Connecticut Orthopedic Update

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Weight Lifting Is Key For All Ages

Women who are afraid that weight lifting will risk growing muscles like a man's are not only wrong, but are missing out on one of the best ways to reshape and strengthen their bodies, according to a UConn professor's article on weight lifting, published in the ***American College of Sports Medicine***. Another study from Louisiana State University says people who work sufficiently hard at weight training, are building muscle that is more efficient, with more mitochondria, the cell's energy factories. The research also shows the muscle is better at using fat for fuel and better at allowing people to use insulin to clear sugar from the blood, reducing susceptibility to diabetes. Weight lifting can also help with problems of aging, says the National Institute of Aging. Older people with osteoarthritis of the knee had less pain and improved mobility when they strengthened their leg muscles, working on those that support the knee.

Helping To Ease Pain of Arthritis

Researchers in Japan and the United States studying tumor growth in cancer patients may have found a way to spell relief for rheumatoid arthritis sufferers. Their research showed that tumor growth in cancer patients is dependent on the growth of new blood vessels that cause cell proliferation, called angiogenesis. This process can be inhibited by a substance called endostatin. Researchers found that the angiogenesis observed in tumor growth is nearly identical to that of patients with rheumatoid arthritis. Researchers believe if endostatin can inhibit angiogenesis in cancer patients, it should be considered as a treatment therapy for RA as well.

Being Fit Is Really Good For Heart

A physically active and fit lifestyle is conducive to preventing heart attacks, says a new preliminary University of Utah study of women from three ethnic groups and different fitness levels. To measure their fitness level, the women underwent a treadmill test during which the speed and elevation was increased every two minutes until they reached a point of exhaustion. Researchers found lower levels of C-reactive protein (CRP) among the most fit Caucasian and Native-American women compared with their less fit peers. An elevated CRP is associated with a two- to five-fold increase in the risk of a heart attack. The study failed to show the same correlation in African-American women.

Growth Plate Fracture Risk For Kids

A child's bones are at risk of a unique injury called a growth plate fracture, says the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Growth plate fractures require immediate attention because the long-term consequences include limbs that are crooked or of unequal length. The growth plate is an area of developing tissue near the ends of long bones that regulates and helps determine the length and shape of the mature bone. Although all children who are still growing are at risk, girls between the ages of 11 and 12, and 14-year-old boys are especially vulnerable. Any child who experiences an injury that results in visible deformity, persistent or severe pain or an inability to move or put pressure on a limb should be examined by a doctor.

Spinal Cord Research Spurs Hope

Human neurons cloned from a human cell line have helped repair injured spinal cords in animals, according to a University of South Florida study in the ***Journal of Neurosurgery: Spine***. Researchers report that once they are transplanted, the cells appear to graft and take the place of the injured cells.

Carpal Tunnel & Genetics Linked

While carpal tunnel syndrome and computer work are often connected, a new study in the journal ***Arthritis & Rheumatism*** links genetic factors to the painful condition. Considered by many as a repetitive strain disorder, the authors suggest that genetics may account for nearly 50% of a woman's risk of developing carpal tunnel syndrome. The study showed that identical twins were more likely to share carpal tunnel syndrome symptoms compared with fraternal twins.

Connecticut Orthopedic Update is published by Connecticut Family Orthopedics, 33 Hospital Ave., Danbury, CT. Comments or suggestions for future editions may be sent to Gabe Carubia, practice administrator, who may be reached at 203-792-5558; via email at ct.fmly.orthopdcs@snet.net; or via fax at 203-731-3213.

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