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Newsletter Archives

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The Healthy Newsletter from AnnA

Your Weekly Health Prescription - 28 January, 2009

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An 'older' issue this week looking at some of the issues and concerns that come up as we age from Alzheimers to Osteoporosis, and some good news on both. But let's start at the other end of life and see if we finally have a link that will help us eradicate childhood obesity - though we still will need to curtail the junk food first! Wishing

you the best of good health from AnnA

In this issue:

- PREBIRTH LINK TO CAUSE OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY
- VITAMIN D AND ALZHEIMER'S LINK CONFIRMED
- AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS OLD AGE AT BAY
- EAT COLOURFULLY FOR BONE HEALTH
- OH REALLY?

HEALTH BITES:

- Astrological health profiles - Pisces
- Does snoring help weight loss?

PREBIRTH LINK TO CAUSE OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY

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You must have noticed the strenuous efforts the Government is making to get our children healthier. It is a real cause for concern as being overweight is now much more common in the under 10's than ever before. There are probably many factors that influence this, including lack of exercise and a high-fat diet, but a new study has shown that there is

also a factor that comes into play before birth.

It was reported this month in the Environmental Health Perspectives Journal that a study done in Flanders in Belgium has revealed that when a woman is pregnant there is a link between how many environmental pollutants she is exposed to and the weight of her baby, right up to the first three years of life.

Certain chemicals are known to disrupt the endocrine system, but it hasn't been realised that even brief exposures early in life can be a problem. Body weight may be increased if mother and baby are exposed to like pesticides, chemicals such as dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE),

hexachlorobenzene, dioxin-like compounds and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) - the ones found in aerosols. Children between one and three years of age were found to have a higher BMI (Body Mass Index) if exposed to these chemicals and more so if their mothers also smoked. For babies they tested blood from the umbilical cord to measure and identify any chemical pollutants at birth.

#### VITAMIN D AND ALZHEIMER'S LINK CONFIRMED

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Cambridge University and the University of Michigan, have for the first time identified a relationship between Vitamin D and cognitive impairment in a large-scale study of older people.

In northern climates there can be a lack of vitamin D, particularly in the winter months, when we suffer from grey skies and not enough sunshine.

Vitamin D is vital to our immune system and to keep our bones strong in the process of breaking down old bone and building up new bone. This process goes on throughout our lives, but it can slow down without the right levels of vitamin and mineral support. We obtain our supply from sunlight, foods fortified with vitamin D like cow's milk, soya milk and cereals and oily fish. Unfortunately, as we get older we are less able to absorb vitamin D from sunlight so need to increase our intake

from other sources or take supplements.

This new study is important because it reinforces the connection between vitamin D, cognitive function and dementia as in Alzheimer's. The researchers assessed cognitive function in 2000 adults aged 65 and over in England, and what they found was that as levels of Vitamin D went down, their levels of cognitive impairment went up. In fact they had double the chance of being cognitively impaired than those in the study who had good levels of vitamin D.

As prevention is infinitely better than cure - which, sadly, in the case of Alzheimer's is still being sought - it makes sense to do all you can to weigh the odds in your favour. Keep mentally alert with quizzes, crosswords or bridge. Take up a new hobby that stretches your brain (line or sequence dancing works well for this) and think about learning a new language or skill. Book a holiday in the sun in the winter and sensibly enjoy exposure to sunlight as often as you can. Supplements are easy to obtain, but there are cautions with them so don't exceed the dose recommended by your doctor or a qualified nutritionist. For more news on avoiding cognitive decay - read on.

AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS OLD AGE AT BAY

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I know the original saying is that it keeps the doctor away, but there is new evidence that the cognitive decline we associate with growing older can be delayed with the help of apple juice.

The Center for Cellular Neurobiology at the University of Massachusetts have been studying laboratory mice and found

that using the standard maze trials the mice performed better than was normal after drinking apple juice. Our ability to carry out mental tasks like working out how to negotiate a maze does decline with age as our cognitive ability is lessened. The mice got the human equivalent of 2 glasses of apple juice a day for 1 month and it was found that they were producing less beta-amyloid. This is a small protein fragment that is responsible for forming the "senile plaques" that are commonly found in the brain of those suffering from degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's.

The lead researcher suggested that if everyone was to drink twoglasses of apple juice a day they would lessen their risk of cognitive decay and help keep their mind functioning at their best. For the most effective juice, buy organic or juice your own - the taste difference is really amazing.

#### EAT COLOURFULLY FOR BONE HEALTH

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You know you ought to eat 5 helpings of fruit and vegetables a day for optimum health, and now it seems that if you choose carefully both men and women could be improving bone strength and lessening the risk of osteoporosis. It's the antioxidant

pigments (carotenoids) from plants that may play a protective role in taking care of bones and protect against bone loss in older men and women.

Osteoporosis used to be thought of as exclusively applying only to women, and men were rarely diagnosed with it, but that is now changing. The lifetime risk for a woman to have a bone break through osteoporosis is 30-40 per cent and in men the risk is about 13 per cent. Researchers at Tufts and Boston Universities used data from the ongoing Framingham Osteoporosis Study and their findings have revealed that an increased intake of carotenoids, and particularly of lycopene, gave some protection against bone mineral loss. It was different for the men and women in the study; men gained bone mineral density at the hip but women gained it in the lumbar spine.

Another reason to have a colourful salad with red tomatoes, and eat watermelon and pink and red grapefruit to ensure a good source of lycopene in your daily diet.

OH REALLY?

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Procter & Gamble may be a household name for washing powder, but they also have a pharmaceutical arm that has just joined

with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to produce a finding that will leave you as amazed as I was - not!

One of the often reported effects of the menopause is a loss of libido. When my good friend Dr Shirley Bond and I were giving workshops on coping with menopause this often came up in the discussion. We found women fell into two camps: they were worried by it, or delighted with it - unfortunately low libido is also associated with depression so it's hard to sort out if it is the menopause or another life challenging situation that is causing it.

This new report was found in the official journal of the International Society of Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (I often find the longer the name the less valuable the information, or is that just me?) and states at length what I just mentioned in the last sentence of the previous paragraph. Obviously brevity doesn't bring a handsome research grant - where am I going wrong? The researchers 'discovered' that women with a low libido suffered physical symptoms and memory problems as well as depression. Lack of a fulfilling sex life could depress anyone, and those 'senior moments' are not an exclusively female characteristic in my experience. Being depressed just by itself can, and does, manifest all

the same symptoms that they are describing in their report.

The research was done by phone over 1000 women in the USA by asking them to undertake a quality of life study. The women were asked about their levels of sexual desire and feelings of physical and emotional well-being or distress. Sadly they didn't phone me, and I would hazard a guess that if they phoned women during the world cup or while trying to get dinner ready then they would have got some interesting results that weren't necessarily typical of that woman's everyday experience.

Amazingly the women who had a low libido were more likely to be depressed and to express dissatisfaction with their home lives and their sexual partners. Having a low libido and an unsatisfactory partner can depress anyone but I am not convinced it is solely applicable to menopausal women as I said before.

Still I am sure there is another research project already under way to investigate my theory, and if you want to give your libido a boost and avoid all those symptoms, then I suggest you go to it in any way that works for you - I expect consumption of George Clooney DVD's and boxes of chocolate to soar.

## HEALTH BITES:

### 1 ASTROLOGICAL HEALTH PROFILES - Taurus 21 April - 21 May

This earthy sign loves the good things in life, particularly food, and weight gain is often a problem. Watch out for:

\* The thyroid gland because it is your weak point. If energy is low, check if it's underactive by asking your doctor to check

\* Vulnerability to throat and ear infections. Sore throats, laryngitis and childhood earaches are common

\* Taureans tend to be stocky in build, so watch the weight as any extra pounds can be difficult to shift

\* For emotional security and physical wellbeing you need regular demonstrations of physical affection such as a daily cuddle.

As I have a few Taurean friends I know their good points, but one of their strong characteristics can be to see things in black and white, and be a bit on the stubborn side. This can be very positive if they put their mind to a fitness or weight loss regime, but hard to convince them if they have decided they don't need it. To help with the regular infections they can be prey to it would a good idea to have an immune-boosting regime in the winter such as Echinacea and/or acupuncture - which would also help with the energy levels.

## 2 CAN SNORING HELP WEIGHT LOSS?

This almost came into the 'I don't believe it' category, but it is a valid piece of research and I shudder to think how people are going to exploit it. A new piece of research has been revealed that shows you can burn up to an extra 2000 calories a day if you are a heavy snorer. There is of course a known link between being overweight and snoring, but as a weight loss aid it's a new one on me. I would have thought it's the partner of the snorer that burns more calories from all that digging them in the ribs and rolling them over onto their backs, but what do I know?

The researchers have, not surprisingly, said they don't know if the snoring is actually causing people to put on the pounds because they believe it might be. This comes from the fact that disturbed sleep patterns can alter the way your body metabolizes energy, and that could affect your weight. As a dietary regime I don't think snoring will catch on, and one of the great dangers of heavy snoring is that it can be related to sleep apnoea. This condition needs to be taken seriously because it can reduce the oxygen content in the blood to dangerous levels.

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I hope you have found this information useful, but do remember I am not a doctor and cannot give you medical advice, so please always take appropriate action by consulting your own medical advisor if you have concerns about any aspect of your health. Please feel free to pass on any of this information to your friends, or suggest they sign up for the newsletter themselves at my website.

Best wishes for a healthy week - AnnA

For free health, creativity and personal development newsletters,
as well as books and information please visit my website at
www.catalystonline.co.uk

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The Healthy Newsletter from AnnA  
Your Weekly Health Prescription - 21 January, 2009

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I feel a bit sci-fi oriented this week with news on how
to see your doctor, without seeing them, and a pill that
will improve your memory on offer. A blast from the past
though with some cautionary news on a favourite winter

remedy, and relief for those women who drive the car into
walls at least once a month - and the partners might just
be grateful too! Best wishes from AnnA

In this issue:

- VICK VAPOUR - STOP RUBBING?

- PMS RELIEF
- YOUR ONLINE DOCTOR WILL SEE YOU NOW
- BAD MEMORY? POP A PILL

HEALTH BITES:

- Astrological health profiles - Pisces
- Is your doctor a Twitterer?

VICK VAPOUR - STOP RUBBING?

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I am afraid I am revealing my age when I recall childhood colds being resolved with a horny handed rub from my mother of Vicks VapoRub on my chest and a firm covering of a red flannel liberty bodice. It did my chest a world of good, though not so brilliant on the rubber buttons, and I still use a few drops under my nose if it is stuffy and blocked in the winter.

Alas, this popular over-the-counter treatment has come under

the scrutiny of the American College of Chest Physicians and they sound a warning that it may stimulate mucus and airway

inflammation. This applies particularly to infants and toddlers and they suggest it could dangerously interfere with their ability to breathe.

The study was carried out at Wake Forest University School of Medicine's Pediatrics Department as a result of treating an 18-month-old girl who went into severe respiratory distress after the salve was rubbed under her nose. Now obviously you can't test this on children, so the researchers used ferrets to study mucus production as well as the build up of fluid in the lungs.

Who would have guessed it, but apparently ferrets have an airway anatomy and cellular composition similar to people - so no more stuffing them down your trousers as they are somewhat distantly related to us. Perhaps not kissing cousins, but you get the idea. The ferrets were regularly anointed with Vicks Vapour Rub and the results showed their mucus secretion rose significantly and that mucus clearance decreased. When relating this to children, the problem is that they have airways that are much narrower than those of adults, so any increase in mucus or inflammation can narrow them more severely.

This is not just Vicks Vapour Rub, but any similar product as

some of the ingredients can cause irritation. These include camphor, menthol, Eucalyptus oil, turpentine and petrolatum, made from petroleum. Such products are not meant to be used on children under age 2, but with the best intentions some parents use it to relieve their child's cold and flu symptoms. Unfortunately, there is a common misconception that anything you can buy over the counter is safe, but you must always read the label carefully for any warnings, and ask the pharmacist if you are in any doubt.

Dr. Rubin, the chief researcher goes further and points out that cough and cold medicines and decongestants are dangerous and neither effective nor safe for young children. American College of Chest Physicians also agree, and Dr Rubin makes the case that natural therapies are a much better alternative and suggests a very old remedy indeed for congestion: using a warm water salt solution to wash out the nasal passages and some good old fashioned chicken soup to boost the immune system (home made from organic chicken of course).

If you still have a jar in the medicine cabinet, there is an alternative use for it in killing toenail fungus, as recommended by an old-fashioned doctor. Just apply on the top, all around the toenail and as much under the nail as you can get. In a few days you will see the nail start becoming darker,

which means the fungus is being killed off.

## PMS RELIEF

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I know many women suffer greatly from a variety of physical, mental and emotional symptoms with PMS (Pre Menstrual Syndrome) and their partners usually also suffer the fallout with monthly regularity. There are some very simple, natural, tips that can help and before you next lock yourself in a dark room with a hot water bottle and some painkillers, it might be worth trying some of these ideas first:

** Get your mineral balance right in particular calcium and magnesium. Just 400 mg of calcium carbonate daily has been shown to help with mood swings, bloating, and headaches. Several large studies have shown that women with PMS have lower calcium levels than women with a good intake from food sources who had very few symptoms.

** Calcium is best taken with magnesium for the best effect and a supplement of 200mg a day can significantly improve PMS mood changes and reduce weight gain, swelling of the hands and legs, breast tenderness, and abdominal bloating.

CAUTION: Anyone with heart or kidney disease should not take

magnesium supplements without consulting their doctor.

** Herbal relief comes from taking agnus castus, which was reported in the British Medical Journal to significantly reduce PMS symptoms such as irritability, depression, headaches, and breast tenderness. Other popular remedies include Black Cohosh which is available in supplement form and used extensively in Germany for the treatment of PMS. Ginkgo Biloba extract can be helpful as well when you take 80 mg twice a day from day 16 of one menstrual cycle to day 5 of the next cycle.

** Eating well can make all the difference, so eat little and often rather than a large blow out meal twice a day. This will help stabilize your blood sugar, particularly if you suffer from bloating and swelling of the hands and feet, breast tenderness, and dizziness. You want to reduce your sugar and salt intake and increase potassium-rich foods such as fish, beans, and broccoli. Give up caffeine, including tea, and switch to something milder and herbal like Green Tea. Avoid alcohol as it can affect hormone metabolism which means that high levels of alcohol can make symptoms like anxiety, depression, and breast tenderness worse.

** Vitamins that have been used include vitamin E (300iu) and vitamin B6 around 100-200 mg per day and both can help reduce your overall symptoms.

** Get moving, even - and especially - when you least feel

like it. The benefits of gentle exercise will help with your mood swings or depression and it's the frequency of your exercise regime that will make all the difference. Again, little and often is best. In China, a study was conducted on women who increased their consumption of tea and found that the more of the caffeinated drink they consumed, the higher prevalence of symptoms

YOUR ONLINE DOCTOR WILL SEE YOU NOW

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I know it can be tedious hanging around the doctor's surgery - no matter what time the appointment it's rare you get in there on time isn't it - but a new trend from the USA could make that a thing of the past. We are now internet savvy; from banking to shopping online we are used to remote contact - but how do you feel about expanding that to include your doctor?

What do you do when you feel a cough, cold or sore throat coming on? Head to the pharmacy or make an appointment to see the Doctor. If you are a busy New York casting director you do a Star Trek and have the doctor beamed into your office. No, really! This chap just switched on his laptop where he has an account at

something called hellohealth.com which is a 'virtual' doctor's office. There, for a monthly fee, you can 'visit' by video link

with a doctor to ask questions, get diagnosed, and have a prescription phoned to your nearest pharmacy to collect.

The doctors communicate in the modern way and you can connect via the internet, email or mobile, and it is certainly catching on in busy New York. Obviously the amount of diagnosis is limited over a video link, but as a first call to pick up any problems it does have its advantages. You get an appointment at your time of choosing and can talk online via video, e-mail a question or visit a Web site where, for a small fee, a doctor will answer your medical questions instantly.

The future is here ...

Ever pop into Asda? Well their American parent, Wal-Mart has set up clinics in some of their stores in Texas where patients speak via videolink to a physician who works in a central office. The doctor can see a patient's throat and ears via a camera at the end of medical instruments. Emergency medical technicians at the clinics operate the instruments and do hands-on tasks such as taking blood pressure and temperature. A basic office visit costs \$59.

Got a medical question?

If you need information on your medication or symptoms for measles then there are online sites that have various specialists on hand to give quick answers. Current charge

is around \$16 - roughly £9.81 per answer, so you might do better to use a great free service here in the UK. I find that NHS Direct does a good job for answering questions for free, and they are very helpful. If you want to try them they are on 0845 4647

BAD MEMORY? POP A PILL

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Let's face it we all get 'senior moments', I was regularly having them in my 30's but then I always was ahead of myself. Lists help some people, a rubber band around the wrist is also an alternative, but now there is news of a possible 'memory pill' that could make forgetfulness a thing of the past.

Originally developed to treat Alzheimer's, they are now being promoted to help with exam revision and memory loss - which of course is a much bigger, and more profitable, market.

AstraZeneca is ahead in the race to get this product to market as an over the counter item as what they term a 'lifestyle pill'.

And here was me thinking it was something you only got in Sunday supplements.

This isn't the first such drug to catch the eye of the consumer, and students have apparently been trying a drug called Provigil, used to treat narcolepsy, to help them stay awake. Whether for

studying or partying isn't known yet, but there is some evidence that ADD drugs like Ritalin are being used to help promote concentration - which they would certainly need if they are regularly using drugs to keep them awake beyond their own body's tolerance.

It isn't illegal to buy these drugs over the Internet, but there are risks as there are with all medicines. In particular these drugs can raise blood pressure to unhealthy levels but not all clinicians agree. Barbara Sahakian is professor of clinical neuropsychology at Cambridge and she has likened these new cognitive drugs to products like Red Bull and other drinks that stimulate with caffeine and sugar, seeing them as not so different.

Not sure I agree, there is a limit to the number of soft drinks

you can down to get a stimulant effect, but with drugs it is all too easy to just take another dose and we just don't know what the cumulative effect in the system might be.

HEALTH BITES:

1 ASTROLOGICAL HEALTH PROFILES

Aries 21 March - 20 April

Courageous, fast-moving and highly motivated, this sign can

also be hot-headed and impulsive, good in some situation,

but not so great for your health. Watch out for:

- * Being accident prone leading to cuts, scalds, burns and bruises
- * Unusually severe and frequent stress-related headaches
- * Short temper and extreme tiredness due to surges of adrenaline
- * Teeth are vulnerable, so have regular check-ups

Sounds like some stress management or mood calming therapies might be helpful. Some Buddhist mindfulness around being present might help eliminate some of those careless accidents where your

mind is somewhere else and those surges of adrenaline might be caused by too many stimulants such as coffee, sugar or chocolate. A more balanced diet with plenty of carbohydrates to even out your blood sugar should help.

2 YOUR DOCTOR IN A TWITTER?

If you are not familiar with online social networking sites like Facebook, Friends Reunited and Twitter, this may come as a bit of a shock. Most people use these sites to contact their friends and post photos of themselves and information about what they are doing. However, it now emerges that doctors in the US are also using them to find information about difficult cases.

If they get a patient with symptoms that confuse them, or they haven't seen before, then they are asking questions on the web

of other doctors in the hope they can help. Sounds sensible, but given the way that such sites are vulnerable to invasion and piracy I am not sure I want my doctor asking an unknown faceless person on the web what he thinks of my rash. Given the way people hide behind false identities on the web, they may not be talking to other doctors at all.

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I hope you have found this information useful, but do remember

I am not a doctor and cannot give you medical advice, so please always take appropriate action by consulting your own medical advisor if you have concerns about any aspect of your health. Please feel free to pass on any of this information to your friends, or suggest they sign up for the newsletter themselves at my website.

Best wishes for a healthy week - AnnA  
[www.catalystonline.co.uk](http://www.catalystonline.co.uk)

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The Healthy Newsletter from AnnA
Your Weekly Health Prescription - 14 January, 2009

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With an eye on the economic climate, a couple of excellent free resources for you this week and a tongue cheek item to help you count your blessings! Best wishes from AnnA

In this issue:

- TALKING THERAPIES EXPLAINED - FREE GUIDE
- WORLDWIDE ATTITUDES TO REGULATING HEALTH
- NATURAL PROGESTERONE AND PROSTATE CANCER
- FREE IMMUNE SYSTEM BOOST

HEALTH BITES:

- Astrological health profiles - Pisces

TALKING THERAPIES EXPLAINED - FREE GUIDE

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At some point, many of us want to take a fresh look at a problem, or an issue in their life and the first port of call is often a therapist. But which one? It can be confusing to sort your way through what is available, and how suitable it is for you and your particular concern.

Most people know something of how counseling works, but

would psychoanalysis or Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

better - and how do you know?

There is now an excellent free guide from The Mental Health Foundation called 'Talking therapies explained', and it does exactly that. It is a quick and easy guide that explains the types of different therapies available and how they work, as well as organisations listing reputable therapists.

To get the right help, you need to know the right questions to ask, and the guide lists practical questions to ask when looking around because although work is being done to address the accreditation and regulation of therapists, there are still unscrupulous and poorly qualified practitioners around and you can't always recognize them without some help.

The Government now has a programme to improve access to psychological therapies on the NHS, but it has only just begun and there is currently an average wait of six months to get an appointment. In these stressful times, more people need help than ever and certainly the talking therapies not only improve an individual's mental health but also their ability to manage family life, relationships, a job or an ongoing physical illness. If you would like a copy of 'Talking therapies explained' you can either telephone the Mental Health Foundation on 020 7803 1101 or download it from their website

at www.mentalhealth.org.uk and it is free for a single copy, though there is a small charge for bulk orders.

WORLDWIDE ATTITUDES TO REGULATING HEALTH

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I know we often feel 'nannied' by the Government in many areas and health is certainly a prime one. There is the 'no operation' unless you lose weight/give up smoking lobby and the imposition of rules around tobacco and alcohol are no longer questioned. But we are not alone in facing new and increasing government interference in what was once nobody's business but our own?

I reported last year on the new proposal in the US for government workers to have to pass a monthly medical or they get their health insurance cover paid, and what if the Government insisted on regularly checking your waistline once you hit 40?

Personally, I stopped checking it years ago and I don't see what business that is of the Government's but it is being proposed in Japan. Anyone deemed too fat would be forced to have dietary counselling and if they didn't shift the weight there would be penalties both for them, and for their community. The Japanese

government's argument is similar to that of the public employee one in the US, in that it has to have an input of how people live because bottom line is that the Government pays for the consequences

of their lack of health care. eg that it must regulate citizens' lifestyles because it is paying their health costs.

In 2007 in the UK censorship for health reared its head over a TV ad when The Egg Information Service wanted to screen an advert, which featured comedian Tony Hancock, to celebrate its 50th birthday. The offending item came in an iconic series of ads made in the 1950's and whose slogan encouraged viewers to 'go to work on an egg'. The advertising watchdog said went against the principle of eating a varied diet and refused to allow it to be shown.

Oh, and if you are fed up with all this and thinking of emigrating, I wouldn't put New Zealand on your list unless you are healthy and slim, or willing to diet. Their government banned an overweight man and his wife from entering the country on the grounds that their obesity would "impose significant costs ... on New Zealand's health or special education services." It had the right effect as he lost weight and was allowed in, but his wife couldn't stick to the regime and had to stay home.

If you don't watch your weight in Germany you are named as being "antisocial" for the amount of money you are costing the state in medical treatment.

If you know of a nice country that allows you to take

responsibility for your own health then let me know and I will compile a list.

#### NATURAL PROGESTERONE AND PROSTATE CANCER

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When I was running the Natural Progesterone Advisory Service I would hear many reports of the cream being used for other purposes than the recommended use for osteoporosis or hormone management. Most of these claims were anecdotal, and interesting but not verifiable. Over the years there has been research on the benefits of natural progesterone, but the most powerful advocates are still its users.

I was always particularly interested in its use for men, and the late Dr John Lee - the pioneer of natural progesterone usage - told me he often prescribed it for men with osteoporosis as,

although there had been no research done, his patients showed consistently good results and higher bone density.

A similar situation has now come to my attention, with men using natural progesterone cream as part of their own treatment/self help programme for prostate cancer. Trevor Taylor runs Wellspring, a company that imports natural progesterone, and I am passing on information he gave me and which I think will be of interest to anyone with a

family member at risk. I stress this is an anecdotal story, not medically verified, and I have let Trevor tell it in his own words:

I want to tell you about the experiences of a personal friend who was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2007. He has had a poor medical history and is 70 years old and in 1996 was diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus; which was operated on in 1996, 2000 and 2003. In 2003 he also had a double hip replacement operation. He then learned of his prostate cancer diagnosis in 2007.

Over the years we have had several women customers who have

recounted to us how natural progesterone had helped their husbands or partners who were suffering from prostate cancer.

I of course was aware of this but was reticent to publicise these reports, but when my friend told me of his diagnosis I asked him if he would like to try it as well as his prescribed treatment, on the basis that it would do him no harm and might well help.

He was first diagnosed in October 2007 and eight sample biopsies showed a PSA level of over 4000. The ideal is less than one. His treatment is 3 monthly Zoladex injections and he used natural progesterone cream daily. In January 2008 his PSA level was checked and had dropped from 4,000 to 100.

At the next check in April 2008 it had dropped from 100 to 20. The next check in August 2008 showed a drop from 20 to 6. Checks and treatment have been extended to 4 monthly and I am pleased to say that my friend looks in good health, is very active; married in August 2008, and is thoroughly enjoying life.

Now Trevor Taylor does not claim that this remarkable drop in PSA levels from over 4000 to just 6 in just eleven months is due entirely or in part to his friend's using natural progesterone, but it is certainly food for thought. If you

want to know more about using natural progesterone you can contact Wellsprings for a free booklet and more information on 01481 233370 or via their website at www.progesterone.co.uk

FREE WAY TO BOOST IMMUNE SYSTEM

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Now I am a great believer in having the strongest possible immune system to combat illness, and in particular to prevent colds and flu in winter. To this end I have seasonal acupuncture and take Echinacea and vitamin C as well as juicing daily to get my 'live' vitamins and antioxidants.

Now I find I could cut my expenditure radically by just making sure I get a decent night's sleep. I know this now, because Sheldon Cohen, who studies the effects of stress on health at

Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University has researched the effects of lack of sleep on health.

We already know from previous research that sleep boosts the immune system at the cellular level, but this new research shows that even the smallest reduction in your sleep can make you more susceptible to illness by reducing the effectiveness

of your immune system to combat it.

If you are someone who tosses and turns at night between dozing and sleeping then you are more 5 times more likely to get sick than someone who sleeps undisturbed. If this is you, and you get more than the average number of colds in winter, then you need to spend some time working out what causes your sleeplessness and tackle it.

At this time of year you really cannot avoid being exposed to the cold virus unless you do a Michael Jackson and travel in your own portable isolation tent and oxygen mask. On the bus, train or office there is always someone who is sneezing, or incubating the cold virus to pass on to you so the most sensible plan is to do all you can to improve your 'cold armour' by keeping your immune system in peak condition.

I have had a sleep pattern of a couple of hours under and then awake and then back for another couple of hours for a number of years and although I manage to stay fairly healthy, I think I will try a lavender bath to relax me before bed and five drops from the handy bottle of Bach Rescue Night which I

have found effective in the past.

#### HEALTH BITES:

##### 1 ASTROLOGICAL HEALTH PROFILES - Pisces 20 February - 20 March

Pisces is a very sympathetic and sensitive sign, which absorbs others atmosphere and moods. Watch out for:

- \* Pisceans who need surgery are likely to recover more slowly from the anaesthetic
- \* Feet are a critical area and you are prone to corns, athletes foot, and veruccas
- \* Addiction patterns with drugs, alcohol, nicotine and caffeine to which you are commonly also allergic
- \* More prone to food poisoning than the other signs and can be seriously allergic to fish and seafood

Seems very unfair that those born under the sign of the fish should potentially have an allergy to seafood and most of the stimulants we are exposed to, but prevention is better than cure. So Pisceans need to be 'body aware' and see which foods upset you - and you know which they are - and eliminate or drastically reduce them from your diet. Make 2009 the 'be kind to your feet' year and invest in some plastic jelly

sandals when swimming in public baths and forget fashion  
and go for comfortable shoes that won't give you corns -  
there is nothing beautiful about a face pinched with pain.

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I hope you have found this information useful, but do remember
I am not a doctor and cannot give you medical advice, so please
always take appropriate action by consulting your own medical
advisor if you have concerns about any aspect of your health
Please feel free to pass on any of this information to your
friends, or suggest they sign up for the newsletter themselves
at my website.

Best wishes for a healthy week - AnnA

www.catalystonline.co.uk

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The Healthy Newsletter from AnnA

Your Weekly Health Prescription - 7 January, 2009

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Let's start the year with good news; two breakthroughs

on the cancer front, help for those who want to improve their eyesight without glasses or surgery, and news of a supplement that can improve the health of your cells which improves your overall health - and it's anti ageing so you get a two for one bonus. May I wish you the very best of continuing good health. Best wishes from Anna

In this issue:

- TWO CANCER BREAKTHROUGHS
- DISABILITY CAN STRENGTHEN OLDER MARRIAGES
- NEW WAY TO MAINTAIN VISION
- ANTI AGEING CELL THERAPY

HEALTH BITES:

- Astrological health profiles - Aquarius
- Frozen food benefits
- Cutting the cost of travel vaccinations

TWO CANCER BREAKTHROUGHS

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The first breakthrough refers to women who have had breast cancer. The survival rate after treatment has improved, and it always helps to know about anything extra you can do to

make those odds even better. One of the risk areas post breast cancer is that survivors have a lifetime risk for developing lymphedema as a result of surgery or radiotherapy.

This is a chronic condition that occurs when lymphatic fluid builds up in the soft tissues of the body, usually in an arm or leg, as a result of damage or blockage in the lymph nodes and results in swelling of the affected limbs.

Lymphedema is a risk for approximately two-thirds of breast cancer survivors in the 30 months after surgery and those who develop post-op swelling have a significantly higher risk of up to 40 percent. It is the second biggest concern, after the recurrence of the cancer itself, and if you are unfortunate enough to develop chronic lymphedema it can be difficult to treat. The swollen limbs can become vulnerable to infection from even a minor injury to the skin, such as a cut, scratch, insect bite, or even athlete's foot. This condition is called

lymphangitis and affects the connective tissue under the skin. Repeated infections can cause scarring that makes the tissue vulnerable to more swelling and infection. Unfortunately lymphedema can lay dormant and symptoms can occur 15 or more years following an injury to your lymphatic system. The good news is that one way to combat this problem is to ensure that there is no risk of seriously being overweight or obese after cancer treatment as a new study from the

University of Missouri-Columbia, published on 2 January, found that the risk of developing lymphedema is 40-60 percent higher in women with a high BMI (Body Mass Index).

Breakthrough two is not ready to launch yet, but there is a way you can take action by utilising that old hospital visitor standby and taking a cancer patient a large bunch of grapes. Make sure they are white grapes, as The American Cancer Association has reported that researchers from the University of Kentucky have been feeding grape-seed extract to laboratory mice and found that it kills leukemia cells.

Apparently it forces the damaged cells to commit cell suicide and does it effectively as the researchers found within 24 hours, 76 percent of such cells had died after being exposed to the extract. This isn't the first time that grape seed extract has been tested for various types of cancer, but this is the first

time it has been looked at in relation the blood and bone marrow cancer cells. The key factor is that the grape seed extract affects the cancer cells, but leaves normal cells alone. This research is at its early stages, but it's a good reason to include grapes in your healthy five a day - just don't peel them Beulah, eat them skin, seed and all.

#### DISABILITY CAN STRENGTHEN OLDER MARRIAGES

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It can be a daunting thought in a relationship that if one partner is incapacitated or disabled in some way we may wonder about how we would cope. Well there is very good news from new research - particularly for older couples. An encouraging new study from Professor Jeremy Yorgason at Brigham Young University was reported in the academic journal 'Research on Aging' and showed that both men and women - regardless of age - reported being happier in their marriage after they themselves became physically disabled.

It may seem strange that when one partner loses the ability to perform routine daily activities it improves the state of their relationship: finds that the onset of physical disability boosts marital happiness more often than not. It seems to apply more to men who are looking after their wives, rather than the other way round, but exactly why physical limitations boost marital happiness is not fully understood.

One theory is that by taking on a more active and caring role for their partner the couple experience more interaction with each other than they did before. The situation seemed to provide the men in the study an opportunity to support and spend more time with their wives and ultimately enhanced their appreciation of their relationship.

This is not of course to say that looking after a less able

partner does not have its own stresses and strains, but it is good to know that there is also a bonus to be found there for many people in this situation.

NEW WAY TO MAINTAIN VISION

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On Christmas Day I was with friends and we played a board game called Senior Moments which I highly recommend if you want to laugh at yourself and others - nicely of course. We are all roughly the same age, but one friend had to hold the question cards at arms length to read them, and it became part of the game as she tried gamely to guess what was written on them. She could of course have got her reading glasses out, but vanity affects us all in different ways and she obviously regarded that as a sign of ageing too far so this next item is just for her - you know who you are!

As we get older small print on labels and that annoying habit magazines have of printing in white on a black background all become more difficult to read. The official term is presbyopia and it occurs at middle age when our eyes lose their ability to focus.

It can start with just a slight blurring and our close vision usually continues to deteriorate due to loss of elasticity of

the crystalline lens so we are less able to focus on objects at various distances. At this point most people surrender and get glasses, a pair for close work, a pair for reading and a pair for distance, or combine them into bi or varifocal lenses. Now, a new treatment from America could change all that.

If you don't want to wear glasses all the time, and don't like the idea of laser surgery - which I confess I find rather more frightening than standing on the edge of Beachy Head in a force 10 gale - then three cheers for a new treatment called the transscleral light therapy system. Not a catchy name, I must admit, and it is still in the trial stage with the USA Food and Drug Administration but patient experience over the two

years it has been monitored has been positive.

What happens is that a laser device emits a low level of light aimed at strengthening the ciliary muscle (which bends and straightens the lens) under the whites of the eyes. The key phrase here is 'low level' and consists of weekly 10-minute sessions at an optician's office for five consecutive weeks, followed by periodic tune-up sessions about every six months. So no hospital visits, and one satisfied participant has thrown away his 8 pairs of glasses and just kept one distance pair which he only occasionally uses for driving at night.

If you think that sounds like a good option to you, and I

would love to get rid of the permanent dent on the side of my nose from my glasses, then it should be widely available with 1-2 years - but not, I suspect, on the NHS.

#### ANTI AGEING CELL THERAPY

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There are literally thousands of nutritional supplements and new ones appear every week. Some are interesting enough for

me to try them and if, like me, you don't like taking a handful of pills every day then this new product might be the answer. It is a complete mineral, oxygen and nutritional supplement that has been used by people with chronic illness to maximize the uptake of nutrients, particularly antioxidants, and it also helps improve cell health which is a key anti-ageing factor.

Cell Therapy RejuvenateT with Fulvic Acid is a highly effective detoxifier and helps boost energy, reverse cell damage and rejuvenates the natural production of enzymes. As it contains 136 essential nutrients including: 74 electrically charged minerals, 16 trace minerals, 28 metabolic enzymes, and 18 amino acids, its no surprise that it also supports the immune system through its role as both a powerful antioxidant and free-radical scavenger.

We all need at least 90 growth and maintenance nutrients throughout our lives to support our cells. If our bodies don't get that support, then the cells break down, and that leads to degenerative diseases that are directly or indirectly related to mineral deficiencies such as arthritis, osteoporosis heart disease, cataracts and of course cancer. One cause of this deficiency has been the deterioration in soil quality and the fact that because of that plants are not producing the minerals

they once did. The causes are well known; intensive farming, industrial fertilizers and pesticides and even the growth of the organic market doesn't help the vast majority of people to get the nutrients they need from their everyday diet.

The key element Of all the factors that make a difference to the reversal and prevention of disease, as well as the maintenance of good health, is Fulvic which was abundantly present in plants but now has to be supplemented for maximum effect. Scientists have found that Fulvic is the element that makes minerals absorbable, and without maximum absorption you do not get the maximum effect from the food you eat. Fulvic is a supercharged electrolyte, and cellular electrical energy is the life force of the body. Cells disintegrate and die when electrical energy is reduced. It is believed that electrical and chemical balances within the cell can be created and controlled by electrolytes - the body's mini battery chargers. Fulvic is one of the most powerful natural electrolytes known

to man and the Fulvic molecule prepares nutrients to interact with each other and makes vitamins and elemental trace minerals more absorbable so that are easily transported into and through membranes and cell walls. It also increases the metabolism of proteins, which contributes to DNA/RNA synthesis, and chelates heavy metals and body toxins, removing them from the system. Cell Therapy Rejuvenate's utilizes this unique ability so that

when it is mixed with water it immediately releases oxygen to the body releases its natural minerals, enzymes, electrolytes and amino acids to go to work on the deepest cellular level.

It is very simple to take as you stir 8 drops into 250 ml (8 oz) of water, 3 times per day. It is best taken between meals (30 minutes before or 1 hour after) but personally I prefer to just put the drops straight into a water bottle and sip through the day for continuous benefit - and then I don't have to remember to take it!

Because it contains organic enzymes it is not suitable for pregnant or nursing mothers and if you are under medical care, do talk to your doctor about it. A month's supply cost £34.97 from Pro Active Healthcare, and if you want to know more then call them on 08707 650 304.

HEALTH BITES:

1 ASTROLOGICAL HEALTH PROFILES

Aquarius 21 January - 19 February generally speaking, Aquarians tend to be quite healthy individuals, but unfortunately you don't always practice what you preach. You do have your own areas of weakness or vulnerability though, so this is what

you need to watch out for:

*Exercise is fine in theory, but you don't give it a high priority and this can have serious consequence, especially later in life.

*Two areas where you are particularly vulnerable are hardening of the arteries and varicose veins.

*To keep circulatory problems like those at bay you need to do some exercise however gentle, or restricted in movement.

Yoga, Tai Chi, swimming and walking would all work well

*Whatever exercise you do, be very aware that your shins and ankles can be weak, leading to frequent falls and damage to the Achilles tendon or bone fractures.

Aquarius is the water carrier, so maybe you would do well to add an element of water to your exercise routine - water aerobics would fit the bill and try a bone supplement such

glucosamine and chondroitin to build up those weak ankles.

2 FROZEN FOOD BENEFITS

With flurries of snow, even on the south coast, vegetables can be pricy at this time of year and many people turn to

frozen vegetables, not always with a glad heart but there is no need to disparage them. You can now buy organic frozen vegetables and if buying non-organic then, as ever, read the labels to check for any artificial additives or colourings.

Fresh fruit isn't as plentiful, but there is one great treat from the freezer cabinet and that is to buy packs of frozen summer fruits. I keep one in the freezer and add a scoopful to the blender with yoghurt, soya milk or fruit juice to make a healthy vitamin c packed smoothie, whatever the weather.

3 CUTTING THE COST OF TRAVEL VACCINATIONS

One of the drawbacks to foreign travel, at least to me, is the number of vaccinations that you seem to be required to have. I am travelling to the Far East this month and was told I had to have Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio, Hepatitis A and Malaria. I am not a fan of vaccinations unless absolutely essential, as they do have side effects. The most serious to me is that they do compromise your immune system, and these are some of the others:

Headache, Itching, Loss of appetite, Fever, Nausea and vomiting,

Anaphylaxis (extreme allergic reaction), Redness or pain and swelling around injection site, A general feeling of being unwell.

I like to keep my immune system as healthy as possible to naturally ward off infection and illness so I phoned my favourite homoeopathic chemist and asked if there were any effective alternatives to these vaccinations. I was assured there were certainly were, and I was sent a neat set of little bottles to take one a day for the next 10 days. If homoeopathy is good enough for the Royal Family it is certainly good enough for me, and there is an additional bonus that doesn't worry them, in that it is a huge cost saving. My remedies cost me £13, including postage, and the cost quoted at a Travellers Clinic was the best part of £150 which seems an awful lot of money to me.

I will let you know how I get on, and if you want to find out more then call Galen Homoeopathics on 01305 263996

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I hope you have found this information useful, but do remember I am not a doctor and cannot give you medical advice, so please always take appropriate action by consulting your own medical advisor if you have concerns about any aspect of your health Please feel free to pass on any of this information to your

friends, or suggest they sign up for the newsletter themselves  
at my website.

Best wishes for a healthy week - AnnA

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