weeks of traveling he wrote in saying, "It wasn't a cure-all, but it took the edge off the pain so I could successfully embark on the three week trip. It was wonderful. My wife and I safely completed the trip riding some of the most challenging mountain roads the world has to offer."

After his motorcycle trip, Bill decided to have hip replacement surgery, since his osteoarthritis was so severe, and he wanted to play baseball "all-out" again. But the pentosan made enough of a difference that he was able to comfortably travel for an extended period of time—riding a motorcycle not less—even with his very advanced case.

Dr. Mitchell worked with a pharmacy technician at D & S Pharmacy (1-800-398-7046) to develop a way to re-compound pentosan sulfate into both the injectable and inhalant forms. You'll need a prescription from your doctor for both the pentosan formula and the inhaler.

D & S tell me that 50-60 percent of people who take pentosan treatment repeat the five-day treatment series every six weeks to three months. But others—most likely people with early cases of osteoarthritis—don't need repeat treatments at all.

It's possible for any treatment, natural or patented, to cause an allergic reaction, but so far Dr. Mitchell and I, along with the pharmacists at D & S Pharmacy, have not seen or heard of adverse effects with the inhaled version of pentosan. The injectable form sometimes causes redness and swelling at the injection site.

A week's course of pentosan sulfate costs about \$150, the one-time cost of the inhaler is about \$75.