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Health Hunter®

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RECNAC cancer research update
Joseph Casciari, Ph.D.

The RECNAC project marked its 8th anniversary in February with a Lunch and Lecture presentation at The Center. Dr. Hugh D. Riordan, RECNAC Project Director, began by stating the project’s goals and introducing the RECNAC staff. RECNAC started in 1989 with the stated goal, contingent upon reaching funding targets, of learning why cancer develops and how to safely treat and prevent it.

Ascorbic acid (vitamin C) emerged from these studies as an especially promising agent...

Neil Riordan, RECNAC Project Manager, described the project’s history. The first two years of the RECNAC project were spent in an exhaustive literature review covering theories on cancer and current therapies. RECNAC has compiled a database of over 6000 cancer related articles.

The next phase involved screening hundreds of vitamin and nutrient combinations for their effects on cancer cells and normal cells incubated in tissue culture plates. Ascorbic acid (vitamin C) emerged as an especially promising agent, showing preferential toxicity toward tumor cells.

The RECNAC project has devoted considerable effort investigating the potential of “mega-dose” ascorbate therapy. A phase one clinical trial is being conducted at the University of Nebraska to insure that high doses of ascorbate are non-toxic to humans. Terminal cancer patients are being treated for eight weeks with continuous intravenous ascorbate infusion. Doses of up to fifty grams per day have been used, with no toxicity observed at that dose. One patient elected to continue therapy, and is reporting improved well being after ten months.

Dr. Joseph Casciari described a proposed mechanism of ascorbate toxicity to tumors based on its ability to convert oxygen and oxygen free radicals to hydrogen peroxide, which can damage cells unless it is broken down by the enzyme, catalase. Since tumor cells often contain low levels of catalase, they are more sensitive to hydrogen peroxide. Casciari has tested ascorbate efficacy using tumor cells grown inside hollow fibers. These hollow fiber tumors share important traits with solid tumors in patients, including the presence of cell sub-populations resistant to conventional therapies.

Casciari found hollow fiber tumors to be five to ten times more resistant to ascorbate than tumor cells grown in tissue culture plates. In a collaborative effort with the H. L. Snyder Memorial Research Foundation, hollow fiber tumors implanted under the skin of mice were found to be unaffected by ascorbate administered in the intraperitoneal cavity, suggesting that mice cleared ascorbate from their bodies before it could accumulate in sufficient quantities at the tumor site. Efforts are underway at RECNAC to overcome these problems by developing ways to recycle ascorbate and increase its delivery to tumors.

Paul Taylor described the Intravenous Ascorbate Inhibition Assay (IAIA). This assay was developed

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Selenium helps prevent cancer

Larry Clark, M.D., and his associates, set out to see if selenium would protect people from skin cancer. They met with success and failure, but the success far outweighed the failure.

Using seven different clinical centers, the researchers followed 1321 patients who had a history of skin cancer, both basal and squamous cell types. Each person was given either 200 mcg of selenium or a placebo daily.

After 8271 person-years of follow-up with the people, they found that the selenium did not protect against recurrent skin cancer. That is the bad news.

The good news. "Selenium supplementation was found to be associated with significant reductions in...total cancer incidence (all-sites combined), lung, colorectal and prostate cancer incidences, and lung cancer mortality."

the researchers concluded in their report that appeared in a recent issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association.

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Nutritional Medicine
by Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

"The word"

Recently a young woman (with a husband and two children) was given "the word." It has already profoundly altered the course of her life. Do you know what "the word" is?

It is estimated that over a million Americans will be given "the word" this year. Each of these human beings will have their doctor walk into the exam room to break the terrible news. The doctor's mood will be somber, deadly serious. The atmosphere will be something like that of a courtroom, just prior to the reading of the verdict. When "the word" comes from the doctor's lips, the patient and their family will gasp and draw back...as if the word "guilty" had been spoken.

Out of nowhere, "the word" appears and puts your very existence in jeopardy...and no one knows WHY!

Monumental efforts have been made in recent decades to crack this great mystery. We all stand in the midst of a kind of plague, hoping that we are making the right choices that will help us elude "the word." Some of the WHYS like smoking and free radicals are becoming better understood.

We must, as a society, undermine the power of "the word" with scientific understanding and human compassion. We must see that it is within our capacity to prevent, control, and to heal this terrible illness. This will require a better understanding of not only the objective but also the subjective WHYS.

It is becoming clear that to heal "the word," we must look deeper into our existence and strive to achieve balance on all levels: mind, body, and spirit.

In all their consternation, these people who are our friends, our parents, our children, our co-workers, will not be able to even imagine what terrible wrong they have committed to deserve this unthinkable, unspeakable sentence.

In short, to beat "the word" we must heal our very lives on all levels! The human spirit will find a way to beat this word.

Continued from page 1

RECNAC to determine, on a patient by patient basis, whether ascorbate doses given in therapy are sufficient for cytotoxic effect. In this protocol, tumor cells grown in tissue culture plates are exposed to patient serum drawn before or after ascorbate therapy. For some patients, serum collected prior to ascorbate therapy actually stimulated tumor cell growth. Post-therapy results vary among individual patients. Taylor showed IAIA data from two patients given 65 gram ascorbate infusions over an eight hour period. Serum from one patient killed the entire tumor cell population, while serum from another patient killed only a fraction of the tumor cells. Measurements of blood ascorbate concentrations after infusion indicated that three or more infusions may be required before blood ascorbate levels get high enough to kill tumor cells.

Vitamin C is not the only lead RECNAC scientists are pursuing. Another area of interest is tumor angiogenesis. This is the process whereby tumors induce new capillaries to grow toward the tumor. Angiogenesis provides tumors with the nutrients necessary for growth beyond microscopic sizes. RECNAC scientists hope to inhibit angiogenesis, thereby starving tumors at an early stage. Taking clues from traditional Chinese medicine, Dr. Xiao Long Meng, with the help of RECNAC scientists, Jan Ryel and Kashif Sheikh, is isolating extracts from herbs and natural products in hopes of finding new agents that inhibit angiogenesis and tumor growth.

Dr. Meng described a triage for screening extracts. First, extracts are tested against tumor cells and normal cells to identify those that are preferentially toxic to tumor cells. Then extracts are added to tumor cells implanted on chick embryo membranes. Without extracts, tumor cells grow on the membrane and induce angiogenesis. Extracts are added to tumor cells implanted on chick embryo membranes. Without extracts, tumor cells grow on the membrane and induce angiogenesis.
tracts that slow tumor growth or inhibit angiogenesis are considered for further study. The most promising extracts are sent to Beijing, China, to be tested in a mouse melanoma tumor model. Two extracts inhibit mouse melanoma by fifty percent. One inhibits angiogenesis, and the other preferentially kills tumor cells.

Dr. Fei Fei Zhong and Tracey Schmidt are looking for ways to boost the body’s immune response to cancer. This effort initially focused on monocytes, the white blood cells responsible for immunity. However, it was serendipitously observed that blood platelets can, under certain conditions, be more toxic to tumor cells than monocytes. Dr. Zhong presented data suggesting that platelet toxicity depends on cofactors in the blood plasma, since they exhibit their toxic effect only when blood plasma is present. Thus, while monocyte studies continue, the potential role of platelets in combating cancer response is being examined.

Neil Riordan described research by Sergey Nesterishin to study electrical events in wound healing and regeneration in salamanders. These experiments employ the Faraday cage that RECNAC had built. We hope this research will increase our understanding of how cells transform from their resting state to one of rapid growth. Riordan also recognized the contributions of RECNAC Administrator, Kim Shoemaker, who helps keep the project running smoothly.

Finally, Neil Riordan shared a case study involving a terminal breast cancer patient with multiple bone metastases that he met during his physician assistant internship. The patient was bedridden, required morphine infusions for pain, and had severe blood clotting in both arms. She was given fifteen grams of intravenous vitamin C. The patient showed much improvement, and her vitamin C dose was increased to 100 grams per day. She was discharged two weeks later, and a subsequent bone scan showed some bone metastases had resolved. Although she died six months later after fracturing her hip, vitamin C therapy improved her quality of life tremendously in those final six months.

The RECNAC project is scheduled to continue until December 31, 1999.

Hey, don’t peel those grapes!

I can remember in movies from the 1930’s and 40’s, the lap of luxury was having a servant sitting around just to peel grapes for the heroine.

This happened both on the screen and off the screen—remember Mae West?

From this, I have heard women say to their husband or significant other, “Peel me some grapes if you really love me.”

Sounds like the ultimate pampering, doesn’t it—having your grapes peeled. Well, it turns out that if one really does love their mate, the answer to, “Peel me some grapes if you really love me,” would be, “No way! Since I really love you, I will wash you some grapes and even take them off the stems and bring them to you in a bowl. But I will leave the skins on them to help your body stay cancer free.”

This sounds like some couch potato male excuse for doing the minimum for his mate so that he can quickly get back to the football game, but it isn’t. New research proves this apparent lack of caring to be the true act of love.

The skins of both red and white grapes, as well as some other plants, contain resveratrol. Resveratrol may be a potent cancer-chemopreventive agent, according to evidence from laboratory research and mouse model work.

Cancer chemopreventive agent is just a fancy term for a natural substance that tends to prevent cancer from even getting started in your body.

Researchers first extracted resveratrol from the Peruvian tree Cassia quinquangulata. Then they found that the substance inhibited the enzyme cyclooxygenase, which is often an initial step that can stimulate tumor-cell growth in the body.

From this, Meishiang Jang, a doctoral candidate at the University of Illinois College of Pharmacy in Chicago, led a team of researchers who discovered that resveratrol prevented tumor initiation by inhibiting free radical formation in human leukemia cells.

The researchers also tested varying doses of resveratrol on mice and reduced skin tumors from 68% to 98%, depending on the strength of the dose.

So far, resveratrol has been found in at least 72 different plants. Both red and white grapes contain it, but red grapes have a greater supply. Mulberries and peanuts also contain resveratrol, researchers noted.

Again, when I was a kid, in the summer we would climb the mulberry trees in the school yard and stuff ourselves with ripe mulberries until we were sick. Little did we know that we were protecting ourselves with a potent chemo-preventive.

Too bad we didn’t know about resveratrol in mulberries because it would have been much easier to justify to our mothers the purple stains on our hands, mouths, and clothes: “Mom, we were just trying to prevent cancer, you know, by taking on a load of resveratrol, that wonderful chemo-preventive and antioxidant.”

Eric Rimm, ScD, an assistant professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, found this information exciting, although preliminary.

Rimm pointed out that it may be necessary to package resveratrol into a supplement because one would have to drink six glasses of red wine a day to gain the benefits found in the study.

“He added that part of what is exciting about the new study is that it may help account for the abundance of evidence showing that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables reduces the risk of cancer.” according to Medical Tribune Research News.

So, if you don’t have a mulberry tree with ripe mulberries handy, be sure to eat your five fruits and vegetables every day—and don’t peel those grapes.

—Richard Lewis
Have you ever asked yourself, "Is there anything I can do to protect myself and my loved ones from getting cancer?" The increase in incidence of this dread disease is approaching pandemic proportions. Charles B. Simone, M.D. answers, "Yes!", to that question. He gives a ten point plan to reduce risk of getting cancer. Questions this month are taken from his book, Cancer and Nutrition.

The National Cancer Institute spends _____% of it's annual budget on prevention programs to help people keep from getting cancer.

After collating the existing cancer data, Dr. Simone found that 80 to 90% of all cancers are a result of ____________.

Diet and nutrition appear to be a factor in 60% of women's cancer and 40% of men's cancer as well as ______% of cardiovascular disease cases.

The exact nature of a single cancer cell is so elusive. Cancer is seen as many diseases with many different causes.

The diet of Americans on the whole is very good, as reported in The Dietary Goals for the United States. The main problem we have is that we eat too little food.

One way to decrease your risk of cancer and heart disease is to ____________.

Learning to deal effectively with stress and to exercise can reduce the risk of developing cancer. Ways to control stress are through ____________.

Case of the month

A 23-year-old college student came to The Center with feelings of profound depression. He felt generalized achiness, was tired, had headaches, was anxious, noted poor memory and poor concentration. He also had frequent upper respiratory infections and some sugar cravings.

He had stopped going to his classes and had gotten involved with recreational drugs. His only medication was Claritin for allergies. At the time, he was taking no nutrient supplementation.

His laboratory testing was quite significant and indicative of the biochemical roots of his illness. He had low histamine and high urinary pyrrole levels, not an uncommon combination in individuals experiencing anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal. Forty-one out of 90 of the foods tested were positive for adverse cytotoxic reactivity.

Plasma C level was -2 standard deviations low. Both omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acids were very low. Erythrocyte zinc and magnesium were low normal. Urine specific gravity was very high indicating chronic dehydration.

B6 and non-flushing niacin were given initially and folate was added later. All three help to raise histamine levels in the brain where it functions as an important neurotransmitter. Three rounds of intravenous C were given with magnesium and zinc to quickly restore tissue levels of these essential nutrients.

Flax oil and fish oil were advised to normalize low fatty acids. It was also suggested he take Liquid Zinc Boost which acts to keep pyrrole levels normal. Two glasses of water prior to each meal were also suggested to help with dehydration. Regular aerobic exercise was also suggested. Finally, 30-60 days of avoidance of reactive foods was recommended.

At his follow-up appointment, the patient's symptomatology had resolved 100%. He reported feeling great, ready to head back to school to start his application process for medical or dental school.
Holding back the ravages of time

Aging is characterized by LOSS—less hearing, less teeth, less hair, less vision, less memory, and less urge for sex. It is also characterized by GAIN—more grey hair, more joint pain, more waistline, more wrinkles, and more confusion.

A very informative article appeared in the January 25, 1997, Science News. It states that many of the degenerative changes that accompany aging have been linked to the cumulative effects of free radicals in the body. Such damage can accelerate with age.

The article further states that a nitrone (novel antioxidant designed to trap free radicals) known as PBN can extend the life of mice. In another study, old rodents treated with PBN performed maze tests as well as young animals.

Until such a pill has been developed for humans, we need to be certain that we are getting adequate amounts of the antioxidants that are known to attack these free radicals. There is evidence to suggest the benefits of a diet based on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and seafood, with land animals eaten less often.

I try to eat well balanced meals, but I also take supplements that contain adequate amounts of vitamins A, C, and E, as well as beta-carotene, zinc, and selenium.

I have just added a new product to my diet regimen. The Center has packaged a wondrous blend of fruit and vegetable concentrates that provides many benefits of a whole foods diet. I find I have more energy at the end of each day when I take two of these at breakfast and two for lunch.

This may not be the PBN formula that is doing so much for mice, but it just may be an answer for humans today.

If we can maintain a good balance in our diet and supplements, have a regular exercise program, be involved in our community and develop a strong support network of friends and family, and, above all, a positive attitude, we can expect the following years to be of better quality.

—Nelda Reed

Mental Medicine
by Marilyn Landreth, M.A.
Life-affirming energy

The dilemma of using mental medicine (mind/body processes) in the treatment of cancer is: If the cancer is not “cured” the person has the additional burden of guilt because “they must not want to be cured.” Most people who have cancer already have enough problems without carrying the burden of guilt for something that someone else thinks they did or did not do.

Each patient is an individual with a unique understanding of the meaning of life and what she/he needs from life. To be able to bring life giving energy to the healing process is one goal of The Center. We encourage patients to become co-learners because it has been found that those patients who become co-learners are the ones who have the most success with The Center’s treatment program. Co-learners are engaged in bringing that life giving energy to the front in the healing process.

In a recent article in the journal, Advances, the researchers discuss treatment at a medical clinic in Illinois that uses a four part program for the treatment of cancer. One part of their program is psychodynamic/psychosocial interventions to invoke life-affirming coping styles to “urge an active engagement on the part of the patient in order to heighten the person’s sense of empowerment and self-efficacy,” wrote Keith Blake, M.D., director of the program.

Using relaxation training, imagery, meditation, and/or biofeedback can increase confidence in a person’s abilities and reduce anxiety. Reduced anxiety increases optimism and one’s sense of possibilities. Using mental medicine in a positive way to promote life-affirming energy is the goal.

Food of the Month
by Donald R. Davis, Ph.D.

POTATOES grew only in the new world till after the time of Columbus. Now they are a worldwide staple, including in China. Relative to calories, whole potatoes contain at least adequate amounts of 25 of the 40 nutrients shown here. Peeling makes little difference except for a 70% loss of iron. Greenish skin is caused by excessive light exposure and should be removed; it is bitter and toxic. As a more nutritious alternative to butter or margarine with potatoes, try cheese, bacon bits, plain yogurt, buttermilk, or (real) sour cream. The cooking fat in French fries and most potato chips shortens by half the length of nearly all bars shown here.
**Beat The Odds Update**

**Green tea helps prevent heart disease**

The Chinese have, for centuries, touted green tea for its medicinal purposes as well as just a delightful drink to enhance meals or sip socially.

Now, researchers are looking at green tea's natural antioxidant capabilities. In particular, researchers are interested in its ability to stop the oxidation of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) that many believe is one cause of atherosclerosis or heart disease.

In one research project found in *Lancet*, researchers in Australia were looking at the antioxidant effects of polyphenolic derivatives consisting of various flavan-3-ols. Their research found these compounds very effective in preventing the oxidation of LDL.

"If completely absorbed, as little as one cup of green tea per day may provide an adequate intake of antioxidant polyphenols," the Australian researchers wrote.

They added, "consumption of naturally derived antioxidants such as green tea beverages and extracts may be a safer alternative and an effective means of increasing the dietary intake of antioxidants, since each cup of green tea (100 mL) is reported to contain 50—100 mg of polyphenols... which would be 6300—12,600 times higher than the dose used in this in-vitro LDL oxidation study."

**CENTER UPDATE**

**Is there a substitute for your daily five fruits and vegetables?**

Everywhere we turn these days, someone is recommending that we eat five fruits and vegetables each day. Health magazines and professional journals regularly recommend eating five fruits and veggies a day.

And for good reasons, too. For several years, research has touted the antioxidant characteristics of fruits and vegetables, particularly in the prevention of chronic disease.

"Understanding the associations between fruit and vegetable intake and other health behaviors is important for properly interpreting the rapidly growing number of studies that link low intakes of fruits and vegetables to the risk of cancer and cardiovascular disease," wrote Sedula and associates recently in the journal *Epidemiology*.

In their research, they surveyed 23,699 men and women and found that, on average, men eat fewer fruits and vegetables (3.3) than women (3.7). Both fell short of the mark. They also found that only 20% of those surveyed in this large group ate the recommended five servings daily.

In another study reported in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, Krebs-Smith and colleagues surveyed children and adolescents between the ages of 2 and 18 in 48 states and found similar results—only one in five children ate five fruits and vegetables a day. To make things worse, the researchers found that nearly one quarter of the fruits and vegetables consumed were French fries.

These are only two studies of many that continue to paint a grim picture of American nutrition. Is there any hope, any help on the horizon?

The Center offers one solution for those with fast paced lifestyles who know they need fruits and veggies, but don’t have the time—there is Fruits Plus and Veggie Plus.

Fruits Plus and Veggie Plus are processed fruits and vegetables in a tablet form. These nutrients are scientifically processed at a very low temperature to preserve digestive enzymes, active phytounitrients (plant based), beneficial probiotics, super antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Two capsules at breakfast and a couple at lunch deliver much of what you miss in your diet. But they do not completely replace the real thing.

**White pasta to whole wheat pasta, an easy conversion**

Many people prefer the taste, texture, and look of regular white pasta over whole wheat pasta. At the same time, more people are taking up the whole foods diet and wondering how they will solve this great pasta crisis.

Don Davis, Ph.D., from the University of Texas at Austin and a consultant at The Center, offers a modest solution: add some wheat bran and germ.

He says, "Yes, theoretically, at least, one can get perhaps all of the many advantages of whole wheat pasta in this way: add to the pasta sauce or other accompaniments the amount of wheat bran and germ that correspond to the white pasta used. For 16 ounces of dry pasta, about 6 cups of cooked pasta, these amounts are about:"

- Wheat bran (15% by weight)
  - 2.5 ounces = 1 1/4 cups
  - (bran is fluffy)

- Wheat germ (3% by weight)
  - 0.5 ounces = 2 Tablespoons

Because these are dry, you may want to add water to the recipe as well, perhaps 1/4 cup or so."

He suggests starting with half this amount if you are worried about taste or appearance. Or, if you like the full amount, you might even try adding more as long as this much fiber agrees with your digestive system.

If you find this is good in your pasta sauce, you may want to try it with other foods such as soups, stews, salads, and egg dishes, for example. Both bran and germ are very rich in many nutrients.

"Wheat germ is best purchased roasted in vacuum-packed jars, and refrigerated after opening. It easily becomes rancid after exposure to air, so buy only small amounts that can be used preferably within a couple of months. Rancidity is detectable by a disagreeable odor and taste," he adds. Bon Appetit!
b. So great is our need to “cure cancer” that more money is collected each year than can be responsibly spent on meaningful research.

d. Since nutrition, lifestyle, and the environment are the most common risk factors associated with cancer incidence, by identifying your risk factors and changing them, you can improve your odds of staying healthy.

a. Cancer research and treatment are extremely complex fields of study.

b. We have total control over the nutritional risk factors but many people choose to do nothing about improving their diet.

c. We eat too much meat, too much fat, too much cholesterol, too much salt, and too much sugar.

da. If you can’t maintain an ideal weight, at least lose 5 to 10 pounds.

a. Learning relaxation techniques is helpful, as is exercise. Strenuous exercise may not be beneficial for everyone although regular exercise also reduces stress.

CANCER & NUTRITION
by Charles B. Simone, M.D.
Would you like to know some ways to protect you and your family against getting cancer and improve health at the same time? Diet, exercise, and supplements all play a part in the prevention program developed by Charles B. Simone, M.D. Softcover.
Retail Price: $12.95
Health Hunter: $11.67

SUPPLEMENTS FOR BEGINNERS
with Donald R. Davis, Ph.D.
Are you interested in starting nutritional supplements? Or have you started already, but are unsure about your choices? There is a bewildering variety of products for sale, at a wide range of prices. This talk emphasizes the basics—what we know (and don’t know) about nutrients, the amounts we need, and a comparison of multivitamin and mineral formulas. Audio cassette & video tape.

UPREGULATING YOUR THYROID
with Ronald Hunninghake, M.D.
Many patients with fatigue, cold intolerance, hair loss, dry skin, depression, weight gain, and other low thyroid symptoms have normal thyroid tests. A new explanation for poor cellular thyroid function is presented. A safe method for upregulating the cellular utilization of T3 thyroid hormone is also discussed. Audio cassette & video tape.

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Upcoming Events...

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APRIL

SPECIAL CLASSES:
2, 16, and 30 Eat Your Way to Natural Weight Loss Workshop

Watchful waiting for prostate cancer

“Patients with localized prostate cancer have a favorable outlook following watchful waiting, and the number of deaths potentially avoidable by radical initial treatment is limited.”, wrote Jan-Eric Johansson, M.D., and associates in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Watchful waiting is the process deferring aggressive treatment such as surgery for men age 65 or older when the tumor is small and localized.

In recent years, the researchers add, “screening and aggressive treatment of early disease are becoming widespread—a development that will escalate the risk of overdiagnosis and treatment.” Recent data, according to the researchers, suggest that PSA (prostate specific antigen) may be elevated for as much as 5 to 10 years before a prostate tumor becomes evident.

**INSIDE THIS MONTH’S ISSUE . . .**

- RECNAC cancer research update
- Selenium helps prevent cancer
- Green tea helps prevent heart disease
- Watchful waiting for prostate cancer

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