Thanks to all our wonderful CANSA supporters!!

A wonderful breakfast was held at Moyo’s at Zoo Lake on Tuesday 27th March. Approximately 116 Joburg businesswomen attended (and a few brave men too!) It was the first fundraiser, which will become an annual event and offered a mix of good food, good music and good company. IBM was the main sponsor and launched their programme to assist with cancer research worldwide (see our article “Help Defeat Cancer”).

Guests were treated to a sumptuous buffet breakfast while listening to the voice and guitar of Velaphi. Saxonwold’s day care patients also joined in and the morning was rounded off by a colourful a cappella group. Due to popular demand, we will be hosting another function towards the end of the year – so please spread the word!

Cresta Centre raised an amazing R135 000 with the Shavathon. We had lots of fun at Redhill School where R12 000 was raised spraying and cutting hair! Bracken High followed closely raising R8 000.

We received sponsorship on twelve bus shelters for one year starting in May 2007 by Primedia.

We also received a wheelchair from Mr & Mrs Lombard after Mrs Richards’ Cuppa.

Sanlam Golf
South Africa’s biggest amateur golf competition has been launched and will be held at golf clubs around the country. We will have CANSA representatives at each competition and we are looking for volunteers to help us as some of the clubs hold competitions on the same day.

Please contact Joanne Steytler on 011 646 5628 if you would like to assist.

Help needed
Our Keurboom Interim Home is looking for help to start various projects such as Gardening, Baking, Sewing, Knitting, etc. The projects aim to teach skills to patients during their stay at the Home, to raise funds and promote healthy lifestyles through activities.

There are very many things needed to get this scheme underway and if you feel that you can contribute time, money or items, please contact Saxonwold and we will put you in touch with them.

Cuppa for CANSA
Mrs Debbie Richards and her daughter Candice hosted a most successful Cuppa in delightful surroundings during March

Anyone for Golf?
A very successful Day Night golf day was hosted in Nigel by Jordan’s Inc. of Heidelberg
At the age of 27, Alison MacPhail was a successful young woman with a career in advertising, a loving family and a quirky, irreverent sense of humour. She was diagnosed with colon cancer and, sadly, died just over a year later. This is a poem she wrote before she died and we know that there are many readers who will relate to her sentiments.

I'd like to see my eyes
Wrinkled on either side
To wake up every morning
Aching bone yawning
To hold my butt and feel
It sagging gently down
To see my brow marked
By many, many frowns
To watch the skin upon my neck
Go loose and stretchy, go to heck
To see my hair go fluffy grey
This is my wish every day.

For every wrinkle, every frown
Is another sun we see go down.
Every stretch and mark and scar
Is proof of how alive we are
I hope to make it to that day
When my body is marked in every way.

For then I know I would have lived
As many full years as God will give.

Alison MacPhail 13/07/03

Our thanks to Alison's parents for allowing us to publish this poem.

Omega-3 may change your mood!

Intake of omega-3 fatty acids is correlated with a better mood and more positive outlook, and may contribute to improving the structure of the areas of the brain associated with emotions, according to a study presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society.

• Researchers studied 55 healthy adults, questioning them about their omega-3 intake and taking magnetic resonance images of their brains. Higher intake of omega-3s was significantly correlated with a higher volume of brain matter in the areas associated with the regulation of mood and emotion.

• In a prior study, the same researchers had discovered a correlation between blood levels of omega-3s and a positive life outlook. People with lower omega-3 levels were more likely to be impulsive and have a negative outlook. People with higher levels were more likely to have a positive mood and outlook.

• The new study suggests that omega-3s may play a role in the structuring and improvement of mood-regulating areas of the brain.

• Omega-3s are one of the two types of fatty acids; the others are omega-6. Scientists believe that the ideal ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 intake is between 3:1 and 5:1.

• The typical omega-6 to omega-3 ratio in the modern, Western diet is between 10:1 and 30:1.
Hoping is Coping Support Group

Contact: Denise Bernstein 011 782 7733 or CANSA Johannesburg: 011 646 5628

This course consists of four two-hour sessions on four consecutive Monday evenings commencing at the beginning of each month.

The programme is designed to enhance skills needed for self-care and to promote physical and emotional well-being for people facing cancer.

Relevant issues are addressed through presentations and group discussions and participants are encouraged to share concerns and find solutions for their problems.

Doctors, dieticians, social workers and other healthcare professionals will provide information and answer questions about:

- What is Cancer?
- Treatments and side effects?
- Nutrition and stress management
- Understanding feelings and relationships
- Living with cancer and celebrating life.

The objectives of the course are to enhance the participants knowledge, coping skills and attitudes.

Where possible a donation of R250 per family is requested.

Link Group

Contact: Denise Bernstein 011 782 7733 or CANSA Johannesburg: 011 646 5628

Link meetings take place on the third Tuesday of each month.

This is for all cancer patients and families and can be a follow-on for those completing the Hoping is Coping course. It is designed to provide further information on relevant topics such as:

- Spiritual issues
- Sexuality and cancer
- Latest developments in Cancer treatment

Prostate Cancer Group

Contact: Fred Baer 011 787 4718 or CANSA Johannesburg: 011 646 5628

The PSA group meets on the first Tuesday of each month.

Reach for Recovery

Contact: Lipsie Katz, CANSA Johannesburg: 011 646 5628 between 8h30 and 13h00 Monday to Friday

This is the Breast Cancer Support Group and they meet every six weeks on Wednesdays. Prostheses are available. Volunteers from this Group visit patients in hospital to give support and guidance.

Exercise Group for Breast Cancer Patients

Contact: Lipsie Katz, CANSA Johannesburg: 011 646 5628 between 8h30 and 13h00 Monday to Friday

Relaxation and exercised for recovered patients. Classes are conducted by a suitably qualified trainer at a cost of R40 per month.

Keurboom Interim Home

Contact: Mike Mphahlele: 011 624 1765

This free audio programme provides knowledge and understanding to people faced with a cancer diagnosis. Track 1 explains what cancer is, its treatment and side effects

Track 2 deals with the emotional impact of cancer and the importance of communication.

Track 3 gives you guidelines on nutrition and cancer treatment

Track 4 is about living positively with cancer

It is available countrywide and is free, although a donation would help to continue this invaluable programme.

Call 0800 22 66 22 toll-free.

Support our Thrift Shop

CANSA’s secondhand shop is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 9h00 to 12h00. Call in and browse around next time you visit Saxonwold.

Donations of books, CDs, clothing, furniture etc. are most welcome and will help us to continue our work.

This home accommodates cancer patients from out of town who need accommodation whilst undergoing treatment at different treatment centres. For information about our homes in your area contact CANSA on 011 646 5628

Other Services available at CANSA Johannesburg branch:

**Counselling Service**

Individual and family counselling provided by a registered social worker and trained volunteer caregivers.

**Nursing Advice**

**Loan Services**

Loan of wigs, prostheses and medical equipment such as wheelchairs, commodes, mattresses, etc. This service is offered on a donation basis.

**Stoma Clinic for Ostomates**

Held every Tuesday and Thursday from 9h00 to 12h00.

Ostomy care and advice given by stoma nursing sisters. We also sell a large range of stoma products including Conplast, Convatec, Hollister, Dansac and Ensure, at a reasonable price.

**Share and Care**

Every Wednesday from 10h30 to 12h00 at Johannesburg General Hospital, volunteers share valuable information regarding CANSA services and offer emotional support where necessary.

**Volunteer Workshop and Supervision**

Training is given to Volunteers twice a year and they meet every last Thursday in the month.

For these services and any other information contact CANSA, Johannesburg on 011 646 5628
The importance of CANSA regional and liaison committees

At a recent meeting of Gauteng staff and volunteers, Acting Provincial Manager for Gauteng, Mr Joel Perry, stressed the importance of these committees and urged members to get involved.

The aim is to have Liaison Committees in the following areas:
Fourways; Alexandra Township; Randburg; Fordsburg; Midrand; Sandton/Marlboro; Johannesburg CBD; Saxonwold

Don’t let this opportunity of making a positive difference in the lives of others less fortunate than you pass you by.

Thank you for caring enough to make a positive difference!

If you are able to help, please contact Ruth Jacobs, Project Facilitator, on 011 646-5628 or email: rjacobs@canسا.org.za

Plants can clear the air!

Certain houseplants can counteract the harmful chemicals emitted into the home environment by cleaning products, paint and tobacco smoke, according to American master gardener Barbara Michael in the Columbia Missourian newspaper.

The biggest offenders to health found in the home are benzene, formaldehyde, trichloroethylene and carbon monoxide.

Benzene, found in tobacco smoke, paint and some other materials, can be reduced with gerbera daisy, chrysanthemum, peace lily, bamboo palm, dracaena, English ivy and snake plant.

Formaldehyde, which can be found in items like permanent-pressed clothing, pressed wood furniture, certain paper products and even carpeting, can be reduced with bamboo palm, dracaena janet craig, dracaena marginata, snake plant, peace lily, spider plant, golden pathos and heartleaf philodendron. Formaldehyde can irritate asthma and create headaches. In addition, formaldehyde has been linked to certain kinds of cancers.

Trichloroethylene, another carcinogen, can be removed by adding gerbera daisy, chrysanthemum, dracaena marginata, peace lily, dracaena janet craig or bamboo palm to your house.

Carbon monoxide, which causes drowsiness and headaches, can be reduced with all of the plants mentioned above.

Most of the above are very low maintenance plants.

Wear a CANSA wristband – show you care!

Available from CANSA Saxonwold at R10 each

2007 Dates to diarise

April Oesophageal Health Awareness
April 6 CLEAVAGE DAY – enjoy a scrumptious breakfast at a News Cafe close to you and be served by beautiful models dressed in jeans and bras, while supporting CANSA!
April 7 World Health day Oesophageal Health Awareness
April 27 Link Group 18h30. Bev du Toit on Resillience
May 9 Reach for Recovery 14h00. Herbs by Sharon Baumgart
May 15 Link Group 18h30. Dr Judy Alter on Anger Management
May 31 World No Tobacco Day
June Men’s Health Awareness Campaign
Prostate & Testicular Cuppa for CANSA launch
June 19 Link Group 18h30 Dr Jonathan Marchand on Intergrative medicine and holistic healing
June 20 Reach for Recovery 14h00. Osteoporosis by Dr Stan Lipschitz
July Colorectal Health Awareness
August 1 - 7 Cancer Prevention Week
August 1 Reach for Recovery 14h00, at the military Museum-Dr Mseleke on Women’s wellness.
September 19 Reach for Recovery 14h00, Dr Norval on Reconstruction
September Women’s Health awarenness
Cervical cancer awareness month
September 26 CANSA National AGM
October International Breast Health Awareness Month
Women’s Health: Breast Health Awareness
Sanlam Golf Challenge finals
November Sunsmart awareness
November 8 National children’s day
November 28 Reach for Recovery Year-end Luncheon
December Sunsmart Awareness (Spot the Spot Clinics)
December 5 International volunteers day

Golf Shirts

Reach for Recovery have high quality embroidered golf shirts for sale
Contact Saxonwold office for details
011 646 5628

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NUTRITION & HEALING

Are your cells mutating?
By Dr Jonathan V Wright

When you hear about folic acid, it’s typically in regard to pregnancy and preventing birth defects. And while that is extremely important, I want to make sure that the rest of us don’t overlook its significance in our health and vitality as well.

Having adequate folic acid levels is crucial for everyone because it’s a key factor in normal cell division. And that means it helps prevent cancer from forming in your body. This is particularly true of cancers in the gastrointestinal tract, but it can also lower your risk of developing breast, pancreatic, cervical and lung cancers. And I have no doubt further research will add other cancers to this list.

If you don’t know what your folic acid levels are, it’s worth looking into. You can check your levels by getting a blood test called the neutrophilic hypersegmentation index. For decades it has been the best test of your personal folic acid status because it doesn’t compare you to other people like most lab tests do. Instead, it looks at your own body and determines if you have enough folic acid for all of your body’s cells.

Protect 100% of your cells

Neutrophils, other circulating blood cells, and the cells that line our gastrointestinal tracts are the most rapidly dividing cells in our bodies. So if there’s a shortage of any of the three key nutrients for keeping cell division normal - folic acid, vitamin B12 and zinc - these rapidly dividing cells are likely to show the effects first.

When neutrophils are born and ‘incubate’ in bone marrow, their chromosomes (or DNA) arrange themselves into five segments. After they mature, they rearrange themselves from five segments into three. Finally, the fully mature neutrophil is released from the bone marrow into the bloodstream.

But if there’s not enough folic acid, the neutrophil’s DNA stays in five segments instead of changing to three. Then, when it’s released into the bloodstream, it’s called a hyper-segmented neutrophil (meaning that it has too many segments).

The hypersegmentation index is the percentage of five-segment neutrophils counted in a total of 100 neutrophils. (Remember, a healthy neutrophil should have only three segments.) The neutrophilic hypersegmentation index is simple enough to be done by any laboratory with a microscope. After a blood sample is drawn, a technician uses a microscope to count the number of DNA segments in each neutrophil. But many don’t do it since it must be done by hand, and labs just don’t have the time – or so they say.

Many test reports say that it’s normal to have 0% to 10% hyper-segmented neutrophils - normal meaning the range that most people’s tests fall into. But since it’s designed to be a test of your individual folic acid supply, never mind anyone else! Ten percent isn’t nearly good enough. Your goal should be to have 0% hyper-segmented neutrophils. That would mean that 100% of your body cells were well supplied.

You can reach this goal if you use enough folic acid. Some people, though, would need to take extremely large doses, and not everyone is willing to take that much. So on the practical side of things, some of us do well to achieve 0% to 5%, even when we supplement with folic acid.

Personalised treatment to keep your cells in peak condition

If your test indicates a high percentage of hypersegmented neutrophils, then you need more folic acid. Your first step should be to add more sources of folic acid to your diet - green vegetables, beans, peas, brewer’s yeast and organic liver. It’s also important to take a folic acid supplement, at least until you get your test score down below 5%.

For many people, folic acid is harder to absorb than other essential nutrients, especially as we grow older. To make up for that, look for a source that’s highly absorbable or opt for a product containing a higher dose and take that until the test normalises, then taper back (although high doses of folic acid are harmless).

There are a few minimal risks you should be aware of. If you take Dilantin for seizures, it’s possible (although not certain) that taking more than 1 milligram (1,000 micrograms) of folic acid daily might raise your risk of seizures by making the Dilantin less effective. Conversely, Dilantin is well known to lower folic-acid absorption. You’ll definitely need to consult a physician skilled and knowledgeable in nutritional and natural medicine about this combination.

Secondly, it’s theoretically possible for a very high dose of folic acid (40 to 100 milligrams - not micrograms - daily) to interfere with zinc absorption. Aside from these two considerations, even high doses of folate don’t have any known hazards.

Their reasoning for limiting the doses is based on the fact that large doses of folic acid can potentially interfere with one type of test for vitamin B12 deficiency - regardless of the fact that there are other easily available tests for B12 deficiency that aren’t affected by larger doses of folic acid. But instead of encouraging medical schools to educate physicians, the government decided to regulate folic acid doses to minimal dose. And now you’re paying the price - literally.

It’s perfectly safe to take the doses I recommended, but if you choose a formula other than the high-dose ones mentioned above, it may mean you’ll have to buy folic acid supplements more frequently and take a larger number of capsules every day.

Article provided by Nutrition & Healing.

For more information about Dr Wright’s Nutrition & Healing, please contact 011 699 6534, and quote the reference NHR-CANSA.

Readers are advised to consult a medical professional before changing their diets or trying any treatment mentioned in the article. This is because everyone is different and may have special needs according to their individual conditions – and need to be examined before changing diets/medication.

WIN! COMPETITION! WIN!

Win a copy of HOW TO FIGHT CANCER AND WIN by Dr William Fischer

In this book, you’ll meet real people like you who were diagnosed with cancer, for which conventional treatments were not successful. They turned their backs on modern medicine and miraculously beat the odds by natural means! William Fischer studied these methods and revealed them in his book so that others may be spared the horrors of cancer.

To stand a chance to win one of 10 copies of this book, please phone 011 699 6534/6550 and quote the code HTF-CANSA. Competition closes on 30th April 2007 and winners will be contacted via email or telephonically on the 2nd May 2007.
Help Defeat Cancer!

BM Help Defeat Cancer was the third project to use the enormous computational power offered by World Community Grid, the world’s largest humanitarian grid housing a virtual supercomputer. Through World Community Grid anyone can donate idle and unused time from their computer by downloading World Community Grid’s free software and registering at www.worldcommunitygrid.org. Fast, easy, safe and secure, hundreds of thousands of individuals are now volunteering the power of their computers to advance research through World Community Grid. Computers running Windows, Linux or Mac operating systems can all participate in World Community Grid.

The Lance Armstrong Foundation is a World Community Grid partner. They supported this initiative by installing the software on all Foundation computers. The Help Defeat Cancer project was designed to help researchers understand the underlying mechanisms of cancer in order to improve treatment and therapy planning for cancer patients. The Help Defeat Cancer (HDC) project has now finished. The last work units have been sent out and when the final results are returned, the project will come to an end. This project, which launched on July 20, 2006, will have run for just over 9 months by the time the last results are returned. During this time 88,000 members will have donated 2,900 years of computer time on 138,000 different computers. This is a significant contribution to cancer research. But the end of this project is really only a beginning. Based on the results, the researchers who are working on this project have a very aggressive plan to make Tissue Microarray technology an integral part of early cancer detection. World Community Grid’s team will keep in close touch with the research team and will post updates on the website in the Research pages. The researchers will also continue to update their HDC website with exciting updates about this project and the inroads it is making on cancer research.

Researchers believe the speed and sophistication of World Community Grid could make it possible to detect and track subtle changes in measurable parameters that could facilitate the discovery of prognosis clues, which are not apparent by human inspection or traditional analysis alone. Researchers have already created a web-based, robotic prototype to automatically image, analyze, archive and share tissue microarrays.

World Community Grid has started work on a new cancer project to discover ways to accelerate the crystallization process used in studying cancer protein structure using X-ray Crystallography, which will help researchers identify proteins involved in cancers and lead to new drug therapies and cures. They plan to launch this new cancer project in the May/June 2007 time frame.

Help is still needed with other ongoing projects! World Community Grid continues to run the FightAIDS@Home, Genome Comparison, Help Cure Muscular Dystrophy and Human Proteome Folding - Phase II projects. These critical research projects need your computer time as well.

We encourage everyone with a computer to assist in this critical work. Together, we can make a tremendous difference to people affected by these diseases. Just go to www.worldcommunitygrid.org and download the small software needed - it takes very little time and space.

INDIGENOUS HERBS

**Mentha longifolia**

*Wild mint, Horse mint, Balderjan, Kruisement (Afr), Koenya-thaba (Sotho), Lomhlange (Zulu)*

**Family: Lamiaceae**

Mentha is Latin for mint and longifolia means long leaves.

The name Mentha comes from “Minthe”, a charming nymph in classic Greek mythology who was much adored by Pluto. This so angered Pluto’s wife Prosperine, that she took her revenge by transforming Minthes into the humble mint plant we now call Mentha.

In ancient Greece, mint leaves were crushed and rubbed on the table to show hospitality to visitors.

Cultivation: Mint is easy to grow in semi-shade and full sun. They are heavy feeders and loves water. To encourage new fresh growth, mint should be cut back often. They are invasive and need to be curtailed.

Division can be easily carried out at almost any time of the year, though it is probably best done in the spring or autumn to allow the plant to establish more quickly.

Medicinal uses: The leaves and flowering stems are anti-asthmatic, antispasmodic, carminative and stimulant. A tea made from the leaves has been used in the treatment of fevers, headaches, digestive disorders and various minor ailments. The leaves are harvested as the plant comes into flower and can be dried for later use.

Traditional uses: The Zulu used infusions from roots, stems and leaves internally or as enemas against colds. The Xhosa used milk or water decoctions for coughs, colds, asthma and other bronchial ailments. The Sotho sometimes placed plants under beds to facilitate breathing in patients with respiratory ailments.

Culinary use: Use in the same way as spearmint and peppermint. Can be taken warm as a tea or cold as a refreshing drink.

Other uses: The flowers are very attractive to bees and butterflies. A good companion plant for growing near cabbages and tomatoes, helping to keep them free of insect pests.

Rats and mice intensely dislike the smell of mint. It therefore can be used as a strewing herb in homes and spread in granaries to keep the rodents off the grain.

Cautions: Like other members of the genus, it is best not used by pregnant women as it is a uterine stimulant.

**Comfrey Oil**

This is a useful oil to keep in the home. It can be used for sprains, aches, clean cuts, bruises and minor burns.

Pack fresh, roughly chopped comfrey leaves into a clean wide neck jar. Pour a cold pressed vegetable oil over the herb until the jar is full. Seal and shake well.

Store the jar in a warm place for 4-6 weeks and strain.

*(Reprinted by courtesy of Barefoot Herbs (www.barefootherbs.co.za)*