

Points of Interest

More Friends Leads to a Longer Life

A recent research review from the journal *PLoS Medicine* ties social skills to longevity. The review concludes that people with poor social ties increase their chances of death (50% higher odds in 7.5 years) than those with stronger, more active social lives. The data show that loneliness can be as risky as obesity or smoking. The analysis did not factor social networking into its results, so stick to real-world interactions for now.

Laura Blue *Time Magazine* July 28, 2010
<http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,2006938,00.html>

Stem Cells Return Hop to Rabbit

Professor Jeremy Mao and his team at Columbia University Medical Center in New York have grown a leg joint for a rabbit using its own stem cells. "It's the first time an entire joint surface has been regenerated with return of functions including weight bearing and locomotion," he said. The findings give hope to men and women with artificial joints to have them replaced with organic ones grown with their own tissue.

CBC News July 29, 2010
<http://www.cbc.ca/health/story/2010/07/29/joint-replacement-rabbits.html>



Lucky Number Seven for Sleep

Seven hours of sleep each night is the ideal for a healthy heart. A study by researchers at West Virginia University finds that any more or any less will increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Stroke, heart attack, angina and coronary heart disease are all more than twice as likely to happen to those who snooze for five hours or less or a day. The increase in risk for those sleeping nine hours or more in 24 hours isn't as bad at one-and-a-half times more likely to develop these complications.

Karin Zeitvogel *AFP* July 31, 2010
<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hWunXgSv1HSFpl-vpz7RiYZ4BbCA>

Cherry Juice Can Put You to Rest

Insomniacs can celebrate the discovery of sleep-inducing properties in tart cherry juice. Sour cherries contain melatonin and have been shown to reduce the inflammation and oxidative stress caused by exercise in healthy adults. A study published in the *Journal of Medicinal Food* shows that either of these factors may be at work here to help one sleep through the night.

Tim Banas *August 2, 2010*
<http://fyiliving.com/sleep/sleep-disorders/insomnia/cherry-juice-may-cure-insomnia/#ixzz0wEEX2DSQ>



Calcium Supplements Harmful to Older Women

A *BMJ* study shows that post-menopausal women who have been taking calcium supplement to ward off osteoporosis may have increased their risk of heart attack by one third. The risk increase is so small that it may be negligible, but the large number of women taking the supplement makes it cause for concern. The supplements have also been shown to have no positive effects. Calcium ingested naturally with food is still considered to be beneficial.

Thomas H. Maugh II *Los Angeles Times* July 29, 2010
<http://www.latimes.com/sns-health-calcium-supplements-heart-attach,0,4911155.story>

