

Backbone Chiropractic Newsletter

SUMMER

2004

Ruling Out Penicillin for Childhood Sore Throat

You've heard the warnings: Over time, using antibiotics can build resistance to their infection-fighting properties, eventually rendering them useless as treatment options. Still, an increasing number of doctors continue to prescribe antibiotics even when no infection exists — such as when symptoms are associated with the common cold, or when research demonstrates their ineffectiveness. Take as example a recent study that penicillin, a commonly prescribed antibiotic, does not reduce the duration of acute sore throat symptoms.

Researchers studied 156 children, ages 4–15, with a sore throat for fewer than seven days and meeting at least two of four other criteria, including history of fever, absence of cough, swollen lymph nodes, or red or swollen tonsils. Participants received either penicillin for seven days; penicillin for three days, followed by placebo for four days; or placebo for seven days.

Results: The study found virtually no differences in terms of symptom duration in the three study groups, and that sore throat actually resolved 1.3 days later, on average, in the three-day penicillin group compared to the group receiving placebo only. The authors make their findings perfectly clear: "Treatment with penicillin for seven days failed to shorten the duration of sore throat, reduce non-attendance at school, or reduce recurrence of sore throat in the following six months." These results were maintained even in children diagnosed with the presence of group A streptococci (which

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Beware the Sugary Seduction

The next time you reach for a soft drink or so-called "fruit" juice, consider this: A new study estimates that, on average, people consume up to 66 calories a day from sugar-laden beverage sources, and another 17 calories from other caloric sweeteners, such as sugar, high fructose corn syrup, maltose, dextrose and others.¹

Researchers from the University of North Carolina School of Public Health in Chapel Hill examined data from the U.S. and countries around the world related to caloric sweetener consumption, including the role played by foods, urbanization and income. Worldwide, the study found a 74-calorie increase in the amount of sweetener consumed daily between 1962 and 2000, while data from the U.S. showed an 83-calorie increase — 80 percent of which came from sugary beverages.

According to a report issued by the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization, less than 10 percent of an individual's daily calories should come from sugar, which translates into roughly one can of soda — and no other forms of sugar — on a 1,500-calorie-per-day diet.²

What's your best bet when it comes to sugar consumption? Limit your soda intake altogether, and consume more whole grains, fruits and veggies, so you can enjoy an occasional sugary treat with less guilt and fewer health-related consequences.

References: 1. Popkin BM, Nielsen SJ. The sweetening of the world's diet. *Journal of Obesity Research* November 2003;11(1), pp325-1332. 2. Davis JL. Sugary foods making us fat. March 4, 2003. www.webmd

Thank you for your referrals. My business is based on them and they are your greatest compliment to my office. To show my appreciation share this newsletter with a friend who needs chiropractic and they will receive a **free consult and exam.**

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Office hours: Mon. – Fri. 1:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Saturday by appointment only

Making Weight Loss a Priority

By now, you've heard the grim statistics: More than half of all American adults are overweight and at an increased risk for developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, and more — diseases responsible for approximately 300,000 deaths a year. The most unfortunate part? These deaths can be prevented.

For most people, weight loss is a highly personal issue that can be difficult to face, especially if one has a considerable amount of weight to lose. And with the dreary facts surrounding weight loss — chiefly, horror stories suggesting that most people who do lose weight don't keep it off — many people doubt their ability to shed pounds permanently.

A recent article on weight-loss strategies suggests that the most effective weight-loss programs include a multifaceted approach that includes diet and behavioral modifications, as well as increasing physical activity. Prospective dieters are encouraged to determine why they eat, as well as assess what they eat, and

engage in regular physical activity; however, some people — especially those who have suffered from lifelong obesity — may need additional motivation to get started. This is where your doctor of chiropractic can help.

Routine chiropractic treatments help maintain the body's structural alignment, they help relieve stress, and positively affect your overall health. Chiropractors can also help answer questions that you may have concerning nutrition, health and weight losing strategies.

Reference: Bartlett, SJ. Motivating patients toward weight loss. *The Physician and Sportsmedicine*, November 2003;31(11).

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can cause strep throat, among other complications).

The authors conclude that nearly all children in the Western world can be treated for sore throat safely without the use of penicillin; however, parents are still encouraged to seek a doctor's care to rule out more serious potential illnesses.

Reference: Zwart S, Rovers MM, de Melker RA, et al. Penicillin for acute sore throat in children: randomized, double-blind trial. *British Medical Journal* (online), Dec. 6, 2003. www.bmj.com.