
Focus on Health

July 2011

John R. Woodward, M.D.
Gynecologic Endocrinology

Good Reads

Two new books are highly recommended reading. They are: The Female Brain and The Male Brain. Read them in that order. Both are written by Dr. Louann Brizendine and are available at any bookstore.

Breast Cancer

A new drug called Exemestane is now available. It lowers the risk of breast cancer by 65 percent. An article concerning Exemestane is in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. The study was done at Harvard and the Massachusetts General Hospital. Treatment is a once per day tablet taken for 5 years. It is safer and has fewer side effects than Tamoxifen, in addition to being much more effective. The problem is cost. At present the cash price for generic is about \$388 per month but with insurance it is \$39 per month.

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.

Hypertension

Can antihypertensive treatment benefit people without hypertension? Yes! Says a meta-analysis in *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2011; 305:913.

Vitamin D

A growing list of health issues is related to Vitamin D deficiency. The latest is hypertension (high blood pressure). Those people in the lowest Vitamin D quartile are three times more likely to have hypertension as those in the highest quartile. Correcting the problem can best be done by taking Vitamin D3-50 twice per week until the blood level reaches 60-80. One capsule per week from then on keeps it there for life.

Blood Clots

You are more likely than average to get blood clots if you are tall, heavy, and male, a study from Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia, PA shows, agreeing with a similar study from Norway which applies to both women and men. Compression stockings, weight loss, and avoiding immobility can help. This article appeared in *USA Today*, April 29, 2011.

Cancer Diagnosis

Head and neck cancer is the eighth most common malignancy worldwide. A new way to diagnose it by analyzing exhaled breath (a method also used to diagnose and follow *Helicobacter pylori*) has been studied and confirmed as safe and reliable. This report appeared in the April 2011 issue of *British Journal of Cancer*.

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

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