



Moderate Levels of Estradiol Tied to Living Longer

Estradiol levels that are either too low or too high increase mortality risk in men with chronic heart failure, according to a new study published in the influential *Journal of the American Medical Association*.*

More than 500 subjects were followed for three years as investigators examined the relationship between serum levels of estradiol and risk of death among men with systolic chronic heart failure.

Based on estradiol levels, subjects were assigned to one of five categories. Statistical analysis revealed that men with the lowest and the highest levels of estradiol were at increased risk of dying. Moderate levels of estradiol (21.8-30.1 pg/mL) were correlated with living longer.

These findings highlight the importance of optimal hormone levels in the pursuit of longevity.

—Dale Kiefer

* *JAMA*. 2009 May 13;301(18):1892-901.

Ginger Reduces Nausea in Cancer Patients

Daily ginger supplements relieved nausea among cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, according to a study presented at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology.* Nausea and vomiting affect about 70% of patients during chemotherapy.

Cancer patients were enrolled if they had already experienced nausea during chemotherapy and were scheduled to undergo further treatments. Four groups were randomly assigned to take either a placebo or ginger at various doses (0.5, 1.0, or 1.5 g/day), in addition to standard anti-vomiting drugs, beginning before the next chemotherapy cycle. Patients rated their level of nausea on a seven-point scale during days 1-4 of the following cycle.

A total of 644 patients were included, mainly women (90%) with breast cancer (66%). Nausea was significantly decreased by day 1 in all of the ginger groups, especially at the doses of 0.5 and 1.0 g/day. Nausea scores remained markedly higher in the placebo group.

—Laura J. Ninger, ELS

* *J Clin Oncol*. 2009;27(suppl):15s. Abstract 9511.



Diabetic Nerve Damage Tied to High Triglyceride Levels

New evidence suggests that progression of diabetic neuropathy is closely tied to elevated triglyceride levels among diabetics.* Characterized by pain, tingling, and possible loss of function in affected extremities, diabetic neuropathy is a common complication of type 2 diabetes.

Investigators conducted two identical controlled trials in patients suffering from diabetic neuropathy. They examined specific nerves in the lower leg, measuring parameters such as myelinated fiber density and nerve conduction velocity. These parameters were reassessed one year later. Subjects exhibiting further deterioration in nerve function were diagnosed with progressive disease. Comparing baseline health parameters with disease progression, investigators concluded that only baseline triglyceride levels were predictive of progressive diabetic neuropathy.

"These data support the evolving concept that [high blood lipid levels are] instrumental in the progression of diabetic neuropathy," researchers concluded.

—Dale Kiefer

* *Diabetes*. 2009 May 1.



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