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FALL 2009

WHAT'S HAPPENING

For a while it seemed that all that was happening was H1N1. With all of the media attention we considered not discussing H1N1 or the vaccine. Would we just be adding to the over-coverage, to peoples' panic and fears? In the end, it was apparent that the issue was of enough concern to our patients that it was worth addressing. John and Lindsay will give you a couple more viewpoints on this controversial issue.

We always try to write on topics of interest to our patients. If you have anything you would like to see in future newsletters please call the office.

CLINIC UPDATES

Holiday Hours

The clinic will be closed on the follow days:

- Thursday December 10*
- Tuesday December 15*
- Thursday December 24 & Friday December 25*
- Monday December 28 & Tuesday December 29*
- Thursday December 31 – closed at 12 pm*
- Friday January 1*

Help us and the Environment

In an effort to save paper/plastic we ask that you bring in your own bags to take home purchases. In a further attempt to save paper if you would like to receive the newsletter via email instead of a print copy just let us know.

Reminders

Please be reminded that we cannot provide a diagnosis over the phone. For both patient

and practitioner safety, new complaints generally should be evaluated in the office. Call our office and we can tell you if an appointment is required. Should you require immediate assistance outside of office hours you can contact Telehealth Ontario - a free, confidential telephone service you can call to get general health information from a Registered Nurse. Telehealth can be accessed at 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007. In emergency situations you should still call 911.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Bio-Ag Seminar

This seminar is put on by the agricultural business operating above our clinic. Although the focus is on agricultural issues many of you may find this year's topics of interest.

Bio-Ag Seminar

Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Keynote Speaker: **Dr. John Ikerd**

Since retiring from the University of Missouri in early 2000, Dr. Ikerd spends most of his time writing and speaking out on issues related to sustainable agriculture with an emphasis on the economics of agriculture. His recent book *Small Farms are Real Farms* is a particularly relevant work.

Other Topics – scheduled to include a presentation on vaccination/immunization

Location: Milverton, Ontario

Please register by January 5, 2010 (seating is limited.) Call 1-800-363-5278 for further information and to register (pre-payment required).

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JOHN'S MESSAGE

H1N1: MENACE OR MYTH (OR JUST PLAIN FEAR-MONGERING)?

If you've grabbed a newspaper, turned on your TV or radio or been on-line over the past few weeks you've probably heard more than enough about the H1N1 swine flu pandemic that's sweeping the nation. Sources would have us think we are in a state of emergency with no hope in sight - except for the one long-awaited magic bullet that will save the day, the H1N1 vaccine.

Excuse me, but let's stop for a moment and do a reality check. To date, the swine flu pandemic has been reported to have claimed 6000 lives worldwide since early April (reported by the World Health Organization as of November 1). The regular, non-swine flu has reportedly claimed 13,000 people in the U.S. since January 2009. In Canada approximately 4000 die from the non-swine flu each year. How is it, then, that there is such hysterical panic about this killer swine flu?

It is estimated that at least 50 million people in North America get the flu each season (November to March). Children are two to three times more likely than adults to get sick with the flu. More than 100,000 people are hospitalized and roughly 20,000 people die from the flu and its complications every year. As for the risk posed to otherwise healthy young children, they are 20 times more likely to be killed by a car than by the H1N1 virus, says chief medical officer of health for Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Dr. Richard Schabas.

The truth is, people will catch the flu when they are susceptible to it (when their immunity is low) and a few of those people may die from complications of the flu. The flu shot gives no *guaranteed* protection from the flu (you can still get the flu even though

you've had your flu/H1N1 shot(s)). There is no research to support the statement being spread that 'The flu shot is your best defense against the flu'. There are no studies to indicate how effective the vaccine is at preventing the flu, let alone that it is safe. In fact, the manufacturer of the vaccine, GlaxoSmithKline (who by the way has been given the responsibility of doing their own safety testing on this \$50 billion goldmine of an experiment) has actually stated, "Clinical trials will be limited due to the need to provide the vaccine to governments as quickly as possible. Additional studies will therefore be required and conducted after the vaccine is made available." This vaccine contains mercury (labeled as thimerosal) and formaldehyde, which can have nerve-damaging, cancer-causing and immune-suppressing effects. It's not surprising that reactions to the flu-shot and other vaccines are not uncommon. The following is taken directly from the Health Canada website concerning the H1N1 vaccine used in Canada:

"As with all medicines, AREPANRIX™ H1N1 can cause side effects. The very common and common side effects are usually mild and should only last a day or two.

Very common (may occur with more than 1 in 10 doses):

- Pain at the injection site
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Redness or swelling at the injection site
- Shivering
- Sweating
- Aching muscles, joint pain

Common (may occur with up to 1 in 10 doses):

- Reactions at the injection site such as bruising, itching and warmth
- Fever
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Feeling sick, diarrhea

Uncommon (may occur with up to 1 in 100 doses):

- Dizziness
- Generally feeling unwell
- Unusual weakness
- Vomiting, stomach pain, uncomfortable feeling in the stomach or belching after eating
- Inability to sleep
- Tingling or numbness of the hands or feet
- Shortness of breath
- Pain in the chest
- Itching, rash
- Pain in the back or neck, stiffness in the muscles, muscle spasms, pain in extremity such as leg or hand

Rare (may occur with up to 1 in 1000 doses):

- Allergic reactions leading to a dangerous decrease of blood pressure, which, if untreated, may lead to shock. Doctors are aware of this possibility and have emergency treatment available for use in such cases
- Fits
- Severe stabbing or throbbing pain along one or more nerves
- Low blood platelet count which can result in bleeding or bruising

Very Rare (may occur with up to 1 in 10,000 doses):

- Vasculitis (inflammation of the blood vessels which can cause skin rashes, joint pain and kidney problems)
- Neurological disorders such as encephalomyelitis (inflammation of the central nervous system), neuritis (inflammation of nerves) and a type of

paralysis known as Guillain-Barré Syndrome."

Looking at the even bigger picture of our health-care system as far as threats to public health, it should be noted that 76,000 Americans are hospitalized and 7,600 die every year from taking Aspirin and other anti-inflammatory pharmaceutical drugs. And that's just one group of drugs. What are we panicking about again?

The best protection against the flu is a healthy immune system. Healthy immunity comes from getting enough rest, limiting your stress (which all this media fear-mongering is not helping), and eating a nutritious diet. Such a diet should include a variety of immune-boosting foods such as garlic, onions, ginger root, and organic vegetables and fruits, while avoiding immune-suppressing 'foods' like sugar and artificial colours, flavours and sweeteners.

One way of maintaining good health is to ensure the body has an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals. Nutrient requirements vary from one individual to the next, but any formula for the immune system should contain: Vitamin A, Beta carotene (provitamin A), Vitamin C, Vitamin D, Vitamin B6, and Zinc. Additional protective measures for preventing any sort of bacterial or viral infection or flu may include the use of homeopathic remedies such as 'Thymuline' (to boost immunity) and 'Influenzinum' (to reduce susceptibility to flu viruses.)

Herbs such as Echinacea and Astragalus are also helpful in improving your resistance to germs this flu season.

If we've learned one thing from the H1N1 pandemic it's the power of the media; how the masses can be swayed and manipulated to do certain things such as partake in risky drug (vaccine) testing trials for the profit of big pharma. This may sound unbelievable. I'll let you look at the numbers and do the math to see for yourself. Wishing a safe, healthy and happy season ahead.

LINDSAY'S MESSAGE LINDSAY BAST, B.Sc., N.D.

H1N1 CONTINUED....

To be clear, it is not our position to tell anyone to get or not get a vaccination. This must be an individual decision based on your beliefs of risks and benefits. As naturopaths one of our principles is "To teach the principles of healthy living and preventative medicine, by sharing knowledge with patients and encouraging individual responsibility for health." We encourage you to get as many perspectives as possible but to view all of them, including ours, with a critical eye. With information so readily available from so many sources (and with many different opinions) it is becoming more important to examine sources of information and question where *their* information came from.

Without a doubt the H1N1 virus can cause significant illness, or in some tragic cases death. It is not something to be ignored and to separate ourselves from these incidences may seem harsh. However we must take an objective view.

Health Canada reports that 75% of deaths attributed to H1N1 are associated with underlying health conditions. It is likely this is an underestimation as data isn't available in some instances. This emphasizes the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and immune system. It has been argued by some that these underlying health conditions may be more accurately considered the cause of death than the H1N1 virus itself.

When examining overall numbers of infected people it is important to keep in mind that testing (i.e. lab confirmation of H1N1) does not occur in the majority of people. It is assumed that influenza like illness (ILI) is H1N1. Additionally, most mild cases of the flu

will never be documented, as the symptoms are not severe enough to seek medical attention. This will lead to an overall under reporting of total cases thus making it seem as though the cases that are lab confirmed are more severe (that is, a larger proportion of infections will appear to lead to hospitalizations and deaths).

Some people may argue that vaccination, which aims to prevent an illness, is very 'naturopathic' in nature. As mentioned, one of our principles is to teach preventative medicine. However the current composition of many vaccines, and the uncertainty surrounding the H1N1 vaccine may oppose perhaps the most fundamental principle of naturopathic medicine "First, to do no harm, by using methods and medicines that minimize the risk of harmful side effects." It is not within the scope of this article to fully investigate, however there are often several harmful components (although in very low amounts) included in vaccines and some speculation that vaccination may not allow for proper development of a person's immune system.

In addition to some suggestions given by John above, we encourage you to review some previous newsletters, specifically the Fall 2007 issue which discusses *Immune System Health* and *Flu and Flu Vaccine*. This issue is available online at www.greenwoodclinic.ca, or through our office by request.

For a more individualized plan call the office to schedule a visit with your naturopath today.

Note: The information provided in this newsletter is not intended to treat or diagnose any condition. Please see your health care provider before beginning any new treatment.