

Voice for a choice: Bera Dordoni sings the virtues of fresh veggies, water and taking charge of your health

By [Jan Jonas](#)
Tribune Reporter

Bera Dordoni is a rescuer.

And when she smiles at you, you want to be rescued.

That's what her three dogs would say if they could speak. One is blind, another has joint problems, and the third, like so many of us, simply needs love and attention.

Those are the things Dordoni, a naturopathic doctor, spreads around, whether to dogs or people.

As a naturopath, she has been taught how to treat disease - or the body's dis-ease, as she calls it - by using natural mechanisms, such as water, air and organically grown fruits and vegetables. She rejects the use of drugs and medicines normally espoused by medical doctors.

To those willing to commit to choosing a healthy lifestyle, she also has advice on how to make the concept real.

"This is a mission to help others help themselves," Dordoni, 52, says.

The Bernalillo resident has released a CD with several original songs and has published a book, "I Have a Choice," in which a highly driven movie director learns he can choose how he wants to live and changes his lifestyle. He becomes healthier and, as a result of feeling better physically, he is also happier.

"The book is a primer for strengthening the immune system," Dordoni says.

A life-threatening bout with pneumonia when she was singing in smoke-filled night clubs in the early '70s drew her into the world of alternative medicine.

Feeling like conventional medicine had failed her, she says, she became convinced alternatives to the American Medical Association's treatment recommendations could be helpful. She later attended a school of natural healing started by John Christopher, earning a degree as a naturopathic doctor.

Dordoni hasn't been to a medical doctor for years, she says, because she knows her body well enough to understand what it needs.

Some suggestions are things we've heard for a long time.

Eat fresh fruits and vegetables - organic is recommended.

Exercise helps relieve stress and brings oxygen to your body.

Drink water - filtered and lots of it, even if you think you don't need it.

"If there's any pain in your body, 90 percent of the time, it can be eliminated by drinking enough water. Most pain comes from dehydration," she says.

Dordoni swears by seaweed, tofu and noni juice, made from the plant that grows in Hawaii and Tahiti.

She also fills up on brown rice, fresh carrot juice and dark green leafy vegetables, often consumed in a powdered form of green-food concentrates that can contain wheat grass, barley grass and alfalfa.

These are daily staples for her and anyone who follows her plan.

Cheryl Heath, music director of the Christ Unity at the Edge of the Woods church, came down with pneumonia a couple of years ago and didn't want to take antibiotics.

Dordoni recommended a tonic of five ingredients, including garlic and hot chile peppers.

"They're very strong," says Heath, 51. "It's like bad germs can't live in this. I used this under my tongue every couple of hours. Afterward, I continued using it three times a day. Now I keep it in my purse. If I ever get a cough, I just put some in my throat, and it stops the cough."

Within three days, Heath says, she was better. With the pneumonia gone, "I was open to whatever might make me feel good," she says.

She has been following Dordoni's plan since then and says she has been healthy.

"If I follow common sense, which is all I think it is, I stay well," Heath says.

That healthy feeling is something Dordoni also planned out for Bunny Hauser, who has fibromyalgia, a disorder that causes widespread muscle pain and fatigue.

Hauser, 52, owns a nail salon in Fullerton, Calif., that Dordoni used to frequent when she lived nearby in the early 90s.

"I thank God for that woman because I would not be where I am today or who I am today," Hauser said in a phone interview last week from her home.

After about nine years of following a vegetarian diet and shopping mostly at health food stores for organic ingredients for carrot and other juices, Hauser says, "I love juicing. When I don't and I get away from it, I don't feel the same. . . . Your body will tell you what it needs every single time."

But, Dordoni says, "Until you say, 'Dang, I don't want to live this way. I don't want to feel this way,'" you can't be ache-and-pain free.

"Knowledge is power, but applying that knowledge is what allows us to heal from a malady, whatever it may be," Dordoni says. "That's why it is so important to know your choices."

Once you know what those are, she says, you can rescue yourself.

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