

# DR. KGB'S HEALTH NEWSLETTER

TOGETHER WE CAN IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF OURSELVES AND OUR COMMUNITY

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## WELCOME *by Dr. KGB*

Welcome to the first edition of Dr. Gibson-Berry's Health Newsletter. I've wanted to do this for a while and hope you enjoy and benefit from it. I also want to invite you to participate in helping me make this letter interesting, fun and useful for everyone.

For the *Health in the News* section, I will present one or two of the latest, hot-off-the-press, and pertinent medical stories in the recent news. I thought about doing the "Pregnant Man" story for this first issue, but thought that might be a little too sensational. ☺ The *Medicine Alert* section will bring you the latest information about medicine - including prescription, over-the-counter, and herbal products - with a focus on interactions, recent new warnings, and things that are being pulled off the market.

I have also included sections called *Ask the Doctor, Patient Tips, Inspiration Alley, New Additions, and Memory Lane*. These are specifically for you, the patients, to contribute in various ways that will benefit us all. See those sections for descriptions of what will be included in them.

*Healthy Living* will be about just that - simple tips how we can all improve various aspects of our lives. I may add other sections in the future and welcome your comments and suggestions. I hope that many of you will participate to make this newsletter beneficial and fun for all.

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## FAST FACTS

### *Did you know that...*

A person who is "pre-diabetic" can reduce their risk of developing diabetes by losing only 7-10% of their current body weight.

A recent study showed that sleep deprivation in healthy young adults (of 4 hours of sleep per night for 5 nights) induced a state of insulin resistance or prediabetes.

An estimated 70% of adults have a problem with sleep at some point in their lives and there are over 80 different sleep disorders.

**NOTE:** My new practice information and website are listed at the top of this page - starting July 1<sup>st</sup>.

## HEALTH IN THE NEWS

*From CNN.com/health*

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### *FDA: Same Salmonella strain in recalled cereal sickens 23 people*

**MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota (AP)** -- At least 23 people in 14 states have been sickened by the same strain of salmonella found in two breakfast cereals recalled by Malt-O-Meal, the federal Food and Drug Administration said Saturday.

Officials in Minnesota are investigating whether a case in that state might be linked to the cereals produced by the Minneapolis-based company, the state health department said.

Malt-O-Meal voluntarily recalled its unsweetened Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat cereals April 5 after finding salmonella contamination during routine testing. The affected bags were produced in the past 12 months in Northfield, Minnesota.

"The Malt-O-Meal company has been extremely cooperative in this investigation and has done the right thing to protect the public's health," Heidi Kassenborg, director of the dairy and food inspection division at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, said in a statement.

Three people have been hospitalized, but no deaths have been reported, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Symptoms of salmonella infection include nausea, vomiting, fever, diarrhea and

abdominal cramps. It can be life threatening. The FDA said people who experience such symptoms after eating a puffed wheat or puffed rice cereal made by Malt-O-Meal should contact their doctors and report the illness to state or local health authorities.

The FDA said the recalled products were distributed nationally under the Malt-O-Meal brand name, as well as private labels including Acme, America's Choice, Food Club, Giant, Hannaford, Jewel, Laura Lynn, Pathmark, Shaw's, ShopRite, Tops and Weis Quality. The cereal bags have "best if used by" dates from April 8, 2008 (coded as APR0808), through March 18, 2009 (coded as MAR1809).

Consumers with products from the recalled lots are advised to throw them out, and retailers have been told to remove the cereals from their shelves.

The CDC said that as of Friday it had received reports of 21 people ill with the same salmonella strain in 13 states. California reported 1; Colorado, 1; Delaware, 1; Maine, 3; Massachusetts, 2; Minnesota, 1; North Dakota, 1; New Hampshire, 2; New Jersey, 3; New York, 3; Pennsylvania, 1; Rhode Island, 1; and Vermont, 1.

It wasn't clear Saturday what the 14th state was or whether the two additional cases were from there.

### COMMENTS/QUESTIONS?

I welcome your input - please send your comments, suggestions, or questions by email. Eventually, I will have a box in my new waiting room.

## MEDICINE ALERTS

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**Vytoren** - This medication commonly used to treat high cholesterol levels is a combination of two medications - simvastatin (also known as Zocor) and ezetimibe (also known as Zetia). A recent trial called the ENHANCE study showed that there was no difference in strokes or heart attacks in patients who took the combination medicine versus simvastatin alone. In other words, there weren't any bad outcomes, but it looks like the extra medication is probably not worth the added cost. Plus, simvastatin is generic now, making it considerably less costly than the brand name Zocor or Vytorin for most of you (depending on your insurance, of course).

**Avandia** - A few months ago, this commonly-used medication for diabetes was in the news when a study was published suggesting that it increased the rate of heart attacks in those taking it. However, another study came out around the same time that contradicted the findings in the first study and did not show an increase in heart attacks. This is a very common scenario in medicine where different studies come up with conflicting results.

So what is a person taking this medicine supposed to do? Discuss the pros and cons with your health care provider to determine what the next step should be. Together you may decide that the benefits outweigh the risks or vice versa. ***But whatever you do, do not simply stop taking medication because of something you heard on the news!***

## ASK THE DOCTOR

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If you have a burning health/medical question that you've been pondering but keep forgetting to ask when you come to the office, feel free to submit it and I'll do my best to answer it. Include your name if you would like credit for the question. Email now and we'll have a box in the waiting room in the future.

For example, you might ask, "How does that Metamucil stuff work to lower cholesterol?" And I would say, "Well...I'm SO glad you asked that question. It helps to lower cholesterol by binding to fats and cholesterol in the bowel so that you poop it out rather than absorb it into your system. It also gets rid of cholesterol that you make which is excreted into the bowel in the form of bile (which comes from the liver and helps us digest fat. Instead of reabsorbing it (the body likes to recycle whenever it can), it too is excreted.

Metamucil (or psyllium husk) is simply a form of soluble fiber and should be taken before meals to have the best effect on lowering cholesterol. It also has many other benefits such as keeping us regular (treating both diarrhea and constipation), helping people with sugar issues control their sugar, helping to prevent diverticulosis and colon cancer, as well as assisting in weight loss for some people.

Pretty cool stuff! That's why it's my favorite "medicine" and something we're often trying to get you all to take.

## PATIENT TIPS

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This section is for patient contributions. This can include health tips, interesting medical news that you've heard, or concerns that you have about the health care system. For those of you who enjoy writing, I welcome short articles as well. Sharing ideas and information will help all of us become more informed and (hopefully) healthier!

Oh, and if any of you have any fabulous ideas about how to fix our ailing health care system, those would be great to hear too. If need be, I can add an editorial section for those types of contributions. Additionally, if we come up with some really good ideas, perhaps we can get them organized and take them to Capitol Hill! Now, THAT would be a story worthy of Oprah! ☺

## NEW ADDITIONS

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We want to welcome new babies to the practice and will include this space for the announcements with your permission. Please bring us photos for the board too!

## MEMORY LANE

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Death is an unfortunate part of life and I would like to honor the memory of our loved ones - family and friends - who have passed. Again, with your permission, I will include this information along with a brief description of why they were special to those around them.

## HEALTHY LIVING

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Regular exercise should be a part of all of our lives. The benefits are numerous, including improved heart & lung functioning, a higher lean body mass, improved sleep, and feeling more relaxed. You don't have to go to the gym in a tight leotard or run a marathon to benefit from exercise. But, frequency, intensity, and duration are key.

**Frequency** - the benefits of aerobic activity are cumulative and it needs to be done at least every other day (and preferably every day) in order for it to add up.

**Intensity** - Getting your heart rate up enough so that you are breathing a little harder than normal (around 140 beats per minute) will cause your body to burn more calories even after you are done exercising.

**Duration** - 20 to 30 minutes a day is best, but if this seems overwhelming, then start with 5 or 10 minutes per day and gradually work up to more. You can even do 10 minutes 3 times a day. If you make it a part of your daily routine, then it won't seem like so much of a burden.

## INSPIRATION ALLEY

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All of us have things that we struggle with in our lives such as chronic illness, obesity, depression, and grieving the loss of a loved one. Many face these challenges with courage and determination. I believe that one person's success at overcoming some of these challenges can be an inspiration for us all. With your permission, I would like to share some of these stories. Let me know if you have something you would like to share.