Health & Wellness Clinic
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Clinic Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00 am- 12:00 pm & 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm Friday 8:30 am- 12:00 pm Friday 1:00 pm- 5:00 pm & Saturday 8:00 am-11:00am
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Interesting Tidbits

Omega-3 Fatty Acids Reduce Back, Neck Pain

Omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil may reduce the incidence of neck and back discomfort, decreasing the need for pain-relieving nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs), according to a new study.

While previous studies have found that omega-3s may relieve arthritis pain, this is the first to examine their effects on persistent neck or back pain. The trial enrolled 125 patients who were using NSAIDs to reduce inflammation and relieve pain. They were given daily supplements of 2400 mg of omega-3 fatty acids for two weeks, followed by 1200 mg of omega-3 fatty acids for approximately two months. After two weeks, the volunteers were asked to stop using NSAIDs, and later they answered a questionnaire concerning their joint and spine pain, side effects, and level of NSAID use.

Fifty-nine percent of patients had discontinued their NSAID medications, and 60% reported lower overall pain levels since beginning omega-3 supplementation. Eighty percent said they were pleased with their improvement, and 88% said that they would continue to use omega-3 fatty acids. The research team noted that as many as two thirds of NSAID users may be able to relieve their pain and inflammation by using omega-3 fatty acids instead of NSAIDs.

Carotenoids Cut Diabetes Risk in Nonsmokers

A recent study shows that abundant intake of carotenoids may greatly decrease the risk of developing diabetes in nonsmokers by combating oxidative stress in the body. Carotenoids are plant-derived antioxidants found in fruits and vegetables such as carrots, tomatoes, and spinach.

Researchers measured baseline serum levels of carotenoids in both nonsmokers and smokers, and observed their incidence of diabetes and insulin resistance over the next 15 years. Nonsmokers with higher levels of carotenoids in their blood at the study's onset were statistically less likely to develop diabetes or insulin resistance, which often precedes diabetes. By contrast, smokers with higher carotenoid levels at the study's onset did not enjoy the same reduction in diabetes risk.

The study results confirm the health benefits associated with a carotenoid-rich diet, and further suggest that smoking may increase the risk of developing diabetes.

Cinnamon Extract Promotes Healthy Blood Sugar Levels

A new study shows that daily supplementation with cinnamon extract helps to improve blood sugar levels in people with type II diabetes.

Controlling blood sugar levels is a challenging but crucial aspect of diabetes management, as poorly managed blood sugar is associated with an increased risk for complications of the disease. When 79 patients with type II diabetes took aqueous cinnamon extract supplements three times daily for four months, their fasting blood sugar (glucose) levels dropped by an impressive 10.3%. Furthermore, people who had higher initial blood glucose levels benefited even more from cinnamon supplementation.

These exciting findings offer hope that cinnamon extract may benefit the millions of Americans who struggle with elevated blood sugar levels.

High Blood Pressure Now Common in Teens

Elevated blood pressure is common among 14-year-olds in the United States, according to a newly released report. In addition, many teens are overweight and a substantial number have borderline high or high cholesterol. High blood pressure, excess body weight, and high cholesterol are all independent risk factors for America's number-one killer, heart disease.

Scientists collected blood samples from and measured blood pressure, height, and weight in 1,717 eighth-grade students from 12 ethnically diverse schools in Texas, California, and North Carolina. Nearly one quarter of the teens had high blood pressure, and almost half were overweight or at risk of being overweight. Approximately 17% had borderline high total cholesterol and 4% had high total cholesterol.

These findings demonstrate that cardiovascular risk factors are prevalent not only among American adults, but also among teenagers. The study authors recommend that all adolescents (regardless of race or ethnicity) who are at risk for weight problems be screened for elevated blood pressure and blood lipid levels.