



October 26th, 2015

Healthier Skin and Veins

October is Autism, Breast Cancer, Celiac, Eye Health, Flu Prevention, Lupus, Psoriasis and SIDS Awareness Month

Treatment for Varicose Veins

Do you suffer from varicose veins? Have you looked at the treatment options but can't make up your mind what's best? Rest assured that all are effective and do improve varicose veins. Three therapies were compared: foam sclerotherapy, laser and surgery. All performed well, although laser edged ahead of the other two. Foam sclerotherapy performed slightly less well with the large saphenous vein and surgery had slightly higher complications.

Treatment for Eczema

The mainstay of atopic dermatitis (eczema) treatment over the years has been applied corticosteroid creams and ointments. Over the course of a lifetime, however, such repeated corticosteroid use disrupts the skin, leading to thinning or atrophy, rosacea and, sometimes, systemic absorption. Exciting research is looking at a probiotic developed from the human microbiome which, applied topically, seems as effective as corticosteroids. Stay tuned!

Psoriasis Updates

Psoriasis is a skin condition, thought to be caused by an autoimmune response, where skin cells are produced too rapidly and don't get a chance to form properly. The result is thickened, flaky plaques of skin that are inflamed and very uncomfortable. An Italian study has found that exercise lowers the risk for psoriasis and improves it when it occurs. It also benefits metabolic syndrome – often associated with psoriasis – and psoriatic arthritis.

Another interesting finding has emerged from the large Nurses' Health Study: older women with high blood pressure or taking beta-blockers (a drug often used to treat high blood pressure) for at six years or more have an increased risk of developing psoriasis (27% and 39% respectively). The mechanism of this effect is unknown but not completely surprising since psoriasis is a systemic illness. It does point to a need to screen for psoriasis in this population.

Our skin often reflects our health status as a whole, offering clues or warnings about what is going on within. Feel free to talk to your pharmacist about your skin issues – you may get more than you bargained for!