

Recent Health Issues

Soy may improve survival rates in some breast cancer patients

Published date: March 7, 2017

Some studies have linked the consumption of soy products with breast cancer. The findings have been mixed, but new research aims to settle the controversy. Soy is found to be safe and potentially even beneficial for women with a certain type of breast cancer.

Ref: medicalnewstoday.com

Mom's vitamin E head off child's asthma risk

Published date: March 4, 2017

Kids born from moms with low levels of vitamin E might be more likely to develop asthma, new research suggests. When moms had low levels of a specific type of vitamin E measured right after birth, their children were more likely to develop wheezing and to have been treated with asthma medications in their first two years of life, the study found.

Ref: nbcnews.com/health

Excess brain fluid may predict autism in high-risk babies

Published date: March 7, 2017

Parents of children with autism take note. It may be possible to predict autism in infants as young as 6 months who have older siblings with the disorder, according to a new study by a national network of researchers. Infants in such families are at increased risk of developing autism, which is typically diagnosed when a child is 2- to 3-years-old and develops symptoms such as challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, delayed speech or nonverbal communication.

Ref: nbcnews.com/health

Patients often reject drug-only psych treatment

Published date: March 6, 2017

Mental health patients are more likely to reject treatment if it involves only drugs, a new study finds.

Ref: webmd.com

Social media can leave you socially isolated

Published date: March 6, 2017

Young people who spend a lot of time on social media websites designed to bring people together seem to be more isolated, new research suggests.

Ref: webmd.com

DNA scan uncovers 18 genes newly associated with autism

Published date: March 6 2017

A new genetic analysis of people with autism and their relatives has uncovered 18 genes associated with the disorder. People with autism often had dozens of mutations that may have caused their symptoms an average of 73 unique mutations, the team at Autism Speaks found.

Ref: nbcnews.com/health

Obesity may raise girls' risk of asthma, allergies

Published date: March 6, 2017

Obese girls may face a significantly higher risk for developing allergies, a new study suggests. But the researchers found the opposite was true for obese boys: They may actually face a slightly diminished risk for asthma, food allergies and eczema when compared to normal-weight boys.

Ref: webmd.com

Polluted environments kill 1.7m kids yearly: WHO

Published date: March 6, 2017

Unhealthy and polluted environments cause more than 1 in 4 deaths of children younger than age 5 worldwide, the World Health Organization says. Environmental factors such as indoor and outdoor air pollution, secondhand smoke, unsafe water, lack of sanitation, and poor hygiene kill 1.7 million children a year, according to two new WHO reports.

Ref: webmd.com

Nasal 'Nerve Block' may help ease kids' migraines

Published date: March 5, 2017

Kids and teens who suffer with migraines may find relief from a nasal "nerve block" that's commonly used in adults with the debilitating headaches, a new study suggests.

Ref: webmd.com

Asthma much more lethal for black children, study finds

Published date: March 4, 2017

Asthma attacks can prove deadly to kids, but a new study shows that black American children are six times more likely to die of the illness than their white or Hispanic peers.

Ref: webmd.com

CDC concerned by H7N9 bird flu's sudden spread in China

Published date: March 3, 2017

A sudden surge in cases of H7N9 bird flu in China is a "cause for concern," the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday. It's infected 460 people just since October, the CDC said in a report.

Ref: nbcnews.com/health

Risk of birth defects from Zika 20 times higher

Published date: March 2, 2017

Pregnant women infected with the Zika virus are 20 times more likely to have a baby born with certain birth defects as mothers who gave birth before the Zika epidemic began, U.S. health officials reported Thursday.

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FDA Approved Recent Pharma News

Sodium oxybate oral solution generic with a REMS program

January 18, 2017

The FDA has approved the first generic version of Sodium oxybate oral solution, to treat cataplexy and excessive daytime sleepiness in patients with narcolepsy, which is a potentially debilitating disease. Cataplexy is a primary symptom of narcolepsy where patients suddenly lose muscle tone, including voluntary muscle control, while awake.

Plecanatide approved for chronic constipation

January 20, 2017

Plecanatide has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat persistent constipation of unknown (idiopathic) cause in adults.

New parkinson's drug may combat movement difficulties

January 4, 2017

New research suggests that people with Parkinson's disease may achieve better and more reliable motor control by taking an experimental drug called opicapone alongside the standard medication levodopa.

Metformin still best as first type 2 diabetes treatment

January 3, 2017

Newly updated guidelines reaffirm that metformin is the first-line drug for people with type 2 diabetes, and that several other medications including newer ones can be added if needed.

Researchers develop potential oral treatment for hemophilia

December 29, 2016

People with hemophilia have to endure painful injections every few days to stay alive, but a newly developed treatment may one day offer a simpler, cheaper and less painful alternative.

www.drugs.com

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FDA Alert

General anesthetic and sedation drugs: drug safety communication - new warnings for young children and pregnant women

December 14, 2016

FDA is warning that repeated or lengthy use of general anesthetic and sedation drugs during surgeries or procedures in children younger than 3 years or in pregnant women during their third trimester may affect the development of children's brains.

Varenicline and bupropion: drug safety communication - mental health side effects revised

December 16, 2016

FDA review of a large clinical trial that FDA required the drug companies to conduct, FDA determined the risk of serious side effects on mood, behavior, or thinking with the stop-smoking medicines Varenicline and Bupropion is lower than previously suspected. The risk of these mental health side effects is still present, especially in those currently being treated for mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety disorders, or schizophrenia, or who have been treated for mental illnesses in the past.

Pioglitazone-containing medicines: drug safety communication - updated fda review, increased risk of bladder cancer

December 12, 2016

FDA has concluded that use of the type 2 diabetes medicine pioglitazone may be linked to an increased risk of bladder cancer. The labels of pioglitazone-containing medicines already contain warnings about this risk, and FDA has approved label updates to describe the additional studies reviewed.

www.drugs.com

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Herbal and Alternative Medicine News

Natural remedies for a sore throat

Dr. Michelle Schoffro Cook, PhD, DNM is the publisher of the free e-news

March 2, 2017

Thyme: The herb thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*) is perhaps the best natural remedy for sore throats, particularly when it is mixed with some raw, unpasteurized honey. But, even vegans can benefit from thyme's natural throat-soothing and anti-microbial properties. Natural compounds known as flavonoids have been linked to thyme's natural cough suppressant and anti-inflammatory effects. To make a sore throat-eliminating tea, add two teaspoons of crushed fresh or dried thyme leaves to one cup of boiled water. Let steep for 10 to 15 minutes, strain and drink three times daily.

Oregano oil: The oil extracted from the herb oregano (*Origanum vulgare*) is highly anti-infectious, and unlike antibiotics that only work on bacterial infections, oregano oil works against both bacterial and viral infections alike, making it perfect for sore throats of a viral nature or those that are the result of Streptococcus bacteria (think strep throat). In a study published in *Biomed Research International*, researchers found that both thyme and oregano had significant antibacterial activity against both gram positive and gram negative bacteria linked to sore throats. Both the alcohol extracts known as tinctures and the essential oil of the oregano plant is highly antiseptic.

Melissa: The herb lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*) is a potent natural antiviral remedy backed by research. In a recent study against the bird flu virus H9N2 researchers found that the herb prevented the virus from replicating, which is how the virus spreads and infects people or birds. In this study researchers obtained the antiviral effects from the essential oil of the plant but results can likely be obtained with an herbal infusion (tea), tincture, or essential oil. Make a tea from 1 teaspoon of dried herb per cup of boiled water. Allow to steep for 10 to 15 minutes, strain and drink three times daily.

Herbal medications are safe or effective to treat heart conditions

Mary Elizabeth Dallas

February 27, 2017 (HealthDay News)

While there's scant evidence that herbal medications are safe or effective to treat heart conditions, they remain popular among people with heart disease, a new review suggests. While popular among patients, they haven't been proven safe or effective in clinical trials, study says

www.digherbs.com

Low-cost vegetable oils used to adulterate saw palmetto extracts

February 1, 2017

The ABC-AHP-NCNPR Botanical Adulterants Program announces the publication of a new Botanical Adulterants Bulletin (BAB) on saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) berry and berry extracts. Saw palmetto extract is a popular ingredient in dietary supplements used for normalizing prostate function and relieving lower urinary tract symptoms (e.g., inability to void urine) related to benign prostatic hyperplasia.

Bulletin summarizes data on adulteration of St. John's Wort extracts with food dyes and/or extracts from other *Hypericum* species

January 9, 2017

The ABC-AHP-NCNPR Botanical Adulterants Program announces the publication of a new Botanical Adulterants Bulletin (BAB) on St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*). Extracts of St. John's wort are widely used for the symptomatic treatment of mild-to-moderate depression. According to data from the *Nutrition Business Journal*, sales of St. John's wort dietary supplement products in the United States alone reached \$ 57 million in 2015.

Reference: herbalgram.org

Melatonin more than just a sleep supplement

January 18, 2017

Melatonin, the hormone known for its ability to regulate your sleep and wake cycle, has long been the focus of sleep studies in the medical world. Though its natural secretion comes from the pineal gland in the brain, melatonin is also taken as an oral supplement to treat sleep disorders like insomnia or help lessen jet lag symptoms.

Recent oncological research is now suggesting a correlation between melatonin and cancer: Studies have suggested it could have a potential ability to lessen the negative effects of cancer chemotherapy, enhance its therapeutic effect and reduce its toxicity.

www.huffingtonpost.com

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New Drug Approval by FDA

Plecanatide

Company: Synergy Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Date of Approval: January 19, 2017

Treatment for: **Constipation -- Chronic**

Oxymetazoline hydrochloride cream

Company: Allergan, Inc.

Date of Approval: January 19, 2017

Treatment for: **Acne rosacea**

Oxymetazoline hydrochloride cream is a potent topical vasoconstrictor for the treatment of persistent facial erythema associated with rosacea.

Hydrocodone bitartrate extended-release tablets

Company: Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc.

Date of Approval: January 17, 2017

Treatment for: **Pain**

Hydrocodone bitartrate is an abuse deterrent opioid formulation for the management of pain severe enough to require daily, around-the-clock, long-term opioid treatment.

Morphine sulfate extended-release tablets Company:

Egalet Corporation

Date of Approval: January 9, 2017

Treatment for: **Pain**

Morphine sulfate is an extended-release, abuse-deterrent, opioid analgesic formulation for the management of severe pain.

Nusinersen injection

Company: Biogen

Date of Approval: December 23, 2016

Treatment for: **Spinal muscular atrophy**

Spinraza (nusinersen) is a survival motor neuron-2 (SMN2)-directed antisense oligonucleotide indicated for the treatment of spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) in pediatric and adult patients.

Rucaparib tablets

Company: Clovis Oncology, Inc.

Date of Approval: December 19, 2016

Treatment for: **Ovarian cancer**

Rucaparib is a poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase (PARP) inhibitor indicated for the treatment of advanced mutant BRCA ovarian cancer.

Crisaborole topical ointment

Company: Pfizer Inc.

Date of Approval: December 14, 2016

Treatment for: **Atopic dermatitis**

Eucrisa (crisaborole) is a novel, non-steroidal topical anti-inflammatory phosphodiesterase-4 (PDE-4) inhibitor indicated for the treatment of mild-to-moderate atopic dermatitis.

www.drugs.com

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