

SUPPLEMENT

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW YORK BUYERS' CLUB

Volume IV, No.14

Summer 2009

ARE YOU READY TO JOIN THE FOOD REVOLUTION?

WE ARE WHAT WE EAT - BUT WHAT ARE WE EATING?

Is it just our imagination, or have we detected a growing public interest in the impact of food on our health? Maybe you've heard about our new first family, the Obamas, and the vegetable garden they've planted at the White House to supply their kitchen with locally grown, healthy vegetables and berries. Or—not such cheerful news—maybe you've read about the obesity epidemic sweeping the US, caused largely by mass consumption of fast food and highly processed food products, and linked to devastating increases in diabetes and cardiovascular disease across the population. Or maybe you've dipped (or dug) into the writings of food revolutionary Michael Pollan, who's gained notoriety for urging us to eat "real" food (like our great-great-grandparents ate), shun the supermarket and shop the green-market whenever possible, and even plant a garden.

Though the New York Buyers' Club is a nutritional supplements co-op, we understand very well that food is first. The food we eat every day, what kind



First Lady Michelle Obama and students from Bancroft Elementary reap the rewards of their work earlier this year establishing the White House's organic kitchen garden.

and how much, has an enormous impact on our health, and research on diet has brought to light ever more clearly the effects of nutrition on both our

The food we eat every day has an enormous impact on both our physical health and our mental well-being

physical health and our mental well-being. A few things have been obvious for a while: traditional diets, such as the "Mediterranean diet" or the "Chinese

diet," are much better for you than the standard modern American diet with its refined carbohydrates, bad fats (saturated or trans), excessive salt, super-

sized portions of red meat, and mighty rivers of high fructose corn syrup. It's simple epidemiology: populations that eat lots of whole grains, fruits, nuts,

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NYBC CELEBRATES
FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

vegetables, moderate amounts of fish and poultry (and little red meat), and rely on traditional seasonings (from rosemary to turmeric) and good fats (like olive and fish oils) end up having significantly lower rates of heart disease, cancer, and even mental health conditions like depression.

Can the clear health benefits of traditional diets be translated in any useful way to the field of supplements? (Supplements are, to repeat, a supplement to food, not a replacement.)

One obvious "yes" comes in the increased study and use of fish oil/omega-3 fatty acid supplements over the

last few decades, first of all for cardiovascular health, but also—as has been highlighted more recently—to reduce susceptibility to depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. Here's a case in which an individual nutrient within a healthful diet has been isolated and can be delivered as a supplement that bestows health benefits. (Fish oil supplements have a particular advantage over food sources, too: they can be refined to eliminate mercury or other contamination, a growing concern these days, whether you're eating fresh or canned fish.)

We also know that it's possible to extract a component from food and use its particular properties to confer a health benefit, while leaving behind other parts that you don't want or need. This is the case with whey protein powders, which leave behind milk fat, but keep (continued on page 4)

CHANGE COMING TO NYBC STORE

NYBC PRICES TOO LOW! NO MORE "I'LL JOIN NEXT TIME!"

Beginning in September, some changes will be coming to New York Buyers' Club, in particular, to our busy online store. In the past, non-members were allowed to freely access our entire product line. While in our younger years this practice was seen as a key way to let people sample our high quality products and services, we have faced increasing pressure from our vendors to make our prices available only to paying members. In essence, our prices were too low to publish without embarrassing other retailers! While mandatory membership might be seen as rigid, it is actually more in line with the way a buyers' co-op optimally works.

Those who have shied away from purchasing a membership in the past should know that annual membership dues are (as always) based on a very reasonable, sliding-scale basis. And one only need make a quick comparison with other stores to realize that the cost of membership is quickly made up for in savings over traditional commercial outlets - and, hands down, no one matches our expertise and experience.

By becoming a member of New York Buyers' Club, you not only gain access to our steeply discounted products, but you will also be supporting the kind of cost-efficient, people-minded healthcare solutions our country could use more of! *To your health!*

- NYBC

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW YORK BUYERS' CLUB

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HIV WORKING YOUR NERVES?

NOT JUST AN IMMUNE SYSTEM DISEASE - NEUROLOGICAL ISSUES ARISE AS WELL

HIV disease is primarily thought of as one that damages the immune system. It does result, if not treated, in the development of AIDS after all! And this is characterized by the loss of "T" cells (otherwise known as *CD4+ T lymphocytes*).

But there is more to HIV than this. As is not uncommon with many diseases, the infection can have an impact beyond the primary problem.

One of the manifestations of HIV disease is the damage it can do to the nerves. This damage may occur in the nerves that find their ends in our fingers and toes. This kind of damage is known as *peripheral neuropathy*. This disorder, unfortunately, may also arise from the use of some of the drugs in the antiretroviral (ARV) arsenal (notably, drugs like d4T, which is also known as stavudine or Zerit).

These nerves are extensions of our brains, which are filled with nerves called neurons. When HIV damages

neurons, it can have all kinds of effects that are recognized by clinicians as falling along a spectrum ranging from minor cognitive motor disorder

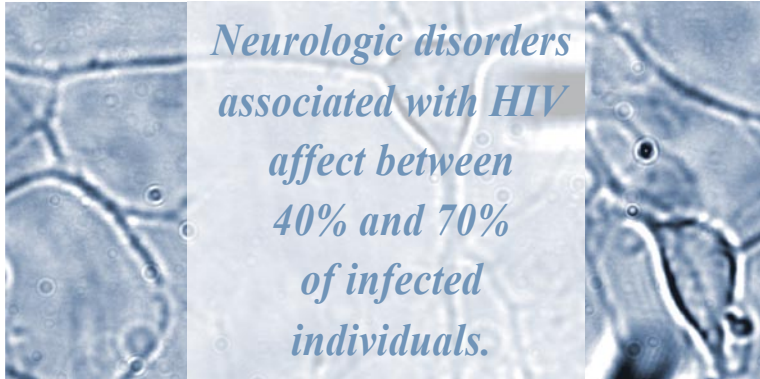
memory trouble. At the far end of the spectrum, dementia can be severely debilitating and incapacitating.

The good news—at least where

types of cells that neurons rely upon to function properly. As a result, they may release large amounts of inflammatory cytokines (notably, IL-1b, IL-6, and TNF for the immunology buffs). These in turn increase oxidative stress and may cause neurons to die.

So what can be done? You guessed it! There are some data indicating that a variety of interventions may help to slow the development of these changes. Among these are fish oils, NAC, acetylcarnitine, theanine, alpha lipoic (neuropathy at least), ginkgo? – others?

This issue covers some of these interventions, the evidence, the limitations and/or problems and where we need more data. We hope these articles will help you in your own research and to craft an approach that works best for you. And that you will share your experiences with us at NYBC! We all learn together...



to HIV-associated dementia. It is estimated that some 40 to 70% of people living with HIV suffer from some sort of cognitive disruption.

The effects can be fairly mild, ranging from difficulty in certain tasks requiring physical dexterity to

people have access to ARVs—is that the most severe cases are in decline from the early days. But many can still suffer an array of trouble.

Interestingly, HIV does not infect neurons. So how does this trouble arise? Well, HIV does infect other

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NEW PRODUCTS ON THE NYBC SHELVES

Jarrow's organic **Hemp Protein Powder** (16 oz.; \$11.25) is derived from pure, organic hemp seed protein. Studies in mice conducted in China showed improvements in energy, reduced fatigue, and some immune system modulation. This included increases in CD4 numbers in the spleen (though of course whether this would have any relevance to people living with HIV is unknown; see Wei Sheng Yan Jiu. 2008 Mar; 37(2):175-178). Lactic acid levels were also seen to decrease. A rat study showed a significant decrease in LDL (the so-called "bad cholesterol") and an increase in the good cholesterol (HDL) over a 20-day period. Again, whether this is relevant to humans or what dosage daily would be needed to achieve this is unclear. In any event, this serves as another alternative for a good protein source with a favorable amino acid profile. It has an innocuous flavor and is great in juice! If you are able to assess your energy level or start this around the time you get blood work, get a fasting lipid panel – and let us know what happens (improvement, no change, or any problems).



Coenzyme Q10 is used by the body to produce energy to fuel cell growth and maintenance. It is also known as *ubiquinone*. In our cells' mitochondria, it is used to help make the important energy molecule, ATP. Ubiquinol is the reduced (active antioxidant) form of Co-Q10. NYBC now carries this form, known as **Q-Absorb** (Jarrow Formulas; one month's supply, \$16 - \$22.25, depending on your choice of three dosages). This is the form that is used in the body. Most people can readily convert the regular form of CoQ10 into ubiquinol, but in some, this conversion may be impaired. See the more complete discussion of Coenzyme Q10 online. An important note: in one study among people with HIV, 3 people with neuropathy saw a worsening of their condition, causing two to have to stop using the CoQ10. The symptoms resolved when they stopped. The study investigators speculated that the CoQ10 may have been helping restore nerves, but the inflammation caused more pain. This needs to be investigated, possibly using agents like acetylcarnitine and alpha lipoic acid that might help to reduce the inflammation.



Vaeyama Chlorella is a type of green alga; the cell wall is broken to improve absorption. This variety is grown in the environmentally pristine coral reef region of Japan's Ishigaki Island. Chlorella is a "whole food"

product and therefore contains many factors not found in isolates, including over 12 pigments, which are the precursors of enzymes and coenzymes. Some anecdotal reports suggest that after several months of use, energy levels and T-cell counts are improved in some (Jarrow Formulas; 150 capsules/bottle; \$8.75/bottle).

Simply One by Super Nutrition (\$13.00) is a comprehensive, one-a-day multivitamin/mineral with herbs for those on the go. This product is vegetarian, hypoallergenic, and gluten free. And it actually is packed with significant dosages of vitamins and minerals (unlike similar brands). An interesting inclusion is DMAE (dimethylaminoethanol), used primarily to help improve attention and focus, mental alertness, and to boost mood. It is a chemical that is similar to choline and thus may act as a precursor to the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. One short-term study suggested a benefit in vigilance and alertness (J Pharmacology Exp. Therap. 1977;200(3)).



Horsechestnut Pro is a horsechestnut seed extract, containing 20% aescin, along with 100 mg of calendula flower. Derived from the beautiful *Aesculus hippocastanum*. Some studies were conducted that showed a significant improvement in reducing lower limb edema (swelling). It appears to help with circulation and maintain the tone of veins. Brinker's book, *Herb Contraindications*, lists this herb as containing (continued on page 4)

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NYBC CELEBRATES 5TH ANNIVERSARY, SHARES "SMART STRATEGIES"

Supplements And Other Smart Strategies For Longer Living was the title of a panel discussion on traditional, complementary and alternative therapies for HIV presented on June 25, 2009 by the New York Buyers' Club in celebration of our fifth anniversary. The event, co-sponsored by POZ Magazine, brought together experts whose knowledge spans East and West, and whose experience ranges from community organizing and scientific writing, to clinical research and the practice of medicine, whether as an M.D. or as a licensed acupuncturist and specialist in Chinese herbalism.

NYBC was especially proud to welcome our Guest of Honor, Sunil Pant, the first openly gay Member of Parliament in Nepal, and Founder/Director of the groundbreaking HIV-support organization the Blue Diamond Society, which was recognized by the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission in 2007 as "one of the most effective human rights groups in the world." At the start of the panel discussion, our Guest of Honor gave a moving account of the work he and his organization have done over the last decade in securing rights for sexual minorities in Nepal, and in fighting for decent treatment of Nepalis with HIV/AIDS. Sunil also took

a moment to recall the many years he has known and worked with our own George Carter, who has directed NYBC efforts to provide supplements and other aid to Blue Diamond Society (among others).

We also felt privileged to hear from our other panelists: Dr. Paul Bellman, a NYC physician who has been treating people with HIV/AIDS since the start of the epidemic; Tim Horn, President and Editor of AIDSmeds.com; Alex Brameier, a licensed acupuncturist and herbalist; and George Carter, Director of the Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research. It's true that the first two of these panelists are in the mainstream of AIDS treatment practice, by which we only mean to say that their main area of expertise is antiretroviral pharmaceuticals. Yet Dr. Bellman also spoke of the usefulness of several



Q&A Pictured (left to right): Moderator Carola Burroughs, Guest of Honor Sunil Pant, FIAR's George Carter, Lic. Ac. Alex Brameier, Tim Horn of AIDSmeds.com, and Dr. Paul Bellman.

supplements that NYBC and its predecessor DAAIR have long recommended: alpha lipoic acid, carnitine, and CoQ10. Tim Horn, whose website focuses largely on pharmaceutical treatments, nevertheless also acknowledged that the "holistic" approach to long-term health for people with HIV makes a lot of sense. And he went on to say that he recognizes that a whole range of "therapies" (including even diet and exercise) may be needed

to address worrisome trends in heart and lung disease among people with HIV who are taking ARVs. Alex Brameier, the licensed acupuncturist on our panel, engaged our audience with an impromptu survey on how people view acupuncture. She then discussed some of the conditions that lend themselves to acupuncture, based on clinical experience: pain

relief, stress reduction, neurological and musculoskeletal disorders, to name a few. Very useful as well was the contrast she drew between acupuncture as practiced in China and Japan (where treatment may be daily or every other day), and the West, where time and financial constraints often dictate otherwise. Her tips on how to get the best out of acupuncture and how acupuncture and herbs can work together were also very valuable.

Last but not least among our contributors was George Carter, who's had two decades of experience with supplements, from clinical research, to acting as NYBC Treatment Director. George, as all who know him can attest, is nothing if not thorough, and for this event he prepared a "Short Primer on Side Effects," a compact but comprehensive review of HIV medication side effects, ranging from malabsorption/diarrhea/nausea, to lipid abnormalities (of concern for cardiovascular health), to fatigue and insomnia, to insulin resistance/diabetes, to liver damage, to bone issues, to peripheral neuropathy. We hope to produce this super-useful handout as a handy pocket guide in the near future, so stay tuned.

Rounded out by live performance by talented pianist Greg Otten and delicious hors d'oeuvres, it was an inspiring, lively, and immensely informative evening, if we do say so ourselves! If you were there, thanks for coming - it was an anniversary to remember. And if not, we here at the New York Buyers' Club certainly hope to see you at the next one - and look forward to serving you for many years to come.

It was agreed that a whole range of therapies, from pharmaceutical to complementary and alternative, are needed to address the side effects of HIV meds

NEW YORK BUYERS' CLUB 5TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SUPPLEMENTS AND OTHER SMART STRATEGIES FOR LONGER LIVING

A lively evening with insights on traditional, alternative, and complementary approaches to HIV.

Guest of Honor:
Sunil Babu Pant
Nepal's first openly gay Member of Parliament; Founder and Director of Blue Diamond Society

Panelists:
Paul Bellman, MD
Nobod AIDS physician
Tim Horn
President & Editor-in-Chief, AIDSmeds.com
George Carter, Lic. Ac.
Acupuncturist, Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research
Alex Brameier, Lic. Ac.
Herbalist & licensed acupuncturist

Sponsored by:
POZ & Gay City

Event Scheduler:
Mark O'Connell & Music
Greg Otten, piano
Q & A 8:00pm
Followed by celebratory Champagne & Cocktails!

Pride Week Wednesday June 24 7-10pm The Center 208 w 13 St

More information & meet the panelists: www.newyorkbuyersclub.org/5

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ARE YOU READY TO JOIN THE FOOD REVOLUTION?

(continued from page 1) the whey protein with its high nutritional value. It's not news that whey protein can help to build and sustain the body's lean muscle mass (crucial for maintaining long-term health, and especially important for people with chronic conditions like HIV that may impair absorption of nutrients), but research has uncovered as well several important indications of its value in supporting immune function, decreasing the risk of cardio-

search is about putting two and two together. It was known that the rate of breast cancer in China is four to five times lower than that in most Western industrialized countries; and there had been previous lab studies suggesting the anti-cancer properties of green tea and mushrooms—so why not investigate more rigorously the relationship between breast cancer rates and con-

ing black and red raspberries, blackberries, strawberries and elderberries) and lower rates of cancer. One new suggestion emerging from the recent studies is that berries may exert a "genome-wide" anti-cancer effect, meaning that, unlike many current cancer treatments that target only one cancer-promoting gene at a time, berries may target a whole spectrum of can-

growing season is year-round), mixing a powdered berry supplement into a smoothie could be just as useful to your health.

We gave this article a somewhat tongue-in-cheek title, asking if you, dear reader, were ready to join the "food revolution." Actually, it strikes us that the current revolution in thinking about our eating habits

Foods found in traditional diets continue to be the focus of scientific research on what's healthy in what we eat, and why

in many ways involves returning to the old days—to the traditional diets of previous genera-

vascular disease, and even serving as an anti-cancer agent.

Foods found in traditional diets continue to be the focus of scientific research on what's healthy in what we eat, and why. Recently, we looked into a study showing that Chinese women who regularly ate mushrooms and drank green tea had lower rates of breast cancer, or less severe manifestations of breast cancer, than those who didn't. This kind of nutrition re-

sumption of these traditional foods?

And here's another bit of evidence-based food advice. A few months ago our hometown newspaper, *The New York Times*, featured a piece entitled "The Power of Berries" (Jan. 22, 2009), which detailed the accumulating research on how these fruits help ward off cancers of the colon, esophagus, and mouth. This research built on the well-documented association between diets rich in berries (includ-

cer-promoting genes, causing them to shut down development of pre-cancerous and cancerous growths. Exciting stuff from the berry researchers! And, there's a further, practical note: investigations have demonstrated that freeze dried berries and berry powders are as effective as fresh fruit in terms of anti-cancer effect. So even if you can't eat fresh berries several times a week (an obvious problem for those of us who don't live where the

tions, to the old-fashioned idea of raising your own food, or to shopping for locally-grown produce at a greenmarket. Of course we return to these older ways armed with a store of advanced knowledge about why some dietary traditions are healthful, and how they can be adapted to our modern lives. If that's the definition of the "food revolution," we at NYBC heartily encourage you to enlist—for your health!

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NEW PRODUCTS ON THE NYBC SHELVES

(continued from page 1) an hydroxycoumarin component, and thus states that taking it with coumadin or aspirin may enhance bleeding effect (though they note this is a speculative effect). The bark is also sometimes used externally on ulcers. Grieve also notes that it has "tonic, narcotic and febrifuge (fever-reducing) properties." *The Handbook of Clinically Tested Herbal Remedies* notes that it was studied and found helpful in three well-conducted, placebo-controlled studies of people with chronic venous insufficiency (using 100 to 150 mg of aescin per day)...they do not suggest any adverse reactions (sometimes gastric side effects) or drug interactions, contrary to Brinker's. They note that it helps to reduce edema and swelling. *Bartram's Encyclopedia of Herbal Medicine* notes that Horsechestnut tones and protects blood vessels, noting that it is sometimes used with Cowslip for varicose veins. Used traditionally for bleeding piles, uterine bleeding, etc...so it may possibly reduce risk of bleeding,

rather than increase the risk. Cautions: Do not use if you have kidney or liver disease. Do not use if pregnant or nursing. While it is only speculative, it is wise to closely work with your physician and watch bloodwork if you are taking blood thinners like coumadin (Warfarin) or aspirin.

NEW Chinese Herbal Formulas

Nine Flavor Tea a Health Concerns formula (270 capsules; \$24.25/bottle), is a proprietary blend of herbs used in Chinese medicine. (A complete list is available on the NYBC website). This formula is used according to tradition to treat chronic or recurrent sore throat, oral sores accompanied by thirst and insomnia or a collection of symptoms including facial flushing, afternoon fevers, chronic inflammation, burning soles and plams, night sweats, blurred vision, dizziness, tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and impotence, according to the *Clinical Handbook*.



Artemisiae Capsules (Zhang; \$21.50/bottle/30 capsules) is also known as *qinghao* or sweet wormwood, has been used for a variety of ailments in traditions in China, Japan and India. Recently, the artemisinin extract has been incorporated as a treatment for malaria, although it is unclear how much is in this particular product which also contains some astragalus red-rooted sage roots. There are some data to suggest it may have benefit in treating certain cancers. Others have isolated compounds that may exert protease inhibitor activity against HIV. However, there are no clinical data to support these observations so far. This is from Qincui Zhang, a well-respected Chinese medicine practitioner in New York. It also a part of his overall program for liver health.

Cold Away (Health Concerns; 90 tablets, \$10.50) is a blend including Isatis extract, *Andrographis* herb, *Platycodon* root, wild chrysanthemum, citrus peel, angelica root, *Magnolia* flower, and licorice root. Designed to clear external heat and alleviate symptoms of the common cold.

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SUPPLEMENT: Newsletter of the New York Buyers' Club is published quarterly and features articles focusing on current items of interest in the world of health and nutraceuticals.

New York Buyers' Club is a non-profit organization with the goal of increasing awareness about and access to vital nutritional supplements, with a focus on the needs of those affected by HIV/AIDS, Hep C, and other conditions.

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