



April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Healthy Lifestyle Tidbits

### Is knuckle cracking safe?

Don't crack your knuckles or you will get arthritis! Actually, this is one of those urban myths but that doesn't mean that knuckle cracking is risk-free! The popping sound produced when bending or stretching finger joints is caused by bursting bubbles in the synovial fluid that lubricates the joints. It can produce significant energy which can lead to swollen joints and reduced grip strength.

### Taller people have healthier heart arteries

Now here's an interesting tidbit: a study of over 2,700 people in Minneapolis has noted that tall people have a lower risk of developing coronary artery disease. The tallest people had up to a 30% reduced risk, even when all other known risk factors were accounted for, such as waist circumference, smoking, diabetes, etc. It seems these people have lower levels of coronary artery calcium, deposits of which contribute to blocked arteries.

### Better afternoon slump fixes

It's 3 p.m. and you feel your energy slumping. Don't reach for the coffee & donut! Those will only produce a temporary fix – followed rapidly by worse fatigue! Instead, get out and take a quick walk around the block or put your head down for a 20-minute power nap (any more can cause insomnia). Snack wisely – make sure it includes protein & fibre. Avoid energy drinks and supplements such as iron/B-vitamins (unless you're deficient) and DHEA.

### Feel tired? Check your fluid intake

Sometimes when we're not feeling up to snuff, we look for more complicated reasons than necessary as to why. For example, feeling fatigued is not always due to a vitamin deficiency or serious illness. Often only a small adjustment to your day-to-day behaviour is needed. Make sure you're getting a little exercise (early in the day) and eating well – but also look at your fluid intake. Many of us aren't drinking enough and that one small change can make a big difference.

If you have health concerns, talk to your pharmacist. They can help you choose some basic changes that can turn the situation around and recognize when it's something more serious that you should pursue with your doctor.