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Which Supplements Are Right for You?

Consumers spend roughly \$20 billion on supplements annually, hoping to improve their health without resorting to "drugs." Many people admit that they have no idea whether their supplements are doing anything to help them, but figure that they are better off safe than sorry.

As a medical practitioner of the integrative kind, I have many patients coming to me asking for advice regarding their intake of these supplements. They have been getting their information from friends, internet newsletters, magazines, health food store clerks. Some, also, are suggested by health care providers. Patients will ask me, "Should I be taking DHEA?" or "Which is the best fish oil supplement?" In the past, even if I had an opinion based upon my reading, I still would not know whether they, personally, would benefit from supplementation.

How does a doctor obtain information on the effectiveness of a supplement, or a drug, for that matter, without the old trial and error approach? Needing some objective technology to help me, I first investigated Applied Kinesiology, which involves muscle-testing of the patient. I found it to be an excellent technique for evaluating patients, but there is some subjectivity involved, and some patients do not readily accept the unorthodox methods of muscle-testing.

Enter, the computer age! I got excited when a friend of mine told me about a company named Zyto that had developed a computerized software program called the Limbic Stress Analyzer that "reads" the stresses off the body, then "balances" them with ideal supplements!

The LSA works with technology that has some things in common with a lie detector. An electronic signal is sent through a plate upon which the patient's hand rests. The signal is interpreted at the level of the brainstem as either a "stressor" or a "reliever," and is quantified visibly upon the computer screen. Through this method, an individualized stress profile is created. Samples of pre-registered supplements are then entered to find which of them, alone, or in combination, will best balance the system.

The Limbic Stress Analyzer is not a diagnostic device, but I have been impressed at how well it ferrets out the useless supplements and helps to discern which ones are actually **doing** something for the body.

I finally have a tool that helps me answer the question, "Isn't there anything natural that would help me?" For all those patients who have searched for answers to questions such as these, and for all doctors who are looking to help their patients, this is a godsend.

Dr. Perry M. Perretz is a specialist in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and runs an integrative practice devoted largely to treatment of musculoskeletal pain. His office, Advanced Pain Solutions, is located at 112 Portland Avenue, Redding, Connecticut. The office may be reached at 203-544-9090. Web presence: <advancedpainsolution.com>