



Sensible Philosophy

Sensible News aims to provide important health information that may not be readily available from conventional sources. Articles are factual. Any references not listed are available on request.

Malaria vaccine may save half million children per year:

A new malaria vaccine has undergone clinical trials in Ghana. It is a big step, but even if the trial goes well, the vaccine is not perfect. The life cycle of the malaria parasite is complex, and the vaccine can protect people only half of the time.

Comment: This is such good news! At the moment, over 1 million children die of malaria every year. Even with a 50% success rate, the vaccine may allow ½ million more children to survive the year.

It will also hopefully mean the end of DDT use in African countries. Until now, governments have had to resort to this toxic chemical to battle malaria.

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Vitamin D slows down breast cancer:

In a study of 279 women, a higher level of vitamin D in the blood was directly correlated with a slower advance of the disease. Researchers believe that vitamin D may be slow breast cancer because it "turns off" the genes that promote it. (1)

Comment: Breast cancer researchers have been looking at vitamin D for awhile. In many ways, Vit D is more like a hormone than a vitamin. It directly interacts with oestrogen and progesterone receptors. In addition to preventing and treating breast cancer, vitamin D supplementation is also important for PCOS and other hormonal conditions. (see [Sensible News 25 and 33](#))

Vitamin D is easy to obtain because it is made when the skin is exposed to UV light. Because of sunscreen use, however, a surprising large number of Australians are deficient. Blood tests are available here at Sensible-Alternative Clinic. Serum vitamin D should be greater than 100 pg/ml.

Pharmaceutical companies influence research findings

Scientists from the Cochrane Review Centre looked at 24 drug studies and concluded that those funded by a drug company were more likely to recommend a drug unconditionally. (2) Upon receiving the research findings, medical journals have conceded that "doctors should explain to *interested* patients [*italics mine*] that funding sources can influence the conclusions drawn from meta-analyses". (The Cochrane Review Centre is a non-profit organisation founded to provide evidence-based health information. www.cochrane.org)

Comment: Your GP is not even aware that the medical journal on her desk consists largely of privately funded studies. She gets her medical "research" directly from the mouths of pharmaceutical companies that want her to prescribe their drug. (She is also exposed to a lot of advertising and free samples.) If you are an "interested patient", you might want to consider this next time you are handed a prescription.

Black tea helps de-stress:

Compared with herbal or green tea, a cup of strong black tea has been shown to reduce stress hormone by half. (3) Researchers do not know if it was the caffeine, or other constituents that were responsible for the effect. The participants in the study were all young, healthy men. The effect may be different for women, or other groups.

Comment: I say, if you enjoy black tea, it is fine to have one or two cups per day. (Watch the sugar, though)

Your Questions answered:

Question from Natalie in Sydney NSW:

"What natural supplements increase growth hormone?"

Answer: A deficiency in growth hormone (GH) can cause premature aging, weight gain, bone loss and fatigue. Growth hormone supplements are a popular anti-aging treatment, but be careful. The injections may have side effects, such as suppressing thyroid function.

In my view, GH decline with aging is more of a symptom than a cause. GH decline may be the result of a decline in progesterone or testosterone, or, even more importantly, the *result of too much insulin*.

Think of it this way: growth-hormone is an anti-aging hormone that counteracts the AGING hormone insulin. (see [Sensible News 17](#) for more information on insulin).

GH and insulin are intertwined. If there is too much insulin, growth hormone cannot keep up. Furthermore, in the presence of excessive insulin, GH becomes less effective. Under normal conditions, GH stimulates insulin-growth-factor 1 (IGF-1), to be released from the liver. It is IGF-1, not GH, that stimulates tissue growth in the body. (Interestingly, too much IGF-1 has been linked with breast cancer. (6)) When insulin resistance has developed, less IGF-1 is released, even if the pituitary releases GH.

IGF-1 is the best blood test for "growth hormone deficiency". Blood test for IGF-1 is available from Sensible-Alternative Clinic.

Improve your GH activity by improving your insulin sensitivity. (see [Sensible News 17](#)) You must also avoid household and environmental chemicals that damage growth hormone production (see [Sensible News 27](#)).

Supplements for Growth hormone

GH is increased by sleep, exercise, protein, testosterone, progesterone, and fasting. It is decreased by carbohydrate, cortisol (stress), and environmental hormone disruptors.

Supplements for GH include zinc, which increases GH binding, and magnesium and chromium, which decrease insulin. The amino acids ornithine and arginine will convert to GH, but very large doses are required. Glutamine may be helpful at doses of only 2grams.

Acne drug may cause inflammatory bowel disease:

Between 1997 and 2002, 85 cases of Roaccutane-induced inflammatory bowel disease were reported to the FDA (US Food and Drug Administration). (4)

Comment: *Inflammatory bowel diseases, including Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis, are very serious conditions. The scary thing is that the link between this drug and IBD has been reported in the literature as far back as the mid-1980's.*(5) *Roaccutane should be off the market! If the drug was a nutritional supplement it would have been pulled off the market ten years ago, undoubtedly with much fanfare.*

*There are other long-term side effects from this drug. I am convinced that it is responsible for some of the cases of PCOS that we see in our clinic. **Please, PLEASE do not let your teenagers take this drug!***

Bell's Palsy may indicate pre-diabetes:

Carpal tunnel syndrome and Bell's palsy may be the 'canary in the mine' when it comes to diabetes. The conditions can be the result of nerve damage from episodes of high blood sugar, even when diabetes does not develop for another ten years. (7)

References:

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- (3) Steptoe A et al. "The effects of tea on psychophysiological stress responsivity and post-stress recovery: a randomized double-blind trial." Psychopharmacology DOI 10.1007/s00213-006-0573-2
- (4) Reddy D, et al. "Possible Association Between Isotretinoin and Inflammatory Bowel Disease" Am J Gastroenterol 2006;101:1569-1573
- (5) Schleicher SM. "Oral isotretinoin and inflammatory bowel disease." J Am Acad Dermatol. 1985 Nov;13(5 Pt 1):834-5.
- (6) Hankinson, et al., "Circulating Concentrations of Insulin-like Growth Factor&Mac220;I and Risk of Breast Cancer," Lancet, Vol. 351, No. 9113 (May 9, 1998) pp. 1393-1396.
- (7) Guilliford, MC et al. Increased Incidence of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome up to 10 Years Before Diagnosis of Diabetes. Diabetes Care 29:1929-1930, 2006

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