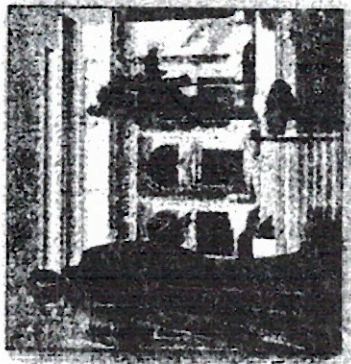


STAR Ventura

Santa Paula, Ojai and Fillmore
www.insidevc.com



Your letters

Only half the picture

Re: your July 15 article, "A change in plans":
I was glad to see The Star cover an issue of vital importance to millions of women and their loved ones about the medical options offered to deal with symptoms of menopause.

However, I was disappointed at the scope of Kim Lamb Gregory's story. A glaring omission is the fact that exercise and good nutrition are of vital importance in maintaining the body's natural balance in order to prevent disease associated with "the change."

Moreover, according to her article, hormone replacement therapy is the only option available to deal with heart disease, vascular disease, stroke and the discomforts of menopause. In truth, this is only half the picture and, all too often, the only picture painted in the popular press.

For centuries, traditional Chinese medicine, including herbal medicinals and acupuncture, have been used to provide a natural and lower-risk means of coping with these same health concerns. In fact, the results are so compelling that many Western-style clinical trials are now under way to demonstrate their efficacy.

In addition, many insurance plans now pay for licensed acupuncturists (who are the only licensed herbalists in the state of California) to work with patients as part of an integrative health approach, achieving not only excellent outcomes for menopausal women, but increasing their energy and quality of life without taking powerful and sometimes dangerous drugs.

Women who want to learn more about the natural side of this equation should look at the Web site (www.acupuncturetoday.com) of Acupuncture Today, a magazine with the latest information on natural treatments for women's health, including alternatives to hormone replacement therapy.

— **Stace Lee Nelson Hicks,**
Licensed acupuncturist and
certified personal trainer,
Ventura