

# Health

## HEALTH BUZZ

### Avocados target leukemia stem cells

Love avocados? A recent study reveals there may be an added health benefit to the fruit.

Paul Spagnuolo, a professor at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, and fellow researchers found that the compound, avocatin B, found in avocados, may help target and destroy acute myeloid leukemia (AML).



This could lead to a new treatment for AML, a cancer that originates in the bone marrow. Their findings were published in the journal *Cancer Research*.

An estimated 20,000 people nationwide will be diagnosed with AML this year; more than 10,000 people will die from the disease.

The scientists found that avocatin B selectively targets and destroys leukemia stem cells while leaving healthy blood cells in the bone marrow alone.

Researchers said it will be years before avocatin B can be used in clinical settings to treat AML.

They joined Canada's Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM) to file a patent for the compound for this use.

Avocatin B falls into a category of compounds called nutraceuticals, which are food-derived products that have possible clinical benefits.

Spagnuolo said they are among a few research teams worldwide who are trying to merge the complex drug investigation processes within the pharmaceutical industry to nutraceuticals.

The health benefits of avocados have made other news. Earlier this year, *Medical News Today* reported on a study that found eating a daily avocado as part of a moderate-fat diet may reduce levels of "bad" cholesterol in those who are overweight or obese.

### Odd tips to lose weight

When it comes to being healthy, many people realize the importance of a proper diet, exercise and getting enough sleep. Here are a few tricks that may not make sense on the surface, but have been proven to work, according to health.com.

- Gain weight to fit into a smaller clothing size. Fat weighs the same as muscle, but muscle takes up less space, meaning women with bigger muscles get smaller overall, if they lose fat.

- Eat more to eat less. A 100-calorie pack of pretzels is likely to make you hungrier than eating something substantial. Small servings of carbs spike blood sugar and leave people wanting more carbs. Instead, opt for protein, such as peanut butter or an apple, which makes you full faster.

ERINN HUTKIN

## POSTURE

### Alternative medicine can help patients maintain balance

ERINN HUTKIN  
SPECIAL TO THE U-T

A person's posture can be telling, and not always in a good way.

As a postural specialist and chief therapist at Los Angeles-based Vivie Therapy, Vivian Eisenstadt knows that poor posture can be read as a lack of self-confidence, shyness and closed communication.

So when helping patients with their posture, she integrates alternative and mainstream approaches.

"I explain how the way you stand and sit reflects to the world who you are as a person, and how you might come across when you are out of balance versus balanced," Eisenstadt said. "Physically I fix posture by massaging

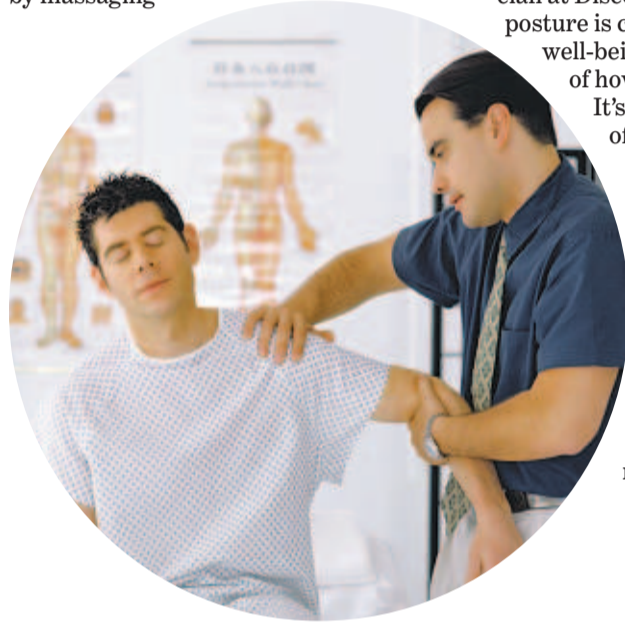
and stretching the muscles pulling the person out of position, mobilizing the spine into balance, strengthening the weak postural muscles and teaching proper ergonomics."

As alternative medicine becomes more accepted by mainstream physicians and patients alike, there are several methods that can be used to help people improve their posture, everything from chiropractic techniques to massage therapy and acupuncture. Having good posture extends beyond a person's appearance.

Joseph Snyder, a chiropractic physician at Discover Wellness Coronado, said posture is critical for good health and well-being through the understanding of how the nervous system works.

It's the "master" control system of the body and is in charge of every cell, tissue, muscle and organ.

"When we have good spinal alignment and function, we have the best chance of having good health and well-being," Snyder said. "When we return proper motion to the spinal column, the body is in the best position to heal itself naturally. And this is a huge



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chiropractic physician,  
Discover Wellness Coronado



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Rick Loos, doctor of chiropractic care at Torrey Pines Chiropractic, said the ability to move well and maintain proper posture while moving is one of the pillars of health "that people tend to forget."

And he said the modern world of texting, driving and sitting at a computer has had a dramatic effect on the decline of posture.

"Maintaining proper posture involves training your body how to move efficiently. Sitting, standing, walking and lying in positions that reduce wear and tear and optimize function is what proper posture is all about," Loos said. "Maintaining proper movement patterns will help reduce the stress and strain applied to the joints, ligaments and tendons that enable the spine's dynamic movements."

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## POSTURE

### 5 tips for standing, sitting, sleeping

ERINN HUTKIN

According to the American Chiropractic Association, unhealthy sitting and standing habits can lead to improper posture.

Here are five things to keep in mind while standing, sitting and even sleeping.

1. While sitting, keep your feet on the floor. If your feet don't reach the floor, use a

footrest. Don't cross your legs, and keep your ankles in front of your knees. Avoid sitting in the same position for long periods.

2. Make sure there's a small gap between the backs of your knees and the front of your chair, and keep your knees at or below the level of your hips. When adjusting your chair's backrest, position it so it supports your lower- and mid-back — or use a back support.

3. When standing, keep your weight mainly on the balls of your feet and position your legs so your knees are slightly bent. Keep your feet roughly shoulder-width apart and let your arms hang naturally at the sides of your body.

4. For a good night's rest, finding the right mattress for your body is crucial. A firm mattress is recommended, but some find softer mattresses reduce back pain. Also, use a pillow while sleeping. There are pillows you can buy to help with postural problems that result from poor sleeping position.

5. Avoid sleeping on your stomach. Sleeping on your side or back can be helpful for those suffering from back pain. Those who sleep on their side should place a pillow between their legs, while those who sleep on their back should keep a pillow under their knees.

SOURCE: AMERICAN CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION

## Egg freezing gives women more possibilities

Procedure no guarantee, but more women are considering it

ERINN HUTKIN  
SPECIAL TO THE U-T

If you ask L. Michael Kettel, those hoping to become parents are living in "a wonderful time" for IVF (in vitro fertilization).

That's because success rates are up, and options for women in different life stages are now available.

There are also plenty of options didn't exist even five years ago.

Kettel, medical director at the San Diego Fertility Center, said some of these advances also extend

to women who choose to freeze their eggs, a practice he feels is on the upswing.

He said women are choosing to freeze their eggs for a variety of

reasons. The two most common scenarios come from women facing medical treatments, such as chemotherapy, that may be toxic to eggs and opt for freezing prior to treatment; and there are also many women who want to preserve their eggs because they're not ready to start a family and are concerned that as they age, fertility may decline.

"While egg preservation is certainly not guaranteed to lead to childbirth ... more women

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## Fun runs may be unfun if no preparation is done

GABRIELLA BOSTON  
SPECIAL TO  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Fun and adventure are probably what you're looking for if you're signing up for short fun runs and obstacle-laden adventure races — increasingly popular events across the country.

But, as with any athletic event, you have to prepare properly, or the fun can turn quite un-fun and the adventure can turn particularly painful.

"To prevent injury, give yourself at least four to six weeks to prepare," says Derek Ochiai, an orthopedic surgeon in Arlington, Va., who has surgically repaired many shoulders and ankles dislocated or broken in adventure races.

So how do you prepare? You can always go to the sites for the races, such as spartan.com and toughmudder.com (both of which have upcoming Southern California events), check on training plans and tips and

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