Popular diabetes meds put to the test

By Alan Mozes

Patients with diabetes who were treated with the popular oral medication metformin face a lower risk of heart complications than users of sulfonylureas (glyburide and glipizide), according to a large, multi-year study. “Metformin should be the preferred oral treatment for diabetes,” said study lead author Dr. Christianne Roumie, of the Nashville Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Tennessee. “Both do a very good job of controlling a patient’s blood sugar levels.” However, “metformin may do a better job at preventing hospitalization for heart attacks and strokes or death,” she added. “Because of this it should be preferred as the starting medication for patients with diabetes.”

At least two-thirds of people with diabetes will die of heart disease, said Dr. Norman Simon, chief of the division of endocrinology and diabetes medicine at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

**Local health care providers go into overdrive to support Sandy’s victims**

By Susan Bloom

For 48 agonizing hours, Hurricane Sandy chased the Jersey Shore, ravaging houses and property, displacing millions of residents and endangering the lives of many with its fury and aftermath. Through it all, however, area health care providers marshaled forces and demonstrated nothing short of a Herculean effort to support those affected, even in the face of their own loss and uncertainty.

“We always hope for the best, but we have to plan for the worst — and that was the worst,” John Lloyd, president of Meridian Health, said of the destruction wrought by the storm. “The devastation of Sandy was enormous, but we knew that we had to be prepared.”

Activating a carefully prepared crisis-management plan throughout the 2,600-bed Meridian network, which includes five hospitals — Jersey Shore University Medical Center; Monmouth Medical Center; Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, New Brunswick; St. Peter’s University Hospital, New Brunswick; and University Hospital, Newark — allowed for the “best response to a devastating event that has never been experienced,” Lloyd said.

*See SUPPORT, Page B8*
Acupuncture might ease fatigue linked to breast cancer

By Alan Mozes

HealthDay

A new study found that women undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer may benefit from acupuncture treatment.

Ongoing breast cancer patients who were given acupuncture experienced less fatigue than those who were given sham acupuncture treatment, researchers said.

“Patients had myriad issues to address, and our team was able to continue to provide care—and we were able to do that because of the power, staff−sues and development solutions that we had put in place,” said Joseph Forgang, the VNA team’s executive director, in an agency statement.

According to the National Cancer Institute, 53,410 of every 100,000 women in the United States are estimated to have breast cancer.

By the end of the six−week period, those who received acupuncture reported a significant decrease in fatigue levels compared to those who received sham acupuncture.

The study, led by researchers at Duke University, randomized 46 women to an acupuncture or sham−acupuncture group.

Acupuncture is a branch of traditional Chinese medicine that involves the insertion of thin needles into the skin at specific points.

In this study, the researchers found that women who received acupuncture had lower fatigue levels than those who received sham acupuncture.

The team assessed the women’s fatigue levels using the Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy−Fatigue instrument, which includes 13 questions about fatigue.

In the study, 64 percent of the women who received acupuncture reported a decrease in fatigue levels, compared to 37 percent of those who received sham acupuncture.

The researchers also found that women who received acupuncture had lower levels of nausea and vomiting, and higher levels of well−being compared to those who received sham acupuncture.

The study was published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology.

The researchers concluded that acupuncture may be an effective treatment for fatigue in women undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer.


By Robert Proctor

KIDS WITH ALLERGIC REACTIONS AT HIGHER RISK OF F卢E DEATH

Migraines may hurt kids’ grades, too

By Robert Proctor

Researchers have found that children with migraines are at a higher risk of academic failure than those without migraines.

In a study published in the Journal of Pediatrics, researchers found that children with migraines were more likely to have below−average academic performance compared to those without, according to the study, which was a part of the National Jewish Health−controlled study.

Researchers monitored 40 children with migraines and 40 controls for five minutes each.

Children in the migrane group were more likely to have below−average academic performance compared to those without headaches, according to the study, which was a part of the National Jewish Health−controlled study.

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