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**Dr Bob's Medical News Aug 20004**

**By Robert Roy MD**

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Hi >

Medical-News-For-You

Hi It's Dr Bob with your latest and up to date newsletter.

Warning on Salmon – another toxin  
Strept Vaccine – hope for the future  
Mom's Influence on their Children As Adults  
Breast Cancer – more is known

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Warning On Salmon from: Environment Science And Technology

Traces of a fire retardant have been found in both wild and farm raised salmon. The study went on to say that wild fish were less contaminated than farm raised.

The toxicity of the chemicals, called polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE) isn't fully understood at this time. The presence of the chemicals raises concerns of health officials. It is known that PBDEs can harm the neurological development of young children and babies.

It's unclear exactly how the PBDEs leach out of products, but they've have been turning up in everything from household dust to women's breast milk. The study shows more evidence of this chemicals climbing up the food chain.

Dr Bob's Take: Once again we are seeing more environmental implication on our food supply. Mercury is better known. More study is needed but until then I would limit this fish in young children to maybe no more than once a week or once every other week. And we need to be more aware of our

environment.

### A Strept Vaccine

Yes, scientists are making progress in developing a vaccine against the infamous streptococcus Group A. This is the same bacteria that give us strept throat and the so called flesh eating disease of which there are about 9,000 cases a year with a high death rate.

The study of the vaccine on just 28 people showed that protection against the strept bacteria did occur. More studies will need to be done to prove not only the effectiveness but also that there are no serious complications.

Dr Bob's Take: work on a vaccine has been going on for over 50 yrs and this study bodes well. It does because of the millions of strept throats which if not treated can give rise to kidney disease or rheumatic heart disease in a small percentage of children. Thankfully these complications are not common. A vaccine will be very helpful to all of us.

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### A quick read – on Health And Fitness And Benefits

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#### It's Proven Mom's Have A Strong Role In Shaping Their Childs Family Roles

Depending on the role of the mother, the son and/or daughter will take on different roles as they mature to adults. For example, college aged men will expect to do more child care if their moms were employed. On the other hand, if their mom's were homemakers they would expect their wives to be tending after the home and children.

For daughters the roles were reversed. If their mothers were employed they tended to spend less time with their children. But, if the mothers were homemakers their daughters tended to stay home more.

This study was based on a survey of college men and women conducted by psychologist Heidi Riggio of Claremont McKenna College. The study size was 351 students.

Dr Bobs Take: Although this study was small additional studies are needed to verify the results. So Moms and Dads don't change what you are doing based on this study.

#### Breast Cancer And..

Several studies have recently come out linking diet with increased risk of cancer. The first is that breast cancer is more frequent in obese women who have a low HDL (the good cholesterol). This study was by Norway's University of Tromso. HDL does not have an active role in the development of breast cancer but may act as a signal to pay more attention to women with low HDL.

In another study co authored by Dr Walter Willett of the Harvard School of Public Health and Instituto

Nacionalde Salud Public of Mexico has shown an increase in breast cancer in women on a high carb diet. Women in Mexico were twice more likely to get breast cancer if they were on a high carbohydrate diets than those who ate less starch.

Dr Bob's Take: it has been known for a long time that obesity carries a higher risk of breast cancer and each of these studies goes on to verify this, only in different ways. With the rise in obesity in this country, I am especially concerned about our children and their increases in obesity, you could surmise that this could mean that breast cancer could be detected at younger ages as time goes on.

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Webmaster and Family Physician forPhysician-on-health.com a medical information website. I have 20 years of practice experience and 12 years as a physician executive for several national health insurers.

**Dr Bob's Newsletter – November 2004**

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Family Members Should Know Their Family's Medical History

Yes, this is a great time to be sure that you are up to date with your family's history. This includes not only your immediate family but your grand parents and aunts and uncles. This history needs to be

updated on a regular interval and then cataloged. Organizing this gives your doctor an upper hand to look for more clues of your susceptibility to any of these diseases.

The US government last week (and very quietly) unveiled a new software that you can use where you enter this information and get a prints out in graphic form a family tree that can help your doctor to assess your risk.

Up to 96% of us know more or less our family history but only 1/3 have tried to catalog. This is according to the CDC. Dr Francis Collins stated last week "family history is central to taking advantage of the new genomic information..". The program is neat and should help your physician.

Here is the site where you can download this for your family:

<http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory/> Dr Bob's Take: do it, please.

### Vitamin E Update

This study has concluded that taking more than 200 international units of vitamin E can worsen your chances of heart disease. Dr Edgar Miller of Johns Hopkins University has analyzed 19 previous studies involving a total of 130,000 people who took vitamin E alone or with other vitamins.

The findings showed that people taking 400 IU or more had a 10 times the risk of dying from heart disease as compared to those taking 200IU or less. Most multivitamins contain about 35 – 40 IU. The benefits of anti-oxidants like vitamin E was first demonstrated in test tubes but never has been seen in scientifically based human studies.

Dr Bob's Take: I have not seen a study in the medical literature which was scientifically sound show that vitamin E prevented heart disease. Initially, when the first studies (test tube) came out that vitamin E was worth taking I was a proponent but as other studies never proved it I told folks not to take them. It may be that anti-oxidants only work if taken from food. (more on that to come)

### Fruits and Veggies Update

Here is a very large study over 100,000 participants of which 71,000+ were female and the rest males. It was conducted under the auspices of Dr Walter Willet of the Harvard School of Public Health. The participants answered mailed out questionnaires and the study was following participants from mid 80's until 1998.

The outcome showed that if participants ate five or more servings of fruit and vegetables per day there

risk heart disease was slightly decreased but it did not show any effect on cancer reduction that was statistically significant.

There were several ideas about why fruits and vegetables did not provide a cancer decrease including that the protective mechanism may take longer to see an effect or that the individuals studied ate more fruits and vegetables normally. The participants included health professionals primarily.

Dr Bob's Take: this was a large study and I believe does show that eating more fruits and vegetables does have some heart protection. I do not believe this should be considered that the end of the controversy over the effects on cancer reduction.

### Omega 3 Fish Oil – New Claims

Coming in a fish counter near you. Yes, you heard me right. The FDA has issued a new label that can be added to certain fish that contain Omega 3 oil. It basically states that research has shown that these oils MAY reduce the risk of coronary disease (hardening of the arteries). The amount of the oil will also be given on the label.

Dr Bob's Take: Yes, it well known that certain fish like lake trout, salmon and tuna, have significant amount of the omega 3 oils and these are good for us. Olive oil is also another oil that is beneficial.

### Cholesterol – How Low Shall We Go

There has been a great deal of discussion in medical circles about the current published target for our cholesterol levels (see below). We are now seeing that there is more improvement noted if the cholesterol total is below 200mg.

Of other significance are the levels of LDL (bad cholesterol) and HDL (good cholesterol). We are seeing more evidence that the lower the LDL goes the better off we are. Once again it is important that you know your own levels and what the current normals should be. Here are the current recommendations from the American Heart Association (AHA).

Risk	Total Cholesterol	LDL (bad cholesterol)	HDL (good cholesterol)
desireable	at or below 200mg	at or below 129mg	40 – 50mg male 50 – 60mg female
moderate risk	200 – 239 mg	100 – 129 mg	below 40 male & female
high risk	240mg and above	130 – 159mg = borderline	160 – 189mg = high 190mg or more = very high

below 40

Dr Bob' Take: I am a firm believer of the science that states we are what we eat and where we are from. We have both genetics and food that represent our cholesterol. It is very important for all of us to get within the goals of the treatment regimen set up by your physician. The final goals are not written yet but will be over the next several years. Here is a "Heart Profiler" that you may find useful from the AHA.

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=1516>

### NEW NEWS Potential Warning with Bextra

On Nov 10th there was a suggestion by the FDA that there may be some unwanted cardiac events with this medication. This medication is another "cox2" meds which is somewhat similar to Vioxx. There was small study where Bextra was given intra-venously and then followed with oral Bextra where the death rate was higher than it should have been.

Dr Bob's Take: it is too early to have a definitive call on this but I would err on the side of caution.

I have several websites, physician-on-health.com and orchids-plus-more.com. A physician by training with 20 yr experience as a family doc. Developing these websites has been an interest for many years.



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