



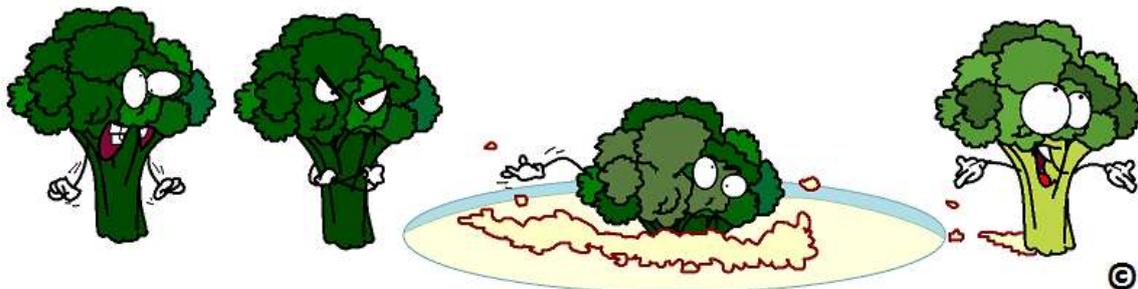
E-spoons E-zine  
March 2012

### LIFTING THE SPIRITS

*Use a cloaking device to "finish your broccoli or else" and take advantage of a little flower power to get a bit of a lift up. Some ideas to lift the spirits - laugh at the sunshine vitamin, share a biotech era friendship "cake", enjoy a muscle massage that is more than an aphrodisiac or toss a coin to a fountain fairy. Watch who you share meals with and how - bad company corrupts. If you succumb to temptation do it early in the morning because afternoon snacking hits the snooze button on the brain alarm.*

The E-spoons E-zine is a monthly compilation of stories appearing on [7 Big Spoons™ blog](#). The stories are based on the latest science tit bits and will help you become a little healthier, wealthier and wiser by explaining the why. As a friend of Spoonful of Science you have been included on our mailing list – should you wish to unsubscribe, follow the link at the bottom of the E-zine.

### Use a cloaking device on that bitter broccoli



As a card carrying member of the “Broccoli tastes really really yuck club”, I have a lot of sympathy for those being force fed broccoli, because it is good for you. Unlike a child, I can at least intellectualize the value of this cruciferous vegetable, as I shovel it in. In fact, it’s cancer fighting prowess, along with its ability to build my immune system, bones etc. is the only reason it even manages to feature on my dinner plate at all.

About 70 % of kids belong to the “broccoli tastes really really yuck” club. The trouble with broccoli is it is very bitter, exactly how bitter, depends on your genes, so for some people, like me, it is really bad, for others it is okay. Turns out, bitter grows on you – so the more you practice the more acceptable “bitter” becomes, so the percentage of adults in the “broccoli tastes really really yuck” club is significantly lower than 70 %.

I have already worked out the only way to “enjoy” broccoli” is to hide it. Research from Temple’s Centre for Obesity Research and Education confirms that this is the way to go, if you want junior to swallow it too.

Read more on [how to use a broccoli cloaking device at the dinner table](#).  
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## The danger of “finish your broccoli or else”



Do you utter these words on a regular basis...  
**CLEAN YOUR PLATE OR ELSE !**

The clean the plate mantra, is loaded with good intentions, but it seems to have a habit of back firing, according to research published by Cornell Food & Brand Lab.

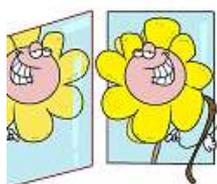
[Read more about the study](#) which found that pre-school “Clean Platers” routinely overload their plates because they’re “learning” to OVEREAT.

A spoonful of broccoli, isn’t worth a lifetime of obesity - so watch how you enforce those “CLEAN PLATE” rules.

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*The obesity epidemic is rampant among our children. Invite Dr Sandy give a FREE presentation at your school / Mom’s group or sign up your family for the “Cheat the Fat Genes programme”.*

## Flower power bouncing the way to sustainability



Without flower power, humans would not be able to power their bodies, since we ultimately depend on photosynthesis to create the foods we eat. But flowers are powering more than just our muscles, they’re helping to turn on our lights – not the metaphorical kind, the overhead lights we see with.

Find out [how engineers are creating SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL](#) with a little sunflower inspiration.

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## The sunshine vitamin moonlights as a comedian

Do you like to see the sun everyday ? Do you find your mood turns grey when clouds obscure it ? For me, no sun puts a real negative spin on the day. The connection between your sinking mood and sun absence, may not be simply in your head, it could be in your chemistry.

Research from UT Southwestern suggests that vitamin D is able to tickle the funny bone. They found that people who had higher levels of vitamin D, were significantly less likely to be depressed. [Click here](#) to read more.

So if you’re feeling blue, stop by the vitamin D comedy club, either sun tan, minus the sun block for a few minutes each day or supplement.

Vitamin D’s hilarious antics, could help chase away those blues. Even if the jokes are not funny enough to keep you chuckling all day, the dose of vitamin D will get the rest of your body smiling, a little.

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## Sharing a friendship cake in the biotechnology era



Remember [friendship cakes](#) ?

They’re BACK, with a little bit of a twist. A group of undergraduate students from John Hopkins University are working on a way to cheaply share vitamin A around the globe using a “friendship” yeast.

Find out [how friendship cakes may help save lives and eyes](#) – thanks to a little biotechnology.

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## A muscle massage is more than an aphrodisiac

*Looking for a little scientific evidence to justify spoiling yourself or someone you love with a massage ?*

Researchers from McMaster University have shown the benefits of a message, extend beyond the obvious feel good head effects, a muscle rub down provides muscles with a physiological lift.

Inflammatory cytokines are the chemicals behind the aches and pains associated with overworked, tired, aching muscles. Muscles receiving a little extra TLC, recovered a little quicker than those left untouched – the reason, rubbed down muscles show drops in the levels of inflammatory cytokines. Anti-inflammatory drugs do the same thing.

So if you're full of aches and pains, maybe it is time to replace the strong pain killer with a pair of strong hands.

Rubba dub dub.

[Read more about the analgesic/aphrodisiac effects of a muscle massage](#)

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## Toss a coin (or something) to a fountain fairy



Thought I'd share my favourite Roman fountains - Trevi Fountain on the left,

PS. You may want to [Watch who spits into your corporate fountain](#)

## Bad company corrupts behaviour even in grown ups

Quick, score your friends. Fat, thin, neutral.



Think back on to the last time you spent some time together. What did they eat ? Now, the big question – what did you eat ? More than you should have ?

“Bad” behaviour becomes more acceptable when other people are doing it. Being in the presence of friends carrying a few extra pounds, could be triggering a “negative sterotype” and undermining your good intentions.

[Find out more about how a little friend management can help you lose weight.](#)

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# Do you know what is sabotaging your weight loss plans ?

Enrol in the brand new

## “Cheat the Fat Genes Programme”

And uncover the schemes and devices that sabotage your waist line.

### Stop listening to your eyes they're not in the hunger loop



Brain happiness depends on keeping the brain, a bit of a pig when it comes to energy needs, satisfied by providing a continuous supply of sugar. But every now and again, instead of taking our eating cue from the brain, we allow the view point of the eye to dictate our eating behaviour.

#### Seeing is eating

Adopt the [kitchen-counter diet](#) and avoid packing on the pounds.

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### When to cheat while on diet

Dieting means

- Incessant dreams of chocolate cake
- A constant feeling of deprivation, because you can't have the chocolate cake
- Moments of failure, as the chocolate cake temptation becomes unbearable
- A mouthful of chocolate cake which tastes good and bad at the same moment, but ends on a BAD note
- Followed by hours of feelings of guilt and condemnation
- And an unforgiving scale



Good news, researchers from Tel Aviv University have found a way to include chocolate cake and other delicious munchies into a DIET programme.

So how can indulging in chocolate cake, when on diet, BE OKAY ?

The key is to indulge early on in the day i.e. the chocolate cake must be eaten as part of breakfast.

[Learn more about the chocolate cake diet](#)

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### Are your snacking habits hitting the snooze button on the brain alarm clock ?

It is late afternoon – your get up and go, has got and left. The current slump is unresponsive to your usual chemical fix i.e. cup of **caffeine** laced coffee. What should you do ?

Packing up and going home is not an option, neither is catching 40 winks whilst staring at your computer screen, since your boss is hovering.

Odds are you would try a sugar snack, reasoning that the brain runs on sugar, so providing the brain with a quick sugar fix should lift your energy level. Of course, using this brain fix on a routine basis could leave you with a weight problem that will need fixing later – but that's another story.



Research from the University of Cambridge, suggests munching a bite of protein would be a far better brain fix, than that spoonful of sugar.

Sugar feeds the brain, so it is logical to assume sugar would trigger the brain's alarm clock. But the research suggests the alarm clock is not particularly fired up by carbs. In fact, just the opposite happens – glucose hits the snooze button on the clock.

It takes a dose of protein to block the snooze button response. So your mid-afternoon snack should include a touch of protein, to fire off enough orexin to WAKE UP YOUR BRAIN.

[Learn more about that orexin alarm clock](#)

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*Are you longing for a deep meaningful conversation about your health, but your doctor and pharmacist are too busy to answer your questions.*

*Book a one-on-one health conversation with Dr Sandy.*

*Get the science not the hype !*

*Talk about .....*

- *Exactly what is wrong with you and what is likely to happen going forward.*
- *How do the drug(s) you've been prescribed work ? Do you really need to take them all ?*
- *Are there things you can do to make the drugs work better ?*
- *What can go wrong ? What should you look out for ? Is there anything else you can do ?*
- *Are there foods/supplements that could help ? Are there foods/supplements that you should avoid ?*

Other stories from the blog this month.....

- [The bad habit that helps people in the habit of forgetting things](#)
- [Too little water is causing bedwetting](#)
- [How much vitamin D do you really need ?](#)
- [Did you know skin wrinkles are a sign of bone wrinkles ?](#)
- [Eternal youth only a stem cell away](#)
- [The brown and white of burning fat](#)
- [All it takes to heal a heart is a piece of heart](#)
- [Doggie cuddles take away health troubles](#)
- [Caffeine the recipe for muscle "achievement" ?](#)
- [Baby making really does pack on the pounds](#)

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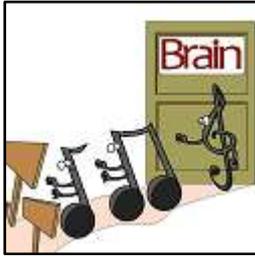
Give us a like on **facebook**

Thank you for taking the time to read the e-zine. I love hearing from readers, so [drop me an e-mail](#) to let me know which story you enjoyed the most, did you learn something new or do you have a different perspective.

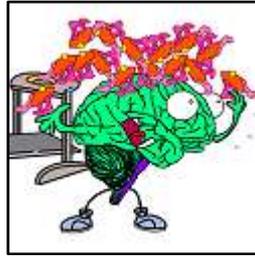
**Did you catch this month's Neurotechnology Tips ?**

*Neurotechnology tips provides tit bits of science to help you buzz up your brain performance.*

[Click here](#) to have a Neurotechnology Tip delivered directly to you in box next week.



There is only one door to the brain's auditory gate



Feeding the brain in a roundabout way helps you think for longer



Painting your desk green will make studying more pleasant

Next month we will be a little "Sweet & Spicy". Look out for the April edition of E-spoons in your inbox on 4 April 2012 (the first Wednesday of the month).

Yours scientifically

**Dr Sandy**



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The cartoons were drawn by [Guy Alain Ngangob](#) – drop him an e-mail if you need a cartoon or two. Photo taken by Dr Sandy. If you want to access the science articles used to compile the newsletter, visit the relevant pages on the blog and follow the link.

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