Well News - All the news that's fit

by Scott LaFee

MEDTRONICAMichael J. Fox Foundation - www.michaeljfox.orgFox is a well-known actor who suffers from Parkinson's disease, a chronic, progressive disorder of the central nervous system. Fox's foundation presents a well-organized Web site on Parkinson's research and prospects for a cure.

GENERICALLY SPEAKING- Half of all prescription drugs purchased in the United States are generic.- The average variation in bio-equivalence (the delivery of the same amount of active ingredient in the same amount of time) between brand-name and generic drugs is 3.5 percent.- Of the 11,167 FDA-approved drugs on the U.S. market, 8,400 have generic counterparts.- Most drugs are patent protected for 17 years before generic versions can be produced.- At an average cost of $28.74, a generic drug is 70 percent cheaper than its brand-name counterpart.- An estimated $8 billion to $10 billion could be saved by American consumers choosing generic drugs over brand names.

Source: Proto/Massachusetts General Hospital

BODY OF KNOWLEDGEHair and nails are the only two places in the human body without red blood cells.

PHOBIA OF THE WEEKThermophobia - fear of heat

ENERGY TO LIVE ENERGY TO LIVE - Scientific research has found that while exercise is certainly a good thing, virtually any kind of activity â€¦ walking, gardening, going to work every day â€¦ appears to promote a longer life. CNS Photo. For years, various observational studies have shown a link between exercising and living longer. The problem with such studies has been that they tend to rely upon self-reporting: Participants keep a record of their physical activity, and weren't always accurate.

So researchers at the National Institute on Aging conducted a new study, one that followed 302 active older adults (ages 70-82) as they went through their ordinary lives for two weeks. Instead of asking them to record their activities, researchers monitored the rate in which hydrogen and oxygen were eliminated from the body as carbon dioxide - a direct measure of total energy expended. Follow-up tests were conducted six years later, and results were reported in the July 12 issue of JAMA.

The scientists found that while exercise is certainly a good thing, virtually any kind of activity - walking, gardening, going to work every day - appears to promote a longer life.

Compared with the bottom third of individuals, representing the lowest levels of energy expenditure, those in the highest third had a 69 percent lower risk of death.Bottom line: Get off your bottom and do something, anything.

STORIES FOR THE WAITING ROOMIn ancient Greece, a favored orthopedic treatment for an ailing back was the strappado. Patients were strapped to the ladderlike device, which was then dropped vertically to the ground. In theory, the drop and sudden jolt snapped displaced vertebrae back into alignment. Depending upon the nature of their pain, the patients were dropped either right side up or upside down.

For the record, it should be noted that the same treatment has, at various times, also been used as a form of torture.

LAST WORDSThe Dutch poet Gerrit Achterberg (1905-1962) had just finished parking his car when his wife asked, "Shall I bake some potatoes?" Achterberg answered, "Yes, but not too much." Then he suffered a fatal heart attack.

GET ME THAT. STAT!One in three Americans bite their fingernails, according to Harry Bright and Harlan Briscoe, authors of "So, Now You Know."

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