

CLINICAL RESEARCH & OSTEOPOROSIS NEWSLETTER

A Publication of New Mexico Clinical Research & Osteoporosis Center, Inc.

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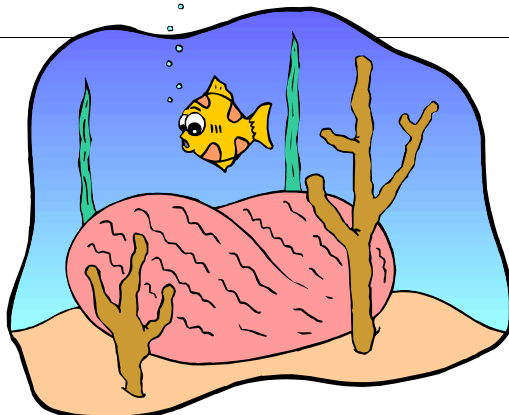
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The Great Coral Calcium Scam!



For as long as humans have existed, there has been a natural and sometimes desperate concern for survival. This has provided endless opportunities for those interested in pursuing another basic human urge- greed. As a result, persuasive individuals with a little bit of knowledge have taken advantage of others in order to make money. In the medical field, these people are commonly called quacks. The scams they put over on an unsuspecting public are at best harmless but expensive, and at worst may deprive people of necessary and effective care or be inherently dangerous.

Consider the hype over coral calcium. In recent years, its “benefits” have been widely promoted on TV, radio, books and online. It has been proclaimed to be the cure for diseases ranging from osteoporosis to cancer, and has been called “the scientific secret of health and youth.” So what is it- cure-all or the snake-oil of the new millennium? Should we all be rushing out to buy it, or is it another scam hoisted on the innocent public?

Coral calcium consists of minerals mined from coral reefs, either live

ones or dead ones, or from the remnants of coral reefs that may form nearby sandy beaches. It consists of the protective shells of coral organisms, which is commonly called limestone. The main ingredient is calcium carbonate, along with some magnesium, other trace minerals, and probably a host of impurities that have precipitated from ocean water. It is well known that the purity of ocean water in many locations is less than ideal. After mining, it is packaged, marketed, and sold at prices that are often quite a bit more expensive than other forms of calcium carbonate.

What is the evidence that coral calcium is more effective than other, less expensive forms of calcium carbonate? There is none. The Mayo Clinic Women’s Healthsource newsletter says, “there is no medical evidence to support any of the health claims made about coral calcium.” What to do? If you need calcium supplements, as many of us do, try one of the other, less expensive, forms of calcium carbonate available in most stores. Stay healthy, and don’t fall for the scams!

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Clinical Research

Our clinical research program is recruiting patients to participate in studies to test new medications and evaluate new uses for currently available drugs. By participating in a study you will have the opportunity to use one of these medications, have free examinations and tests, and receive reimbursement for your time and travel. If this interests you, please take a few minutes to read the major criteria for participation.

If you think you may qualify for a study, ask for Valerie White, the Research Manager, or call the Research Dept. at (505) 855-5505.

Feel free to pass this newsletter to a friend or relative who may be interested. The drug study information will be updated quarterly, since we are continually starting new studies and closing out old ones. If there is nothing for you now, there may be next time.

Postmenopausal Osteoporosis

This is a clinical research study designed to compare two currently marketed drugs for the treatment of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women on the chance of experiencing fractures. If you meet all study entry criteria you may be eligible to participate. The study will last approximately 5 years. Compensation up to \$300 is available to qualified participants.

Qualifications:

Females 50-80 years of age, and
At least 2 years postmenopausal, and
No spinal fractures, and
Have not used estrogen replacement therapy (hormones) within the last month, and
Have no history of cancer, and
Meet all study entry requirements.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome Research Study

This is a clinical research study designed to evaluate the clinical safety, tolerability, and efficacy of an investigational medication in outpatients with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). If you meet all study entry criteria you may be eligible to participate. The study will last approximately 19 weeks. Compensation is available to qualified participants for study participation.

Qualifications:

Male or female, 18 to 65 years of

age.

IBS must be either diarrhea-predominant or alternating diarrhea and constipation.

No known or suspected allergies to any benzodiazepine or any multiple drug allergies.

No history of presence of significant head trauma, myocardial infarction, cerebrovascular accident, bipolar or any psychotic disorder.

Generally in good health.

Meet all other entry criteria.

High Cholesterol Research Study

This is a clinical research study designed to compare the efficacy and safety of an investigational medication that may help reduce cholesterol to two approved cholesterol-lowering medications to achieve the current nationally acceptable cholesterol levels in high-risk subjects with high cholesterol. If you meet all study entry criteria you may be eligible to participate. The study will last approximately 18 weeks. Compensation is available to qualified participants

for study participation.

Qualifications:

Male or female, 18 years of age or older.

Willing to discontinue all cholesterol-lowering drugs.

No uncontrolled hypertension or hypothyroidism.

No cyclic hormone replacement therapy.

No active liver disease or hepatic dysfunction.

Meet all other criteria.

Hypertensive Diabetics

This is a clinical research study designed to evaluate the safety and efficacy of the addition of amlodipine to quinapril or losartan in the treatment of diabetic hypertensive subjects. If you meet all study entry criteria you may be eligible to participate. The study will last approximately 22 weeks. Compensation is available to qualified participants.

Qualifications:

Male or female, age 35 to 80 years.
Diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes,

on stable treatment for at least 3 months.

HbA1C \leq 9.0.

Have hypertension and not on OR must be willing to wash out of anti-hypertensive medication.

No heart attack, coronary artery bypass, or intra-coronary interventions within 6 months.

No donation of blood / blood products for transfusion 30 days before, during, or 30 days after treatment.

Meet all other criteria.

Severe Diarrhea-Predominant Irritable Bowel Syndrome

This is a clinical research study for female subjects with severe diarrhea-predominant irritable bowel syndrome who have failed conventional therapy. If you meet all study entry criteria you may be eligible to participate. The study will last approximately 19 weeks. Compensation is available to qualified participants for study participation.

Qualifications:

Females 18 years of age or older.

Non-childbearing potential or on an acceptable method of contraception.

Diagnosis of severe d-IBS for at least 6 months and failed to respond to conventional IBS therapy.

No current evidence or history of chronic or severe constipation.

No evidence of biochemical or structural abnormality of the digestive tract.

Meet all other entry criteria.



Calendar of Events

Osteoporosis Foundation
of New Mexico
Albuquerque
Osteoporosis Support Group

Free
Educational
Presentations
Second Thursday of every month

Rehabilitation Hospital of New Mexico
(formerly St. Joseph's Rehabilitation Hospital)
505 Elm St NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM



PREVENTING OSTEOPOROSIS

Thursday, January 8, 2004
Jan Newquist, RD, LD
"Dietary Calcium as Your New Year's
Resolution"

Thursday, February 12, 2004
Dr. Elliot Pierce
"Lets Talk About Prevention"

Thursday, March 11, 2004
Stephanie Crook, PT
"How Much is Too Much"

The support group is open to the public.
It is a great opportunity to talk to
osteoporosis experts for as long as
you want.



Consider attending if:

- You have osteoporosis,
- You have a loved one with osteoporosis, or
- You are interested in learning more about osteoporosis.

Call 338-6333 to RSVP
your attendance!

Ask Dr. Mike Lewiecki about . . . OSTEOPOROSIS

Dear Dr. Lewiecki— I am a certified nurse practitioner in a rural ranching area. I see many elderly patients, many of whom have osteoporosis. I think I do a good job of providing for their care, but sometimes I need help. How do I know when to refer an osteoporosis patient to a specialist for a consultation?
Marjorie L., Texas.

Dear Marjorie— I am glad you asked that question, and I appreciate your concern for osteoporosis in your patients. Let me begin by saying that primary care providers, such as you, are very well qualified to handle most of the osteoporosis problems you encounter. However, there are sometimes unusual causes of osteoporosis and difficult management issues that require the care of a physician with special knowledge about osteoporosis. This doctor may have almost any specialty, as long as he or she has an interest and advanced education in this area.

Fortunately, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) has

come to our rescue and provided guidelines on which patients should be referred.

AACE recommends that patients be seen by an osteoporosis specialist when any of the following situations are present:

1. Osteoporosis is unexpectedly severe or there are unusual features at the time of diagnosis.
2. Suspected or known conditions causing osteoporosis.
3. Patient is a candidate for combination therapy, or
4. Intolerant to approved therapies, or
5. Fails to respond to treatment.

I wish you the best of luck in the care of your patients, and trust that these guidelines will help you to make the right decision about the care of your challenging patients.

Sincerely,

Mike Lewiecki

QUALITY BONE DENSITY TESTING

When any medical test is done, it is vitally important to have some assurance that the results are accurate and dependable. It is especially important for bone density tests, where the expected rate of change in response to therapy is often small in proportion to the measurement error of the test itself.

Fortunately, there is an organization dedicated to high quality performance of bone density tests. It is called the International Society for Clinical Densitometry. The ISCD educates clinicians and technologists on all important aspects of bone density testing.

If the technologist doing the test and the doctor interpreting the test have been trained and certified by the ISCD, you can be assured that they have the basic qualifications to provide a good test. If they have a special interest in bone densitometry and stay current on new developments, so much the better.



The Osteoporosis Foundation of New Mexico needs your support! This is a local non-profit 501(c)(3) foundation established to benefit osteoporosis research and education. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation or bequest. Donations may be mailed to Osteoporosis Foundation of New Mexico at 300 Oak St. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. For more information, call Yvonne Brusuelas at (505) 855-5627, or visit the web site at www.osteoporosisfoundationnm.org.