

Joint supplement cuts risk of heart attacks

Glucosamine users less likely to suffer cardiac arrest and strokes, study of 460,000 Britons suggests

By Laura Donnelly HEALTH EDITOR

TAKING over-the-counter joint supplements could lower the risk of dying from heart disease by a fifth, research suggests.

The study of almost half a million adults found those who took glucosamine, used to protect against arthritis, had significantly lower rates of heart attacks and strokes. The food supple-

ments, which cost as little as 10p a day, are commonly taken to protect against joint pain.

The compound, produced naturally by the body in cartilage between the joints, is said to reduce inflammation.

Researchers, including those from Harvard School of Public Health in the US, tracked the diets of 466,039 British men and women to examine which supplements they took.

One in five were found to be taking glucosamine at the start of the study.

When medical and death records were examined seven years later, glucosamine use was associated with a 15 per cent lower risk of heart attacks and strokes and a 22 per cent lower risk of

deaths from such problems. Authors of the study, published in the *BMI*, said regular use of the amino sugar has been linked to a reduction in levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a chemical associated with inflammation.

They also highlighted other research that suggests the supplement may mimic a low carbohydrate diet, shown to protect against heart disease.

However, the research was observational, meaning it could not demonstrate that the supplements were the reason for the better heart health among those taking them.

Experts said those taking such pills might be more health-conscious in other ways. But the research said the

22pc

The cut in the risk of glucosamine users dying from heart attacks and strokes, according to a study of 466,000 Britons

links between the supplements and a lower risk of heart disease remained when other factors such as age, sex, weight, lifestyle and diet were taken into account.

The findings are based on an analysis of data from the UK Biobank study that contain the health records of hundreds of thousands of people. During the

course of the follow-up period, there were 10,204 CVD incidents, 3,060 CVD deaths, 5,745 coronary heart disease events, and 3,263 strokes. Participants were enrolled from 2006 to 2010 and were followed up to 2016.

Dr Sonya Babu-Narayan, British Heart Foundation associate medical director, said: "We urgently need to fund research that could result in improved prevention, diagnosis and treatment."

"If a well-known and widely available supplement like glucosamine could help prevent heart and circulatory diseases, it is an avenue of research worth exploring."

"Meanwhile, an important way to reduce your risk is to maintain a healthy

lifestyle and when relevant take medications as recommended to you by your doctor."

Earlier this week, the charity revealed that deaths from heart disease among under-75s are on the rise for the first time in 50 years.

Diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity are all playing a role in driving up deaths among younger people, their experts said.

In 2017, 42,384 people died from heart and circulatory diseases in the UK before the age of 75, a rise of just over 3 per cent on the 41,042 in 2014.

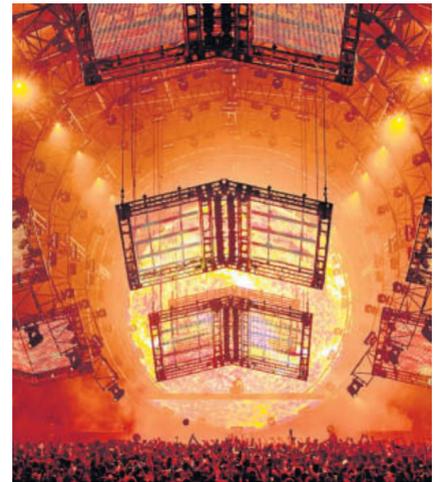
Among under-65s, there were 18,668 deaths in 2017, up almost 4 per cent on the 17,982 five years earlier.



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Candid camera A grandfather feeding a baby at a drinks party was the overall winner of a photography competition capturing impulsive moments at special events. Other section winners included a picture of Voalá Station, an Argentinian arts company performing in Stoke-on-Trent, along with a light show at Bayfront Park in Miami. The winners of the Event Photography Awards were announced last night in Mayfair.



Trans women more likely to face breast cancer, doctors discover

By Sarah Knapton SCIENCE EDITOR

TRANS women who undergo sex-change procedures are being warned that their risk of developing breast cancer increases by 46 times in comparison with men.

A study of more than 2,000 women who had transitioned from men showed that about one in 200 developed breast cancer in contrast to fewer than one in 8,000 men.

Although the risk was about one third less than naturally born women, experts from the Netherlands said it was important that doctors and patients were aware of the increased

threat, which is likely to be caused by injections of female hormones.

The study's lead author, Dr Martin den Heijer of Amsterdam University Medical Centre, said: "We do believe that it is important that possible risks and side-effects of the hormone treatment are openly discussed with the people who receive this treatment."

"This enables trans women to make educated decisions about the treatment. In our practice, we advise trans women to participate in the population-based screening programme for breast cancer."

About 55,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer in Britain each year

and there are approximately 11,000 deaths. But gender reassignment surgery is on the rise with some NHS trusts such as Imperial in London now scheduled to perform 250 operations a year, compared to just 54 across the whole health service in 2000.

Previous studies have shown that hormone replacement therapy can increase the risk of breast cancer in some postmenopausal women, which could suggest a similarly increased risk in trans women receiving hormone treatment, the authors said.

However, they said it was unclear whether some of the cancer cases were caused by genes or lifestyle factors.

Scientists highlight 12 keys to preventing onset of dementia

By Sarah Knapton SCIENCE EDITOR

TWELVE lifestyle choices and conditions that fuel dementia have been identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in the most definitive list ever of how to avoid mental decline in later life.

New guidelines based on analysis of decades of research found that physical inactivity, smoking, eating an unhealthy diet and drinking excessive alcohol significantly increased the threat of diseases like Alzheimer's.

Medical conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity also played a role in

Checklist The main factors influencing mental decline

- ◆ Smoking
- ◆ Excessive alcohol
- ◆ Poor diet
- ◆ Hearing loss
- ◆ Social isolation
- ◆ Mental inactivity
- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Blood pressure
- ◆ High cholesterol
- ◆ Obesity
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Physical inactivity

the development of cognitive decline and full-blown dementia. It also warned of a link between hearing loss and depression.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO director general, said: "The scientific evidence gathered for these guidelines confirm what we have suspected, that what is good for our heart is also good for our brain."

Around 850,000 people in Britain are currently living with dementia, and the number is expected to rise to one million by 2021.

Under the new guidance, over-65s are advised to do at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week.

No 10 warns broadcasters after Kyle show guest's death

By Anita Singh ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

BROADCASTERS have a responsibility to safeguard the mental health of television programme participants, No 10 said last night as ITV faced pressure to cancel *The Jeremy Kyle Show*.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said the death of a man who had appeared on the daytime show was "a deeply concerning case".

Steve Dymond went on the show in an effort to convince his fiancée that he had not been unfaithful. He took a lie detector test but failed. He continued to protest his innocence and was found dead a week later.

"Broadcasters and production companies have a responsibility for the mental health and wellbeing of participants and viewers of their programmes. We are clear they must have appropriate levels of support in place," a No 10 spokesman said.

Mr Dymond, 62, from Portsmouth, was said by his fiancée to have been diagnosed with depression.

Charles Walker, MP for Broxbourne, said the death should be a "watershed moment" and the programme cancelled permanently. ITV has suspended

the show and removed episodes from its catch-up service, but in an email to staff said that decision is "in no way a reflection of the show, but the best way we think we can protect the show".

Prof Simon Wessely, of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, also said the show should be dropped. "It's the theatre of cruelty. Yes, it might entertain a million people a day but, then again, so did Christians versus lions," he said. "The show will not be the only factor implicated. But, like all social media, this show is an amplifying force."

Prof Wessely said shame and guilt were powerful emotions that can precipitate a breakdown "so it's not difficult to imagine that this is multiplied when the audience is a million. Plus, the idea that - as the programme says - 'Jeremy is here to help' is stretching the verb 'to help' beyond any normal meaning of help. It's almost an offence under the Trades Description Act.

"Ronald Reagan used to say that the most frightening words in the English language are, 'I am from the government and I am here to help you'. Substitute 'my name is Jeremy Kyle and I am here to help you'."

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Getting ahead Restoration of the William Wallace statue in Wigan before its return to Stirling's National Monument.

Methodists have change of heart on same-sex marriage

By Gabriella Swerling SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS EDITOR

METHODISTS have recommended that gay couples be allowed to marry in their churches for the first time.

In a document published yesterday in the run-up to the Methodist Conference this summer, a task force gave a series of recommendations in an effort to modernise the church.

The report was drawn up as the church looks to reflect changes in society regarding same-sex relationships, cohabitation and the declining marriage rate.

It also comes after the Government's revelation last year that civil partnerships would be rolled out to heterosexual couples.

The recommendation to change the rules to allow same-sex weddings in its chapels was revealed in the publication entitled *God in Love Unites Us*, and was drawn up by the Methodist Church's marriage and relationships task group.

The report's authors said that there was a need to address the "hurt" felt by those who believe that the church's current definition of marriage implies that gay people are "lesser persons".

However, the report also contains a

clause which ensures that ministers who object to same-sex marriage will not have to officiate the ceremony.

Revd Ken Howcroft, chair of the task group, said: "Methodists have no problem with having ministers or members who are in a same-sex marriage, but we have not been allowed - up until now - to bless those relationships in a church. So this is the next step on the journey."

Emma Meehan, assistant director of *"It is fantastic to see religious institutions taking steps to support people to celebrate all parts of their identity"*

public affairs at the LGBT Foundation, said of the report: "Despite progress in recent years, it is still the case that many LGBT people of faith are unable to seek formal blessings from their place of worship on the one of the most significant days of their lives."

"It's therefore fantastic to see religious institutions taking steps to better include and support people to celebrate all parts of their identity."

The Methodist Conference will be held from June 27 to July 4.