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WOW ! Summer is fast coming to a close. Let's look at some recent medical updates. Interesting findings on some common drugs in use by millions.

This headline grabbed my attention: "Muscle Injury from Statins can hide behind Normal Blood Tests." This was a fairly small study but it appeared to be well controlled and had solid objective evidence to back it up.

Some people on statins, (such as Lipitor) for high cholesterol, experience muscle symptoms. When that happens the patient should tell the prescribing physician. The patient should then get a creatine phosphokinase (CPK) test to check for muscle damage.

This study found that the test actually missed half of the patients with verified muscle damage by biopsy. Again this study was small but even one of the 20 asymptomatic controls was also found to have some muscle damage. The authors of the study don't know if the muscle problems resolved over time. (They need a long term study). Lots more research needs to be done with this one to learn how to screen people who are susceptible to this problem.

Here's perhaps a good way to boost memory and learning ability in senior citizens. A study presented at the Alzheimer's Association 2009 Conference in Vienna stated that 900 mg of DHA, (found in oily fish and fish oil or in DHA capsules) could double their DHA blood levels while at the same time reduced errors in memory tests by almost half. 900 mg of DHA is a significant amount. Depending on capsule size, about 6 DHA capsules per day, with fish oil capsules that could be 4-10 per day. Check the label on the bottle.

And another study points out how critical it is to have a correct diagnosis before being prescribed a medication. In this study healthy subjects were given Nexium (used for gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD) {Otherwise known as heart burn} and then taken off. Guess what - almost half of them developed GERD. So if your physician puts you on Nexium for heartburn, but it is not, don't worry, then you will have it. Then he/she will be right. So confusing. (Patient's should have endoscopic evidence of GERD before being put on long term Nexium)

Please say healthy. The risks of the disease and sometimes the treatment are too high.

Quote of the email: When you start coasting, there is only one way to go
and that's downhill