

# WEEKLY HEALTH UPDATE

Week of: Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> 2011

Courtesy of:

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**Mental Attitude: Brain Games.** Researchers have found risk/reward scenarios (such as playing games) stimulate nearly all areas of the brain. Since the brain's primary purpose is to maximize our chance of survival and reproduction, it makes sense reward should be important for all cognitive functions, and thus most brain regions.  
*Neuron, Oct 2010*

**Health Alert: Antibiotics.** After 70 years, antibiotics are still the primary treatment for bacterial infections. The prevalence of antibiotic resistance is now outpacing the rate of new drug discovery and approval. The economic costs and health threats of antibiotic resistance have become so serious that the World Health Organization dedicated World Health Day to call global attention to the issue. Antibiotics are routinely sprayed on crops and fed to livestock, which helps cause antibiotic resistant bacteria to develop. That antibiotic resistance is then transferred to humans when they eat the food containing the antibiotic-resistant bacteria. *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, which is resistant to a broad range of antibiotics, causes infections in people with compromised immune systems, such as HIV and cancer patients. It's also responsible for hospital-related infections such as urinary tract infections, pneumonia and infections from burns. The fatality rate is about 50%. Hospital-acquired urinary tract infections by *P. aeruginosa* alone cost more than \$3.5 billion a year in the US.  
*WHO, Oct 2011*

**Diet: A Slice Of Watermelon!** Watermelon reduces atherosclerosis in animals. The study involved mice with diet-induced high cholesterol. By week 8, animals given watermelon juice had lower body weight, due to decreased fat mass. They experienced no decrease in lean mass. Plasma cholesterol concentrations were significantly lower, with modestly reduced intermediate and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol concentrations.  
*University of Kentucky, Oct 2011*

**Exercise: Reduces Productivity?** Exercise may reduce work productivity in employees with high stress jobs. The study's authors recommend employees with more stressful jobs utilize other techniques to manage stress.  
*Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Oct 2011*

**Chiropractic: Yoga & Low Back Pain.** A 12-week yoga program for adults with chronic or recurrent low back pain improved back function better than back pain education booklets.  
*Annals Of Internal Medicine, Nov 2011*

**Wellness/Prevention: Stop Smoking!** Smokers are twice as likely to have strokes, and on average, they have them 10 years earlier than non-smokers.  
*Heart and Stroke Foundation, Oct 2011*

**Quote:** "You can turn painful situations around through laughter. If you can find humor in anything, even poverty, you can survive it." ~ Bill Cosby