

Focus on Health

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John R. Woodward, M.D.,P.A.
Gynecologic Endocrinology,
Gynecologic Urology

Move Over Viagra

The drug Viagra may be in for some stiff competition starting in 2003 from a new drug called **Cialis**, which is reported to have a quicker onset of action (male erection, female lubrication).

Positive Effects with Hormone Therapy

A study of over 3,000 men and women living in Utah found that women who take **hormone therapy** after menopause and continue it for 10 years or more have a reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease of 50%. Long term positive effects of **hormone replacement** on mood, memory, cognition and sleep have assumed a larger and larger role as reasons to continue hormone therapy long term.

Nausea Relief

Topical application of **Promethazine (Phenergan)** gel to the wrist (in a dose and concentration that is most appropriate for each patient) to stop nausea provides excellent, rapid results.

Falls When Over 75 Years

Almost half of persons older than 75 years fall each year. When these individuals subsequently fracture a hip, more than half will die within 12 months. Age and prescription drugs were found to influence risk of falls (the study was done in rural elders). Falls increase 4% with each increased year of age. Prescription analgesics (pain medication) increased fall risk by 55-85%. Arthritis medications decreased risk of falls 20-60%.

Genetics and Food Affect Results

Pharmacogenomics research studies how a drug causes great results in some people, no results in others, and bad results in a few because of differences in genetic makeup. Example: There are 29 genetic variations that affect how one responds to cholesterol lowering **"statin"** drugs such as Lipitor or Pravachol. The study of how food interacts with genes is called **nutrigenomics**. Example: Only 15% of the population has sodium sensitive hypertension. For everyone else, cutting sodium in the diet has almost no effect on high blood pressure.

Ultra Fast CAT Scans

A recent comment by well known cardiologist Dr. Harold Karpman concerning Ultra fast CAT scans (also known as EBCT) is of interest. He writes "I feel convinced that EBCT will end up being a superb screening technique to identify patients at increased risk of MI (myocardial infarction) or other serious coronary events, and in many instances, may prove to be incredibly useful in motivating affected individuals to alter their life-style in a positive way and to accept therapy with lipid lowering drugs and/or other agents that will improve endothelial function and diminish the atherosclerotic burden over time."

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 if you have time before I see you, so that we can further discuss whichever topic especially interests you.

Perhaps you have seen an item that I have not included in this list or have not seen myself. If so, feel free to bring it to my attention.

John R. Woodward, M.D.,P.A.
7777 Forest Lane, Suite A338
Dallas, Texas 75230
(972) 566-7870