



# Natural Standard

The Authority on Integrative Medicine

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**Natural Standard** provides high quality, evidence-based information about complementary and alternative therapies. For more information, please visit [www.naturalstandard.com](http://www.naturalstandard.com).

## Saw Palmetto Extract: As Effective as Placebo



Saw palmetto, an herbal extract often used to improve urinary symptoms caused by an enlarged prostate gland, is no more effective than a placebo, according to the results of a recent study.

Stephen Bent, MD, one of **Natural Standard's** Editors, led the year-long study with Andrew Avins, MD, MPH. The researchers randomly assigned 225 patients with benign prostate hyperplasia or BPH (enlarged prostate glands) to either saw palmetto extract or placebo twice daily for one year.

Symptoms were evaluated based on a standard symptom score for BPH and objective measure of urinary function. The results show no statistically significant difference between the two groups. The researchers also found no difference in patients who had severe symptoms versus those who had acute symptoms.

The results of the study, which were published in the February 9, 2006 issue of the [\*New England Journal of Medicine\*](#), contradict the findings of many previous studies. The difference may be attributed to the length and size of Bent's study, which was considerably longer and involved more subjects than past studies. Also, Bent's team spent a long time creating a placebo that replicates the pungency of saw palmetto.

According to the National Institutes of Health, more than 50 percent of men over the age of 60 and more than 90 percent of men over the age of 70 have BPH.

For more information on saw palmetto, including dosing, interactions and safety, please visit [Natural Standard's](#) herb and supplement database.

**Reference:** Bent S, Kane C, Shinohara K, Neuhaus J, Hudes ES, Goldberg H, Avins AL. Saw palmetto for benign prostatic hyperplasia. *N Engl J Med.* 2006 Feb 9;354(6):557-66. [View Abstract.](#)

[Saw Palmetto Extract: As Effective as Placebo](#)  
[Public Library Association Conference](#)  
[Glucosamine, Chondroitin and Arthritis Pain](#)  
[Natural Standard Collaborates with Dietitians of Canada](#)  
[Dietary Regimens for Andropause](#)  
[Integrative Medicine Consortium](#)  
[Peer-Reviewers needed for JHP](#)  
[Inside Natural Standard](#)

## Public Library Association Conference

The Public Library Association is hosting its 11th national conference at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston this month.

The conference, which will take place March 21 – 25, 2006, will feature more than 200 continuing education programs. Special events will include

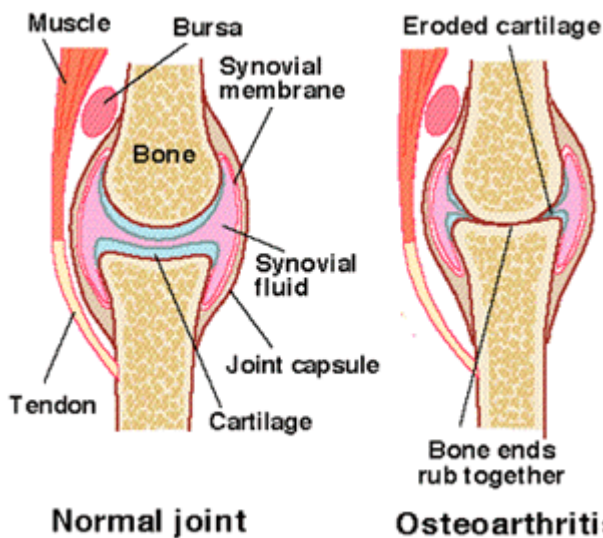


pre-conferences, author luncheons, talk tables and more than 700 public library exhibits.

Natural Standard will be an exhibitor at the event March 22 – 24. Please visit our booth, #704, to learn more about herbs, supplements and alternative therapies.

If you would like us to post your event(s) online, please e-mail: [news@naturalstandard.com](mailto:news@naturalstandard.com).

## Glucosamine, Chondroitin and Arthritis Pain



Glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate, two supplements made from animal cartilage and shellfish, do not effectively treat aching joints caused by mild to moderate osteoarthritis, according to a new study.

More than 20 million Americans suffer from osteoarthritis, and that number is expected to double as the baby boomers age. Over five million Americans use the two supplements either alone or together to treat symptoms.

The study, funded by the [National Institutes of Health](#) and published in the February issue of [The New England Journal of Medicine](#), involved 1,583 patients with arthritis knee pain. Patients received one of five treatments:

glucosamine or chondroitin, a combination of both, the painkiller Celebrex® or placebo pills.

After six months, patients were surveyed to determine how many felt a 20 percent reduction in pain. Results show that the supplements, when taken alone or in combination, were no more effective than the placebo pills. Sixty percent of patients who took the placebo experienced pain reduction compared with 64 percent who took glucosamine, 65 percent who took chondroitin and 67 percent who took both.

Patients with more severe arthritis pain may benefit from supplementation. Of the 354 patients with moderate to severe pain, 79 percent who took both supplements reported reduced pain compared with 54 percent who took placebo and 69 percent who took Celebrex®. The authors do, however, describe limitations of their study design.

Overall, the majority of studies published previously suggest that glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate effectively relieve or reduce arthritis pain. It should be noted that many of the studies were flawed or potentially biased because they were funded by the supplement manufacturers. Further well-designed clinical trials are needed before a firm conclusion can be drawn.

To learn more about the potential health benefits of glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate, please visit [Natural Standard's](#) herb and supplement database.

**Reference:** Clegg D.O., Reda D.J., Harris C.L., Klein M.A., O'Dell J.R., Hooper M.M., Bradley J. D., Bingham C.O. III, Weisman M.H., Jackson C.G., Lane N.E., Cush J.J., Moreland L.W., Schumacher H.R. Jr., Oddis C.V., Wolfe F., Molitor J.A., Yocum D.E., Schnitzer T.J., Furst D.E., Sawitzke A.D., Shi H., Brandt K.D., Moskowitz R.W., Williams H.J. Glucosamine, Chondroitin Sulfate, and the Two in Combination for Painful Knee Osteoarthritis. *N Engl J Med* 2006; 354:795-808, Feb 23, 2006. [View Abstract](#).



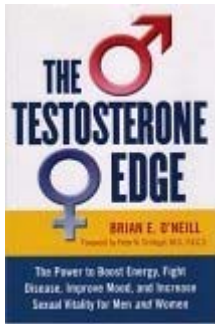
**Dietitians of Canada**  
**Les diététistes du Canada**

Natural Standard Editor Heather Boon, BScPhm and PhD, recently developed a Continuing Education (CE) course on herbs and supplements with the [Dietitians of](#)

[Canada \(DC\)](#).

Those enrolled in the course will receive access to DC's new service, [Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition \(PEN\)](#). This service provides evidence-based practice guidance, tools and resources for practitioners. Expert dietitians have chosen resources that represent the most current recommendations to be included in PEN. Natural Standard is among such resources and will provide a one-month free subscription to the database for students registered for the DC herbal supplements course.

## Dietary Regimens for Andropause



Women are not the only ones who experience a decline in sex hormones as they age. While women go through menopause, men experience a decline in testosterone, a process called andropause. Brian O'Neill's new book, *The Testosterone Edge*, discusses nutrition techniques to combat andropause symptoms.

For instance, zinc supplementation may help increase testosterone levels. According to O'Neill, a health writer and consultant, moderate to severe zinc deficiency is associated with low levels of testosterone as well as slow growth, poor appetite, hair loss and more frequent infections. Zinc is available as a supplement, but it is also found in many different foods, including oysters, baked beans, beef, shitake mushrooms, pumpkin seeds and whole grain

cereals.

O'Neill's book also includes meal plans, recipes and exercise tips. [Click here](#) for more information about his new book.

## Integrative Medicine Consortium



The North American Research Conference on Complementary & Integrative Medicine will feature original scientific CAM research. Presentations and discussions will focus on clinical research, methodological research, health services research and education research.

The conference will take place May 24 – 27 at the Shaw Conference Center in Alberta, Canada. The Academic Consortium of Health Centers in Integrative Medicine is sponsoring the event. The

consortium was founded by Harvard and has expanded to include 27 member institutions across North America.

For more information, please visit [www.imconsortium-conference2006.com/index.php](http://www.imconsortium-conference2006.com/index.php).

If you would like us to post your event(s) online, please e-mail [news@naturalstandard.com](mailto:news@naturalstandard.com).

## Peer-Reviewers needed for JHP



Natural Standard's quarterly, Medline listed [Journal of Herbal Pharmacotherapy](#) (JHP) would like to offer qualified herbal and dietary researchers the opportunity to peer-review future articles.



The international journal features original research and developments on medicinal herbs and supplements. JHP addresses basic and applied research and makes it easier for healthcare professionals, including pharmacists, physicians, and nurses, to translate data into applied medicine.

Reviewers are given a three to four week deadline for each article and are expected to review at least one article per quarter. In exchange, reviewers will be attributed annually and will receive a complementary issue of the journal. If you would like to peer-review articles for the journal, please e-mail: [news@naturalstandard.com](mailto:news@naturalstandard.com).

[Click here](#) to view the contents of upcoming issues.

## Inside Natural Standard



**Consorta Contract:** The **Natural Standard** database will be available to Consorta members nationwide. The two-year contract will give Consorta members, including nearly 600 pharmacy program participants at 360 hospitals, a discount for subscribing to Natural Standard. In addition, clients will receive 100 flashcards with color digital photos that can be posted on each subscriber's public Web site as a public service.

**Natural Standard Contributes to Nursing Book:** Executive Director of **Natural Standard**, Catherine Ulbricht, PharmD, and Clinical Research Assistant Erica Seamon, PharmD, contributed to the new edition of *Saunders Nursing Drug Handbook*. The book is scheduled for publication in 2007. The handbook is a reference for practitioners seeking up-to-date, reliable information on medications. It contains monographs of several hundred brand name drugs as well as frequently used herbs.

### Quick Links:

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- [Natural Standard PDA](#)
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