

# **WALLACE INTEGRATED HEALTH CENTRE**

## **NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2007**

### **New Developments**

- We are pleased to welcome Registered Massage Therapist, Sara Inch, to the WIHC, as of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. Sara does both therapeutic and relaxation massage and is available Mondays, Wednesdays and every other Friday.
- Karen Sarlo, Reiki Master, will be taking a course on Crystal Therapy, and one on Quantum Touch, in March of 2007. Karen looks forward to incorporating some of these new techniques into her reiki treatments.
- Our Open House, on the afternoon of Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, was a great success. MPP Monique Smith and Deputy Mayor Peter Chirico were on hand to participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and bring welcome wishes from the community. Ms. Smith announced a grant from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund's Young Entrepreneur Program, of \$22, 525 to help with the renovations and equipment for our facility. Thanks to everyone who attended!

### **Articles**

#### ***Vitamin & Mineral supplements***

*The following article is an excerpt from "The Health Show," which ran on JOCO radio in Sturgeon Falls, through the summer of 2005. This particular episode was a show that Kelly Wallace, N.D., did, in order to de-mystify some the confusion surrounding vitamin & mineral supplements.*

There are so many natural health products on the market these days, all of them claiming to do anything and everything from weight loss to curing cancer. It can be tricky to figure out what you really need and which products actually work.

The first issue is do we really need to take supplements at all? Vitamin and mineral supplements have only been around for the last 50 years or so, and have really only become popular in the last 10-20 years. How did we survive until then?

Well, in theory, we should be able to get all of the nutrition that we need from our diet. This is true if we eat a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and some meats. However, in reality, very few people actually eat this way. In fact, a recent survey showed that 80% of North Americans are deficient

in one or more essential nutrients based on their diet alone. When you get right down to it, we North Americans eat way too many calories, too much fat, too much sugar and not nearly enough vitamins and minerals.

But why are vitamins and minerals so important anyway? Well at the most basic level, if we are deficient in certain vitamins and minerals, we will develop certain diseases, like scurvy or rickets. The RDA, or Recommended Daily Allowance, shown on many food packages, is only the bare minimum amount of a certain nutrient that we need in order to prevent these diseases. For example, the RDA for vitamin C is 60mg per day. If you've ever bought a bottle of vitamin C at the pharmacy, you know it is usually sold in 500 or 1000 mg tablets. This is much more than the recommended 60 mg. So why the difference?

Well, research is now showing that while we may only need very small amounts of vitamins and minerals in order to prevent frank deficiency, larger amounts may be therapeutic for certain conditions, and may help prevent certain diseases. Based on these findings, it makes good sense to consume extra amounts of certain vitamins and minerals.

So which are these particular vitamins and minerals that are so important? Well, I could talk for hours on that topic, but I only have a few minutes, so I'm just going to mention what I believe are the most important.

A good multivitamin can provide many critical vitamins and minerals in therapeutic doses. Make sure you read the label on the bottle to see what the recommended dose is for each product. Some companies put everything into huge pills and you only need to take one a day. Other companies spread out their nutrition and you need to take more than one pill in order to get the right amounts. While it may not be as convenient to swallow several tablets in a day, I usually prefer these "multi-pill" supplements. The vitamins and minerals in these "multi-pill" products are usually easier to absorb since by the time all of the ingredients are packed into just one pill, they are usually so tightly jammed in there that it is very hard for the body to get them out again.

While consuming extra amounts of many vitamins and minerals can be beneficial, there are a few nutrients that can be dangerous in high amounts. Vitamin A is one vitamin that it is possible to overdose on. For this reason, don't take more of a product than the dose recommended on the bottle, unless you have consulted with your health care practitioner.

Iron is another nutrient that can be tricky. Although iron is very important, even small amounts of iron can be harmful. Most of us get enough iron in our diets and don't need to add anymore. Women who are menstruating do lose some iron every month, so it is usually safe for them to consume small amounts in a multivitamin. However, most men and women who are past menopause do not

need to take extra iron, unless they are anaemic, or iron-deficient. For men and older women, I usually recommend using a multi-vitamin that is iron-free.

Besides a good multivitamin, one supplement that many people can benefit from is an omega 3 fatty acid. These good fats are the most important fats for brain development and to help ward off depression. They are also very important for good eyesight, a healthy immune system, fertility, weight loss and heart health. These fats do pass through the breast milk, so if you are breastfeeding, make sure you are getting enough omega 3 fats for your baby's brain to develop properly.

The omega 3 fats are found mainly in fish that live in cold water. Flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, soy foods and walnuts do contain some of these fats, but not as many as fish do. Omega 3 fats are the one type of fat that most people don't get enough of in their regular diet. For this reason I often recommend supplementing with this particular fat. It is generally very safe, however, check with your health care practitioner to make sure that supplementation is appropriate for you.

One other thing to think about when choosing a vitamin and/or mineral supplement, is the quality of the product that you are purchasing. Read the label and identify the "other" or "non-medicinal" ingredients in the bottle. Products that contain lots of fillers and preservatives are not as effective as products without these additives. Many good companies will put a statement on their label which says something like "This product contains no artificial preservatives, colour, or sweeteners." You can also talk to your health care professional, or the owner of the pharmacy or health food store. They can help guide you towards better quality products.

Kelly Wallace, N.D.