

doctokr Talk

Vol. 1, Issue 2, October 2003

Welcome to the second issue of **doctokr Talk**. Our health information newsletter will discuss common and interesting health problems, provide updates about **doctokr**, and direct you to useful resources. Our aim is to empower you to become an informed health care consumer. You are welcome to share this with your friends and family; with acknowledgment. If there are topics you would like us to cover in this newsletter, please contact Dr. Dappen at drdappen@doctokr.com.

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doctokr News

DOCTOKR IN THE NEWS!

The **doctokr** practice model changes the delivery of health care by having the doctor answer the phone or call you right back; with **doctokr**, you can reach the doctor almost Any Time, Any Way and Any Where. Now the news is out of the bag! Several articles have been published about **doctokr**, in the *Washington Post* and *Benefit News*, and you may even have heard some radio interviews. The articles are accessible through the web: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A44864-2003Sep8.html>
<http://www.benefitnews.com/detail.cfm?id=5023&terms=|xxxar||xxxnw||xxxeb||doctokr||xxxnw2|>

DOCTOKR HOURS

There are some changes to our hours:

By phone- 24/7 Any Time, Any Way, Any Where - This means Saturday and Sundays too. Call (703) 938 4604 and push 1 to reach Dr Dappen. If I don't answer the phone, leave a voice mail message which automatically pages me. I should be able to call you back within 30 minutes under most circumstances.

By email- any *non-urgent and non-confidential* information can be sent to DrDappen@doctokr.com Many times the response time will be almost immediate but since I am not sitting at my computer continuously, response times could take as long as 12 hours (for example, if you send an e-mail in the evening).

By office visit*: Office visits may be made *any day of the week*, but are by appointment only, except for pre-announced ‘drop-in’ hours. The usual office hours are;

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Monday, Tuesday, Thursday | 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM |
| Wednesday | 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM |
| Friday, Saturday | 10:30 AM - 5:30 PM |
| Sunday | 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM |

By house call*: Dr Dappen is available to make house calls, providing the driving time is within 15 minutes of the Oakton Vienna area. There is a minimum charge of \$75.00 for a house call. This includes up to 10-minute consulting time at your home. After 10 minutes, additional time is charged as in routine office visits.

* PPO insurances will reimburse for office visits and house calls.

‘PLAN A’ SAVINGS

We encourage everyone to join Plan A. Members place \$100.00 or more in a prepaid account, thus simplifying our billing and saving you money (up to 25% reduction in cost). This deposit can be reclaimed or withdrawn at any time, should you decide to close the account. It does not expire, nor does it lose value over time.

We notify everyone when their account balance is getting low so that they can replenish Plan A. If your account balance is \$0.00 at the time of service, then the price of services will be billed out under the higher Plan B rates.

konundrum:

CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING DIETS

Despite the media hype, claims that diets, when used alone, lower cholesterol and reduce heart disease have been based mostly on theory. Evidence-based studies have concluded the following:

- About 80% of your cholesterol level is determined by your genes and your weight (the more you weigh, the higher the cholesterol level.)
- Cholesterol (purely an animal product and never found in any plant or plant oil) is manufactured in the liver and if not eaten in the diet, is produced by the liver to reach what appears to be a body “set point”.
- Diets in the most strictly administered studies result in up to a 15% reduction in cholesterol level within the first 2-3 months but over time the average reduction by diet alone drops to 7-8%.
- Outcome studies show that the impact of *diet alone* on mortality of patients with high cholesterol is barely statistically significant compared to those on no special diet.

Thus for vast majority of people cholesterol lowering diets have hard to measure impacts on cardiovascular disease despite all the effort. Cholesterol-lowering drugs continue to

be the best and strongest predictive way of lowering cholesterol significantly AND reducing heart attacks, strokes and mortality.

A recently published study in JAMA may change this trend. The study suggests that a new diet can significantly lower cholesterol almost the same amount as drugs. Thus for some people, a diet might really offer an alternative to drugs. This diet combines elements already well-tested individually in previous studies and shown to have measurable, but small, impacts on cholesterol. Apparently, when you put them together, the benefits add up. The key elements are:

* the American Heart Association Diet (vegetarian, low in cholesterol and saturated fats), *combined with daily consumption of:*

* 1 gram plant sterol ester-enriched margarine (e.g., Benecol);

* 10-25 grams of viscous fibers such as oats, barley, psyllium (e.g. found in METAMUCIL), eggplant and okra;

* 21.4 grams soy protein (soy milk and soy meat analogues); and

* 14 grams of whole almonds (among other nuts).

This diet lowered cholesterol by 29%, which was the same that the cholesterol-lowering drug achieved. Drops in bad cholesterol (LDL= low density lipoprotein), and C reactive protein (a marker with predictive risk for developing heart attacks) was similar to that achieved by drugs. There were no reported health problems associated with the diet, and no contraindications.

The study has limitations:

* Small sample size. A total 30 people involved.

* Short duration (4 weeks). Most diets over time lose cholesterol lowering ground as the liver figures out how to manufacture more cholesterol.

* No outcome measurements. It often takes as long as 5 years to see statistically significant changes in cardiovascular disease based on changes in diet and/or medications.

Nonetheless you will certainly be reading and learning more about this diet in the future. For more information...

The referenced article is:

Jenkins DJA, Kendall CWC, Marchie A, et al. Effects of a dietary portfolio on cholesterol-lowering foods vs lovastatin on serum lipids and C-reactive protein. JAMA 2003;290:502-510.

<http://www.ub.uio.no/umn/farm/pbl/artikler/kolesterol.pdf>

A great review article for lowering cholesterol: Adopting Healthful Lifestyle Habits to Lower LDL Cholesterol and Reduce CHD Risk

<http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/106/25/3253#TBL8>

For more information on low fat the American Heart Association diet:

AHA – Dietary Guidelines For Healthy Americans

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=1330>

For more information about plant sterols:

<http://www.ifst.org/hotspot29.htm>

http://www.bbriefings.com/pdf/foodingredients_2002/technology/raisio.pdf

Dietary supplements are also available in the nutritional supplements section of most stores.

For more information on fiber in the diet:

<http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/full/69/1/55#SEC1>

<http://www.stacommunications.com/journals/pdfs/cardiology/junecardiology/c.pdf>

For more information on sources of viscous fiber:

<http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/106/25/3253/TBL8>

Medikal Tips

TIME FOR FLU SHOT OR NEW SPRAY

Flu season is upon us. Unlike other years, there should not be a shortage of the vaccine. The high-risk people (6-23 months, all those over 65 yo, anyone with frequent respiratory disease, or chronic health problems) are being asked to get the flu shot in October. People with “average risk” can wait until November. The cost of receiving the shot at [doctokr](#), from our nurse, or Dr. Dappen will be \$20.00.

For people between 5-50 years old, and a strong needle phobia, there is a new flu “nose spray” vaccine which costs considerably more. Because of cost, we will not be stocking this “FluMist” but will be able to special order it for those who specially request it. The cost for the nose spray will be around \$60.00, plus an administration fee of \$10.00.

We will be offering flu shots on a drop-in basis on Friday afternoons from 1 until 5:30PM Through October and November, and by pre-arranged appointment during other regular office hours. So drop on in on Friday afternoons or call 703 938 4604 and push 2 for the nurse to speak with Gail Hale, RN to arrange a time for your shot.

EXERCISE FOR SENIORS- A LOCAL RESOURCE

If you are a senior who has trouble exercising for almost any reason, or know someone who is, then you should know about Cheryl Bartholomew, a certified Senior Fitness Instructor. She is currently offering her seated exercise programs at the Vienna Community Center on Friday 12:30pm- 1:30pm and at Lord of Life Lutheran Church (5114 Twinbrook Rd in Fairfax) on Wednesday and Thursday from 1:30pm-2:30pm. Cheryl is founder and President of Seniors 'N Sync and offers unconventional exercise options for beginning exercisers, persons with limited movement, older adults who wish to improve their balance and endurance to maintain functional fitness and persons who for any reason prefer to workout while in a chair. Call the Vienna Community Center to

register at 703-255-6360 (Ask for the Heart and Sole Exercise program # 242476 A1) or call Cheryl directly for more information at 703-281-1560. Everyone benefits from exercise. These programs are fun and purposeful. Register today!

www Link of the Month

MEDLINE

An excellent place to review the medicine(s) that you are taking, including dosing, when to use the medicine, indications for using it, side effects, contraindications, warnings, and medication interactions is <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html>

It is extremely important in my opinion for you to know as much as possible about the medicines you're taking. If after reading the information you have any concerns or thoughts we have not considered, please call 703 938 4604.

Alan Dappen, MD

docto**kr** family medicine, P.C. www.doctokr.com

360 Maple Ave W, Suite D, Vienna, VA 22180

Tel: 703 938 4604 Cell: 703-869-6269 Toll Free 1-888- docto**kr**

FAX: 703 938 4618 (362 8657)

e-mail: DrDappen@docto**kr**.com