

Helping You Achieve Health . . . Naturally!

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2007 - THE YEAR OF VITAMIN D

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2007 - The Year of Vitamin D

For those of us interested in Natural Health, Nutrition and Optimal Wellness - 2007 was a great year. Finally we have had moments where we can say - scientific research is catching up to, and validating, many of the things that we have known for years. The best example has been Vitamin D.

Vitamin D, often referred to as “the sunshine vitamin,” is different from other vitamins in that it influences your entire body. Receptors that respond to vitamin D have been found in almost every type of human cell, from your brain to your bones.

Optimizing your vitamin D levels could help you to prevent many different types of cancer, including pancreatic, lung, breast, ovarian, prostate, and colon cancers.

Further, optimal vitamin D levels are also known to positively influence the following conditions:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Multiple sclerosis and osteoporosis
- Influenza or the “flu”

How much Vitamin D do we need though?

Your naturopathic doctor can measure your serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25(OH)D) to determine your vitamin D status. Your vitamin D level should NEVER be below 32 ng/ml (nanograms per milliliter), and anything below 20

ng/ml is considered a serious deficiency state, which will increase your risk of breast and prostate cancers and autoimmune diseases like multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis. Even the Canadian Cancer Society advises that Canadians take a vitamin D supplement to ensure that their blood levels are optimal in order to decrease the risk of cancer in the future.

The OPTIMAL value that you're looking for is 45-52 ng/ml (115-128 nmol/l), but previous research has suggested that maintaining a slightly higher level of 55 ng/ml is optimal for cancer prevention. (Mercola.com)

So, what is our best source of Vitamin D?

Sun exposure (without sunscreen) of about 10 to 15 minutes a day, with at least 40 percent of your skin exposed is your best source of vitamin D. In Canada, there are many times in the

Quiz

What is our best source of Vitamin D?

Email answers to: info@oihc.ca

All correct answers will be entered into a draw to win a FREE gift certificate for the OIHC redeemable for services or merchandise.

Previous Issue: What are 5 sources of vitamin C and 5 sources of Zinc?

VC = oranges, asparagus, avocados, beet greens, bok choy etc.

Zinc = dulse, egg yolks, fish, kelp, lamb etc.

year where getting 10-15 minutes of sun exposure is nearly impossible, therefore supplementation with Vitamin D is necessary. A daily dose of 1000 IU (international units) of natural vitamin D3 is your best choice! Avoid synthetic vitamin D2 - your body will not assimilate it the same way.

For those of us looking for a change that we can easily make that will have a lasting impact on our health, Vitamin D daily may be the way to go.



Children's Cough Treatments

by: Kim Callaghan, ND

Since the fall there has been quite a lot of controversy over children's cough and cold medicines.

In October, an advisory panel to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration called for all over-the-counter pediatric cough and cold medicines to be banned.

The advice from the independent experts was unequivocal: These drugs should never be given to children under the age of 6 because they are potentially dangerous.

The panel members were also clear about this key point: The drugs don't work in children. They don't make a cough go away and they don't alleviate any other cold symptoms. Never have and never will.

Health Canada in turn, issued an advisory warning that the drugs were not suitable for toddlers under the age of two. It also vowed to review labelling and safety standards of all cough and cold medicine intended for children.

So here's some information on pharmaceuticals intended for children's coughs and colds and some naturopathic alternatives.

Over the Counter Pharmaceuticals
Expectorants contain guaifenesin, are

a common ingredient in cold medicines, and are supposed to help loosen mucus. They have never been proven to be helpful in children.

Decongestants are meant to relieve symptoms of a runny nose or stuffy nose. They include ingredients like phenylephrine and pseudoephedrine. Phenylpropanolamine (PPA) was a decongestant that was removed from the market in 2000, and should be avoided. Decongestants often cause hyperactivity and irritability.

The most popular cough suppressant is dextromethorphan (DM). DM is centrally acting, which means it works directly on the brain to stop coughs. Alternative remedies have been proven to be more effective.

Antihistamines are added to cough and cold medications for their sedative effect and because they dry out airways. They include diphenhydramine, brompheniramine, chlorpheniramine, and carbinoxamine, and are usually found in allergy and 'night time' cold medicines.

Here is a list of some side effects: Please note this list is not comprehensive: confusion, blurred vision, rigid muscle tone or involuntary muscle movement, headache, nausea, vomiting, irregular heart beat, loss of consciousness, hallucinations, dizziness, disturbed coordination, irritability, palpitations.

Each of these drugs is used to quiet symptoms, which does not help the body get rid of the infection. The cough is an excellent reflex designed to move viruses, bacteria, and mucus out of the chest and the runny nose gets rid of microbes in the nose and sinuses. The body knows what it's doing, but it can be pretty uncomfortable - especially at 3 a.m. when no one is sleeping. So next up: naturopathic treatments.

Naturopathic Remedies for Coughs

Breastfeeding

Mom will have been exposed to the

Recipe Corner

PANCAKES WITH SWEET POTATO

by: Jessica Seinfeld

Sweet potato puree both sweetens and boosts the nutrition of the simple, quick breakfast.

Ingredients:

1 cup Water
1/2 cup Sweet Potato Puree
1/4 tsp Cinnamon or Pumpkin pie spice (optional)
1 cup Pancake mix
1 tbsp Vegetable oil
Pure maple syrup

In a large bowl, mix the water, sweet potato puree, and cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice, if using. Add the pancake mix and stir just to combine - the batter should be lumpy.

Coat a griddle or large nonstick skillet and set over medium-high heat. When the pan is hot, add the oil, and spoon the batter onto the griddle or pan.

Cook until bubbles form on top of the pancakes and the batter is set, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip pancakes and cook them until golden brown on the other side, 2 to 3 minutes.

ENJOY!

same virus or bacteria which has caused to the child to cough. She'll produce all kinds of antibodies and immune factors which are passed through the breast milk. Breast milk is warm and soothing and has components to help kids sleep. Such an ingenious system indeed.

Hot or cool mist

If your child wakes up with a "barky" or "croupy" cough in the middle of the night, take him or her into the bathroom, close the door, and let the shower run on hot for several minutes. After the room steams up, sit in the bathroom with your child for about 20 minutes.

The steam should help your child breathe more easily. Try reading a book together to keep your child occupied.

A cool-mist humidifier in your child's room might help him or her sleep through the night.

Honey

The Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine published a study in December that compared the efficacy of honey, dextromethorphan (DM) and no treatment at all for coughs for children. The researchers investigated how each of these remedies or lack thereof, affected the cough, the child's sleep and the parents' sleep. Honey was the winner on all counts beating out DM and beating out no treatment at all. Not too surprising for us ND's and moms and dads. Honey is soothing to the red, raw tissues of the throat irritated by a cough but it is also antimicrobial. While it soothes and helps the cough directly, it also helps the body fight off the virus or bacteria causing the cough. Pretty great stuff. Of course, honey shouldn't be given to kids under the age of 12 months.

Homeopathics

Homeopathic remedies help the body to fight the infection and calm the tissues irritated by the cough. Single remedies specific to the child and situation may be prescribed by your naturopathic doctor or qualified homeopathic practitioner. Combination remedies may be on hand for quick but less individualized help.

Foods

Lime, onions and garlic are excellent remedies to help with coughs for children and adults alike. They are all safe for kids and help in ways similar to honey. Lime, onions and garlic can directly soothe irritated tissues, and, they are each antimicrobial. They kill viruses and bacteria and help the body get rid of the infection - that is, the root cause.

Here's a lovely cough recipe:

2 onions

3 cloves of garlic
1/4 lime
1 Tbsp honey

Chop up the onions and garlic and steam them until they are translucent. Use the water, now infused with onion and garlic drippings, as a base and add lime and honey.

Sip warm or cold to ease the cough. The onions and garlic may be eaten on their own or added to soups or stews.

Here's hoping your family doesn't catch cold this year but if they do, I hope this information helps.



GARDASIL: IS IT NECESSARY?

***by: Shawn Yakimovich, ND
Naturopathic Doctor***

One of the top stories making medical news in 2007 was the introduction of Gardasil into school and provincial vaccination programs. Gardasil is a vaccine designed to prevent cervical cancer in women, and is approved for use in females 9-26 years of age.

The advertising campaign for the vaccine has been huge, and continues to expand. Women are made to feel that Gardasil is the only way to

prevent cervical cancer, and misleading statistics have been publicized to generate a sense of urgency to get vaccinated.

Is this vaccine really necessary? While Gardasil does reduce the risk of a relatively rare cancer, it is neither 100% effective or safe. Thirty percent of cervical cancer cases will NOT be prevented by the Gardasil vaccine, and like every vaccine, there are some rare but serious side effects. What are the alternatives to the vaccine?

Naturopathic medicine offers an integrated approach to the prevention of cervical cancer and HPV infection. The first aspect of prevention to consider is lifestyle choices. HPV is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). For sexually active individuals, the risk of infection can be reduced by limiting the number of sex partners one has, and practicing safe sex.

Diet and lifestyle choices also play a significant role in a woman's susceptibility to cervical cancer. A diet deficient in the vitamin folate has been shown to increase the ability of HPV to infect cervical cells. All fresh fruits and vegetables are high in folate, but leafy greens such as spinach, liver, legumes and asparagus are the richest sources of this vitamin. For women not consuming a diet rich in green vegetables, taking 1mg of folic acid as a supplement each day can help prevent deficiency.

Smoking increases the risk of cervical cancer, and carcinogens from smoke can be detected in cervical fluid. Use of the birth control pill for longer than five years has also been associated with an increased risk of cervical cancer.

Annual Pap tests are important, as they help in early detection of any pre-cancerous changes. According to the Center for Disease Control, "regular Paps and careful medical follow up, with treatment, can help ensure that pre-cancerous changes in the cervix caused by HPV infection do not develop into life-threatening cervical cancer". The CDC goes on to observe that "most women who develop invasive cervical cancer have not had regular

Looking Forward

NATUROPATHIC APPROACHES TO INTESTINAL DISEASES

Dr. Shawn Yakimovich ND will be presenting a talk at the Intestinal Support Ottawa group Email: (intestinalsupportottawa@hotmail.com) on **Saturday, January 19 at 2:30 pm** at the McNabb Community Centre, 180 Percy St.

The topic will be Naturopathic Approaches to Intestinal Diseases, such as IBS, colitis/Crohns, diverticulitis and ulcer.

SMOKING CESSATION PACKAGES

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Your choice of the 3 day or 7 day detox packages available.

cervical screening (Paps).”

Approximately 90% of women will clear an HPV infection from their body within two years. This observation points to the critical importance of healthy immune function in preventing the development of cervical cancer. If the immune system can destroy the virus, then no cervical cancer can develop. Therefore, preventing immune suppression is a key strategy for women who do not wish to receive the vaccine, but want to decrease their risk of developing cervical cancer.

Lifestyle habits that promote strong immunity include getting adequate sleep every night, regular exercise and breathing fresh air every day. Relaxation, a positive mental outlook and laughter all help to increase immunity as well. Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fish, legumes and nuts and seeds help protect the body against many cancers, and increase resistance to all bacteria and viruses. Foods that are detrimental to immune function include trans-fats (hydrogenated oils and deep-fried foods), soft drinks, sugar, artificial flavorings and preservatives and processed flour products.

In addition to healthy nutrition and lifestyle habits, there are many natural therapies within the naturopathic scope of practice that help support optimal immune function. Herbal medicine, homeopathy, hydrotherapy, acupuncture and specific nutritional supplements all help to balance the immune system and increase the ability of the body to clear an HPV infection on its own. If, despite all precautions, a woman does develop cervical cancer, naturopathic medicine offers many options for treatment.

There is no epidemic of cervical cancer in Canada. Regular Pap tests, in combination with safe sex practices, a healthy diet and lifestyle habits, and additional naturopathic immune support where needed, greatly reduce the risk of exposure to HPV and the development of cervical cancer, whether or not a woman has been

vaccinated. It is important to realize that Gardasil has only been on the market for 18 months, and that the full side effect profile of the vaccine is not yet known. While effective against four strains of HPV, it does not protect against close to 100 other strains, and will not prevent about 30% of the cases of cervical cancer.

Girls and women DO have an effective alternative to Gardasil. Any of the naturopathic doctors at OIHC can help you or your daughter decide on which option is right for you.

**For a complete version of this article, including references, please go to our website at www.oihc.ca. Click the resources link, and scroll down to Vaccinations, where you will find a link to this article.

In the News

In December, the CBC reported that wound dressings saturated with honey have been approved by the FDA. The dressings are particularly beneficial for slow healing wounds and diabetic ulcers, and wounds infected by antibiotic resistant bacteria. Looks like a 4000 year old natural remedy is now cutting edge!

For the complete story, please visit: www.cbc.ca/health/story/2007/12/26/honey-medicine.html

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For more information on any of the articles in this newsletter or to make an appointment please call: (613) 798-1000 or email: info@oihc.ca

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