

WELLNESS CONNECTION

Fall/Winter 2008

“Food for Thought: Cognitive Nutrition” From *The Economist* July 19th, 2008

A professor of neurosurgery and physiological science at UCLA, Fernando Gomez-Pinilla feels that **“appropriate changes to a person’s diet can enhance his cognitive abilities, protect his brain from damage and counteract the effects of aging.”** Over 160 studies over the years have been compiled by Gomez-Pinilla into a review of food’s effect on the brain in the journal *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*.

He is a strong believer that the **brain, being a large consumer of energy, is at high risk for oxidative damage.** Therefore, antioxidants (think orange juice and vitamin C) should be helpful in preventing this damage.

Folic acid, a must for a pregnant mother’s developing fetus, has been shown to help prevent mental illness issues. Last year the *Lancet* published a study showing that folic acid

supplements can help those between the ages of 50 and 70 ward off cognitive declines that come with aging like clinical depression, verbal fluency and memory loss.

He also concludes that some foods are like drug compounds and their effects are so profound that mental health of entire countries may be linked to them. One example is the Japanese island of Okinawa. On Okinawa, residents have a “strikingly low rate of mental disorder”. Oily fish, like salmon, are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Okinawans are notable fish eaters, even compared to the Japanese.

On the other hand, diets rich in trans and saturated fatty acids, like those containing deep fried foods and butter, are associated with bad cognitive effects. Studies have shown that rodents put on bad fatty diets show

declines in cognitive performance.

The article, sadly, pointed out that over-eating was also an oxidative stress on the brain. So watch those portions.

Take home message: Look out for foods with proven anti-oxidant effects. Always consider the source of the information.



Upcoming Events

October— Paula and Stacey will attend a program at UNC, Chapel Hill on Incorporating an Infant and Early Childhood Dental Program Into Your Practice.

November— Dr. Woodson will attend the Academy of General

Dentistry meeting in Williamsburg, VA.

February— Scheduled for next year in February is the **Annual OSHA Update** in Greenville.

Also in February is the annual ADA sponsored **Give Kids a**

Smile Day. Each year our office donates our time and materials for children who do not have regular access to dental healthcare.

Stacey Walker, Clinical Assistant

Stacey grew up in the suburbs of Chicago and upon fond memories of family vacations to the beaches of North Carolina, she made the Outer Banks her home in 2001. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois in Champagne and has continued to further her education as a dental assistant. Stacey has over 4 years experience as a dental assistant. She joined Dr. Woodson’s practice in February 2008 and continues to expand her knowledge, talents and abilities in the field of Modern Family Dentistry.

Stacey lives in Manteo with her husband, Wallace and her 2 lovable dogs. She has a special love and appreciation for music, enjoys sports in which watching the Chicago Bears is a primary interest, gardening at home, watching movies and time at the beach with family and friends. Stacey awaits the opportunity to provide you with the utmost in professional service while ensuring superior healthcare in dentistry.

Patient Financing

Our office now offers **Care Credit** Patient Financing in addition to **Citi-Healthcard** and **Dental Fee Plan**.

These companies offer a variety of payment plans. 3 month, 6 month or even 12 month interest free programs are available. Traditional methods of repayment are also available.

So often I hear "Dentistry

is so expensive, I'll wait till I save some money to get that tooth fixed." With these financing options your oral health doesn't need to wait.

A broken tooth is a broken body part that needs to be restored to proper form and function. It is important that these issues be addressed promptly. This usually saves you, the patient,

money as well as time spent at the office.

These companies help you afford the dentistry you deserve.

Care Credit and **Citi-Healthcard** can be used for your entire family. They can also be used at different medical, dental and even veterinary practices in the area.

I know these programs work for our patients and it's easy to qualify. 5 minutes on a computer to apply could save lots of money later.

Ask Me—Paula

"Fosamax and Osteonecrosis of the Jaw: Important Questions and Answers"

From The Journal of General Dentistry May/June 2008

What are Fosamax and Osteonecrosis of the Jaw?

Fosamax belongs to a class of drugs called oral bisphosphonates. The goal of these drugs is to help prevent the progression of osteoporosis. This class of drugs is also associated with increased risk of osteonecrosis of the jaw bone (ONJ) among long term users. Osteonecrosis is an area of dead bone in the jaw.

How often does ONJ occur?

The drug manufacturer of Fosamax is **Merck**. Their figures show that a little less than 1 person per 100,000 taking Fosamax have experienced ONJ. The *Consumer Reports On Health* issue in 2006 found that 1 person in 20,000 had experienced ONJ. The Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery found that in Australia

studies found a range of 1 in 8470 person to 1 in 2260 persons had experienced ONJ while taking Fosamax.

Are there other bisphosphonate drugs?

Yes. Actonel (Aventis, Inc.), Boniva (Roche Inc.), and Reclast (Novartis) are all bisphosphonates. Boniva can be taken orally once per month and Reclast can be taken via an IV infusion. Reclast has shown very positive results in the osteoporosis battle. However, atrial fibrillation seems to be a risk in Reclast patients versus those taking a placebo.

How does the Jaw die from this drug exposure?

The jaw bone seems to deposit a higher concentration of the bisphosphonate than other bones.

When certain forces are placed on the jaw bones or invasive surgery is performed, like tooth extraction, the jaw bone is called upon to repair itself. In some, the bisphosphonate drugs slow this repair and also reduce bone blood supply and a portion of the bone will die.

What are the symptoms of a necrotic jaw bone?

Loose teeth, swelling of the gums covering the jaw bone or ulcers. Exposed bone at the site of tooth removal can also be a symptom of a necrotic jaw.

Is jaw surgery, tooth removal or dental implants off limits for Fosamax users?

No. However, you the patient should have a frank discussion with your dentist/physician

about the risks of ONJ or related complications specific to the procedures planned.

Fosamax drug Holiday?

The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) states that if a person has been taking an oral bisphosphonate for 3+ years, discontinuing the drug for 3 months prior to an oral surgery procedure may reduce the risk of ONJ.

Are there tests to assess the ONJ risk?

A test called the "serum CTX test" has been advocated to determine if bone has the ability to repair itself following surgery. Follow-up studies with large numbers of participants are needed to have the CTX test generally accepted.