
Focus on Health

June 2011

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Gynecologic Endocrinology

Breast Cancer Natural Supplement

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, exceeded only by lung cancer. A study recently published in the journal Breast Cancer examined the effects of a blended natural supplement on breast health in 96 pre- and post-menopausal women not taking hormonal contraceptives, supplements, or HRT. The randomized controlled trial, published by Canadian researcher Maggie Laidlaw, used a novel biomarker called the carcinogenic ratio. A follow-up study will be funded by the Canadian government. The breast health supplement used was derived from stinging nettle and contained HMR lignan, indole-3-carbinol, calcium glucarate, and milk thistle.

Robotic Medicine?

The newest laparoscopic method available is called single port or single incision laparoscopy. It is described in detail in the April 2011 issue of OBG Management. Meanwhile, robotic surgery is available in most major hospitals. The surgeon can be present or in another location (or country) while he or she conducts the surgery.

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.

Diabetes - Salt

In Type II diabetes or in Metabolic Syndrome salt restriction is not a good idea, says an article in Diabetes Care, 2011; 34.

Blood Sugar

Tight control of blood sugar levels long term is associated with increased mortality. The reason remains unknown. An A1C hemoglobin measures average blood sugar levels over the preceding two months. The target should be around 7.2, not 6, as was previously the recommendation.

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HRT Benefits

From The Wall Street Journal of April 18, 2011: Women who start estrogen in their fifties reduce risk of coronary disease by 41% and heart attack risk by 46%. For women who wait until their seventies to start estrogen, there is an increase in colorectal cancer risk of 83%, and overall disease increase of 15%. Therefore, ladies, timing of the beginning of HRT is crucial, the earlier the better.

Sooner Better

Data from the California Teacher's Study – a prospective cohort study – was robustly reassuring as to cardiovascular safety when hormone therapy is used by recently menopausal women. The earlier HT is started, age-wise, the better the results. This from Annals of Internal Medicine, 2010;152:211.

Sleep Apnea

A blood cysteine level is a good biomarker for people with obstructive sleep apnea, which is consistently linked to increased risk for cardiovascular misadventure.

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