A cup of Joe may cut risk of diabetes

Researchers say they can't fully explain the results, but their latest finding comes after a string of articles that have raised questions about the health benefits of coffee. Men who drank five or more cups of coffee a day were 20% less likely to develop type 2 diabetes, according to a study published in the journal *Diabetes Care*. The study followed more than 500,000 people for 20 years and found that those who drank more coffee had a lower risk of developing the disease. However, the researchers say the findings need further study and that more research is needed to determine the exact role of coffee in preventing diabetes.
Townsmull fluoridation issue again

Whitehall and Montague mixed adding fluoride to city water in the 1970s.

By Susan K. Treutler
Grand Rapids Press News Service

"Not in my water," was the battle cry in the 1970s when Whitehall and Montague considered adding fluoride to municipal water supplies in order to save the teeth of the citizens.

And now, after all these years without the chemical tooth decay inhibitor, the Muskegon County Health Department is encouraging the cities to rethink their prohibition.

Since fluoride was banned, White Lake area children have had to endure regular fluoride "swishes" in school so they can get the benefits not provided by city water. It also has likely had a "pocketbook effect" in the area; one local dentist said introduction of fluoride would certainly lower dental bills of his patients.

All municipal water supplies in the county provide fluoridation except Whitehall and Montague. The health department initiated a meeting with officials of the cities recently to begin chewing on the issue.

While the talks are in the very early stages, Montague City Manager Jerold Graham said: "It is my understanding that if we were to do it, we would have to put it to a vote of the people."

Graham said Whitehall Mayor Norm Ullman "suggested the health department begin laying the groundwork to educate the public as to the need. Ultimately, it will be up to the people if they want it."

The issue could be put on the ballot in August or November if there is enough interest in one or both cities, Graham said.

Fluoride strengthens tooth enamel and inhibits acid production, which causes tooth decay, health officials said. It also is believed to protect tooth roots and prevent gum disease leading to tooth loss.

Health department officials said increasing the number of communities with fluoridated water is a national goal.

"We're looking at maybe several community forums to talk about fluoride and the history of it," said Ken Kraus, county health department director.

Both cities have ordinances banning fluoride from municipal water. In the 1970s, the councils of the two cities approved the bans, opting out of the state fluoridation program.

Ullman said he vividly recalls the heated debates at city meetings three decades ago when the issue raised the ire of a large and vocal anti-fluoride contingent.

One man even wrapped the American flag around himself saying he would never let fluoride in his city water. Some of the arguments heard here and nationwide were that allowing a chemical to be introduced into the water supply would make it too easy for saboteurs for poison the populace.

One local dentist pushed for the addition of fluoride to the water, but others were either less enthusiastic or didn't want to get involved in the issue, Ullman recalled.

"Grand Rapids and Muskegon in 1945 were the nation's test cities for fluoride. The 15-year test compared tooth decay among Grand Rapids residents, who would get fluoride, and Muskegon residents, who would not. The cities were chosen in part because they shared a common water supply — Lake Michigan.

But long before the planned 15-year test was complete, other cities — seeing the dramatic results Grand Rapids was having — began fluoridating their water.

In 1951, Muskegon's water supply was fluoridated. Muskegon Heights joined in a year later. Grand Haven added it in 1959, Fremont in 1968.

Dentists, in written reports, said the results were incredible. Prior to fluoridation, it was common to see people as young as 25 who needed dentures, and tooth decay among children was rampant.

But the success of fluoridated water elsewhere didn't influence Whitehall or Montague, whose city councils opted not to add it to the water, or Hart and Pentwater where voters went to the polls and say no to fluoride.

Fluoride is a naturally occurring chemical found in underground aquifers. Montague contended in 1973 that it had enough in its water supply to protect the public without adding more.

It also is present in some water supplies of numerous other communities where it is not added to the water. But naturally occurring fluoride is found in amounts too small to do much good.

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**FLUORIDE**

Grand Rapids' test showed dramatic results.
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Researchers find clinical trial participants are full of lies
Poll on Internet filters called unfair, slanted

The introduction to a poll question concerning library filters that has caused a stir in Holland:
Local public outcry for requiring libraries to install Internet filters on public computers was motivated in part by a tragic rape of a 10-year-old girl at a public library in Muskegon. Following that, citizens were shocked to learn that Holland's library has no filtering software on its publicly accessible computers.
The caller then asked, "If it makes you more or less likely to vote for or to vote against the ordinance?"

POLL
Survey on Internet filters called unfair

CONTINUED FROM A1
sttering, said that he has heard from several residents who were polled last week. He said that proponents of Internet filters have tried to associate the rape of the 10-year-old girl to the need for filtering.
"There are well-meaning people on both sides of the issue but it's troublesome when people think the ends justify the means," Noordijk said. "It's really untruthful to bring up the Muskegon girl. That makes me very uncomfortable. I've heard Gary Glenn say it several times."

Glenn is president of the American Family Association of Michigan, which worked with its local chapter to put a proposal for filters on the Feb. 22 ballot.

Muskegon County Prosecutor Tony Tague said that the Nov. 2 rape of the 10-year-old girl in the Holland public library had nothing to do with the Internet. An 18-year-old is awaiting trial in the case.
"It was a random event," he said.

But Tague said that he favors Internet filters at public libraries to protect children from accessing inappropriate material.
"I do believe that filters would be a good idea," he said. "Unfortunately, it's difficult to totally supervise children in a public setting. We have to weigh the rights to freedom for adults versus the dangers to children."

At another point, the survey states: "The American Library Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and several other groups including the Gay & Lesbian Alliance oppose requiring libraries to install Internet filters."

Daniel Gale, director of the Lesbian and Gay Community Network of Western Michigan said the survey is "sensationalizing" by including that statement.
"Because conservative West Michigan has such a problem with gays and lesbians, they're using that as more ammunition to get the general public to answer their plea," Gale said.

Lansing pollster Ed Sarpolus said the polling method "smacks of something unethical" and the AFA's refusal to release all questions from the survey casts a shadow on the results.

"Any time a pollster is refusing to show you the questions of the survey, you should doubt the data," said Sarpolus, of the firm EPIC-MRA.

The wording of the question makes the survey sound like political "push polls." In push polls, campaigns try to influence public opinion rather than gauge it, Sarpolus said.

"There was no reason he had to do that," Sarpolus said of Glenn's poll. "He could have achieved the same thing without doing that."

But Glenn defended the poll which included 24 questions: posed to 300 city residents Jan. 26 by the Florida-based Marketing Research Institute.

Glenn said the poll is being paid for by the pro-filtering local group called Holland Area Families Voting Yes! To Protect Our Children, although he would not reveal the cost.

Glenn said he wasn't surprised to hear that people think oppose filters are upset with the poll. Still, he called the poll a "scientific sampling of where people stand."

Glenn said the sampling was not a "push poll" or biased poll because they would have called every voter to conduct such a poll.
"If it's a push poll, you are actually trying to change people's minds," he said.

In this case, the poll asked residents about different themes.

Glenn thinks the question that mentions the Muskegon rape is legitimate. The AFA never said the rape was specifically motivated by Internet pornography.

Glenn released selected questions that were asked 300 Holland residents.

Among them: "As pointed out in a recent 'Wall Street Journal' article, the debate over Internet filters is becoming a national issue. Now, the focus is on Holland, which has the first ballot issue in the nation."

It also says that the American Civil Liberties Union, and other groups including the Gay & Lesbian Alliance oppose requiring libraries to install Internet filters."
DOONESBURY by Garry Trudeau

IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S A NATURAL SITUATION FOR A MAN TO BE FREE.

DON'T ARGUE WITH THAT, DAVID.

WELL, THERE'S NO TIME ANYWAY, I Gotta GET TO MY FRIENDLYS BEFORE THEY CLOSE.

WHAT ABOUT DONUTS FOR MY BLOG REVIEW?

FROM MY FRIENDLYS, I THOUGHT YOU WERE REVIEWING KREME KARE.

WHAT'S KREME KARE?

TO GET DONUTS FOR MY BLOG REVIEW.

I AM NEED A CONTROL GROUP. ALWAYS WITH THE FANCY SCIENCE GO WITH YOUR GUT, DAVID.

GR Press  Aug. 2005
Early treatment may rein in multiple sclerosis

By Linda A. Johnson
The Associated Press

One of the drugs used to control multiple sclerosis also sharply slows the rate at which people develop the crippling nerve disease, according to researchers.

The finding, from an international study halted early because the results were so strong, could help thousands of patients who currently don't get treatment until they have substantial brain or nerve damage.

"It's a very important finding because it really shows if one starts treatment early on, one can change the fate of a patient," delaying or even preventing the onset of the disease, said Dr. Thomas Leist, director of the Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Center at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

"It opens up a new perspective about treatment of multiple sclerosis," said Leist, who was not involved in the study, which was published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

Until now, people who suffer inflammation of nerves in the eye, spinal cord or lower brain — indications that MS might be developing — have not been diagnosed with the autoimmune disorder, let alone treated. The diagnosis only follows a second flare-up elsewhere in the central nervous system.

However, researchers at the State University of New York School of Medicine at Buffalo and about 50 other U.S. and Canadian sites concluded that giving patients a drug called interferon beta-1a within weeks of the first nerve inflammation cut the likelihood of developing MS symptoms within three years by 44 percent.

"Only one-third of patients who gave themselves weekly thigh injections of the drug developed MS within three years, compared with half the patients who injected a harmless substance," Dr. Stephen Reingold, vice president for research programs at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, said the findings will push doctors to promptly order magnetic resonance imaging in patients with an initial nerve flare-up.

One of them, interferon beta-1a, known by the brand name Avonex, is a genetically engineered replica of a naturally occurring human protein said to be the lead researcher, Dr. Lawrence Jacobs, professor of neurology at SUNY-Buffalo and head of neurology at Buffalo General Hospital. It works by reducing inflammation and quieting down the overactive immune system.

Along with delaying the onset of MS, Avonex cut the number of actively inflamed lesions detected by MRI by more than half. It also cut the total volume of such lesions in the nervous system by 21 percent over the comparison patients, Jacobs said.

experiment with placebo
Study shows twins may age differently

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Gwen Sirota and Gay Block are identical twins. When they hit age 60, they thought they still looked alike. After all, identical twins are supposed to age alike, aren't they?

Then a plastic surgeon stunned them with side-by-side photographs: Despite having the same genes, Block actually looked like an older version of Sirota instead of a twin.

"At first I thought he'd touched up the photos," Block recalls. "Then I went, 'Oh my gosh, I really do look older.'"

Block, it turns out, loved to tan, baking on California beaches. She says she smoked marijuana and drank fairly heavily during a stressful period of the 1970s.

Her twin never did any of that. And while genes gave them the same eye wrinkles and smile lines, Block's wrinkles were significantly deeper, with those telltale vertical lip lines from puckering up to smoke, and her skin was coarsened by the sun.

So much for assuming that good genes are enough to fight the ravages of time.

Your doctor — if you didn't hear it from mom or dad first — always have said smoking and too much sun are bad for you. They sow the seeds for cancer and other problems, but it's hard for some people to believe that today's lifestyle choices carry serious consequences down the road.

But Dr. Derrick Antell's new study of twins illustrates that in the nature vs. nurture debate, nurture plays a huge role in how we age. And he argues that, if faced with powerful photographic evidence, more people would kick some bad health habits.

"You can talk until you're blue in the face about all the health hazards" of habits like smoking and tanning, said Antell. "But tell them they'll age quicker and not look as attractive, and people will probably listen."

Identical twins are sought by medical researchers struggling to understand the relationship between genetics and the environment on a host of topics, including what makes some people age better than others.

Antell was interested in aging's skin-deep effects. So he traveled to the annual Twins Days Festival in Twinsburg, Ohio, to recruit twins for a study.

A report comparing photographs of his first seven sets of twins, in the Annals of Plastic Surgery, concluded smoking and tanning led a list of environmental factors that over- aged some twins who otherwise led similar lives.

"It's the photographs that are unique. In many ways, a visual message is often a much stronger draw than same-old warnings," said aging expert Dr. Robert Kane of the University of Minnesota.
Fears of mental impairment from heading in soccer largely unfounded

By Marnell Jameson
Health and Fitness News Service

"Hey, Coach! Can we head the soccer ball?" asked a 10-year-old girl during practice.
"If the ball's coming fast, duck. If not, go for it," the coach answered.
While the player's question echoed a hesitation among many soccer parents, the coach's answer reflects the ambivalence surrounding the heading controversy.
Is it safe to hit soccer balls with your head? The latest word, according to the nation's top sports concussion experts, is a qualified yes.
The concern and confusion are understandable.
In a study that sent shock waves through soccer leagues around the world, European researchers reported in 1999 that years of soccer playing may be associated with reduced cognitive abilities.
The study of Dutch amateur and professional soccer players suggested that, when compared with athletes in noncontact sports, the soccer players were, on average, slower at learning and remembering new material.

Study too general.
"The authors generalized that heading was the culprit," said Mickey Collins, assistant director of sports concussion programs at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, "but the study wasn't well-controlled for heading."
The results, he said, could have come from lifestyle or a number of other factors.
That study prompted American researchers to launch their own investigations, none of which found a link between heading and cognitive problems.

Kevin Guskiewicz, director of sports medicine research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, analyzed data he'd been collecting on the school's athletes.
He compared 91 incoming soccer players to 96 incoming athletes who had played noncontact sports. He also tested 53 nonathlete students as a second control group.
The soccer players were no different in neurocognitive abilities than the control groups.
"We did see a higher prevalence of concussion among the soccer players, but that made no difference in cognitive ability," Guskiewicz said.
University of Pennsylvania researchers studied 100 varsity collegiate soccer players before and after 20-minute soccer-heading practice sessions. They found no decrease in mental performance scores after the heading sessions and later published their findings in the Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine.
But couldn't multiple impacts to the head, such as those sustained when repeatedly heading soccer balls, have a degenerative effect on the brain?
"Current scientific literature refutes that as well," said Guskiewicz, who wrote a position paper for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Proper technique the key
"No published study has provided direct evidence that the practice of heading a soccer ball causes long-term deficits in mental function," he wrote.
"Preliminary evidence suggests that, if done correctly, heading a soccer ball is safe."
The American Youth Soccer Organization agrees.
"We tend to be conservative," said Rick Davis, director of player programs for AYSO, "and our stand is that until there's conclusive evidence that heading soccer balls is a problem, we allow it."
AYSO recommends its coaches not teach heading to kids younger than 8, said Davis, "because it's not a necessary part of the game at that level."
Although concussions occur in soccer, they're unlikely to be the result of heading a ball, Guskiewicz said. Most occur in head-to-head, head-to-ground or head-to-goal post collisions.
To put the risk in perspective, 64 percent of all sports-related concussions among high school boys occur in football, 11 percent in wrestling, 6 percent in soccer and 4 percent in basketball, Collins said.
Faith relieves pain

British experiment aims to discover if...
Stop Hangovers Before They Start ...Quickly, Safely And Effectively

The secret is out! This is the world's only patented and all-natural hangover prevention product, that's registered with the FDA and with an unconditional money back guarantee!

You can enjoy any and all alcoholic beverages including beer, win, champagne, mixed drinks, blended drinks and hard liquor worry knowing you won't have to deal with the unpleasant experience of hangover ever again.

This truly unique, one-of-a-kind product is endorsed by medical professionals and consumers alike worldwide for it's remarkable completely eliminate the common hangover. Try this wonderful product today risk-free!

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Sob'r-K™ as a Hangover Remedy: Preliminary Findings of a Double-Blind Study with Bar Patrons

James M. Schaefer, PhD.
James M. Schaefer & Associates, LLC
Schenectady, New York
May 1997

Abstract

Hangover symptoms were measured among fourteen volunteer, paid bar patrons after consuming beverage alcohol in their regular bar setting. Consenting subjects were administered pharmaceutical grade activated carbon Sob'r-K in caplet form, or placebo, before, during and at the end of each of three evenings of drinking in a double-blind research design. A multiple regression analysis was statistically used for the sample using the hangover scores (from the "morning-after") type of activated carbon, compared to the sugar placebo.

Sob'r-K and Hangover Amelioration
One of the few long-term studies to a possible link between stress and breast cancer has been controversial. Some experts have said it blamed women for their disease, and studies in which women with cancer were compared with healthy women have had conflicting results.

After following more than 1,000 women for over a decade, researchers found those who had significant stress in the five years before the study were twice as likely to develop breast cancer as women who didn't.

In 1984, researchers at the Sahlgrenska Academy in Gothenburg, Sweden, examined 1,462 women, ages 38 to 60, and asked them whether they had felt stressed for a month or longer, and if those feelings included tension, fear, anxiety or sleep problems.

Of the 456 who completed the study, 456 reported having experienced significant stress. Twenty-four of those developed breast cancer. Of the 300 who had not experienced serious stress, 24 developed breast cancer.

The study was presented at the recent European Cancer Conference in Copenhagen.
A new study, published in the journal "American Journal of Public Health," suggests that "Doctor's Approaches to Exercise" may not be as effective as previously thought. The study, conducted by researchers from Johns Hopkins University, found that doctors' advice on exercise was often not followed by their patients.

The researchers analyzed data from over 1,000 patients who were diagnosed with heart disease. They found that only 20% of patients followed the exercise recommendations made by their doctors. The study also revealed that doctors were more likely to prescribe exercise to patients with less severe conditions.

The findings are concerning, given that exercise is a well-established treatment for heart disease. The study calls for more research into effective ways to encourage patients to follow exercise recommendations.

"Our results suggest that doctors need to do more to help their patients understand the importance of exercise," said lead author Dr. Jane Smith. "We need to find new ways to engage patients and help them make exercise a part of their daily routine."