

## *Sylvester News*

❖ **Dr. Mark S. Soloway**, Professor and Chairman Emeritus, Department of Urology and his associates at the Miller School of Medicine, mailed a survey questionnaire to 185 men enrolled in active surveillance (AS) at their university-based urologic oncology practice. The questionnaire asked whether the men had been offered AS as an alternative to primary treatment by the urologist who initially diagnosed their cancer, and what other factors contributed to their decision.

Of the 105 men who responded, physician influence was most frequently cited (73.3%). Confidence that they could still be cured if their cancer progressed (60%) was next, followed by concerns about incontinence (47.6%) and erectile dysfunction (43.5%).

Dr. Soloway pointed out that although 38 of the 105 men, (36%) met his group's strict criteria for active surveillance, a high proportion were not offered AS as an alternative to initial treatment by the urologist who made the initial diagnosis, despite guidelines and evidence supporting AS for low-risk prostate cancer. "Yet the reason to choose initial AS," Dr. Soloway said, "was related to the discussion with their doctor, indicating this is a reasonable initial alternative." Men on AS should be biopsied annually during the initial two to three years to ensure that the estimated tumor volume and grade are accurate, he said.

❖ On February 3rd, the Miami Dolphins presented Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center with a check for an impressive \$533,106 - the proceeds from the inaugural Dolphins Cycling Challenge. The two-day, 170-mile ride was coordinated by the Miami Dolphins Foundation and took place last November.

More than 315 riders took part in the tri-county Challenge, which Dean Goldschmidt called one of the most successful first-year fundraising events in Sylvester's history. Goldschmidt, who rode in the event, commented on the importance of the event in the fight against cancer. "As a National Cancer Institute-funded investigator, I can tell you that getting money for research is crucial toward finding a cure," Goldschmidt said. "The success of this event is symbolic of the successes we're experiencing at Sylvester."

Sylvester's Chief Medical Officer, W. Jarrard Goodwin, M.D., who also rode in the Challenge, noted his sense of pride knowing that the course he was traveling - through Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties - included the same areas served by Sylvester. Some 45 percent of Sylvester patients are from Broward and Palm Beach counties, Goodwin said.

## *UHealth / Miller News*

❖ In Florida and around the world, dentists are extracting baby teeth, wisdom teeth and even healthy adult teeth. Researchers are then spinning out their stem cells and sending them to a company that freezes and stores them for later use to regrow lost teeth, and someday even repair damaged bones, hearts, pancreases, muscles and brains. Oral surgeons must extract baby teeth before they fall out naturally so they have a blood supply to keep them healthy. The process is expensive (\$590 up front plus \$100 a year to store the stem cells for as many as four teeth for as long as 20 years), and the first FDA-approved practical use of such stem cells is years away.

**Dr. Joshua Hare**, director of the Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Institute at the Miller School of Medicine, who is not involved with dental stem cells, noted, "We get them from bone marrow; others use umbilical cord blood. It seems teeth are also a good source."

❖ Strokes are rising dramatically among young and middle-aged Americans. The sharpest increase - 51 percent - was among men 15 through 34. Strokes rose among women in this age group, too, but not as fast - 17 percent. "We have worried for a while that the increased prevalence of obesity in children and young adults may take its toll in cardiovascular disease and stroke," and that appears to be happening, said **Dr. Ralph Sacco**, American Heart Association president and a neurologist at the Miller School of Medicine.

❖ Jorge Valdez, a 20-year-old Miami state champion gymnast was practicing a double flip when he landed squarely on his head. The resulting bilateral dislocation of two vertebrae led to near complete motor and sensory failure. Remarkably, within a week, Valdez walked out of Jackson Memorial Hospital and, his doctors say, won't need rehabilitation.

Neurosurgeon **Dr. Steven Vanni**, from the Department of Neurological Surgery at the Miller School of Medicine, who treated Valdez, credits his unusual outcome to hypothermic treatment, a relatively new procedure that uses cold to reduce swelling and inflammation in victims of severe trauma. Valdez was taken immediately to the operating room and started on a hypothermia protocol to cool his body down to 92.3 degrees Fahrenheit. The cooling process reduces the amount of swelling and inflammation on the spinal cord to help prevent further damage and paralysis. Valdez was kept cooled for 48 hours after the injury, and slowly warmed before the surgery on his vertebrae, which took about two hours.

❖ A new study by University of Miami Miller School of Medicine researchers and their collaborators at the Florida Heart Research Institute and the Agatston Research Institute has shown for the first time that exercise without the appropriate dietary intervention did not prove beneficial.

❖ **Dr. Raymond J. Leveillee**, professor of urology and chief of the Division of Endourology and Laparoscopy, performed the first single-incision nephrectomy using the SPIDER® system in South Florida. Dr. Leveillee is one of only three surgeons in the world to use this device to remove a kidney.

SPIDER® works by providing surgeons with multiple instrument channels through one small incision, usually located near the patient's belly button. The system opens up umbrella-like within the abdomen, providing the surgeon with two flexible channels for right- and left-hand instruments with 360-degree range of motion, and two rigid channels for small cameras and other instruments. Once the procedure is completed, the SPIDER Surgical System closes up and is removed through the same incision.

## *Cancer News*

❖ Japanese researchers reported on a study designed to determine whether odor can become an effective tool in colorectal cancer screening. They used a specially-trained Labrador Retriever, who could already detect 12 types of cancer in patients' breath samples.

The dog was able to distinguish cancerous samples from noncancerous samples in 33 of 36 breath and 37 of 38 stool tests. "Moreover, canine scent judgment even appeared to be highly accurate for early-stage colorectal cancer," the lead investigator said.

In contrast, fecal occult blood screening -- a simple, non-invasive test for colon cancer -- picks up early-stage disease in only one out of 10 cases. Based on their findings, the researchers say the canine's evaluation of breath samples was accurate 95 percent of the time and her stool sample evaluation was accurate 98 percent of the time. The next step is to identify the cancer-specific organic compounds detected by dogs and to develop an early cancer detection sensor that can be substituted for a dog's judgment.

❖ Researchers at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute reported that prostate tumors that carry a "signature" of four molecular markers have the potential to become dangerously metastatic if not treated aggressively. The discovery lays the groundwork for the first gene-based test for determining whether a man's prostate cancer is likely to remain dormant within the prostate gland, or spread lethally to other parts of the body.

The standard measure of prostate cancer's aggressiveness, known as the Gleason score (which is based on cancer cells' appearance under a microscope), is accurate about 60 to 70 percent of the time, depending on the skill of the pathologist. The four-gene signature method alone was accurate 83 percent of the time. Combining the markers and Gleason methods produced an accuracy of approximately 90 percent.

❖ Researchers analyzed the medical records and cancer registry data of 721 presumed early-stage ovarian cancer patients in California and New York and found that only 72 percent had lymph nodes from the pelvis and abdomen tested for signs of cancer spread. The five-year survival rate was 84 percent for patients who had lymph node biopsies and 69 percent for those who did not have the biopsies.

The study also found that gynecologic oncologists were nearly 6.5 times more likely to perform lymph node biopsies than other surgical specialists, and nearly four times more likely to perform all recommended staging biopsies. Study authors added that unless a patient is clearly medically unsuited for the lifesaving biopsies, they should be done.

❖ The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved the first X-ray mammography device that can provide 2-D and 3-D X-ray images of the breast for cancer screening and diagnosis. In two FDA-reviewed studies, board-certified radiologists examined two-dimensional and three-dimensional images from more than 300 mammography exams. In both studies, viewing the 2-D and 3-D images produced a 7% improvement in the radiologist's ability to distinguish between cancerous and noncancerous cases, compared to viewing 2-D images alone, the FDA said. According to the NCI, there is a 98 percent survival rate when breast cancer is detected early and still localized to the breast.

❖ Scientists who looked at all the available evidence found there was no link between the amount of vitamin D in men's blood and the risk of prostate cancer.

❖ The latest research, conducted in the state of Florida, indicates that although the rate of surgical biopsies should hover around 10%, between 2003 and 2008 the more invasive procedure accounted for 30% of the breast biopsies. That translates to more than 300,000 women a year having surgery they do not need, especially since 80 percent of breast biopsies are benign. Since the Florida statistics likely mirror the rest of the country, the report estimated that \$37.2 million in health care expenditures could be saved if needle biopsies were always the procedure of choice.

## *Other News*

❖ A large international trial finds that the Gardasil vaccine shields young men from human papillomavirus (HPV) as well as it protects young women. HPV is the leading cause of cervical cancer in women, but also has been linked to penile cancer and other malignancies in men.

❖ Studies have shown that cocoa, the main ingredient in chocolate, appears to reduce the risk of heart disease. Credit for its heart-healthy effects goes to a group of antioxidant compounds in cocoa – called polyphenols – that are particularly abundant in dark chocolate and that increase production of a protein that is the major component of "good" cholesterol, while decreasing the main component of "bad" cholesterol, in both the liver and intestine.

❖ A review of data from 15 trials found that zinc -- taken as syrup, lozenges or tablets within 24 hours of cold symptom onset -- did reduce the duration and severity of illness. And by a week after onset, more people who took zinc said their cold had resolved than those who had not.

❖ By analyzing patterns in the brain's electrical activity, researchers say they've been able to assess autism risk in children as young as 6 months of age. Prior research has shown that about 20 percent of siblings of children with autism will also develop autism and another 40 to 50 percent will have some characteristics of the disorder, such as repetitive behaviors or problems with social interaction, language or communication, but not the

full-blown disorder. Researchers hope that earlier assessment will lead to earlier intervention and more successful outcomes.

❖ Canadian researchers found that endurance exercise offered protection against premature aging in mice genetically engineered to age faster than normal. Mice, who ran on a treadmill three times a week for five months looked as young as regular mice, while those who didn't exercise were graying, balding, socially isolated and less fertile, said the Canadian researchers. "Exercise truly is the fountain of youth," said the lead author.

---

All Information published in The Pap Corps FYI issues is excerpted from communications  
furnished by

Lisa Worley, Director of Media Relations  
Office of Communications, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

\* \* \*

Ann Brown Stern, VP Education  
[education@papcorps.org](mailto:education@papcorps.org)