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# Focus on Health

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## Vitamin D

**O**verweight or obese women (not the same condition at all) are both at increased risk of Vitamin D deficiency, says an article in the research journal *Obesity* in 2008.

## Niaspan Substitute

**F**or those who cannot take Niaspan for correction of abnormal blood lipids because of Niaspan's side effects (flushing, rash) red yeast rice is an effective substitute.

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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.

## Fractures Death Risk

**A**ll major fractures in both men and women over age 60 are associated with increased mortality over the next five years and 10 years for hip fractures. In addition even minor low trauma fractures are associated with elevated subsequent death risk. Low Vitamin D (Calcitriol) levels can be corrected to help prevent this major problem. (Source: *Internal Medicine Alert*, March 15, 2009).

## Red Meat

**A** study in *Archives of Internal Medicine*, March 2009 revealed that people who eat large amounts of red meat and processed meats face a risk of premature death from heart disease and cancer. This finding agrees with information from the book *The China Study* by T. Colin Campbell which advocates a vegan diet. Over a 10-year period, eating the equivalent of a quarter pound hamburger per day of red meat gave a 22% higher risk of dying of cancer and a 27% higher risk of dying from heart disease. Hot dogs, bacon, and cold cuts are also included. The large study of 545,000 men and women showed that amount or the equivalent per day was enough to cause the increased risk.

## Breast Cancer Indicant

**C**yclin B1 is a human gene which regulates cell reproduction (mitosis). A person with a high expression of this gene has a poor prognosis in breast cancer. This could be used to select those patients who should receive more intensive early therapy. (Source: *British Journal of Cancer* (2009) 100, 1055-1060, 17 March 2009)

## Helicobacter Vaccine

**T**he bacterium "Helicobacter" is associated with cancers of the gall bladder and bile ducts according to a 2007 study from Stanford University School of Medicine. This would suggest Helicobacter as a causative agent in mammary duct (breast) cancers as well, and Helicobacter is also known to cause gastric cancer. A study of women who have had breast cancer and who are then vaccinated with the Type B hepatitis vaccine Recombivax, known to be effective against Helicobacter, could easily be organized with adequate funding were it available.

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