



March, 1997

MEMBERSHIP DESK

Please help:- We are having difficulty in maintaining sufficient funds to cover the printing and mailing of the Newsletter this next two months.

A few of us have tapped into Fraternal Organisations of which we are members and have received four amounts this last year, sufficient, together with donations at the door, and some personal donations (thank you) to survive to date. We appeal to you, particularly those of you who cannot make the meetings, to consider mailing in a donation of any amount to me, Jim Lodge, 410-831 Dunsmuir Rd. Victoria. BC. V9A 5B9, (Make cheques payable to Victoria Chapter HeCSC). If you ask for a tax receipt (over \$10.00) I will forward it with your next Newsletter (saving postage). If anyone is a member of an organisation which raises charitable funds and feels that an approach could be made to them for funds, but you would rather we apply, please forward particulars of whom and where to write. In a nutshell, our Chapter is growing faster than the funding just now. The need for information, comfort and support is there, we just have to find ways to keep up the work. We have, as many know, funding kicking in on May 1st, 97 which will help us achieve some of our aims and goals. The drought is now!

We anticipate lots of work after Justice Krever gives his report, such as continuing to seek justice and fair treatment for persons who have developed Hep. C, by keeping up the dialogue with public health officials and government representatives. We therefore still need you to consider becoming members of the Society as this gives us much more clout. Why not complete the Application Form (if you have mislaid it, phone for one) today and mail it to the Toronto Address and please don't forget to renew your membership when due. (A portion of your dues are returned to the Chapter). The expiry date is on the mailing label of the Newsletter. If it's blank, it simply means you have not made application yet for membership. If it's highlighted with an orange mark it's a reminder it is or is about to expire. We have, I'm glad to report, some encouraging news in that a few members have already written their M.P.'s and M.L.A.'s and have received some favourable replies.. We now have a vibrant Advocacy group, if you are on Internet and wish to volunteer, phone Joan Diemecke at 479-5290 for further details.

Meet your M.L.A.:- Dave Balchin and I have a date to meet with our M.L.A. Moe Sihota for a discussion and information session on Hep. C. Can you meet with your M.L.A.?

David Smith (co-chairperson) has dates set to meet with media groups, TC, Shaw Cable, CFX etc. and a 10K run which has been organised to bring awareness to Hep. C. Watch for details Aug/Sept) then enter if you feel like a run (especially if you can find some sponsorship), for the fun of it.

Reminder:- Any change of address, phone number, or Postal Code please let me know at your earliest. It saves our meagre funds. Thanks.

Jim Lodge Co-chairperson
& Membership
Tel.: 386-8227
e-mail: ut301@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

The deadline for any contributions to next issue of hepc.bull is March 23rd. Please contact Joan Diemecke at Tel. 479-5290.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, Mar. 26, 1997 1 - 3 PM, and again at 7-9 PM
St. John the Divine Church Lounge 1611 Quadra St. (Entrance through the
rear, marked Annex) **Elections for officers will be held at both meetings.**

NOMINEES TO DATE:

CHAIRPERSON:

David Smith

VICE-CHAIRPERSON:

Jim Lodge

SECRETARY:

Priscilla Ekman

TREASURER:

Joan Diemecke

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (3 to be chosen):

Joanne Balchin

Frank Nielsen

Randy Bennet

RECIPE CORNER

LEMON DRINK

*This drink can be used to cleanse and purify your liver and gallbladder.
It will also flush toxins out of your lymph glands, aid in the absorption of fatty acids, and help to regulate pH.*

RECIPE:

3-4 Whole organic lemons

3-4 T. Organic extra virgin cold pressed OLIVE OIL

1-2 T. Flax oil

1/4 to 1/2 can Frozen fruit juice (pineapple, orange, etc.)

6 oz. Distilled water

Other possible additions: 1 T. Vitamin C powder, ginger, stevia to sweeten, grapefruit seed extract, beet juice.

Cut up lemons into quarters and cut off any bad places on rind, place in blender, several pieces at a time. Add juice and water, olive and flax oil, and any of the other possible additions, blend on high for several minutes and continue to add the rest of the lemons. Strain into a jar to get rid of excess pulp. Press small amounts through wire mesh strainer with large spoon. When you start spin the spoon in the stuff round and round, as the finer liquid strains through.

This makes enough for 3-4 days. You can drink 2 oz. 2-3 times a day.

This stuff tastes good, you would have no idea there is any oil in it!

DISCLAIMER:

HeCSS cannot endorse any physician, product or treatment. The guests invited to our group to speak, do so to add to our information only. What they say should not necessarily be considered medical advice, unless they are medical doctors. The information you receive may help you make an informed decision. Please consult with your health practitioner before considering any therapy or therapy protocol

BLOOD TESTS - WHAT DO THEY MEAN?



Patients with liver failure and those who have been transplanted require frequent blood tests in order to monitor their condition. But what do these tests mean?

Liver Function Tests:

A number of tests reflect liver function. Abnormal results may indicate infection, rejection, obstruction of the bile system, or other ongoing illness... The normal value may be slightly different depending on which lab did the analysis. Also, the normal blood values in children vary with age. For example, newborns often have a higher bilirubin level for the first few

weeks of life. Blood tests are compared with the patient's previous numbers and considered along with how the patient feels before beginning any treatment. These lab results may also indicate that further tests, such as an ultrasound or biopsy, are necessary.

Biochemistry:

The blood biochemistry reflects the balance of minerals, protein, and fluids within the body as well as kidney function. These tests can be affected by infection, rejection, nutrition, dehydration, medication, and overall health. For example, albumin is a blood protein which is usually low when the liver malfunctions or the patient is poorly nourished. This decreased protein level can cause fluid to pool in the abdomen (ascites) and also leads to swollen hands and feet. Urea and creatinine are kidney function tests which may be elevated if a patient is dehydrated or is on medications such as cyclosporine or Lasix.

Hematology:

Hematology is the study of the blood and its properties. Hemoglobin carries oxygen to the tissues, and platelets are important for blood clotting. The white blood cells increase in response to infection, but along with the platelets, they may be low if the spleen is enlarged from liver disease. The INR, PT, and PTT refer to the time it takes for blood to clot. When the liver is failing, the blood clots slowly and patients are at risk for life-threatening blood loss.

Excerpt from the newsletter FOCUS, Fall 1995.

NORMAL VALUES METRO-MCNAIR LABS

WBC	4.0 - 10.0
RBC	3.8 - 5.1
Hemoglobin	118 - 154
PT	150 - 350
PTT	22 - 37 sec.
Albumin	35 - 55
Uric Acid	161 - 422
Creatinine	55 - 110
Bilirubin	0 - 20
AST	8 - 40
ALT	5 - 26
GGT	0 -

TWO RESEARCH LABS COLLABORATE TO SPEED THE GENERATION OF HCV PROTEASE INHIBITORS

Structural Bioinformatics Inc. and CyberChemics Inc. collaborate to speed the generation of hepatitis C viral protease inhibitors

Source: Business Wire (BW HealthWire) via Individual Inc. Jan. 27, 1997

Structural Bioinformatics Inc. (SBI) and CyberChemics Inc. (CCI) declared the formation of a team effort aimed at speeding the generation of new viral protease inhibitors through a combination of computational technologies.

In their first research efforts, the two drug-design companies will apply their computer technologies to attack the hepatitis C virus. An effective treatment for hepatitis C is not available yet, but great interest and effort by a variety of pharmaceutical companies is currently focused on this disease.

SBI will design non-peptide drug leads based on the computational structural analysis of sequences of highly active new viral protease inhibitors generated by using CCI's algorithms.

Structural Bioinformatics in San Diego has developed a supercomputational system making it possible to use gene sequence data in a broad range of structure-based, drug-discovery and design processes.

SBI's proprietary algorithms make it easier to design and identify small molecule lead compounds based on new

gene sequences and the comparative structural analysis of interesting protein families.

CyberChemics Inc. is a new company with offices in Alabama, and laboratories in New York. CCI uses artificial-intelligence programming techniques to create suites of biologically active peptides.

Two projects have created more than 100 active compounds, with an active hit rate of better than 50 percent for the creation of antimicrobial compounds and more than 70 percent for the creation of AIDS virus protease inhibitors.

The proprietary algorithms developed by CCI create a wide variety of possible compounds on the computer while the screening functions are also done, thus limiting the actual number of compounds requiring synthesis.

CONTACT:

Structural Bioinformatics Inc., San Diego | Susan K. Burgess, 619/675-2400 | <http://www.strubix.com> | or | CyberChemics Inc., Huntsville | Andrew Brittain, 205/881-8805 | <http://www.bio.com/co/protease.html>

HEPATITIS C VIRUS MIGHT INDUCE FIBROMYALGIA

*By Nelle Nix
Exclusive to SHN*

October 17, 1996 -- A Portland, Ore. study suggests hepatitis C may trigger fibromyalgia. The study is the first to show a link between the two illnesses. Fibromyalgia often arises after a traumatic event or an illness. Several infections have previously been proposed as potential inciters of fibromyalgia, including Lyme disease and the human herpes virus-6.

Published in the Journal of Clinical Rheumatology's August issue, the 12 patient study determined that the relationship between hepatitis C virus and fibromyalgia followed three distinct patterns:

In nine patients, fibromyalgia developed as a long-term complication of the hepatitis, arising on average 13.4 years after the virus was acquired.

In two patients, fibromyalgia arose simultaneously with the hepatitis C infection.

In one patient, pre-existing fibromyalgia was significantly worsened by the hepatitis C.

Six of the 12 patients were diagnosed with fibromyalgia after initial evaluations for musculoskeletal complaints. All had the chance of contracting hepatitis C through either blood or body fluid exposure. Three used intravenous blood products, one experienced an occupational needle stick, three had tattoos, three used intravenous drugs, and two engaged in promiscuous sexual practices.

The reason for the link between hepatitis C virus and fibromyalgia is unknown. The authors propose, however, that hepatitis C causes chronic activation of the immune system that leads to muscle aching, fatigue, mental changes, sleep abnormalities, and alterations of the neuroendocrine system.

The patients with both hepatitis C and fibromyalgia could be distinguished from most other patients with fibromyalgia alone because they had symptoms unusual to fibromyalgia. These symptoms included synovitis (inflammation of the membrane around a joint, bursa, or tendon) and vasculitis (inflammation of a blood or lymph vessel). In addition, laboratory findings pointed to a disease process other than fibromyalgia.

The study was conducted at Oregon Health Sciences University and Portland Adventist Hospital.

Source: "Fibromyalgia: A prominent feature in patients with musculoskeletal problems in chronic hepatitis C, A report of 12 patients," by A. Barkhuizen, G.S. Schoepflin, and R.M. Bennett, Journal of Clinical Rheumatology, Vol. 2, No. 4, August 1996.

THE TZU CHI INSTITUTE

The Tzu Chi Institute for Complementary and Alternative Medicine recently opened in the Heather Pavilion of the Vancouver Hospital and is affiliated with both the VGH and UBC. When I spoke with one of their practitioners on the phone, she expressed interest in HepC, saying that it's the kind of health issue that they are seriously interested in. I think this kind of interest and new direction in medicine gives everyone hope. Their primary purpose is to serve as a bridge between conventional and non-conventional health workers, to design and implement research methodologies, to scientifically assess complementary medicine, to offer education and training programs, and to introduce scientifically proven complementary therapies into mainstream practice.

They are currently assessing community health needs, both on the phone at 875-4769 (which takes about 15 minutes) or through a survey form that upon completion is mailed back out to the institute. (I have a copy of the form and could run additional copies for our library). There does seem to be a significant portion of those with HepC that seeks alternative treatment, yet it sounds as if their goal is to work co-operatively with mainstream practice.

The institute presently has a phenomenal amount of information that is currently being translated into English. One can access this information at their resource centre/library facility in Vancouver or at their Website <www.ICAM.healthcare.UBC.CA>

by J. P.

HEP C PROGRAM NOT SHOWN

To: Joan Diemecke
From: comments@discovery.ca (Discovery Audience Relations)

Joan:

Thanks for your note, and for your interest in Discovery Channel. We appreciate it very much!

THE CUTTING EDGE is an independently produced series in the US. The producers buy programming time from the US Discovery Channel, however, the US Discovery Channel has no rights to the series, and therefore cannot distribute it. As a result, the series is not offered to us for broadcast.

Hope this clarifies things for you.

Best regards,

Saundra Katz
Audience Relations Coordinator

Joan Diemecke wrote:

Dear Sirs:

I was looking forward to seeing the program on "The Cutting Edge", about Hepatitis C on the Discovery Network, and was disappointed to learn it wouldn't be shown in Canada, and so were the 200 members of our support group in Victoria. It had been announced in our newsletter, and everyone marked their calendars....

Is there any way you could manage to air this program? ...I hope you will do your part in educating the Canadian public about this little-known, but widespread disease...It is urgent that people with ... risk factors be tested, because the earlier they are diagnosed, the earlier they can start treatment....

Thank you for your attention. If you have any questions, please contact me.
Joan Diemecke

COORDINATING COMMITTEE -- VICTORIA CHAPTER

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