WellNews: An unclear threat

by Scott_LaFee

If you don't do windows, you might want to start.

Canadian researchers say "urban organic films," a fancy name for window grime, may be contributing to air pollution inside homes and buildings.

AN UNCLEAR THREAT - Canadian researchers say 'urban organic films,' a fancy name for window grime, may be contributing to air pollution inside homes and buildings. CNS Photo. MEDTRONICA - The Museum of Menstruation & Women's Health at www.mum.org is unusual. Once you get past the unusualness of the subject, this virtual museum is really quite interesting. CNS Photo. The grime, according to D.J. Donald at the University of Toronto, soaks up an inactive version of nitric acid, a chemical component of smog. When sunlight passes through afflicted windows, it heats up the nitric acid, causing it to be released back into the atmosphere.

In other words, recycled smog.

Donald's findings are scheduled to be published in the June 15 edition of the journal Environmental Science & Technology.

MEDTRONICA

Museum of Menstruation & Women's Health

www.mum.org

Once you get past the unusualness of the subject, this virtual museum is really quite interesting but difficult to navigate. There are assorted stories about menstruation research, a reader's forum and an ongoing poll asking the question: "Would you stop menstruating if you could?"

STORIES FOR THE WAITING ROOM

The 1847 edition of "The Ladies' Vase or Polite Manual for Young Ladies" offers this advice for improved oral hygiene: "A lump of charcoal held in the mouth two or three times in a week and slowly chewed has a wonderful power to preserve teeth and purify breath. It would not be wise to swallow that or any other gritty substance in large quantities or very frequently; but, one or twice a week, a little would be salutary."

BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

On average, men get hiccups more often than women do, but women blink twice as often as men.

HYPOCHONDRIAC'S GUIDE

Hysterical gait is not simply walking funny. Sufferers exhibit bizarre forms of locomotion: exaggerated stepping, dragging feet and mimicking unusual walks, such as that of a tightrope performer. It has no obvious organic cause, but has been linked to neurological problems. In some cases, it appears after a severe bout of stress. Therapeutic counseling and corrective walking devices are the usual treatments.

NEVER SAY DIET

The world's speed record for eating raw eggs is 13 in 1.4 seconds.

GET ME THAT. STAT!

Consuming 2.5 servings of whole-grain foods each day may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by almost 25 percent, according to a new study at the Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

PHOBIA OF THE WEEK

Xyrophobia - fear of razors

OBSERVATION

A good gulp of hot whiskey at bedtime - it's not very scientific, but it helps.

- Alexander D. Fleming, discoverer of penicillin (1881-1955)

LAST WORDS

This is no time to be making new enemies.

- The French writer and philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778), in reply to the bishop of Paris when asked on his deathbed to renounce the devil and turn to God.

WALK FOR MEMORY

Start moving for more memory. Although certain parts of our brains shrink as we age, causing slower thinking and memory loss, just three hours of brisk walking a week may reverse this. A University of Illinois study looked at adults ages 60 to 80. MRI scans showed that after six months of exercise, the walkers' brains looked two to three years younger than others their age who only stretched.

WATCH PREDIABETES

Prediabetes may increase the risk of age-related mental decline and dementia, says a recent study in Diabetes Care. Also called insulin resistance, prediabetes is characterized by elevated blood sugar that isn't high enough to qualify as diabetes. The study found that middle-aged people with prediabetes had greater declines in cognitive tests over the course of six years, compared with those with normal insulin levels.

Copley News Service

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