

## DC On-Line

Brian Sutton, DC

### Selenium for the Prostate

A new study<sup>1</sup> adds support to previously reported benefits of the mineral selenium for prostate health. In this study of over 33,000 men, those with high levels of selenium were found to have only 1/3 the risk of developing advanced of prostate cancer when compared to those with low levels of the mineral. Other studies have suggested that selenium also may help prevent cancers of the lung and colon.

1. Journal of the National Cancer Institute, August 18, 1998.
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### Folacin to Prevent Colon Cancer

A new study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine<sup>2</sup> concludes that folic acid exerts a powerful anti-carcinogenic effect on the large intestine. Researchers followed over 121,000 nurses over a period of 18 years and correlated the incidence of colon cancer to their intake of folacin. Those women who had a higher intake, either from consuming fruits and vegetables rich in the compound or by taking vitamin supplements, were 75 percent less likely to contract the illness. About 47,000 Americans die of colon cancer each year.

2. AIM, October 1998.
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### Dangerous Sex

British doctors are warning against women having sex within a week or two of giving birth. It happens rarely, but a number of deaths have been documented as a result of an air embolism entering the body through damaged uterine vasculature. The previous attachment point of the placenta takes some time to heal after birth. During sexual activity, air can be forced into compromised blood vessels or the pumping action of the heart can draw in air, especially if the womb is elevated higher than the heart.<sup>3</sup>

3. Postgraduate Medical Journal, October, 1998.
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### Acupuncture for Depression

A small study published in a journal published by the American Psychological Society<sup>4</sup> concludes that acupuncture is beneficial for depression. Thirty-eight women suffering from major depression

were separated into three groups, all of which received some form of acupuncture. However, some had their treatment delayed, while others initially received a treatment aimed at headaches or backaches. All eventually received the correct therapy. All three groups improved, but the improvement proceeded at a much faster rate when the genuine treatment began.

4. Psychological Science, October 1998.

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#### Vitamin E for Heart Disease

Another study finds that vitamin E helps to protect against heart disease. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania saw a 40 percent reduction in cardiovascular lesions in mice given the vitamin over a 16 week period. The findings are published in the October 1998 issue of Nature Medicine.<sup>5</sup>

5. Nature Medicine, October, 1998.

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#### Tea for Ulcers

Researchers in Japan report that substances found in tea -- catechins -- are devastating to helicobacter pylori, a bacterium that is implicated in many cases of digestive ulcers. They first suspected tea offered some protection from ulcers when they noticed a very low incidence of ulcers in a tea-producing region of Japan. Catechins also appear to kill strains of escherichia coli and staphylococcus aureus. Scientists from the Netherlands have been looking at another natural remedy for h. pylori-associated ulcers -- garlic. They have found that fresh allicin (found in garlic) is deadly to the bacteria.<sup>6</sup>

6. Reported to the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy in San Diego, September 26, 1998, by Yoshimasa Yamamoto (Show University School of Medicine in Tokyo) and Ellen Stobberingh of University Hospital Maastricht.

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#### Antibiotics in the Food Chain

More researchers are warning about the dangers of using antibiotics to enhance food production. Researchers from the University of Maryland School of Medicine have found, in the intestinal tracts of chickens, bacteria that are highly resistant to antibiotics generally considered to be the last remaining drugs effective against many infectious diseases. In addition, they have found resistance to what were thought to be very powerful drugs still under development. These germs are being found in animals raised on antibiotics, which are given in an effort to boost growth and gain.<sup>7</sup>

7. United Press, September 25, 1998.

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#### Soccer Hard on the Brain

A study published in *Neurology*<sup>8</sup> reports that soccer players are at an increased risk for chronic brain injuries and cumulative damage. Researchers compared soccer professionals to swimming and track athletes, looking at memory, language, recognition and planning skills. They found a significant mental decline in the soccer players, especially those who "head the ball" often (such as forwards and defensive players) and in those who had suffered more concussions.<sup>9</sup>

8. *Neurology*, September, 1998.

9. *United Press*, September 20, 1998.

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### Treating HIV Too Early

One of the co-discoverers of the AIDS virus, Dr. Jay Levy, warns that premature initiation of antiviral drug treatment can be detrimental to an HIV-positive patient's health. He contends that the popular "drug cocktail" therapy weakens the patient's natural immune system if it is not already severely compromised by the infection. Patients who test positive but show no other signs of the disease, should be allowed to let their immune system continue to fight the infection; once the drug therapy is started, he says, their immune system will no longer be much help.<sup>10</sup>

10. *The Lancet*, September 19, 1998.

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### Tea for Cancer

Chinese researchers report that they have found direct evidence that green and black tea result in a clinical improvement of cancer lesions. Their study involved 59 people with oral cancers over a six-month period of time. Tea was consumed orally and applied topically and resulted in significant improvements in cancer signs, as well as inhibiting the proliferation of pre-cancer cells.<sup>11</sup> Other studies have shown benefits in lung cancer, oxidative stress due to smoking, colon cancer, and heart disease.<sup>12</sup>

11. Presented to the Second International Scientific Symposium on Tea & Human Health in Washington, September 16, 1998.

12. *United Press*, September 16, 1998.

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### Diabetes and Fat Consumption

A researcher from Duke University says that restricting sugar intake to control diabetes is the wrong approach. He says fat consumption is a much more important factor. In a study of rats bred to develop type II diabetes, his research group found that when fat intake was cut to 10 percent of total caloric intake, the diabetic condition was reversed 40 percent of the time.<sup>13</sup>

13. *Metabolism*, September 1998. Research was led by Richard Surwit, professor of psychiatry at Duke University.

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## Infections Reduced with Breast Milk

Researchers at Georgetown University Medical Centre and Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health report that premature babies benefit tremendously from breast milk. Examining the histories of 212 low-weight infants, they found that overall infections were cut nearly in half when the babies received breast milk instead of formula. Meningitis and certain blood infections were significantly decreased in the same group.<sup>14</sup> Previous studies have shown that milk from mothers of pre-term babies has a greater immunological component than that from mothers who carry to full-term.

14. Pediatrics, September 1998.

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