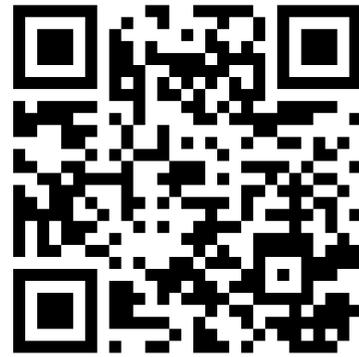


# CALIFORNIA CENTER *for* FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE

SEPTEMBER 2023 | ISSUE 5



Share Me!



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## Time Flies

It's hard to believe it is already September! As we return from vacations and send the kids back to school, many of us find ourselves getting back into a routine, or trying to create new ones. I know I am. As I do, I am trying to emphasize the importance of making time for my health.

Routines help me stay on track with my health goals and continue to remind me that my well-being is a priority. Time can escape us quickly as we become busy and put everyone's needs before our own, but it is important to prioritize our own health so that we can best take care of others. As we say farewell to summer, I want to encourage each of you to slow down, touch the grass, get sunshine on your face, and embrace time with your community. You will never regret the time you took to support your own needs.

In health,

Sunjya Schweig, MD

# Patient Programs & Offerings

We offer a variety of online programs to fit your needs, from webinars to comprehensive health programs. Our goal is to offer our patients and the general public online programs that provide education, health tips, and support to promote optimal health and wellness. These programs are virtual, so you can take them with you on the go, and learn at your own pace. [Explore our current offerings:](#)

- Sleep Mastery
- Women's Hormones Webinar
- Men's Hormones Webinar
- Introduction to Breathwork
- Love Your Gut
- Understanding and Mastering Metabolic Health
- Stressful Times Toolkit
- Peer Support Group
- 30 days of Wellness (opt-in [here](#))

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## *It's wildfire season, are you ready?*

Even if you aren't on evacuation notice, toxic wildfire smoke can disperse far from the source, affecting many. Our Smoke Exposure Support Program gives you the tools you need to protect your health during fire season.

This program is **FREE** to first responders. Please email [operations@ccfmed.com](mailto:operations@ccfmed.com) to receive your unique access code.

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***Enroll Today***



## ***Same Programs, Lower Prices***

We are passionate about bringing health education and resources to our patients -- and beyond. We also understand the rising cost of living can be a challenge for many, but accessing valuable health information should not be. In order to make our programs accessible to more people, we are now offering them at more affordable prices. If you've been eyeing a program but have been held back due to cost, this is your time! Explore our new prices, and don't forget about our free offerings as well!

*\*All patient programs are free to our current Recover and Rebuild CCFM members.*

**For more information and to register, [click here.](#)**



## NEW OFFERING

### ‘Ask Our Nutritionist’ with CCFM’s Lindsay Christensen, MS, CNS, CKNS

Join CCFM’s nutritionist, Lindsay Christensen, every other Tuesday for virtual office hours. This online group allows you time to ask important dietary questions and gain a better understanding of the world of nutrition. This group is open to all CCFM patients. In the future, we plan to offer this to the public at large so stay tuned.

‘Ask Our Nutritionist’ is completely **FREE** and will meet **every other Tuesday at noon, PST**, beginning Tuesday, **September 19th**. Click [here](#) for more information.

*\*Please note due to the nature of this group, this does not serve as a 1:1 appointment with Lindsay and she will not be able to provide individualized care for your unique health protocol.*



## Podcast Highlights

Make sure to press play on the latest podcast episodes featuring Sunjya Schweig, MD



### DR. RUSCIO RADIO

Dr. Schweig sits down with Dr. Michael Ruscio to discuss our work at CCFM, the power of Functional Medicine, and how treating the root cause improves chronic illness.

[Listen here.](#)



### DHRU PUROHIT PODCAST

Dhru Purohit sits down with Dr. Schweig for a masterclass on sleep and how it impacts every area of our health.

[Listen here.](#)



### THE DOCTOR'S FARMACY

Dr. Schweig joins Dr. Mark Hyman to discuss why autoimmune issues are on the rise and how we can treat them using a Functional Medicine approach.

[Listen here.](#)

# Nonprofit Updates from the FMRTC Team

We are pleased to bring you the latest from the Functional Medicine Research and Technology Center (FMRTC), the nonprofit wing of CCFM. Our mission, deeply ingrained in our daily operations, is to prevent and reverse chronic illnesses by delving into cutting-edge research, education, and innovation. We're thrilled to announce that our website is now live and fully operational. We encourage you to [explore it](#).



## Spotlight: Lyme Disease Prevention for Firefighters

Lyme disease is notorious for causing health concerns ranging from fatigue and joint pain, to life-threatening cardiac and neurological issues. Lyme and other tickborne diseases are a significant public health issue in many global regions.

Unfortunately, firefighters are at an increased risk of contracting Lyme disease due to regular exposure to tick-infested areas. Whether it's battling wildfires or attending to emergency calls in urban and suburban settings, they are at high risk for tick-borne illnesses. We've recognized a glaring gap: many firefighters are uninformed about Lyme disease risk and the preventative measures vital for their safety. This gap not only puts them at increased risk but also compromises their ability to continue serving our communities effectively.

Our newest initiative focuses on addressing this challenge. We aim to provide targeted training and resources to raise awareness of tickborne illnesses among firefighters. This includes the creation and distribution of educational materials, organizing training sessions on tick bite prevention, education on tick identification, and promoting regular tick checks. We will also be providing education on various tick repellents, guiding fire crews on symptom recognition, and ensuring they receive prompt medical care when needed.

The threat of Lyme and tickborne diseases is real and growing. As wildland firefighting needs expand and our firefighters continue to serve in diverse environments, it's our collective responsibility to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and tools to stay safe. With our new program we hope to help keep them safe as they continue their pivotal roles in our communities. If you would like to donate to our work with this program, you can do so [here](#).

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## Online Summit: *Mastering Mast Cell Activation*

Have you been struggling for years with mystery symptoms, feeling exhausted and misunderstood? Does it feel like you're trying to convince multiple specialists that you're not making this up? Mast cell activation syndrome could be a key reason behind your unexplained symptoms. Join CCFM's Sunjya Schweig, MD, and other functional medicine experts to explore the latest information on MCAS, and find your path to healing!

**Mastering Mast Cell Activation is online and FREE from October 16-22, 2023.**

- Dr. Schweig will discuss the Tick-borne/Mast Cell connection on 10-20-23.

[Reserve your spot today!](#)



# Supplement of the Month

## Are You Getting Enough Calcium?

by Lindsay Christensen, MS, CNS, CKNS

Calcium is an under-appreciated nutrient. Most of us vaguely know we must eat enough calcium to support healthy bones. However, I've found that many patients don't think much about their calcium intake until they receive a DEXA scan result that shows suboptimal bone density or experience a bone fracture or another injury. However, if we can optimize calcium intake throughout our lives, we'll set ourselves up for better bone density and health.

So, how much calcium should you be consuming? 1,000-1,200 mg of calcium/day is a good goal for most people. It is best to obtain as much calcium as possible from whole foods and to only use supplemental calcium if necessary to round out your calcium intake because high doses of supplemental calcium may pose a risk to cardiovascular health.

Here are the top whole-food sources of calcium. Please note that some foods, such as nut milk, are fortified with calcium. While these are fine to include in your diet, we ideally don't want to rely on fortified foods as our primary sources of calcium.

- Bone-in canned fish, such as bone-in sardines, mackerel, and salmon. Read the label carefully to make sure you're choosing bone-in fish. Boneless sardines, mackerel, and salmon are not significant sources of calcium.
- Low-oxalate dark leafy greens, such as kale, mustard greens, bok choy, arugula, and collard greens. 1 cup of kale provides 55 mg of calcium.
- Cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli and bok choy. For reference, one cup of broccoli provides 60 mg of calcium.
- Tahini: 2 tbsp of tahini provide 120 mg of calcium.
- Almonds: 1 serving of almonds (1/4 cup) provides 96 mg of calcium. Choose soaked and dehydrated or sprouted almonds, which contain more bioavailable calcium.
- Chia seeds: 2 tbsp. of chia seeds provide 179 mg of calcium.
- Basil seeds: 2 tbsp. of basil seeds provide 270 mg of calcium. Zen Basil is a good resource for basil seeds: <https://zenbasil.com/>
- Full-fat fermented dairy products: 1 cup of yogurt contains 450 mg of calcium.
- Figs: 2 small fresh figs provide 28 mg of calcium.
- Orange: 1 navel orange provides 60 mg of calcium.

How can you determine whether you're getting enough dietary calcium? While blood work helps assess your levels of many nutrients, calcium isn't one of them.

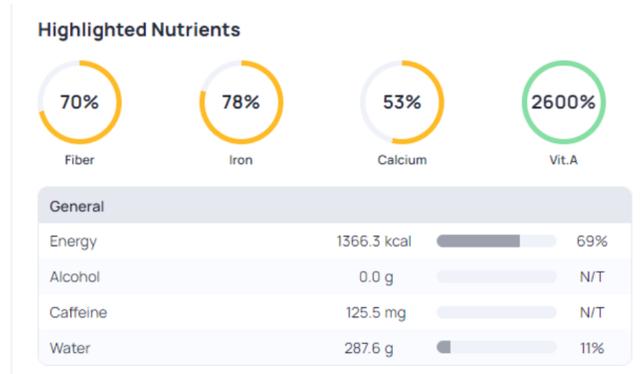
Calcium levels are tightly controlled in the bloodstream; therefore, serum calcium (calcium levels in your blood) is not a reliable indicator of dietary calcium intake.

The best way to determine whether you're consuming enough calcium in your diet is to track your food for several days in an app such as [Cronometer](#). With Cronometer, you can see how much dietary calcium you're consuming and then adjust your intake of calcium-containing foods accordingly if you're falling short.

Continue reading on page 6. →

## Supplement of the Month Continued...

Here's an example of what a suboptimal calcium intake looks like in Cronometer:



If you are on your computer and hover your cursor over the calcium circle, you can see how many milligrams of calcium were consumed. For example, this patient consumed 534 mg of calcium. This means she needs to nearly double her intake to reach at least 1,000 mg of calcium daily:



What if you cannot consume 1,000-1,200 mg of calcium solely through whole foods? Maybe you're dealing with food sensitivities that preclude you from eating some of the foods on this list. In that case, you may need to supplement with some calcium.

At CCFM, our preferred calcium supplements are either calcium citrate or MCHC (microcrystalline hydroxyapatite complex) calcium. Calcium citrate provides supplemental calcium in an absorbable form. MCHC is usually derived from bovine bone and contains calcium and other compounds found in bone, such as phosphorus and collagen. For calcium citrate, we like [Pure Encapsulations Calcium Citrate](#) (search product PUR-CC1 to purchase). For MCHC calcium, we recommend [Bone Builder Forte by Metagenics](#) (search product MET-CALACAP to purchase).

Finally, it is essential to maintain an optimal vitamin D level and to consume vitamin K2 in your diet to ensure that calcium is directed to places where it is needed, such as your bones and kept out of places it does not belong, such as your soft tissues and arteries. You can obtain vitamin D from sun exposure and a limited array of foods, namely egg yolks and fatty fish. However, most people must also supplement with vitamin D to maintain a healthy level between 40-60 ng/mL. Vitamin K2 is found in egg yolks, liver, and fermented dairy products.

**Fun fact:** Did you know that an optimal calcium intake can protect your body from lead, a toxic heavy metal? Lead and calcium share similar properties, so ensuring an optimal calcium intake may help inhibit lead from being taken up by tissues, such as bone tissue.

# Product of the Month

## Wear Are You Now?

Using Wearable Devices to Optimize Performance, Health and Longevity

By Sunjya Schweig, MD and Tracey, O'Shea, FNP-C

Wearable technology can provide a deeper picture of internal functioning and help to build and adjust lifestyle habits and routines to lower risk. In today's technology-driven world, people can use widely available devices and data-driven insights to help guide lifestyle and health decisions and perform at their best. Continuous monitoring enables you to adjust daily decision-making to directly benefit your health with real-time feedback showing the immediate impact of interventions.

You may be familiar with some of today's popular wearables like the Apple Watch, WHOOP band, FitBit, or the Garmin Smartwatch. At CCFM, we love (and all use) the Oura Ring. The Oura ring is a sleep and recovery tracker, however, its data provides more than just that. Combined with its comprehensive app, Oura's data centers around three scores: readiness, sleep, and activity. Each is calculated on heart rate, heart rate variability, temperature, daily activity, and more. Your scores tell you how your body feels and what your body needs.

If you are using an Oura ring or another wearable device, here are some data points to pay attention to:

1. **Heart rate variability** (HRV) is a key marker that reflects an individual's capacity to effectively respond to environmental demands. HRV shows the variance in time between the beats of your heart. High HRV is a sign of a balanced nervous system and shows that your body is capable of adapting to its environment and performing optimally. A low HRV tends to represent a reduced capacity to effectively adjust and respond to stressful stimuli. HRV can be impacted negatively through stress, illness, alcohol, impaired sleep, toxins, workouts that are too intense, etc., or positively with restorative sleep, balanced workout or workload, healthy eating habits, mindfulness practices, appropriate work-to-rest ratios, and more.
2. **Resting heart rate** (RHR) is an indicator of both long and short-term health. In the long-term, low RHR is generally a sign of better cardiovascular health, physical fitness, and recovery, while in the short-term, high RHR can be from things you have control over like external stressors, eating patterns, circadian disruption, light exposure at night, and imbalanced exercise habits. You can use RHR data to have a better understanding of how well your body is recovering from a workout, life stressors, and more.
3. Measuring and tracking **body temperature** in relation to external influences can help you make decisions about recovery, intensity of exercise, how "big" to go when having fun or partying, and more. Using wearables that track your baseline average temperature and report variations in this baseline can let you know if something is challenging your body and preventing it from maintaining your ideal temperature range. Spotting short-term trends might help you see if you are starting to come down with a cold or longer trends can suggest hormone shifts in a menstrual cycle.

If you are interested in purchasing an Oura Ring, please visit [ouraring.com](https://ouraring.com).

# Chill Out!

## Ways Our Team Stays Grounded During Back-to-School Season



"**Morning walks** have become an important part of my day. **Breathwork** is also critical to balancing my stress. I especially like the breathing pattern 4-0-6-2. When my day starts to feel hectic, breath grounds me. All it takes is five minutes! If you are new to breathwork, I highly recommend our [breathing program](#). - *Sunjya Schweig, MD*



"**Meal prep** is key for our family. I typically prepare a snack tray and prep my son's bento box with healthy and easy-to-grab options the night before. I also plan our **weekly menu** and grocery shop accordingly once per week. A short **15-minute walk or weight lifting/HIIT workout** always energizes me for the day. I am reminded that **self-care** makes me a better mother and spouse." - *Allie Nowak, Physician Assistant*



"**Lunchtime walks** help me step away from my computer between morning and afternoon patients. Even 10-15 minutes makes a huge difference in my afternoon energy. Also, this sounds simple but packing lunches the night before makes the morning less chaotic. I'm also loving [the website] [Trello](#) to help me create a to-do list weekly or daily." - *Megan Anderson, Nurse Practitioner*



"**Movement** is so important to my mental health. When I'm feeling stressed or anxious, the first thing I do is get up from my desk to **stretch** or head outside for a **walk** if I can. I attend **regular group fitness classes** as well. This gets me out of the house and moving, and helps me connect with my community. My secret recipe is ending each workout with mindfulness and breathwork. The key is finding the right movement for YOUR body -- AND mind!" - *Katie Compton, Health Coach*



"I start most days with a **morning walk** to get sunlight on my eyes (no sunglasses!). This helps me set my intention for the day and gives me some quiet time before the rush of work, kids, etc. I also create a **monthly meal plan** for our family to help us stay organized and on track with our nutrition plan. Recently I got an **under desk treadmill** that has been a game-changer! It helps me move throughout the day and release some of that unwanted tension." - *Tracey O'Shea, Nurse Practitioner*

# Oats on a Gluten-Free Diet

## Are they safe to consume?

By Ramzi Asfour, MD

Oats have always been controversial on a gluten-free diet. Oats themselves do not contain gluten, however, in recent testing conducted by Gluten Free Watchdog, most samples of Purity Protocol oats tested were found to be contaminated with gluten, including amounts over the FDA limit of 20 parts per million.



Oats can be contaminated in many ways, including growing wheat or other gluten-containing grains in the same fields as oats by accident. This can happen when gluten-containing grain (GCG) seeds from GCGs that had previously been planted in the same field or neighboring fields grow and get mixed in with oat crops. Another potential contamination is when companies use shared equipment for oats and GCGs, which happens quite often.

There are two main ways oats can be classified as gluten-free: Purity Protocol and optically sorted oats. Purity Protocol oats are generally thought to be safer than optically sorted oats, however, even purity oats have shown significant amounts of gluten during testing by Gluten Free Watchdog and other testing. These findings often exceed what the FDA considers safe for those with celiac disease, which is 20 parts per million. Please note that we do not consider any ongoing level of gluten exposure to be safe for most patients with celiac disease...

**Continue reading.**

**Are you (or someone you know) struggling with persistent health issues, but are not ready to become a CCFM patient? Are you looking to optimize your health?**

Get **real** answers about what's happening in your body - and new options for treatment - with our Functional Medicine Checkup. This is a great way to get a taste of how functional medicine works.

**Learn More**

***\*The FMC is only available for non-members.***

