

DC On-line (Chiropractic Research)

Brian Sutton, DC

Exercise to Avoid Premature Death

A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*¹ concludes that women who exercise regularly live longer. The study found a 38 percent decrease in premature death among women 55 years and older who were moderately active four times a week for the duration of the study. The types of exercise included light sports, such as bowling or golf, gardening, or long walks.

1. *JAMA*, April 23, 1997.
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Hysterectomies: a Last Resort

A survey conducted among British physicians finds concern about the number of hysterectomies performed world-wide. Most often, the procedure is used to treat menorrhagia (excessive menstrual bleeding). About one-fifth of all women in England undergo the operation, one of the most frequently performed surgeries in the Western world. The research group Meditex reports that most physicians think hysterectomies should only be done as a last resort. According to one expert,² the practice is more prevalent among less-educated women.

2. Dr. Sally Hope, as quoted by Reuter news service, April 21, 1997, "Hysterectomy should be last resort, report says."
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Vitamin C for Angina

A German cardiovascular specialist reports that vitamin C appears to be beneficial in the treatment of angina pectoris. In addition to enhancing the health of the cardiovascular system, the vitamin also appears to help sustain the long-term effectiveness of anti-pain therapies the patient may be using.³

3. Reported to the annual conference of the German Society of Cardiologists by Dr. Eberhard Bassenge of the University of Freiburg.
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Leaded Antacids

A lawsuit filed against eight manufacturers of antacids in an attempt to lower levels of lead in their products was settled by the state of California in April. According to the lawsuit, some of the products contain up to 20 micrograms of lead in a daily dose. Current law requires a warning label

if a product exposes consumers to more than 0.5 micrograms of lead per day, but this does not apply to foods; since antacids contain minerals, the settlement was reached on the idea that they are a food supplement. The makers are to reduce the lead content to 4-6 micrograms per daily dose by July 1. By the year 1999 the content is to be a maximum of 2.25.⁴ The Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental and public health group, originally initiated the action, but their suit was sidetracked when the state of California later launched one of its own. Part of the concern that initiated the original lawsuit was that these products are often taken by pregnant women who often experience heartburn and want to increase their calcium intake. The NRDC is very disappointed in the outcome.

4. Associated Press, April 21, 1997.

Common Asthma Exacerbators

An article in *The Lancet*⁵ describes about 250 common substances that are known to induce asthmatic attacks in sensitive people. A large number of these are present in the workplace, causing what the authors refer to as "occupational asthma." The report also claims that about 10 percent of the general population suffers from asthma that is triggered by substances such as grain mites, flour, latex, wood dust, animal urine, and shellfish, to name a few of the irritants. Chemicals used in the plastics, rubber, textile and pharmaceutical industries are also on the list.⁶

5. *The Lancet*, May 17, 1997.

6. Associated Press, May 16, 1997.

Cockroach Asthma

A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*⁷ reports that cockroaches are responsible for a much higher percentage of asthma attacks than previously thought. Roaches rank higher than dust mites and cat hair, according to this paper. While some estimates put the U.S. rate of asthma at 4-5 percent; densely populated areas seem to be more affected. Some Bronx elementary schools report rates of 50 percent.

7. *NEJM*, May 8, 1997.

Acupuncture for Your Eye

A small study by Japanese researchers demonstrates an increased blood supply to the retina upon stimulation of certain acupuncture points. Needles were inserted near the posterior base of the thumbs of volunteers while investigators used a laser to scan the retinal blood flow. Both volume and velocity increased in these patients. The work was done at the ophthalmology department at Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine.⁸

8. Reported by Dr. Kazuhiko Mori at the annual meeting of the Association for Vision and Ophthalmology in Fort Lauderdale this past May.

Garlic for Bladder Cancer

A study published in the journal *Cancer*⁹ suggests that garlic may slow the growth of cancer cells in the bladder. Researchers laced the water supply of laboratory mice with garlic extract one month before injecting them with bladder cancer cells, then monitored the growth of the cells over the next two months while the mice continued to drink the mixture. They report that tumor growth slowed as the concentration of garlic in the water increased. A mixture of 500 milligrams of aged garlic extract in 100 milliliters of water slowed growth by 59 percent.

9. *Cancer*, May 15, 1997.

Vitamin Deficiency and Arthritis

Doctors at the Training Centre for Public Health in Hagerstown, Maryland, say that rheumatoid arthritis and lupus seem to be associated with low levels of vitamins A and E. They tested serum donated to a blood bank for vitamin levels, then tracked the donors to see who eventually developed the diseases. Those who developed rheumatoid arthritis were especially deficient in beta-carotene.¹⁰

10. *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, May 1997, published by the British Medical Association.

Laser Surgery Linked to Vision Loss

Speakers at a recent meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology warn that laser correction of the cornea can affect a patient's night vision. One doctor estimates that one in four patients will lose some of their ability to see at night, and many will have to quit driving at night altogether.¹¹

11. United Press, May 12, 1997.

Cellular Phone Cancer

An 18 month study of mice concludes that frequent exposure to radio frequencies similar to the output of cellular telephones doubled cancer rates. The mice, genetically bred to be susceptible to lymphomas, developed tumors in 43% of the exposed group as opposed to 22% of the controls. While this seems like a very significant finding, the practice of using such specially bred animals is new and how findings translate to normal creatures is not yet known. One commentator remarks that the highest mortality attributable to cell phones is related to their use while driving an automobile.¹²

12. *Radiation Research*, May, 1997.

Exercise Your Arthritis

Epidemiologists from the Centres for Disease Control are complaining that doctors are not telling their patients about one of the most effective ways of dealing with arthritis: exercise. In fact, many tell patients to not exercise. This is just wrong, according to the CDC. Even if certain joints are too painful to target with a workout program, exercising another area of the body offers benefits too good to forgo, even to the afflicted area.¹³

13. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 8, 1997.

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