

# 9 Signs You May Have Heart Trouble

Even with knowledge and all of these advancements, Atherosclerosis continues to be the No. 1 silent killer in the United States. Atherosclerosis is a constricting or clogging of the arteries, preventing them from carrying vital nutrients through the body. It can lead to both heart attack and stroke.

Not all of the symptoms of a heart attack are the same, especially between men and women. In some cases the signs may be painfully obvious, but in others they may be much more subtle.

The information that follows are indicators that something may be wrong with your heart. They could also be caused by something entirely different. There are two very important steps that you should take. One is to not panic and the second is speak with your personal physician about any of the signs that you may be suffering from. Remember that only a medical professional can assess your situation. Never rely on Google for a serious diagnosis.

**1. Lethargy and fatigue.** Simple fatigue from a day of overworking or not receiving adequate sleep is perfectly normal. Severe fatigue on a regular basis which simply does not go away after a good night's rest could be a sign that something is amiss with your heart. This is the type of tiredness you feel when you are coming down with the flu.

Director of Women's Heart Health at the Heart and Vascular Institute at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City Suzanne Steinbaum, urges people, especially women, not to dismiss this ongoing fatigue. It could be a warning sign that something is wrong with your heart.

The reason for the extreme fatigue in these cases is that your

heart is in distress from trying to transport vital oxygen for your body through constricted or clogged arteries. The reasons that this causes severe lethargy and extreme fatigue is twofold. First, your heart is tired from working overtime and your body is still not receiving the proper oxygen levels it requires for optimal functioning.

**2. Peripheral edema.** Peripheral edema is when extremities of the body swell such as ankles and feet. There are numerous non-life-threatening reasons that these areas swell such as varicose veins and pregnancy. But it may also be something much more serious such as poor circulation and/or congestive heart failure. This can cause a chronic condition in which your heart is not able to pump blood efficiently.

A professor of cardiovascular medicine at the University of the Maryland School of Medicine states that peripheral edema of the feet can also be a sign that one or more valves in your heart is unable to close properly. This swelling can also be the result of taking certain types of medication such as those for diabetes and/or hypertension. If swelling does correlate with heart issues, in most cases, there will be other indications as well. It may be accompanied by extreme fatigue and/or shortness of breath. It is best to consult your medical professional to determine exactly what is causing the edema.

**3. Excruciating pain while walking.** If the muscles of your legs and hips may cramp severely when you walk, but then relax upon resting. Do not automatically dismiss this sign as a curse of growing older. This could be a symptom of PAD or peripheral arterial disease. This is a result of fatty plaque accumulating in your arteries and clogging them, which has been linked to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Both PAD and related cardiovascular disease are generally completely treatable as long as you listen to the early warning signs and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

**4. Feeling faint or light headed.** There are many different

causes of dizziness which are in no way related to heart disease. Fitness gyms post signs warning individuals that they should stop exercising, if they become faint or light headed. You could simply be dehydrated or you rose from a sitting or lying too quickly. If it is reoccurring, it is important to consult a physician to determine whether it is something such as a side effect of a medication that you are currently taking or if it is related to cardiovascular disease. Dizziness may also be a warning from your heart that your blood pressure is dropping too fast or frequently. This may be the result of a defective heart valve or clogged arteries.

**5. Shortness of breath.** If you have been fit pretty much all of your life, but suddenly become short of breath when performing those same routine exercises, it could be the result of an infection, anemia or asthma. It could be something much more serious, especially if you began to feel this way after simply climbing stairs and it is to the degree that it makes you cough. The heart may be having trouble pumping blood and/or your heart valves may be injured.

A defective heart valve can cause fluid to accumulate that may cause wheezing and coughing that are often mistaken for bronchial asthma. Once the valve is repaired or replaced it eliminates fluid from the lungs and allows the patient to breathe much easier. Be sure that you consult your doctor about this warning sign.

**6. Depression.** Depression is extremely prevalent throughout the entire world. More than 19 million people are affected every year in the United States alone. While depression is not generally an actual direct symptom of cardiovascular disease, studies show that it can increase the risk of heart disease. Those who suffer from other symptoms of cardiovascular disease or are hereditarily at risk for it are more likely to suffer from depression as well. Physical and mental health are closely related and play an integral part in your overall well-being. It is essential that you speak with a medical

professional immediately, if you are suffering from depression whether you believe it is related to heart disease or not.

**7. Frequent migraines.** There are all sorts of reason that you may get a headache. It could be the result of stress, allergies or the beginning of a cold. Frequent migraines are an indicator of possible cardiovascular disease. Approximately 12 percent of the world's population suffers from migraine headaches. That figure dramatically increases to 40 percent in those diagnosed with heart disease. Numerous studies are being conducted because the exact connection remains unclear. One common theory is that it is the result of an imbalance of the autonomic nervous system and heart defects. This is because a connection has been made between these abnormalities and individuals suffering from migraines accompanied by auras.

**8. Hearing your heartbeat as you fall asleep.** Some individuals are able to hear their defective heart valve as they fall asleep. Some of them become adjusted to the sound and/or simply change the positions that they sleep in. It is important not to ignore this symptom and to speak with your doctor about it to determine the cause. There are several reasons why your heart may pound loud enough for you to hear. Certain medications, anemia, dehydration and low blood sugar or blood pressure are all possible causes.

**9. Anxiety accompanied by nausea and sweating.** Sudden panic attacks accompanied by nausea and sweating may be caused by an anxiety disorder. This may also be an indication of cardiovascular disease. If you experience this with other serious symptoms such as pain that radiates through your shoulder, back, chest and other upper extremities, it is vital that you seek immediate medical attention. This could be a sign that you are having a heart attack. Five precious minutes could be the difference between life and death.

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*For the original article, visit .*

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## **Loving Gay People: Compassion Without Compromise?**

Let's be clear. Homosexuality is a sin. If the Bible is infallible—and it is—then Scriptures like Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:18-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Timothy 1:8-10 and Judges 19:16-24 cannot be misinterpreted.

But if the Word of God is without blemish—and it is—adultery is a sin too. So is lying, stealing, idol worship, hatred and other assorted transgressions and acts of ungodliness. Whether some in the church choose to believe it or not, there is no distinction between “venial” and “mortal” sin. It all requires repentance from believers of Jesus Christ.

And, as Romans 3:23 tells us, “... for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” So, EVERYONE has something in their lives of which to repent.

Certainly no one in the church who believes in the infallibility of God's Word is condoning homosexuality, nor should they. And certainly adultery among heterosexual couples should be brought to light as well.

But have we, as the imitators of Christ that we're instructed to be, forgotten about Matthew 10:42? The often-quoted scripture says, "And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

Doesn't the same principle apply in dealing with members of the gay community? Instead of pointing fingers, shooting harsh looks and shouting condemnation—behavior which, interestingly enough repels people instead of attracting them—shouldn't we be willing to sit and speak with them, get to know them and eventually share the gospel with them?

Ron Citlau and Adam Barr certainly believe so. Both pastors in the Reformed Church in America, Citlau and Barr recently authored a book titled, *Compassion Without Compromise* (Bethany House), in which they reveal how the gospel "frees us to love our gay friends without losing the truth."

Their association with the Reformed Church might immediately put up a red flag for some readers. Citlau says the denomination is "being torn apart" because "a growing number of our churches and leaders are promoting a pro-LGBT theology, including many pastors and professors at our colleges and seminaries."

Citlau and Barr are not among that group. They are firmly behind resolution R-28, passed at the RCA General Synod in 2013 that reads, "While compassion, patience and loving support should be shown to all those who struggle with same-sex desires, the General Synod reaffirms our official position that homosexual behavior is a sin according to the Holy Scriptures, therefore any person, congregation or assembly which advocates homosexual behavior or provides leadership for a service of same-sex marriage or a similar celebration has committed a disciplinable offense."

At the 2013 RCA General Synod, General Secretary Tom DeVries

quoted 1 John 4:18ff (NIV), which says, “‘There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment ... If anyone says, I love God, yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his sister and brother.’”

“We’re going to be challenged in how we live this out together,” De Vries said. “My call would be for us to say, how do we begin to take steps of love? Steps forward, steps toward each other, and steps that declare that we love God, but we also love each other and others.”

Barr says that the struggle within the Reformed Church on this issue is simply a small manifestation of a fault line that is forming in the church.

“This isn’t just a debate over how we define doctrine,” he said. “In the end, our differences are producing diametrically opposed visions for gospel ministry.”

But that doesn’t mean that that churches shouldn’t be without compassion for the broken and hurting. If it weren’t for attitudes like that, Citlau might still be dealing with his own issues.

Now a husband and the father of four boys, Citlau escaped from a life of homosexuality and, in 1997, gave his life to Jesus and began attending a local church in Southern California.

“The reason I began to follow Jesus is because of the local community,” he said. “They didn’t demand that I change right away. They made me feel like I belonged before I was better. That compassion and caring attitude thrust me into eternal life. The church community loved me where I was at. I always thought that no one would love me if they actually saw who I was.”

You think a nonjudgmental attitude, prayer and a little compassion can't help facilitate the miraculous transformation from a life of blatant sin to that of servitude to Christ? Like Citlau's testimony, consider the story of Amy, a woman featured in Pastor John Burke's book, *Mud and the Masterpiece: Seeing Yourself and Others Through the Eyes of Jesus*.

Just for kicks on a Sunday morning, Amy and her lesbian girlfriend decided to attend a church service. "Lets go just for fun! We'll see how much we can push their buttons," Amy told her girlfriend.

Amy admitted that she went to the church "on a mission to shock people."

"Rachel and I would hold hands in front of people, but instead of the disgusted looks of contempt we expected, people met eyes with us and treated us like real people," Amy is quoted in the book. "So, we started coming to church weekly. We kept moving closer to the front each week, trying to get a reaction so that we would be rejected sooner rather than later. When we couldn't shock people, we stopped trying and started learning."

What happened soon after cannot be contributed to anything but the transformational power of the Holy Spirit. Amy and Rachel stopped seeing each other, but Amy continued to attend church in search for "something." It took a few years, but as she continued to learn more and more about Jesus, she discovered something that shocked her: God actually did love her.

God's Word began to show her how the roots of her sexual issues were tied with her philandering dad. A seminar at Burke's Gateway Church in Austin, Texas, helped Amy to bring closure to her brokenness.

Amy now leads Gateway's ministry that helps people find healing and wholeness from many kinds of sexual and relational issues.

In Citlau's case and with Amy's, someone became compelled to Christlikeness and compassion. Read Colossians 3:12-13. The result was two more souls' names written in the Book of Life.

But what happens when Christians simply give up on homosexuals and write them off as going to hell? What happens when there is little or no compassion for those that will at least listen? Read part 2 of this story to find out.

*Shawn A. Akers is the online managing editor for Charisma Media.*

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## 10 Memory-Making Activities to Do With Your Wife

You don't have to be super creative or break the bank to create memories with your wife. There are several simple yet meaningful activities and routines you can start to help bring you closer to your wife and, at the same time, create memories.

Here are 10 things to do with your wife:

**1. Weekly date night.** Simply spending quality time together is probably not enough to prevent a relationship from getting stale. Here's How to Reinvent Date Night.

**2. Exercise together.** This is a win-win. Both of you will benefit from the exercise and the relational time together.

**3. Develop each other's interests.** This week you attend the play she wanted to see, but you could care less about. Next week she accompanies you to the game. Compare notes. Laugh at yourselves.

**4. Volunteer together.** Find the needs in your community and jump in together. Try connecting with your church on a mission trip. Giving yourselves to people in need will move you both on a deep level.

**5. Eat at least one meal a day together.** Talk about favorite meals. Make plans for future meals together.

**6. Communicate throughout the day.** Send her a text or call her on your break to let her know you are thinking about her.

**7. Travel together.** Go to the place she's always wanted to go or just do a simple weekend away. Leaving town helps temporarily take away the stress and responsibilities of life.

**8. Watch your wedding video every anniversary.**

**9. Host an annual holiday party.** Gather friends and celebrate.

**10. Have a game night.** Pull out Scrabble, Monopoly, Apples to Apples or your favorite game. Eat ice cream too.

And, don't miss out on these 34 Memory-Making Things to Do with Your Kids either!

Sound Off: What is your favorite memory with your wife in the past year?

Huddle Up: Huddle up with your wife and plan to do one or several of these things.

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# Unexplained Pain: You Could Have This Common Condition

Do you hurt all over? Are you always tired, yet can't get a good night's sleep? If so, you may be suffering from fibromyalgia and not know it, says Dr. Jacob Teitelbaum, nationally recognized authority on pain, and author of the book *Pain Free 1-2-3!*

"Fibromyalgia is one of the most under-diagnosed conditions in the country—85 percent of people suffering with this devastating, yet very treatable illness, have not been given the correct diagnosis," Dr. Teitelbaum tells *Newsmax Health*. Unfortunately, patients often have a difficult time getting properly diagnosed and treated, because symptoms can be confused with other illnesses. Also, symptoms can be so vague that they are dismissed by doctors or treated as a mental problem, not a physical disease.

Currently, less than 2 percent of the general public is recognized as having fibromyalgia, but if new diagnosing guidelines are accepted by the American College of Rheumatology, the percentage will jump to more than 5 percent. Since women are more prone to the immune disease than men, 1 out of 12 women may be suffering, often in silence, because their complaints have been ignored.

Symptoms include a combination of severe fatigue and widespread pain that lasts at least three months, as well as brain fog. But the symptom that sets fibromyalgia apart from other conditions, such as multiple sclerosis or arthritis, is the inability to get a restful night's sleep. "You either have severe insomnia or you wake up feeling you haven't slept," says Dr. Teitelbaum.

Patients often suffer for years, going from doctor to doctor

trying to find out what's wrong with them. "Most doctors are clueless," he says. "They don't even know how to pronounce the name of the disease.

"Most doctors are not familiar with the disease, they're not trained in the disease, and they don't know how to diagnose the disease," he says. "They figure, 'I don't know what's wrong with you, so you're crazy.'"

Now, a simple quiz you can take at home can pinpoint if your pain is caused by fibromyalgia. To take the test, go here.

Even if you have other medical conditions, such as multiple sclerosis, lupus, or rheumatoid arthritis (RA), if you can't sleep and have widespread pain, you may have secondary fibromyalgia, which should be diagnosed and treated. "If you have another disease, it's important to find out if you have fibromyalgia, because if you go to your doctor and tell them you are having horrible pain, they're going to keep giving you more powerful and toxic medications to treat lupus or RA," says Dr. Teitelbaum. "The drugs aren't going to help, and they're going to make your body more toxic."

If you believe you have fibromyalgia, or if you have any form of chronic pain, you can use Dr. Teitelbaum's SHINE protocol to get well:

- **Sleep.** Get eight hours of sleep each night.
- **Hormonal support.** Low thyroid, adrenal estrogen and testosterone levels can all lead to chronic pain.
- **Infection, impingement, and inflammation.** Infection and inflammation are common causes of pain and can be dealt with using natural products such as fish oil and frankincense (boswellia).
- **Nutrition support.** A healthy diet with adequate vitamins and minerals is essential. Several studies have linked low levels of vitamin D with chronic pain.
- **Exercise.** Exercise should be matched to each person's

capability.

“The majority of people who follow SHINE are pain-free in three months,” says Dr. Teitelbaum.

You can speed your recovery by taking a special nutrient called ribose, according to Dr. Teitelbaum. “Studies show you’ll increase your energy by 61 percent in three weeks and reduce your pain.” He recommends taking 5 grams of ribose powder mixed with water three times a day for three weeks, and then reducing the dosage to twice a day. He also recommends a vitamin powder called Energy Revitalization System. “It replaces 35 pills a day.

“You don’t have to live with pain,” says Dr. Teitelbaum. “You can get your life back.”

*For the original article, visit .*

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## **Spiritually Pregnant? This Revelation Will Give You Strength**

As I mentioned in last week’s Plumb Line column, I’ve had a series of baby dreams over the last decade. One seemed to build upon another until this last one, which seemed out of sequence. One interpretation set me—and many others—free from frustration.

If you haven’t already, please go back and read [1 Possible Reason You Haven’t Birthed Your Prophetic Dream](#) so you can catch the full meaning of this article.

After receiving the dream and interpretation I shared last week, something unusual happened. Something that defies coincidence and happenstance. Something that goes beyond a chance encounter or a fluke face-to-face. Something that could only be God encouraging me to continue preparing for the birthing.

It happened while I was on my way from Fort Lauderdale to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to minister in the Navajo Nation with a group of people I had never met. The Southwest flight had one stop in Houston. I had to change planes for the second leg of the journey. I usually don't fly Southwest so I didn't realize there was open seating until the flight attendant told me to "Sit wherever you'd like."

### **Waiting on the Lord**

Now, I must admit I don't normally pray about what airplane seat to occupy on my journeys. Of course, I prefer an aisle seat close to the front so I can get where I'm going just a little quicker! But it's never occurred to me to stop and pray about my seating—until the Holy Spirit moved on my heart to ask.

So I stood there—with a long line of impatient people behind me—asking the Holy Spirit to show me where to sit. I scanned the aisles from as far back as I could see to right in front of me until I felt led a few rows down on the left. An older woman was sitting on the aisle seat and had an empty seat next to her. I asked if I could take the seat. She nodded. I sat down and determined to do some reading on the second leg of my trip—except this woman started talking to me.

Now, I usually don't talk to folks on the plane much. I like to read or pray or otherwise process thoughts and strategize about the next assignment. But this woman wanted to chat. I thought I heard her say she was on her way to see her girlfriend who had called her in the middle of the night to

rush out to California. I was troubled.

### **The Midwife is Ready**

I thought to myself, “OK, she’s a lesbian and God wants me to share the gospel with her. That’s why I’m sitting here.” I was wondering what would happen next. I kept listening to her and waiting for an opening. Only I had misheard her. She didn’t say she was going to meet her girlfriend. I misheard. She said she was going to deliver a baby. An old friend had called her in the middle of the night to hurry out to Sacramento because labor pains had started. I said labor pains had started!

God purposely sat me next to a midwife—a midwife that has delivered Hollywood stars and Olympic athletes, among many hundreds of other babies over the course of her career. I listened intently to her describe spiritual principles of birthing. I took notes on what the Holy Spirit was showing me while she shared the beauty of the birthing process. I was moved by the conversation. But what I learned next was really stunning: This midwife, whom I met on a plane in Houston, lives three blocks down the street from my house. We’re neighbors! What are the chances!

From that encounter—that divine appointment—I received this revelation: Sometimes the spiritual pregnancy is long and hard. Sometimes it’s frustrating. Sometimes you just feel like you are going to bust wide open. Sometimes the labor pains feel like too much to bear. Sometimes you don’t feel like pushing any more. But the midwife is ready!

When God’s perfect timing comes for you to deliver what He has put in you, He will be there to help you birth it. The Holy Spirit is your midwife, so to speak, and He is ready when the Father decides the time is right. So take heart. Don’t give way to frustration. God has your dream in His hands—because it’s His dream too!

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## **Netanyahu as Mordechai, America as Esther**

In the story of Esther, celebrated during the Feast of Purim, which begins tomorrow, Esther and her relative, Mordechai, are very close in heart and relationship, though separated by distance.

Through her beauty, Esther has won a coveted position of safety and economic security in the walls of the palace of Ahasuerus. Mordechai, and most of the Jewish community, are living off in the Persian land of Shushan. The evil Haman launches a plot to destroy the Jews, and the imminent threat of this plot is felt keenly in Shushan, where, the story says, the Jews are "perplexed." ... They are experiencing a real threat that no one else in the kingdom seems aware of, nor is taking seriously.

Mordechai boldly acts. He draws upon his relationship with Esther and, risking her displeasure, speaks strongly to her, fully apprising her of the dire threat facing the Jews in the region, imploring Esther to use her position to influence in

the government to act, and to act decisively and immediately.

Esther perceives herself as far from the imminent danger which Mordechai knows is real, and feels largely immune to the threat. She is doing the best she can, she seems to communicate, and to take any more decisive action could upset the delicate balance at Court, which has secured her favor. "Over 30 days have passed since I have been called in to the King ..." she reports. Bureaucracy, it seems, moved slow, even in ancient Persia.

It is at this point that Mordechai's cry cuts like a knife to the heart of the story. Mordechai risks everything—even the good favor he had currently enjoyed with the king and within the kingdom, to arouse Esther from her distracted and misguided passivity. Was this because Mordechai felt his life was at risk? In part.

But he also realized that Esther's life was just as much at risk as his. If Esther did not act and act immediately and decisively, all would be lost. It was not up to Mordechai to tell Esther *how* to act. But act she must. The time for talk and waiting was over.

We have just witnessed a moment in history of biblical proportion, where indeed the ancient Jewish calendar and the modern political one have aligned. Mordechai has come to our shores. The message has been presented. The king does not understand what is going on. It is up to Esther to act, and act now.

And act she will, for she must. Across this nation, pastors and rabbis, genuinely reform-minded Muslims and human rights activists, grandmas and undergrads, evangelicals and atheists—everyone and anyone concerned about the future of this planet must stand up now and understand what is at stake. Seventy years ago, world leaders inanely jabbered about the good Hitler was doing and how he would bring peace and

stability to the region, until Chamberlain's appeasement lunacy quickly melted under the stark blazing glare of reality.

Churchill arose and prophesied into a generation that then stood firm and resolute against the greatest evil in modern times. We are at that moment again. President Obama criticized Mr. Netanyahu for "not offering any viable alternatives," as though it would have been appropriate and non-inflammatory for the prime minister to explain to Congress what true leadership looks like and how the president *should* be leading.

Mordechai has come to our safe and economically secure shores. He has warned us of the real and imminent danger of a nuclear Iran, though it seems far removed from us. He has cut through the bureaucratic morass of lumbering government to sound a clear alarm. The beautiful Esther that is America must awaken now—and act—before it is too late.

**Robert Stearns** *is the founder and executive director of Eagles' Wings, a global movement of churches, ministries and leaders.*

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## **7 Things That Can Spark an Argument With Your Spouse**

Is there too much peace and harmony in your marriage? Want to pick a fight? (sarcasm) If so, here are seven ways to start an argument with your spouse.

**1. Change plans at the last minute without consulting your spouse.** Changing plans at the last minute without checking with your spouse isn't an act of romantic spontaneity. Rather,

it demonstrates selfishness and a lack of caring for your spouse. Being married means being a part of the same team. [Tweet This] So when one teammate makes a decision without the other teammate, it inevitably leads to conflict. Instead, help your spouse feel like their input is important by consulting them before making decisions. Because being united in the little things paves the way to being united in the big things.

## **2. Wait until late at night to have a serious conversation.**

When my wife, Susan, and I start discussing a serious matter when we are both tired and worn out from a long day, the results usually are not good. And I think many couples would agree with me that trying to discuss a sensitive subject at night rarely yields good results. As I suggested in my blog *Avoid Arguments with Good Timing*, make sure you discuss tough topics at the right time. Because working through issues when you and your spouse are fresh and focused will lead to much healthier conversation.

## **3. Speak without a filter.**

One sure way to start a fight with your spouse is to just say whatever is on your mind with no self-control. When you do so, hurtful, destructive words are often said. So how can you keep these things from slipping out in the heat of the moment? By speaking with a filter in your marriage! Some examples of filters include: *Are my intentions pure?* or *Will this build up my spouse?* For more filters, check out my blog *5 Ways to Filter What You Say*.

## **4. Compare your spouse to others.**

When you see other couples who appear to have it all together, it's easy to start comparing by saying things like: "Why can't you be more sensitive like Amy's husband?" Or, "Why can't you be more supportive like Ben's wife?" When you do so, an argument may not be far behind. The key to avoiding the comparison argument is understanding that all spouses have their faults and you aren't seeing the whole picture of what their relationship is really like. Just remember, no one is perfect—including you

and me.

**5. Bring up past mistakes.** So many marital arguments arise over past mistakes. Though you may still be in pain, it's important to make the decision to forgive and your heart will follow. For more on giving forgiveness, visit my blog *Corrie ten Boom: The Ultimate Forgiveness Story*.

**6. Question your spouse in front of the kids.** Another way to make your spouse angry is to question your spouse's judgment or disagree with your spouse in front of your children. To avoid conflict over this, be sure to never create a negative image of your spouse in front of your kids. Instead, discuss issues privately with your spouse. This will keep both your marriage and your relationship with your kids at its best.

**7. Attack your spouse when they're in a bad mood.** Life is full of irritating moments—moments when frustration gets the best of us. So when you come home in a bad mood after a frustrating day at work, the last thing you want is for your spouse to attack you by saying something like, "What's your problem?" Avoid fights by doing your best to turn your spouse's irritated mood into a calm mood.

How do you avoid getting into an argument with your spouse? Please share your tips below.

**Mark Merrill** is the president of *Family First*. For the original article, visit [.](#)

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## Clearing Up the Confusion:

# Comparing the Sugar Impact of Foods

Many people would like to lessen sugar's impact on their body to lose weight and reduce the risk of many health problems, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and even colds and flu.

However, there appears to be a lot of confusion about which foods have the greatest sugar impact. Below are some foods that have a low sugar impact, as well as some ones with a high sugar impact that may be surprising.

## **Spaghetti Squash**

This is a great substitute for regular spaghetti, which has a high sugar impact. Just cut it in half (carefully!) scrape out the seeds and pulp, oil the cut part, then put each half, cut side down, on a baking sheet and roast at 375 for 40 minutes.

## **Homemade Salad Dressings**

This is a lower sugar impact substitute for bottled salad dressing. Just whisk together one part vinegar (not balsamic) and three parts olive oil and season to taste. Salt and pepper are fine, I also add some Dijon mustard, crushed garlic and Italian Seasoning.

## **How to Soak Beans**

### **(excerpted from JJ Virgin's Sugar Impact Diet)**

If you can, buy your beans dry, and rinse and soak them before cooking them. They'll be more nutritious, lower in salt and less expensive than canned beans. Soaking also ensures they'll cook evenly and cuts down on the gas they generate.

There are two main ways to soak beans: the long-soak method and the quick-soak method.

- **Long soak:** To long soak, rinse the dried beans, put them in a bowl, and add enough water to cover them by about 3 inches. Then just put them in the fridge overnight, and they will be ready for you to drain, rinse, and cook in the morning.
- **Quick soak:** When you're in a hurry, pour the beans into a large pot and add water until they're covered by about 3 inches. Boil for 1 minute, then cover and let stand for an hour. When the beans are tender and have doubled in size, they're done and ready to drain.

Here are the sugar impacts of several types of foods:

## **VEGETABLES**

### **Low Impact**

Acorn squash

Artichoke

Asparagus

Bok Choy

Broccoli

Brussels Sprouts

Butternut squash

Cabbage

Carrots

Cauliflower

Celery

Chard

Cucumber

Eggplant

Kale

Kale chips

Lettuces

Mushrooms

Okra

Onions

Peppers

Pumpkin

Snow peas

Spaghetti squash

Spinach

Turnips

Zucchini

### **Medium Impact**

Beets

Parsnips

Rutabaga

Sweet potatoes

Yams

### **High Impact**

Beet Juice

Carrot juice

French fries

Mashed potatoes

Potato chips

Root veggie chips

Sweet potato fries

White potatoes

## **FRUITS**

### **Low Impact**

Acai berries (no sugar added)

Avocado

Blueberries

Cantaloupe

Cranberries

Gazpacho

Grapefruit

Guava

Lemons

Limes

Nectarines

Olives

Oranges

Peaches

Persimmon

Raspberries

Star fruit

Strawberries

Tomatoes

**Medium Impact**

Apples

Apricots

Bananas

Cherries

Dates

Fresh figs

Grapes

Honeydew

Kiwi

Mango

Papaya

Pears

Pineapple

Plums

Pomegranate

Sundried tomatoes

Tangerines

Tomato juice

Tomato paste

Tomato sauce

V8 juice

Watermelon

### **High Impact**

All dried fruit

Fruit leather

Fruit juices

Jams

Preserves and conserve

Nectar

Sorbet

Fruit juice concentrates

Canned fruit cocktail

Fruit juice Popsicles

### **SWEETENERS**

#### **Low Impact**

100% dark chocolate

85% dark chocolate

Erythritol

Inulin

Chicory

Monk fruit

Stevia

Xylitol

### **Medium Impact**

Blackstrap molasses

Cane syrup (non-GMO)

Coconut palm sugar

Coconut sugar

Glucose (aka dextrose non-GMO)

Local, organic, raw honey

Mannitol

Raw brown sugar (nonprocessed)

Rice syrup

Sorbitol

### **High Impact**

70% dark chocolate

Acesulfame-K

Agave

Candy

Caramel sauce

Chocolate syrup

Crystalline fructose

Fruit juice concentrate

High fructose corn syrup

Honey (processed)

Licorice

Maltodextrin

Maple syrup

Marshmallows

Milk chocolate

Molasses

Neotame

Processed brown sugar

## **DAIRY**

### **Low Impact**

Flax milk (unsweetened)

Full-fat cheeses (avoid blue cheese due to gluten)

Full-fat cream cheese

Full-fat grass-fed milk

Full-fat organic milk

Full-fat plain cottage cheese

Monk fruit sweetened coconut ice cream

Mozzarella

Coconut creamer (no sugar added)

Coconut, cashew or almond milk (no sugar added)

Organic creamer

Organic, plain full-fat Greek-style yogurt

Plain dairy or coconut kefir

Ricotta cheese

### **Medium Impact**

Cream cheese spread (low-fat or full-fat)

Half-and-half

Low-fat cheese

Neufchatel cheese

Organic low-fat or non-fat plain Greek-style yogurt

Part-skim mozzarella

Part-skim ricotta

Soy cheese

Sweetened coconut milk creamer

Unsweetened rice milk

Whipped cream cheese

### **High Impact**

94% fat-free microwave popcorn and/or kettle corn

Breakfast bars

Carnation Instant Breakfast

Creamsicles

Dried fruit snacks

Ensure

Fat-free baked chips

Fat-free muffins

Fat-free pudding

Flavored almond milk yogurt

Flavored kefir

Frozen yogurt

Fruit-added cream cheese

Fudgesicles

Gelato

Granola bars

Hot cocoa

Ice cream

Lite Cool Whip

Low-fat and Fat-free cookies

Low-fat graham crackers

Low-fat or fat-free ice cream

Low-fat or light frozen dinners

Low-fat Oreos

Low or reduced-fat crackers

Non-fat cheeses

Non-fat cream cheese

Pineapple cottage cheese

Pretzels

Protein bars

Pudding

Reduced-fat macaroni and cheese

## **DRESSINGS AND CONDIMENTS**

### **Low Impact**

Avocado oil

Hot sauce

Macadamia nut oil

Mustard

Olive Oil

Olives

Pesto

Salsa

Sesame

Sour Dill pickles

Tabasco

Tapenade

Vinegar

Walnut oil

Wheat-free tamari

### **Medium Impact**

Bread and butter pickles

Caesar dressing

Fish sauce

Green curry sauce

Italian dressing

Marinara sauce (no sugar added)

Pickle relish

Red curry sauce

Sweet pickle relish

Sweet pickles

Tomato sauce

### **High Impact**

Asian-style salad dressing

Balsamic vinaigrette

Balsamic vinegar

BBQ sauce

Blue cheese dressing

Brown sauce

Catalina dressing

Cocktail sauce

French dressing

Hoisin sauce

Honey mustard

Honey mustard dressing

Hot and sour sauce

Ketchup

Marinara sauce (sugar added)

Peanut sauce

Ranch dressing

Raspberry vinaigrette

Steak sauce

Sweet chili sauce

Tartar sauce

Teriyaki sauce

Thousand Island dressing

Worcestershire sauce

## **DRINKS**

### **Low Impact**

All teas

Green drinks (greens only-no fruit, carrot or beet added)

Green tea (no sugar added)

Coffee and decaf coffee

Sparkling mineral water

Unsweetened coconut water

Unsweetened fruit essence teas

Water

### **Medium Impact**

Tomato juice

V8 (not with fruit juice)

Kombucha tea (no sugar added)

### **High Impact**

Capri Sun

Carnation Instant Breakfast

Carrot juice

Commerical "smoothies"

"Enhanced" waters (with sweeteners)

Fruit juices

Fuze

Gatorade

Kool-Aid

PowerAde

Rockstar energy drink

Slim-Fast

Sobe

Soda

Sweet tea

Sweetened coconut water

Vitaminwater and most vitamin-supplemented waters

*For the original article, visit .*

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## **10 Things a Pastor Doesn't Like to Hear Right After His Sermon**

I've actually assembled more than 10 things church members have told pastors immediately after they preached. But these are 10 responses where pastors have had the most visceral reactions.

1. "I am going to be late for lunch because you preached so long."
2. "You must not have had much time to prepare that sermon."
3. "My former pastor preached a much better sermon from that text."
4. "I wish {fill in the blank} would have heard that sermon."

5. "You act like you weren't feeling well while you preached."
6. "I'm sorry I fell asleep while you were preaching. Your voice just puts me to sleep."
7. "Your subject/verb agreement was incorrect three times in your sermon."
8. "I wish you wouldn't preach from the Old Testament."
9. "Let me tell you what you missed in your sermon."
10. "Are we ever going to be done with this sermon series?"

Pastors often take 10 to 20 hours to prepare a sermon. They pray for God to speak through them. They preach with conviction and fervency. And then they hear one of these sentences.

These 10 responses are close approximations of what pastors have actually told me. I am sure there are many more. Let us hear what they are.

**Thom S. Rainer** is the president of LifeWay Christian Resources. For the original article, visit [.](#)

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## 20 Verses That Define Mature Manhood

A beard might help you look like a mature man. A "manly" smell based off the latest deodorant or cologne campaign might help you smell like a mature man.

Even a high-ranking position at work or a recent increase in salary might make you feel like more of a man. But nothing—and

I mean nothing—better defines what it means to become and stay a mature man than the Scriptures.

So, you're not convinced of that?

Here are 20 Bible verses that you will help you build and maintain a true mature manhood:

1. "Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature" (1 Cor. 14:20).

2. "A wise man is full of strength, and a man of knowledge enhances his might, for by wise guidance you can wage your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory" (Prov. 24:5-6).

3. "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).

4. "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb. 10:24-25).

5. "It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?" (Heb. 12:7).

6. "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:8).

7. "But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness" (1 Tim. 6:11).

8. "Speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts" (1 Thess. 2:4).

9. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves" (Phil. 2:3).

10. "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast" (1 Pet. 5:10).

11. "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27).

12. "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

13. "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5).

14. "My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (James 1:19).

15. "A fool is quick tempered, but a wise man stays calm when insulted" (Prov. 12:16).

16. "Rejoice in your sufferings, because you know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Rom. 5:3-4).

17. "Don't be proud at all. Be completely gentle. Be patient. Put up with one another in love" (Eph. 4:2).

18. "Take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm" (Eph. 6:13).

19. "God gave us His spirit, and the spirit doesn't make us weak and fearful, instead, the spirit gives us power and love. He helps us control ourselves" (2 Tim. 1:7).

20. "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13).

Don't see your favorite verse listed? Post it below and let's build a powerful list and inventory for every man to use in his own life.

Did one of these verses impact your life? Share your story and prove the point of this post.

**Manturity** is a blog built on establishing spiritual maturity in today's man. The goal is to assist men in building better marriages and help them grow in maturity and explore different aspects of manhood. features new weekly blog posts, daily social-media updates and a powerful resources page. Stay up to date with the Manturity blog communities on Facebook and Twitter.

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