



# The Downing Clinic Newsletter – Fall 2009

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*Acupuncture & Massage & Electrodermal Screening & Reiki & IV Therapy & Reflexology*

*Counseling & Hypnosis & Quality Vitamins & Herbs & Natural Cosmetics & Homeopathic Remedies*

## Prepare Now for H1N1 Virus Protection

On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) signaled that a global pandemic of novel influenza A (H1N1) was underway by raising the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6. This action was a reflection of the spread of the new H1N1 virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus. H1N1 is a milder form of flu, with less severe symptoms than the usual flu seen in the winter months.

You can't avoid exposure entirely but there are a few things you can do to cut down on your exposure to viruses.

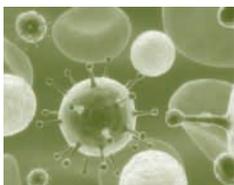
1. Wash your hands often, and turn off the faucet with paper towels, not your clean hands.
2. Use hand sanitizers/wipes. Keep in your car, office and other places for quick access.
3. Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes.
4. It may seem extreme, but avoid crowded areas such as malls and public events, if there is an outbreak in your area.



The best way to stay flu-free is to boost your immune system. One of the best things to do is to get adequate Vitamin D3. It is made in the skin if you are exposed to enough sunlight, but in Michigan from now until the middle of May, the sun isn't strong enough with enough UVB rays to make Vitamin D3 in our skin. Most people need to supplement their Vitamin D3 intake. The recommended dose is 3,000 IU per 100 lbs of body weight.

Another important action is to minimize your sugar intake. Sugar suppresses the immune system. Don't forget that sodas, "sport drinks", and juices are loaded with added sugar. A flu epidemic may be a good time to get rid of that sweet tooth that so many of us seem to have.

The first line of defense in our bodies is specialized white blood cells called natural killer cells.



These are like sentries floating through the blood stream looking for anything foreign. They identify bacteria, viruses, parasites, or anything else that is a potential

pathogen. The natural killer cell engulfs the invader and kills it. To keep this line of defense strong – drink green tea. Just a couple of cups a day helps to prime your immune system. Colostrum and Beta Glucan are two supplements that specifically support the natural killer cells making them more active and increasing their numbers.

The Downing Clinic prefers to boost the immune system in advance of the flu season. We have several products which we recommend:

- ⌘ Engystol
- ⌘ Astragalus
- ⌘ Monolauren
- ⌘ Elderberry capsules or drops
- ⌘ Thieves Essential Oil for a household cleaner
- ⌘ Esberitox
- ⌘ Echinacea
- ⌘ Influenzium
- ⌘ Vitamin C
- ⌘ Olive Leaf
- ⌘ Bird Flu Nosode

An H1N1 and seasonal flu Homeopathic Drops therapy is also available. It is recommended that you start the drops slowly and work up to 10 drops, 3 times a day between meals during the flu season or when you feel you may be at risk of exposure.

Additionally, we offer IV Therapy to help support the immune system. Please call the office for more details.

## Cholesterol Therapy – New Insight

The cholesterol controversy continues. We are bombarded with newspaper and magazine articles, television news headlines and advertisements touting the latest in statin drug therapy. Statins (such as Lipitor, Zocor, Crestor, Mevacor, Vytorin, Etc.) block cholesterol production in the liver by blocking an enzyme called Hmg-CoA-reductase. This blocks the production of cholesterol but also some other important substances such as CoQ-10, a precursor to Vitamin D and hormones such as estrogen, testosterone, and cortisol. Despite their ubiquitous advertisements to control cholesterol, there are concerns about statin's effectiveness and safety. Not everybody on the planet needs to be on a statin!

The assumption about statins is that by lowering the cholesterol levels you reduce the risk of heart disease. This is just one of approximately 12 risk factors for heart disease. Others include: inflammation, increased insulin, elevated homocysteine, elevated glucose, etc. We have all heard of

people with normal or even low cholesterol levels dying unexpectedly of heart attacks. So, questions commonly asked include: “When is the use of statins recommended?” “Are there any safe alternatives?” “How do I decide?”

Cholesterol is a white, powdery substance that is found in all animal cells and animal-based foods. It is an essential nutrient for many of the body’s functions, so much so that if you don’t consume enough the liver produces it from fat in the diet. Cholesterol travels through the bloodstream to the cells. The cells take what they want and leave the rest to circulate in the bloodstream.



To measure cholesterol, a fasting blood lipid profile is done. The lab results will report levels of total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, and triglycerides. HDLs are considered the “good” cholesterol; they are a measure of the cholesterol’s ability

to flow through the bloodstream without sticking to arterial walls, plus they can pick up other “bad” cholesterol and take it back to the liver for recycling. The higher the HDL level, the lower the risk of heart attack or stroke. LDLs are the “bad” cholesterol. They are of a lower molecular weight than HDLs and can stick to and “burrow into” blood vessel walls.

There are now more specific lipid profiles available that provide more detail about cholesterol levels. These profiles break down the lipids into size, appearance and pattern to give a more accurate picture of what is going on. One test is the VAP (vertical auto profile) available from Quest Diagnostics. The one that Dr. Kovalcik prefers is the NMR test available only through Beaumont Hospital labs.

Genetics are thought to be more strongly linked to heart disease than diet, but diet can influence the genetic tendency. Some things you can’t change, such as: family history, being male or your age. You CAN change your lifestyle and reduce environmental exposure which can lessen the potential damage to blood vessel walls. This includes cigarette smoke, household and lawn & garden chemicals, lead, mercury, trans fatty acids, increased insulin, homogenized milk, radiation, and elevated homocysteine levels.

Lifestyle recommendations, especially diet changes, can be made which will positively impact the blood lipid levels. General recommendations include:

- ☞ Do not smoke
- ☞ Less red meat, especially fatty meat
- ☞ More fish and chicken or turkey
- ☞ More fiber
- ☞ At least 5-8 servings of fruits and vegetables daily and at least 5 colored fruits and vegetables daily.



- ☞ 25-35% (or less) total fat as saturated fat
- ☞ Limit alcoholic beverages to two or less glasses of red wine daily
- ☞ Exercise 4-5 times per week with at least 30-45 minutes of aerobic exercise.

Those of you who are concerned about cholesterol can have the expanded blood lipid panel done. If the levels are elevated or the patterns abnormal, Dr. Kovalcik can recommend the best program for you to reduce the levels and change the patterns back toward safer ones. As always, we have researched the products and manufacturers that we feel are the best quality and carry these in our office.

## Hidden Sugars

Many of our patients have been advised to reduce their sugar intake for a variety of reason – candida, diabetes, inflammation or simply to lose weight.

It’s a transition that takes time and involves understanding what foods may have added sugars that are considered “hidden.” These hidden sugars provide additional calories and defeat the low sugar approach individuals may be trying to comply with. The other part of this transition is selecting the right reduced or no-calorie sugar substitute to use. The lists below will guide you as you work toward reducing sugars in your diet.



## Sugars With Other Names

Sugar may have a different name based on the source of the sugar. A good way to recognize a sugar is if the word ends with “ose” it is a sugar. Here are some common sugars that you will find in food and will typically have calories similar to table sugar.

- ☞ Maltose
- ☞ Dextrose
- ☞ Fructose (fruit sugar)
- ☞ Sucrose (cane or beet sugar)
- ☞ Lactose (milk sugar)
- ☞ Corn syrup
- ☞ High fructose corn syrup
- ☞ Molasses\*
- ☞ Brown sugar\*
- ☞ Maple sugar\*

\**Considered safer and more natural sugars*

## Avoid These No Calorie, Artificial Sweeteners

- ☞ aspartame (NutraSweet)
- ☞ sucralose (Splenda)
- ☞ 3acesulfame-K (potassium)
- ☞ neotame
- ☞ saccharin

## Use These Safe, No Calorie Sweeteners

- ☞ Truvia
- ☞ Stevia

## Reduced Calorie Sweeteners

According to a Nutrition Fact Sheet entitled *Polyols: Sweet Benefits* by the American Dietetic Association, (www.eatright.org), “Polyols, also called sugar alcohols, are a group of lower-calorie, carbohydrate-based sweeteners. Polyols provide a comparable alternative to the taste and texture of sugar with about half the calories. They are used as a food ingredient, often to replace sugar, in many sugar-free and reduced-calorie foods”.

The substitution of polyols for sugar is in equal amounts, one cup for one cup. Here are some examples of lower or reduced calorie sweeteners:

- ☞ erythritol
- ☞ hydrogenated starch hydrolysates or polyglycolol
- ☞ isomalt
- ☞ lactitol
- ☞ maltitol (including maltitol syrups)
- ☞ mannitol
- ☞ sorbitol
- ☞ xylitol

Polyol content MAY be included on the food label voluntarily, but must be listed if the product claims to be “sugar-free.”

And if two polyols are used in a food, then the term “sugar alcohols” must be used, according to FDA guidelines for Nutrition Facts Panel on food labels.

For more information about sugars, check Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.com) or Google (www.google.com) and enter the following words in the search box - sugar, natural sugars, sugar substitutes or whatever you are interested in learning more about.

## New Therapeutic Lifestyle Program



The Downing Clinic is pleased to announce that clinic staff are now certified in a research-based health risk reduction and disease management program called FirstLine Therapy. Ann Heusted, RN, Lifestyle

Educator, will coordinate the program and provide direct patient care under the supervision of Laura Kovalcik, DO, Board Certified Internal Medicine, clinic owner.

This new program, FirstLine Therapy, created by Metagenics Corporation is only offered through physicians who have attended the certification program. The program offers patients a plan for therapeutic lifestyle changes that will positively impact their health.

The program has been recommended by leading health organizations for treating and reducing the risk of common conditions such as:

- ☞ High cholesterol
- ☞ High blood pressure
- ☞ Metabolic Syndrome
- ☞ Type 2 Diabetes
- ☞ Cardiovascular disease
- ☞ Osteoporosis
- ☞ Osteoarthritis
- ☞ Conditions related to aging



Lifestyle choices are also the key to addressing other health concerns and symptoms, such as:

- ☞ Fatigue
- ☞ Hormone imbalance
- ☞ Low sex drive
- ☞ Stress-related symptoms
- ☞ Poor memory or lack of mental clarity
- ☞ And many others

The personalized FirstLine Therapy program includes:

- ☞ Initial and follow-up testing
- ☞ Regular consultations on how to make daily choices that will enhance your health and prevent and reverse disease processes
- ☞ A series of classes with an accompanying guidebook
- ☞ Solutions for staying active
- ☞ Simple eating guidelines
- ☞ Progress tracking
- ☞ Lifestyle counseling
- ☞ Nutritional product recommendations

For more information on this exciting new program which provides new options for treating the above mentioned conditions, please call 248-625-6677.

## Upcoming Classes

All classes require preregistration. Please check our website for more details.

### The Benefits of Skin Brushing

November 5, 6-7 pm. Fee \$25.00. Preregister by October 29.

Your skin is often referred to as the third kidney because detoxification occurs through skin's pores via sweat. Many detox programs suggest or use skin brushing as part of their program. Skin brushing will help to improve the health of your skin and encourage detoxification. Class covers skin brushing techniques and benefits.

Instructor Nancy Boch has both a BS and MS in holistic nutrition and an extensive knowledge of human anatomy and physiology. She is a certified Fitness, Yoga and Chi Gong Instructor.





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**INSIDE:**

H1N1 Flu  
Preparedness



New Therapeutic  
Lifestyle Program –  
Metagenics  
FirstLine Therapy



Cholesterol Testing



Hidden Sugars

### **To Bag or Not**

The Downing Clinic is always happy to provide you with a bag for all your purchases. But, with an eye to conservation and recycling (which we try to promote), we ask you to consider bringing recycled or reusable bags to your next visit. Keeping a compact plastic bag or reusable paper bag in your car or purse is an easy way to climb on the eco-friendly band wagon. Remembering to use them will be a commitment on your part to help “Green Up” the planet. Join with us in helping to reduce and reuse is both Earth-friendly and neighbor-friendly. Please help us continue to beautify our planet by not adding to the landfills.

### **Dr. Kovalcik Inducted as Fellow in the College of Osteopathic Internists**

Dr. Kovalcik was inducted into a very select group of internists – Fellows in the College of Osteopathic Internists, this October at the annual national Osteopathic Physician conference held in Tuscon, AZ.

This designation is given to a few select physicians every year who have given exceptional care to patients, service to the community and mentorship to medical students.

Dr. Kovalcik will continue to mentor medical students again this year as an Associate Professor at the new

Michigan State College of Osteopathic Medicine in Oakland County where she teaches first year medical students in the art of the Doctor-Patient relationship. Congratulations to Dr. Kovalcik!

### **Dr. Downing Publishes Children’s Book**

Nedra Downing, DO, founder of The Downing Clinic, now retired, will publish her first book for children entitled *Carousel*. It is a collection of poems written by Dr. Downing as a result of spending time with her grandchildren, John and Katie. Poems cover topics such as visits to a museum, feeding birds, a good night story with an antique clock tick tocking in the background and bath time fun. The book is intended to be read aloud to children and is written in 3 verse poetry.

Look for this book at the clinic in time for the holidays. Price: under \$15.00.

### **Great Gift Selections**

Please consider The Downing Clinic for your holiday gift purchases. We have a wide selection of products, books, tapes and services (massage, reiki, reflexology, acupuncture) that would be appreciated by those you care about. Gift certificates are also available.

Remember to check our website:

**[www.TheDowningClinic.com](http://www.TheDowningClinic.com)** for specials, classes and updated information.