



Thanks to *Taste for Life* readers for your e-mails and letters. Sorry we can't print them all, but here's a recent sampling.

CURRENT AND ACCURATE

I have been so impressed with *Taste for Life!* As an acupuncturist, herbalist, and nutritional counselor for 15 years (and because of my special interest in nutrition), I read many journals, newsletters, and publications on health. I try to stay up on the latest information, developments, and cautions. I am usually aware of things way before the general public—sometimes by years!

I have found *Taste for Life* to be very current and accurate. Some publications will know a few current or accurate things but then be far behind in other areas. I give your magazine an A++! I am so pleasantly surprised and delighted to see a body of information so accurate and timely go out to the general public. I think you should get an award—your publication is definitely a winner!!

E. P., LAC, Asheville, North Carolina

RED YEAST RICE, REVISITED

It may be wise to inform your readers that red yeast rice (RYR) can cause the same deleterious side effects as drugs.

K. J., Moscow, Idaho

RYR contains 10 compounds that are similar to prescription statins, particularly lovastatin found in the drug Mevacor.

According to Jay S. Cohen, MD, in

What You Must Know about Statin

Drugs & Their Natural Alternatives (\$15.95, Square One, 2005), "red yeast rice does not seem to cause the typical side effects—muscle pain, abdominal discomfort, liver irritation—that commonly occur with statins."

President of the American College for the Advancement of Medicine and an alternative practitioner in New Jersey, Allan Magaziner, DO, has used

RYR with more than 500 patients and found it "remarkably effective" and "very well tolerated," without lowering coenzyme Q10 levels (although he always recommends taking CoQ10 for safety). Two double-blind, placebo-controlled studies report similar results. "I suspect that because [red yeast rice] contains small amounts of multiple compounds, no one of them is large enough to produce problems," Dr. Magaziner explains.

Medical supervision is important for anyone using RYR, and liver enzymes should be checked regularly. Like statin drugs, red yeast rice is not recommended during pregnancy or with drugs contraindicated with statins. It does, however, seem to provide an affordable alternative to expensive pharmaceuticals—at least for individuals with moderately high cholesterol levels (between 200 and 260).

GM FOODS

I read with interest about family allergies in your March 2005 issue, which I picked up at Sunflower Markets. I would bet that many, if not all, of that family's allergies are due in large part to genetically engineered or modified (GM) foods.

I break out from fresh corn and tomatoes. And how about those strawberries the size of golf balls that keep in the fridge uncovered for two to three weeks?

Of course, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration will not push for labeling because if the American people knew they were eating "Frankenstein" food they would not buy it.

D. C., Tucson, Arizona

Polls conducted by Rutgers University and ABC News find that at least 90 percent of U.S. con-

sumers want labeling for GM foods. Currently, the only foods certified not to contain genetically engineered ingredients are organic. To learn more on this subject, read Genetically Altered Foods and Your Health by Ken Roseboro (\$5.95, Basic Health, 2004) and visit the Campaign to Label Genetically Modified Foods (www.thecampaign.org). That said, corn, strawberries, and tomatoes were considered allergenic foods even before the biotech industry began tinkering with our food supply.



MORE ON TOENAIL FUNGUS

I want to thank you for *Taste for Life*. It has a lot of good health information, which I greatly appreciate.

Re: the article "Fungus Among Us?" (3/05), one natural remedy that worked for me was putting vinegar on the infected toenails. Toenails can take six months to grow out, so vinegar needs to be applied every day until the nail grows out completely clean.

D. O'D., Knoxville, Tennessee

