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# Focus on Health

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August 2010

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## Eye Blood Pressure

**M**etabolic Syndrome is a risk factor for high intraocular tension according to an article in the February 2010 issue of *International Journal of Obesity*. There is direct correlation of fasting plasma glucose levels, blood pressure, and triglycerides (three of the components of this condition) to increased pressure within the eye.

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## Fish Oil

**E**ight major brands of fish oil supplements (Omega-3 fatty acids) are accused of knowingly selling them laden with PCB's. A lawsuit has been initiated against them in California. Lovaza is not one of them.

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## Alzheimer's Update

**F**rom the July 17, 2010 *The New York Times*: Alzheimer's, once an oddity, now affects 5.3 million Americans and is the seventh leading cause of death. It also devastates and bankrupts families. Because of the prolonged course of the disease, studies will need ten to fifteen years to arrive at meaningful conclusions. Even though almost 100 drugs are in the pipeline, drug companies hesitate to start studies that the FDA may find do not meet the criteria to get a new medication on the market. The new PET scan soon to be available will be a huge help in evaluating patients before the clinical effects of the disease are noticeable and thus hopefully avoid it.

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## Nature Finds

**B**irds in the wild that devote less time to parenting engage in homosexual behavior very frequently in both males and females with no cost to reproductive success. Whether this translates to other classes of fish and mammals is not clear. Similar results are found in primates, say studies from the University of Newcastle in Callaghan, Australia.

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## Insight on SIDS

**B**rain cells called astrocytes long thought to simply act as glue cells to shore up brain cells may also sense changes in blood carbon dioxide and trigger increased breathing to remove excess CO<sub>2</sub> from the blood. This may help in the understanding of sudden infant death syndrome (also known as "cot death"), according to an article from London in the July 2010 issue of the journal *Nature*.

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## Diabetic News

**D**iabetic and non-diabetic people have similar fat tissue levels of adiponectin and leptin levels. This suggests that counter regulatory mechanisms are present in diabetes. There is a visceral fat pad located near the heart containing these two substances which may influence the development of diabetes. This from Spain.

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