



Healthy Mind...Benefits of Faith

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Faith in God and belonging to a religion may reduce stress and anxiety in family caregivers, a new study suggests. Researchers from Stanford University examined the impact of prayer, faith and religion on the well-being of individuals who serve as caregivers to a family member.

It has been suggested that patients who pray for themselves or are aware that others are praying for them may develop stronger coping skills and decreased anxiety, thereby potentially improving health outcomes. Other theories include beneficial effects of prayer or "positive thinking" on the immune system, central nervous system (brain) or hormonal system. The meditative, relaxing effects of prayer have been suggested to have beneficial effects such as lowering blood pressure. There are no plausible scientific explanations for the possible effects of intercessory prayers said without the knowledge of patients.



The study, conducted over a 14-month period, used participant observation and in-depth interviews to evaluate the health of African American adults providing in-home care for a family member with chronic confusion.

The majority of caregivers were adult daughters. Nearly half attributed chronic confusion to a difficult life and emotional stress or "worry," a third believed it to be a natural component of "old age." The study reported that caregivers tended to view their work as an expression of love and devotion that was accompanied by emotional stress and personal sacrifice. While just under half of the caregivers had no other family members willing or available to assist with the physical care of the elder, the majority were able to turn to family members for emotional support.

The study found that caregivers identified strong religious beliefs as the primary force that sustained them in the caregiving role. The centrality of spirituality, and faith/religion was noted in nearly all aspects of life. Caregivers also reported that faith in God was an important aspect of the care recipients' lives as well. Recipients' spiritual needs were addressed by accompanying the care recipient to church services and reading Bible passages to them on a regular basis. Selective community services were also used that supported efforts at maintaining the family caregiver role.

Studies of the effects of prayer on health outcomes report variable results, with some research finding benefits, and other trials noting no effects. More research on the effects of faith and religion on the health of both patients and their caregivers are needed.

If you received this newsletter from a friend or colleague and would like to be added to our mail out, please email amwarren@mdanderson.org

Healthy Body...Benefits of Green Tea

Tea is one of the oldest drinks across the world and is enjoyed in every country. The Chinese have known about the medicinal benefits of green tea for thousands of years, using it to treat everything from headaches to depression.

In 1994, the Journal of the National Cancer Institute published the results of an epidemiological study indicating that drinking green tea reduced the risk of esophageal cancer in Chinese men and women by nearly sixty percent. The secret of green tea lies in the fact it is rich in catechin polyphenols, particularly epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG). EGCG is a powerful anti-oxidant.



Tea has about eight to 10 times the polyphenols found in fruits and vegetables, according to long-time tea researcher John Weisburger, PhD, senior researcher at the Institute for Cancer Prevention in Valhalla, N.Y.

Green, white, oolong, and black teas all come from the leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* plant. What sets green tea apart is the way it is processed. Green tea leaves are steamed, which prevents the EGCG compound from being oxidized. By contrast, black and oolong tea leaves are made from fermented leaves, which results in the EGCG being converted into other compounds that are not nearly as effective in preventing and fighting various diseases.

Come enjoy a free cup of tea anytime at our Main location. We have a variety of flavored teas, in addition to green tea. We also have free hot chocolate and free coffee.

Recipe...Green Tea Cooler

- 1 cup green tea, steeped at regular strength, at room temperature or chilled
- 2 kiwi fruit, peeled and diced
- 2 cups diced honeydew melon, fresh or frozen
- 1 ripe banana
- 1 tablespoon sugar (optional)
- 6 ice cubes



Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender, breaking the banana into three or four pieces. Blend or process until smooth. Serve immediately in tall glasses. About 2 servings.

As always, please be mindful of any dietary restrictions you may have. Please consult with your medical provider if you have any questions.

Place...of wellness Spotlight

Nutrition Classes with Dena Norton

Senior Clinical Dietitian Dena Norton facilitates lectures twice a month at Place...of wellness to help patients and caregivers better understand nutrition.

In her program, she talks about the importance of eating a primarily plant based diet, proper serving sizes, and eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables.

Dena also facilitates a class on Organic Foods. Topics include how to identify organic foods and why it is important to buy organic.

Organic foods are more nutritious and may have increased amounts of protein, vitamins or minerals. Studies have also shown that there are fewer harmful ingredients, such as pesticides and heavy metals, in organic foods. Together, this makes organic foods a better choice for health.

Nutrition for Individuals Touched by Cancer is always held on the first Tuesday of the month. Organic Foods is always the third Tuesday of the month. Both classes are at 10:45 AM at the Main location of Place...of wellness.



For Place...of wellness Facilitators

Website Linking Project Getting Started!

To improve our website, we are working to link our program descriptions with their review of therapies found on the CIMER website as well as a photograph and biography of the facilitator.

If you have not yet submitted a photograph or biography for the program you facilitate, please contact your program coordinator:

Alex de Alvarado at Mays Clinic (ACB) – 713-563-8867
Andrea Warren at Main – 713-563-9688

Events & Activities

May 3, 2008 – Sprint for Life 5K Run/Walk – For details and to register, visit mdanderson.org/sprintforlife

May 4, 2008 – World Laughter Day

Integrative Medicine Program Lecture Series

April 17, 2008 - **Why We Believe What We Believe: How Beliefs Affect Health**

Andrew Newberg, M.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Radiology, Director of Clinical Nuclear Medicine, Director of NeuroPET Research, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

May 15, 2008 – **The 10 Leading Nutritional Supplements with Potential in Cancer Care**

Judith Ann Smith, PharmD, Associate Professor, Gynecologic Oncology – Research, UT-MD Anderson Cancer Center

Lectures take place at 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in Hickey Auditorium (R11.1400). Lunch provided. For more information about the lecture series, please visit the Complementary/Integrative Medicine Education Resources website at www.mdanderson.org/CIMER

Research...Broccoli and Bladder Cancer

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An extract made from broccoli sprouts may inhibit the development of bladder cancer, a new study suggests.

Bladder cancer is the uncontrolled growth of cells, usually originating in the bladder lining. The bladder is an organ located in the pelvic cavity that stores and discharges urine. Urine is produced by the kidneys, carried to the bladder by hollow tubes called ureters and discharged from the bladder through a tube called the urethra.

Bladder cancer accounts for about 90 percent of urinary tract cancers, including renal pelvis, ureters, bladder and urethra. It is the sixth most common cancer in the United States. About 53,200 Americans are diagnosed with bladder cancer each year, and 12,200 die annually of the disease. The estimated new cases and deaths from bladder cancer in the United States in 2007 are 67,160 and 13,750, respectively.

According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), the highest incidence of bladder cancer occurs in industrialized countries such as the United States, Canada and France. Incidence is lowest in Asia and South America, where it is about 70 percent lower than in the United States.

Researchers from New Zealand and Maryland explained that isothiocyanates are a well-known class of cancer chemopreventive agents, and broccoli sprouts are a rich source of several isothiocyanates.

They observed that the broccoli sprout isothiocyanates taken by mouth are then selectively delivered to the bladder tissues through urinary excretion. The study used a freeze-dried aqueous extract of broccoli sprouts that contained about 600 times the isothiocyanates content of mature broccoli.

The study found that in the animals given the low-dose extract, tumors developed in 22 percent fewer animals, and the number of tumors per rat was 1.39. Animals given the high-dose extract developed about 58 percent fewer tumors, and the average number of tumors per animal was only 0.46.

The study authors concluded that broccoli sprout extract may be a highly promising substance for bladder cancer prevention, and the isothiocyanates in the extract are selectively delivered to the bladder epithelium through urinary excretion.

