

Topic of the Week

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WE CARE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

Vaccination – Is it Our Best Option to Fight Swine Flu?

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In March/April of this year, we learned of a new swine flu virus emerging in Mexico and the United States. It was given particular attention because of its tendency to cause an abnormally large number of hospitalizations and deaths in younger age groups.

Renamed the H1N1 virus, the flu was classified as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in June.¹ Since then, various health agencies and pharmaceutical companies have joined forces to create a vaccine to stop this dangerous virus.

Vaccines and the Elderly

In a recent online article, Dr. Donald Millar, MD, gives us some insight into the question of flu vaccines and their role in keeping us healthy.²

Not a fan of the flu vaccine, Dr. Millar quotes a research study involving the elderly whereby investigators found that "after adjusting for the presence and severity of comorbidities, influenza vaccination was not associated with a reduced risk of community-acquired pneumonia during the influenza season."³



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Another study showed that while the vaccination rate for elderly persons 65+ years of age in the US increased from 30% to 67% between 1989 and 1997, "mortality and hospitalization rates continued to increase rather than decline as would be expected if the vaccine were optimally efficacious."⁴

Why is this significant? Pneumonia in the elderly accounts for the vast majority of annual deaths (36,000) that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has attributed to the flu.⁵

What About Children?

Infants are at risk for serious complications when infected with the flu. As a result, mandatory vaccination of all children is being recommended.

However, a review of the available literature found no evidence that the flu vaccine is any more effective than a placebo for children under two years.⁶

Even when studies show influenza vaccines being effective at reducing the incidence of influenza in children, Dr. Millar reminds us that this is often just a measure of the relative effectiveness of the vaccination. For example, one study showed vaccination of pregnant mothers to be 63% effective in reducing the incidence of flu in their infants.⁷ Using this statistic alone, this sounds impressive.

Exercise of the Week

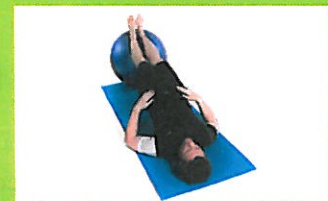
Low Back Stabilization in Reverse Bridge Position with Hamstring Curls

Difficulty: Moderate

(Consult your chiropractor before starting this or any other exercise.)

Start: Lie on back, lower legs rest on ball, knees straight. Hands can rest on hips with elbows touching floor. Press down into ball with legs, lifting hips until entire body is in a straight position, feet to shoulders. Stabilize with stomach tucked in and hold.

Exercise: Roll ball toward buttocks using both feet. As ball comes closer to buttocks, hips should rise but not bend, keeping straight line between knees, hips and shoulders. Curl legs to 90 degrees and hold for 2 counts. Return to start position; maintain a tight abdomen throughout. Repeat 5-10 times.



However, it's not as impressive when Dr. Millar explains what the actual numbers really mean.²

Two groups were studied. A number of pregnant mothers (159) received vaccination and the other group (157) did not. In the vaccinated group, 6 of their infants eventually got the flu. In the unvaccinated group, 16 infants eventually contracted the flu virus. Result: vaccination reduced the number of flu victims by 10/16, or 63%. However, using absolute numbers, the flu vaccine only benefited 10 out of 159 infants or 6% of the total group studied. And 6 infants whose mothers were vaccinated still got the flu!

Are vaccines harmful?

Substances found in flu vaccines include: formaldehyde (a known cancer-causing agent), aluminum (linked to Alzheimer's disease), ethylene glycol (antifreeze) and thimerosal (containing mercury). According to Dr. Millar, each of the 100 million flu shots used in the 2008-2009 season that contained thimerosal also contained up to 25 micrograms of mercury - 250 times more than the Environmental Protection Agency's safety limit!²

Another Option to Fight Flu

Scientists have recently discovered one way in which our body fights off the influenza virus: natural anti-infectious agents known as antimicrobial peptides.⁸



Levels of this peptide are found to increase in the presence of an adequate concentration of vitamin D. Since vitamin D is produced in the skin as a result of exposure to the sun's UVB radiation, some researchers hypothesize that a relative vitamin D deficiency in the winter months causes a greater incidence of influenza during this season.⁹

But can supplementing with vitamin D really work? Investigators of one scientific study showed that vitamin D prevented colds and influenza significantly better than a placebo. In fact, researchers observed that when subjects were given a daily dose of 2000IU of vitamin D, it "virtually eradicated all reports of colds or flu."¹⁰

Is vitamin D safe in high doses? Consider this. If you're exposed to the sun for 30-minutes, the level of vitamin D in your blood increases by 10,000IU to 20,000IU without any side effects.

Can Chiropractic Help?

The immunity-boosting powers of chiropractic have often been demonstrated, but Dr. Walter Rhodes documented the most impressive of these in his account of the influenza epidemic of 1918 in North America.¹¹

According to the medical statistics from the era, many people who were treated by chiropractors fared much better than those treated by MDs with respect to the flu. Here's a striking account, "In Davenport, Iowa, 50 medical doctors treated 4,953 cases, with 274 deaths. In the same city, 150 chiropractors, including students and faculty of the Palmer School of Chiropractic, treated 1,635 cases with only one death."

So next time you consider getting a flu shot to help keep you healthy, think twice.

Quote of the Week

"It is useless to administer a powder, potion, or pill to the stomach when the body needs an adjustment."

- B.J. Palmer, DC

For more health tips, visit online
www.citruspie.com



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