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# Focus on Health

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Unfortunately, the terms “progesterone” and “progestin” are incorrectly used interchangeably, not only in the lay press but also by reputable medical journals and professionals who should know better, resulting in confusion.

## Poor Blood Flow

**R**aynaud’s Syndrome (RS) can be a debilitating condition which causes severely restricted blood flow to the fingers and toes and sometimes ears and nose. It is of autoimmune origin and may be an early symptom of scleroderma, lupus, or arthritis. Early aggressive antioxidant therapy is crucial. It involves a localized defect in the arteries or arterioles that deliver blood to the extremities.

The safest treatment is Vitamin E in megadosage. Patients can be monitored by measuring blood prothrombin times periodically. Vitamin E (alpha tocopherol) can also be directly measured in blood.

## New Facts on Bromelain

**B**romase, a brand of bromelain, is a protein digesting enzyme (protease) extracted from the stump or root portion of the pineapple plant. It is commonly used in Germany for treatment of athletic injury or surgery. There is currently great interest in bromelain research in Germany.

Bromelain blocks 2 pathways of essential fatty acid metabolism – the COX 2 pathway and the LOX pathway. Both of these pathways lead to chronic inflammation. Bromelain does not block the COX 1 pathway, which promotes decreased platelet clumping and therefore decreases blood clots.

A similar drug called Licofelone developed in Germany was expected to be a blockbuster, but was shown to cause kidney toxicity. It also would have blocked COX 2/LOX pathways without blocking COX 1.

Therefore Bromase is the only drug which does the anti-inflammatory job safely, and it has shown almost no toxicity except in massive doses which no one could even swallow in a day. Thus there is a wide margin of safety.

Bromelain is thought to help maintain healthy cardiac tissue by preventing mild infection or inflammation caused by fatty substances inside the walls of coronary blood vessels where plaque may form. Bromase brand of bromelain reduces inflammation by digesting the byproducts of tissue repair. It reduces mucous, painful ribs, asthma, hay fever, and symptoms of the common cold or influenza. Dosage can be adjusted by following the resting pulse rate which rises proportionately with increasing dosage.

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As part of the professional services I feel should be provided by me to my patients, screening of the voluminous medical literature has become more and more important. Please read this now. Perhaps you have seen a new item that I have not included in this newsletter or have not seen myself. If so, feel free to bring it to my attention.

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## Coenzyme Q-10 Benefits

Coenzyme Q-10 as well has many useful actions. It is an antioxidant that scavenges free radicals which contribute to the aging process and are produced naturally in the body. Environmental toxins including ultraviolet light from the sun, radiation (including X-rays), cigarette smoke, and air pollution exacerbate the problem. If you live in Dallas, Texas, or many other places as well, you had better be taking it.

Co Q10 enhances the immune system, helps heart disease, congestive heart failure, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and periodontal (gum) disease.

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## Pycnogenol Is Not New, But Very Beneficial

Pycnogenol is a mix of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds derived from the bark of the French maritime (coastal) pine. Given to French explorer Jacques Cartier by a local Canadian Indian in 1535, it was used to cure his crew's bleeding gums and skin lesions due to scurvy (Vitamin C deficiency). It improves blood flow to muscles which speeds recovery time after physical exercise and significantly reduces muscular pain and cramps in athletes and healthy, normal individuals. Again, the leading research is being carried out in Germany. Patients with diabetic microangiopathy, venous disorders, asthma, osteoarthritis, and dysmenorrhea (painful menstrual periods) benefit from its anti-inflammatory effects.

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