



Hands of Health Newsletter

November/December 2004

Hello, again:

Fall has finally arrived in Phoenix! Interesting how quick the transition was from extreme temperatures to “normal” temperatures; seemed like a matter of days. A few days ago I was still running in shorts but on November 1st I had to put on the sweat pants and even then I felt overdressed but I know if I ran in shorts I'd be cold. So better a little warm than a little cold. I could always shed my sweatshirt. SO don't let the weather dictate your exercise program. Stay with it and make the necessary adjustments so you can stay in shape year 'round and not have to feverishly work to shed those extra pounds you may gain from the holiday season and from brushing off your exercise routine because the weather got cold. EXCUSES! Make the effort and your body will thank you for it. The better your health the better the quality of your life. And remember to get in to see me for your massage. Massage is one of the best investments you can make for your health. Massage doesn't cost; it pays. It pays on making you healthy, happier, less stressed and more productive. All leads to a better quality of life. I continue with the theme of your health in this issues' articles, a good diverse election.

BIG BULLY

Republished with permission from www.hsibaltimore.com, Health Sciences Institute e-Alert, July 21, 2004 from NOW.com

Only a very small percentage of adults in the U.S. are doing enough to keep their muscles strong, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This is a critical lapse for many reasons, but here are two good ones: 1) The moderate amount of exercise required to maintain muscles will yield other important health benefits. And 2) Keeping muscles strong is relatively easy.

And now it may be even easier. According to a new study that appears in a recent issue of the journal *Nutrition*, key nutrients have been shown to help develop muscle mass and support physical functioning as we age.

Getting a grip

Because age-related muscle loss is associated with osteoporosis and an increased risk of falls, researchers at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center wanted to find out if an intake of three nutrients might provide a simple way to help prevent muscle loss.

The Vanderbilt researchers recruited a group of 50 women whose average age was about 77. Over a 12-week period, a “treatment group” of 27 women received a daily supplement containing 1.5 grams of lysine, 2 grams of beta-hydroxy-beta-methylbutyrate, and 5 grams of arginine. (I'll tell you more about these three nutrients in a moment.) A second group of 23 women received a placebo.

Before and after the trial period, several measurements were taken to determine potential changes in muscle mass:

- Whole-body protein synthesis and loss (estimated with a specially designed blood test)
- Limb, hip and abdomen circumference
- Leg and handgrip strength
- Physical functionality
- Levels of hormones that affect proteins
- Percentage of lean body mass and body fat.

The hormone levels of both groups remained the same, but the treatment group improved in all other categories compared to the placebo group. The treatment group also had a significant increase in the average circumference of limbs, and their protein synthesis increased approximately 20 percent, compared to placebo subjects.

Researchers concluded that a daily supplement of these three nutrients may play an important role in muscle health, while improving functionality protein synthesis and strength in older women.

The multi-tasker

According to Healthnotes Newswire, the average person over the age of 70 may experience muscle loss as high as 15 percent per decade. So a 12-week trial can't begin to show an accurate picture of the long-term benefits of these nutrients. Nevertheless, the results of the Vanderbilt research provide a basis to consider supplementing with the nutrients studied, especially for older people who may be incapacitated in some way that prohibits exercise.

In the e-Alert “Five Stars” (8/26/03), I told you about arginine (also known as L-arginine), which is a remarkable amino acid, known to play a role in blood vessel dilation, reduction of inflammation, repair of skin and connective

tissue, and thymus gland regulation. Arginine has also been shown to facilitate muscle metabolism by reducing body fat while increasing muscle mass.

Dietary sources of arginine include dairy products, meat, poultry and fish, as well as nuts, rice, whole-wheat, soy and raisins.

Plus two...

In the Health e-Tips e-letter “Keeping Your Extra Parts” (5/13/04), Amanda Ross explained that lysine - an essential amino acid - has been used to increase calcium absorption and may help prevent osteoporosis. In supplement form, high doses of lysine may raise cholesterol levels and increase the risk of gallstones, so lysine supplementation should be monitored by a nutritionally oriented physician. Dietary sources of lysine include meat, fish, dairy products, legumes and brewer's yeast.

The third nutrient in the Vanderbilt study is beta-hydroxy-beta-methylbutyrate (HMB), a derivative of the amino acid leucine. HMB is not widely studied in humans, but animal tests show that it may improve the growth of lean muscle tissue by slowing protein breakdown. The dietary sources of HMB are limited to small amounts in citrus fruits, catfish and alfalfa.

Up off the duff

So... let's say you check with your doctor about these three nutrients, he gives you the green light to monitor supplementation, and in time they begin strengthening your muscles. That's great. But for older people who are able, exercise is still the most effective way to support muscle strength. And more specifically, exercise that incorporates weight training or resistance training will yield the best results, including:

- Reducing the risk of falls and fractures
- Increasing endurance
- Promoting healthy bone density
- Improving insulin sensitivity

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) has published a free guidebook for starting an exercise program, which is available on their web site: nia.nih.gov/exercisebook. The book provides a section on diet advice that offers the outdated and misguided USDA food pyramid as a dietary guideline, but other than that, you'll find useful tips for starting and staying with a strength exercise regimen.

Sources:

“Effect of Beta-Hydroxy-Beta-Methylbutyrate, Arginine, and Lysine Supplementation on Strength, Functionality, Body Composition, and Protein Metabolism in Elderly Women” *Nutrition*, Vol. 20, No. 5, May 2004, ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

“Battle Age-Related Muscle Loss with Amino Acid Combination” Kimberly Beauchamp, ND, Healthnotes Newswire, 2/24/04, pcnaturalmarkets.com

“Strength Training Among Adults Aged >65 Years” *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Vol. 43, No. 2, 1/23/04, cdc.gov

“Strength Training Urged for Elderly” Merritt McKinney, Reuters Health, 1/23/04, story.news.yahoo.com

“Growing Older, Staying Strong: Preventing Sarcopenia Through Strength Training” *International Longevity Center - USA*, Issue Brief, September-October, 2003, ilcusa.org

CIGARETTES TEN TIMES MORE POLLUTING THAN CARS

Reprinted with permission from www.healthandage.com, August 25, 2004, reported by Susan Aldridge, Ph.D., medical journalist

An experiment shows that filter cigarettes emit ten times more particulate pollution than diesel car exhaust. Particulate pollution is actually one of the more harmful elements of smoke as far as health is concerned. New engine models and lead free fuels have reduced the amount of particulate matter emitted from cars. There have been no such advances when it comes to cigarettes.

A team from the Tobacco Control Unit, National Cancer Institute, Milan, Italy, set up an experiment in a private garage in a small mountain town in northern Italy. A turbo diesel two liter engine was left running for 30 minutes with the doors closed and then the doors were opened for two hours. Then three filter cigarettes were lit sequentially and left to smolder for 30 minutes.

Levels of particulates in the first hour after the engine had been started reached 88 micrograms per cubic meter. In the first hour after the cigarettes were lit, they reached 830 micrograms per cubic meter - nearly ten times higher. Outdoors, the diesel engine fumes doubled particulate matter while the tobacco smoke increased it by a factor of 15. Clearly cigarettes can be a far more potent source of pollution than car exhaust.

Source: Tobacco Control August 2004 Volume 13 pages 219-220

As I mentioned before, the quality of your health will determine the quality of your life. And with the holidays coming up the gift of a massage, a gift of health, is a great way to show those who are important to you how much you care whether it's for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Chanukah, for a business associate, customer, client, or family member or for a birthday, award, anniversary or just to show your appreciation, you'll do right with the gift of massage. So let me know how many gift certificates you need. Have a safe and festive holiday season and a happy, safe, New Year and I'll be back in January.



THE BENEFITS OF WALKING

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF WALKING:

What Goes Up:

Muscle Tone
Strength
Mood
Energy
Self-Esteem

What Goes Down:

Weight
Blood Pressure
Risk of Heart Disease
Stress
Body Fat

FUN WAYS TO TAKE EXTRA STEPS:

1. Choose a parking spot at the far end of the lot.
2. Sign up for a weekend charity walk.
3. Listen to your favorite songs while walking.
4. Tour the open houses in your neighborhood.
5. Volunteer to walk dogs at an animal shelter.

WALKING STATS

Roughly 2,000 steps - 1 mile • Walking is the world's most popular exercise - and it's free. • One city block = around 200 steps • You can take about 1,200 steps in only 10 minutes. • Walking uses nearly 200 muscles. • The simplest way to burn more calories is to walk more.

Stay healthy, stay well,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to Susan Aldridge.

I Love Referrals!!!

Ask me about earning FREE MASSAGES for referrals.