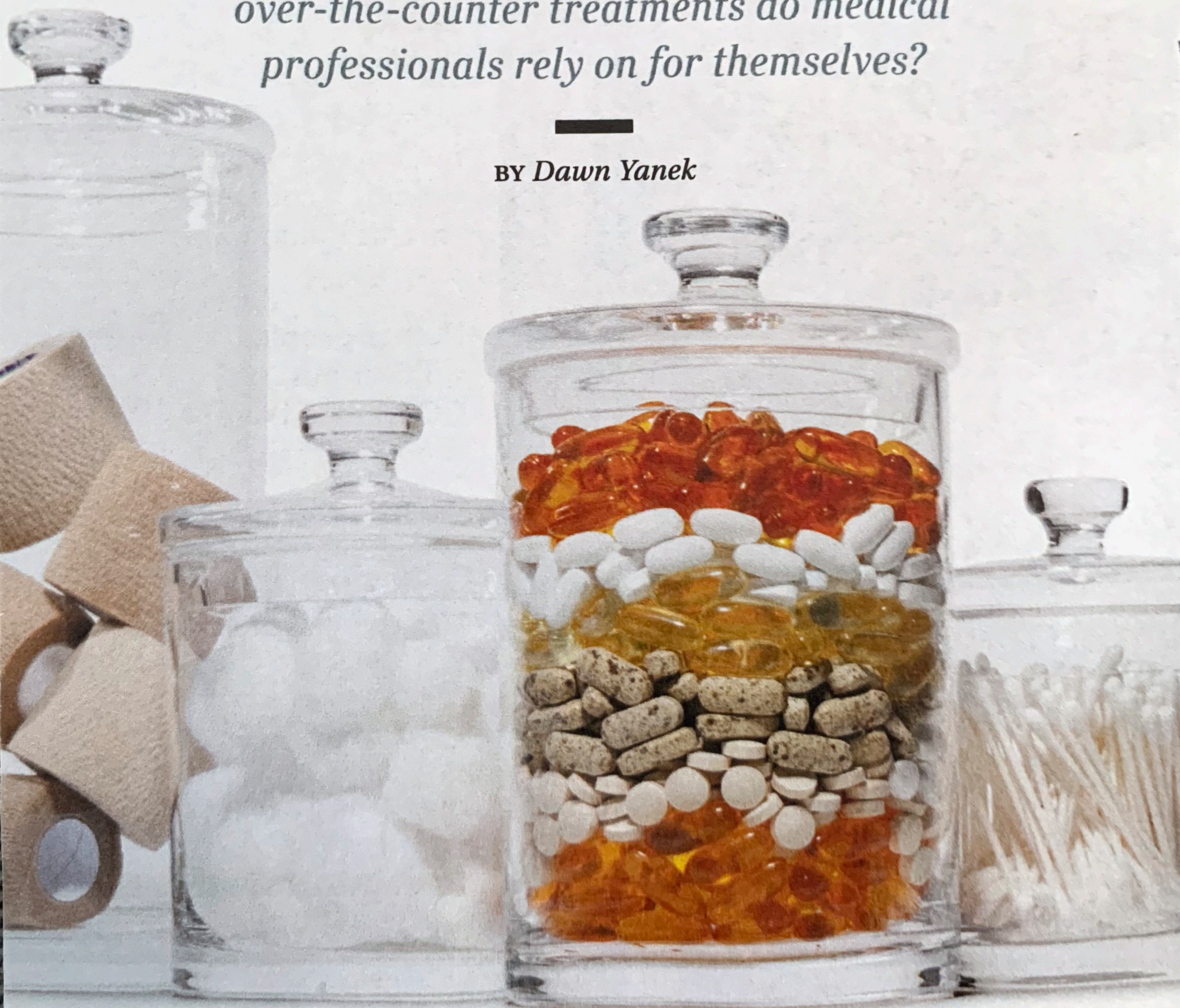


HOW TO

Use Supplements Like a Doctor Does

*Which vitamins, minerals, and
over-the-counter treatments do medical
professionals rely on for themselves?*

—
BY Dawn Yanek



THERE'S HEARTBURN, AND then there's heartburn. Three years ago, Elroy Vojdani, MD, experienced a debilitating and chronic version of it. "It was a ten-out-of-ten pain, and I would literally keel over at my desk, not able to do anything else," says Dr. Vojdani, the founder of Regenera Medical in Los Angeles. "This would happen every day for a week, every one to two months."

Serious problems such as gastric ulcers and pancreatitis had been ruled out, so his doctors just kept recommending higher doses of the same drugs. But Dr. Vojdani worried about taking Prilosec because long-term use has been linked to osteoporosis and possibly irritable bowel syndrome. Tums and Zantac helped but didn't fix the underlying issue. He needed a better solution, but he was stumped.

That's when Dr. Vojdani turned to supplements, taking cues from his study of functional medicine, which looks to address the root of a problem and treat each patient with a personalized mix of interventions. After he identified and eliminated his trigger foods—including his beloved "bullet-proof coffee," a homemade blend of black coffee, coconut milk, and medium-chain triglyceride (MCT) oil—he decided to try some of the alternative remedies he'd been learning about.

The next time his heartburn hit, he took a stomach-soothing blend of marshmallow root, licorice, and aloe extracts (you can find it online

and in health food stores). He also took probiotics, the amino acid L-glutamine, and a low dose of melatonin, which he'd read could reduce heartburn by tightening the lower esophageal sphincter and preventing acid reflux. "Within a day, my symptoms subsided," he says. "I didn't need to use [medication] at all during this episode, which had never happened before." After two weeks, he slowly began to reintroduce his

"WITHIN A DAY OF ADDING SUPPLEMENTS, MY HEARTBURN SUBSIDED."

trigger foods, and after two months, he stopped the supplements altogether and today uses them only if he overindulges. "I'm now two years out," he adds, "and I haven't needed Zantac or Prilosec once."

These days, Dr. Vojdani follows that same protocol with patients looking to get their heartburn under control. He is one of many doctors who have experienced the benefits of supplements firsthand for conditions that include vascular issues, prediabetes, brain health, and mood disorders. Researchers agree that it is best to get your nutrition from food. But there is a growing body of scientific literature that shows that these complements to conventional medication can help

improve a variety of health problems. These doctors have found that out for themselves, and they are happy to share their discoveries:

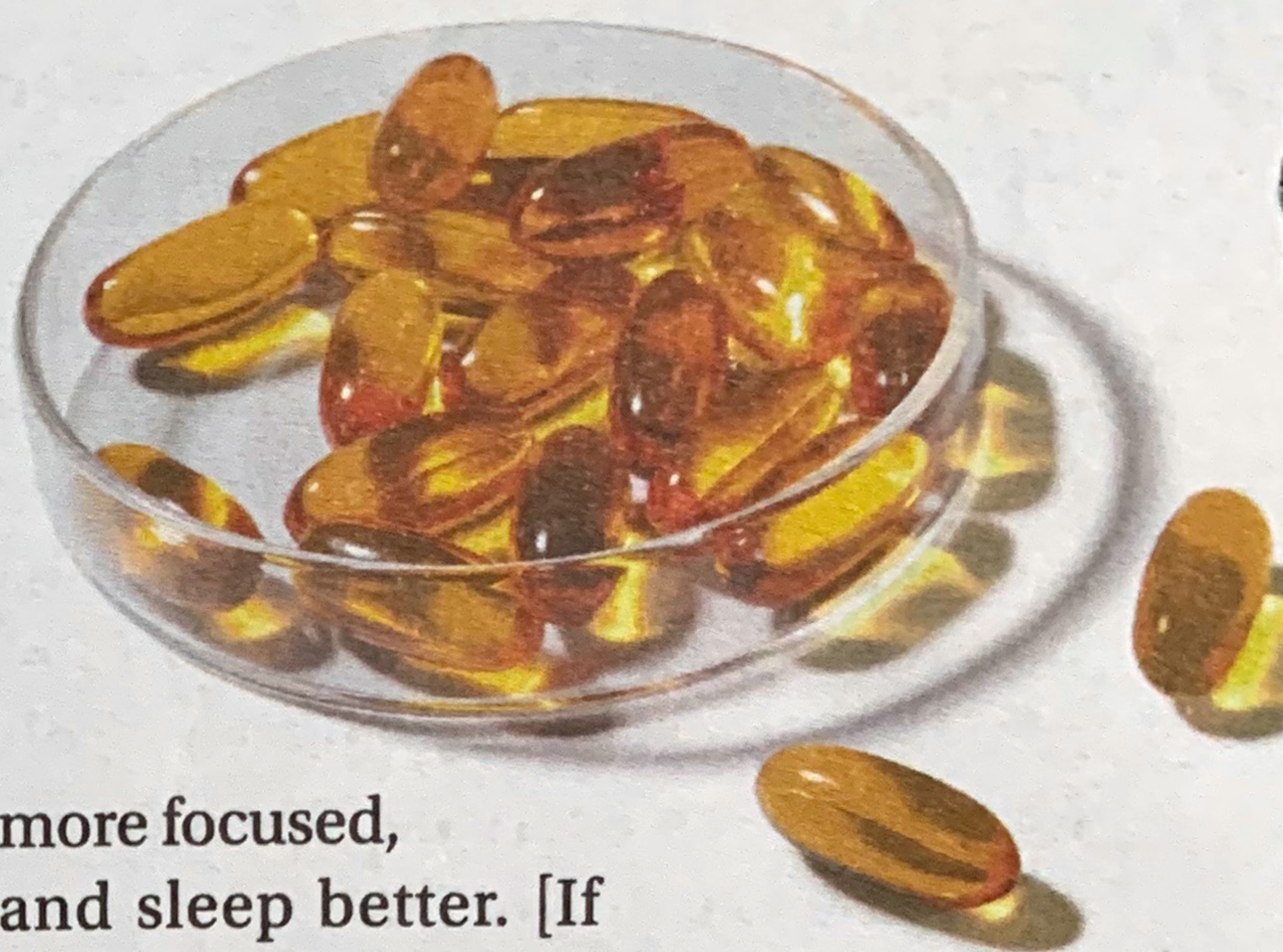
Curcumin

"I have a history of pretty severe depression that wasn't diagnosed until medical school. At that point, I started taking Prozac; more recently, I added a second drug called Abilify. But I still felt like I wanted to sleep all the time, and there's literature that says curcumin has antidepressant qualities. It can also help with inflammation and pain. I was actually recommending it to people before I tried it, and I was like, Why am I not using it? I feel like I have more energy when I take this stuff. Plus, it helps with weight-loss goals. When I feel better, I'm more likely to track my food, not turn to food to get energy or comfort."

—CHARLIE SELTZER, MD,
*a Philadelphia-based physician
specializing in weight loss*

Vitamin D

"I was feeling fatigued—even when I'd slept for seven, eight hours—but I attributed this to working long hours on my feet. I decided it was important to practice what I preach, so I went to my doctor for a physical. My vitamin D level was low. I started taking supplements, and in a couple of weeks, I started to become more energetic, feel



more focused, and sleep better. [If my levels are normal at my retest,] I'll be more conscientious of what I'm eating and get a little more sunlight—and maybe take some more tropical-beach vacations."

—JANETTE NESHEIWAT, MD,
*a New York City-based family and
emergency doctor*

Omega-3s

"I have been a vegetarian for many years, and although I started eating fish again, it is sporadic. Omega-3s may help our bodies in many ways, from brain cognition to cardiac health. As a cardiologist and a mom, I need my brain, so I put myself on a regimen. We know that food is the best medication, but I'm not always giving myself the best through my food, so I felt taking a supplement was a good option for me."

—SUZANNE STEINBAUM, DO,
*director of Women's Cardiovascular
Prevention, Health, and Wellness at
Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City
and cofounding member of the Global
Nutrition and Health Alliance (GNHA)*

Vitamin C

“Vitamin C has been shown in some studies to help reduce the risk of stroke. As a vascular surgeon, I recommend a vitamin C supplement to patients after a vascular procedure for a faster recovery, and I personally use [it] on a daily basis.”

—KEREM BORTECEN, MD, PHD, *an endovascular and interventional surgeon at NYC Surgical Associates*

Zinc

“Zinc is one of the most important minerals to stave off infection. I recommend it to my allergy patients because they are generally more prone to infection. I take a daily multivitamin that contains it.”

—TANIA ELLIOTT, MD, *a New York City-based allergist and the former chief medical officer of the preventive health-care company EHE*

Chromium

“There have been multiple studies on the use of chromium for diabetes; it is thought to improve the responsiveness of the insulin receptor. Those on high doses of insulin had the best

response to chromium. As an endocrinologist who does not have diabetes but has a family history of it, I make sure that my multivitamin has at least 50 mcg of chromium.”

—RASHMI S. MULLUR, MD, *an assistant clinical professor at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and associate chief of Integrative Medicine at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System*

Lutein and Zeaxanthin

“A large study called AREDS2 showed that the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin protected the retina from developing advanced age-related macular degeneration, while another small study showed that higher levels of plasma lutein and zeaxanthin were significantly associated with higher cognitive performance. I take the AREDS2 dose of 10 mg of lutein and 2 mg of zeaxanthin. Although both antioxidants are present in leafy green vegetables, the absorption is not very efficient, so supplements may be useful even in people who have a healthy diet.”

—SONAL TULI, MD, *an ophthalmologist at University of Florida Health*



Dairy-Tail Romance

The dating-app craze has officially spread to another species.

Tudder, an app recently launched in the United Kingdom, plays matchmaker for cattle looking for breeding partners—with farmers making the actual connections. (Swiping left with a hoof is very difficult.) It’s not as udderly crazy as it sounds. Animals from at least 42,000 farms have Tudder profiles.