

March 2008

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The Mortar & Pestle

Long Term Care Newsletter



Shelly's Medication Services - 1504 Grundy's Lane - Unit #8 - Bristol, Pa. 19007

Genetics and Longevity

When centenarians are asked about the secret to their longevity, many answer "good genes." However, according to a report in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, studies of twins have found that only 25% of variation in human life can be attributed to genetics; 75% is attributed to modifiable factors such as smoking, diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and exercise.

A study conducted by **Laurel B. Yates, MD, MPH, of Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston** and colleagues reports, "Smoking, diabetes, obesity, and hypertension significantly reduced the likelihood of a 90-year life span, while regular vigorous exercise substantially improved it." The report estimates that a 70-year-old man who did not smoke and had normal blood pressure and weight, no diabetes, and exercised 2-4 times per week had a 54% probability of living to age 90. Adverse factors such as sedentary lifestyle, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, smoking, three of these factors, or five of these factors reduced that probability to 44%, 36%, 26%, 22%, 14%, and 4% respectively.

Siesta Lowers BP

For most a daytime nap can revive sagging energy, but for some it may help to lower blood pressure. In a report in *The Journal of Applied Physiology*, investigators at **John Moores U**, in the U.K. assessed blood pressure, heart rate, and blood vessel dilation of 9 volunteers with average age of 34. All of the volunteers were restricted to 4 hours of sleep on the night prior to each of the sleep laboratory tests. The report said that during their ten minute nap, the subjects' blood pressure decreased on average by more than 9%

Educational Dinner Program

Join with colleagues from around the area as SMS presents the next in our continuing series of educational dinner meetings. Jointly sponsored with Watson Pharmaceuticals, it will be held on May 1st at **Maggiano's Little Italy**, 205 Mall Blvd., in King of Prussia. Registration will begin at 6:30 PM. Dinner and the program will start at **7. Diane A. Smith RN, MSN, CRNP**, who is **VP/Clinical Director, OnSight Continence Care LLC** will speak on **Incontinence in the LTC setting including f-tag discussion & drug therapies**. As always, the evening promises to be both an enjoyable and informative one. This program is CEU certified. Seating is limited so make your reservation today by calling SMS at 215-785-6616. Just ask for Barry or Stan.

Dr. Feelegoode's Corner - Stroke

Stroke symptoms are difficult to identify. A trained professional like myself may not have a problem doing this, but most people would. Brain damage may occur when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke with 3 simple questions:

- Ask the individual to **SMILE**,
- RAISE BOTH ARMS** and
- SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE**.

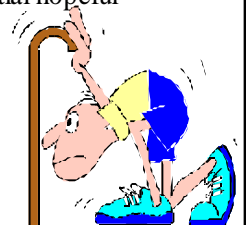
If they have trouble with any of these tasks, call 9 -1 -1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevention of brain damage.



Laughter - the best Prescription

With the November elections growing near, the presidential candidate decided that some really good publicity would occur if a series of visits to nursing homes were begun. After arriving at the first home, the candidate began the "tour" walking down the main hallway. Most residents and staff members said hello, but halfway down the hall the candidate passed a little old man who didn't seem to notice him. Sensing this, the presidential hopeful backtracked to the man and asked,

"Do you know who I am?" The little old man leaned on his cane, looked up and said, "No, I don't, but if you go to the front desk, I'm sure they will tell you your name."





Prescription Descriptions

Advisory on Chantix Reacting to emerging evidence of a link between the smoking cessation drug Chantix (varenicline) and serious neuropsychiatric symptoms, the FDA issued a Public Health Advisory to alert health care providers, patients, and caregivers to new safety warnings. As a result, FDA has requested that Chantix's manufacturer, Pfizer, more prominently highlight this safety information in the drug's prescribing information. The agency is also working with Pfizer to finalize a patient Medication Guide.

Last fall, the agency said that it was evaluating postmarketing adverse event reports on Chantix related to changes in behavior, agitation, depressed mood, suicidal ideation, and actual suicidal behavior.

"Chantix has proven to be effective in smokers motivated to quit, but patients and health care professionals need the latest safety information to make an informed decision regarding whether or not to use this product," said Bob Rappaport, MD, director of FDA's Division of Anesthesia, Analgesia and Rheumatology Products.

Add to the Long List of Potential Smoking Hazards

Smokers, particularly women, now have more to worry about when it comes to the possible health hazards of smoking. Researchers at **Penn State College of Medicine** suggest a direct interaction between cigarette smoke carcinogens and the human papillomavirus (HPV) that may lead to an increased risk of cervical cancer.

If that isn't enough to get one to quit smoking, a **University of Rochester** scientist discovered that the toxins in cigarette smoke wipe out a gene that plays a vital role in protecting the body from the effects of premature aging. According to **Irfan Rahman, PhD**, associate professor of environmental medicine and an investigator in the University of Rochester's Lung Biology and Disease Program, not only is youthfulness lost without this gene, it leaves the lungs open to destructive inflammation and diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and cancer. Research from 2 separate clinical studies appeared in the **American Journal of Respiratory Critical Care Medicine** and the **American Journal of Physiology**.

Quick drug info on the Web
WWW.SMSLTC.COM
Choose the link to
Drug Information

This month's words of wisdom ...

To be 70 year s young is somet imes far mor e cheer ful
and hopef ul than to be 40 year s ol d.

... Oliver Wendell H olmes

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**Partnership In
Long Term Care**

