

# **An Anonymous Tip on Nutrition Supplements and Herbal Remedies**

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24 June 2021



79-year-old member of my local community, who desired to remain anonymous, struggles with health problems that can prove costly to treat. With a limited income, they have to get creative with how they manage their health. Rather than filling pricey and sometimes questionable prescriptions, they prefer herbal and nutritional alternatives. By balancing their

finances with their health, they are able to maintain their quality of life without running the risk of cutting it short.

This person isn't rich. Their current home cost a total of \$32,000 in 1969. Today, they owe \$100,000 on a home equity line of credit. Now they pay off interest to keep a house they already own. Between themselves and their spouse, who's also retired, the household brings in roughly \$53,000 a year. According to Kathleen Coxwell at NewRetirement, this senior's household income is about \$5000 below average. The loan helped keep them afloat, but now it eats away at their limited income. Fortunately for them, their limited income also qualifies them for Medicaid, which they use to buy non-prescription herbal drugs to help keep costly and potentially dangerous medications away.

This clever person supplements their nutritional intake with herbal medications to keep themselves healthy. They have a strong distrust for doctors and prescription drugs. "It's amazing how better off you are going to herbal remedies first. Most doctors will just pop, pop, pop pills to you." This senior has legitimate cause to distrust doctors' prescriptions. Marlene Cimons of the Washington Post claimed that "in 2017, an estimated 94 percent of older adults received a prescription for a drug that increased their risk of falling, a startling increase from 57 percent in 1999." The prescription drugs in question do more than just what they are prescribed for. My interviewee's own experience corroborates this claim, as they have found that many prescription drugs often need additional prescription drugs to counter the negative side effects of the first batch. However, this senior cannot just abstain from medicine altogether. For their list of health problems, they have a list of herbal medications they feel confident in using:

- Zinc for leg cramps
- Red Yeast Rice to lower cholesterol

- Melatonin to mitigate sleeping problems
- Fish Oil for heart health
- B12 to boost energy
- Turmeric for joint pains
- Magnesium for acid reflux
- Vitamin K to reduce blood clots

They find these cures in *Prescription for Nutritional Healing* by Phyllis A. Blach, CNC. Their only complaint with this book is that the most recent edition is too big and contains too much information. They keep an older edition for their own convenience, and I was able to observe their process of cross examining the two editions to find new medicines, find new uses for old medicines, and ensure that old cures still worked.

A GNC sticker on the book caught my attention, so I asked them about the familiar logo. They claimed they had bought this book and a few of their medicines at the General Nutrition Center. I must warn you about this particular piece of advice. This person did not know, as I did not know at the time, that GNC was bought out around September of 2020. According to Joe Napsha of TribLIVE, GNC filed for bankruptcy and agreed to sell to Harbin Pharmaceutical Group Holding Co. in June. Although GNC is now under new, overseas ownership, the Harbin Pharmaceutical Group was already affiliated with GNC's largest shareholder. So, maybe Harbin Pharmaceutical will transition smoothly from owning about 40% of the company to owning and running it completely. Either way, my interviewee may not have had well-timed advice on GNC, but the company seemed to have set a healthy precedent in the past.

This senior is a living testament to their own advice. They still drive, go out shopping and eating, catch the occasional movie at the theater, and tackle their long basement staircase

whenever the need arises. They have to watch out for certain foods and take care not to over exert themselves when walking their dog or performing other physical activities, but with eighty just around the corner for them, they are holding up well. By using smart, safe, and affordable herbal and nutritional medicines, this local practitioner of nutritional healthcare has bought themselves more time than a costly fistful of prescription pills could.

## Works Cited

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