

Musings on Integrative Oncology

By Dr. Connie



Dr. Marcel and I have just returned from an integrative oncology conference in Seattle. Spending 3 days with some of our most brilliant naturopathic oncologists, **we were awed by the depth of the research and clinical experience shared, by the evolution of complementary options, by the commitment of doctors from the U.S. and abroad.** Topics ranged from patient and cross professional relations and legalities of treatment to conventional and complementary treatment protocols and pharmaceuticals to lifestyle considerations in cancer. We covered everything from modifications of intravenous therapy formulas for pediatric patients, to statins and anti-parasitics in cancer care to the recipe for Buddha Balls to treat cachexia.

As many of you know, a cancer patient in the United States must be under the care of an oncologist. Other practitioners may offer adjunctive care, but the care that can be provided is limited by standards of conventional care, by FDA restrictions on therapeutics, and even by bans as to what can and cannot legally be said about these therapies.

Nonconventional pharmaceuticals and protocols used in Canada, Mexico and European countries may be, in the United States, extravagantly more expensive, unavailable, or out and out illegal.

Compounding pharmacies offering formulas not in the conventional pharmacopeia are constantly under attack, resulting in prices for such basic ingredients as intravenous vitamin C and selenium varying exponentially from day to day. **All of this is a disconcerting reality and has affected the availability of effective therapies such as I.V. curcumin and mistletoe, photodynamic therapies, and off label uses of existent pharmaceuticals.**

We heard stories of parents being threatened by child welfare officials when the chosen treatment protocols were not sanctioned within the conventional medical community. One of the presenting MDs, previously an ER doc and

subsequently trained as an ND, relayed the story of his young daughter who had contracted a deadly form of cancer. One of our well-known colleagues had successfully managed bureaucratic hurdles to provide adjunctive lifesaving I.V. therapies during her harrowing treatment protocols. With persistence and the right connections, help is possible.

It is also true that integrative cancer care differs from conventional care in ways that do not threaten conventional standards. Whereas **our patients' oncologists tell them that what they eat makes no difference, evidence proves that we are what we eat. Never mind the drugs, what you eat and in what timing is critical to successful treatment.**

Daily intermittent fasting has huge benefit. The standard American diet curtails the efficacy of any cancer treatment protocol, and increases side effects. Moving away from that diet improves overall health and the efficacy of therapeutic interventions. Mental and emotional health also is paramount to successful treatment, hence our promotion of Emotional Freedom Technique and of the patient friendly atmosphere in our clinic. Basic holistic naturopathic care facilitates positive outcomes in cancer care!

Look to our sharing, integrating and implementing whatever we can of what we learned at this powerful conference.