



Newsletter, Volume 2, Number 7 – July 2010

In the News

**** 15% Discount offered on all medical aesthetic procedures for men during the month of July at pHresh Spa.**

**** Save 10% on mens' health physical exams**

**** Save 10% on dermal fillers (eg. fillers for nasolabial folds, marionette lines, & lip augmentation)**

**** Save 10% on products for medical weight loss solutions**

Curcuma domestica vs NSAIDs for Knee Osteoarthritis

In 2009, a human trial (107 subjects) compared the effects of turmeric (*Curcuma domestica*) versus a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) for osteoarthritis of the knee. This randomized controlled study examined the safety profile and clinical efficacy of *Curcuma domestica* extracts for pain reduction and overall functional improvement in subjects with knee osteoarthritis. Subjects with a pain score of ≥ 5 were given either 800mg/day of ibuprofen or 2000mg of turmeric extracts for 6 weeks. The end points of the study were reduction in pain upon walking, pain climbing stairs, and knee function assessed by subjects walking up and down stairs.

Results of the study showed no difference in pain and functional outcomes for both the NSAID and turmeric groups; there were also no significant difference in the adverse events between the groups; as such the authors reported that *Curcuma domestica* as being comparable in safety and efficacy to ibuprofen for the management of osteoarthritis of the knee (J Altern Complement Med. 2009 Aug;15(8):891-7).

Naturopathic Options:

While the aforementioned study reported no difference in the adverse events for either NSAID or turmeric, I would advise for subjects with a previous history of peptic or duodenal ulcer to avoid the former in consideration of the risk of gastrointestinal bleeding and ulceration. Secondly, the intake of NSAID with alcohol increases one's risk for liver toxicity, of course, depending on the amount of NSAID and alcohol consumed.

While turmeric is a great alternative for its anti-inflammatory effects, the herb is also used clinically to support the liver's detoxification processes (it may alter metabolism of certain prescription drugs); additionally, it is a potent antioxidant as well as a blood thinner secondary to its antiplatelet aggregating activity (* Caution for those on Warfarin or Aspirin). Used in Asian and Middle Eastern cooking, this spice has been found to be useful in traditional medicine for relieving symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome and ulcerative colitis. Preclinical studies also indicate curcumin (the active ingredient in turmeric) has potent chemoprotective actions against a variety of tumors.

Advice from Dr. Aaron Hoo

If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with osteoarthritis, it would be prudent to ensure that the joint is supported so as to delay the progression of the condition. Avoidance of known food allergens/sensitivities is prudent so as to reduce the risk for low grade systemic inflammation. Secondly, cartilaginous support such as glucosamine (*Caution if allergic to shellfish) and chondroitin sulfate may be a good adjunctive therapy to turmeric's anti-inflammatory actions, however, some may also complain of a mild gastro-intestinal upset with glucosamine sulfate. As always, drinking plenty of water, getting lots of rest and minimizing your stress is a great way to naturally reduce the inflammatory process percolating in your body. Otherwise, consider checking out my online store:

http://www.doctorschoicenutrition.ca/online_store.html, log in with your username and password and look for the following products: **Chondrocare, Collagenics, Kaprex & UltraInflamX.**

Featured Recipe

MUSHROOM TOMATO SOUP (6 cups) – Gluten Free


Ingredients:

½ yellow onion; 1 cup (1/3 pound) button or cremini mushrooms; 3 tbsp vegetable oil; 3 tbsp sorghum flour; 1 clove garlic; 4 cups vegetable broth; 2 x 6 oz. cans tomato paste; 1 cup plain soy milk; 1 tsp dried basil; ½ tsp sea salt.

Dice onions and slice mushrooms. Put the oil & flour in saucepan over medium heat and stir continuously for 5 minutes. Add garlic, onion & mushroom and stir frequently. If it's cooking too fast, add a little broth to the pan (1/2 cup). Saute for 5 minutes. Add about 2 cups of vegetable broth, then add tomato paste. Stir until the paste becomes completely smooth. Add the rest of the broth, the soy milk, basil and salt. Stir well and heat through.

Bon a petit!

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