

"DC" On-Line

Brian Sutton, DC

Fascinating Facts Gathered On-Line

Sleep Loss and Immunity

Researchers at the University of California in San Diego have found that healthy persons losing four hours of sleep over consecutive nights experience a 28 percent decrease in immune system activity. This loss of killer cell function decreases the body's resistance to microbial invaders and cancer cells.

Putting Conscience above Research Money

A researcher has returned a \$600,000 NIH research grant, and is withdrawing his application for another \$1.25 million, saying he believes that high-tech genetic engineering is a seriously flawed approach to treating cancer. He feels that the answer to health problems lies in holistic health care techniques, not tinkering with the intricate building blocks of life.

Treating AIDS with Malaria

Dr. Henry Heimlich, originator of the Heimlich Maneuver, is a proponent of introducing high fever in AIDS patients. He reasons that since a fever improves immune response, raising a patient's temperature will improve their condition. He is currently involved in a research project using malaria to induce the fever.

In the past he has proposed using fever to improve the health of people with cancer and Lyme disease.

American Children Becoming Sedentary

The Centers for Disease Control have reported what they call "disturbing declines" in school physical education programs. Of 9th-12th grade students surveyed, nearly half are not enrolled in physical education classes, and very few of the remainder go on a daily basis. About one fourth of those who are enrolled don't do any physical activity during class.

Over the years, children have been gradually exercising less. Many prefer television to physical play, causing concern about the long-term health and lifestyle patterns of the next generation of adults.

Car Accidents Down; Injury Claims Up

A recent statement issued by the Insurance Research Council reported that even though the

number and severity of automobile accidents are decreasing, claims for injuries are increasing in number and expense.

Researchers have found a correlation between higher insurance payments and attorney representation, with an additional \$8,700 being paid per injury, on average, to persons represented by lawyers. Nearly all of this amount goes toward treatment and attorney fees, with the injured party receiving maybe \$100 more than those without the benefit of counsel.

The statement by the IRC did not address whether or not the injured persons recovered from their injuries any better as a result of their increased treatment.

CPR -- Worth the Cost?

A study by John Hopkins University of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation found that in a hospital setting, CPR is effective about half the time. However less than 10 percent of those survived long enough to be discharged from the hospital.

Cancer, AIDS, coma patients, and those who suffered unwitnessed cardiac arrests were much less likely to survive very long after revival. With a typical post-CPR hospitalization cost of half a million dollars, the researchers questioned the cost-effectiveness of the procedure of high-risk patients.

Anesthesia: How it Affects the Fetus

Dr. Muin Khoury of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that general anesthesia may be risky for babies in utero. A study has suggested a ten-fold increase hydrocephalus when the mother underwent surgery requiring general anesthesia. The effect seems to be limited to babies born with other central nervous system defects, but further investigation is likely.

Swedish researchers have also reported a possible link of anesthesia with neural tube defects.

Exercise: the More, the Better

Most people realize that exercise is good, but frequently people think that after a certain point it is no longer beneficial or even harmful. However, a study of the heart disease risks of serious runners (such as cholesterol levels) has found that cardiovascular benefits continue to increase even in the most intense programs.

Another study published in the American Physiological Society Journal of Applied Physiology has found that tissue plasminogen activator (TPA) is produced in greater quantities in people who exercise regularly. TPA is one the substances involved in dissolving clots in the bloodstream.

Orange Juice May Help Your Body to Resist Cancer -- and Not Because of Vitamin C

Cornell University researchers have found that feeding rats large quantities of orange juice decreased the incidence of cancers by 40 percent, even when the rats were exposed to a potent carcinogen.

The effect was not due to vitamin C. Researchers had extracted all of that vitamin from the juice. Theoretically, retaining the vitamin C content would enhance the anti-carcinogenic activity.

Speeding up MRIs

Yale researchers have come up with an idea that they think will reduce the time needed to perform a magnetic resonance imaging scan. The procedure involves quickly moving the patient through the magnetic field during the scan, thereby inducing a stronger signal and decreasing the total scan time need to as little as 18 seconds.

Breast Cancer Highest in San Francisco

The highest rate of breast cancer in the world is found among white women who live in the San Francisco Bay area. No explanation to this point seems to satisfy officials as to why this is the case.

The U.S. seems to predominate in the rankings, with other areas of high incidence being found among women in Hawaii and Utah, as well as blacks in Atlanta and San Francisco. Also, high incidences were found in Geneva, Switzerland, Denmark, Israel, New Zealand, and Scotland.

Japanese females fare much better: their risk is only 20 percent that of the San Franciscan women.

Stay in School to Be Healthier

A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines a major study of education and health in the United States. It concludes that known higher risk lifestyles are more likely among less educated citizens.

Such factors as smoking and obesity are about twice as likely to be found in persons without a high school diploma compared to someone who went to college. Higher educated people also appear to be more physically active on average.

Homeopathy Passes the Placebo Test

British researchers report in *The Lancet* that after conducting a study of allergic asthma, they have concluded that a homeopathic remedy produced significantly greater relief from symptoms than a placebo.

Of course in their words, the results were "nowhere near that obtainable with conventional medicines." Still, some would say it's a very good showing for a natural treatment examined in a framework designed for conventional medicine.

Electronic Cancer Detector

A doctor at a clinic in Cleveland testing a non-invasive instrument that purportedly detects breast cancer by measuring electrical charges in the breast tissues using surface sensors. In a test of 457 women, the device successfully detected cancer (verified by biopsy) in 98 percent of the cases. This instrument provides an evaluation in minutes and the developer expects it to become a valuable alternative to mammography.

Cesarean Surgeries in Ohio

Ohio public health officials have gone on record as saying that too many unnecessary C-sections are being done in their state. The highest incidents of the surgery -- over 30 percent -- are in the most affluent neighborhoods where women have supposedly received high quality prenatal care.

According to Dr. Sidney Wolfe of the Public Citizen's Health Research Group, the rate should be closer to 12 percent.

Alcohol and Fertility

A research group at Harvard School of Public Health have found that a woman who has more than seven alcoholic drinks each week has a 60 percent increase in risk of ovulatory dysfunction compared to non-drinkers. The study was done on a group of 5,900 women, one-third of which were having fertility problems.

Lead Poisoning Drug May Worsen Problem

Succimer, a chelating drug that is used to treat lead poisoning, has been found to actually decrease lead excretion in a recent study of low-level lead exposure. For further study, the HHH has funded a new investigation into the effects of the drug on children with moderate blood levels of lead.

In the meantime, it is being recommended that children who take succimer be kept in completely lead-free environments so that "there is no chance that the drug will make the children's lead poisoning worse."

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