
Focus on Health

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Gynecologic Endocrinology

Reliable Blood Testing

Be sure the laboratory your gynecologist uses does hormone testing correctly, unlike LabCorp and Quest labs. Both of them use a quick kit test which is massively inaccurate on the high side. Even UT Southwestern does the tests incorrectly, which is particularly disturbing, since they should know better. This is why I send my hormone tests to Inter Science Institute in Inglewood, California. They do the testing correctly and have for years. Quest Lab did, too, but succumbed to the almighty dollar several years ago.

- Estrogen replacement improves colorectal cancer outcomes.
- Daily magnesium supplementation lowers blood pressure in older women.
- Harvard epidemiologists find that Caucasians with high blood levels of Vitamin D have a 62 percent lower risk of Multiple Sclerosis.
- Petadolex is a brand of Butterbur extracted from the Butterbur plant. It is available in capsule form from many health food stores and is very effective in prevention and treatment of migraine headaches.

Handy Barometer

A man's erectile function is an important indicator of overall health. An Italian study showed that in two-thirds of patients with both heart disease and ED, the erection problems showed up, on average, three years before other more obvious symptoms, such as chest pain. A test for C reactive protein level in the blood (normal is less than 0.5) and coronary artery calcium (an ultra fast CAT Scan) is warranted when ED is detected. The penis is a barometer of health of the cardiovascular system. If Levitra or Cialis are tried and don't help the ED, that is an ominous sign. Sorry, ladies, you don't have such a handy barometer to use.

Reappointment to Clinical Staff

My reappointment to the Clinical Staff at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas was recently confirmed.

Breast Cancer Detection

Elastography, a new ultrasound technique for detection of breast cancer, measures how easily a lump in the breast resumes its former shape after being compressed. Results are immediate and almost 100% accurate. Therefore an invasive needle biopsy which can spread cancer cells is avoided.

Testosterone

There is proof now that low blood levels of testosterone in men account for an increased incidence of falling. HRT for men using topical testosterone cream or subcutaneous testosterone pellets corrects the problem, as well as restoring vigor, strength, self confidence, alertness, libido, and stability.

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Helpful Fever

From Roswell Park Cancer Institute comes this information about what it is we are messing with when we casually bring down a fever by taking aspirin or Tylenol.

A fever helps rather than hurts you. High temperature ramps up the body's immune responses. Heat increases the density of sticky molecules on the surface of blood vessels in the lymph nodes. These catch more white blood cells as the blood rushes past. It is a cellular Velcro kind of phenomenon.

Thyroid Treatment

Thyroid replacement is much more effective when done using triiodothyronine topical cream applied directly to skin over the thyroid area of the lower neck. Using some of the cream on the scalp also prevents and treats male pattern baldness and hair loss in both men and women. New hair growth is dark instead of white.

DHEA Study

A long-awaited study on Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) is well under way in Australia. The study protocol is identical to the one I designed with Dr. Leon Speroff and tried to start in conjunction with Drs. Kathleen Connell and Marsha Guest at Yale Medical School last year. We were unable to obtain adequate funding to complete the trials.

New Blood Test

A new blood test called a "Glycomark" has been developed and is available at LabCorp. It replaces the A1C hemoglobin (glycohemoglobin) test as a measure of average blood sugar levels and is a huge step forward in management of diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

As part of the professional services I feel should be provided by me to my patients, screening of the voluminous medical literature has become more and more important. Please read this now. Perhaps you have seen a new item that I have not included in this newsletter or have not seen myself. If so, feel free to bring it to my attention.

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Grief Stages

Investigators at Yale University School of Medicine studying the conventionally accepted stages of grief (disbelief, yearning, anger, depression, and acceptance) found that the initial dominant grief item was not disbelief, but yearning, which peaked at four months after the loss. All negative grief indicators are in decline by approximately six months post-loss, and acceptance, the final stage, increased steadily over a 24 month follow-up period.

Pulse Pressure

A pulse pressure (difference between the systolic blood pressure and the diastolic blood pressure) of 40 mm./Hg. or less in patients who eventually developed atrial fibrillation was associated with a 20-year incidence rate of 5.6 per cent. A pulse pressure of more than 61 was associated with an incidence of 23.3 per cent, six times higher. This probably indicates arterial stiffness, which is modifiable in aging patients.

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The Truth About Fatty Acids

Unsaturated fatty acids are not harmful when ingested, and indeed are beneficial. Vegetable oils, olive oil, various nuts, etc. contain unsaturated fatty acids in abundance. Omega 3 fatty acids in fish oil, fish, and seafood lower the amount of fat in the blood, which can lower blood pressure and decrease the risk of getting cardiovascular disease. Omega 6 fatty acids in sunflower oil and safflower oil also reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease but can contribute to allergies and inflammation. Farm-raised Atlantic salmon should be avoided.

Polyunsaturated fat, along with monounsaturated fat, are "healthy fats," the amount of which in one's daily diet should be near 45 grams (in a 2,000 calorie-per-day diet). Polyunsaturated fat can be found mostly in grain products, fish and seafood (herring, wild salmon, mackerel, and halibut), soybeans, and fish oil. Foods like mayonnaise and soft margarine may also be good sources, but you should always check the nutritional label first. Polyunsaturated fat is necessary for the body and protects against illness. Natural sources of monounsaturated fat are avocados, canola oil, olive oil, peanut oil, walnut and other nut oils, safflower oil, sesame oil, and sunflower oil. Flax seed oil should be avoided.

Most fatty acids in nature are found in the cis configuration, which means that two carbon atoms are on the same side of a double bond. The rigidity of double bonds freezes configuration, so that the more double bonds a fat contains, the lower its melting temperature. The trans configuration of fats is not found in nature and is the result of human processing (hydrogenation). These are uniformly bad if consumed

(eaten).

Omega 3 fatty acids have a double bond on one end and are beneficial, while Omega 6 fatty acids are metabolized into Arachidonic Acid, leading to chronic inflammation as well as behavioral changes such as violence and depression.

Fatty acids play an important role in the life and death of cardiac cells because they are essential fuels for mechanical and electrical activities of the heart.

Finally, essential fatty acids cannot be made in the body and must be supplied in food (or pills).

Fatty acids that are not attached to other molecules are called "free," and are measured in the blood as triglycerides.

Essential Fatty Acid Metabolism Chart

A color schematic of Essential Fatty Acid Metabolism, one of the keys to understanding treatment of autoimmune diseases, and cancer is on the fourth page of this newsletter.

Fatty Acids

Fatty acids, about which you have heard for years, are carboxylic acid, often with a long unbranched tail (chain) which is either saturated or unsaturated with hydrogen atoms. Saturated fatty acids form straight chains and as a result can be packed together very tightly. They can be stored in living animals as fatty tissues. This allows animals to store a large amount of potential energy supply in relatively small areas of the body. Eating these saturated fatty acids in meat is potentially harmful in large amounts.

