

DC On-Line (Chiropractic Research)

Brian Sutton, DC

Phytoestrogens against Uterine Cancers

Research from the Cancer Research Center of Hawaii suggests that soy products and other phytoestrogen-rich foods can have a protective effect against endometrial cancer. In a nine-year study of over 800 women, those that consumed much of these foodstuffs showed a 54 percent reduction in the incidence of the cancer. The work is published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*.¹

1. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, September, 1997.

Liposuction Deaths

The state of California is investigating a number of what seems to be a growing problem: patients dying after liposuction -- fat removal by vacuum. The cosmetic surgery is supposed to be safe, but a surprising number of deaths have been recorded during and immediately after the operation. Overdoses of anesthesia and epinephrine, cardiac arrest, and massive dilution of the blood and fluid overload are just some of the fatal occurrences seen thus far. In one case, the surgeon had injected nearly 20 liters of lidocaine-containing fluids. The patient expired at home 10 hours after the operation -- it takes about seven hours for lidocaine levels to peak in the bloodstream. One expert says that for every death, there are 15 to 20 severe injuries during liposuction, a procedure for which there is little in the way of accepted standards.²

2. Associated Press, August 24, 1997.

Fallopianectomy

In another incident in a string of recent hospital errors getting media attention in Hong Kong, a young girl undergoing an emergency appendectomy had the wrong body part removed. The surgeon mistook a fallopian tube for an infected appendix and took that instead. "We all make mistakes," was the comment by the hospital's head of surgery to the press. The young girl, who still has her appendix, is doing well. According to another consulting physician, "The infection subsided on its own."³

3. Reuter, August 24, 1997.

Genital Herpes Risk to Fetus

A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concludes that the chances of an infant being infected by a mother's genital herpes is much smaller than previously thought, unless the mother contracts the condition shortly before labor. In this study of over 7,000 women, those that became infected during early or mid-pregnancy did not pass the infection to their infants. This might suggest that the mother's immune system can sufficiently suppress the virus activity, at least enough to shield the baby, given a chance to mount a defense. However, nearly half of women who contracted genital herpes shortly before labor did pass the infection to their babies, resulting in death or long-term neurological problems.⁴

4. *NEJM*, August 21, 1997.

Mediterranean Diet

Another study is singing the praises of the Mediterranean diet, a low-meat and high grain, fruit, vegetable, and fish diet. Using data from a previous research project, this time correlating regional diet patterns to death rates, Dutch researchers found that deaths from heart disease were one fourth the usual North European rate in persons eating such foods routinely.⁵

5. Research presented by Dan Kromhout to the 19th Congress of the European Society of Cardiology in Stockholm, August 1997.

Lead Weakens Teeth

Research from the University of Rochester in New York is showing a connection between lead and dental cavities. Pregnant and nursing rats given lead-containing water produced young that had 40 percent more cavities than those not exposed to lead. The reason may be related to the discovery that the leaded pups produced 30 percent less saliva, which is known to have a protective effect.⁶

6. *Nature Medicine*, September, 1997.

Smoking and Stomach Cancer

Researchers at the Columbia University School of Public Health say that about 40 percent of U.S. stomach and esophageal cancers are due to smoking. The risk of some types, such as squamous cell carcinoma, was five times higher in smokers. Statistically, the risk remains high for about 30 years after a person quits smoking. A small bit of wine seems to offer some protection.⁷

7. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, September, 1997.

Have You Heard?

A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*⁸ concludes that medical residents are not too handy with a stethoscope. On average, the 450 medical doctors tested were able to identify only about 20 percent of abnormal heart sounds. According to the study's author, bedside diagnostic skills are waning as doctors rely more on high-tech machines and tests. He did find a good indicator of a physician's "ear" for diagnostic sounds, though. The best diagnosticians in this study were also musicians.

8. *JAMA*, September 3, 1997.

Volunteers Needed for Malathion Study

Researchers at the University of South Florida in Tampa are looking for local residents to help them study the effects of human exposure to the pesticide malathion. The area is a good place for the research since, for a few weeks this past summer, helicopters and airplanes blanketed the city and outlying areas with the chemical in an attempt to eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly. More than 500 people called the local poison control center complaining of symptoms from the spray. Residents had been told that the chemical was perfectly safe for humans, but to cover their cars because it would ruin the paint.⁹

9. United Press, September 2, 1997.

Beware of Squirrel Brains

A neurologist from the University of Kentucky¹⁰ is warning people against eating squirrel brains because of a possible connection to Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), the human variant of mad-cow disease. This doctor and colleagues have found a number of cases of CJD among Kentuckians who partake of this delicacy. Other neurological disorders seem to be related as well, including Parkinson's Disease.

10. Dr. Joseph Berger, writing in *The Lancet*, August 30, 1997.

Prayer in (Medical) School

Eight of the United States' most renowned medical colleges are putting together courses to explore the link between health and spirituality. The programs are a result of \$25,000 grants from the John Templeton Foundation in conjunction with the National Institute for Healthcare Research. These institutions join about 30 other medical schools that have already put similar programs in place during the past few years in an effort to give medical students some holistic(?) training.¹¹

11. United Press, August 26, 1997.

Malnourished Children

A new study published in the journal Pediatrics¹² paints a sorry portrait of nutrition in U.S. children. Interviewers assessed the diets of more than 3,300 youths 2-19 years old. They compared their food consumption to the USDA's recommended intake of grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat, and percentages of fat and added sugar as guidelines. They discovered that only one percent were in compliance; 16 percent did not meet any of the standards; and about 36 percent were getting enough vegetables. Thirty percent met the requirements for fruits, grains, meat, and dairy products. Teenage boys fared the best in the study, probably because of the sheer quantity of food they consume.

12. Pediatrics, September, 1997.

Brian Sutton, DC

Colorado Springs, Colorado

BSuttonDC@aol.com

[73160.676@compuserve.com](tel:73160.676@compuserve.com)

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