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# Focus on Health

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## Postmenopausal Testosterone

The FDA has ruled that benefit for women does not justify the possible health risk of using postmenopausal testosterone. Recent research warrants a second look at this issue and will almost surely result in a reversal of this ruling, since it is an incorrect one in my opinion.

## Bad for Smokers

Beta carotene has both benefits and risks. An eighteen year study of 6,000 men using beta carotene showed that it slowed cognitive decline, improved memory, and improved fluency. It does, however, increase the risk of lung cancer in smokers.

## Anonymous Complaints

The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons has filed a federal lawsuit against the Texas Medical Board and all its members for anonymous complaints, violation of due process, and retaliation against those who speak out (such as myself).

## Weight Loss

Merck has a weight-loss drug named Taranabant which is very similar to Rimonabant and is in their pipeline of proposed new drugs.

## Alzheimer's/Dementia Testing

Cognitive testing to diagnose early Alzheimer's or dementia is available from a company in Australia but not here. It is done using playing cards, is available on the Internet from CogState, Ltd., and is very useful. A blood test for early diagnosis of presymptomatic Alzheimer's which is 90% accurate is being developed at Stanford. It analyzes 18 signaling proteins in blood plasma. A positive test signaled patients who progressed to Alzheimer's 2-6 years later with 90% accuracy in a blinded study.

## More on Acomplia

An article in the December 15, 2007 *OB GYN NEWS* gives good information on Acomplia (Rimonabant) which will be marketed in the U. S. as Zumulti if and when it is approved by the FDA.

Ironically, the Texas Medical Board has filed a formal complaint against me for trying the drug on myself in 2006 at a time when it was available worldwide but not here. A book written by Dr. Jerome Groopman of Harvard called "How Doctors Think" specifically recommends just such a course of action as I pursued.

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. The information in this newsletter is derived from periodicals and books which I have read and whose information I have consolidated. 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.

## Breast Cancer Testing

A novel mammographic system called stereoscopic digital mammography improves accuracy by 40% to 50%. However, in my opinion, blood testing with Ca 27-29's serially will be the better screening technique, with this newer radiologic technique entering the detection system in follow up prior to doing breast MRI's.

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