



Preventicum
London Centre of Preventive Medicine

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This month...

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Did you know?

While haemochromatosis GH is becoming one of the most common genetic disorders, if you receive too little iron, you can become anaemic. Anaemia or a lack of iron is the most common nutritional deficiency in the UK and throughout the world. If you are eating iron rich foods (such as red meat and spinach) to increase your iron intake, eat them with foods rich in vitamin c to help your body absorb the iron.

Tip of the Month

Alcohol consumption in Britain increases by a

"Hello and welcome to the December issue of Preventicum E-news"

The festive season is well upon us now and the year drawing to a close. Here at Preventicum, 2011 has been our busiest year to date and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our private and corporate clients for your continued support. It is great to see that such a high percentage of our new clients come from recommendations from you.



We have covered a wide range of topics this year in our Enewsletter, however if there is something specific that you would like us to discuss, please [email us](#) as we'd love to hear your suggestions.

This month we are focussing on one of the most common genetic disorders in the UK, haemochromatosis (GH), which as many as 1 in 200 people are at risk of developing.

Lastly, I'd like to extend season's greetings to you all on behalf of myself and the Preventicum team and here's to a happy, healthy and prosperous 2012!

As always, please [forward](#) this Enews to friends, family and colleagues who may be interested in it.

Dr Garry Savin, Medical Director

massive 40% in December according to drinkaware.co.uk.

Over the festive season it is hard for many people to avoid excess alcohol but do always try to eat when drinking as this may reduce the amount of alcohol you absorb. You should also alternate alcoholic drinks with water or soft drinks which will help protect you from alcohol induced dehydration. Drinking a pint of water before going to bed is unlikely to help as much as your stomach may fail to absorb the water after all the alcohol you have already drunk - much better to rehydrate gradually throughout the evening. Lastly, your liver is an amazing organ with a multitude of functions including the production of antibodies to fight off infection. The liver has the ability to regenerate after suffering damage however if you damage it too much, permanent scarring can occur. Treat it well and give your liver a rest from alcohol for several days a week to allow it to regenerate.

Watch our Movie



Testimonials

"I found the Preventicum full screening service to be far in advance of any of the previous check-ups that I have had over the last 20 years. The scope and technical application that the Preventicum service brings is

Haemochromatosis (GH)

Most people have heard of iron deficiency but few have heard of iron overload which can be equally serious. Haemochromatosis is a medical condition caused by an overload of iron in your body. There are several forms of this condition, however we are focussing on the most common form, known as genetic haemochromatosis (GH) where an abnormal gene is inherited from both parents which causes the body to absorb an excessive amount of iron from the diet: the iron is then deposited in various organs, mainly the liver, but also the pancreas, heart, endocrine glands, and joints causing serious tissue damage.



Excessive iron is toxic to the body and we have no regulatory mechanism to increase iron loss if there is too much. This build-up of iron can take many years but left untreated it can cause irreparable organ damage, including cirrhosis of the liver, late onset diabetes or cardiomyopathy (heart damage). Iron overload can cause a wide range of non-specific symptoms and clinical findings, such as unexplained weakness or fatigue, bronze skin pigmentation, abnormal liver function, joint pains/arthritis (particularly if in the first and second knuckles), diminished sex drive or impotence, diabetes or abnormal heart rhythms. Most of these symptoms are found in other disorders however, if the above symptoms are present, GH should also be considered as a diagnosis. Because the symptoms are insidious, GH is often not diagnosed for many years and often irreversible damage has occurred.

As a nutrient, iron is important in our diets to help make haemoglobin, a vital protein in red blood cells which helps them carry oxygen around your body. About two thirds of the iron absorbed is incorporated into haemoglobin itself. Most of the rest is stored in your liver with smaller amounts distributed to other organs and body tissue. Normally you should have about 3-4 grams of iron in your body. Your body has no natural mechanism for getting rid of unwanted iron once it has been absorbed and in a GH sufferer, when more than 5 grams of iron has been absorbed it will start to become deposited around the body. An excessive amount of iron can mean 20 grams or more.

At Preventicum, evidence of Haemochromatosis (GH) is screened for in all of our Check-Ups using a simple blood test to check iron markers. If iron markers are raised, we can arrange further genetic tests to look for the genes that are associated with haemochromatosis. Once diagnosis is confirmed, it is important to begin treatment as soon as possible to avoid further iron build-up and possible organ damage. We can also arrange this through our network of highly experienced specialists. The treatment, known as venesection therapy or phlebotomy, involves the regular removal of blood to return the iron stores to normal levels. Symptoms will improve but the treatment will not cure conditions

second to none and the facilities are exemplary "

Bill Holroyd DL

[Click here](#) to read more of our testimonials

such as diabetes or cirrhosis that were already present prior to commencing the therapy. This emphasises the need for early diagnosis to prevent irreversible organ damage.

For more information on Haemochromatosis and its symptoms, [click here to visit The Haemochromatosis Society](#).

For details on our range of Check-Ups please [click here](#) or [email us](#).

The perfect gift!

If you are looking for the perfect gift for a loved one, friend or colleague this Christmas, perhaps you should think about Preventicum Gift Vouchers which can be used to pay for all or part of our Check-Ups.

Please call us on 020 7605 6900 or [email us](#).



Correction: Please note the following correction to last months' article on PSA testing at 60

Some interesting research from Sweden on 1167 blood samples taken in 1981 on men aged 60 and followed until aged 85 has shown that if a man's PSA is < 1.0 Ug/L at aged 60 then the lifetime chance of him developing clinically significant prostate cancer is negligible (risk of death 0.2%). For the full article [click here](#).



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