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# Focus on Health

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April 2011

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## Chromosomes and Telomeres

**C**hromosomes contain DNA which controls your genetic code. Each chromosome has a protective end cap called a telomere. This cap is often likened to the plastic end of a shoelace. If this end is damaged, it may not be able to prevent damage to the chromosome. In controlled laboratory settings, a cultured human cell will divide about fifty times before the telomere becomes shortened enough to stop further division. Early research has linked shorter telomere length in humans with such conditions as high blood pressure, cancer, heart disease, and early death.

Stress, inflammation, and oxidative damage accelerate telomere shortening.

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## Statins and CoQ10

**A**n article has appeared on [www.MayoClinic.com](http://www.MayoClinic.com) warning that taking a statin, particularly Lipitor, without a concomitant dosage of Coenzyme Q-10 may risk serious side effects. These include muscle breakdown and subsequent kidney damage, as happened to me. Since there is no warning mentioning CoQ-10 on the drug information sheet for Lipitor, can a class action lawsuit be far behind?

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## Your Liver

**A**n invention reported in the Mayo Clinic Newsletter of March 2011 called a Magnetic Resonance Elastography can detect liver stiffness. MRE can thus diagnose liver fibrosis and cirrhosis at a more treatable early stage.

As part of the professional services I feel should be provided by me to my patients, screening of the voluminous medical literature has become more and more important. The information in this newsletter is derived from periodicals and books which I have read and whose information I have consolidated. Perhaps you have seen an item that I have not included in this list or have not seen myself. If so, feel free to bring it to my attention.

## Shingles

**A** study reported in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in 2005 revealed that vaccination against shingles (herpes zoster) one time reduces the risk of hospitalization for HZ by 65 percent.

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## L-arginine

**I**n order for L-arginine to be converted into beneficial Nitric Oxide, the body must have a sufficient amount of active thyroid hormone (Free T-3). Therefore a Free T-3 blood level should be measured periodically. Checking a TSH is not sufficient.

An article from Strasbourg, France measured exercise capacity in heart transplant recipients and found it better with those patients who took L-arginine.

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## Trained Dogs

**D**ogs are being specially trained to pick up a low blood sugar in diabetics who have become insensitive to the warning symptoms indicative of this condition (hypoglycemia).

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[www.abouthormones.org](http://www.abouthormones.org)