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## EAGLE FEATHER RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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Welcome, Willkommen, Bienvenue, Bienvenidos, Benvenuto. In past issues of our newsletter, we have dealt with the issues related to processed white sugar in addition to artificial sugar substitutes and problems therein. We would like to bring you up to date on sugar substitutes. While many places still use saccharin (Sweet and Low), Aspartame (Equal or NutraSweet), there are far better choices in the market that do not put you at a health risk. We refer to *Splenda*, *Xagave*, and sweeteners based on a sugar alcohol based products (Erythritol) like *ZSweet* and *Zerose* plus sweeteners from *Stevia* (*PureVia* and *Truvia*). To help you make a better choice we offer the following breakdown:

***Splenda*** : Made from sugar cane, has no calories but will raise your blood sugar levels.

***Erythritol*** based products: *ZSweet* and *Zerose* are labels that contain Erythritol which is a sugar alcohol that is made from sugar. Unlike other sugar alcohols used in dietetic foods such as sorbitol, maltitol and xylitol, erythritol does not lead to gassiness, bloating or a laxative effect. While it is calorie free it is not as sweet as table sugar (60-70% less).

***Agave***: *Xagave* is made from the agave plant native to Mexico and sold in syrup form. Unlike *Splenda* and *Stevia* it contains more calories than sugar itself (56 calories per tablespoon). It is however sweeter than sugar and it is less likely to lead to erratic blood sugar levels. However, if you have irritable bowel syndrome or heart disease, you may be better off with stevia.

***Stevia***: Banned by FDA for decades as a result of power politics from the special interests sugar based companies, Stevia has for some time been marketed as a dietary supplement relegated to health food stores where it was sold as a stand-alone sugar substitute. The good news is that the FDA has finally approved its use in food.

Currently, you have to get it with health food grocers. There are many companies that are promoting it. In packets you can get it as Truvia, PureVia, Stevita etc. Unless you are getting the pure extract, these products have other sweeteners as fillers such as erythritol, and maltodextrin. These may produce an aftertaste that departs from what you are used to with table sugar. We recommend getting an **extract only** Stevia product. This does not seem to have any aftertaste largely because of its purity; it is 300 times sweeter than sugar. You can get it in liquid or powder form. If you get it in powder form you have to use a minute amount which calls for a very special measuring spoon. Even the smallest commercial one eighth of a table spoon is too much for a glass of freshly squeezed lemonade. In fact you would have to use only a quarter of that one eighth of a tablespoon. There are minute measuring spoons that pharmacists use that would be more appropriate. Look for them in a medical supply outlet. Because it can go a long way, you will note that you will initially pay more at the beginning. In the end it will even out because a pound may last you more than a year. (For the latter, the internet has bulk sales for these products e.g. the label *Now* has a pound for some \$45.00. Remember, this will last you more than a year and it will not raise your blood sugar levels, is calorie free, natural and naturally sweet. When Stevia will finally be used in the future with candy, cookies, doughnuts, sodas, baking mixes, it will bring down the alarming increase in diabetes, obesity and behavioral problems due to the altering effect of processed white sugar and or sugar corn syrup used indiscriminately in the food chain.

In addition to food addictions among the populace, there are the smoking addictions. While there are no longer Malboro commercials or Hollywood actors that smoke cigarettes on screen, this does not seem to be the case with cigars. There is an erroneous perception that cigars are cool, often helped by pictures of elegant men in tuxedos or famous women like Demi Moore and Madonna. It has shown up in films like *Iron Man The Dark Knight*, *Quantum of Solace*. and *Wolverine*. *The American Cancer Society* notes that they are particularly popular with adolescents and young adults. While cigar smokers do not inhale “all the way,” smoking cigars are linked to cancers that develop along the route that the smoke travels—from the lip to the tongue and through the mouth and throat to the lungs. Smoking cigars has been shown to increase the risk of pancreatic and bladder cancer as well as heart and lung disease. Secondhand cigar smoke poses an even greater danger than cigarettes. They contain more tobacco, more nicotine, and more toxic chemicals. *A Journal of Exposure Analysis and Environmental Epidemiology* study found higher levels of the toxin carbon monoxide at two cigar social events in San Francisco than on a busy California freeway. Finally, a large cigar contains 23 times more nicotine than a cigarette and is absorbed through the lining of the mouth as opposed to the lungs.

**Acid Reflux** If you have been diagnosed with acid reflux (a trendy term invented by medical folks), you will probably be prescribed a set of drugs known as proton pump inhibitors (Nexium, Prilosec and Prevacid). A new study from *The Journal of the American Medical Association* now shows that patients that take these drugs are at a

higher risk for pneumonia than those that do not take these drugs (30% higher). An estimated 40 to 70 percent of inpatients receive acid suppressive drugs during a hospital stay. It is thought that these drugs might promote the growth of different types of bacteria in the upper gastrointestinal and respiratory tract and that bacteria might be responsible for pneumonia. Another explanation is that acid stimulates coughing and coughing less helps in the promotion of pneumonia. On a personal note, a female member of the family diagnosed for years with acid reflux took a natural approach to eliminating the problem. A diet was constructed that included eliminating meats, breads (gluten), starches, dairy products and raw fruit. It consisted largely of organic steamed vegetables and brown rice (no beans) supplemented with Ginger tablets, digestive enzymes and apple cider vinegar. For drinks, green tea (or Jasmine) and soymilk with an occasional sugar free soft drink (with Splenda) completed the diet. (One should also make certain that there are no emotional or mental issues associated with the person in question). Within a week or two, the acid reflux diminished and in six weeks it was gone. It has been a year or two since and there have been no recurrences. Now, the daily routine includes the elimination of processed foods, cooking with virgin olive oil and organic foods, occasionally eating only whole multi-grain bread. This diet consists of 80% fruit and vegetables and 20% fish and natural white meats with occasional natural soft low fat cheese, organic cereals, egg beaters and natural herbal teas (hot or cold) or one soft drink sweetened with Splenda per day. Supplements continue with ginger, digestive enzymes, COQ10, joint formula for women, resveratrol and a multivitamin for women. Juices are from frozen concentrate (orange, grapefruit, cranberry). Smoothies are made with fruit (banana, strawberries or pineapple), vanilla soymilk, dip of ice cream (carb free, low fat ice cream sweetened with Splenda), with spirulina and crushed ice. (a natural delight).

**Bio-fuel of the future:** While Solar and Wind energy are sure future entries; algae will replace corn as a bio-fuel. Why? We should not be using food sources for fuel. We have a hunger problem worldwide. Besides, algae reproduce at a rate of 6 to 7 times the amount as any other plant. Exxon has just recently made a sizable research investment in the use of Algae as a bio-fuel.

Happy and Insightful Reading,

Arnoldo Carlos Vento, Ph.D