

OPRAH
MAGAZINE

PUTTING
YOURSELF
FIRST

When it's
selfish,
when it's
essential

GOT GUILT?
DR. PHIL'S
got a cure

HOW TO TAKE
BETTER CARE OF
YOURSELF

guide to restoring
health, heart & spirit

WIN A SPA
GIVE-O-WAY

Do we have
treats for you!

COUSINS & PASTA,
GET TOGETHER AGAIN
the news about carbs
you've been hoping to hear

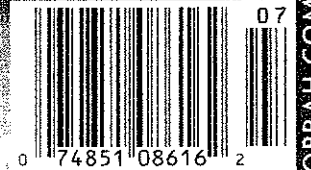
OPRAH
DOES LUNCH

From caviar to
white peach crisp—
friends, food and summer

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In Watsu, the therapist works in a pool of 98-degree water.

NEED A TUNE-UP?

You've pulled your back, your shoulders are up around your ears, you're tense from eyebrows to fingertips... where do you turn? Here's a quick look at some of the most innovative body therapies:

Craniosacral

The therapist lightly touches the skull and spine, often cradling the head or pelvis, listening to the rhythms of the craniosacral system—the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. Practitioners theorize that these “tides” can be impeded by injury or stress and that therapy restores their natural flow. This technique is used to treat a long list of ailments, such as migraines, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Watsu

An aquatic combination of massage, Shiatsu, and movement therapy, Watsu is done in a pool of warm water, to take weight off the vertebrae and relieve the pressure of the spine on nerves. The practitioner supports your floating body, stretching and manipulating it with gentle, gradual twists and pulls. It's especially good for healing emotional trauma, and practitioners claim it's similar to meditation in releasing tension and helping to slow the heart rate and breathing.

Ortho-Bionomy

A therapist slowly moves your body into certain positions to help relax tight areas, often making you exaggerate some of your poor postures (such as hunching your shoulders) in order to help realign the body without forceful manipulation. Ortho-bionomy is effective for joint and muscle pain, postural problems, and stress.

Bowen Technique

A specialist works his fingers and thumbs over your body, stimulating sensory fibers within the muscles. With rolling movements, she presses and stretches each muscle before easing up again, which may prompt certain cells to send a signal to the brain that produces muscular relaxation. Bowen is used to treat shoulder, back, and neck pain, plus headaches, posture problems, and repetitive strain injuries.

WHAT'S UP, DOCS?

After reviewing available data, Public Citizen, a nonprofit consumer watchdog group in Washington, D.C., has issued safety warnings for three common prescription medications. We asked members of Luminari, O's panel of medical experts, for their

» **The cholesterol-lowering drug:** In August 2003, despite Public Citizen's fervent protests, the FDA approved a statin drug called Crestor. But because high amounts of it can cause muscle destruction, it may lead to kidney damage, it can be prescribed in low doses. Crestor's ad campaign hit network this spring, just as Public Citizen claimed that even low doses can cause kidney damage unrelated to the muscle disease—something none of the other statins have been associated with. Mehmet Oz, MD, a professor of cardiac surgery at Columbia University Medical Center, says that Crestor's advantages are still unproven, and until they're confirmed, the other popular statins may be a safer bet. If you're already taking the drug, says Lynne Perry-Bottir, MD, a cardiologist and a clinical assistant professor at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, make sure your doctor monitors your muscle enzyme levels and kidney and liver function every three months.

» **The diet pill:** Approved in 1997 to treat obesity, Meridia has been implicated by Public Citizen in an increasing number of hospitalizations, heart attacks, and even deaths. When combined with exercise and a healthful eating, it can result in slightly more weight loss than lifestyle changes alone. But Mitzi Krohn, MD, the founding medical director of the Iris Center at UCLA Women's Health Center, believes Meridia may exceed its benefits, especially for patients who aren't monitored regularly. Sonya Bolch, a registered dietitian in Marin County, California, agrees but says that those already on the drug should be monitored without talking to a physician.

» **The antidepressant:** In 2003 Serzone was discontinued in both Europe and Canada after reports linked it to rare cases of life-threatening liver damage. “This doesn't mean it's unsafe,” says Janet Taylor, a clinical instructor of psychiatry at Columbia University Harlem Hospital Center, but it does mean doctors should prescribe the drug with some caution. “I would never use Serzone as a first-line drug to treat depression,” says Norman E. Rosenthal, MD, a depression researcher in Bethesda, Maryland, because some people respond to this antidepressant when other drugs have failed, he says. “It can't be extremely valuable.” If you're on the medication and it's working, keep taking it, Taylor says. But if your doctor suspects you may have a liver disorder, she suggests that you get blood work (including liver function tests) every six months and familiarize yourself with indications of liver failure, such as jaundice.

—LAUR