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OF WEST AFRICA

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HCOWA, the Health Community of West Africa, is a dynamic organization dedicated to promoting healthcare standards and enhancing access to quality medical services across the sub-region. With a commitment to improving the health and well-being of communities in West Africa, HCOWA serves as a catalyst for transformative change in the healthcare sector.

Our primary focus lies in industry brand promotion, supply and demand linkage, investment and trade policy alignment, and industrial cooperation guidance. Through strategic partnerships and collaborations, we facilitate the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and resources to drive innovation and sustainable development in the medical industry.

At HCOWA, we recognize the importance of academic exchange promotion and other key areas in shaping the future of healthcare in West Africa. Through a blend of online and offline initiatives, we foster dia-

logue, facilitate networking opportunities, and explore avenues for cooperation between China and West Africa in the medical sector.

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We remain steadfast: to be at the forefront of healthcare transformation in West Africa, driving positive change and making a meaningful impact on the lives of millions.

Join us in our mission to advance healthcare standards, foster innovation, and build a healthier future for West Africa. Together, we can create a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

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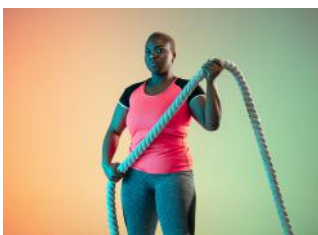
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Addressing the Dialysis Crisis in Ghana

The Need for Collective Action

By Prince Dogbey and Chance Iradukunda

Dialysis is a critical lifeline for patients suffering from kidney failure, yet in Ghana, accessing this essential treatment remains a daunting challenge. As highlighted in an article by Kidney Health International, dialysis centers in Ghana are grappling with limited capacity, with a median of only 20 patients per center. Despite these constraints, many centers are operating at or beyond their maximum capacity.

The quality of dialysis care is also under significant threat due to a severe shortage of nephrology specialists. With only 0.44 nephrologists per million population, Ghana falls well below the global average for low and middle-income countries, which stands at 1.6 per million. This shortage directly impacts the quality of care, as 57.5% of dialysis centers in the country lack a resident or visiting nephrologist.

Recently, the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) took a significant step by formally starting its Free Dialysis Coverage program for patients in certain categories, fulfilling a pledge to improve access to and the cost of dialysis in Ghana. According to NHIA CEO Dr. Da-Costa Aboagye, six significant healthcare providers have submitted their lists of chronic dialysis patients treated in June as part of the program. As of the first month of the program's execution, the NHIA paid these providers a total of GHS 587,236.

The allocation of funds is as follows: Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH), Cape Coast Teaching Hospital (CCTH), Efiu Nkwanta Regional Hospital (ENRH), and Ho Teaching Hospital (HTH) will receive GHS 96,236.00, GHS 77,578.00, and GHS 92,308.00 respectively. Tamale Teaching Hospital (TTH) and Korle Bu Teaching Hospital (KBTH) will receive GHS 57,938.00 and GHS 179,706.00, respectively. These funds are intended to ensure that patients who paid cash in June receive their full reimbursement.



NGOs, corporate bodies, and other stakeholders must see the urgent need to support medical centers with dialysis machines and other resources.

Despite this commendable initiative, the burden of dialysis on patients remains immense. Under the National Health Insurance Scheme, individuals 60 years of age and older, as well as those under 18, will receive eight free dialysis sessions per month. Patients between 19 and 59 years old undergoing treatment at KATH, CCTH, ENRH, HTH, and TTH will be eligible for two complimentary sessions each month. At KBTH, the NHIA will subsidize half of the monthly cost for two dialysis treatments.

While these measures are crucial, they are not enough to fully address the dialysis crisis in Ghana. NGOs, corporate bodies, and other stakeholders must see the urgent need to support medical centers with dialysis machines and other resources.



 The Organ

The Thyroid

By Prince Dogbey

The thyroid, a small butterfly-shaped gland located in the neck, plays a crucial role in regulating the body's metabolism and overall hormonal balance. Despite its modest size, the thyroid gland's impact on health and well-being is significant, affecting various bodily functions ranging from energy levels to heart rate.

Situated just below the Adam's apple, the thyroid gland consists of two lobes connected by a thin bridge of tissue known as the isthmus. The primary function of the thyroid is to produce, store, and release hormones into the bloodstream. These hormones, primarily thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3), are vital for regulating the body's metabolic rate. They influence how fast or

slow organs and cells work, affecting everything from heart and muscle function to brain development and bone maintenance.

The thyroid's hormone production is controlled by the pituitary gland, located at the base of the brain. The pituitary gland releases thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), which signals the thyroid to produce more T4 and T3 when levels are low. This feedback loop ensures that the body maintains a stable metabolic rate and proper energy balance.

One of the most common thyroid disorders is hypothyroidism, a condition where the thyroid does not produce enough hormones. Symptoms of hypothyroidism can include fatigue, weight gain, depression, and sensitivity to cold. Conversely, hyperthyroidism occurs when the thyroid produces too much hormone, leading to symptoms such as weight loss, rapid heartbeat, and anxiety. Both conditions require medical attention and can often be managed effectively with medication.

In addition to hormone production, the thyroid also stores iodine, an essential mineral needed for the synthesis of T4 and T3. Iodine deficiency can lead to goiter, an enlargement of the thyroid gland, and other thyroid-related health issues. Ensuring adequate iodine intake through diet or supplements is crucial for maintaining thyroid health.

Thyroid health is vital for overall well-being, and regular check-ups can help detect any issues early on. Blood tests measuring TSH, T4, and T3 levels are commonly used to diagnose thyroid disorders. Early detection and treatment can prevent complications and improve quality of life.

In conclusion, the thyroid may be a small organ, but its role in regulating the body's metabolism and hormonal balance is indispensable. Understanding its function and maintaining its health through proper nutrition and medical care is essential for overall well-being.



More People Are Dying From Alcohol Consumption

WHO Reports



The World Health Organization (WHO)'s global report on alcohol, health, and the treatment of substance use disorders reveals an unacceptably high increase in the death toll from alcohol consumption, with the highest rates in low-income countries and the lowest in high-income countries.

The report highlights that of all deaths attributable to alcohol in 2019, an estimated 1.6 million were due to non-communicable diseases, and approximately 724,000 were due to injuries, such as those from traffic crashes, self-harm, and interpersonal violence. Another 284,000 deaths were linked to communicable diseases, as alcohol consumption increases the risk of HIV transmission due to a higher likelihood of unprotected sex and heightens the risk of TB infection and mortality by suppressing various immune responses.

It also shows that an estimated 400 million people live with alcohol use disorders, while 209 million people globally live with alcohol dependence.

WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, speaking to the report, said:

"Substance use severely harms individual health, increasing the risk of chronic diseases and mental health conditions, and tragically resulting in millions of preventable deaths every year. It places a heavy burden on families and communities, increasing exposure to accidents, injuries, and violence. To build a healthier, more equitable society, we must urgently commit to bold actions that reduce the negative health and social consequences of alcohol consumption and make treatment for substance use disorders accessible and affordable."

The report highlights that despite some reduction in alcohol-related death rates since 2010, the overall number of deaths due to alcohol consumption remains unacceptably high. Death rates due to alcohol consumption per litre of alcohol consumed are highest in low-income countries and lowest in high-income countries.

PMS

Premenstrual Syndrome.

By Chance Iradukunda

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) is a collection of physical, emotional, and psychological symptoms that many women experience in the days leading up to their menstrual period. While common, PMS can vary widely in severity and impact on daily life. Understanding its symptoms, underlying causes, and effective management strategies is crucial for women's health and well-being.

Symptoms of PMS

PMS symptoms typically occur in the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle, which begins after ovulation and ends with the start of menstruation. Common symptoms include:

- **Physical Symptoms:** Bloating, breast tenderness, headaches, joint or muscle pain.
- **Emotional Symptoms:** Mood swings, irritability, anxiety, depression, crying spells.
- **Behavioral Symptoms:** Food cravings, difficulty concentrating, fatigue, changes in sleep patterns.

Symptoms can vary from cycle to cycle and may range from mild to severe, significantly impacting daily activities and interpersonal relationships.

Causes of PMS

The causes of Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) are multifactorial and not fully understood. Hormonal fluctuations, particularly changes in estrogen and progesterone levels during the menstrual cycle, play a significant role. These fluctuations can affect neurotransmitters like serotonin, influencing mood regulation and exacerbating emotional symptoms such as irritability and anxiety. Sensitivity to these hormonal changes varies among individuals, with some women experiencing heightened symptoms due to genetic predispositions or differences in hormone sensitivity. Lifestyle factors such as stress, lack of exercise, poor diet, and inadequate sleep can also contribute to the severity of PMS symptoms by exacerbating hormonal imbalances and affecting overall physical and mental well-being.

Diagnosis and Evaluation

Diagnosing PMS involves tracking symptoms over several menstrual cycles and ruling out other potential causes of similar symptoms, such as depression or anxiety disorders. Keeping a symptom diary can help identify patterns and severity, aiding in accurate diagnosis and effective management.

Outlook and Support

For many women, symptoms of PMS improve with age or after childbirth. However, for others, PMS can significantly impact quality of life. Seeking support from healthcare providers, support groups, or counseling can provide reassurance, validation, and personalized treatment plans tailored to individual needs.



Stadiometer

By Yosua Domedjui

A stadiometer is a medical device used to accurately determine a person's height. Typically constructed with a sliding horizontal headpiece and a ruler, the headpiece can be adjusted to rest on top of the head, providing an exact measurement.

Stadiometers are commonly employed in clinical trials and standard medical checkups to ensure precise height measurements, which are crucial for various medical assessments, including calculating Body Mass Index (BMI) and monitoring growth in children and adolescents.

THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES OF MEDICAL MEASURING RODS:

Wall-Mounted Stadiometers: These are fixed to a wall or a sturdy surface and are often used in clinical settings for quick and reliable measurements. Their stability and ease of use make them ideal for frequent height assessments.

Portable Stadiometers: These can be disassembled and transported easily, making them useful for home visits or in mobile health units. Their portability ensures that accurate height measurements can be taken in various locations without compromising precision.

Most measuring rods have square or circular sections, but flat boards are also an option. Some feature markings that change every few seconds, enhancing their precision and usability in various settings.

The stadiometer itself is primarily a measuring tool for the height of the human body, generally used for both adults and children. Height is measured for children 2 years of age and over, whereas to measure children under 2 years of age, the term "length" is used. This distinction is important for accurate growth tracking and health assessments in pediatric care.

In summary, stadiometers are essential tools in medical practice, ensuring accurate height measurements which are fundamental for a range of health evaluations and clinical research.



WASH Urges Immediate Action on Grey Water Management for Public Health

By Chance Iradukunda

Prof. Kwabena Biritwum Nyarko, Provost of the College of Engineering at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, is emphasizing the urgent need for grey water management to prevent health and environmental issues.

In his inaugural speech as a professor, he urged the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources to include grey water management in their water and sanitation plans.

Grey water, the dirty wastewater from laundry, bathrooms, and kitchens, poses serious hazards to public health and the environment. In his speech titled "Universal Access to Water and Sanitation Services: A Myth or Reality?" Prof. Nyarko expressed concern that the issue of grey water has not received adequate attention in Ghana.

His studies on grey water have shown troubling results: 36% of the water consumed is converted

to grey water, which contains higher-than-anticipated levels of micropollutants and requires treatment before disposal.

Prof. Nyarko highlighted the inadequacy of onsite sanitation in addressing grey water concerns, especially since less than 5% of Ghana's population has access to sewerage systems. He stressed that grey water management must become an essential part of achieving universal access to water and sanitation.

"It will be meaningless to achieve universal access to water and sanitation without addressing grey water issues," he said. Prof. Nyarko concluded that at the

family level, the least that can be done is to use a soakage pit or soakaway system.

According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, 27% of people allow their grey water to run into gutters or drains, while 70% dispose of it by dumping it on the ground or in the street. Additionally, 11% channel their grey water into a soakaway or soakage pit, and 2% let it run off into the sewer system.



How Telemedicine is Reshaping Patient Care

By Pavel Chamabe

Through the use of digital technology, telemedicine is transforming patient care by providing medical treatments remotely. This shift is especially important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which made the quick implementation of remote healthcare technologies necessary.

Patients who live in rural or underdeveloped regions will benefit most from improved access to healthcare thanks to telemedicine. By doing away with the necessity for travel, patients may consult with professionals anywhere in the world. For people who need many follow-ups, have chronic conditions, or have mobility challenges, this is essential. A telemedicine-using psychiatrist says, "I perform certain telemedicine actions for patients who occasionally have financial issues. They save paying for a round journey by using telemedicine. In addition, I provide telemedicine services to underprivileged individuals who do not always possess a driver's licence, particularly young individuals who rely on their parents for transportation."

Telemedicine provides unmatched efficiency. Patients don't have to take time off work or wait long for visits because they may plan them whenever it's convenient for them. The procedure of visiting a healthcare practitioner is streamlined via virtual consultations, which frequently leads to a speedier diagnosis and course of treatment. Healthcare professionals may see more patients and efficiently manage their time because to this efficiency.

Self-management and patient involvement are made easier by telemedicine technologies like mobile applications and patient portals. Patients have direct communication with their healthcare professionals, have access to their medical information, and receive reminders for visits or medicines. This ongoing involvement encourages patients to follow their treatment regimens and gives them the confidence to actively manage their health.

Patients' and providers' healthcare

expenses are decreased using telemedicine. By reducing the need for physical infrastructure, reducing travel costs, and avoiding needless ER visits and hospital stays through early intervention and monitoring, it can also reduce the overall cost of treatment.

Telemedicine fills the gap between nearby providers and far-off experts for patients in need of specialized treatment. This enhances the overall quality of care by expanding the range of available expertise and facilitating second perspectives.

Wearable technology and remote monitoring technologies make it possible to monitor chronic illnesses in real-time using telemedicine.

In summary, telemedicine is transforming patient care by improving accessibility, convenience, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of healthcare.

 Health Myth Buster

Sugar Make Kids Hyper

By Pavel Chamabe

The notion that sugar makes kids hyperactive is a widely held belief among many parents. The image of children bouncing off the walls after consuming candy or sugary drinks is a familiar one. However, scientific research consistently debunks this myth, showing that sugar does not cause hyperactivity or negatively impact children's behavior and focus.

Studies have repeatedly shown no significant link between sugar intake and hyperactivity. In various controlled experiments, children were given either sugar or a placebo, and neither the children nor their parents could reliably distinguish any behavioral changes attributable to sugar. This lack of evidence suggests that the common belief in sugar-induced hyperactivity is unfounded.

One significant factor contributing to this misconception is the power of expectation. Parents who believe that sugar causes hyperactivity are more likely to anticipate and notice energetic or disruptive behavior after their children consume sugary foods. This phenomenon, known as confirmation bias, leads parents to see what they expect to see, reinforcing the erroneous belief that sugar is to blame.

Additionally, children often consume sugar in environments already charged with excitement, such as birthday parties, holidays, or special events. These settings naturally elevate children's energy levels due to the excitement and social interactions. The resulting high energy is often mistakenly attributed to sugar consumption rather than the festive circumstances.

While sugar may not cause hyperactivity, it is essential to recognize that it is not without its health concerns. Excessive sugar intake can lead to a variety of health issues, including obesity, dental problems, and increased risk of chronic diseases. Therefore, limiting sugar intake as part of a balanced diet is crucial for maintaining overall health and well-being.



Parents can better manage their children's energy levels and behavior by focusing on providing a nutritious diet and encouraging physical activity. Offering healthier snack options that provide essential nutrients without the added sugar can help maintain stable energy levels. Ensuring children get ample physical activity throughout the day also helps regulate their energy and improve their focus.

In conclusion, the belief that sugar causes hyperactivity in children is a myth unsupported by scientific evidence. By understanding the facts and focusing on a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle, parents can make informed choices for their children's well-being, free from the misconceptions surrounding sugar and hyperactivity.



AFRICA
in focus

Nigeria Declares State of Emergency Over Cholera Outbreak

By Gloria Addo

The Nigerian Center for Disease Control (NCDC), said that its decision to activate the National Cholera Emergency Operation Center followed a risk assessment conducted by authorities. An evaluation showed the country was at high risk of the disease and that the fatality rate from cholera stood at 3.5% of cases.

So far, more than 50 people have died out of more than 1,500 recorded cases in the country. Speaking to the media, director general of the NCDC, Jide Idris stated; "Having considered all the details available, there's still an increasing trend of suspected cases nationwide. We have four levels of risk low, medium, high, and very high. We've seen more cases in more states than we did last year."

Public health analyst Chukwunonso Umeh also commented on the outbreak saying,

"I'm happy that the government has declared an emergency on this. The virulent level is very high, so there's a possibility of transmutation; in terms of the severity of the symptoms, and rate of transmission'. He also added that socioeconomic problems are affecting the way the disease impacts Nigerians.

The latest outbreak comes as the European Union pledged millions to help fund vaccine production in Africa. The continent depends on imports for more than 90% of its vaccine doses.

National health authorities say they will work with affected state authorities to ensure rapid case detection, analysis, and management.

Source: AriseNews-Nigeria

Tuberculosis

A Preventable Disease

By Mavis Essaba Mensah

Tuberculosis (TB), a highly infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, has long been a global health challenge. Despite its prevalence and impact, TB is a preventable and curable disease. Through effective public health strategies, widespread education, and robust healthcare systems, the spread of TB can be significantly curtailed.

Understanding TB and Its Transmission

TB primarily affects the lungs but can also impact other parts of the body. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. The disease can be latent, where the bacteria remain inactive in the body without causing symptoms, or active, where the bacteria multiply and cause illness.

Préventive Measures

- **Vaccination**

The Bacillus Calmette–Guérin (BCG) vaccine is the most commonly used vaccine against TB. It is especially effective in preventing severe forms of TB in children. While the BCG vaccine does not prevent TB in adults as effectively, it remains a crucial tool in the global fight against the disease.

- **Early Detection and Treatment**

Identifying and treating active TB cases is essential in preventing the spread of the disease. This involves screening high-risk populations, such as those living in close quarters, people with compromised immune systems, and healthcare workers. Rapid diagnostic tests and access to appropriate treatment regimens can halt the transmission chain.

- **Public Awareness and Education**

Educating the public about TB symptoms, transmission, and prevention is vital. Awareness campaigns can encourage people to seek medical advice if they experience symptoms such as a persistent cough, fever, night sweats, and weight loss. Educating communities about the importance of completing the full course of TB treatment can prevent the development of drug-resistant TB strains.

- **Infection Control Practices**

In healthcare settings, implementing stringent infection control measures can prevent the spread of TB. This includes using protective equipment, improving ventilation, and isolating patients with active TB.

- **Addressing Social Determinants**

TB is closely linked to social determinants of health such as poverty, malnutrition, and overcrowded living conditions. Addressing these underlying factors through social support programs, improved housing, and nutritional support can reduce TB incidence.

Global Efforts and Challenges

The World Health Organization (WHO) has set ambitious targets to end the global TB epidemic by 2030. Strategies include improving TB diagnosis and treatment, investing in research and development for new vaccines and treatments, and ensuring that TB care is integrated into broader health systems.

However, challenges remain. Drug-resistant TB strains, limited access to healthcare in low-income regions, and social stigma associated with TB continue to hinder progress. Increased funding, international collaboration, and sustained political commitment are crucial to overcoming these obstacles.

Conclusion

Tuberculosis is a preventable disease, and with concerted global efforts, we can make significant strides toward its eradication. By prioritizing vaccination, early detection, public education, infection control, and addressing social determinants, we can protect vulnerable populations and reduce the burden of TB worldwide. The fight against TB requires a multifaceted approach, but with determination and collaboration, a TB-free world is within reach.

Retinol

The Key to Advanced Skincare

By Yosua Domedjui

Retinol, a derivative of vitamin A, is widely used in skincare for its numerous benefits. It promotes the growth of skin cells and aids in pore cleaning. By exfoliating the skin and boosting collagen synthesis, retinol helps minimize the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, leaving the skin looking more youthful and plumper.

One of the primary applications of retinol is its anti-aging properties. Retinol is available over-the-counter, but higher concentrations of retinoids may be prescribed by a doctor for more significant effects. As a topical treatment, retinol comes in various forms, including creams, gels, ointments, and serums. While it starts working on your cells immediately, visible improvements in skin texture and appearance typically take a few weeks. Initially, your skin condition might appear worse as it adjusts to the new routine, a phase often referred to as the retinol purge.

Retinol is particularly effective in treating the following skin concerns:

Acne Treatment: Acne, a common skin condition, occurs when dead skin cells and oils clog pores, leading to blackheads, whiteheads, and other types of pimples. Retinol helps by preventing pores from becoming clogged. During the first few months of treatment, you might still experience pimples, and your skin could look worse. However, with perseverance, clearer skin will emerge.

Acne Scars: Acne scars result from inflammation and damage, manifesting as pink, red, or dark spots that can last for weeks. Popping or picking at pimples can cause further skin damage and long-lasting scars. Topical retinol treatments help reduce breakouts and the associated inflammation, although severe acne scars that are raised or sunken might not respond well to topical retinol.

Dark Spots: Hyperpigmentation, often caused by sun damage, results in dark spots on the skin. These spots, also known as sun spots, age spots, or liver spots, are due to melanin accumulation. While painless, they can be aesthetically displeasing. Topical retinol treatments can lighten these spots over several months, though they may cause skin irritation. For persistent dark spots, consulting a dermatologist is recommended.

Incorporating retinol into your skincare regimen can significantly improve skin health and appearance. Consulting a doctor can help determine the best way to include retinol in your beauty routine for optimal results.



⊕ Disease In Focus

Understanding Zoonotic Diseases

And How They Affect Humans

By Pavel Chamabe



Zoonoses, another name for zoonotic diseases, are infectious illnesses that people get from animals. These illnesses pose serious hazards to the public's health and can be brought on by bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungus. Humans can get zoonotic illnesses by eating contaminated food or water, coming into direct contact with infected animals, or indirectly through polluted surroundings, vector-borne routes, or human interaction.

Direct Contact

Humans get an infection by direct contact with an infected animal's body fluids, such as blood, urine, faeces, or saliva. Farmers, veterinarians, and pet owners are especially vulnerable. Examples are anthrax, which may be acquired by handling contaminated cattle, and rabies, which is spread by animal bites.

Indirect Touch

Indirect transmission occurs when a person comes into touch with infected settings or surfaces. For example, inhaling dust contaminated with rodent droppings, urine, or saliva might expose oneself to the hantavirus. Similar to how leptospirosis spreads, it does so by contaminating water with animal urine.

Vector-Borne Transmission

In this mechanism, diseases are transferred from animals to humans by vectors like fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes. This kind of transmission is typified by illnesses like West Nile virus, which is spread by mosquito bites, and Lyme disease, which is spread by tick bites.

Waterborne and Foodborne Transmission

Taking in tainted water or food is another frequent method that zoonotic illnesses spread. E. Coli, Campylobacter, and Salmonella illnesses are frequently caused by eating raw meat, eggs, or unpasteurized dairy products. Furthermore, using animal dung as fertilizer might infect fruits and vegetables with zoonotic diseases.

Emergencies of zoonotic diseases are more likely as a result of increased human-animal interactions brought on by growing urbanisation, globalisation, and land use changes. A One Health strategy is necessary to address zoonotic illnesses, combining environmental, animal, and human health efforts to reduce risks and improve early detection and response mechanisms. Effective zoonotic disease prevention and management need responsible agricultural practices, vaccinating animals, raising public awareness, and implementing better sanitation and sanitation techniques.

Neonatal Incubators

A Lifesaving Technology for Premature Babies

By Gloria Addo

Across the globe, 1 in 10 of all live births which is an estimated 13.4 million babies were born preterm according to a study published in 2020 by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Preterm birth is the leading cause of neonatal mortality and is associated with long-term effects. Because of their early arrival, these babies need a controlled environment in which to continue to grow and develop thus calling the need for a Neonatal Incubator.

Also called an infant incubator, this device offers a safe space for infants to live and grow as their organs develop. Most commonly found in Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs), maternity units, and paediatric units, unwell babies also use neonatal incubators for health conditions, including Breathing problems, Gestational diabetes, Infection, Low birth weight, Surgery, or trauma.

Infant incubators with a transparent cabinet maintain specialized light, temperature, humidity, and oxygen levels optimized for a baby's development. Offering optimal temperature, oxygen, humidity, and light control, an incubator is a crucial tool for infants for providing a safe, controlled environment for vital organ development. It also tracks vital signs like temperature and heart rate, enabling continuous monitoring.

New-borns, particularly those born prematurely, can have trouble regulating their body temperature. This, and the fact that they don't have much fat, makes them prone to hypothermia. Hypothermia is when your body loses heat faster than it can produce it. This can cause complications like low tissue oxygen, breathing difficulty, and slowed growth.

Incubators prevent hypothermia by helping your baby maintain an optimal temperature. Temperature controls

on a baby incubator can be set manually or automatically based on your baby's temperature. Another feature of baby incubator is that they help block out noise that can disturb them and cause sleep interruptions, increases in blood pressure, and unnecessary stress.

Incubators are important medical equipment, without it fewer babies would be able to survive tough beginnings.





Fish with Sweet Potatoes and Zucchini

By Yosua Domedjui

This fish with sweet potatoes and zucchini dish is an excellent choice for a healthy and balanced meal. Combining lean protein, complex carbohydrates, and fiber, this recipe offers a complete and nutritious dinner while being simple to prepare.

Ingredients

- 2 white fish fillets (cod, tilapia, etc.)
- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 zucchinis
- 1 red onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions

Preparing the ingredients

- Preheat your oven to 200°C (390°F).
- Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them into 2 cm cubes.
- Wash the zucchinis and slice them into rounds.
- Thinly slice the red onion and finely chop the garlic

Cooking the vegetables

In a large bowl, toss the sweet potatoes, zucchinis, red onion, and garlic with one tablespoon of olive oil, salt, pepper, paprika, and thyme. Spread the seasoned vegetables on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 25 minutes, stirring halfway through, until the vegetables are tender and slightly golden.

Preparing the fish

While the vegetables are cooking, season the fish fillets with salt, pepper, and a bit of lemon juice.

In a skillet, heat one tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat. Cook the fish fillets for about 3-4 minutes on each side, until they are nicely browned and cooked through.

Assembly

Remove the vegetables from the oven and arrange them on a serving platter. Place the fish fillets on top of the vegetables. Drizzle with fresh lemon juice and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

Presentation and enjoyment

Serve immediately, accompanied by a lemon wedge for an extra touch of freshness.



The Importance of Consistency In Fitness and Exercise

By Prince Opoku Dogbey

Consistency is the cornerstone of effective fitness and exercise routines. Whether you're aiming to lose weight, build muscle, or improve overall health, sticking to a consistent regimen yields significant benefits.

Physical Adaptations

When you exercise regularly, your body adapts to the increased demands placed upon it. Muscles grow stronger, cardiovascular endurance improves, and flexibility increases. These adaptations occur gradually but steadily over time, reinforcing the importance of maintaining consistency in your workouts.

Mental and Emotional Well-being

Consistent exercise isn't just about physical changes; it also positively impacts mental and emotional well-being. Physical activity releases endorphins, commonly known as "feel-good" hormones, which reduce stress and elevate mood. Regular exercise has been linked to decreased symptoms of anxiety and depression, promoting a more balanced mental state.

Long-term Health Benefits

The benefits of consistency extend beyond immediate physical and mental improvements. Engaging in regular exercise lowers the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. It also helps manage weight and improves overall quality of life, contributing to longevity and vitality.

Establishing a Routine

To achieve consistency, it's essential to establish a realistic and sustainable exercise routine. Choose activities you enjoy and vary your workouts to prevent boredom and plateauing. Set achievable goals and track your progress to stay motivated. Additionally, incorporating exercise into your daily schedule, whether it's morning walks, gym sessions, or home workouts, helps embed physical activity as a regular part of your lifestyle.





Long-term Health Benefits

Maintaining consistency may pose challenges, such as time constraints, fatigue, or lack of motivation. To overcome these hurdles, prioritize exercise as a non-negotiable part of your day, enlist support from friends or fitness communities, and seek professional guidance if needed. Remember, even small efforts add up over time, making consistency key to long-term success in fitness and exercise.

In conclusion, consistency forms the foundation of effective fitness and exercise regimens, offering physical, mental, and long-term health benefits. By committing to regular physical activity and overcoming challenges with determination, you can achieve and sustain a healthier lifestyle.



Sleep

The Unsung Hero of Healthy Living

By Gloria Addo

Did you know that if there was one pill that could altogether improve productivity, memory alertness, reduce the risk of chronic diseases, which is also completely free and natural, it would just be SLEEP?

The fast-paced nature of contemporary living might make it difficult to take breaks and relax. It may make consistently getting a restful night's sleep seem like a fantasy. But sleep is just as vital to overall health as exercise and a balanced diet.

Frequent sleep deprivation increases the risk of numerous illnesses and disorders. These include dementia, obesity, and heart disease, as well as stroke.

According to Dr. David White, Chief Medical Officer at Philips Sleep and Respiratory Care, "a single night of inadequate sleep duration (generally considered to be less than seven hours) can impact mood, performance, and general well-being. Multiple consecutive nights of inadequate sleep have even larger effects."

Studies have found that poor sleep compromises problem solving, all of which play an integral role in achieving optimal productivity.

Further research also proves there is a connection between sleep and overall wellbeing. For example, a study observing more than 4,000 employees at four large American corporations found that participants with insomnia or insufficient sleep experienced the most productivity losses. Deficits included spending three times as much of their day on time management, feeling less

motivated, and struggling with focus, memory, and decision-making.

Taking good care of your sleep is one of the foundations of health, along with diet and exercise. Lack of sleep raises the risk of heart disease, depression, weight gain, inflammation, and illness, among other detrimental health effects. A significant amount of research indicates that you should receive between 7 and 9 hours of sleep every night for best health; however, individual needs vary.

Whatever your personal demands and preferences, it's important to give sleep the same priority that you give your nutrition and physical activity.



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Managing Screen Time for Children

Balancing Health and Technology

By Prince Dogbey



In today's digital age, children are increasingly exposed to screens through devices like smartphones, tablets, computers, and TVs. While technology offers educational and entertainment benefits, excessive screen time can negatively impact children's physical and mental well-being.

Impact on Physical Health

Extended screen time often correlates with sedentary behavior, which can lead to health issues such as obesity, poor posture, and sleep disturbances. Physical activity, crucial for children's development,

may be neglected when screen time dominates their leisure hours.

Impact on Mental Health

Excessive screen time has been linked to issues like decreased attention span, delayed language development in younger children, and increased risk of anxiety and depression in older children and teenagers. The constant stimulation from screens can disrupt sleep patterns and affect mood regulation.

Practical Tips for Parents

- 1. Set Clear Limits:** Establish daily or weekly screen time limits appropriate for your child's age and maturity level. Use parental controls on devices to enforce these limits if needed.
- 2. Create Tech-Free Zones and Times:** Designate areas in the home, such as bedrooms or dining areas, as screen-free zones. Establish screen-free times, such as during meals or before bedtime, to encourage face-to-face interaction and better sleep hygiene.
- 3. Encourage Alternative Activities:** Promote physical activities like outdoor play, sports, or family walks as alternatives to screen time. Engage in creative activities such as arts and crafts, reading, or board games to stimulate imagination and cognitive development.
- 4. Lead by Example:** Be a positive role model by managing your own screen time and demonstrating healthy technology habits. Engage in meaningful activities together as a family without relying on screens for entertainment.

By proactively managing screen time and promoting balanced use of technology, parents can help their children reap the benefits of digital tools while safeguarding their physical health, fostering healthy habits, and supporting their overall well-being. member can thrive physically and enjoy a higher quality of life together.



The Challenges of Male Reproductive Health

By Pavel Chamabe

Male infertility poses a significant challenge for approximately 7% of men of reproductive age worldwide. It is characterized by the inability to conceive a child involuntarily, stemming from various underlying factors that impact fertility.

One of the primary causes of male infertility is sperm-related issues. These can include low sperm count, poor motility (ability to move effectively), and morphological abnormalities that impair the sperm's ability to fertilize an egg. Hormonal imbalances, such as low testosterone levels, also play a role by disrupting sperm production. Additionally, genetic factors like chromosomal abnormalities or mutations can affect sperm quality and production.

Infections and inflammations of the reproductive organs, such as epididymitis or orchitis, contribute to infertility by damaging tissues crucial for sperm transport and production. Another common issue is varicocele, a condition where veins in the scrotum become enlarged, leading to increased testicular temperature and impaired sperm production. Environmental and lifestyle factors, including exposure to toxins, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and obesity, further diminish sperm quality and quantity.

Diagnosis of male infertility typically involves semen analysis to evaluate sperm health, including count, motility, and morphology. Hormonal tests are also conducted to identify any underlying hormonal imbalances contributing to infertility.

Treatment options for male infertility vary based on the specific cause identified:

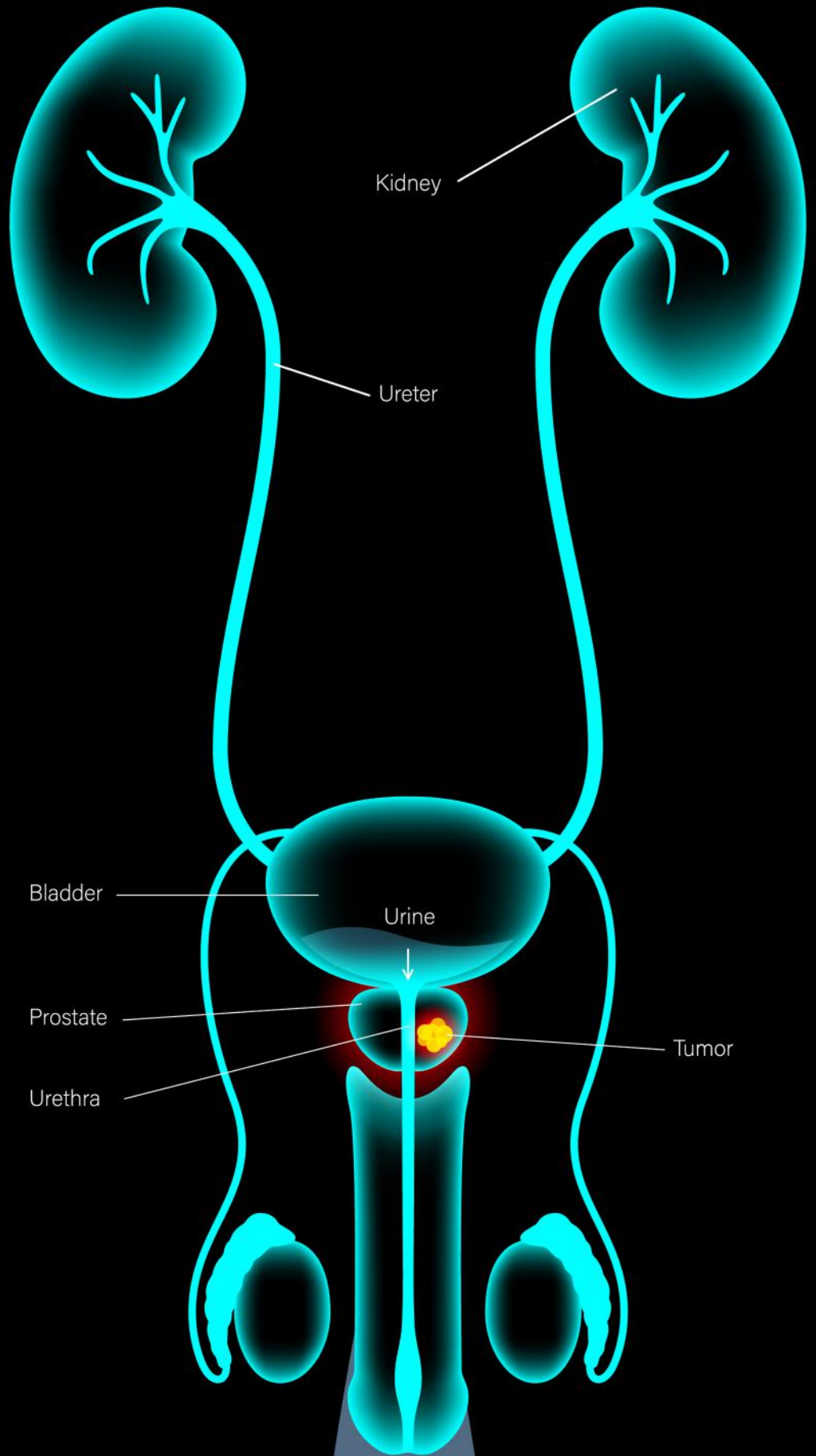
Artificial insemination is suitable when sperm count and motility are adequate, involving the direct placement of sperm into the

uterus to facilitate fertilization. In vitro fertilization (IVF) is employed when sperm quality is lower, where fertilization occurs outside the body before transferring the embryo to the uterus. Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) represents the most advanced technique, where a single sperm is injected directly into an egg to achieve fertilization.

Addressing male infertility requires a comprehensive understanding of its causes and tailored treatment approaches to improve reproductive health outcomes. By addressing both medical and lifestyle factors contributing to infertility, individuals and couples can pursue effective strategies to achieve their family planning goals.

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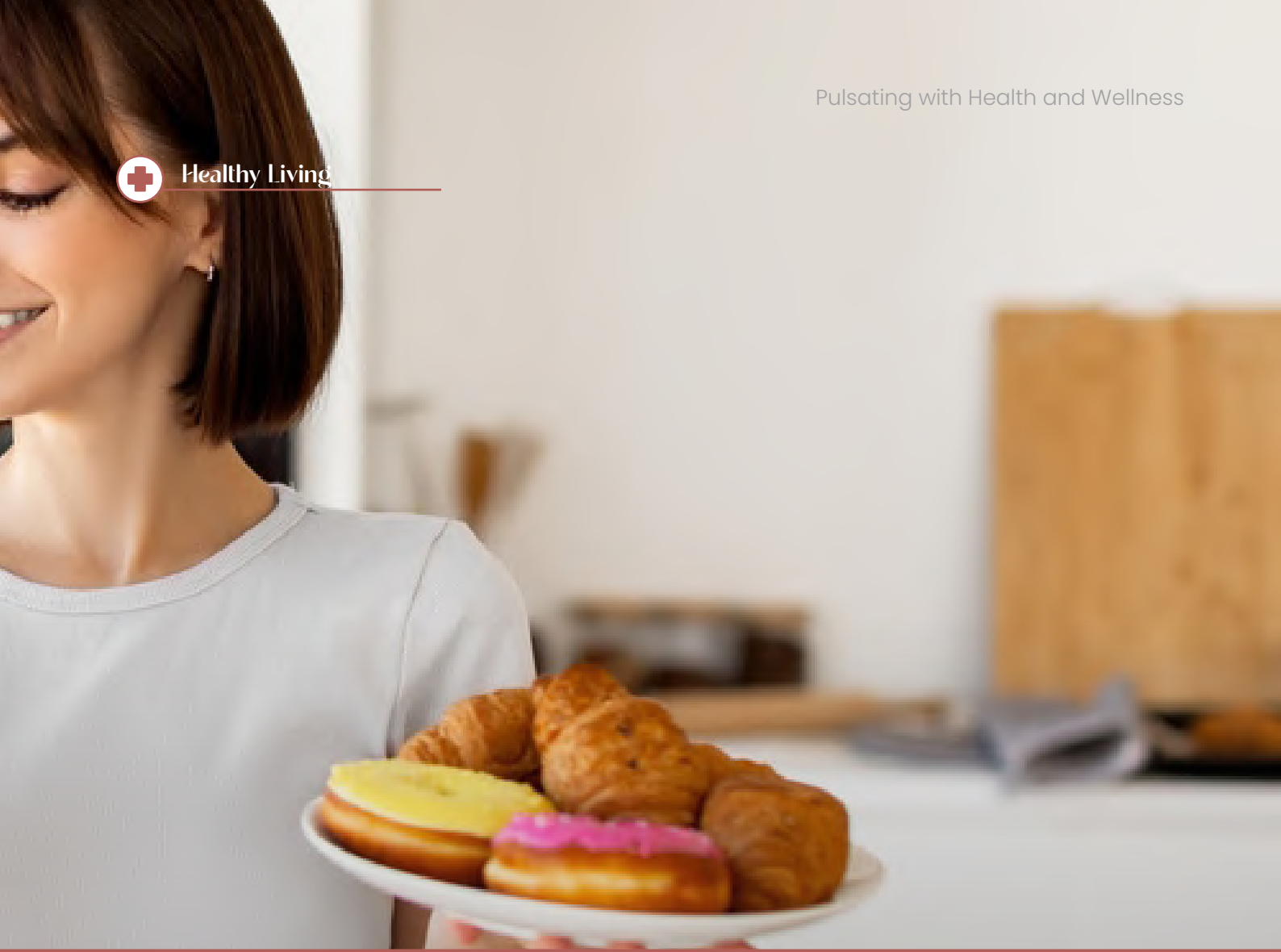




The Importance of a **Balanced Diet** for Overall Health

By Mavis Mensah

Maintaining a balanced diet is crucial for achieving and sustaining good health. It involves consuming a variety of foods in appropriate proportions to provide the body with essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Here's why a balanced diet is essential:



Nutrient Adequacy

A balanced diet ensures that your body receives all the nutrients it needs to function optimally. This includes carbohydrates for energy, proteins for muscle repair and growth, fats for cell function and hormone production, vitamins for immune support, and minerals for bone health and metabolic processes.

Weight Management

Eating a balanced diet can help manage weight effectively. By incorporating a variety of foods rich in fiber, lean proteins, and healthy fats, you feel fuller longer, reducing the likelihood of overeating or consuming empty calories from sugary or processed foods.

Disease Prevention

A well-balanced diet plays a significant role in preventing chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. High-fiber foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can lower cholesterol levels and improve heart health. Meanwhile, antioxidants found in colorful fruits and vegetables help combat oxidative stress and inflammation, reducing the risk of cellular damage and disease.

Establishing a Routine

Fiber-rich foods are essential for maintaining a healthy digestive system. They promote regular bowel movements, prevent constipation, and support a diverse gut microbiome, which is crucial for immune function and nutrient absorption.

Enhanced Mood and Mental Well-being

What you eat can also impact your mental health. Balanced diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids (found in fish and nuts), whole grains, and antioxidants have been linked to improved mood and cognitive function. Conversely, diets high in refined sugars and saturated fats may contribute to mood swings and sluggishness.

In conclusion, a balanced diet is fundamental for overall health and well-being. By making informed food choices and prioritizing nutrient-rich foods, you can support your body's needs, maintain a healthy weight, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases, ultimately promoting a longer, healthier life.



IS ACUPUNCTURE THERAPY AN EFFICIENT TREATMENT?

By Chance Iradukunda



Acupuncture, a traditional Chinese medicine technique practiced for 2000 years, has been validated by modern science for its effectiveness in stimulating reflexes and modulating physiology through peripheral nerves. Despite its proven benefits and increasing research, with 2471 systematic reviews focusing on various therapeutic areas, acupuncture remains underused in clinical practice and health policy.

Acupuncture is known for its simple, efficient techniques and minimal pain, appealing to those seeking natural treatments for acute or chronic issues without invasive procedures or chemical medications. With growing concerns over the negative effects of pharmaceuticals, there's a rising interest in acupuncture as a safer alternative. Many patients prefer acupuncture

for treating diseases that modern medicine also addresses but without the side effects associated with drugs.

Acupuncture has shown moderate to large effects with moderate to high certainty in treating conditions like post-stroke aphasia, neck and shoulder pain, fibromyalgia, non-specific lower back pain, vascular dementia, and allergic rhinitis. However, few healthcare systems include acupuncture in their clinical guidelines or national health coverage. A systematic review of eight trials found significant improvement in functional communication for post-stroke aphasia patients favoring acupuncture. In the UK, limited recommendations exist for using acupuncture to treat chronic tension-type headaches, migraines, and chronic pain.

Despite these promising findings, the integration of acupuncture into

mainstream healthcare faces several challenges. These include a lack of standardized training for practitioners, varying regulatory frameworks across countries, and limited awareness among healthcare providers and patients. To overcome these barriers, there needs to be a concerted effort to educate both the public and medical professionals about the benefits of acupuncture. Additionally, more robust clinical trials and consistent regulatory policies can help establish acupuncture as a credible and widely accepted treatment option. By addressing these challenges, the potential for acupuncture to complement conventional medicine and provide holistic care can be fully realized.



Medical Jargons You Need to Know

BRADYCARDIA: A slower than normal heart rate, typically defined as a heart rate below 60 beats per minute in adults. It can be normal in well-trained athletes but may indicate a problem with the heart's electrical system in others.

CYANOSIS: A bluish discoloration of the skin and mucous membranes due to low levels of oxygen in the blood. It can be a sign of respiratory or cardiovascular issues.

LEUKOCYTOSIS: An increase in the number of white blood cells (leukocytes) in the blood, often indicative of an infection, inflammation, or other conditions such as leukemia.

PROGNOSIS: Muscle pain or soreness. It can result from overuse, injury, or conditions like infections, autoimmune diseases, or fibromyalgia.

PARESTHESIA: An abnormal sensation such as tingling, prickling, or numbness, often felt in the extremities. It can be caused by nerve compression, injury, or neurological conditions like multiple sclerosis.

SEPSIS: A life-threatening condition that arises when the body's response to infection causes widespread inflammation, leading to tissue damage, organ failure, and possibly death. It requires prompt medical treatment.

Understanding these terms can help you better navigate medical conversations and make informed decisions about your health!



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