


Test Your Health IQ: Round four!



This is the 4th in our series of Health IQ tests. If you haven't already, please take a crack at our previous challenges: [Round One](#), [Round Two](#), and [Round Three](#)

According to an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, American adults get a "D" in science; 22% confuse astronomy and astrology! On a general science knowledge quiz consisting of 12 questions, the test-takers answered 7.9 correctly, on average. That's a score of 66%. Only 6% answered all 12 questions correctly. 

Similarly, lack of health literacy is also a huge problem among Americans. We are continually bombarded with often-contradictory health information. U.S. patients are confronted with a myriad of treatment options that they are ill-equipped to properly choose among. Urban legend, aggressive direct-to-consumer advertising, and dumbed-down media stories add to the confusion.

The mission of *Intelligent Medicine* is to enhance your health IQ. Here's a fourth, all-new installment of our Health Quiz. See if you get a "Pass!"

1. Natural treatments with documented efficacy for ulcerative colitis include all of the following EXCEPT:
 - A. Curcumin
 - B. Comfrey
 - C. Omega 3 fish oil
 - D. Aloe Vera
 - E. ALL of the above are correct
2. Arguments against routine mammogram screening of women include all of the following EXCEPT:
 - A. Mammograms are known to miss cancers some of the time
 - B. The cumulative radiation burden of numerous mammograms over the course of a woman's life may contribute to cancer risk
 - C. Mammograms may discover cancers that don't need to be treated
 - D. Mammograms lead to unnecessary procedures and apprehension in women who don't have breast cancer
 - E. ALL of the above are correct
3. Artificial sweeteners have been shown to contribute to obesity for all of the following reasons EXCEPT:
 - A. They disrupt the microbiome which has an effect on absorption and metabolism
 - B. They perpetuate cravings, which result in compensatory over-eating

- C. They aren't really "zero-calorie" as claimed
 - D. NONE of the above are true—artificial sweeteners are a proven aid to management of obesity and diabetes
 - E. A, B, and C are all true.
4. Nicotinamide riboside, a novel nutraceutical, has been shown to deliver all of the following benefits EXCEPT:
- A. It replicates the effects of caloric restriction for anti-aging
 - B. It supports levels of NADH⁺ which helps energy metabolism
 - C. It may have neuroprotective effects
 - D. It helps to relieve pain
 - E. ALL of the above are true
5. To support bone metabolism and to prevent osteoporosis, blood levels of 25-OH vitamin D should be at least:
- A. 20
 - B. 40
 - C. 60
 - D. 80
 - E. 100
6. The function of the appendix is:
- A. To house lymphoid tissue essential for intestinal immunity
 - B. To secrete enzymes essential for nutrient absorption
 - C. To catch and destroy harmful pathogens
 - D. As a reservoir for beneficial bacteria, available to repopulate the intestinal tract
 - E. It has no function; it's simply a vestigial organ, carried over from our evolutionary past
7. Examples of biofilms include all of the following EXCEPT:
- A. Dental tartar and plaque
 - B. Chronic sinusitis
 - C. Chronic ear infections in children
 - D. Poorly healing leg ulcers
 - E. ALL of the above
8. Which of following most accurately reflects the state of the art of nutrigenomics, the science of using genetic information to predict an individual's optimal diet and supplementation:
- A. Nutrigenomic information can be used to formulate diet and supplement plans with a high degree of accuracy
 - B. Blood typing is a more reliable way of determining what diet is most suitable for an individual
 - C. While nutrigenomic information is currently of no value in predicting what a person should eat, it may be in the future as the science advances
 - D. Nutrigenomic testing will never be a useful tool for forecasting

a person's optimal diet

- E. Genetic tests, while yielding clues as to how a person should eat and supplement, must be weighed against an individual's circumstances, preferences, and health status
9. All of the following are signs of adrenal stress EXCEPT:
- A. Inability to fall or stay asleep
 - B. Low blood pressure
 - C. Exercise intolerance
 - D. Low blood sugar, with inability to go long periods without eating
 - E. ALL of the above
10. Which of the following would LEAST likely be beneficial for a sufferer of GERD (gastro-esophageal reflux)?
- A. Deglycyrrhizinated licorice (DGL)
 - B. A low-carb diet
 - C. Peppermint oil capsules
 - D. Aloe gel
 - E. Probiotics

ANSWERS:

- 1. **B:** Comfrey, while soothing and anti-inflammatory, should be reserved for external application, due to its high content of pyrrolidine alkaloids, which can cause liver problems.
- 2. **A:** While true, a test doesn't have to be 100% sensitive to be of predictive value. But let's not quibble—I won't dock you points if you answered "E."
- 3. **C:** While "zero-calorie," they disrupt the microbiome and stoke cravings.
- 4. **D:** While nicotinamide riboside has many benefits, pain relief is not chief among them.
- 5. **B:** 40 is the level generally considered a minimum for prevention of bone loss. While higher levels of D may be beneficial for other reasons, 100 is considered the threshold for potential vitamin D excess.
- 6. **D:** Whereas "A" was once thought to be the function of the appendix—to house lymphoid tissue—researchers are now favoring the theory that the appendix is kind of an auxiliary reservoir for beneficial bacteria.
- 7. **E:** Biofilms make it hard for antimicrobials or the body's natural immune defenses to eradicate bacteria and fungi in many types of infections.
- 8. **E:** While not yet entirely ready for "primetime," nutrigenomic testing may provide useful insights that help with formulation of a diet and supplement program.
- 9. **E:** Dysregulated cortisol can cause all of the above symptoms.
- 10. **C:** While its antimicrobial and antispasmodic effects are useful for

irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), peppermint relaxes the esophageal sphincter, allowing stomach contents to reflux upwards.

If you answered all these questions correctly, or even 9 out of 10, congratulations, you are a true paragon of *Intelligent Medicine*! If you got 7 or 8 right, you're still doing better than average. If you scored 60% or less, your health literacy needs a boost. Try boning up on medical and nutritional facts by listening to our *Intelligent Medicine* podcasts and following the articles we post at DrHoffman.com—you're sure to ace the test when we offer another installment later this year!