

Vitamin D and Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is the 3rd most common cancer in the world, and the 4th highest cause of cancer-related deaths. In the U.S. it is the 2nd leading cause of cancer deaths. Now, research conducted by the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute has shown that vitamin D helps the body fight against colorectal cancer by boosting the immune system.

Drawing on data from 170,000 participants, in two long-term, health-tracking research projects (the Nurses' Health Study and Health Professionals Follow-up Study), researchers compared selected groups of 318 colorectal cancer patients, and 624 individuals who were free of cancer. All 942 of them had had blood samples drawn in the 1990s, before any developed cancer. The investigators tested these samples for 25-hydroxyvitamin D.

According to senior author Dr. Shuji Ogino: "People with high levels of vitamin D in their bloodstream have a lower overall risk of developing colorectal cancer...Laboratory research suggests that vitamin D boosts immune system function by activating T cells that recognize and attack cancer cells...This is the first study to show evidence of the effect of vitamin D on anti-cancer immune function in actual patients, and vindicates basic laboratory discoveries that vitamin D can interact with the immune system to raise the body's defenses against cancer."

<http://www.dana-farber.org/Newsroom/News-Releases/Vitamin-D-protects-against-colorectal-cancer-by-boosting-the-immune-system.aspx>

Vitamin D and Sleep apnea

Sleep apnea is a common disorder where a person stops breathing during sleep, which can result in fatigue, headaches, weight gain, and worse of all, cardiovascular problems. The most obvious sign of apnea is snoring: though not everyone who snores has apnea. While many people can reverse this condition with lifestyle changes, along with a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine, this approach does not work for everyone.

Recent research now suggests that a vitamin D deficiency may be associated with obstructive sleep apnea. A study out of Ireland found a higher prevalence of vitamin D deficiency among patients with obstructive sleep apnea, in fact, 98 percent of those who had sleep apnea were also found to have a vitamin D deficiency. And, those patients with severe sleep apnea were found to be even more deficient in vitamin D.

One theory is that since sleep apnea is an inflammatory disorder, vitamin D deficiency, already linked to inflammation, predisposes or worsens sleep apnea. There was, as of yet, no follow up to see if dosing those patients with vitamin D would alleviate or lessen their symptoms, but if one has that condition it seems to be a safe bet to try some extra vitamin D.

(Kerley CP, et al. "Serum vitamin D is significantly inversely associated with disease severity in Caucasian adults with obstructive sleep apnea syndrome." Sleep. 2016;39(2):293–300)

<http://www.journalsleep.org/ViewAbstract.aspx?pid=30430>

Reading

As a bit of a follow-up to my blogs on “The Real Cause of Alzheimer’s Disease”, I suggest this new book which offers other perspectives on preventing, and treating Alzheimer’s, including information for caregivers.

“The Alzheimer’s Prevention & Treatment Diet”, by Richard S. Isaacson MD and Christopher N. Ochner PhD.

“While the cause of Alzheimer’s disease is still a mystery, new research has increased our knowledge of certain aspects of the disease. Perhaps most significant, studies show that proper diet may make a real difference, not only in slowing the progression of AD, but also in preventing it. In this groundbreaking book, a notable expert on Alzheimer’s disease has teamed up with a leading researcher of nutrition to create a unique guide to understanding and managing this serious condition. The Alzheimer’s Prevention & Treatment Diet outlines a cutting-edge nutritional program that will be of interest both to Alzheimer’s patients and to anybody who wants to maintain optimal memory and mental agility for years to come. The book begins with an overview of Alzheimer’s disease, outlining its symptoms, risk factors, diagnosis, and current treatment methods. You’ll also learn how Alzheimer’s disease differs from other forms of memory loss and cognitive impairment. Next, Drs. Isaacson and Ochner take a closer look at the impact of nutrition on your ability to think and remember, examining the effects of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins on the brain. Then, they share their innovative program for Alzheimer’s prevention, showing you how to maximize your cognitive health through diet and exercise. Finally, the authors give tips for the caregiver on adapting and implementing the program for people who already have Alzheimer’s, decreasing the speed with which symptoms worsen.” <http://www.amazon.com/Alzheimers-Prevention-Treatment-Diet/dp/0757004083>

Viewing

This link leads to an infographic on the role that vitamin D plays in Autism Spectrum Disorder, offering recommended therapeutic doses for prevention (during pregnancy), and treatment protocols for those with autism. http://www.vitamindcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ASD_Infographic-1-1.pdf

With a new study from Duke University (North Carolina) finding a “Legacy of Radioactivity: Contamination from Thousands of Fracking Wastewater Spills” <http://www.desmogblog.com/2016/05/08/duke-university-study-finds-legacy-radioactivity-water-and-soil-contaminated-thousands-fracking-wastewater-spills> not to mention the already-established contamination of waterways with heavy metals, that also follows these spills, now might be a time to enjoy (if that is the right word), a rant on the subject by none other than David Letterman. <http://tv.greenmedinfo.com/david-lettermans-epic-rant-against-fracking/>