
Focus on Health

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Gynecologic Endocrinology

New Drugs

Two new experimental drugs (dapagliflozin and sergliflozin) are currently in Phase II trials (rats) for treatment of Type II Diabetes. They are selective inhibitors of gut and renal selective sodium-glucose cotransporters and show promise in lowering blood glucose levels by changing the glucose utilization rate in the proximal renal (kidney) tubules.

DHEA & Birth Control

Lower hormone levels in women who exercise regularly and take birth control pills may result in 60 percent less gain in muscle mass than women who are not on “the pill,” says a new study from Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio. The reduction in DHEA levels caused by birth control pills may explain this. Thus DHEA Cream could be a good idea for birth control pill users. As with any other bioidentical hormone, oral use is not effective due to the “first pass through the liver” effect.

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Cancer Cures?

Although there has been huge progress in lowering mortality from infectious diseases and cardiovascular disease in the last half century, the mortality rate due to cancer has declined by less than 5%. Has there been progress? Yes, but no cure. New treatments are gentler and can extend life, but they do little to cure. Could it be that the traditional approach by the medical profession (surgery, chemotherapy, radiation) is misdirected? Meanwhile, huge cancer institutions are being built (Harvard, Yale, M. D. Anderson in Houston, and Baylor in Dallas are just a few) and will certainly be utilized to the fullest pursuing what is probably the wrong approach. Alternative methods of cancer treatment should therefore be attempted and analyzed with careful large scale studies.

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.

Sunscreen Ratings

Sunscreen isn't just about SPF (sun protection factor). This number reflects how well a product screens out UVB (ultraviolet B) rays. The SPF rating is calculated by comparing the amount of time needed to produce a sunburn on protected skin to the amount of time needed to cause a sunburn on unprotected skin. Right now labels don't say anything about UVA rays which penetrate deeper and cause cancer. This will change in the next 18 months due to new FDA rules. UVA will be rated on a 4-star scale. “Waterproof” and “sunblock” are terms that don't mean much of anything and can be ignored.

Salt Intake

A Chinese study shows that people with Metabolic Syndrome have an exaggerated blood pressure response to salt intake or restriction of about 5 mm Hg.

Diabetic Nephropathy

Studies in diabetic mice with severe kidney damage show that both Estradiol and Tamoxifen may protect against end stage diabetic nephropathy. In women as well, they should be tried in human studies.

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