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EAGLE FEATHER RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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Welcome, Willkommen, Bienvenue, Bienvenidos, Benvenuto. Welcome to our April issue of our newsletter in which we cover cultural, environmental, medical and national issues.

LINK: INFLAMMATION, DISEASE AND IMMUNE SYSTEM

Inflammation is one of many new topics of medical research. While it is not the cause but the effect, it is the age-old immunological defense mechanism that causes the area of tissue of an injury to become red, hot and swollen. It can also fend off various disease-causing bacteria, viruses and parasites, subsiding after healing has begun. Poor dietary and lifestyle factors promote chronic inflammation. Free radicals or reactive oxygen species are unstable particles which damage cells or increase the “oxidative” stress in the body. While anti-oxidants can fight off free radicals, when chronic inflammation sets in, it is essential to break the cycle of damage by lowering factors which promote inflammation and by boosting our anti-oxidant status through dietary and lifestyle changes. The following factors are important to note in achieving good health:

- A poor diet can create micro-nutrient deficiencies. Type B malnutrition is common in Western nations. This is a diet high in calories but deficient in nutrients, resulting in obesity and poor health. Micro-nutrient deficiencies make us more susceptible to low grade infections such as helicobacter pylori (cause of stomach ulcers), gum disease, recurrent urinary tract infections and Chlamydia. All low grade infections can bring about a chronic inflammation in the body.
- Poor intestinal health. The immune system in the intestinal tract is one of the most important first lines of defense against the outside world. It contains billions of good bacteria that promote good immunity and good digestion assisting in good absorption of nutrients. However, if there is an over-growth of bad bacteria, these produce toxins, triggering a systematic low grade inflammation throughout the body’s immune system. One of the symptoms is food intolerances. A diet low in fiber and high in saturated fat and sugar promotes intestinal dysbiosis (bad bacteria and toxins).
- Stress causes inflammation in your intestinal health making it more susceptible to chronic low grade infections, lowering the immunity to bacteria, viruses, parasites etc. It

can also reduce cortisol hormone levels if the adrenals are exhausted, which is a natural anti-inflammatory hormone.

- Obesity. Fat cells behave like immune cells sending messages to increase the inflammatory immune response. Thus, a sedentary lifestyle and a diet high in fat and sugar promote inflammation.
- Avoid excessive sunlight that brings about the same condition since sunburn is free radical stress. A measured amount of sunlight is beneficial.
- Avoid a diet deficient in anti-oxidants that contributes to the effects of inflammation. (anti-oxidants are found in most fruit, vegetables, cacao, green tea etc.)
- Avoid excessive exercise since the process of energy production produces free radicals as a by product. A measured amount (20-40 min daily) is beneficial.
- Avoid trans and hydrogenated fats that are made by processed, over-heated vegetable oils. These are also found in processed and refined foods as well as fried foods. Read the labels for “hydrogenated” oils.
- Avoid environmental pollution such as pesticides in conventional vegetables and fruits, radiation from your computer, microwave etc, heavy metals including toxic chemicals from exhaust fumes, appliances, HD TV’s , paints, glues and construction materials. Inform yourself. Google it.

FEDERAL CONTRACTORS: ABUSE AND WASTE

Each year \$530 billion are awarded to private companies ranging from landscaping to war-zone security. But a recent report reveals that the system designed to monitor the contractor’s performance has failed to keep tabs on those with histories of misconduct. According to the *Government Accountability Office* (GAO) part of the problem lies with the inadequate number of assessments made; less than one third of the 23,000 contracts were surveyed. Many of the contractors have a history of defaulting and yet are on the payroll. Such was the case with one who defaulted on a \$280 million munitions contract. As many as 8 contractors who had previously defaulted were awarded contracts on the reconstruction of Iraq. Clearly there is inefficiency in the collection and sharing of performance data. Many to be sure, are politically based and are at the expense of the taxpayer.

CLIMATE CHANGE: FACT OR FICTION?

In 1997, the world community received its first warning of global warming via international agreement to fight global warming. Since, climate change has worsened beyond some of the grimmest aforementioned warnings. A decade of discussion by politicians and industrial spokespersons has passed amidst the changes that are visible as new ship passages have opened through the once frozen summer sea ice of Antarctica. In Greenland and Antarctica, ice sheets have lost trillions of tons of ice. Mountain glaciers in Europe, South America, Asia and Africa are shrinking faster than ever before. Climate change affects the eco-system globally impacting the oceans and the species. This is not just about a change in temperature; this is the effect not the cause. The cause is trillions of tons of CO₂, methane and other toxic chemicals that are disrupting the natural balance of the eco-system. While politicians argue about the economy and profit, the world’s oceans have risen by about an inch and a half. Species are in peril: the polar bear, fragile butterflies, frogs, bees and the entire stands of North American pine forests. Temperatures have risen four tenths of a degree in the last 12 years alone. Since, carbon dioxide in the air has increased 6.5 percent. Carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels have increased by 31 percent. U.S. emissions of the greenhouse

gas rose 3.7 percent. Emissions from China, now the biggest polluter (aside from the U.S.), have more than doubled. The research data is indisputable. As far back as the 1950s, American geophysicist Charles David Keeling found that every year the carbon dioxide was rising—going from 311 to 314 ppm during 1957-1958. A French-Soviet team took core samples from Antarctica measuring the carbon dioxide in the bubbles showing pre-industrial carbon dioxide at 290 parts per million. It is now at 389 part per million. Atmospheric physicist Peter Pilewskie from the University of Colorado states “What cannot be denied is that there has been an increase in CO₂ and this increases the infrared opacity of the atmosphere and therefore increases the atmospheric greenhouse effect.” The threat to the oceans has scientists very concerned. The oceans are getting more acidic because more of the carbon dioxide in the air is being absorbed into the water. Acidification was not even a topic for discussion a few years ago. Biologists now realize that more acidic water harms the coral, oysters and plankton and ultimately threatens the ocean food chain. The accord on global warming reached at Copenhagen was not binding as the major industrial nations sought to protect their economies as they continue to pollute the atmosphere. Without some serious and drastic changes, carbon dioxide will almost certainly double before the end of the 21st century and temperatures are predicted to rise from 2 to 4.5 degrees Celsius.

CENSUS: SOME FACTS

There are some surprising facts in the last census among them are women who now make up the majority among new recipients of Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees. In fact, for the first time, women have pulled even with men among recipients of doctoral degrees. Additionally, they are making more money than their spouses. Other facts reveal the following:

- One in 10 male students carried a weapon to school.
- About 3 in 10 people wed in the 1990’s did not last together 10 years.
- While retail sales declined, purchase of lottery tickets increased.
- More adults play video games than take education courses.
- While abortion rates keep declining, 1 in 3 births is to an unwed mother.
- More Americans spend time hunting with firearms than playing baseball.
- Text messages have increased in one year, from 46 billion to 110 billion.
- Mail delivered by the Postal Service has declined to the lowest in a decade
- Daily newspapers have declined. (Due to the digital information network.)

LATINOS: OBSTACLES TO EDUCATION

Ironically Latinos believe education and hard work is a key to a successful future but they are more likely to drop out of school and live in poverty according to a *Pew Hispanic Center* study. Latinos make up 18% of all young people in the nation, the largest share of the youngest Americans. About 25% of all Latinas have a child by age 19, a rate higher than whites, Asians and Blacks. In terms of the drop out rate, 17% of Latinos drop out of school—nearly double the rate of Blacks. And about 23% live in poverty—higher than whites but lower than Blacks. There is a difference however, between the first generation Latinos and those born in the U.S. Those born in the U.S. are less likely to leave high school as opposed to the first generation. The U.S. born is less likely than foreign born young Latinos to be employed in low-skilled jobs. They are also less likely to live in poverty. What is apparent likewise is that students who receive a private or religious school education are more likely to go to college.

DID YOU KNOW....?

- Until the 1830's, Americans did not eat tomatoes. Incredibly, they thought this Native American vegetable to be poisonous. They used them only for decorations, known as "love apples".
- During the first five years of the XX century, a Negro was lynched almost every day; Mexicans in the Southwest suffered a similar fate.
- By 1900 the problem in the cities was pollution with some 3 million horses dumping 25 lbs of manure in the streets daily. The stench, swarm of flies and pungent urine odors permeated throughout. When it rained it became a muddy manure mush. People rejoiced with the advent of the horseless carriage which ironically was to pollute the atmosphere for future generations.
- Benjamin Franklin was opposed to the bald eagle as a national symbol. He referred to the bird as one with "bad moral character." His choice was the turkey as the national symbol.
- Even though the *Mayflower Compact* continues to be thought of as the cornerstone of democracy and self government in America, the *Compact* was specifically designed to curb freedom, not promote it. The Pilgrim Governor wrote that its purpose was to control renegades aboard the *Mayflower* who threatened to go their own independent way once on land. The *Compact* forbade such action and required "all due submission and obedience." While there is mention of majority rule, they had no intention of turning it over to the people; it was to be ruled by the elite. Another association by Americans is freedom of religion but this was restricted to only their brand of religion. Religious persecution against Catholics, Jews and other sects is well documented in Colonial America.

Happy and Insightful Reading,

Arnoldo Carlos Vento, Ph.D