NEWS+TRENDS

Cures from Your Couch

Are wellness products hawked on TV infomercials too good to be true? The answers may surprise you. —*Cary Barbor*

PRODUCT	CLAIM	EXPERT VERDICT
Debbie Meyer Green Bags *($9.95 for 20 bags)*	"Extends the life of produce"; store bagged fruits and veggies in the fridge or on the counter	**Thumbs up.** The bags absorb the hormone ethylene, which "may help prolong the life of fruits and vegetables that ripen quickly," says Paul Dawson, PhD, a food science and human nutrition professor at Clemson University.
Inner * Health SOLE Pads *($33 for 30 pads)*	Herb-filled cotton pads stick to your feet and provide a "cleansing action"; originally called "SOLE Detox Pads"	**Thumbs down.** "There's no scientific basis to these claims," says James Christina, DPM, director of scientific affairs at the American Podiatric Medical Association. "Toxins are removed by the liver, not the skin."
Listen Up Personal Sound Amplifier *($14.99)*	A microphone in a small case amplifies sound to earbuds; for use in crowded, loud settings	**Thumbs up.** "This is a terrific quick fix until you can get fitted with a hearing aid," says University of Pittsburgh otolaryngologist Barry Hirsch, MD. "We use them in our offices."
Lens Doctor Scratch Repair Kit *($9.99)*	"Reduces surface scratches" on eyeglasses of all types	**Thumbs down.** "These products leave a coating you can hardly see through," says Kerry Beebe, OD, of the American Optometric Association. "The only real solution is to replace the lens."
Super Blue Stuff OTC pain relief cream *($18.99 for 4.4 oz)*	"Guaranteed to provide fast natural pain relief"	**Neutral.** "The main ingredient (menthol) can reduce pain, but its MSM and glucosamine aren't likely to help topically," says orthopedic surgeon Nicholas DiNubile, MD, author of *FrameWork*. "Look for menthol in a cheaper product," like Tiger Balm.

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PHOTOILLUSTRATION AND PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOLA LOPEZ