Life in These Parts

Our Patient, F.Y. (in her 70's) volunteers at Kuakini Medical Center. She was walking down to Fort Street Mall for a Burger King lunch when a 50's Caucasian man dressed in shorts, t-shirt and shaggy hair asked her for a handout: “Can you spare 25 cents for coffee?” She countered, “You can't get coffee for 25 cents. Here's a dollar” and feeling sorry for the stranger, she invited him to come in and have lunch on her. He accepted her offer, but then he asked her to sit while he got the lunch instead... “I thought you were broke?” F.Y. said. He bought lunch for two and explained... “I’m president of a firm in Chicago. I heard there were very few homeless in Hawaii and I was checking out the report.”

After lunch, he produced a bill fold with 100 dollar bills, gave her five bills and his name card. F.Y. was too flabbergasted to refuse the offer...

A three year $1.79 million study will investigate the possible links of degenerative brain diseases (e.g. Parkinson’s) and exposure to environmental toxins. The funding was announced by Senator Inouye and assigned to the Honolulu regional office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Pacific Health Research Institute. Dr. G. Webster, UH Med School associate clinical professor will lead the research project of Japanese-American men who joined the Honolulu Health Program in 1965. More than half of the original 8,000 subjects have died. UH epidemiologists Drs. David Morens and Andrew Grandinetti will be associated with the study. Morens and Dr. Jim Davis (also with UH Med School) have published their research which seems to indicate that people who eat foods high in Vit E have a lesser risk of developing Parkinson’s.

News Briefs

A $10,000 poll of 400 Hawaii voters sponsored by a pro-marijuana group reveals that 38% strongly supported the use of marijuana for medical purposes; 25% somewhat supported its use; 21% were strongly opposed, and 7% somewhat opposed; while 10% did not know. 41% strongly supported farmers growing and selling marijuana; 18% somewhat supported this. 15% were strongly opposed; 9% were somewhat opposed and 18% did not know...

University Health Alliance has signed a contract with Rx America LLC based on Salt Lake City. Rx America is owned by Long's Drug Stores, Inc. and American Drug Stores, Inc.

Coordinators for PLCO Trial (Prostate, lung, colon and ovarian cancer trial) are recruiting 1,700 more participants (ages 55 to 74) to meet the Hawaii quota of 10,000. Lance Yokochi, is principal investigator.

Russell Stodd’s Aloha Surgery Center, and outpatient surgery center with three operating rooms, will be available by early January. (Maui News)

State auditor Marion Higa feels that physician assistants should be licensed to prescribe drugs (including controlled substances.)

Protest

(Excerpts from Malcolm Ing’s letter to the editor, Honolulu Star Bulletin, November 13, 1998)

“The original HMSA partnership created in the 1940’s by physicians and administrators has given way to a big business mentality...”

“Physicians are now being paid at the lowest possible level and have received notice from HMSA of another 4.5% pay cut for surgical procedures...”

“Local hospitals have received notices from HMSA that future reimbursements for care will be decreased...”

“All the while, the surplus income that is derived by HMSA premium payments is accumulating in the ‘million for investment’ purposes...”

“Meanwhile, members are kept happy by being informed that there won’t be any premium increase for the next period...”

Dissenting Voices

(Quotes from nonconcurring opinions in the blue ribbon panel’s final report, Catholic Herald June 1998)

“The present incompetence of our health delivery system in respect to end of life care should not be corrected by legalized killing.”

Brian F. Issell MD Director,
Cancer Center of Hawaii

“I strongly believe in providing adequate medical treatment, which include pain relief and alleviation of suffering at the end of life, but I do not believe entrusting physicians with the authority to assist killing a person should be a part of the healing profession.”

Naleen N. Andrade MD, Psychiatrist,
Queen’s Medical Center

This is primarily an issue of social justice. Until we have taken away as many layers of social inequality as possible, have enhanced our practices of communication, and have broadened our understanding of death and dying, I believe the option for physician assisted suicide and death is too vulnerable to these inequalities.”

Rev. Beth Donaldson,
Kapaa United Church of Christ

The very fact that physicians often have great power and can exert substantial influence on the decisions of a patient require that much caution be exercised before recommending physician assisted suicide and death be legalized. I am not sure that Hawaii is ready to embrace the concept of physician assisted suicide and death as a form of medical practice.

James Pietsch Attorney Director,
Elder Law Project

Miscellany

During my annual eye examination, I noticed a sign in my ophthalmologist’s office stating that he was now affiliated with a prominent HMO. Throughout the checkup, I questioned him about the pros and cons of managed care.

When the exam was complete, the doctor handed my papers to a secretary and said, “Mr. Pripstein here is a member of our HMO.”

“No, no,” I corrected him. “I was just inquiring about HMOs. I don’t belong to one.”

“You don’t?” he said with a laugh. “Well then, come back into the examining room and I’ll take a look at your other eye!”

A policeman at the scene of a car accident was helping one of the drivers out of a damaged car and asked, “Are you seriously hurt?”

“How should I know?” the driver responded tartly, “I’m a doctor, not a lawyer.”

Potpourri

A doctor, an engineer and a lawyer were arguing over whose profession was the oldest. “On the 6th day, God took one of Adam’s ribs and created Eve,” said the doctor. “So that makes him a surgeon first.”

“All right,” I said with a laugh. “I was just inquiring about HMOs. I don’t belong to one.”

“You don’t?” he said with a laugh. “Well then, come back into the examining room and I’ll take a look at your other eye!”

Question: “What’s the difference between your first honeymoon and your second?”

Answer: “The first, Niagara; the second, Viagra.”

Two Eulogies

Chew Mung Lum, age 76, was eulogized on January 5 at the Community Church of Honolulu: Chew Mung, physician athlete, scholar, beloved father, husband, and grandfather, who was adored by colleagues and patients alike had scribbled the following tenets on a notepad: “Nothing worth doing is completed in our life time...Therefore we must be saved by hope...Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith...Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; we are saved by love.”

Hove: faith; and love.
Herbert Suguru Takaki, age 97, was eulogized on January 14, at the Honpa Hongwanji by his long time golfing friends of the Mid Pac Country Club. Dick Omiura was the master of ceremonies. Lionel Furukawa and Masaru Koike offered group incense and medical historian Mike Okihoro recalled Herbert's evolution: an immigrant youth from Haleiwa matriculating at McKinley High School, U of Chicago (where he was NCAA bantam wrestling champ for 3 years) and Rush Medical School and practicing medicine and surgery until age 86 before retiring. (Herb took up golf in his 60's and last shot his age at 91 at Mid Pac CC....which is all the more remarkable because he was blind in one eye, smoked six packs/d with endless cups of coffee and scoops of ice cream...Besides his mastery of judo and kendo, he had a voice that rivaled Caruso...How well do we remember.)

Health News Briefs

A Veterans Administration study released in November at the American Heart Association meeting in Dallas shows that gemfibrozil given to 1,264 men with low HDL (31.5) raised the HDL just two points, but after 5 years, only 17% of the patients had MI's compared to 21% of the patients on placebo.

About 10% of the people who took the diet drugs Redux and fen-phen had mildly leaky heart valves, and serious heart problems were rare according to a new analysis. Also, the latest evidence hints that the valve problems may gradually go away after stopping the drugs. At least 13 studies have looked into the problem. (Reports at the American Heart Association meetings in Dallas)

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A Mayo Clinic study in Finland since 1995 of a margarine called Benecol (containing a plant stanol ester) lowered LDL 14%. The product is being introduced in the U.S. by McNeil Consumer Products and marketed under the name Benecol in January. Another margarine product called Take Control containing a cholesterol-lowering plant sterol will be introduced in February by Lipton.

Youth Elixir

Human growth hormone or hGH is being promoted as the latest youth elixir, although there's been too little research and the drug could be a risky, high priced snake oil. Dr. Adrienne Denese, a Manhattan Upper East Side rehabilitative therapist, has been taking the drug over a year and her "skin is flawless as porcelain and her body tight..." She is over 40 and could easily pass for someone in her 20s."

The National Institute on Aging reported last year that too much hGH can result in diabetes, joint pain, high blood pressure and carpo tunnel syndrome and that there is no proof that any supplement works as an antiaging remedy. Until recently hGH was taken mainly for developmental disorders such as dwarfism. Dr. Huber Warner, acting associate director if the National Institute of Aging's biology of aging program in Bethesda, Md says only a small study conducted in 1990 by Dr. Daniel Rudman showed potential benefits of hGH. "The study of 12 men aged 61 to 81 took hGH for six months and had increased muscle mass, a decrease in fat and tighter skin. Some of the men had breast enlargement." Proponents say moderate doses of hGH are safe. Klatz says his Academy was founded by a dozen doctors in 1993 and now has more than 4,000 member physicians in 37 countries.

Potpourri I

Joe suffered from excruciating headaches. The doctor told him only castration will cure his headaches. "You have a rare condition that causes pressure to build up against your spine" he explained. Joe was shocked, but had the operation. When he left the hospital, Joe was depressed, so he stopped at a men's shop for a new suit. The salesmen eyed him and said, "44 long?"

"That's right," Joe said. He tried the suit and it fit perfectly.

"How about a new shirt?" the salesmen asked. "Let's see, a 34 sleeve and 16" neck ought to do it."

"Right again," Joe said. "You're simply amazing."

"While we're at it, how about new underwear?" the salesman suggested. He eyed Joe's waist and said, "Size 36."

"Nope, you finally missed one," Joe said, chuckling. "I wear size 34."

"You couldn't possibly," replied the salesman. "Underwear that tight would create a great deal of pressure against your spine and cause one hell of a headache."

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Two guys were chatting at a cocktail party. "Your wife certainly brightens the room," one said to the other. "Her mere presence is electrifying."

"It ought to be," the other man replied. "Everything she's wearing is charged."

Conference Notes

"Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery" by Jeffrey Lee, Queen's Medical Center, Friday, December 11, 1998.

Introduction:

a. PTCa: 434,000 in US/yr...25-30% restenosis within 6 mos; coronary stents improve results.
b. CABG: c. 800,000 world/yr

CABG: Old & New: Traditional CABG Minimal Invasive CABG: a. MIDCAB: LAD only; b. OPCAD: All vessels with stenotomy...

Cost Comparison:

a. PTCa ($36k) ($18,000-$22,000)
b. MIDCAB ($13,000) "The beauty of MIDCAB's is its simplicity and safety."

Problems & CABG: 3.1% incidence of strokes;> Age 70: even higher incidence

Neurocognitive Dysfunction in cerebral microemboli with traditional CABG: (8 d = 70%; 8 wks = 40%; 1 yr = 30%)

Comparison OPCAB vs Traditional CABG: (May - Dec 28, 1998 SFH)

OPCAB Traditional CABG

Intubation 3.2 8.8
LOS 4.7 6.3
Atrial Fibr 38% 41%
Mortality 0 2/50
CXR 354 440

Intraoperative Transcranial Doppler Results (Microemboli to brain)

ASHD PTCa CABG OPCAB OPCAB OPCAB

CABG 1200 1600 1400 0 0

Hematological Problems: CABG-OPCAB

Red cell mass determines transfusion need. RBC Mass = wtg x 7% = Hct

RBC Mass < 1.8 > 1.8
Transfused 83% 17%
No Transfusion 26% 4%

If RBC mass < 1.8 liter = 56% transfused
If RBC mass > 1.8 liter = 6% transfused

Early MIDCAB and OPCAB graft patency rates are equivalent to CABG patency rates.

*OPCAB = Off-Pump Coronary Artery Bypass

"Hyperlipidemia in Diabetes" by Willa Hsueh, UCLA, January 5, 1999. Sponsored by Merck.

Diabetics have 2 to 4 times more risk factors...Insulin Resistance or Cardiovascular Metabolic Syndrome (Former Syndrome X)

a. Insulin resistance b. Hyperinsulinemia
c. Low HDL d. High VLDL triglycerides
e. HTN f. Glucose Intolerance
g. Elevated PAl-Ih. Increased visceralfat
h. Hyperuricemia j. High small dense LDL

Genetic Susceptibility

Environmental Factors

Onset Complications

Diabetes ↓ Disability ↓ Death

IGT ⇒ Ongoing Hypoerycetemia

Insulin resistance Hyperinsulinemia
Low HDL
High triglycerides
etc.

LDL Level in Diabetics: ADA recommends LDL 100 (Since diabetes have 3 times more CHD, all diabetics should maintain LDL of 100 or less)

Target BP's (Results of 45 Study)

Hypertensives: 140/90
Diabetics: 130/85
Proteinuria: 120/75

ABCD Trial (Aborted) when incidence of MI's: 25 (Nisoldipin) vs 5 (Enalapril)

FACET Trial: Amlodipine (greater incidence of strokes and MI's) than Fosinapril
"Migraine Update" by VP Lawrence Neuman, Queen's Medical Center, September 4, 1998

Epidemiology: Prevalence 23.4 x 10^6; female = 3x male; 18% of US females; 70 - 90% = familial. Diagnosed: 29% of males; 41% of females; undiagnosed 71% of males; 59% of females; "This disorder won't kill you, but... Mis diagnosed as tension HA; "sinus HA" "It's all in your head..."

Pathophysiology: Vascular theory; Neural; Unified or Neurovascular; Serotonin (5-HT) Neurortransmission...

Diagnosis: Sy's & Sx's of organic disease; extremely rare; sudden onset; new severe HA; Most severe HA experienced; progressively worsening HA; Onset with exertion, coughing, sexual activity (subarachnoid hemorrhage); Drowsiness, confusion, or memory loss.

*Sexual HA's: Treat with BB
Chronic malaise, myalgia, arthralgia
Fever
Progressive visual disturbance
Weakness, clumsiness
1* HA after age 50
*Migraine without aura is the common migraine.

Five Phases of Migraine: a. Prodrome b. Aura (only 10% have aura) c. HA d. HA termination e. Postdrome

Phase I (Prodrome) a. Hyper or hypoactivity (Heightened sensory perception) b. Irritability c. Depression d. Food craving e.g. for chocolates e. Repetitive, insomnia f. Fluid retention


Phase III (HA) a. 4-72hrs b. Throbbing c. Worsens with activity d. Frontal & temporal e. Edema f. N & V g. Scalp & pericranial tenderness h. Tension type perception i. Hibernation

Phase IV (HA Termination)

Phase V (Postdrome)

Common Precipitating Factors:
Menstruation
Oral contraceptives
Glarling lights
Exertion
Fatigue

Ddx Migraine HA vs Cluster HA

Female 25% vs Male 1%

Treatment Migraine
Myth: re treatment response

Fact: Always establish dx before Rx
Treatment response does not necessarily correlate with etiology of HA
MISdx may lead to fatality

Acute Medications in Symptomatic Migraine
Over the counter: Tylenol, ASA
Analgesics: barbiturates, analgesics, etc.
NSAIDS
Antiepileptics, phenothiazones

Migraine Specific RX: Ergotamine tartrate; dihydroergotamine; Isomethapentene; acetaminophen, dichoral phenazone; sumatriptan (Imitrex)

Onset
Imitrex Injectable (6 mg) 10"
Imitrex Nasal Spray (20 mg) 15-45"
Imitrex tabs (25 mg) 60-90"

Colcetrapin
Naratriptan tab 1 mg 2.5mg
Migranal Pump Nasal Spray

Beta Blockers:
Inderal (Inderal LA) 40-320mg/d
Naldolol (Corgard) 40-240mg/d

CaCB
Tricyclics: Nortriptiline 10-150mg/d
Amipriptiline 10-30mg/d

SSRI's: Paxil, irritable bowel syndrome
Anticonvulsants: Divaprox, Na 500-300mg/d
Sensert (Methysergide 2-8mg/d

Potpourri II
A panda walked into a restaurant and ordered a sandwich and a drink. When he finished, he pulled out a pistol and shot up the place scaring customers and breaking dishes, glasses and liquor bottles before turning to leave. Shocked, the manager said, "Hey, where are you going?"

The bartender pulled out a dictionary and found an entry for "panda." The definition read, "A tree dwelling animal of Asian origin characterized by appliance for fatness, name by Chinese."

The boss called an employee into his office. "Bob," he said, "you have been with the company for a year. You started in the mail room, one week later you were promoted to a sales position, and one month after that you were promoted to district manager of the sales department. Just four months later, you were promoted to vice president. Now it's time for me to retire and I want to make you the new president and CEO of the corporation. What do you say to that?"

"Thanks," said the employee.

"Thanks?" the boss replied. "Is that all you can say?"

"I guess not," the employee said, "Thanks, Dad."

Don't Sweat the Small Stuff
by Richard Carlson, Phd
Make peace with imperfections...

Let go of the idea that gentle relaxed people can't be super achievers...

Be aware of the snow ball effect of your thinking...

Remind yourself that when you die, your "In Basket" won't be empty...

Do something nice for someone else...And don't tell anyone about it....

Continued on Next Page, 3rd column
You Are Invited to Attend The xélan 1999 Financial Planning Seminar

You will learn:

• HOW to prevent the loss of everything you've worked for.

• HOW you can pay taxes only on what you spend, not on what you earn.

• HOW liability policies often leave you with no coverage.

• HOW your children's college tuition can be paid with before-tax dollars.

• HOW parents (or in-laws) may be the best retirement plan if you are under age 45.

• HOW building home equity may not be the best investment in order to reach your retirement goals.

Tuesday March 9, 1999 or Wednesday March 10, 1999
5:30PM to 8:30PM
Ala Moana Hotel  Carnation Room
Honolulu, Hawaii
Tuition & Refreshments Complimentary

To Register: Call (808) 591-8286 or Fax this form to: (808) 597-1113
Select which day you will attend:
[ ] Tuesday March 9, 1999  OR  [ ] Wednesday March 10, 1999

(Please Print)
Name: ________________________________
[ ] MD  [ ] DDS  [ ] ATTY  [ ] CPA  [ ] Other ____________________________
Office Phone: ______________________ Office Fax: __________________________
Address: ____________________________ City: ____________________________
State: __________ Zip: ____________

Classified Notices

To place a classified notice:
Please call 538-7702. HMA members may place a complimentary one-time classified ad in HMJ as space is available. Regular and non-member rates are $1.50 a word with a minimum of 20 words or $30. Not commissionable. Payment must accompany written order.

For Sale

For Sale.– Portable Gomco suction machine, with stand $150, without $120. 1.V. pole $30, Mayo stand $50, extra tray $20, oxygen cylinder with cart and meter $175. Vermonton autoclave $750, '91 Lexus LS400 $16,900. 671-5055 or 525-3600.
For Sale.– USED DIASONIC SONOgram in good condition, $2,500/OBO, including 3.5MHZ transducer.

Office Space

Pearl City Business Plaza.– Tenant Improvement Allowances for Long Leases; 680 sq ft; 24-hr security; free tenant/customer pkg; Gifford Chang 581-8653 DP, 593-9776, 531-3526.
Kailua-Kona.– Lease space available, 795 sq ft, ground floor next to OB-GYN. Improvements for long lease. Property Network, Ltd., (808) 329-9300.
Queen's Physicians Office Building L– Prime location; P/T, F/T space available to share; Call 537-9595.

Misc.

Mask & Glove Relief.– Sensitivity barrier gel reduces irritation from latex, nitrile, polyethylene face masks & gloves. Free evaluation sample to USA physicians (1 per office). Sahara Cosmetics Oahu 808-735-8081, USA toll free 1-877-280-2020, record complete delivery address.