

# WEIGHT LOSS E-NEWSLETTER

May 4, 2009

The information contained in this newsletter is for informational purposes only. It is not to replace the medical opinion rendered by a physician specifically to a patient.

Ara Keshishian, MD, FACS  
Dawn R. Keshishian, RN, CCRN

## Patient follow up....

Follow up of patient that we have operated on takes different forms. They include review of the laboratory studies that ordered, follow up office visits, and communication with your other health care providers to name a few. None of these however are suppose to replace the routine office visits. We are very much aware of the long distances that some patient have to travel to come for their office visits. Then there are times that more time is spent waiting in our office for a relatively short visit. I can not however emphasize the importance of the a face to face office visit.

The lab results that are sent to our office are reviewed as they are received. When abnormal labs are noted appropriate measures are taken, including sending out letters that explain the abnormalities noted with recommendations that may include prescription medication. The prescriptions are also included. More frequently than not the lab results are received in our office in batches. This is why some patients receive their letters describing the deficiencies noted in their labs not all at once.

One last note regarding the follow up.....We strive to be accessible at all time to patients and to their health care providers alike. We can be reached either via phone at 661-725-4847, or via email [info@dssurgery.com](mailto:info@dssurgery.com) . Every single inquiry, be from patient or another health care provider is responded to in a prompt and timely fashion.

Ara Keshishian, MD, FACS

## Drug Interactions with Herbal remedies:

Today, one of the fastest growing supplements is the herbal remedy. Experts estimate that approximately 60-70% of the population in the United States is using some form of herbal products. What is concerning about this figure is that only a small portion of the people using herbals are communicating that fact to their health care provider.

The majority of people using herbals are unaware of the potency and the interactions that herbals can have with many prescription and non-prescription medications. There are many medications that are derived from plant or herbal products such as digitalis, morphine and several anti-cancer medications. These medications easily achieve toxic levels and have very strong effects. Plant and herbs are not necessarily harmless supplements or treatments. Patients need to be aware that there is a potential for interactions with other medications and it is imperative to let your health care providers know what type of supplements or treatments you are taking over the counter.

Below is a list of a number of herbal products and their interactions with other medications both prescription and non-prescription. It is not an inclusive list and therefore anyone taking an herbal supplement or treatment should do research and always let your health care provider know what you are taking.

<b><u>Herbal products</u></b>	<b><u>Prescription or Over the Counter products</u></b>	<b><u>Interaction</u></b>
Valerian Root	Sedatives, Flagyl, sleeping pills	Increases effect and may cause “hung over” effect
Ginko, Ginger, Garlic, Dong Quai, Ferverfew, Huang qin, Shitake, Red Clover, Vitamin E, Chamomile, Chondroitin, Goldenseal, Bilbery fruit	Warfarin (Coumadin), low-molecular weight heparins, and possibly aspirin	Increases bleeding, before having surgery patients should stop herbal products at least 10 days prior to surgery.
Chromium picolinate, Garlic, Ginseng, Psyllium seeds	Diabetic medications	May increase Hypoglycemia
Ginseng	Digoxin	Increases possibility of toxic effects or may interfere with effectiveness of Digoxin
	Coffee, tea, cola (caffeine)	Increases stimulation, tachycardia, hypertension
	Antipsychotic meds, MAOI	Can increase headaches, insomnia, and tremors
	Corticosteriods	May increase effects of Corticosteriods or increase its side effects
St John’s Wort & Saw Palmetto	Iron	May inhibit absorption of iron. Should be taken 2 hours before or after ingesting iron
	Cholesterol lowering medications	Increases adverse effects of medications
	Digoxin	Decreases blood levels of digoxin by 25%, should not use together
	Elavil	Worsens depression and decrease blood levels
	Theophylline	Worsens signs and symptoms of asthma and decreases blood levels.
	Estrogen bith control pills	Breakthrough bleeding
	Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors	Increases serotonin syndrome, lethargy, confusion, muscle stiffness
Green Tea	Calcium	Decreases Calcium absorption; tea should be taken 2 hours before or after Calcium
Green Tea, Alfalfa	Warfarin (Coumadin)	Decreases blood thinning ability of Warfarin due to the high amount of Vitamin K in herb