

Microchip Implanted to Deliver Drug Shows Promise in Trial

Scientists at Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Case Western Reserve University have conducted the first human trial of an implantable microchip-based drug delivery device, that releases accurate doses of teriparatide, an injectable drug used to treat osteoporosis. The entire implant is about two and a quarter inches long and one and a half inches wide. The cost of the drug delivered by the implant is 10,000USD per year. The procedure is performed as an out-patient procedure.

Male Genes May Explain Higher Heart Disease Risk

Heart disease is the leading killer of women as well as of men, two heart disease patients out of every three are male, and heart disease strikes men 10 to 15 years earlier than it does women. In the study, published in *The Lancet*, it has been found that nearly all British men have one of two variants of a cluster of genes on their Y chromosome. Those with one of the variants

had a 50 percent increased risk of heart disease compared with men with the other variant. This risk was independent of traditional factors like cholesterol, smoking and diabetes.

No Cancer Benefits Seen in Supplements

A new study testing B vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids for cancer prevention has found no beneficial effect. In this placebo-controlled five-year study, French researchers divided 2,501 survivors of cardiovascular illness ages 45 to 80 into four groups. The first took daily supplements of vitamin B9, vitamin B6 and vitamin B12; the second took two kinds of omega-3 fatty acids; the third took vitamin B6, vitamin B12 and omega-3; and the last took a placebo.

There were 174 cases of primary cancers among the participants, all confirmed by pathology. After controlling for dozens of other factors, the researchers found that neither the B vitamins nor the omega-3 fatty acids had any effect among the men. But there was an increased rate of cancer incidence and mortality among women who took the omega-3 supplements.

Dr. Nayil Khurshid, M.S., M.Ch.
(Section Editor)