

RGH e-Bulletin

THIS week's issue of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-bulletin gives some background on recent research into calcium supplementation and cardiovascular risk in healthy postmenopausal women.

It's available at no charge from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

Drinkers in denial

A NATIONAL survey has revealed many Australian men and women who drink at dangerous levels do not think they drink too much.

Conducted over the 2008 summer holiday period, the survey found men had an average of 7.6 standard drinks on a typical occasion and women consumed an average of five standard drinks.

But 79% of the 1,000 surveyed claimed they did not binge drink.

More than 60% agreed Aussies drink too much, with 36% pointing the finger at their friends.

More than 21% admitted they had passed out at least once as a consequence of drinking.

Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Foundation (AER) CEO Daryl Smeaton said: "The clear evidence that excessive alcohol consumption is one of three main contributors to Australia's chronic disease burden, as well as the clear link to mental health issues, violence and road and water incidents, requires a direct focus on long term preventative strategies."

Pharmacists are thinner

PHARMACISTS are among the thinnest professionals in Australia, according to a survey published last weekend in the *Australian Financial Review*.

The listing compared the percentage of workers who were overweight or obese in each profession, with pharmacists coming in tenth on the list at 38%.

Other health professionals were

Short sleepers gain more weight

GET a good night's sleep or get fat - that's the message from a Japanese study that shows men who sleep fewer than five hours a night run greater risks of becoming obese and of having high levels of blood sugar that could lead to diabetes.

Lack of sleep triggers a hormone in the blood which stimulates the appetite, said the study's lead author, Nihon University medical department associate professor Yoshitaka Kaneita.

According to the study of 21,693 men, those who were not fat in 1999 were 1.36 times more likely to become obese if they slept fewer than five hours a night on average over the next seven years compared with men who slept more.

Short-sleepers were also 1.27 times more likely to have high blood-sugar levels.

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DISPENSARY CORNER

KRISPY Kreme doughnuts are very hard for those with a sweet tooth to resist, according to new research in the USA.

Volunteers fasted for eight hours, then had their brains monitored as they were shown photos of the sticky treats.

The brains' spatial attention network apparently "lit up" at the sight of the doughnuts.

TWO BUMBLING robbers in Poland had their plot foiled after they were blinded when they tried to use pepper spray on a bank cashier - right in front of an air conditioning unit.

"They told the cashier to open the till and then tried to put her out of action to grab the cash, but the pepper sprayed back in their faces because of the blast of warm air from the heater," said a police officer.

FUNERAL directors are getting into the green movement, with the advent of new environmentally friendly coffins.

Made by a company called LifeArt, the cardboard coffins have the added benefit that they come in a huge range of colours and designs.

As well as a number of colours plus traditional wood grains there are designs for golfers or flower lovers, while sports enthusiasts can even have a coffin customised in their team colours.



The coffin of a diehard Sydney Swans supporter

also slim, with specialist doctors the thinnest with just 25% being overweight or obese.

Other thin professions included nurses, counsellors, social workers and medical scientists, while the most overweight were ministers of religion, construction managers, auditors and electrical engineers.

Obesity expert Garry Egger of Southern Cross University said he wasn't surprised that health professionals were among the thinnest, saying they were more likely to "change their habits as information about health and obesity comes through."

Some of the findings weren't easily explained, including a discovery that the heaviest female professionals were natural therapists, with 66% being overweight or obese.

Pfizer schmoozes ministers

PFIZER is the frontrunner in the "Suckup Olympics", the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported Friday, thanks to its creative gifts for the new Rudd Government.

The pharmaceutical giant has created a personalised desk calendar with 12 new twists on the Kevin07 logo.

On February's page, for example, it is spelled out in cocoa on a cappuccino.

For October it is made up in pebbles on the beach.

Pfizer has tailor-made similar calendars for every minister and parliamentary secretary, using their first names in the designs.

The article refers to Pfizer's interest in maintaining a good relationship with senior ministers as any public drug listing worth more than \$10 million must go to cabinet for approval.

Green tea is good

A HONG Kong study has shown that green tea can help control endometriosis.

The research unveiled at the 10th World Congress on Endometriosis in Melbourne last week has confirmed that antioxidants in green tea called catechins can restrict the formation of blood vessels that help the spread of endometriosis.

RGH Pharmacy

Due to popular demand the
RGH Pharmacy
Anticoagulation Handbook
is now available to the
pharmacy industry across Australia.

The handbook gives patients important information about warfarin treatment and has a chart to record INR results.

Repatriation General Hospital is making it available for purchase for \$2.80 per booklet, reduced to \$2.40 for PSA and SHPA members.

More information

