

# TOTAL WELLNESS NUTRITION

## NEWS

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Hope you are enjoying the changes in season and are ready for the upcoming winter months. As many of you know I have now added office hours in Mount Kisco, at the Center for Health & Healing and in Hawthorne at Kidabilities/Chatter Box. Please let me know if you want to know more about these great facilities.

Many people are already experiencing colds, coughs and flues and to that end I want to invite you all to a seminar I will be doing on December 10th, sponsored by the Center for Health and Healing at Northern Westchester Hospital from 6:30 to 8 PM called "Building a Healthy Immune System." To register, call (914) 244-9393. I will also be co-leading a seminar on November 19th, "Mind Body Approaches to Infertility," at the Scarsdale Library at 7 PM.

Please call our office to say hello, if you have any questions or if you would like to try some of the products mentioned in this newsletter. If you would prefer not to get this newsletter, please send us an email. I would also welcome your feedback on the content and format of this newsletter. I haven't sent out a newsletter in over two years. The purpose is to stay in touch and to inform you of health topics that I think you would be interested in. Have a great holiday season! Yours in good health, Renee Simon

WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWS

I recently attended a seminar on women's reproductive health given by Jeffrey Bland, Ph.D. and Joel Evans, M.D. and I wanted to pass along to you some of the insights from that meeting.

First, as many of you know, HRT is no longer recommended for anything other than short-time management of menopausal symptoms. There is an increased risk of cancer, coronary heart disease and stroke as a result of the Women's Health Initiative study that was done using Prempro, a mixture of equine estrogen and synthetic progesterone.

Since women want to live longer, to have optimal health and to prevent, treat and manage the chronic diseases associated with unhealthy aging, what can be done to best balance hormones and to achieve better health?

The first objective is to start focusing on health and longevity now, and not to wait until the disease process starts. That means cleaning up the diet, obtain optimal Body Mass Index (no more than 25%), eat enough fiber, essential fatty acids, fruits and vegetables, especially berries and cruciferous vegetables, high olive oil, low red meat and no trans fats. According to the NEWS, The National Advisors to the Nation on Science "there is no safe level of trans fatty acids and people should eat as little of them as possible." Exercising at least 30 minutes a day, 5 times a week is also recommended.

How our body handles estrogen is an important determinant to perimenopause and menopausal symptoms as well as diseases like breast, cervical and ovarian cancer. In addition, there are many conditions such as endometriosis, fibroids, infertility and PMS that have to do with faulty estrogen metabolism.

Estrogen is metabolized in the liver and the by-product is excreted in urine and bile and out through the stool. However, if the pathways are not working properly, estrogen can be released into the gut and reabsorbed, causing a long-term toxic effect. This can make the transition to menopause difficult as well as cause some of the conditions mentioned above that have to do with a high ratio of estrogen to progesterone.

If you are interested in finding out how your body metabolizes estrogen there are some stool, urine and saliva tests available to check the pathways. Please call our office if you would like more information.

In the mean time, follow the dietary guidelines mentioned above and also eat garlic and onions, which supports the body's detoxification pathways. Taking glucosamine sulfate, or MSM can also help with the process as well as making sure you have good gut bacteria (*Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium*).

There are many natural ways to manage menopause and perimenopause symptoms. Since the studies were done using only one type of estrogen and progesterone, keep in mind that natural human progesterone does not work the same way as progestin (what was used in the study) and estriol is a different type of estrogen that may be right for

some women without the dangers of estradiol (what was used in the study). Please let us know if you want more information on this or need help with other hormonal issues.

## FOOD ALLERGY NEWS

I often get questions about food allergies vs. sensitivities so I thought I would take a moment to describe the difference and tell you about a new test that we are using to detect food related problems.

Most allergists test for IgE food allergies. IgE is one of the immunoglobulin families that can cause a fixed, immediate response to a food. Usually the symptoms are hives, other rashes, swollen tongue, scratchy throat, sneezing and worse case anaphylaxis. There are usually only a small number of people that have true food allergies and for the most part they are limited to a few foods per individual. The test is usually done by blood or skin.

There are other immunoglobulin families such as IgD, IgG, IgM, IgA which all have a delayed response to a given food. The onset can be anywhere from 2-72 hours and is often difficult to diagnose from the symptoms which range in type and severity. Some examples of associated medical conditions which can be exasperated if not caused by food sensitivities are: gastrointestinal (diarrhea, constipation, loss of appetite, gastritis, IBS, colitis, canker sores); autoimmune (RA, ALS, MS); skin (acne, eczema, psoriasis); neurological (headache, insomnia, hyperactivity, anxiety, SI, mood swings, attention/focus issues); respiratory (asthma, rhinitis, recurrent ear infections); urinary tract (bed-wetting, bladder infections, IC); general (weight gain, fatigue).

In the past, I have recommended using IgG food sensitivity testing for about 100 foods to get a sense of what foods should be avoided for about three months. That is usually the amount of time needed to get the offending food out of the system and to clean up the gut so that the food can be reintroduced and tolerated on a rotation basis. Many patients have found this test very useful and quite accurate. The downside is the cost (about \$350 for 100 food panel) and for some it seemed as though it was a list of foods that they were eating a lot of, since IgG is high for foods that are consumed regularly.

I am now recommending another type of test for people who are interested in testing all of the immunoglobulin families at once for 100 foods. It is called the Whole Health Food Sensitivity Test by ALCAT, a lab that was started in Germany, but there is now an office in Florida. The cost to test 100 foods is only \$199. In addition, they will send out a phlebotomist to your house to draw the blood. Please let me know if you or anyone you know is interested in this type of test.

Once we detect a food allergy or sensitivity, there are other things besides removing the food that can be helpful. There are digestive enzymes that help break down the proteins in the foods that cause a problem, anti-inflammatory agents such as ginger, boswellia, omega-3 and 6 oils that help the inflammatory reaction, vitamin C and bioflavonoids

which act as natural anti-histamines and cleaning up the gut so food is properly digested and doesn't leak through the mucosal lining.

## WEIGHT LOSS NEWS

I have recently gotten a lot of questions on the South Beach diet, designed by cardiologist, Dr. Arthur Agatston. After thoroughly reviewing his recommendations I like his program very much. It is similar to the Atkins diet plan without the high amounts of unhealthy saturated fats. It also brings in healthy carbs (fruits and whole grains) after two weeks and offers a host of yummy low-carb, low-fat desserts throughout the three phases of the program. Best part is in addition to losing weight and inches, Dr. Agatston's patients have reduced bad cholesterol and triglycerides, raised good cholesterol and reversed type II diabetes. How can a diet like that be bad.

## CHILDREN'S NEWS

I recently came across the following news items that I wanted to pass along to you. First, there is now a single dose measles and mumps vaccine that can be ordered by your doctor. Merck is the vaccine manufacturer and can be reached by calling 1-800-422-9625 or 1-800-637-2579. This would alleviate the concern of getting a larger than expected dose or too much preservative if the vaccine wasn't probably administered.

Second, the New England Journal of Medicine published a major review article in "Current Concepts" entitled "The Toxicology of Mercury," the end of October. I have not yet read the article but it appears to be another negative article about the connection between mercury toxicity and autism and related disorders.

There was also a recent paper published in the Netherlands entitled "Is Candida albicans a trigger in the onset of celiac disease?" Again I haven't read it but the topic sounds very interesting and perhaps something I can address in a later newsletter.

## NEXT NEWSLETTER TOPICS

The following are some ideas I am working on for the next newsletter:

Help for Tinnitus, chronic ringing in the ears

News from Columbia University on weight loss

News on Sensory Integration Dysfunction and nutrition