



In Geoff's Words...

More Interesting Articles

The *Self Health Signal* is an email newsletter with short summaries of health-related news. I try to select topics that show new approaches to existing conditions. However, it is not intended to be medical advice.

To sign up for The Self Health Signal simply send an email to signal-on@mail.shrc.net. You do not have to write any Message. You don't even have to write a Subject. Whichever email address you use to send the signal-on message will begin receiving The Self Health Signal. A new one is emailed every two to four weeks, although it may be longer or shorter because there is no fixed schedule. Instructions for discontinuing the newsletter are included at the bottom of each issue (it's as simple as sending a "signal-off@mail.shrc.net" email).

Following are some of the articles that have already been covered:

Vitamins ward off Alzheimer's

A study begun in 1995 on 4,740 people aged 65 or older found those who had been taking vitamin supplements had a 78% lower risk of getting Alzheimer's. The particular supplements were high doses of vitamin E (up to 1,000 iu) and vitamin C (up to 1,000 milligrams --note the article says "micrograms" but I think that must be a misprint -Ed.). The authors cautioned that a controlled trial was needed to confirm these results.¹

Clove extract neutralizes asbestos fibers

Asbestos is dangerous and difficult to handle. But Italian chemists at the University of Turin found that eugenol and hydrogen peroxide instantly hardens asbestos into a polymer. Eugenol is a chemical found in cloves. The team of scientists hopes to develop a commercial spray that can be used on buildings to provide a safer and cheaper

way of neutralizing the threat of exposure from asbestos previously used in building materials.²

Is the spread of corn syrup causing the spread of your tummy?

High-fructose corn syrup is an inexpensive corn sweetener that gained popularity in the early 1980s, coinciding with the start of the American obesity epidemic. Studies at UC Davis and the University of Michigan have shown that fructose is more readily converted to fat by the liver than other types of sugar. Although fructose is a sugar that does not stimulate the pancreas to produce insulin, benefiting diabetics, it also fails to increase leptin production. Both insulin and leptin signal the brain to turn down the appetite. Some doctors say, however, that it is not the type of sugar we are eating that is getting us in trouble, it's the fact we are eating too much of it. A single 12-ounce can of soda has as much as 13 teaspoons of sugar in the form of high fructose corn syrup. That would be a lot of sugar, even if it wasn't high-fructose.³

Consumers look to vitamins to boost eye health

Three vitamins (C, E, beta carotene) and zinc, have been shown to slow progression and associated vision loss by 25% among patients with moderate to advanced macular degeneration. The disease is caused by the incurable breakdown of the macula (the central part of the retina) and is the leading cause of blindness in people over 65. Other dietary supplements with less scientific data behind them are also gaining popularity.⁴

Where is my order?

When we ask for your email address on our website, or on the phone when you order, it is not just to send you the Signal. A more important reason is to send you an email with the tracking number of your order. Our website is at www.shrc.net.

¹ Reuters, Jan 19, 2004

² Chemical Communications, 2001, p2182

³ <http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/8075662.htm>

⁴ LA Times Feb 23, 2004