

HEALTH

INSIDE

Using mosquitoes to fight malaria. **C3**

Angioplasty in the wrist rather than groin. **C3**

STRESS LESS

How do we know if people can change?

Many people are capable of change. If this weren't so I'd have left my profession long ago. It's also true that many other individuals can't or won't change.

Since most of us aren't taught how to know the difference, we may tend toward one of two unrealistic extremes:

● We assume that all people are capable of change, and we are inclined to avoid acknowledging aspects of people's personalities that cause us discomfort.

● We develop a negatively fixed view of others, i.e., we tend not to notice positive change that people have made, and instead assume that the troublesome traits they once exhibited will always be present, thus never acknowledging when improvement has occurred.

Neither of these extremes is healthy, but how do we know when change is or isn't possible? If you are in a difficult relationship with a friend, family member, business partner or romantic partner, here are characteristics that may indicate that the other person is capable of positive change:

● This person demonstrates a willingness to take responsibility for her part in the relationship difficulties.

● He expresses and seems to feel remorse when he has hurt you or others.

● She appears able and willing to "get into other people's shoes" when they're in pain, i.e., demonstrates empathy.

● He is honest about life's important issues.

On the other hand, here are some of the warning signals that you're dealing with a person who's incapable of change:

● He tends to believe that when things go wrong, it's someone else's fault, not his.

● Her actions indicate that she doesn't have a conscience.

● Somehow he never seems to truly feel others' pain.

● Her behavior, words or both tell you that she feels entitled to special treatment and circumstances.

Please see TIPS on C2



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A surprising number of supplements tested don't match what the label says. One-quarter of the supplements tested by an independent company over the last decade have had some sort of problem.

Tests show many supplements have quality problems

Unproven remedies

By Marilynn Marchione
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lead in ginkgo pills. Arsenic in herbals. Bugs in a baby's colic and teething syrup. Toxic metals and parasites are part of nature, and all of these have been found in "natural" products and dietary supplements in recent years.

Set aside the issue of whether vitamin and herbal supplements do any good.

Are they safe? Is what's on the label really what's in the bottle? Tests by researchers and private labs suggest the answer sometimes is no.

One quarter of supplements tested by an independent company over the last decade have had some sort of problem. Some contained contaminants. Others had contents that did not match label claims. Some had ingredients that exceeded safe limits. Some contained real drugs masquerading as natural supplements.

"We buy it just as the consumer buys it" from stores, said Dr. Tod Cooperman, president of ConsumerLab.com. The company tests pills for makers that want its seal of approval, and publishes ratings for subscribers, much as Consumer Reports does with household goods.

Other tests, reported in scientific journals, found prenatal vitamins lacking claimed amounts of iodine and

supplements short on ginseng and hoodia — an African plant sparking the latest diet craze.

"There's at least 10 times more hoodia sold in this country than made in the world, so people are not getting hoodia," said Dr. Mehmet Oz, a heart surgeon and frequent Oprah Winfrey guest who occasionally has touted the stuff.

Industry groups say that quality problems are the exception rather than the rule.

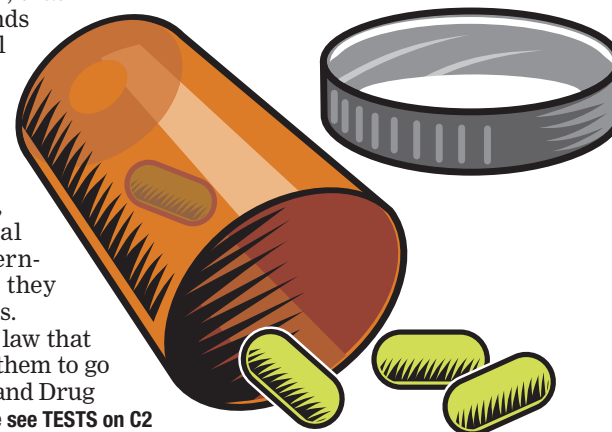
"I believe that the problem is narrow, that the well-established and reputable brands deserve their reputations," said Michael McGuffin, president of the American Herbal Products Association.

Of course, prescription drugs have had problems, too. Dozens of deaths were linked last year to tainted heparin, a blood thinner produced in China, for example. However, pharmaceutical drugs must show evidence to the government of safety and effectiveness before they go on sale. Not so for dietary supplements.

Fifteen years ago, Congress passed a law that treats supplements like food and allows them to go straight to market without federal Food and Drug

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Please see TESTS on C2



WASHINGTON POST

Dr. Tammy Brady, a pediatric nephrologist, talks with Va'Sean Duvall at Hopkins Children's Center in Baltimore. Research at Hopkins indicates that hypertension puts young people at greater risk for severe heart problems when they grow older.

MISSED DIAGNOSES

High blood pressure often is missed in kids

By Kelly Brewington
BALTIMORE SUN

Va'Sean Duvall is a skinny 17-year-old who stays busy with an after-school job, choir rehearsals and school drama productions. On the surface, he doesn't fit the mold of someone — older, obese and inactive — who would be at risk for high blood pressure.

Yet he's among as many as 4 million children in the United States estimated to have hypertension, a figure that has grown fivefold in the past generation, according to Johns Hopkins researchers. It's a condition that doctors often fail to diagnose and one that leaves

children, particularly blacks, at risk for serious heart problems, says a recent Hopkins study.

Doctors have known that a rising number of children are at risk for high blood pressure, and they think the nation's surging child obesity rate is a prime cause. But now, researchers are trying to learn more about the specific heart problems triggered by high blood pressure and hope to sound the alarm on the importance of catching hypertension early.

"We need to do a better job at increasing the public

Please see HIGH on C2

Children should wear sunglasses when outside

How important is it for my child to wear sunglasses?

The long-term effects of excessive sunlight aren't seen early in life — they show up when people are 60 or 70 years old and experience macular degeneration or cataract issues, says Steven Schiff, an optometrist in Deer Park, N.Y.

Just as parents want to protect their children from skin cancer by putting sunscreen on them, parents should protect

children's eyes by getting them in the habit of wearing sunglasses outdoors.

"Some children are easier to convince than others," Schiff says. Emphasize the importance of sunglasses by the time their children are 5 or so, he says.

Most sunglasses labeled 100 percent UV protection, and preferably 100 percent both UVA and UVB protection, are the best bet.

One mistake parents make is having children don the shades only when they are

going to the beach.

If a child is outside playing sports or at a park, the eyes should be protected then as well, Schiff says.

An elastic strap that holds the glasses to the head or a looser-fitting strap that keeps the glasses around the neck when they're removed will help. Of course, a cord should not be used with a toddler's sunglasses.

— MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE