

News About NIH-funded Research Advances from the Nation's Medical Schools and Teaching Hospitals

June 2007

Male estrogen levels can increase osteoporosis risk

New research from **Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine** shows that low amounts of estrogen in men can increase their osteoporosis risk. Although women are four times more likely than men to develop osteoporosis, or degenerative joint disease, one in 12 men also suffer from the disease. The underlying causes of osteoporosis are numerous, but in women, low estrogen levels after menopause have been considered an important factor.

<http://mednews.wustl.edu/tips/page/normal/9425.html>

Newly discovered cell receptor could help treat rheumatoid arthritis

Rheumatology researchers affiliated with the **University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine** have discovered that a cell receptor sends a signal to inhibit the immune system. Controlling those signals could potentially protect transplant patients from rejection episodes or could relieve symptoms of autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. The CR3 receptor, found on cell surfaces, suppresses dendritic cells, the sentinels of the immune system, from setting off an alarm signal that brings on a full immune response.

http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/micro_stories.pl?ACCT=159681&TICK=CHOP&STORY=/www/story/05-15-2007/0004589272&EDATE=May+15,+2007

Banned drug may not be associated with bone breaks

New data from **Harvard Medical School** indicates that the sedative benzodiazepine, contrary to previous research, may not be associated with hip fractures after all. Previous epidemiological studies suggested the drug increased the risk of falling among the elderly, and led to a variety of state and federal regulations on benzodiazepine, including its current exclusion from coverage through the Medicare Part D drug benefit. Researchers say those policies may now need to be reexamined.

http://web.med.harvard.edu/sites/RELEASES/html/1_15Wagner.html

Vitamin D potentially a factor in more than just bone health

Older adults who don't get enough vitamin D may be at increased risk not only for poor bone health, but possibly also for diabetes, cancer, colds, and tuberculosis. Investigators at **Wake Forest University School of Medicine** have found that older adults are particularly prone to low vitamin D levels because they may get less exposure to sunlight and because their skin is less efficient in producing vitamin D from sun exposure compared to younger adults.

<http://www1.wfubmc.edu/News/NewsArticle.htm?ArticleID=2063>

Thinking about the past biologically affects how we think in the present

Thoughts of "what might have been" play an active biological role in shaping future decision making, new research from **Baylor College**

Next FTP Briefing

Join us for the next Fulfilling the Promise (FTP) Capitol Hill briefing, "Innovative Approaches to Osteoarthritis," on **Monday, July 16, 4-5 p.m. in the Cannon House Office Building, room 121.**

Featured speakers will include:

Stephen I. Katz, M.D., Ph.D., director of the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases at the National Institutes of Health.

Farshid Guilak, Ph.D., director of the Orthopaedic Bioengineering Laboratory and Orthopaedic Research Laboratories at Duke University Medical Center.

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[Advancing the Fight Against Cancer](#) (PDF, 5 pages)

[Making Inroads into Alzheimer's Disease](#) (PDF, 3 pages)

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"Fulfilling the Promise" is a special AAMC initiative highlighting the collaboration

of Medicine shows. Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to measure blood flow changes in specific areas of the brain, researchers measured the brain's response to "what could have been acquired" versus "what was acquired." The former, also known as fictive learning, was measured and found to distinctly affect the brains of the subjects and played an important role in computation and planning operations.

<http://www.bcm.edu/news/item.cfm?newsID=886>

New vitamin could hold anti-aging properties

Researchers at **Dartmouth Medical School** found that a new vitamin extends lifespan in yeast cells and could pave the way for developing anti-aging supplements for humans. The vitamin, a naturally occurring cousin of niacin termed nicotinamide riboside or NR, activated the yeast's anti-aging gene product called Sir2, which resembles human anti-aging mechanisms called sirtuins.

http://dms.dartmouth.edu/news/2007_h1/03may2007_brenner.shtml

between the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and academic medicine. As research engines of the U.S. health system, the nation's medical schools and major teaching hospitals are awarded more than half of all NIH grants to scientists through its extramural research program.

www.aamc.org/ftp

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