



Life in these parts

Physician Moves

General Surgeon **Brandt Lapschies** opened his private practice at Kapiolani Medical Center, POB Suite 1150.

Pediatrician **Harald Nilsson** opened his private practice at 1350 S. King St., Suite 300. (Harald's wife is Straub internist Lois Saruwatari)

Richard Creagan, MD, FACEP, board certified in emergency medicine joined *Hunalalai Urgent Care* as medical director. Five board certified physicians formed the West Hawaii Medical Group (in Kailua-Kona); viz dermatologist **Joy McElroy**, internist **Lois Chang-Stromen**, dermatologist **John Dilley**, urgent care **Richard Creagan** and orthoped **Martin Jackier**.

Medical Tid Bits

Canadian researchers reported in the March 5 *JAMA* that steroid asthma inhalants cause glaucoma in older people. Eye patients in Quebec had a 44% increased risk when using steroid inhalants longer than 3 months. (Co-author **Samy Suissa**, McGill University professor pleads, "Don't stop using these medications. We don't want to fill up our emergency rooms in Canada and in the U.S. with patients with asthma attack because they stopped their medication.")

The same *JAMA* reports that angioplasty offers about the same quality of life and relief from symptoms after five years as by pass surgery. The study admits that angioplasty patients often need repeat procedures. **George Sopko** of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in Bethesda, MD headed the research.

Miscellany

The exhausted business man stepped in a Tokyo bar for a drink.

"Speak English?" he asked the bartender.

"Yes sir."

"Great. I'd like a Stoli with a twist."

The barkeep looked at him for a moment, then leaned over the bar.

"OK, once upon a time there were four little pigs."

Playboy March '97

Why are educators so concerned about the graduating class of economists? The majority believe Prozac ended the Great Depression."

A popular restaurant owner in Beijing had a secret recipe, but it's a secret no more. He would sprinkle opium on his special dishes. The customers left happy and always came back.

(From Paul Harvey News)

Conference Notes

"All that Wheezes is not Asthma: Dx and Rx of Wheezing Disorders."

Visiting Professor **Michael Iseman** from the National Jewish Center of Immunology and Respiratory Medicine, Denver, Colorado. QMC Friday morning, March 7.

I. Asthma

General discussion:

A. impact of asthma:

Rising morbidity and mortality despite improved therapies available.

B. Spectrum

Mild		Moderate	Severe
Mild Intermittent	Mild Persistent	Moderate Persistent	Severe Persistent

*Add regular preventive therapy to any category above "mild intermittent"

Regular preventive therapy required when:

- Sy's are chronic
- Exacerbation more than 1-2x/wk
- Beta agonists required daily
- Nocturnal sy's more than 2x/mo
- Evidence of airway obstruction per spirometry

II. Pharmacologic Measures

A. Mild Intermittent

- Sy's less than 2x/wk
- PFT's near normal;
- usually a/c airway inflammation;
- probably adequate therapy with beta agonist

B. Mild Persistent

Combined bronchodilation and anti-inflammatory Rx.

1. Short Acting Beta Agonists

- Albuterol
- Terbutaline
- Metaproterenol
- Dobutamine

2. Anti-inflammatory agents

- Inhaled steroids: Betamethasone; triamcinolone
- Cromolyn or Nedocromil: "Anti-inflammatory"; little or no side effects, even mild efficiency

C. Moderate Persistent

(Sy's with bronchodilators and low to moderate dose inhaled steroids; frequent nocturnal sy's.)

Use Short Acting Bronchodilators plus:

- long acting theophylline
- long acting Beta agonist (Serevant)
- inhaled steroids at increasing doses (up to 2000 mcg)
- short term oral steroids

Remarks: Theophylline has come to life again. Serevant has long term overnight effect. "Inhaled Steroid War."

re Short term oral steroids: We were taught to give in am. "Only quacks give twice a day. The Magic Time is 3 p.m. It blocks the nocturnal process; increasing inhaled steroids dosing is

controversial. One study shows only nominal improvement in symptoms compared to Serevant. There is increased risk of side effects with doses 1000 to 2000 mcg/d.

re Serevant: Effective 12 hours or more. Must be used with short acting beta agonist and anti-inflammatory agents. Marketed in bid dose, but dose hs helpful in nocturnal asthma. If patient requires proventil/ventolin 4xs a day, discontinue Serevant.

re Long Acting Theophylline: Also improves nocturnal sy's. Many patients take only hs. May have anti-inflammatory effect as well.

re Zilantin: Useful in ASA induced asthma, cold air induced asthma, exercise induced asthma. "Zilantin makes asthma better." Effective in nocturnal and daily asthma. Reduces theophylline dose by 50%. ALT rises in 4-6%.

re Zafirlukast (Accolate): Useful in patients ages 12 to 70; 1/2 life 10 hrs; T max 3 hrs; no side effects with common asthma treatment; reduces nocturnal sy's by 20% and day time sy's by 29%.

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re Clinical Aspects of Problem Asthma:

- GERD: 2nd asthma therapy; prednisone, analgesics.
- Adult Asthma Triggers:
 - G - GERD
 - A - Analgesics
 - U - Upper respiratory infection
 - S - Sinusitis
 - S - Sleep
- Rx Sinusitis: Nasal saline washings; nasal steroids; Claritin
- Adult Asthma Triggers:
 - S - Stress
 - A - Allergic; Aspergillosis (bronchopulmonary)
 - M - Metabisulfite
 - B - Beta blockers
 - O - Occupational/Industrial/hobby

re Vocal Cord Dysfunctional Syndrome (Conversion reactions): Common in women, health professionals.

PRK Report

(Gleaned from a Mid Week report by reporter Carol Chang)

At least 130 Hawaii eye doctors do PRK (photorefractory keratotomy) at two laser eye surgery centers viz the Laser Eye Institute and the True Vision Laser Center. Statistics: 95% of PRK patients improve their vision to 20/40 (required for unrestricted driver's license); and 80% can expect 20/20 vision (500,000 surgeries have been

done in the past decade).

In PRK, the retinal "zapping" lasts less than 60 seconds and costs at least \$2,000 per eye. The entire process takes 15 minutes and the results are permanent. Most health plans do not pay for the procedure since it is considered cosmetic surgery.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved PRK only for "mildly nearsightedness." Ophthalmologists **John Olkowski** and **Pierre Pang** feel that severe near-sightedness, astigmatism, and even far-sightedness may become correctable within the year as LASIK technology passes the FDA hurdle. LASIK combines classic surgery (with a diamond tipped scalpel) with the PRK laser beam. A flap of the cornea surface is cut and temporarily rolled aside, exposing the internal tissue for the laser to vaporize. When finished, the surface flap is reattached and left to heal.

Pierre Pang had LASIK surgery 6 months ago in Colombia and now has 20/20 vision. "It's like a miracle that I can see so well without my glasses. It's great."

Miscarriage and Depression

(Gleaned from *Wes Young's* column "Checkup on Health" February 19)

Joyce Nakamura, chief of OB&Gyn at Kaiser Permanente notes: that miscarriages are relatively common and are reported in about 20% of pregnancies during the first three months. "A miscarriage interferes with their life plans. Today, when a miscarriage occurs, a lot of people do not talk about it. A woman needs to go through the steps of the grieving process—anger, denial, bargaining and gradually acceptance. A lot of people do not realize that a mother has lost a part of herself. I tell them that it is OK to cry about it." If you cannot function after three to six weeks, we

have to start to wonder if there is a problem and you should have a reality check with your primary physician. If he says "This has been going on a long time," it may be time to get psychiatric help.

Psychiatrist **Yuko Kusaka's** experiences with depression and miscarriage are both professional and personal. She explains that mourning does occur with a miscarriage since a miscarriage disrupts a prospective mother's immediate hopes and plans for a child. On a personal level, Kusaka relates that she had a miscarriage when her first child was 2 years old. "I was in my late 30's. If I had not had a child already, I would have been devastated. I can understand why some individuals feel this way, especially if they feel their biological clock ticking and have not yet had a child. Two or three miscarriages in a row can be especially difficult."

Families should be aware of the differences between the normal mourning process and a complicated bereavement process with major depression for which professional advice and treatment is needed. One difference is that when mourning, prospective parents feel sad and lonely, but they do not blame themselves for their loss. Individuals who develop a major depression inappropriately blame themselves. The signs of severe depression include being non-functional in all areas of life and feeling depressed almost everyday. Such individuals lack interest in almost everything. They have no hope and stop trying to get better. Warning signs include prolonged loss of sex drive, lack of energy, difficulty sleeping, inability to concentrate, argumentative behavior, social withdrawal, drug or alcohol abuse and recurring thoughts of suicide. Kusaka observes that Asian women seem to have problems because of the great importance placed on having children.



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American Heart Association - Hawaii Affiliate

May is Stroke Awareness Month - 1997 Activities

May 10

Stroke Awareness for the Public

Dr. Melvin Yee & Dr. Web Ross

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Kuakini Hospital

Auditorium

May 13

Stroke Awareness for the Public

Dr. Marek Mirski

6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Queen's Medical Center

Tinney Theater

May 14

**Stroke Awareness for Health
Professionals**

Dr. Web Ross

12:00 p.m., V.A. Hospital,

Prince Kuhio Federal Building

300 Ala Moana Blvd., Rm 6307

May 17

Stroke Awareness for the Public

(Risk Factors, Atrial Fibrillation,
Anticoagulant Therapy)

Dr. Leo Maher

2 p.m., Straub Clinic & Hospital

Doctor's Dining Room

May 30

Stroke Awareness for Health Professionals

Dr. Stan Au

(Time TBA), St. Francis Medical Center

Fourth Floor Conference Room

For more information:

Call the American Heart Association
Hawaii Affiliate Programs Department
538-7021, ext. 14.