



Sunday February 8, 2009

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Supplement - Health, Nutrition & Food

PREVENTION OF CANCER

Eight million new cancer patients are diagnosed every year in the world and one in three people in the world will die of cancer according to statistics available today.

Cancer is not a new disease. It has been described as old as 3,000 B.C. by Egyptians on breast cancer, Indian medical texts have described tumours 2,500 years ago, and Chinese have described treatment for throat cancer 2,000 years ago. This clearly shows that cancer is not a new disease but we know for sure it has increased in incidence due to change of dietary habits and the environmental factors as well as obesity.

Well controlled randomised intervention studies have shown that increasing the fruit and vegetable intake can reduce the incidence of certain types of cancers, for instance breast and colon cancers as well as the possibility of helping with prevention of many other cancers. There is enough evidence to show that by increasing the amount of diet intake of fruits and vegetables to nine servings per day among healthy women can significantly reduce incidents of breast cancer.

The most important thing to realise - often forgotten by us is that the cancer protective effect of fruits and vegetables may be multifaceted and, looking at individual nutrients or micronutrients may overlook the total effect of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables as demonstrated in many clinical trials of prevention.

So, it is a total intake of fruits and vegetables which is superior by select intake of vitamins alone. And therefore taking vitamins should not give you the false assurance that you are taking the proper steps to prevent cancer.

It is clear from the current research published that diet has a significant role in preventing most cancers, including the breast and colorectal cancers and possibly genitourinary cancer, including prostate. In this sense it should be a daily effort to see that you increase your dietary intake from three servings of fruit and vegetables to about nine servings as described before.

In addition to taking certain supplements of calcium and other antioxidants, selenium dosage for prevention should not be more than 200 mcg. It is important to recognise that heavily cooked or well done meat including selenium, may play some cancer protection role.

The role of alcohol and caffeine in cancer has been studied and there is strong evidence that alcohol is an independent risk factor for colorectal cancer. Cancers do not occur in a short period of time transiting from normal cells to mutant cells. It is a long process, and, in this process, with diet you could make this transition from normal cell to cancer cell less likely.

Therefore, patients with a family history of cancer should particularly be aware of this and should immediately start changing their life and dietary habits to have at least five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day and have some high whole grain fiber in the diet and reduce the intake of red meat and saturated fat.

- A.P. Ganepola MD, E.A.C.S. Director Center for Cancer Research and Genome Medicine, The Valley Hospital, Ridgewood, NJ Associate Professor of Surgery, Columbia University, New York, NY Active Member of American Association of Cancer Research, Active Member of European Association of

How weekend eating adds up

People regularly overeat on the weekend, which can sabotage their weight loss efforts and lead to a gain of nearly 10 pounds by the end of the year, new research shows.

Participants in a Washington University School of Medicine study consistently ate more from Friday through Monday than they did during the week, with Saturday being the worst day for overeating. Previous studies had confirmed what anyone faced with a holiday dessert buffet could tell you: special days often led to weight gain.

But the Washington University study, funded by the National Institute of Health and published in the online edition of the journal *Obesity*, is the first to show that people eat more calories on most weekends of the year.

"This is just one of those many factors that can hinder weight loss or weight control efforts," said Dr. Susan Racette, the study's lead author and an assistant professor of physical therapy and medicine at Washington University in St. Louis.

The study followed 48 adults aged 50 to 60 as part of the Comprehensive Assessment of Long-term Effects of Reducing Intake of Energy (CALERIE) study, which is looking at the possible health benefits of a calorie-restricted diet, shown to reduce some common markers of aging and disease in animal studies. The participants all had a Body Mass Index (BMI) that placed them in the normal or overweight categories at the start of the study, and none were obese.

Participants were put into one of three groups. The first kept their diet and activity levels as is, the second reduced daily calorie intake by 20 percent, and the third increased daily exercise by 20 percent. A careful daily record of their food intake, activity levels and weights were kept for one year, Racette said. "The main thing we found was that before interventions began, when people were just doing their own thing, they consistently gained weight on weekends," Racette said. Some of that gained weight -- an average of 0.4 pounds on the weekend across all study subjects -- would be lost again during the week, but not all of it, leading to cumulative weight gain over time.

"If someone is not really trying to follow any particular diet prescription," she said, "it could lead to an almost nine-pound weight gain at the end of the year if they repeated this pattern every weekend."

Those in the intervention groups showed a slowdown in progress on the weekends as well, due to extra calorie consumption. The participants in the reduced-calorie group lost weight during the week, but stopped losing on weekends because they were eating more, Racette said.

Those in the increased-activity group kept up their exercise through the entire week, but though they lost weight during the week, they gained it on the weekend because they didn't burn enough calories to make up for the extra food they consumed.

Over time, that pattern slows down weight loss progress for people who are following a particular diet or exercise plan, Racette said, which could lead to frustration when the pounds don't come off as quickly as expected. "They're working really hard during the week, but then they allow themselves to be more casual on weekends, and they end up being a lot more casual," she said. "If it were to continue every weekend, then it could lead to substantial gain over the year because they're not completely making up for it during the week."

The main culprit for the increased calories seemed to be fat -- an average of 36 percent of the study participants' calories came from fat on the weekends, with less than 35 percent coming from fat during the week. The kinds of foods that people often eat on weekends -- convenience foods and junk foods -- are often high in fat, and fat is higher in calories than protein or carbs.

It occurred to the researchers that water retention due to excess sodium intake could be behind the higher numbers on the scale on the weekends, Racette said, but evaluation of the data showed that there wasn't a significant increase.

Siddhalepa celebrates 75th Anniversary

Siddhalepa, which has provided relief for people both here and abroad for over a period of seven decades, celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. Every Sri Lankan can be proud that Siddhalepa started by Kidney Specialist and Astrologer Ayur Dr. Hendrick De Silva Hettigoda in 1934 is today well known both locally and internationally as one of the top Sri Lankan brands.

A series of social and religious activities has been organised in commemoration of this event. The picture shows Chairman, Hettigoda Group of Companies, Deshabandu Dr. Victor Hettigoda presenting a commemorative plaque to President Mahinda Rajapakse.

Managing Director of the Company, Asoka Hettigoda who was also present on this occasion is at right.

HRT cancer connection 'confirmed'

New evidence of a link between hormone replacement therapy and a raised risk of breast cancer has been put forward by US researchers.

The New England Journal of Medicine research found breast cancer risk fell sharply when women stopped taking HRT.

A UK expert said a 50% drop in HRT use in recent years had probably stopped up to 1,000 breast cancer cases a year.

But another group of experts said the fall in breast cancer rates may be due to other factors. The interpretation of the original 2002 "Women's Health Initiative" study, linking combined oestrogen and progestin HRT with breast cancer, has been hotly debated.

This combined version remains the most commonly-prescribed HRT in the UK.

The Californian researchers said that their new findings would end debate over the link.

After the move away from combination HRT in the US after 2002, the number of breast cancer cases fell, a sign to many that the connection between HRT and breast cancer was genuine. Others argued, however, that a reduction in the frequency of mammograms among women who ditched their HRT might have contributed to the apparent drop.

The latest research not only kept monitoring 15,000 women from the original study, who had all been urged to stop taking HRT in 2002, but looked at data for women not originally involved, who had been given no specific advice on giving up.

In the first group, the incidence of breast cancer was much higher in the hormone group in the five years leading up to 2002, then dropped very rapidly, with the number of diagnoses falling 28% in 12 months. The women had roughly the same number of mammograms before and after 2002. Many women in the second group also chose to stop taking the tablets, and this 50% decline in hormone use coincided with a 43% fall in breast cancer rates between 2002 and 2003.

Women in the second group who carried on taking HRT were at higher risk of cancer - with a woman who continued for five years doubling her breast cancer risk every year, the researchers said.

'Convincing data'

Dr. Marcia Stefanik, from Stanford University, said: "This is very strong evidence that oestrogen plus progestin causes breast cancer.

"You start women on hormones and within five years their risk of breast cancer is clearly elevated. You stop the hormones and within one year their risk is essentially back to normal.

"It's reasonably convincing cause-and-effect data."

Professor Valerie Beral, director of the Cancer Research UK Epidemiology Unit at Oxford University said that many studies since 2002 had agreed with the initial finding.

She stressed the "good news" - that breast cancer risk caused by HRT fell soon after women stopped it, rather than persisted for many years.

She said: "In the UK, where there has been a 50% fall in the number of women taking HRT, this means 1,000 fewer women with breast cancer every year."

Cancer Research UK advises that HRT can be taken by women with severe menopausal symptoms for short periods

However, not everyone is persuaded by the latest research findings, with some specialists insisting that HRT remains an important treatment for women whose lives are badly affected by menopausal symptoms.

'Too soon'

Dr. David Sturdee, president of the International Menopause Society, which represents HRT specialists, said that women should speak to their doctors to see if HRT would be appropriate.

He said: "There's no doubt there has been a drop in breast cancer rates, which is very good news, but this started before the reduction in HRT use. "Breast cancer takes years to develop, so if this drop was due to stopping HRT, we wouldn't be seeing it just yet.

"There's something happening, which is worth investigating, but it's unlikely to be HRT."

A spokesman for Breakthrough Breast Cancer said previous research had suggested that the extra risk of breast cancer linked to HRT disappeared after five years.

He said the suggestion of a swift return to normality in the research needed to be reproduced in other studies.

Golden Key Eye & ENT Hospital going strong, say doctors

One and a half years after it commenced operations, the Golden Key Eye & ENT hospital, the only private super-specialty category hospital in Sri Lanka, now treats up to 250 people a day for eye-related problems and had in the last year treated 16,000 people with ear, nose and throat issues, the hospital said last week.

In 2008 alone, the hospital had performed more than 2,800 cataract surgeries, establishing itself as a significant constituent of the country's medical infrastructure, and a centre of excellence for eye and ENT related investigations, treatment and surgery.

"The equipment and facilities at this institution alone make it unique," said Dr Saliya Pathirana, Managing Director and Chief Consultant Eye Surgeon at the hospital. "It is the only private facility in Sri Lanka where all necessary eye-related investigations including optical coherence tomography (OCT) as well as treatment can be done under one roof."

He said tests such as fundus fluorescein angiography (FFA), A&B scans, as well as laser treatment and phacoemulsification surgery for cataracts are done routinely at the hospital, making it the most advanced facility of its kind in the country.

"This is also the only private medical facility in Sri Lanka to offer vitreoretinal surgery for problems such as retinal detachment and intraocular infection," Dr Pathirana said.

The hospital runs several full time specialty clinics for conditions such as Glaucoma, Squints and Ocular plastics and is the only specialty hospital that is open 24 hours a day, he added.

In its other area of specialty, the state-of-the-art ENT hospital has a fulltime ENT surgeon. It has shown phenomenal success with standard ENT surgeries like Tympanoplasty, Mastoidectomy, Tonsillectomy, Adenoectomy as well as advanced head and neck surgery such as Thyroidectomy. Its Cochlear Implant programme has helped many young children to hear. State-of-the-art equipment is also available for Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS) done for Nasal Polyps and Sinusitis.

The hospital is equipped with the only Total Treatment Unit for ENT in the country, with multiple endoscopes for upper gastrointestinal and other head and neck investigations, Dr Sobitha Abeyaratne, Resident Consultant ENT Surgeon said.

"The setup here is the most advanced in Sri Lanka, and our dedicated state-of-the-art ENT theatre can support two major ENT surgeries at any given time," Dr Abeyaratne said.

He said audiometry and brain stem audiometry investigations are offered as standard features, along with a general laboratory equipped with the latest auto analyzers for all biochemical and hematological investigations. The hospital also offers speech therapy and rehabilitation for auditory impairment.

In all, the Golden Key Eye & ENT hospital has five operating theatres located on two floors. Two of them are Ultra Clean Modular theatres, the first of their kind in the private sector. One of each is dedicated to the two specialties. Of the other three theatres, two are for cataract surgery while the other is an emergency ENT theatre.

The theatres are equipped with the highest grade Carl Zeiss surgical microscopes and hi-tech German surgery recording facilities that enable family members to watch the surgery in progress and take home a CD recording for later viewing.

The hospital has a two bed Intensive care unit that is fully equipped to handle any patient needing intensive or high dependency care, 17 single rooms, 23 beds in two or three bed mini ward units and 10 beds for the care of patients who come in for single day procedures such as cataract surgery making a total bed strength of 44.

Does too much sugar worry you?

In today's context everybody is getting conscious about the calorie intake where safer substitutes are sought at all times.

The world's leading sugar substitute, Equal Sweetener has now come to the rescue offering the liberty of enjoying your tea, coffee, and fruit juices to puddings, dressings, jellies and other deserts. It looks like sugar, tastes just like sugar but keeps your calorie intake low and reduces the chance of weight gain and health risks like obesity and diabetes.

Equal is also a nutritious low calorie sugar substitute which contains Aspartame, an ingredient found in 'everyday' food that ones body digests naturally. Aspartame is 200 times sweeter than normal

sugar and is an internationally acclaimed non-toxic, low calorie sugar substitute which has no side effects and has been thoroughly tested and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as well as public health organizations around the world.

Equal does not contain Saccharin and is a product that's been highly trusted for many years now available in Sri Lanka through J.L.Morison Son & Jones (Ceylon) PLC, which is one of the leading manufacturing, marketing and distributing companies in the island.

Equal is economically priced and available island wide in leading supermarkets and pharmacies. The ideal Equal users are health conscious individuals, those with overweight problems, those with cholesterol problems (who need to control fat as well as calorie intake), diabetic patients. The product is well distributed island wide and the quality of the brand has helped in keeping it the preferred choice of all health conscious people.

You can also log on to www.equal.com to get exciting recipes.

Fair Pharma herbal remedies

Fair Pharma (Pvt.) Ltd. is a widely recognised Indo-Sri Lankan joint venture engaged in ayurvedic herbal medicine manufacturing for life threatening and crippling diseases, under the BoI flagship and ISO 9001:2000 QMS standard.

Among the medicines approved by the Department of Ayurveda, the main herbal drug manufactured by Fair Pharma plays a major role in the recovery of the health of cardiac patients by removing the blocks in the arteries. By dissolving the plaques clogging the arteries, the patient is free of chest pain in a matter of days.

Also their medicines are extremely useful to those who have undergone surgery. After using these medicines heart patients will feel a difference in their health within 30-50 days. After completing the 100-150days course, they may go for tests like Coronary Calcium Score Test, ECG, TMT or Angiogram, which will show good improvements.

Apart from these there are some products of Fair Pharma (Pvt.) Ltd. for Osteoporosis , Osteo Arthritis, Rheumatoid and Rheumatic Arthritis , Chronic back pain, Liver problems, Migraine, enlargement and inflammation of Prostate gland, bedsore, diabetic ulcers and burns.

Initially patients can get registered with the head office and then they can buy the balance stocks from Dehiwala, Thalawathugoda, Pittakotte, Gampaha, Negombo , Hikkaduwa, Mawenella, Kandy, Kurunegala, Embilipitiya, Bandarawela, Anuradhapura, Minneriya , Modara, Makola, Castle Street, Sea Street, Ekala , Kaduwela , and Mardamunai.

For more details visit the website: www.fairpharmasilanka.com

Water Sanitation Project

With latest research highlighting bowel diseases as one of the most critical health issues in the country, HNB embarked on an ambitious safe drinking water and sanitation programme, which was extended to include Araly in the Jaffna district.

The villages of Araly South in the Jaffna District, which house about 500 families mostly farmers, had only one well, which was insufficient to meet their needs for fresh water. There was also the danger of intrusion of salt water to this source of fresh water due to over irrigation, a common problem in that part of the country.

With the assistance of the National Water Supply and Drainage Board another fresh water source was identified and HNB arranged to have this source deepened to a fair sized well connected to a water tank. A water tank and a pump room were constructed and a pump was installed to serve the needs of these villages. Through this project a farmer community of more than 500 families in three Grama Sevaka Divisions in Araly will now get safe drinking water.

The first water and sanitation project was initiated by HNB last year where the bank was instrumental in providing the people of Siruthopu, a village in Mannar to have access to a proper source of safe drinking water. To day more than 75 families benefit from the well and tank that was built along with six taps in a central area of the village providing the much-needed solution to the dire water and sanitation problems faced by the people in the village

This project was initiated with the guidance of J R P M Paiva, Deputy General Manager - HR & Administration who is heading the CSR initiative of the bank to provide safe drinking water. The Hatton National Bank plans to initiate similar projects in Anuradhapura, Puttalam, Vakarai and Kataragama in the near future.

Work longer to stay healthy

New research shows that older workers have lower rates of heart disease, diabetes, obesity and arthritis than their non-working peers.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics report has revealed that mature workers aged between 45 and 74 years were less likely to have a chronic health condition than retirees.

Cardiovascular disease and arthritis each affect about 25 per cent of mature workers compared with 50 per cent of those who do not work. However 7 per cent of mature-age people said their work was partly responsible for causing a chronic condition such as arthritis, asthma, cancer or mental illness.

Work-related complaints included a high number of disc problems (42 per cent), back problems (41 per cent and hearing loss (32 per cent).

Tradespeople aged 45-74 years were more likely to have a chronic health condition (84 per cent) than professionals (75 per cent).

Even with a major health condition, more than half of older workers described their health as very good or excellent compared with only a third of those not working. Older people who study are also more likely to have better health, Adult Learning Australia states.

"Studies show that people who remain actively engaged through life-long learning and participation in their communities experience greater levels of general well-being, suffer less depression and illness and are less likely to get dementia," Adult Learning Australia's Julia Gane said.

J.L. Morison - building on decades of success

By Ashwin Hemmathagama

Established in 1935 in Sri Lanka by the British, J.L. Morison Son & Jones (Ceylon) PLC is one of the country's leading manufacturing, marketing, and distribution companies offering a world renowned diversified product portfolio. Following are excerpts of an interview held with Director - Sales and Marketing - Consumer Division, Chanaka Keppetiwala on the recent developments of the company and the current market condition.

Question (Q) - How would you direct your company in the present economic condition?

Answer (A) - It is true that economic situation is getting bad. But as a corporate entity we have aligned our operations to face the difficult period. Various effective measures are taken and this doesn't mean that we have taken extreme cost cutting, but strategic changes in all aspects are made to suite the requirement.

Q - How would rising tariffs and volatile exchange rates affect your company's performance?

A - We are a company which relies highly on imports and the tariff charges and exchange rates do have an impact which is beyond our control. However, our product portfolio exceeds 300 items where the majority is manufactured in Sri Lanka. So, whatever we manufacture in Sri Lanka has been distributed cost effectively at affordable prices. This helps to strike a balance and we are ready to meet any economic challenge which comes in this financial year.

Q - With more new brands being introduced, how would you see the increased competition in the market place?

A - Competition is getting hotter and hotter, but within that we have a product line which has created an edge passing the greater benefit to the consumer. We handle 30 - 40 brands where the majority of them happen to be in the number one or number two positions in value as well as in quantity. We have the greater ability in driving the brands from a sketch to the market leadership position which is being done in the past as well as in the present.

The best example is the Kiwi and Good Night, which didn't have any shape when entered into the local market. These two brands were developed to become highly successful in Sri Lanka. Today Kiwi happens to be the market leader with 90 per cent market share followed by Good Night which is enjoying the 3rd position. This is how we react to the competition which is necessary for a healthy market.

Q - Can you tell us about the formation of this company and landmark achievements?

A - The initial operation of the company in then Ceylon was limited to trading exercise. Eventually it was expanded into manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of pharmaceutical and consumer products. Though J.L. Morison Son & Jones (Ceylon) PLC was well known for pharmaceutical since 1998 the shift was more towards consumer items. So, today we are better known for consumer and household goods.

During this period the ownership changed hands and was retained in Sri Lanka which became a listed company at the Colombo Stock Exchange. Some of the world famous brands including Nivea, Saralee,

Wipro, Today pens and Garnier are handled by us in Sri Lanka. Our own products; Morison's Lacto Calamine lotion, Morning Pride and Valmilex, Morison's Gripe Mixture have won the hearts of many Sri Lankans.

Q - With war coming to an end, what are your future plans?

A - The operation in the North and the East was not that great during the last few years. But we are planning to expand the operations into these areas with war coming to a possible end. New products are also looked at being introduced while expanding the present services to cover many parts of the rural Sri Lanka.

GSK helps share latest knowledge on treatment of respiratory diseases

The latest information available on the treatment and management of respiratory diseases will be shared with the local medical fraternity by several international and local experts later this month at a forum organized by GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals (GSK).

The forum themed 'Breathe with Confidence' will focus on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma, two common respiratory diseases in Sri Lanka.

The panel of speakers at this event will comprise of Dr. Prashant N Chhajed Chest Physician and Interventional Pulmonologist, Director Lung Care Mumbai and Consultant at the Nanavati Hospital and Saifee Hospital in Mumbai, Dr. Kirthi Gunasekera, Consultant Chest Physician at the Central Chest Clinic Colombo, Dr. R Ajanthan, Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics and Consultant Paediatrician at the University of Colombo.

Presentations will cover 'Recent Advances in the Management of COPD' (Dr. Prashant N Chhajed), Systemic Manifestations of COPD' (Dr. Kirthi Gunasekera) and 'Paediatric Asthma' (Dr. R Ajanthan). The forum will take place at the Colombo Hilton on the 15th of February from 7.00 pm onwards.

Elaborating on this event GSK Sri Lanka Managing Director Stuart Chapman said that this is the first of a series of events that GSK has organized this year to contribute to the enrichment of knowledge among medical practitioners in the communities it serves.

"This is an example of the noteworthy contribution made by GSK to help patients afflicted with asthma and COPD," Chapman said. "We are also happy to welcome Dr. Prashant Chhajed, a very experienced medical expert to the meeting to share his knowledge with the audience."

All doctors who participate at GSK 'Breathe with Confidence' forum will receive a Certificate of Participation, the company said.

In Sri Lanka, asthma is estimated to afflict around one million people during their lifetime. Recent studies have shown that one in every three children is afflicted with a respiratory disease at some time.

Carmino all natural dietary supplement for abdominal discomfort

Carmino softgel caps instantly help to alleviate the symptoms and incidence of cramping, bloating, gas, acid reflux and other minor digestive problems.

- * Rapidly eases discomfort due to stuffed feeling commonly known as gas
- * Helps normalise abdominal cramping, bloating, pressure, and fullness
- * Provides cooling comfort to the stomach lining and gently helps the body counter digestive inflammation and burning. May help alleviate nausea and other symptoms of digestive problems.
- * With regular use, Carmino may help the body's natural ability to deal better with symptoms of indigestion, heartburn and acid reflex.

Peppermint Oil (*Mentha piperita*), one of the most effective of the mint herbs, has been used for centuries help the body deal with indigestion, nausea and heartburn. Modern research has demonstrated its effectiveness in soothing the symptoms of diverticulosis, IBS and other digestive disorders.

Mentha piperita is widely cultivated for medicinal uses and also has anti-inflammatory and antispasmodic properties. It helps relax muscles of the digestive tract and stimulates the flow of natural digestive juices and bile, thereby assisting healthy digestion.

Ginger Oil (*Zingiber officinale*), has a long history of medicinal use in traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine. Modern research confirms its usefulness in the symptoms of nausea, vomiting, indigestion, flatulence and dizziness. Working mainly in the digestive tract, Zingiber boosts digestive fluids and neutralizes acids, making it an effective alternative to anti-nausea medication, but without the usual unpleasant side effects. Ginger is also known to have strong anti-inflammatory properties

and helps the body deal with pain.

Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) is a tropical evergreen native to the West Indies and Indonesia. Nutmeg is recorded in history as early as the seventh century and various parts of the tree were used by ancient Arabians, Greeks and Romans as a spicy aroma and is used to warm the body and stimulate the mind.

Ajowan/Ajwain (*Carum copticum*) is a very effective herb for helping the body deal with indigestion, flatulence, and spasmodic disorders. Ajwain is an excellent carminative that's useful in flatulence, indigestion and low appetite.

Ingredients:

Millennium Herbal Care uses only standardized whole herb extracts identified by TLC "fingerprinting" and active phytonutrient analyzed by HPTLC method in all its products. Standardization assures specific, measurable levels of important phyto-nutrient compounds that provide beneficial activity. Millennium Herbal Care uses a matrix of synergistic herbal extracts in their optimum therapeutic dosage for purity, potency and consistency.

Other ingredients:

Arachis oil, Gelatin, Glycerin, Sorbitol, Bees wax, Soya Lecithin, Methyl Paraben, Vanillin Flavour, Propyl Paraben, Brilliant blue, Titanium dioxide, Sunset yellow.

Direction for use.

Take one to two softgel capsules twice daily with water, thirty minutes to one hour before food as a dietary herbal supplement.

Nawaloka Hospitals opens Serene Health Screening Centre

Nawaloka Hospitals, a leader amongst private sector healthcare providers recently moved to their plush new hospital complex, and added yet another new facility namely a state of the art health screening centre, Serene.

Located on the fourth floor of the New Nawaloka complex it offers an excellent ambience and peaceful surrounding which eliminates crowds and congestion, and facilitates, patients to get professional attention without a hassle. Hence its title Serene.

Headed by Dr Shan Perera who was responsible for pioneering an innovative health screening procedure in Sri Lanka, the Serene Centre is open from Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for bookings.

"Good health is a process which enhances your physical well being, enabling you to engage in social, mental and spiritual aspects of life, it is a necessity" said Dr Perera.

"Most of us have hidden health problems which later manifest themselves as full blown diseases and most often it is too late for a remedy. You must accept the fact that prevention is better than cure and discipline yourself into having an annual health check," said Dr Shan. He said that an annual health check was a necessity. "Give priority to safeguarding your health - always be one step ahead."

Nawaloka's Serene health screening centre offers a number of health screening packages with each package being customized to suit age related problems. "All packages include examination and advice by a consultant physician, while there are special packages which include consultation with a specialist in the related field."

Dr. Shan emphasised the fact that each patient would receive a personalised service by a highly trained and professional medical and para medical team, with all reports being handed back in 2 - 3 days after the examination.

The duration of the screening package ranges from 2 - 6 hours depending on the package selected.

The atmosphere at the Serene Centre is bright and cheerful, with the accent being on the patients comfort and wellbeing. A complimentary snack too is served .

The New Nawaloka complex was built at a cost of Rs 1.5 billion, resulting in Nawaloka Hospitals having a total floor area of 300,000 square feet; the new complex alone being 80,000 square feet; thus making Nawaloka Hospitals the single largest private hospital complex in Sri Lanka

The new complex has eight floors, each having a floor area of 10,000 square feet.

"One floor is dedicated to channeling / consultations and the speciality areas will be segregated so that all consultants specializing in their different field of medicine will be together," said Director / General Manager of Nawaloka Hospitals, Professor Lal Chandrasena.

The new complex houses amongst other facilities, a well equipped emergency treatment unit, an OPD laboratory, pharmacy, consultation rooms, caf,, ATMs, a maternity department complete with surgical theatre, delivery room as well as private delivery rooms and an Out Bound Unit for patients with post pregnancy defects, a neo natal unit, a MICU (Medical Intensive Care Unit) with the latest facilities, a Sleep Lab (snoring monitoring facility), dialysis unit, isolation room, 14 ultra modern surgical theatres, a modern fertility centre, nephrology unit, as well as a series of villas and suites to cater to the more fastidious patients.

"Two operating theatres will be dedicated for the needs of 'out patients' while another two will be dedicated for obstetrics and gynecology." Professor Chandrasena added that all the ICUs including the medical, surgical, coronary and the angiography laboratory have been expanded and are housed on the second floor, along with the staff so that attention and care would be even more prompt and easier.

He also said that they had additionally invested Rs 60 million to purchase equipment including monitors for the ICUs which would help the nurses monitor the patient's condition from a central location. "Annually we invest around Rs 200 million on technology and state of the art equipment to ensure that we are up to date and can provide our patients with the best of facilities."

"With the opening of the Serene health screening centre, it is our intention to offer all our valuable clients a new experience which guarantees a highly personalised service, supported by a panel of qualified professionals" said Professor Chandrasena.

Vitamin D helps control MS gene

The first evidence of how vitamin D deficiency and genetics interact to increase the risk of multiple sclerosis has been reported by researchers. A UK and Canadian team found that vitamin D helps to control a gene known to increase MS risk, the PLoS Genetics journal reports.

It suggests that vitamin D supplements taken during pregnancy and early in life could prevent the disease. More than 85,000 people in the UK are thought to have MS. The condition results from the loss of nerve fibres and their protective myelin sheath in the brain and spinal cord, causing neurological damage.

It is not entirely clear what causes MS but other research has suggested vitamin D, produced in the body through exposure to sunlight, plays a part.

Specifically there is evidence that populations from Northern Europe have an increased risk of developing MS if they live in areas receiving less sunshine.

Various pieces of research have also pointed to genetic causes.

In the latest study, researchers at the University of Oxford and University of British Columbia looked at a section of the genome on chromosome six which had been shown to have the strongest effect on MS risk.

While one in 1,000 people in the UK is likely to develop MS, this number rises to around one in 300 among those carrying a single copy of the gene variant - known as DRB1*1501 - and one in 100 of those carrying two copies. The researchers found that proteins activated by vitamin D in the body bind to a particular DNA sequence next to the gene, altering its function.

They believe that vitamin D deficiency in mothers or even in a previous generation may lead to altered expression of the gene in their offspring.

Immune system

Exactly how the gene-environment interaction alters MS risk is yet to be determined; one explanation could be an effect on the thymus - a part of the immune system which produces T cells to attack invaders such as bacteria and viruses. It is thought that in people who carry the gene variant, a lack of vitamin D during early life might impair the ability of the thymus to delete rogue T cells, which then go on to attack the body, leading to a loss of myelin on the nerve fibres.

Co-author, Professor George Ebers, from the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, at the University of Oxford, said it had been known for a long time that genes and the environment determine MS risk.

"Here we show that the main environmental risk candidate - vitamin D - and the main gene region are directly linked and interact." Study leader, Dr Sreeram Ramagopalan, added: "Our study implies that taking vitamin D supplements during pregnancy and the early years may reduce the risk of a child developing MS in later life."

Simon Gillespie, chief executive of the MS Society, said: "These remarkable results tie together leading theories about the environment, genes and MS but they are only part of the jigsaw. "This

discovery opens up new avenues of MS research and future experiments will help put the pieces together." The government already advises that pregnant and breastfeeding women make sure they get enough vitamin D, taking supplements if necessary.

And it is also recommended that children under five take daily vitamin D supplements.

Ulcerative colitis

Ulcerative colitis is a long-term inflammatory disorder that causes ulceration of the rectum and the colon.

It may only affect the rectum or may spread from the rectum to affect part of - or the entire colon.

Symptoms are intermittent, often not occurring for months or years.

During mild attacks symptoms may develop over a few days and include; diarrhoea - sometimes with blood and mucous; tiredness; abdominal pain - and poor appetite.

In severe attacks the symptoms come on suddenly and may include; severe diarrhoea many times a day; passing of blood and mucous; fever; abdominal pain and swelling - and weight loss.

A potentially fatal complication of ulcerative colitis is inflammation and distension of the colon, called toxic megacolon, which may result in bowel perforation. Ulcerative colitis affecting most or all of the colon for several years increases a person's risk of bowel cancer.

Those with ulcerative colitis may also have arthritis, eye disorders (uveitis) - and erythema nodosum.

Ulcerative colitis affects approximately one in 160 people.

It is more common than crohn's disease.

It most often occurs in caucasians, particularly those of jewish decent.

Symptoms usually first appear between the ages of 15 and 35.

It can run in families and is more common in non-smokers and ex-smokers.

Its exact cause is unknown and so it is difficult to prevent.

Treatments include medication to prevent attacks, stop diarrhoea and reduce inflammation - and surgery.

'Ceylinco Takaful Insurance receives ISO 9001-2000 certification'

The above article published in the Insurance Supplement on January 25 stated that: "Ceylinco Takaful is fully guided by a Shari'a Supervisory Board officially and institutionally represented by All Ceylon Jammiyathul Ulama, the apex body of Muslims in Sri Lanka."

This sentence should have read as "Ceylinco Takaful Limited is fully guided by Shari'a Supervisory Board represented by an eminent panel of Islamic scholars with international repute to meet the aspirations of the Muslims in Sri Lanka." Editors Note: What was published was a press release sent by the company.

The best of physical and sports medicine at Revival

Physical medicine and Sports medicine specializes in diagnosing and treating injuries related to musculo-skeletal ailments and sports related injuries.

Physical medicine and sports medicine specialist "team" includes Rheumatologists, Orthopaedic Surgeons, Neurologists, Neurosurgeons, and Sports Medicine Specialists, backed by expert Physiotherapists. Because of the competitive nature of sports, a primary focus of sports medicine is the rapid recovery of patients, which drives many innovations in the field.

Sports medicine has always been difficult to define because it is not a single specialty, but an area that involves health care professionals, researchers and educators from a wide variety of disciplines. Its function is not only curative and rehabilitative, but especially preventive.

Sri Lanka happens to be the home for many award winning teams and sports personalities, where demands for such sport medical facilities are high. Revival Physical Medicine Centre (RPMC) located at Kalinga Place in Jawatte Road, Colombo 5 happens to be a pioneering effort catering to all specialty services pertaining to physical medicine and sports medicine. According to RPMC Chairman, Dr. R.S. Jayatilake, physical medicine and sports medicine can encompass an array of specialities.

"We have all the necessary equipment and the experts to attend to any service relating to Physical

Medicine and Sports Medicine. Our team of physiotherapists is trained in the art of assessing human movement and posture, and is qualified to treat any condition that affects your muscle, joints or nerves. Revival is located in a much spacious land in the heart of Colombo where convenient vehicle parking and necessary space to do exercise is also provided. Among the many services we offer laser therapy, traction therapy, short wave, digitism, infrared, interferential therapy, ultra sound therapy, hot and cold packs are provided. Also, most of the equipments are from U.K. and hitherto not available in Sri Lanka," he said. (AH)

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24, Katukurunduwatte Road, Ratmalana Sri Lanka
Tel : +94-75-365891,2 Fax : +94-75-365891
email : editor@thesundayleader.lk