

DC Online (Chiropractic Research)

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Vitamins and Neuroblastoma

A study of young children in the U.S. and Canada suggests that children whose mothers took a multivitamin during pregnancy have a reduced risk of neuroblastoma, one of the most common forms of cancerous tumors found in infants. The study involved about one thousand children; about half had been diagnosed with the tumor. Statistical analysis found that there was up to a 40 percent less incidence if the mother had taken multivitamins prenatally. The researchers do not know which vitamin or combination leads to the benefit.¹

1. Reuters, August 30, 2002, reporting on the work of Dr. Andrew Olshan, professor of epidemiology at the University of North Carolina
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Pets for Allergies

Researchers in Augusta, Georgia report that contrary to conventional medical wisdom, having cats or dogs in the house with infants appears to reduce that child's subsequent risk of developing allergic reactions. By their calculations, two cats or dogs in the household for the infant's first year of life cuts the incidence in half. The reductions in reactivity occurred not only to animal allergens, but to most other common allergens as well. Skin sensitivity testing was used to measure the children's reactivity.²

1. *JAMA*, August 28, 2002.
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Cold Workouts

Research from the University of South Carolina suggests that regular exercise helps prevent the common cold.³ More than 500 volunteers averaging about 48 years of age reported to researchers their exercise habits and frequency of upper respiratory infections during this 12-month study. Those participants who did enough to meet the U.S. surgeon general's minimum recommendations reported up to 32 percent fewer colds than the more sedentary subjects. Other studies suggest that the duration of the infection is somewhat shorter in regular exercisers, although suddenly changing your exercise habits when you contract a cold appears to have no effect.

1. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, August 2002.
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Vitamins Against Blockage

A new study of certain vitamins and cardiovascular patency reinforces previous work that suggests coronary angioplasty patients can reduce the likelihood of recurring blockages. This study of more

than 500 patients concludes that a six-month regimen of folic acid, vitamin B₁₂ and B₆ can cut the rate of subsequent restenosis of the arteries in half. The research suggests that the benefits continue well after the vitamin supplementation ends.⁴

1. *JAMA*, August 28, 2002.
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Feeding Alzheimer's Disease

A new report in the *Archives of Neurology*⁵ concludes that the risk of Alzheimer's disease can be influenced by the quantity of food in your diet. In 1991, researchers began evaluating just under 1,000 Medicare patients, many of whom were deemed at high risk because of a genetic predisposition. Their total caloric intake was related to the incidence of the disease. Among patients with the genetic predisposition, those consuming the most calories, on average, showed a 2.3 times greater incidence of Alzheimer's disease. The researchers suggest that fat intake may be more significant than carbohydrates or protein.⁶

1. *Archives of Neurology*, August 2002.
 2. Reuters, August 15, 2002, in an interview with Dr. Jose Luchsinger for Columbia University in New York.
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Grains for Diabetes

A study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*⁷ concludes that a diet rich in whole grains can reduce the risk of type II diabetes. This research involved more than 42,000 men over a 12-year span who averaged between one-half and three servings of whole-grain foods a day. Overall, those consuming the most whole grains were 42 percent less likely to develop diabetes. When weight considerations are factored in, the difference is even more dramatic. Lean subjects who also consumed the most grains were 87 percent less likely to become diabetic. The researchers think that the benefit may be due to a combination of the more steady carbohydrate metabolism associated with whole grains and their nutritional content.

1. *AJCN*, August 2002.
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CoQ₁₀ for Parkinson's

A new study from the University of California at San Diego offers preliminary evidence that supplementing a patient's diet with coenzyme Q₁₀ may slow the progression of Parkinson's disease. The study was small, involving only 80 people, but at the end of the 16-month test period, the mental and activities of daily living scores of each member of the group that had been given CoQ₁₀ had declined 44 percent less than those in the placebo group.⁸ The highest dose used in this study, 1,200 mg daily, was associated with the most benefit. The researchers believe that the nutrient is not merely giving symptomatic relief, as it took a number of months for any significant difference to appear. They theorize that CoQ₁₀ preserves nerve function, noting that other studies have shown diminished concentrations of the vitamin in the nerve cells of Parkinson's patients.

1. *Neurology*, October 2002.

Handyman's Wart Remover

By now you have probably heard that duct tape has been shown to remove warts more effectively and with less discomfort than standard medical treatments, such as freezing with liquid nitrogen.⁹ Here's the procedure:

1. Apply tape over the wart and wait six days.
2. Remove the tape, soak the area in water and scrape with an emery board.
3. Repeat the above steps and continue for a maximum of two months.

This procedure worked 40 percent better than the freezing treatment in this study. The researchers did not test any other kind of tape, so no one knows if less versatile types of household tapes would work as well. It is thought that the tape induces an immune response that helps break down the wart.

1. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, October 2002.
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Iron Deficiency Unchanged

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that the rates of iron deficiency, in the U.S. have not improved significantly in the past 10 years.¹⁰ About seven percent of toddlers are deficient, according to CDC standards. Among premenopausal women and teenage girls, up to 15 percent are iron deficient, depending on their ethnicity. The CDC recommends that doctors test iron levels in their female patients periodically.

1. Reuters, October 10, 2002.
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Curry for Radiation

Researchers looking for a way to reduce the side-effects of radiation treatment report that an ingredient in curry appears to be effective. Curcumin, a compound that gives turmeric its yellow color, dramatically reduced the sunburn-like inflammation and blistering that can follow radiation treatment in laboratory mice. The mice were given curcumin for five days before exposure to radiation. In addition, cancerous tumors responded better to the combination radiation and curcumin therapy, probably due to the ingredient's suspected propensity toward inhibiting new blood vessel development, thus restricting the tumor's blood supply.¹¹

1. Reuters, reporting on the work of Dr. Paul Okunieff, chief radiation oncologist at the University of Rochester's Wilmot Cancer Center, October 7, 2002.
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Redheads More Sensitive to Pain

Research from the University of Louisville¹² concludes that it takes more anesthesia to numb sensations in redheads than brunettes or blondes. Volunteers inhaled metered doses of a typical anesthetic used in surgery and were asked to report on the level of sensation induced by mild electrical shocks. Redheads required about 20 percent more anesthesia to achieve the same level

of tolerance in this all-female study. The current theory on why redheads should be affected in this way involves the interaction of melanin with certain pain-sensitivity receptors. This interaction may occur because the gene that leads to red hair also prevents the usual melanin receptors from binding properly to the hormone.

1. Associated Press, October 14, 2002, reporting on the work of Dr. Daniel Sessler.

The Fattening of America

A new study reports that Americans are still gaining weight. The report, based on Body Mass Index (BMI) measurements, says that the number of obese persons in this country has doubled in the past 20 years. On average, 31 percent can be classified as obese using their BMI. However, only one in every five persons surveyed considered him or herself seriously overweight.

For youngsters, the statistics are even more disturbing: from ages six through 19, 15 percent fall into the obese category, three times the rate 20 years ago. One in 10 toddlers also fall into this category, having a BMI of 30 or higher. A BMI of 20 to 25 is considered a normal, healthy index.

Nearly two-thirds of Americans have a BMI higher than 25.¹³

1. *JAMA*, October 9, 2002.

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