



LAMOPH Department of Pennsylvania January 2010 News Bulletin

Breast Cancer Update 02:

Some women with very advanced breast cancer may have a new treatment option. Doctors report a combination of two drugs that more precisely target tumors significantly extended the lives of women who had stopped responding to other medicines. It was the first big test of combining Herceptin and Tykerb. In a study of 300 patients, women receiving both drugs lived nearly five months longer than those given Tykerb alone. Doctors hope for an even bigger benefit in women with less advanced disease, and were elated at this much improvement for very sick women who were facing certain death. "We don't see a lot that works in patients who have seen six prior therapies as they did in this trial, so that alone is exciting," says Jennifer Litton, a breast cancer specialist at the Univ. of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. The good results are in stark contrast to two other studies that found no survival advantage from Avastin, a \$30,000-a-month drug whose approval for breast cancer patients was very controversial. Considering Avastin's potential side effects - blood clots in the lungs, poor wound healing, kidney problems - a survival benefit "would have made the cost of the drug less painful to take," Litton says. She had no role in any of the studies, which were reported 11 DEC at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium sponsored by the American Association for Cancer Research, Baylor College of Medicine and the UT Health Science Center.

Herceptin and Tykerb aim at a protein called HER-2 that is made in abnormally large quantities in about one-fourth of all breast cancers. Herceptin blocks the protein on the cell's surface; Tykerb does it inside the cell. "It's kind of like having a double brake on your tumor. If the first one fails, the second one does the job," says Kimberly Blackwell of Duke Univ. She led the combo treatment study and has consulted for its sponsor, British-based GlaxoSmithKline PLC, which makes Tykerb, and for Genentech, which makes Herceptin and Avastin. Women in the study had already received Herceptin alone or with various chemotherapy drugs and still were getting worse. They were randomly assigned to receive only Tykerb or both drugs, to see whether the combo might help Herceptin regain its effectiveness. Median survival was analyzed after about 75% of the women had died - roughly two years after the study began. It was 61 weeks in the combo group versus 41 for those taking only Tykerb. That likely underestimates the combo's true benefit because women on Tykerb alone were allowed to add Herceptin partway through the study if they continued to worsen, and many of them did, Blackwell says. One woman on the combo in the study suffered a fatal blood

clot. The only other common, serious side effect was diarrhea, which plagued 7 to 8% of each group. Herceptin costs about \$10,000 a month, Tykerb, \$5,000 to \$6,000.

Eric Winer, breast cancer chief at the Dana-Farber Cancer Center in Boston, says several studies now show that Herceptin still helps women even when their cancers seem to be getting worse. "Herceptin is like a big roadblock on a superhighway. Eventually the cancer finds a way around it by taking an off ramp. But it's much less efficient to take that off ramp, so Herceptin is still having some influence on that cancer," says Winer, who, like Litton, has no financial ties to any drug makers. "Herceptin is a drug that keeps on giving," he says. Not so for Avastin, which works by crimping a tumor's blood supply. The federal Food and Drug Administration approved its use in women whose cancers had spread beyond the breast over the objections of FDA advisers who wanted more evidence of benefit for these patients. Now, two big international studies show that Avastin modestly delayed the time breast cancer took to worsen, but had no effect on overall survival. Avastin also is approved to treat certain lung, brain and colon cancers, and the new studies that follow have no bearing on its use in those patients:

A 684-patient Study of Avastin with chemotherapy as a second-try treatment for women whose cancers do not respond to Herceptin.

A 736-patient Study of Avasti, plus Taxotere, or a dummy drug as first-time treatment for cancers that had recurred or spread beyond the breast.

[Source: Lab News Daily AP article 14 Dec 09 ++]

Vinegar:

For those who are not aware following are a number of uses for vinegar that will make your life a little easier:

Using Vinegar for BEAUTY, HAIR & BATH

In your bathwater - Add ½ cup of vinegar or so to warm bath water when bathing and get double benefits softer skin and a cleaner bathtub with less work!

Hair Conditioner - vinegar makes a simple, inexpensive conditioner for your hair and helps remove the sticky stuff shampoo can leave behind. About a tablespoon will do it.

Dandruff Treatment - Simply pour a few Tablespoons of vinegar on your hair and massage into your scalp. Wait a few minutes, then rinse and wash hair like normal. Try this for a few days until you see results.

Weight Loss - Vinegar naturally helps to remove fat from the body - apple cider vinegar is especially good for this. Drink some in a glass of water a few times a day, and add a little lemon or honey for a nicer flavor. This will also help reduce your appetite.

Cracked, dry skin - Smooth a little vinegar on dried skin to help it heal.

Clean dentures - Soak dentures overnight in Heinz White Vinegar then brush away tartar with a toothbrush.

Facial Spritzer - mix 1/2 apple cider vinegar and 1/2 water into a spray bottle. Refreshing!

Hair Cleanser - Take 1 cup of vinegar and warm water into a large glass and use to rinse your hair after you shampoo. Vinegar adds highlights to brunette hair, restores the acid mantle, and removes soap film and sebum oil.

Longer lasting pantyhose - Add 1 tablespoon of vinegar to the rinse water when washing and your pantyhose will last longer!

Using Vinegar for CLEANING

Cleans Glass - Mixed with water or simply sprayed full-strength on glass and mirrors, vinegar does a great job quickly and easily. Simply wipe windows dry with crumpled up newspapers and watch your windows sparkle.

Clean your car - Use it full-strength to polish car chrome with a cloth and see it shine! Use it on your car's windshield and windows, too.

Cleans drinking glasses - Soak cloudy drinking glasses in warmed white vinegar for a few hours to remove the film, simply wipe clean, rinse, and dry.

Clean your washing machine - Periodically run a gallon of distilled vinegar through your washing machine to clean it thoroughly, get rid of soap scum, and clear out the hoses. Run the machine through the warm water wash cycle empty and then add the vinegar during the rinse cycle.

Furniture Polish - Make your own furniture polish with one part vinegar and three parts lemon oil or olive oil.

Remove price tags or stickers - Paint them with several coats of vinegar and let it soak in. Depending what you are removing them off of is whether they'll slide off easily or require a little heavier rubbing.

Clean your Iron - Put vinegar in the water holder and let it steam itself clean. Remember to flush it with water when you are done.

Clean paintbrushes - Simmer paintbrushes in pure vinegar, then wash in hot soapy water.

Wash walls - Wipe down your walls with a vinegar-water mixture and it will help absorb odors and clean the surfaces.

Remove spots from glass - Use a vinegar-soaked cloth to remove spots from any glassware or crystal.

Unclog drains - Pour boiling white vinegar down clogged drains to remove the clog!

Clean jars - Remove odors and stains from jars by cleaning them out with vinegar.

Clean an old lunchbox - Soak a piece of bread in vinegar and let it sit in the lunchbox over night.

Clean and deodorize a garbage disposal - Make vinegar ice cubes and feed them down the disposal. After grinding, run cold water through Teapot cleaning - Boil a mixture of water and vinegar in the teapot and wipe away the grime.

Using Vinegar for HEALTH

Are you suffering from a sore throat? Mix a Teaspoon vinegar with a glass of water. Gargle with the mixture and then swallow.

Remove calluses - Try soaking your feet in a combination of white vinegar and warm water nightly and watch your feet soften noticeably.

Sunburn - Soak a washcloth in vinegar and gently apply it to sunburned skin for cool relief. Reapply as needed as it evaporates. Besides sunburn, vinegar also soothes the itch and irritation of bee stings!

Arthritis Tonic - Two Tablespoons of apple cider vinegar in a glass of water, several times a day.

Jellyfish Stings - Dot the irritation with vinegar and relieve itching.

Sinus Infections and Head Colds - Add 1/4 cup or more vinegar to the vaporizer.

Wart Removal - Mix one part Heinz Apple Cider Vinegar to one part glycerin into a lotion and apply daily to warts until they dissolve.

Soothe an upset stomach - Drink two teaspoons Heinz Apple Cider Vinegar in one cup water to soothe an upset stomach.

Mosquito bites - Use a cotton ball to dab mosquito and other bug bites with Heinz Vinegar straight from the bottle.

Using Vinegar for PETS & ANIMALS

Pet's drinking water - Add a teaspoon of vinegar to your pet's drinking water to encourage a shinier coat, and reduce odor.

Remove skunk odor - Use vinegar straight to remove skunk odor from your pet's fur.

Stop your cat's scratching furniture - Sprinkle or spray vinegar on areas you don't want the cat scratching on.

Fish bowl cleaner - Eliminate that ugly deposit in the gold fish tank by rubbing it with a cloth dipped in vinegar and rinsing well.

Remove pet stains from carpets - Blot up urine with a soft cloth, flush several times with lukewarm water, then apply a mixture of equal parts vinegar and cool water. Blot up, rinse, and let dry.

[Source: <http://opossumsal.homestead.com/household.html> Oct 09 ++]