

Your Health

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Jennifer Beals Beats Fatigue BC ND's Book Spurs Star Recovery

Jennifer Beals "flashed" across the screen in 1983's *Flashdance* as a young, healthy, exceptional dancer. Since then she has made nearly 40 feature films alongside such renowned actors as Gene Hackman, Dustin Hoffman, Denzel Washington and Gwyneth Paltrow.

Over twenty years after *Flashdance*, Beals still cuts a fine figure and looks the picture of health. But despite looking physically fit, she spent the last decade feeling very ill. Diagnosed with the Epstein-Barr virus and chronic fatigue syndrome, she lacked the energy to meet life's daily challenges. Worse, she also suffered from thyroiditis, an inflammation of the thyroid gland that contributes to fatigue. She even tested positive for Lupus.

Beals saw one of the top endocrinologists in New York hoping to regain her stamina, but he was unable to help. He suggested she see an alternative doctor.

Fortuitously, while shooting a movie in Vancouver, Beals came across a book in the lobby of a hotel that offered her some hope. The book was *Eating Alive*, by BCNA member Dr. Jonn Matsen.

Matsen's premise draws from the core tenets of naturopathic medicine: That given the right support and balance, or "homeostasis", our bodies have an inherent ability to self-heal. It's finding this homeostasis that's the difficulty—especially in our modern lives where

we often eat poorly, pay little attention to nutrition, and take drugs to counter illness without dealing with the underlying cause of disease.

Matsen's books (he has written three) focus on digestion as a key to disease prevention and regaining the body's balance. By focusing on the specific foods we eat, when we eat them, what we eat them with (i.e., food combining), and the quantities of those foods, along with appropriate supplementation, a person's metabolism will increase, the body will digest food better, and absorb a higher nutritional value from the food. Better digestion promotes healing.

As Matsen notes in *Eating Alive*, "Speeding up your digestion by improving stomach function and following food combinations can result in virtual starvation for the intestinal competitors. The less food they digest, the less toxic stress on your system, the less free-radical irritation, the greater your body's inherent healing power. Homeostasis can swing the pendulum away from disease and back to health."

After accidentally discovering *Eating Alive*, Beals booked an appointment with Matsen: In only three weeks she began to regain her lost energy. "That experience made it so clear to see how the digestive system is such a huge key in wellness and health," she says. Later, she used Matsen's same food-combining theories to help her lose the weight she gained for leading roles in

Devil in a Blue Dress and *A House Divided*.

The nutritional protocols developed by Matsen in his books and employed at his North Vancouver clinic are widely used by naturopathic physicians. In fact, all licensed naturopathic physicians receive extensive education in nutrition and, in BC, each ND must pass board exams in clinical nutrition—using nutrition to heal, not just providing dietary advice.

Modified from an article in *Better Nutrition*. To read the entire Jennifer Beals story, link to the website for *Better Nutrition* and select the magazine's March 2004 issue (www.betternutrition.com).

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Corporation Makes "Natural" Shift

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Excerpts from the CBC Radio One "Early Show", this winter:

CBC Reporter Pamela Post: Dr. Swetlikoff and his 200 or so colleagues in BC were baffled by a recent report that recommended that they be dramatically restricted in their scope of practice. The recommendations came from the Health Professions Council. It made sweeping recommendations to government on how to licence and regulate the growing number of health care practitioners in the province under a new Health Professions Act. The council recommended naturopaths be restricted from carrying out examinations like pelvic exams and pap smears, prostate exams, from using ultrasound, lasers and x-rays, performing allergy testing, some physical therapies and administering drugs and local anaesthetics. All things, say Dr. Swetlikoff, naturopathic doctors or NDs are trained for eight years to provide.

Dr. Garrett Swetlikoff, BCNA President: The medical doctors have to realize that there's many, many players on the health care field right now. If they are upset that midwives got licensed...because the obstetricians didn't like that. [At the same time] the orthopedic surgeons don't like the chiropractors and the medical doctors don't like us. You know, there's all of this subculture and it has nothing to do with what's right for the public or what's safe or what's appropriate. It has to do with protecting one's turf, power, money and ego.

Post: The head of the Health Professions Council that made the recommendations [against naturopathic doctors] denies the charge. Dr. Arminee Kazanjian says no one practitioner group swayed her council and that the decision to recommend the restrictions on naturopaths came out of years of submissions, briefs and a concern for public safety. It's a charge naturopath Garrett Swetlikoff has heard before and equates to an urban myth.

Swetlikoff: [Those claims are] nothing but hot air. There is nothing statistically [to prove those claims]. There's nothing that they can come up with and show us that. All they want to say is that certain herbs are unsafe... They are. That's why there's doctors who learn how to use them, but herbs aren't killing people like drugs are.

Post: Naturopaths in BC are lobbying health bureaucrats and politicians to ignore the recommendations and they're engaged in a province-wide petition campaign aimed at maintaining their scope of practice.

Swetlikoff: We're not going to sit idly by and let them destroy 100 years of a profession just because it doesn't fit into some other group's agenda.

Post: [Both the BCNA President and regulatory College President say it's] a battle their colleagues are used to but weary of fighting—the battle for credibility and they say it's the medical establishment that chips away at it. Dr. Doug Blackman is the Deputy Registrar of the BC College of Physicians and Surgeons. He denies MDs are out to get naturopathic physicians, but he doesn't consider them colleagues, either.

Blackman: Uh, I wouldn't call them peers, no. You know, the word "doctor" uh is a word that uh has perhaps been altered from what you and I watched on television years ago with Marcus Welby.

Post: The head of the BC Medical Association also finds little in common with naturopathic physicians. Dr. John Turner admits many MDs might use or even recommend natural remedies for their families, but would stop at recommending them for their patients. Turner denies any plotting by MDs against naturopaths. He says he really doesn't even know what they do.

Turner: I don't know the philosophy that is behind many of the naturopathic physicians or the aromatherapists or the various other philosophies...

Post: Comparisons of his profession to aromatherapy make Dr. Garrett Swetlikoff bristle. He says it perpetuates ideas that what naturopathic doctors do is flaky, ineffectual and uneducated. For public health advocate Lorna Hancock [of Health Action Network Society], the bitterness and divide between health practitioners is doing nothing to help provide maximum health choices for the public.

Hancock: There's a new player out there that really wants to be heard and that's the consumer. This is a longstanding disharmony between groups and the fact is that no one group can do it on its own.

Post: Hancock is one of tens of thousands of British Columbians who've signed petitions opposing the proposed restrictions on naturopaths. She says the recommendations are simply unfair and a symptom of inter-professional rivalry run amok. Her prescription is to end the mudslinging and give consumers the power to make informed choices about their own health.



Stress is a silent manipulator: It appears out of nowhere, invading our hectic lives without us suspecting, often leading to quick term solutions such as caffeine, alcohol and prescription meds.

Much of our daily stress stems from career goals and employer expectations. "People are expected to do more work for less money in most jobs," says BCNA member Dr. Pamela Hutchison. "There is less of a feeling of being compensated for your work." That leads to more stress at home, too. Parents are stressed out trying to juggle the demands of work and shared child care, Hutchison says. And among children, depression, obesity and anxiety—all key symptoms of stress—are becoming more common.

Other symptoms of stress include insomnia, chronic tiredness, pre-menstrual syndrome, restlessness, neck or back pain, headaches and muscle tension. Over the long-term, stress is thought to contribute to cardiovascular disease, arthritis, high blood pressure, gastrointestinal illness and cancer.

"One of the things that happens with stress is that people have these feelings that they're holding it at bay," Hutchison says. "I see it in a lot of government workers lately...people don't want to talk about their stress because they feel others will think if they're stressed they're not doing their job well." So, instead of talking about their feelings, she says, people turn to stimulants and habit-forming crutches. Alleviation does not heal however. "People do these things for short-term gain, but the long-term is actually very important in stress management."

BCNA member Dr. Albert Rode notes that it's often much easier for him to identify stress in his patients than it is for them to admit to it. "You can see signs of it in the way they hold themselves, and in their eyes," he says. "The eyes are a great window into the mind...but people get stressed

Hello Doctor Budhwani,

I just wanted to let you know how very you recommended I stop taking BCP a couple have felt great and have had no further

I am so happy that a health professional really consider the alternatives to what might be causing my problems. I am so amazed that the answer was so simple, and straightforward, and I can't believe a legion of doctors failed to help me over the last 15 years. I think you should feel great about your practice and your professionalism—I have recommended you to others and will definitely return should the need arise.

Thank you so much—not just for your knowledge, awareness and expertise, but for caring.

Sincerely,
Erin L.



out about being asked about stress sometimes."


Hutchison explains that stress affects blood flow to the brain causing more blood to flow to the back of the brain "where the basic survival functions happen." With less blood flow to the front of the brain, she says, "people react in a less intellectual way...they react and make decisions from a place of fear and anxiety, rather than from a place of contemplation."

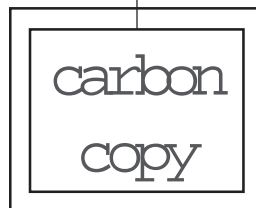
There are numerous strategies naturopathic physicians employ to deal with stress. At Dr. Rode's clinic, he prefers to treat patients with botanical medicines, vitamins, minerals and acupuncture. "That way you deal more directly with the emotions," he says. "Stress causes tunnel vision, and when you're in a tunnel you can't see clearly. When you peel off some of the layers it helps."

Hutchison works at goal-setting with her clients, also suggesting dietary changes where necessary. Other important ways to reduce stress are to stay connected with friends and community, and to set up an exercise program that fits into work and home schedules. "The biggest thing I hear from people when they start making [productive] changes is that they feel more grounded" she says. "That gives them the confidence to keep on going."

Adapted from Adrienne Mercer's article in Monday Magazine, May 13-19, 2004. Dr. Hutchison can be reached in Victoria at 250/475-1522. Dr. Rode can be reached in Victoria at 250/382-1223.



 The Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors has embarked on a national television awareness campaign now showing on CBC television. View their 30-second spot online at www.bcna.ca or www.cand.ca



grateful I am for your help and treatment. Since months ago to deal with my health problem, I problems.

finally took the time to listen to me, and to I am so amazed that the answer was so simple, and straightforward, and I can't believe a legion of doctors failed to help me over the last 15 years. I think you should feel great about your practice and your professionalism—I have recommended you to others and will definitely return should the need arise.

GM CROPS

A recent study from the Union of Concerned Scientists reported that significant contamination of conventional crops with DNA from genetically modified varieties was common. The report also warned that new "pharm" crops—crops engineered to produce drugs and other chemicals—are "a serious risk to human health."

Meanwhile, the European Union's ban over genetically modified (GM) crops is under fire from the US. The EU has acted on the overwhelming will of the people. However, the US government has filed papers with the World Trade Organization claiming that the ban is illegal, contravening international trade regulations; they are seeking \$1.8 billion US compensation. The WTO decision will basically determine whether governments have the authority to act on the will of the electorate or whether international treaties override democratic considerations.

DRUG SIDE EFFECTS

New research suggests that medical X-rays cause thousand of fatal cancers every year. Scientists also reported that women who are chronic antibiotic users have twice the risk of breast cancer as other women. A researcher in the UK studying breast tumors found high concentrations of preservatives used in underarm deodorants and other cosmetics, and another study found evidence that frequent underarm shaving together with deodorant use could increase the risk of breast cancer.

The use of antidepressants among children has spiralled three- to tenfold from 1987-1996 recent studies show. A more recent survey showed a rise in 50% of prescriptions over the last decade. The explosion in use of antidepressant use occurred even though the vast majority of clinical trials have failed to prove that the medicines help depressed children. Prescriptions for Paxil, for example, have doubled between 1998-2002, even though three trials showed it fared no better than dummy pills. Further, of 15 trials conducted among depressed children, 10 failed to show antidepressants were better than placebo. These negative results have been withheld from public scrutiny as the pharmaceutical companies claim the data is proprietary. Even Prozac, which in the US has been approved by the FDA for pediatric use, failed an internal analysis with government researchers noting "the evidence for efficacy based on the pre-specified endpoint is not convincing."

PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Many people carry unhealthy levels of pesticides in their bodies: That's the conclusion of recent data analyzed by

the US Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and collected by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

San Francisco-based PAN, which advocates for alternatives to pesticide use for pest control, found that the average person in the study carried 13 of the 23 pesticides they evaluated. Many of the pesticides have been linked to infertility, birth defects, cancer and other serious health ailments.

The PAN study found that children between 6 and 11 years old were exposed to the nerve-damaging pesticide chlorpyrifos at four times the level deemed acceptable by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Chlorpyrifos is designed to kill insects by disrupting the nervous system.

Dow, the largest manufacturer of the chemical, claimed that the pesticide leaves the body quickly without doing harm. A Dow spokesperson added that the measurement of an environmental chemical in a person's blood or urine does not mean that the chemical causes disease.

The report said that women carry "significantly" higher levels of three pesticides called organochlorines known to reduce birth weight and disrupt brain development in infants.

PAN researchers believe pesticide makers should be held responsible for the "pesticide body burden" and its financial and health impacts.

MERCURY TOXICITY

A recent international study undertook an assessment of possible brain function impairment in adolescent children due to prenatal exposure to mercury when the mothers' diet was high in seafood. The authors found that high levels of mercury passed from mother to child in-utero produced irreversible impairment to specific brain functions in the children. The study was carried out in the Faro Islands and appears in the February issue of *The Journal of Pediatrics*.

To assess the impact of the exposure to mercury, brainstem auditory evoked potentials (BAEP) were recorded using surface electrodes placed on the skull. At two different sound frequencies, the researchers measured the transmission of electrical signals in the brain. Observations from this study showed that mercury exposure and its effects are lasting.

The results suggested that postnatal mercury exposure may damage brain functions that are different from those that are sensitive to mercury during fetal development.

In a related paper the same authors report that the neurological changes are also linked to decreased nervous system control of the heart function. At higher mercury exposures, the children were less capable of maintaining the normal variability of the heart rate necessary to secure proper oxygen supply to the body.

Sources: Harper's May 2004; Guardian Weekly April 22-28/04 and April 29-May 5/04; Yahoo!

ACUPUNCTURE

A team of medical researchers in Florida have used functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging, or MRIs, on patients before, during and after acupuncture, to gauge changes in blood flow and the amount of oxygen in blood.

Researchers applied acupuncture needles to points on the hand linked to pain relief in traditional Chinese medicine. Blood flow decreased in certain areas of the brain within seconds of volunteers reporting a heaviness in their hands, a sign the acupuncture is working correctly.

"When there's less blood, the brain isn't working as hard," said radiologist Bruce Rosen. "In effect, acupuncture is quieting down key regions of the brain."

The specific brain areas affected are involved in mood, pain and cravings, Rosen says. This could help explain why some studies have found acupuncture helpful in treating depression, eating problems, addictions and pain.

The brain regions involved also are loaded with dopamine, a "reward" chemical that surges in reaction to everything from cocaine to food, beautiful faces and money. The reduced blood flow could lead to dopamine changes that trigger a "cascade" effect, releasing endorphins, the brain's natural pain-relieving and comforting chemicals.

On the tails of the acupuncture research comes a renewed interest in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Unfortunately, a lot of the recent interest has come from major drug companies wanting in on the "complementary" profits. Nevertheless, a UK research team from drug companies and universities went on a recent mission to China to evaluate the potential application of TCM in an allopathic setting. One of the researchers reported that the west still has a lot to learn about complementary medical care. The first stumbling block for the research team was that pharmaceutical drugs are single compounds whereas in TCM practitioners mix, or "compound" as per the individual patient's particular needs. This "novel" approach baffled the UK research team. The harder the team looked for single active compounds the more they found that many herbal medicines use several plants at once containing up to thousands of chemical compounds. But they vowed to persevere: The global market for TCM has been estimated at \$15.6 billion USD.

ANTI-OXIDANTS & CYSTIC FIBROSIS

Recent research has shown that large doses of the substance found in the spice turmeric, curcumin, significantly cut deaths among mice with the genetic disease cystic fibrosis (CF). That research discovery prompted the US Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to fund a study on its effects in patients.

CF attacks patients' lungs with a thick mucus, trapping bacteria. Many CF sufferers eventually die from lung damage or infection. CF also harms digestion and vitamin absorption as the mucus clogs other organs.

Treatments to fight lung infections and improve nutrition have dramatically improved care and lengthened the survival of CF sufferers, but pharmaceutical treatments only focus on the symptoms.

The curcumin research, published in the journal *Science*, shows a possible way to attack the disease's underlying cause.

Curcumin is derived from turmeric, the East Indian yellow spice used to flavor curries and color mustard; it has long been used in Asian remedies as an antiseptic, a digestive aid or a cold treatment.

10 PRACTICAL STEPS TO A BETTER NIGHT'S SLEEP

- Adopt a regular sleep routine, going to bed at the same time each night and rising at the same time—even on weekends and holidays!
- Get regular exercise. Exercise releases stress (but don't exercise right before bedtime).
- Reduce stimulants. Coffee, tea and caffeine laden soft drinks, cigarettes and chocolate all contribute to a poor night's sleep.
- Drink in moderation. Alcohol does increase drowsiness but it does not induce REM (healthful, deep) sleep. And you probably won't feel better in the morning!
- Consult your ND regarding diet. Certain foods promote sleep, others don't. Overweight individuals often suffer from sleep apnea. Never go to sleep on a full stomach.
- Sleep on a good bed.
- Try to avoid brooding before bedtime. One way is to write out a to-do list for the next day so you aren't mulling deadlines under the covers.
- Get your children to sleep in their own beds.
- Napping over 15 minutes during the day, especially if you suffer from insomnia, will not improve your sleep.
- If you can't sleep don't lie in bed thinking about it. Get up, have a cup of chamomile tea, take a warm bath, practice some relaxing yoga or similar relaxation techniques.
- If you have chronic sleep problems speak to your ND.

Sources: *Globe & Mail*, February 21, 2004; *Guardian Weekly* April 1-7, 2004; Yahoo!

Maintaining Healthy Skin

Skin is designed to protect us from the harmful effects of sunlight while also processing the beneficial effects of sunlight. The skin acts as both a barrier and a sponge, making it essential that we consider the factors which increase the sensitivity of skin to light. Deaths from melanoma have more than doubled in recent years and incidences of the condition appear to increase every day.

Depletion of the ozone layer by chlorofluorocarbons and other wastes have resulted in an increase of ultraviolet (UV) light reaching the earth's surface. It is a popular theory that the increase in UV light is responsible for the increase in melanoma and that we should all protect ourselves against the sun.

Risks for Melanoma

However, there is a different and new interpretation of the research that suggests that the increase in melanoma cannot be satisfactorily explained by exposure to UV radiation. There is consistent evidence of a higher incidence of melanoma among indoor workers and those of higher social class. The distribution of melanoma is often higher on body areas not exposed to sunlight.

There is also considerable evidence that sunlight is a therapeutic, if not preventative, agent in many modern diseases. The evidence also shows that melanoma is not exempt—that regular daily exposure to the sun is preventative.

By 1964, more than 100 photosensitizing agents, including many commonly used drugs, had been documented. Photosensitizing drugs include hypoglycemics, anti-hypertensives, tranquilizers, broad spectrum antibiotic drugs, sunscreens, and tanning lotions. Oral contraceptives may increase the risk of the disease because of the effect on the hormonal system.

Oils for Healthy Skin

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests the increase in consumption of dietary polyunsaturated oils, such as sunflower oil, may be responsible for the increase of malignant melanoma.

During the 1960s there was an increase in the use of highly unsaturated vegetable oils like sunflower and safflower (77% polyunsaturates). Margarine was also substituted for butter because of the false but well-advertised association between saturated fats and heart disease. At the same time there was an increase in the cost of olive oil (only 9% polyunsaturates) making it less popular.

Using unnatural fat sources such as polyunsaturated oils and margarines to manipulate dietary fat causes a change in the surface fat layer of skin. It has been shown that a

high cholesterol content in the skin's fat layer has a protective role in skin tumors; it is stable and not prone to oxidation.

However, if our intake of dietary linoleic acid (polyunsaturated fats) increases, there is a greater rate of oxidation when the skin is stimulated by UV rays from the sun, causing sunburn. Sunburn is the most common stimulus for linoleic acid to the arachadonic acid (inflammatory) pathway.

How to Protect Your Skin

- ◆ If you are worried about the risk of malignant melanoma, consider the following:
- ◆ avoid polyunsaturated fats in your diet, e.g., use olive oil and flax oil instead of sunflower, safflower or peanut oils;
- ◆ avoid animal fats which contribute to arachadonic acid prostaglandins;
- ◆ use butter instead of margarine;
- ◆ avoid fluorescent lighting and prolonged exposure to electromagnetic fields;
- ◆ take vitamin E, 400iu per day, internally, as it can help protect against oxidation;
- ◆ take a B-complex vitamin; it has been shown that deficiency in vitamin B6 and other B vitamins, caused by a diet higher in refined and processed foods, is a factor in malignant melanoma.

The best protection from burning is a suntan. A moderate tan gives four to eight SPF protection. Avoid the hottest times of the day, i.e., from 10 am to 2 pm. Wear lightly woven material (two to four SPF protection) and a hat. Keeping the skin moist is the best way to enhance tanning and protect against burning; use a natural oil such as almond oil; aloe or vitamin E creams can be used for burns and protection.

This article written by BCNA member Dr. Jennifer Doan who practices in downtown Vancouver. Link to www.earthmed.ca or call 604/878-2111.

MEDIA

Internet Radio Show

BCNA member Dr. Pieter Taams hosts a weekly Internet radio show which debuted this spring. Listen live on Thursday afternoons, 5 pm PST, anywhere in the world on your computer. Link to www.talknetradio.com. Listen again to archived shows at www.naturopathic-retreat.com (choose the "radio show archive" tab). Recent topics have included the contentious Codex Alimentarius, the new naturopathic medical college in New Westminster, and complementary medical treatments for cancer patients.

Understanding Your Blood Chemistry

A blood chemistry is a series of tests that a doctor will perform to evaluate the general health of a patient. The test is usually performed on blood taken from a vein after a patient has fasted for a minimum of 12 hours. A complete blood chemistry usually involves over 20 different tests to assess electrolytes, liver, kidneys, lipids, carbon dioxide, proteins and uric acid. In addition, various factors within a blood chemistry may help a physician evaluate disease in many tissues of the body.

Electrolytes (chloride, sodium, potassium) provide information on fluid, adrenal, kidney and neuromuscular disorders. Electrolytes can also be affected by certain drugs, such as diuretics. These drugs are often referred to as water pills, since they remove fluid from the body. Carbon dioxide may also be included in a blood chemistry and can provide valuable information on respiration and acid-base balance.

Blood urea nitrogen (BUN), Creatinine and BUN/Creatinine ratio can be useful in assessing kidney function. BUN may be increased in conditions where proteins are being broken down such as fever, dehydration, starvation, intestinal bleeding, or kidney disease. Decreased values are observed in liver disease, malnutrition, or with excessive fluid intake. Uric acid is increased in gout, anemias, by certain drugs, toxicity, malnutrition or kidney disease and decreased by drugs and some chronic conditions.

Albumin, Globulin and Albumin/Globulin ratio are used to help detect liver and kidney disease and monitor progress. They can also be useful in investigating causes of edema (swelling). The only cause of increased albumin is dehydration.

Bilirubin is a brown/yellow pigment in the blood which helps to evaluate gallbladder and liver function. If bilirubin levels rise excessively jaundice may develop causing the skin to turn yellow. Bilirubin can also be elevated by exercise, estrogens and during menses.

Specific enzyme tests such as LD, ALT, AST, GGT and Alk/Phos help the doctor to assess various tissues of the body including heart, liver, kidneys, muscle and lungs.

The section of the blood chemistry most familiar to people is their cholesterol results. Standard blood chemistry measures the Total cholesterol. Some chemistry tests include High density lipoproteins (HDL), Low density lipoproteins (LDL) and the

Cholesterol/HDL ratio. Abnormalities of these tests may indicate cardiovascular disease, liver disease, kidney and nutritional disorders.

Triglycerides are another fatty substance (lipids) in the blood which serve as a means of energy storage. Along with Cholesterol, Triglycerides help to screen for risk of heart disease and are commonly elevated in diabetes, alcoholism, kidney disease and women using oral contraceptives.

It is important to understand that abnormalities of a blood chemistry may sometimes be due to drugs, vitamins, herbs or simply lab error. Any blood test should be evaluated in conjunction with the clinical symptoms of the individual.

This article by BCNA member Dr. Trevor Salloum, a naturopathic physician in Kelowna. His column appears weekly in the Kelowna Capital News. He welcomes your questions and can be reached at 250/763-5445 or link to www.dr.salloum.com

LAB FAST FACTS:

NDs in BC use medical laboratories in Alberta and the US for blood, urine, stool, saliva and hair analyses. The BC College of Physicians & Surgeons restricts lab access to NDs in BC and discriminates against NDs (even though the labs are publicly funded and privately owned)

The BC Cancer Society allows for NDs to run PAP smears and mammograms through their own lab. NDs receive over 1500 hours training in basic sciences (anatomy, cell biology, physiology, pathology, neurosciences, physical diagnosis, histology, genetics, biochemistry, lab diagnosis, pharmacology, etc.), over and above their pre-medical training at university.

The 1991 Seaton Report (BC Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs) specifically recommended the government remove the requirement that a medical laboratory must be owned and managed by an MD, thus acting in the public interest to optimize choice of health care services for patients. Unfortunately, subsequent governments have never acted on this recommendation.

Just Desserts

For more than half a century, the Voortman family has made its cookies in the same blends of flour, sugars and oils, building a loyal following and carving out a place as one of North America's biggest cookie makers along the way.

But Lynn Voortman, the founder's daughter, a naturopathic doctor, and a proponent of healthy living, had a problem with one of the ingredients—trans fatty acids. Raised on Voortman cookies, she stopped eating them altogether.

Lynne's concerns led to a policy change: Voortman Cookies has become the first major company to go trans-fat free.

While eliminating trans-fats will make the cookies healthier, it will also probably boost sales. Trans fatty acids raise levels of bad cholesterol (low-density lipoproteins) and also prevent good cholesterol (high-density lipoproteins) from doing their job of clearing the circulatory system. Avoiding sweets altogether may be the "healthiest" alternative, but for those who enjoy dessert, making a healthy choice is a step in the right direction.

Trans fats are believed to contribute to heart disease, diabetes and Alzheimer's. Ask your ND for more information on trans fats in your diet.

Despite much more strict rules on the use of trans fats in Europe, they continue to be used widely in food production in North America. Worse, Canadians are, per capita, the world's biggest consumers of trans fatty acids.

Trans fats are created by bubbling hydrogen gas through vegetable oil at high temperatures; the process, known as

partial hydrogenation, changes the molecular structure of unsaturated liquid fats and transforms them into semi-solid trans fatty acids. Trans makes foods more pliable and extends shelf life.

Voortman's has spent considerable time and expense not only eliminating the trans fat, but creating a healthful alternative with the same taste and texture as the trans-fat original.

Voortman, a family business founded in 1951, now produces more than 30 tonnes of cookies annually at plants in the US and Canada. The company is privately held and sales figures are not public.

John Bol, the company's product development specialist, said the move to go 100% trans free will "change the cookie landscape" and, if the move is as successful as the Voortmans think it will be, it could change the way virtually all processed foods are manufactured.

Voortman Cookies has already made waves with its line of sugar-free cookies. It has also been singled out for praise by Greenpeace for not using any genetically modified organisms in its baked goods.



Source: Globe & Mail

Phone us toll-free: 1-800-277-1128

PHYSICIAN REFERRALS * NATUROPATHIC MEDICAL INFORMATION * STUDENT INFORMATION

Your Health is published quarterly by the British Columbia Naturopathic Association, the professional association for naturopathic physicians in the province. It is compiled and edited by Glenn Cassie. The information provided herein is for educational and reference purposes only; it is not intended as a substitute for consultation and diagnosis nor treatment from a qualified doctor.

Your Health is provided free to BCNA members.

The BCNA offers patients, across the province, referrals to licenced naturopathic doctors (NDs) in their area, as well as student information to persons interested in the profession. It is the BCNA's purpose

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to advance the scientific, educational and professional aspects of naturopathic medicine.

The public is welcome and encouraged to join the BCNA. An annual membership fee of \$25 assists the BCNA in its efforts to increase government recognition and heighten the profession's profile. Membership entitles you to a one-year subscription to Your Health and other news and information bulletins.

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