

## Living Well with Arthritis, a Natural Approach - During September, Natural Health Month

For Immediate Release - September 2003



The economic burden of arthritis, bone and Joint disease is often more significant than other chronic conditions including cardiovascular diseases and cancer. The impact of disability on these conditions is significant on both long term care and loss of productivity. Currently the ways of treating these conditions is both costly and partial. Dr Daniel Lewis, a Bone and Joint Specialist (Rheumatologist), who specialises in natural medicine believes that, "A sustainable answer lies in adopting strategies to promote and maintain health throughout life. It requires that there be a focus on health and healing."

This focus' on individuals as 'whole people,' with minds and spirits as well as bodies and is aligned with the World Health Organisation's definition of health which includes a person's social, psychological emotional and spiritual well-being.

This practice of medicine involves patients, doctors and other health professionals working to maintain health by paying attention to lifestyle factors such as diet and adequate nutrition, regular exercise, quality of rest and sleep, managing stress, the value of community and the nature of relationships.

### **Current natural treatment for arthritis (which has been supported by the scientific community) includes:**

- Diets high in antioxidants and omega 3 fatty acids are beneficial in inflammatory arthritis.
- Weight control is effective in preventing and reducing the rate of progression of osteoarthritis.
- Nutritional supplements such as folic acid, calcium and vitamin D reduce the adverse effects of long term anti-arthritis drugs.
- The use of glucosamine for osteoarthritis of the knee has shifted from being an alternative therapy to the mainstream as the result of research.
- Numerous herbs, minerals and vitamins are supported by large amounts of anecdotal evidence and some trials but due to the limited allocation of resources in this area have not been subject to comprehensive scientific evaluation.

Also available now is:

- **Pathways to Wellbeing** a series of innovative and unique programmes embracing the practices of integrative medicine are now available in Melbourne for individuals with various arthritis, bone and joint diseases.

### **Natural Medicine facts:**

- 50% of the Australian population user some sort of complementary therapy and it is increasing.
- One outcome of the PAN Pharmaceuticals product recall was the demonstration of the significant degree to which these products are now used within our society.
- The majority of natural products in use are for pain due to arthritis, bone and joint related conditions.
- The use of fish oil for rheumatoid arthritis and glucosamine for osteoarthritis of the knee have shifted from being alternative therapies to the mainstream as the result of research.



- Adequate calcium and Vitamin D reduces the risk of osteoporotic fractures.

Daniel Lewis will present on, "Bone and joint disease in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, problems and solutions," from a natural medicine perspective at the Annual Scientific Meeting for the Bone and Joint Decade and the Australian Rheumatology Association on Saturday 18 October 2003.

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#### Media Interviews:

If you would like to arrange a meeting with one of our bone and Joint Specialist such as Dr Daniel Lewis, Rheumatologist, MBBS, FRACP (Danny's brief background attached) please contact Robyn Middleton on 02 9256 5458.

Media kits can be found at [www.rheumatology.org.au/media/mediareleases.asp](http://www.rheumatology.org.au/media/mediareleases.asp)

Additional information can also be found at [www.rheumatology.org.au](http://www.rheumatology.org.au)

## Profile: Dr Daniel Lewis - MBBS, FRACP

Dr Daniel Lewis is recognized as one of Australia's leading rheumatology experts in natural medicine.

His current clinical appointments include:

- Director, inpatient musculoskeletal pain management program at Cedar Court Rehabilitation Hospital (inaugural Director of Complementary Therapies at Cedar Court Hospital)
- Private Practice, Melbourne and
- Monash Medical Centre

Dr Daniel Lewis is a past president of the Arthritis Foundation of Victoria. Additionally he has given:

- Lectures, (Monash University, Honorary lecturer)
- Workshops and
- Retreats

in Australia and overseas on various aspects of whole person care.

Daniel's passion is integrating lifestyle change, especially in the area of nutrition, exercise and stress management into mainstream management of medical problems. His area of special interest is in integrative approach to the management of bone joint and arthritis related illnesses.



#### Memberships:

- Australian Rheumatology Association
- Director, Lewis Institute For Health and Wellbeing - newly formed education, training and research organization providing evidence based information to health professionals and the public about bone and joint and arthritis related issues for the perspective of health enhancement)

