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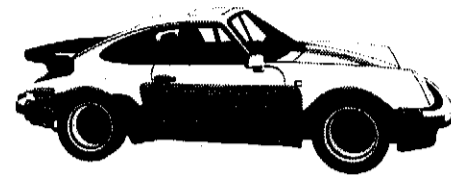
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THE NEXT ISSUE OF
HEALTH CAPSULES
WILL FEATURE AN
IN DEPTH ARTICLE
ON
HYPERTENSION
AND INFORMATION
ON WATER FILTERS.

A HEALTHY DRIVING TIP

Using your headlights when driving during daylight hours is effective in reducing auto accidents. Studies in countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Denmark have been so conclusive that beginning in 1990, Canada will require daytime running lights on all autos made in that country.



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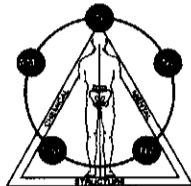
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IMPORTANT SUBSCRIBER INFORMATION

The A.K. Health Bulletin has had a face lift and Health Capsules is the new look. Content, publication date and subscription rates will remain the same, only the looks have changed. ICAK-USA will continue to provide information regarding current health issues and trends. Thank you for your support and interest in Health Capsules. Please feel free to submit any comments or questions to:

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CORRECTION

In our last issue, we stated that calcium lactate is an acidic form of calcium. This should be corrected. Pure calcium lactate is not acidic, but neutral. Many calcium lactate products are made acidic by the addition of citrate.

IS YOUR WATER SAFE?

More and more people today are questioning the quality of their drinking water. "Nobody should just assume their water is safe. They should know for sure," says Joseph Cotruvo, Ph.D. The Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Drinking Water is telling many what's been feared for years.

But how does one really know about the safety of their water? Potential contamination of the water supply is the greatest concern. Most contaminants fall into four categories:

1. Organic chemicals. These include pesticides, herbicides, and trihalomethanes, a by-product of chlorination.
2. Inorganic chemicals. Included in this category are lead, copper, and nitrates.
3. Bacteria. This most common is coliform bacteria.
4. Radiological contamination. This includes radon, radium, and uranium.

For most people, taking steps to analyze their own water is the first procedure. Once some of the questions about the quality of the water are answered, steps necessary to improve it can be taken more logically.

The first question to ask is about the source of your water. For most people, this is either a public water system, or a well.

Individuals on public systems have the

legal right to ask their water supplier for the results of past testing. They must also inform you of any problems, past or present, in meeting federal requirements for safety.

If your source of water comes from a well, you'll have to take the initiative to have the water tested yourself. At times, however, the health department may do some testing on its own, especially when there are local pollution problems. Deeper wells generally have less contamination than more shallow, often older, dug wells. Many problems come from water runoffs and chemical leaks, at times from far away.

Whether you drink public or well water, another potential source of contamination is your pipes. Copper pipes may pose two different problems: the copper mineral itself, and also the lead solder. Because lead is a serious health hazard, it was outlawed in 1986, although it is still used illegally in some new plumbing. This contaminant can be seen at the joints of your pipes as a dull gray sheen. A bright, shiny color means a silver-nickel-tin product was used, which is thought to be much safer. Lead solder is not used on plastic or galvanized piping. If in doubt, a test kit, available in many hardware stores, can also give you the answer.

Copper pipes can also leach the mineral

into your drinking water. High copper occurs in areas where there is soft water, (sometimes referred to as a low pH or high acidity). Although not as serious as lead, excess copper can be a health problem. Disturbances of mineral balance (zinc, iron, and manganese) are possible.

In older houses, usually built before 1930, the plumbing may actually contain lead. These soft, dull gray metal pipes are very dangerous, especially with soft or acidic water. Some cities, like Chicago and New York, have lead connector pipes. These are the sections that connect the city water supply with your home. The water department or city engineer should be able to tell you whether this is the case with your home.

Some homes, especially in the northwestern U.S., have pipes (or tanks) made of galvanized steel. These metals can leach cadmium, and, like copper, may pose health dangers.

Corrosion of pipes can also cause excess contamination. This is typical on the Eastern seaboard of the U.S., where basements are often damp year round. The most common source of corrosion, however, is due to the grounding of your electrical system. This, too, is easy to inspect. As simple

UNDERSTANDING OBESITY

A study in the *International Journal of Obesity* (vol.10, 1986) showed that too many weight conscious people get most of their dietary information from popular magazines. And worse still, many doctors are told by patients that they are following certain dietary advice in advertisements from TV, radio, magazine, and newspapers. These two sources grossly misinform individuals about the facts of being overweight.

In another study published in the *International Journal of Eating Disorders* (vol.3, 1984), it was revealed that 75% of the information in articles on dieting was unreliable.

Fortunately, certain basic facts about being overweight do exist:

- ✓ Being overweight or obese is not usually due to overeating. Actually, most overweight people eat very little, relative to their thin counterparts. (Actually, it's not unusual for a slim individual to consume in excess of 3,000 calories a day and maintain their weight.)
- ✓ Dieting, through caloric restriction, may temporarily reduce the size of fat cells, but it does not decrease their number.
- ✓ Probably most overweight and many obese individuals have a lowered metabolism which is partly or mostly responsible for their condition. Dietary restriction not only creates the risk of nutritional deficiency, it also typically slows the metabolism further. This is the reason why dieters classically gain back their weight, plus more, following a crash program. And almost all diet plans are of this short term, "quick loss" type.

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Find out from a reputable professional if your metabolism is low. (Often, a low temperature — below 98.6 degrees F — indicates a sluggish metabolism.)
- Consider easy exercise as a healthy means of raising your metabolism and "burning fat." More intense forms of exercise often will not do this.
- Be sure to eat breakfast as part of a balanced diet. Also, don't be afraid to eat a variety of natural fats, such as butter, cream, vegetable oils, and eggs.
- Learn as much as you can from reliable sources. Ask your nutritionally-oriented doctor for recommendations.

In our next issue, we will discuss "A Healthy Way to Lose Fat."

POLONIUM, LEAD, AND CIGARETTE

The fact that cigarette smoking causes cancer and coronary heart disease is well known and documented. Both tar and nicotine have been implicated in these disorders. But now, more and more indicators show another deadly ingredient in cigarette smoke: radiation.

The increasing evidence is showing that alpha radiation, the most damaging type, in tobacco promotes changes in normal cells which result in cancerous growth. So says research associate Lynn Campbell of the American Council on Science and Health.

The source of this radioactivity comes from two substances: polonium-210 and lead-210.

Polonium-210 results from the decay of radon, a substance produced from naturally occurring uranium below the earth. (Radon has also been shown to cause lung cancer.) Tobacco contains substantial amounts of polonium which produces alpha radiation, and cigarette smoke helps deliver it to the

cells of the smoker and non-smoker alike. Children, because of their rapid growth, are especially susceptible to harmful effects of alpha radiation of tobacco smoke in the air.

The 1982 Surgeon General's Report cited several studies which verified the presence of radioactive polonium-210 in tobacco smoke.

Lead-210, another radioactive atom dangerous to human health, has also been found in tobacco. Like polonium-210, it too directly affects living cells via alpha radiation in tobacco smoke. But unlike polonium-210, lead-210 is very concentrated in

tobacco.

Many believe that the alpha radiation produced in tobacco smoke from both polonium-210 and lead-210 is a dominant factor in the development of lung cancer. It's reported that 325,000 people a year die not just from lung cancer, but coronary heart disease and other problems related to cigarette smoking.



QUESTIONS FROM OUR READERS...

Q. I enjoyed your article on Free Radicals in the last issue of the AKHB. I have a problem with cataracts, which my doctors says may eventually need surgical correction. Is there any relation between cataracts and free radicals? A.L.

A. There is a definite relationship between cataracts and nutrition. Studies show that carotenoids (such as beta-carotene), vitamins C, E, and B-2, selenium, and other nutrients — the antioxidants — have a place in the treatment of cataracts. Of course, a good diet containing these nutrients is the best deterrence, supplementation to those afflicted is the optimal individualized approach. If you or your doctor would like scientific references for this subject, we'd be happy to supply them.

EDITORIAL

Dr. Philip Maffetone

For many years, the public has had its share of scares regarding foods that maim, pollution that disintegrates, and even toys that kill. From chemicals that cause cancer to natural foods that do the same, too many people either live in terror, or don't care about their health. While many of these problems stem from greed, one philosophy should become a rule of thumb: if there is any reasonable question regarding the safety of anything, by any sensible group who would not benefit directly or indirectly from any action taken then restrictions must be established. In other words, rather than waiting for enough people to be adversely affected by some questionable ingredient, it shouldn't be used. It can be as simple as that.

Scientists typically perform extensive testing on new products. Animals are often the target of the first line of "in vivo" experiments. Sometimes, real people become another group used to observe if any ill health problems develop as a result of using chemical X. But following this relatively short time trial, the entire population may be exposed. Essentially, we all become the test group used to observe the long term harm. At the same time, the product, or chemical, is often being sold at immense profits.

In addition to denying a new product or chemical entry to the market if its health affects are questioned, specificity should also prevail. Fluoride is a good example. This substance has long been thought to help in the prevention of tooth decay. Although the specific targeted group is children, fluoride is added to the general water supply. As a result, everyone, rather than just those susceptible, is exposed to fluoride whether they need it (or want it) or not. As Dr. George Goodheart says, "don't put it in the water, put it in the candy," where the specific need is thought to exist.

Is Your Water Safe?

Continued From Page 1

as this may be, electrical grounds should never be attached to your water pipes.

Hot water potentially can leach lead, and other contaminants, out of pipes which normally may not be a problem. If in doubt about lead in your water, use cold water for cooking.

Although the most accurate method of analyzing your water is through a lab, observing the stains in your sink may be a clue for some contaminants. The exception is lead, which won't render any discoloration. Copper, however, will produce a blue-green stain, and iron a brown streak.

Having your water tested by a competent laboratory will remove all the guess work regarding its safety. Samples should be taken from a frequently used tap, such as in the kitchen. A morning sample would generally have the highest levels of mineral contamination, as water sitting in the pipes all night tends to accumulate these substances. As stated above, other toxic chemicals can be part of an unhealthy contaminated water supply.

The health department may test your water without charge. However, if your area has never had a problem, they may not. If, on the other hand, other water sources in your area have been contaminated, or if several members of your household have symptoms which may relate to contaminated water (such as diarrhea, vomiting, or seemingly bizarre problems), the health department will most likely do a thorough testing. At the least, they can give you the names of reputable labs in your area where you can get your water tested for the various contaminants. These labs use EPA standards, and although some feel their ranges

Bridging the Gap

In this new column, we will take a look at interesting scientific/medical articles from professional journals and explain them in easy-to-understand language. When we "bridge the gap," we find out how much great information is really known about being healthy, but never gets out into the "public sector."

In this edition of the *Health Capsules*, we focus on an article in *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise* (vol.21, No. 1, 1989) entitled, "Exercise reverses depressed metabolic rate produced by severe caloric restriction." Essentially, the title means that "dieting" slows the body's metabolism, and that exercise can correct that problem.

One of the problems with "dieting" is that the body slows itself down excessively. If you're trying to lose weight, for example, this slowed metabolism actually causes you to store body fat. Most people who have dieted find that although there is some initial weight loss, the weight not only returns in time, but there is an addition of even more weight.

In this study, 500 calories-a-day diets slowed bodily processes down by 87%! This is a dramatic depression in body function. Using 1000 calorie diets, metabolism decreased by 24%. When one wishes to lose weight in the form of fat, the metabolism must be increased in order to accomplish this feat.

The most effective way to increase the metabolism and increase fat loss is through easy exercise. This study showed that with the addition of only a few minutes of daily exercise, a decreased metabolism was prevented. The subjects jogged, swam, or rode stationary bicycles at 60% of their maximum effort.

A final note regarding dieting: There are many important nutrients necessary for "burning off" that extra body fat. Too often restricting food intake results in missing out on some, or all, of those necessary nutrients.

of normal are too conservative, at least you are assured of accurate testing. Don't take your own water samples. The lab should provide its own containers, as some samples need to be properly preserved.

Costs for these tests will vary. Some labs may charge anywhere from \$5 for one test, and up to \$250 for several dozen tests.

Certain levels of many contaminants are obviously not a good sign. You may wish to inform the health department as to the levels of those substances, especially since they may be coming from a septic or underground gas tank some distance away.

In some instances, such as high lead content, you may ask your doctor about testing the levels in your blood. This year the EPA will change the standard for this toxic metal from 50 parts per billion (ppb) to 10 ppb when testing home levels. But even at low levels, a long term build up in the body is always a possibility. Children are most susceptible to lead toxicity.

If you still have questions about your water, the EPA has a "Drinking Water Hotline" in Washington, D.C. Its toll free number is 800-426-4791. They can provide you with a list of contaminants and their allowable levels.

If you find contaminants in your water supply, there are several things you can do to remedy the problem. If the source can be changed, such as your septic or someone dumping toxic waste, this becomes the priority. In the instance where the source is within your home, or other circumstances which are difficult to change, a water filtering system can usually solve your problem. We will deal with this topic in our next edition.