



# To the Point

NEWSLETTER | JULY 2021

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

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*Representing Idaho Acupuncturists since 1986.  
The IAA is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) association.*

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**• President's Points •**

*By Dr. Cass McLean, DACM, LAc  
Idaho Acupuncture Association President*

**Remaining Connected During a Time of Distance**

**Welcome** to our new column, "President's Points." This will become a regular addition to our biannual newsletters. Within, you will find a behind-the-scenes look at what the IAA is working on and what we've accomplished to date.

This past year was truly transformative for me. I navigated the pandemic at home and in the office. I closed my business then reopened my business. I tried to nourish my connections with friends and family while maintaining physical distance. This was a year of flexibility, survival, adaptation, change, and growth. Though challenging, the year left me feeling...inspired. I witnessed a brave, universal invitation to lean into our support networks. As Aristotle said, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," and we, as social creatures, as community members, as business owners, and as acupuncturists, banded together and found new ways to connect.

Idaho acupuncturists have historically been a solitary sort, private islands in an archipelago. The IAA membership committee recognizes the importance of unity and reduced the barriers to membership in October by creating a sliding scale. This allows our members to join for as little as \$35. In addition, newly licensed acupuncturists get free membership for their first year! Our numbers have jumped 25% and we are at an all-time high!

We continue to strive for a more efficient organization, so starting October 1, 2021 all members will share the same renewal date. This will make it easier for us to track

renewals and for you to budget. In addition to the new date, we are offering bigger, better perks of membership which include tiered membership options. For example, with a Gold Needle membership, you receive 15 FREE CEUs and a discount on malpractice insurance. For more information about our tier offerings, visit [www.idahoacupuncture.com](http://www.idahoacupuncture.com).

The absolute best way to stay connected is to come to our conference! It is my great honor and privilege to announce this year's IAA Conference and CEU offering: Pearls of Wisdom: Gems Found Amongst Our

*This was a year of flexibility, survival, adaptation, change, and growth. Though challenging, the year left me feeling... inspired.*

Own. The date is scheduled for November 13, 14, 2021 in Boise. There is still much work to be done so if you want to be on the planning committee, please contact Cass at [idaхоacupunctureinfo@gmail.com](mailto:idaхоacupunctureinfo@gmail.com).

IAA membership increases our connectivity at a state level, while American Society of Acupuncture (ASA) membership connects Idaho acupuncturists to other states. The IAA Board voted to join the ASA on April 5, 2021. We are in the process of incorporating our 501(c)6 organization with the IRS. Once that is complete, we will be able to apply for membership with the ASA.

It has been my pleasure serving as your president and I look forward to connecting with you all at our Fall conference.



*Cass McLean, L.Ac.*

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# Updated E&M Codes: Big Benefits for Acupuncturists

By Samuel A. Collins

This article is reprinted with permission from the April 2021 issue of Acupuncture Today ([www.acupuncturetoday.com](http://www.acupuncturetoday.com))

**Question:** I billed a 99201 and it was denied. What happened? Are E&M codes no longer valid, or have they changed?

**Yes,** for 2021 there has been an update to the evaluation and management (E&M) codes including the elimination of code 99201. E&M codes were not deleted, but were revised in ways I believe are going to be helpful to acupuncture providers.

## What's Changed With the Codes (and What Hasn't)

The codes now for E&M codes range from 99202 through 99205 for a new patient and 99211 through 99215 for an established patient. The only code eliminated was 99201, but all codes have an update to their description and the manner in which you choose the appropriate level of E&M service.

What has not changed is how you choose a new-patient or established-patient code. The codes for new patients (99202-99205) still maintain that a new patient is someone who is new to the office, or has not been seen in three years or longer. An established-patient code (99211-99215) is for the evaluation of any patient seen by the provider within three years. A new injury or new complaint of an existing patient (less than three years) does not constitute a new patient for coding of E&M services.

## What the Codes Now Mean

The codes are now described in the following manner:

**99202** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and straightforward medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 15-29 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter, (99201 has been deleted; to report use 99202.)

**99203** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and low level of medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 30-44 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

**99204** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and moderate level of medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 45-59 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

**99205** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of a new patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and high level of medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 60-74 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

**99211** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, and may not require the presence of a physician or other qualified health care professional.

Usually, the presenting problem(s) are minimal.

**99212** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and straightforward medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 10-19 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

**99213** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and low level of medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 20-29 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

**99214** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and moderate level of medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 30-39 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

**99215** Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, which requires a medically appropriate history and/or examination and high level of medical decision-making. When using time for code selection, 40-54 minutes of total time is spent on the date of the encounter.

## Why the Changes Benefit You

The prior descriptions indicated providers would spend a typical amount of time face to face with the patient. This has been removed. This statement did not allow providers to use time as a controlling factor for the level of exam and would otherwise be based on three main factors, including history, examination and medical decision-making (severity of the patient's condition).

This protocol often meant that acupuncture providers who might require an hour of history and evaluation for a chronic patient would not qualify for a code higher than 99203, as severity and medical decision-making did not meet the requirements of morbidity or mortality. Even with this lengthy history and other details necessary, the severity and medical decision-making would only allow for a lower-level coding.

Under the new definitions of E&M codes, you may still use medical decision-making or severity as a factor when choosing the code; but may also use time as a deciding factor. What is now considered part of the E&M is not just time face-to-face or medical decision making, but time for the evaluation that includes the time before, during and after the face-to-face time that is part of the evaluation.

For example, many providers may use specific intake forms within an electronic record-keeping system that require the patient to fill out detailed history and complaint forms before the examination. That information is often reviewed before seeing the patient. That time will now count toward the time of evaluation as long as it is done on the same date as the visit.

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*Under the new definitions of E&M codes, you may still use medical decision-making or severity as a factor when choosing the code; but may also use time as a deciding factor.*

Time is now a specific parameter to choose the level of E&M and is not just time face-to-face, but represents the total provider time spent on the date of service, including:

- Preparing to see the patient (e.g., review of tests)
- Obtaining and/or reviewing separately obtained history
- Performing a medically appropriate examination and/or evaluation
- Counseling and educating patient / family / caregiver
- Ordering tests or procedures
- Referring and communicating with other health care professionals (when not separately reported)
- Documenting clinical information in electronic or other health records
- Independently interpreting results (not separately reported) and communicating results to the patient / family / caregiver
- Care coordination (not separately reported)
- Discussing ongoing treatment, lifestyle modifications and preventive health care needs

The protocols for choosing the proper E&M service will maintain medical decision-making as a method to choose the code. For example, a patient with a life-threatening condition may still have an evaluation that would qualify for 99205 (a high-value code), even if it only takes 15 minutes. The difference now is acupuncture providers will no longer be limited to lower-level E&M codes, even when they have to spend considerable time with the patient on evaluation.

I caution that if you spend one hour with every new patient, that may be a style issue. I suggest you not use 99204 and 99205 when there is a minor or self-limited problem, as use of the code would require an explanation of the need for spending such time on a limited condition.

You may wonder, what if you spend less than 10 minutes on an evaluation on a new patient? What code can you use? It would still be 99202, and although you may not have spent 10 minutes, the medical decision-making for 99202 starts with one self-limited or minor problem. Just as the other codes can use medical decision making without the time element, this would, too. If the patient has one self-limited problem or you spend 10-19 minutes on a new patient, it would qualify for use of 99202.



## When it's time to go back out again . . .

A good many of us have been shut in and living very yin lifestyles for a while now. And although cultivating more yin in our choices can be very nourishing, for many of us, we are looking at this time of 2021 to safely get back out and to celebrate the warmer months, embracing a more yang approach to life. These formulas can help restore some of the vitality we let slip away in 2020.

**ZHENG QI SUPPORT FORMULA** (*Zheng Qi Fang*) is an essential formula for any immune support formulary. Taking this formula several weeks before cold/flu season can prepare the immune system to stand in opposition to external pathogens, including pestilent qi.

**GINSENG & ASTRAGALUS FORMULA** (*Bu Zhong Yi Qi Wan*) is the most popular formula in Chinese herbal medicine for overcoming fatigue due to qi deficiency. It has a strong "lifting" action that can counter "sinking qi," which may have developed as a result of poor diet and no exercise.

**GINSENG ENDURANCE FORMULA** (*Ren Shen Pian*) is a Chinese herbal "adaptogenic" formula, designed to increase athletic performance and restore homeostasis to the body after undergoing stress. It is a qi and blood tonic that also provides some immune support.

**SHENG MAI FORMULA** (*Sheng Mai San*) literally means "Generate the Pulse Powder." It has been used for centuries to revitalize someone who has been severely depleted of qi and yin because of severe or long-term illness.

**SIX GENTLEMEN FORMULA** (*Liu Jun Zi Tang*) is another principal formula for supplementing the qi. It differs from Ginseng & Astragalus Formula in that it has more power to circulate the qi to prevent stagnation, and it can resolve the phlegm and dampness that tends to accumulate when the spleen qi has become weak.



# The Gift of Summer and the Fire Element –A Five Element Perspective

By Lisa Ostermiller, L.Ac., M.Ac.



*The Chinese character for Fire shows a flame rising up, an eternal source of warmth and light.*

*“Summertime, and the livin’ is easy...” From the Musical “Porgy and Bess”  
Lyrics by George Gershwin*

**Ahhh ...** Summer! The warm weather and easing of Covid restrictions beckons us to express our joy and love, wander in fields of blooms, gather for picnics and greet others with those new-found hugs. Most of us have ended our isolation and come out from our winter shells, but how does this really affect us and our patients and how can we use what we know about the Fire Element to help us navigate our emergence from our Covid-safe cocoons?

I retired from my position as an acupuncturist with St. Luke’s Health System last winter during the pandemic. Now, as I consider re-opening a private practice, I contemplate the changes we’ve all undergone. How can studying the cycles of nature and the Elements and Officials guide us toward a way of life? I admit, I have these, “Not too fast, Lisa!” feelings - I’m still cautious about going out in public, like a shy, newly emerged being, I feel vulnerable and tender. Perhaps some of you share these feelings? I’d like to explore this a little more deeply in this article and examine how the Fire Element can assist us with our assimilation back into feeling connected to others.

## **A Little Background**

In my studies of the Five Elements and Chinese Medicine theory one of the Laws of Nature is called the Shen Cycle or Five Element Cycle. In summary, the five elements of Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water exist externally in nature but more importantly, as humans, we are a part of that cycle. Just as the ancients observed nature and the seasons in their daily lives, farming, hunting, gathering food, the elements were observed to be inextricably linked to those seasons: Spring’s emergence of new life (Wood), on to the warmth and love during Summer (Fire), the abundance of Late Summer (Earth), to the balance of Fall (Metal), and Winter’s deep, cold slumber (Water). For example, if there

was a poor harvest, people went hungry, or worse, starved during the long winter. These days, most of us don’t have to worry about going without food because of a poor harvest. Just the same, being aware of this basic cycle of energy helps us understand and feel more rooted in our daily lives and can bring us better clarity around navigating the “new normal” after the pandemic.

## **Our Situation Now - Is It Really Unique?**

Epidemics and pandemics have been with us for centuries, and, sadly, we aren’t done with them. Statistics and research show we will most likely have more pandemics in the future. Ironically, many ancient Chinese medicine texts were written during epidemics! Healers were driven to look to Nature for cures and through their observations, were helped to bring balance and ease to their patients. We are truly experiencing extraordinary times, and, as practitioners, we are uniquely positioned to observe how the Elements are working within our patients and help bring them more ease.

## **Summer’s Gifts**

To examine how the season of summer and the Fire Element, along with its four associated meridians, assist us with our recovery after Covid-19, let’s travel back to winter and spring for some contrast. The cold winters here in Idaho naturally make us want to gather inside and pile on extra layers of clothing. We hunch against the bitter wind and even our gait is choppy and less free to keep us from slipping and falling on the icy walkways. We were more or less in a natural (and also forced) state of hibernation, isolated from others in our own homes or apartments trying to stay safe from exposure to the Coronavirus. Unfortunately, we had abnormally high rates of depression, suicide and child abuse during this last winter. People simply could not get the help they needed when they needed it most.

Then, the stirrings of Spring (the Wood Element) inevitably began. Deep underneath the snow and ice, the earth began to warm, the sap began to rise, the days lengthened and we felt that “itch” more and more to get moving, get out, and “surface” from the layers. But alas, we were still barely getting our vaccinations and we were still warned to be cautious about gathering.

Now, with the season of Summer fully surrounding us in Idaho, we can easily see, feel and hear the correspondences of the Fire Element associated with Summer. The sun works to “melt our hearts”, flowers are in their peak of bloom, the scorched smell of overheated walkways, the sounds of laughter and joy drifting from a nearby park lifts our spirits. And so it is within us, the Fire Element provides us with an internal source of warmth and light, bringing an almost undeniable urge to show our love for one another. Thus we are aided in our transition from isolation back to togetherness, our arms open wide in welcome. Just as the song says, “...the livin’ is easy...” in summertime, and we can just melt into the warmth, forgetting the dark and cold of last winter, shed the layers of clothes protecting us from bone-chilling cold and peel off the masks hiding our warm smiles (when safe to do so of course).

## **The Fire Element Meridians and Officials: Heart (I), Small Intestine (II), Triple Heater (VI) and Heart Protector (V)**

Let’s start with the Heart (I): The Heart, also known as the Supreme Controller, has “authority” over all the other officials, and, in essence “rules” with wisdom, unconditional love. Without the Heart’s guidance, we are in chaos, not knowing which way to turn. In times of chaos we can feel more at ease, confident there is a benevolent leader in charge.

Small Intestine (II): The Official Separating the Pure from the Impure - transforming our lives from the ordinary to the extraordinary! We encounter count-



Lisa Ostermiller,  
L.Ac., M.Ac.

*continued on page 8*





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less decisions every day, how do we sort through it all? Have you noticed when you are more calm, things seem to “sort themselves out”? Look for ways to bring more calm into your life - even a short break to

take some deep breaths can do wonders!

The Heart Protector (V): One of the visualizations I like to use for this Official is one of a walled city with great gates protecting the valuable assets within. If

... I would like to ask you to participate in a challenge: Carve out some time each day to show gratitude for the gifts of summer.

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these gates are working properly, all that is beneficial will freely pass in and out giving us ultimate protection! What is allowed in and out of your heart? Can emotions come and go when needed?

Triple Heater (VI): When things get too hot or too cold we have an inner regulator, the Official in Charge of the thermostat! Ultimately, this is harmonizing, bringing ease and comfort to our bodies, minds and spirits in times of extremes. Looking deeper for a root cause of the “change in temperature” is helpful.

### *When the Fire Element is Out of Balance*

Awareness of how the Fire Element can be out of balance aids us in understanding how to bring about ease even during times of stress. I'm writing this piece during summer's first flush - the fires that could plague our clean air and threaten lives and homes have yet to appear in force. The knowledge this could happen frightens us all. This is the Fire Element out of balance - raging flames that scorch and blacken all in its path.

Even so, during the relatively “easy” living in summer, things can get a little hectic and overwhelming and frankly, it can be exhausting! Dial into your self-care, drink plenty of water and get lots of sleep.

### *A Challenge and Opportunity*

Paying attention to how we feel inside helps guide us in our lives and as practitioners. Now that we have these reminders of what the Fire Element brings to us during Summer, I would like to ask you to participate in a challenge: Carve out some time each day to show gratitude for the gifts of summer. Although it is brief here in the mountains, it is so large in what it brings - the love and warmth we all need to survive and thrive! Take a little extra time to linger in the warmth of a hug from a friend, the connection of a kiss, even smile at a stranger! You will feel the benefit of this and so will your patients.



## Introducing Our New Lobbyist

**The IAA Board is pleased** to announce that Lance Giles has agreed to be our new lobbyist for the Idaho Acupuncture Association (IAA). Lance has worked closely with our previous lobbyist, Kris Ellis, over the years, and he is looking forward to being the “eyes and ears” of the IAA at the Idaho State Capitol. He will continue the outstanding work of Kris Ellis in advocating on our behalf before the Idaho Legislature, the Office of the Governor, and Executive Branch Officials and staff.

Lance is an experienced Idaho based lobbyist who has over 25 years of communication, public policy, and government affairs experience in the state, federal, non-profit, and private sectors. He has deep roots in Idaho and is a graduate of Meridian High School and Boise State University where he earned his Bachelor of Business Administration.

He spent a considerable portion of his career living and working in the Washington, D.C. area where he earned his law degree from Howard University and worked on Capitol Hill. Upon returning to Idaho, Lance worked for Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne. In 2014 he launched his own lobbying firm, the Giles Group, and he has been helping his client's achieve their legislative goals ever since.

Lance is a member of the Idaho State Bar and lives with his wife, Lisa, in Boise. •

*On behalf of the Idaho Acupuncture Association, we would like to thank **Kristina Ellis** for her 18 years of service as the IAA lobbyist! Kris retired from her position earlier this month. Thank you for your support and we wish you the very best in all of your future endeavors!!!*

**After putting** 2021 legislative session behind us, it is time for the IAA to start thinking about the 2022 legislative session. In preparation, the IAA needs to be aware of the following items:

### IDOPL

The Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses was recently reorganized into the Idaho Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses (IDOPL), where all licensing boards, including those that were previously independent, are now housed. IDOPL is divided into three sections – Health Care, Building Construction and Real Estate, and Occupational. The Idaho Board of Acupuncture falls under the responsibility of the Occupational Section, which is overseen by Ann Lawler.

### ADMINISTRATIVE RULES REVIEW

As part of the Governor Little's “Red-Tape Reduction Initiative,” all the Administrative Rules for all licensed professions, including Acupuncture, will be reviewed by IDOPL. The Administrative Rules for the profession of Acupuncture are up for review in 2022. IDOPL will be approaching this effort from ground-zero approach, meaning they start with a blank sheet of paper. In order to prepare for this process, I highly recommend that the IAA create a subcommittee to look at our current rules and have recommendations ready to go on what the IAA wants to eliminate and/or add. Please note that the elimination of text is looked upon



Lance Giles

much more favorably than the addition of text.

### SUNRISE/SUNSET REVIEW

This year, Senate Bill 1084 was signed into law. It requires all licensing chapters, including Acupuncture, to go through a sunset review process. A new Occupational and Professional

Licensure and Review Committee will ultimately review all licensing professions and make recommendations to the germane committees in the Idaho State Legislature. These recommendations could include no changes, additions and subtractions, or even the elimination of licensing the profession of Acupuncture altogether. The Committee, which has yet to be established, will begin reviewing professions in 2022. It is unclear at this time, when the profession of Acupuncture will be before the Committee. Thinking proactively, I highly recommend that the IAA create a subcommittee to review the Acupuncture statute and determine what to add or subtract. Please note that the IAA should justify with specific examples of why the profession needs to be licensed to protect the health and safety of Idahoans.

### ONE-PAGER

Finally, I recommend that the IAA develop a one-pager that contains general information on the profession of Acupuncture in Idaho. Most legislators do not have a clue about Acupuncture, and they will constantly need to be educated and in some cases re-educated. This

one-pager will help in that education process. The one-pager should include a description of the profession and what you do, education requirements, the number and location of acupuncturists in Idaho, why the profession needs to be regulated to protect the health and safety of the public, etc.

It is a privilege and pleasure to advocate on the behalf of the Idaho Acupuncture Association. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

## • IAA Classifieds •

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ers investigated it in the mid 1930s for the very purpose of adjusting patients' estrogen levels. When Diethylstilbestrol (DES), an artificially created hormone, was found to be a more powerful synthetic estrogen than BPA, it was returned to the shelf...until someone discovered its usefulness as an ingredient in plastics. And now it is ubiquitous; used as cups and bottles, food wrappers and containers, coating the insides of cans, sprayed onto receipt paper, in new carpets, in the breastmilk of Inuit mothers...this is the page where I started to cry...

#### ***Alarming numbers related to EDC use:***

Decline in birth rates worldwide, between 1960 and 2015: 50%

Drop in fertility rate in US, between 1960 and 2017: 50%

Drop in fertility rate in Hong Kong, between 1960 and 2017: 80%

Decline in sperm quality since 1980: over 50%

Rise in "impaired fecundity" in women aged 14 to 24, between 1982 and 1995: 42%

Increase in miscarriage rates in US, between 1970 and 2000: the rate of reported miscarriages increased by about 1.0% per year.

Number of IVF embryo transfers last year, worldwide: 2.5 million

Increase in legislation that limits use of EDCs in the USA: 0


#### **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

How can we take action to protect ourselves, our families and patients from this nefarious chemical? The final section of Swan's book addresses our dilemma, and presents many practical fixes. The short version: Counsel all of your patients, not just those in treatment for fertility, to BAN PLASTICS, PESTICIDES, AND PHTHALATES from their life! Swan cites evidence that making these changes (see sidebar) can reverse their deleterious effect on sperm count, morphology and motility in men, and can result in better endocrine function in women. One study even showed that sperm motility improved dramatically in men who started following a healthier diet, in just one week!

In our Chinese medicine clinics, we can focus on supporting the Liver and Large

Intestine for detoxification and elimination; support Kidney function in those with fertility complaints, and, to my mind, the most important - empower patients with knowledge and resources. Depending on your style and expertise, and each patient's presentation, you may recommend a gentle cleanse and saunas. For fertility patients, advise them to make changes about 3 months before trying to conceive, since that's about how long it takes for sperm quality and the environment of follicles that nourish eggs to improve. Stay with your patients as they get sad, then mad, then awakened into action!


While this article has focused on EDCs and fertility, Swan's book addresses broader health concerns as well: cancer, endocrine disorders, and so on. And, as we affect fertility, so too the health of yet to be conceived children. Exposure to EDCs in utero and in early childhood has profound and

lasting ill effects. As we know, hormones affect the entire body. And, Swan tells us, it's not just about people. Animals are going extinct in droves, many in part due to decreased fertility directly associated with exposure to EDCs. So even if you don't see patients for reproductive health, Count Down is a valuable read. And, as practitioners of Chinese medicine, we are uniquely equipped to help. Chinese medicine's health promoting wisdom is as relevant as ever and our training gave us tools that grew from this wisdom, tools that can help our patients improve their fertility. By counseling our patients to replace toxic products with natural ones, and to otherwise avoid BPA and other EDCs, we steer them toward improved fertility and a healthier lifestyle. And, as Swan's book seems to suggest, knowledge is power. Empowerment over their own health and the health of the planet may be the greatest gift we can give our patients. 

#### **• THE LIST •**

Counsel your fertility patients to:

- Ditch plastic! Replace with stainless steel, ceramic, or glass
- No plastic in the microwave (to which I would add: No microwave use in the first place!)
- Prepare meals at home as often as possible
- Filter all drinking water (See NSF International, for water filtration system information)
- Replace toxic cleaning and body care products with safer alternatives (See Environmental Working Group website <https://www.ewg.org/> for ratings and recommendations); or make your own, using water, vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils – recipes abound online
- Replace your vinyl shower curtain with one made of cotton, linen, or hemp
- Do not use air fresheners – choose essential oil diffusers instead
- Use reusable cloth or canvas bags for shopping
- Opt for email receipts, or no receipt, rather than printed ones
- Wash your hands often
- Don't give your kids plastic toys, or use plastic
- Replace outdoor hoses with PVC- and BPA-free ones
- Vacuum often, with a machine that has a HEPA filter
- Use HEPA air filters indoors, especially in bedrooms
- Support eco-friendly manufacturers and retailers
- Lobby for legislative change, and vote for candidates who endorse stricter regulation of chemicals
- Take off your shoes when you come indoors, to avoid tracking chemical residues into the house
- Form a reading group, or an action committee, with your friends and neighbors
- Write to legislators and the EPA and FDA; protest toxic chemicals, and support non-toxic alternatives, with your wallet!



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NEWSLETTER | JULY 2021

## To the Point

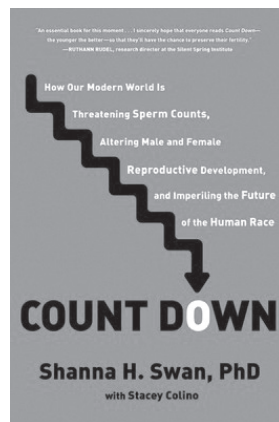
### • Book Review •

## ***Count Down***, by Shanna H. Swan, PhD

*A book review by Naomi Jankowitz focusing on Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals, Infertility, and Your Patients*

*“Consider this book a rallying cry for raising awareness about these issues!”*

As healthcare practitioners and aware citizens we have all heard by now about the health hazards of plastics, pesticides, and other chemicals found in our everyday environment. These nefarious compounds cause worldwide disruption of endocrine function, noticeable decreases in fertility and birth rates, increasing gender dysphoria, and increases in cancer rates. In her new book, *Count Down*, Shanna Swan, PhD presents her review and interpretation



of thousands of studies that show how Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) affect birth rates and the reproductive health of both men and women. Dr. Swan is one of the world's leading environmental and reproductive epidemiologists, and an award-winning research scientist. Her book is invaluable for those of us in the healing professions whose aim is to help restore our patients' reproductive function and overall health.

If you haven't already seen a patient

of thousands of studies that show how Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) affect birth rates and the reproductive health of both men and women. Dr. Swan is

beset by infertility or other gynecological complaints or poor sexual functioning, believe me, you will. Fertility rates in human beings have declined by over 50% worldwide in the last forty years, and that number continues to decline by one percent per year. (For more scary numbers, see side bar).

To take one of Swan's examples, bisphenol A (BPA), is just one among many of the EDCs discussed in the book. "Throughout a woman's life, BPA might as well be considered a nemesis to her reproductive health" (p 119). This substance was first synthesized in a lab in 1891, and research-



Naomi Jankowitz,  
L.Ac., MSOM

*continued on page 10*