

# What's your Health IQ? Take this test to find out!

written by Dr. Ronald Hoffman | October 8, 2015

According to a recent 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 myriad treatment options 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. Let's start with this simple quiz to see if you get a "Pass":

1. Documented benefits of exercise include all of these except:
  - a. Reduced risk of cognitive decline
  - b. Improved survival from many types of cancer
  - c. Better sexual performance
  - d. Protection from HIV infection
  - e. All are correct
2. Vitamin D has been shown to reduce the risk of all except:
  - a. Multiple sclerosis
  - b. Colon cancer
  - c. Influenza
  - d. Melanoma
  - e. All are correct
3. A natural way to reduce the risk of kidney stones is to:
  - a. Drink green tea
  - b. Do hot yoga
  - c. Drink lemon juice
  - d. Drink beer
  - e. None of the above
4. According to the "Hygiene Hypothesis," you should:
  - a. Use Listerine mouthwash daily to prevent mouth infections
  - b. Clean household surfaces frequently with disinfectant
  - c. Allow children to play in the dirt
  - d. Keep up with regularly-scheduled vaccinations
  - e. All of the above
5. All of the following are true about mammograms except:
  - a. There's a general consensus among health professionals that routine screening mammograms save lives
  - b. Mammograms can miss some cancers

- c. Cumulative radiation exposure from mammograms increases a woman's lifetime risk of breast cancer
  - d. After a certain age, it's recommended that it's OK for older women to stop getting routine screening mammograms
  - e. All are correct
6. The bacterial composition of your "microbiome" impacts all except:
- a. Your weight
  - b. Your risk of developing diabetes
  - c. Your mood
  - d. Your risk of certain cancers
  - e. All are correct
7. Which of the following is an example of "epigenetics":
- a. The high risk of developing breast cancer in woman with the BrCa gene
  - b. The ability of persons predisposed to diabetes and weight gain to stay healthy with diet and exercise
  - c. Families in which most males die early of heart disease
  - d. The claim that diet and supplements can't help autistic children since it's pretty much "hardwired" from birth
  - e. None of the above
8. Examples of factors that promote aging and degenerative disease include all of the above except
- a. Free radicals
  - b. Advanced Glycation Endproducts (AGEs)
  - c. Nitric oxide
  - d. Dietary trans-fats
  - e. All are correct
9. Sleep deprivation can result in all of the following except:
- a. Decreased testosterone levels
  - b. Insulin resistance
  - c. Weight gain
  - d. Attention Deficit Disorder
  - e. All are correct
10. Among Americans over 65, the incidence of polypharmacy (the simultaneous use of more than 5 medications, some of which may be unnecessary) is greater than:
- a. 10%
  - b. 25%
  - c. 40%
  - d. 50%
  - e. 60%

- 1. *D – There is no evidence that exercise confers protection against HIV*
- 2. *E – Vitamin protects against all of the above*
- 3. *C – Lemon juice, because of its citric acid content, reduces the risk of calcium oxalate stones*
- 4. *C – Exposure to germs in childhood "trains" the immune system to respond normally to pathogens and reduces the likelihood of allergic and autoimmune disorders*

5. A – While most health organizations continue to recommend routine screening mammograms, considerable doubt has been raised over the survival benefits they may confer
6. E – All are affected by the bacterial composition of the microbiome
7. B – The ability of individuals to overcome genetic predisposition to diabetes and overweight is an example of epigenetic influence on the expression of heredity
8. C – Nitric oxide improves endothelial function which protects against circulatory disorders
9. E – All have been found to be associated with sleep deprivation
10. D – Over 50% of Americans over 65 are using five or more medications (polypharmacy)

If you answered all these questions correctly, or even nine out of ten, congratulations, you are a true paragon of *Intelligent Medicine*! If you got seven or eight 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 here at [DrHoffman.com](http://DrHoffman.com)—you're sure to ace the test when we repeat it sometime next year!