

VOL. 1

EDITION 5

MAY • 2024

Health pulse magazine

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HEALTH COMMUNITY
OF WEST AFRICA

HCOWA: Advancing Healthcare Standards in West Africa

HCOWA, the Health Community of West Africa, is a dynamic organization dedicated to promoting healthcare standards and enhancing access to quality medical services across the sub-region. With a commitment to improving the health and well-being of communities in West Africa, HCOWA serves as a catalyst for transformative change in the healthcare sector.

Our primary focus lies in industry brand promotion, supply and demand linkage, investment and trade policy alignment, and industrial cooperation guidance. Through strategic partnerships and collaborations, we facilitate the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and resources to drive innovation and sustainable development in the medical industry.

At HCOWA, we recognize the importance of academic exchange promotion and other key areas in shaping the future of healthcare in West Africa. Through a blend of online and offline initiatives, we foster dia-

logue, facilitate networking opportunities, and explore avenues for cooperation between China and West Africa in the medical sector.

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We remain steadfast: to be at the forefront of healthcare transformation in West Africa, driving positive change and making a meaningful impact on the lives of millions.

Join us in our mission to advance healthcare standards, foster innovation, and build a healthier future for West Africa. Together, we can create a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

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 Editorial

In a world where cannabis addiction remains a significant challenge with no definitive cure, Professor Pier-Vincenzo Piazza, a renowned psychiatrist and neurobiologist, brings a beacon of hope.

A winner of the prestigious Inserm Grand Prix, Professor Piazza has dedicated over a decade to developing a groundbreaking medication to precisely target and treat cannabis addiction. This promising candidate is known as AEF0117.

The journey to create AEF0117 revolves around targeting the brain's CB1 receptor. This receptor plays a crucial role in the effects of cannabis, particularly its psychoactive component, THC, which hyperactivates the CB1 receptor and leads to addiction. By focusing on this receptor, Professor Piazza and his team have made significant strides in addressing the core mechanism of cannabis dependence.

AEF0117 operates by modulating the CB1 receptor's activity. When taken as a capsule once daily, the medication aims to normalize the receptor's function, thereby reducing the addictive properties of THC. This precise approach not only targets the root cause of addiction but also minimizes the potential for side effects that often accompany broader treatment methods.

The implications of AEF0117 are profound. If successful, this medication could revolutionize the treatment landscape for cannabis addiction, offering a reliable solution for individuals struggling to overcome their dependence. Given the increasing prevalence of cannabis use and the associated health risks, the development of such a targeted treatment is both timely and essential.

Currently, AEF0117 is progressing through the stages of clinical investigation. Professor Piazza's team is meticulously conducting trials to ensure the medication's efficacy and safety. The early results have been promising, generating cautious optimism among researchers and healthcare professionals.

A New Era in Addiction Therapy:

The Promise of AEF0117 for Cannabis Users

By Yosua Domedjui,

In a recent conversation, Professor Piazza emphasized the importance of this research. "Cannabis addiction is a growing concern, and the need for effective treatment is more urgent than ever. AEF0117 represents a significant step forward in our understanding and ability to combat this addiction," he stated.

The development of AEF0117 is a testament to the relentless pursuit of solutions in the field of addiction treatment. As clinical trials continue, the hope is that this medication will soon become a vital tool in helping individuals break free from the grip of cannabis addiction, offering them a chance at a healthier, addiction-free life.



The Oesophagus:

An Inconspicuous Yet Essential Organ

By Pavel Chamabe

The pancreas, a vital organ tucked away behind the stomach, is often overlooked until it encounters trouble. Yet, this unassuming gland plays a crucial role in maintaining our health and well-being.

The esophagus is composed of different layers. The mucosa, the innermost layer, is made up of epithelial cells that protect the esophagus from food particles and stomach acids. The muscle layers beneath it plays a crucial role in moving food. These muscles contract in sequence in a mechanism known as peristalsis, which allows food to descend to the stomach.

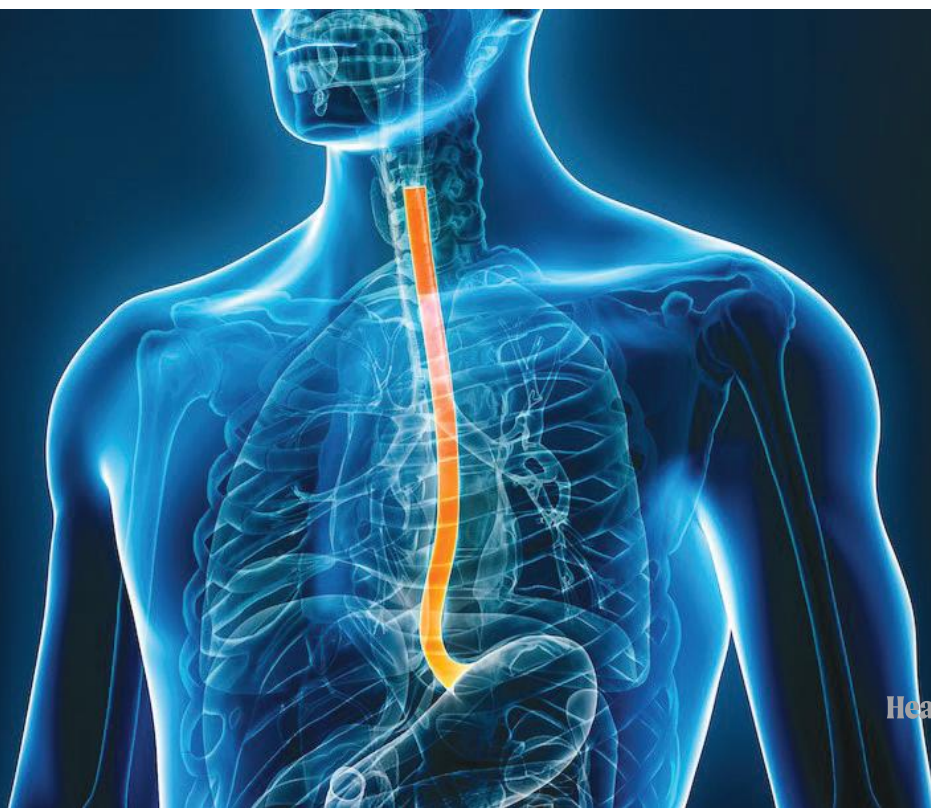
Two main sphincters support the function of the esophagus. The esophagus and the pharynx are connected by the upper esophageal

sphincter, which prevents air from entering the digestive tract during breathing. At the junction with the stomach, the lower esophageal sphincter prevents stomach acids from refluxing into the esophagus, protecting the mucosa from acid erosion.

The esophagus is susceptible to various disorders. The most common cases are gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), which manifests as the backflow of stomach acids into the esophagus, causing heartburn and inflammation. Achalasia, a disorder of esophageal motility, where the muscles of the esophagus do not function prop-

erly, causes swallowing difficulties. Esophageal cancers, although less common, pose a serious health threat and require urgent medical attention.

To maintain esophageal health, it is essential to follow a balanced diet, limit spicy and acidic foods, and refrain from tobacco and alcohol. By understanding and taking care of this essential organ, we can not only improve our digestive well-being but also prevent potentially severe diseases. Despite its discreet nature, the esophagus plays a crucial role in our daily well-being.



Using Technology

to improve care and access.

By Chance Iradukunda

Technology has changed almost every area of our lives in the digital age, including how we obtain and use healthcare. The digital landscape provides a plethora of tools and resources to assist people in taking charge of their health, ranging from wearable technology and online patient portals to telemedicine and health apps.

Effectively navigating this digital healthcare environment can benefit patients by increasing access, improving results, and giving them a more tailored experience. In the digital age, people can use the following technology to navigate healthcare:

Telemedicine: Using encrypted messaging apps, phone calls, or video conferences, patients can communicate virtually with medical professionals. Thanks to technology, people may now receive care from the comfort of their homes, eliminating obstacles like distance and transportation. Whether it's a standard examination, a follow-up visit, or a meeting with a specialist, telehealth ensures prompt access to medical services while providing convenience and flexibility.

Health applications and Wearable Devices: People are now better equipped to monitor and take charge of their health, thanks to the widespread use of wearable technology and health applications. These digital gadgets, which range from symptom trackers and medication reminders to fitness trackers and calorie counters, enable users to keep an eye on a variety of health-related issues in real time.





Through the collection and analysis of data, such as heart rate, sleep patterns, and physical activity levels, people can acquire a better understanding of their health and make well-informed decisions on treatment options and lifestyle choices.

Online patient portals: A lot of healthcare providers currently provide patients with secure online

access to their test results, medical data, and appointment calendars. In addition to facilitating contact between patients and healthcare providers, these portals make it easy for people to ask inquiries, obtain prescription refills, and get critical information.

Online patient portals encourage openness, cooperation, and continuity of care by enabling patients to take a more active role in their care. Medical professionals need to use technology in the digital age to provide better treatment and access and to connect with physicians more effectively.



New Hope for Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Patients

By Pavel Chamabe

Forecast from the World Health Organization (WHO) predict a 77% increase in cancer cases by 2050, doctors are racing against time to improve patient care and survival rates. The Institut Curie presented a promising study at the ASCO conference. This study could change how patients with triple-negative breast cancer, an aggressive and difficult-to-treat type due to frequent recurrences, are managed by enabling early detection of relapses.

Currently, there is no systematic follow-up to detect potential recurrences after triple-negative breast cancer. Doctors see the patients in consultation, but they undergo no specific medical examinations. Scans are only prescribed if symptoms appear to confirm a recurrence. To address this, the Institut Curie is conducting a study to evaluate if a follow-up based on a simple blood test could increase patients' life expectancy.

"The idea is to use the blood test to detect what we call circulating tumor DNA, small DNA molecules released into the blood by the cancer, which would indicate a possible relapse. This would then justify conducting radiological exams to search for the recurrence," explains oncologist François Clément Bidard.

It is essential to start treatments while the likelihood of relapse is still low. 450 patients are involved in this study. The first results, expected in 2027, could revolutionize treatment and save thousands of lives each year.



Why Not Yoga?

Importance Of Yoga To Feminine Health

By Pavel Chamabe

Yoga is an ancient and complex practice that began as a spiritual activity but has now become popular as a way of promoting physical and mental well-being. The practice is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science that focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body.

Even though yoga is practiced by both males and females across the globe, research shows the practice has proven over time to be significantly beneficial to women due to the following:

Fertility Support: Several yoga poses improve blood flow to the reproductive organs and lower stress levels, which may help fertility. Other poses concentrate on the pelvic floor health and stimulate reproductive organs.

practiced by both males and the globe, research shows proven over time to be significantly beneficial to women due to the following:

Several yoga poses improve productive organs and lower stress levels, which may help fertility. Other poses concentrate on the pelvic floor health and stimulate reproductive organs.

Menstrual Health: Some yoga poses have been reported to help ease menstruation pain by releasing pelvic tension and encouraging relaxation. Furthermore, the stress-relieving properties of yoga may aid in the management of premenstrual syndrome symptoms.

Prenatal and Postnatal Health: Prenatal yoga classes encourage relaxation, strength, and flexibility throughout pregnancy through gentle stretches and breathing exercises specifically designed for expectant mothers. Yoga for new mothers can help them relax, regain strength, and strengthen their connection with their babies.

Mood Enhancement: Studies have indicated that regular yoga practice may be useful in lowering symptoms of depression and mood disorders. It has also been associated with enhanced mood and concentration.

Hormonal Balance: It is thought that particular yoga poses and sequences stimulate the endocrine system, which aids in hormone regulation and may lessen menstrual irregularities and menopause symptoms.

Sleep Quality: By calming the nervous system and relaxing the body before bed, yoga can improve both the quality and duration of sleep.

Aside from the above, yoga offers a host of physical and mental health benefits for people of all ages. The next time you think about improving your health and general well-being, consider this phrase: 'Why not yoga?'



Salmonella disease:

Know and Prevent

By Yosua Domedjui

Salmonella is a type of bacteria that commonly causes foodborne illnesses worldwide. These bacteria reside in the intestines of humans and animals, including birds, and can lead to a condition known as salmonellosis. The two main species that cause illness in humans are *Salmonella enterica* and *Salmonella bongori*.

Transmission and Sources

Salmonella infections typically occur through the consumption of contaminated food or water. Common sources of infection include: Raw or undercooked meat, poultry, and eggs, Unpasteurized milk and dairy products, Contaminated fruits and vegetables

Unsafe drinking water

In addition to foodborne transmission, direct contact with infected animals or their environments, especially reptiles and birds, can also spread Salmonella.

Symptoms and Risk Groups

Symptoms of salmonellosis usually appear within 6 hours to 6 days after infection and can last from 4 to 7 days. These symptoms include: Diarrhea, Fever, Abdominal cramps, Nausea, Vomiting

While most healthy individuals recover without specific treatment, certain groups are at a higher risk for severe illness. These include infants and young children, elderly individuals, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. In severe cases, the infection can spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and other body sites, which can be life-threatening if not promptly treated.



Diagnosis and Treatment

Salmonella infection is diagnosed through laboratory tests that detect the bacteria in stool samples. Most cases of salmonellosis do not require specific treatment beyond staying hydrated. However, severe cases may necessitate antibiotics. It is important to use antibiotics responsibly to prevent the development of antibiotic-resistant strains of Salmonella.



“Mental Illnesses Are Due to a Weakness of Character”

By Pavel Chamabe

In contrast to popular belief, mental health disorders are not the consequence of character flaws or a lack of willpower. The medical problems in question are intricate and arise from a confluence of biological, psychological, and environmental variables. In order to comprehend this myth and the reality of mental diseases, keep in mind these important points:

Biological Factors

- 1. Genetics:** A genetic component is present in many mental diseases, including bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and depression. An increased risk of developing these illnesses is seen in those with a family history of them.
- 2. Brain Chemistry:** A major factor in mental diseases is an imbalance in neurotransmitters, which are the chemicals in the brain that carry signals. For instance, depression is linked to aberrant serotonin levels.
- 3. Brain Structure and Function:** Mental diseases may be exacerbated by abnormalities in the structure or function of the brain. Studies indicate that individuals with mental diseases may have distinct functional patterns in specific brain regions.

Psychological Factors

- 1. Trauma and Life Experiences:** Mental problems can be brought on by or made worse by traumatic experiences such as abuse, neglect, or exceptionally stressful situations.
- 2. Stress:** Mental diseases may arise as a result of prolonged or severe stress. For example, a high level of stress at work may raise your risk of anxiety and depression.
- 3. Coping Skills:** It is not a sign of weakness, but a person's capacity to cope with stress and life's challenges might affect their vulnerability to mental diseases. Therapeutic approaches can support the development of these abilities.

Environmental Factors

1. Socioeconomic Context: Major risk factors for mental disorders include low socioeconomic position, unemployment, and poverty. Unfavourable living circumstances exacerbate stress and restrict access to supports for mental health.

2. Lack of Social Support: Isolation and the absence of intimate relationships are two examples of how a lack of social support can make mental health symptoms worse.

3. Physical Environment: Exposure to hazardous or violent situations can raise the chance of mental illness development. Importance of Awareness and Understanding

Stigma: This misconception feeds into the stigmatization of those who suffer from mental illnesses, which frequently keeps them from getting the care they require.

Therapy: A combination of counselling, medicine, and social support can be used to successfully treat mental diseases. Psychosocial therapies, psychiatric drugs, and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) are useful therapeutic modalities.

Education: It is essential to lessen stigma and motivate people to seek the right care by educating the public about the true causes of mental diseases and advocating an informed, compassionate attitude.

In conclusion, mental disorders are legitimate medical problems that are intricate and multifaceted. It is untrue and detrimental to individuals who experience them to minimize them to a question of character or willpower.

The Skin-Stress Connection:

How Tension Affects Your Complexion

By Chance Iradukunda

Stress can wreak havoc on our overall health, and our skin is no exception. When we're stressed, our body's "fight or flight" response triggers the release of hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. These hormones can lead to a range of skin issues, from acne and rosacea to premature aging and eczema.

Stress causes inflammation in the body, which can lead to skin inflammation, resulting in redness, irritation, and breakouts. Additionally, stress can disrupt the skin's natural barrier function, making it more vulnerable to environmental stressors and irritants.

Moreover, stress can lead to skin habits like scratching, picking, and rubbing, which can further exacerbate skin issues. Stress can also affect our skin care routine, leading to neglect or over-indulgence in unhealthy habits like smoking or excessive alcohol consumption.

The good news is that managing stress can have a positive impact on our skin health. Practicing stress-reducing techniques like meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises can help regulate hormones and reduce inflammation. A healthy diet rich in antioxidants, ome-

ga-3 fatty acids, and vitamins C and E can also support skin health.

To manage stress for a clearer complexion, prioritize self-care and stress-reducing activities like meditation, yoga, and deep breathing exercises.

Get enough sleep (7-8 hours) and stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Eat a balanced diet

rich in antioxidants, omega-3s, and vitamins C and E, and take breaks to engage in activities that bring you joy.

Practice good skin care by sticking to a consistent routine, using gentle products, and protecting your skin from the sun. Finally, seek support from friends, family, or a mental health professional if needed, and consider stress-reducing supplements like ashwagandha, vitamin B, or omega-3s after consulting a healthcare professional. By managing stress and prioritizing self-care, you can help reduce inflammation and promote a clearer, healthier complexion.

By identifying the skin-stress connection, we can take steps to mitigate the negative effects and cultivate a healthier, more radiant complexion. Remember, a clear mind and body are reflected in glowing, healthy skin.





Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

By Yosua Domedjui

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a serious respiratory condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It is characterized by persistent and progressive airway obstruction, making breathing difficult. COPD includes conditions such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema and is a major cause of morbidity and mortality.

Causes and Risk Factors

The primary cause of COPD is smoking. Approximately 85 to 90% of COPD cases are attributed to cigarette smoke exposure. Other risk factors include long-term exposure to air pollutants, industrial dust, and chemical fumes. Frequent respiratory infections during childhood and a genetic predisposition can also contribute to the development of COPD.

Symptoms

COPD symptoms develop slowly and can worsen over time. Common signs include a chronic cough, often accompanied by mucus production (sputum), shortness of breath (dyspnea), wheezing, and a feeling of tightness in the chest. As the disease progresses, daily activities become

increasingly difficult, and exacerbations, or acute flare-ups of symptoms, become more frequent.

Diagnosis

Diagnosing COPD involves a combination of tests and clinical examinations. Spirometry is the gold standard test to measure lung function and confirm the diagnosis. Other tests, such as chest X-rays and arterial blood gas analysis, may be used to assess the severity of the disease and rule out other conditions.

Treatments

While there is no cure for COPD, various treatments can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life. Quitting smoking is crucial to slowing the disease's progression. Bronchodilators, administered via inhalers, are often prescribed to open the airways. Corticosteroids can reduce inflammation, and antibiotics are used to treat infections. In severe cases, oxygen therapy and pulmonary rehabilitation may be necessary. Vaccination against influenza and pneumococcal infections is also recommended to prevent respiratory infections.

Conclusion

COPD is a debilitating chronic disease, but with proper management, patients can live longer and enjoy a better quality of life. Prevention, particularly by avoiding tobacco and pollutants, remains key to reducing the incidence of this debilitating condition.



Pulsating with Health and Wellness

 Health & Technology

Patient Monitor

By Mavis Essaba Mensah

In the hectic environment of healthcare, the professional health monitor serves as a discreet yet vital guardian, akin to a loyal friend, meticulously observing vital signs, ensuring orderliness, and promptly alerting to any signs of distress.

Take the example of a hospital, surrounded by sounds and activities. During your recovery, the patient medical monitor is by your side, tracking your heart rate, breathing, and much more. It ensures constant attention, providing peace of mind to you and your medical team.

However, the patient medical monitor is not limited to passive observation. No, it plays a critical role in your health journey. When things go awry, it sends alerts, indicating to healthcare professionals that it's time to intervene. Responses are swift and efficient thanks to it, ensuring your safety and well-being.

And that's not all - the patient medical monitor is also a discreet teacher. By recording and storing



your physiological data, it offers valuable insights into your health over time. This provides a better understanding of your condition to your medical team and allows for adjustments in care accordingly, ensuring you receive tailored and attentive treatment.

Of course, there are obstacles to overcome. Sometimes, the monitor's notifications can seem overwhelming, adding extra stress to an already tense mo-

ment. However, this is a small disturbance compared to the peace it provides by protecting you.

Ultimately, the patient monitor goes beyond being a mere device - it is a trusted partner in your health journey. By staying constantly vigilant and committed to ensuring your well-being, it represents the best of contemporary medical technology, offering essential support to all who need it.



Eat Green: The Vital Role of Vegetables in Your Everyday Diet

Why everybody must include more vegetables in daily diet

By Chance Iradukunda

A plant-based diet is essential for maintaining good health, as it provides essential nutrients, fiber, and antioxidants. Consume a variety of colorful vegetables daily, including leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables, and root vegetables, and aim for 5 servings daily.

Spinach and tomatoes are a nutrient-dense duo that offers numerous health benefits when consumed together. Spinach provides a rich source of iron, calcium, and vitamins A and K, while tomatoes are high in vitamin C, lycopene, and potassium. This combination helps to boost the immune system, support healthy bones and eyes, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, and cognitive decline. The fiber content in both foods supports healthy digestion and satiety, making them a nutritious and filling addition to a balanced diet

Here is a short recipe for tomatoes stew with spinach:

Ingredients

- 2 diced tomatoes
- 1 bunch fresh spinach, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Preparation

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat.
2. Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute.
3. Add chopped tomatoes, salt and pepper, Stir well.
4. Reduce heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes.
5. Stir in chopped spinach and cook until wilted.
6. Serve hot, garnished with a sprinkle of paprika and crusty bread on the side.

By Chance Iradukunda





Effective Stress Management

By Yosua Domedjui



Consume plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats into your meals. Avoid excessive caffeine, sugar, and processed foods, which can contribute to stress and anxiety.

Get Adequate Sleep

Quality sleep is essential for stress management and overall wellness. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Establish a regular sleep routine, create a calming bedtime environment, and avoid screens before bed to improve sleep quality.

Connect with Others

Strong social connections can provide emotional support and help buffer against stress. Spend time with family and friends, join clubs or groups with similar interests, and don't hesitate to seek support from a mental health professional when needed.

Practice Time Management

Effective time management can reduce stress by helping you feel more in control of your day. Prioritize tasks, break them into manageable steps, and set realistic goals. Avoid overcommitting and learn to say no when necessary.

Engage in Relaxation Techniques

Incorporate relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, or aromatherapy into your daily routine. These practices can help calm the mind and reduce physical symptoms of stress.

Conclusion

Managing stress is essential for maintaining wellness and overall health. By incorporating mindfulness, regular exercise, a healthy diet, adequate sleep, social connections, effective time management, and relaxation techniques into your life, you can effectively reduce stress and enhance your well-being. Prioritize these strategies to create a good health.

Mindfulness and meditation are powerful tools for stress management. These practices involve focusing on the present moment and observing thoughts and feelings without judgment. Regular mindfulness practice can help reduce anxiety and improve emotional well-being. Start with a few minutes of meditation each day and gradually increase the duration.

Stay Physically Active

Regular physical activity is one of the most effective ways to combat stress. Exercise releases endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. Whether it's walking, running, yoga, or any other form of exercise, staying active helps clear the mind, reduce tension, and improve overall mood.

Maintain a Healthy Diet

Eating a balanced diet can help stabilize mood and energy levels. Incorporate



A Peep At Prostate Cancer

Gloria Addo

Globally, prostate cancer is the second-most diagnosed cancer in men.

By the close of 2024, it is estimated that 299,010 new cases will be diagnosed and 35,250 men will die from the disease, with African-American men more likely to have and die from it than other men.

What Is The Prostate, And Why Is It Important?

The prostate is a part of the male reproductive system that occupies the space below the bladder in front of the rectum. Its most important role is the production of a fluid that, together with sperm cells from the testicles and fluids from other glands, makes up semen. The muscles of the prostate also ensure that the semen is forcefully pressed into the urethra and then expelled outward during ejaculation.

The word "prostate" is taken from the Greek expression meaning "one who stands before," which describes the position of the prostate gland. Viewed from below, where the urethra leaves the gland, the prostate "stands before" the bladder.

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the abnormal growth of one's prostate, usually caused by changes to the genes that normally control how cells function. This cancer is usually slow-growing, and a person

may have no symptoms (asymptomatic) for 10–30 years. Eventually, if left unchecked, the tumor grows and puts pressure on the surrounding tissues, including the urethra and bladder, causing prostate symptoms.

These symptoms include needing to urinate more (including at night), a slow or interrupted urine stream, pain when ejaculating, and blood seen in the urine or semen. There may also be issues getting an erection, leg or foot weakness, loss of bladder or bowel control, unintentional weight loss, or feeling very tired. If the cancer has spread to the local lymph nodes or bones, it could

cause back, hip, pelvic, or rib pain.

Who's at risk?

- **Age.** Prostate cancer is rare in men younger than 40. The chance of having prostate cancer rises rapidly after age 50. About 6 in 10 cases of prostate cancer are found in men older than 65.

- **Genetics.** A man's risk of developing prostate cancer is higher if his father or brother has had the disease. Inherited conditions associated with an increased risk also include Lynch syndrome and BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations.

- **Diet and dietary factors.** The exact role of diet in prostate cancer is not clear, though some studies suggest that a diet high in animal fat and dairy products may increase the risk of prostate cancer, and a diet high in fruits and vegetables may decrease the risk.

- **Smoking.** Smoking may increase the risk of dying from prostate cancer.

Can Prostate Cancer Be Prevented?

There's no sure way to prevent prostate cancer. Research findings frequently contradict one another, and the majority of research doesn't aim to establish conclusively if a certain factor protects prostate cancer. Consequently, no effective means of preventing prostate cancer have been found. If a man is interested in preventing prostate cancer, doctors generally advise him to make decisions that will improve his general health rather than just the risk of prostate cancer.



Ulcerative Colitis:

A chronic inflammatory bowel disease

By Bismark Kwabena Baiden

Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a chronic inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) characterized by inflammation and ulcers in the lining of the colon and rectum. It is a complex condition that can significantly impact the quality of life of those affected. In this article, we delve into the intricacies of ulcerative colitis, exploring its causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment options, and strategies for managing the condition.

Ulcerative colitis is believed to result from an abnormal immune response in genetically predisposed individuals, triggered by environmental factors. The inflammation typically begins in the rectum and extends continuously along the colon, leading to symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhea, rectal bleeding, and urgency to have a bowel movement.

The severity and extent of inflammation can vary from person to person, ranging from mild to severe and affecting different parts of the colon.

Signs and Symptoms

The symptoms of ulcerative colitis can be unpredictable and may come and go in episodes of flare-ups and remission. During flare-ups, individuals may experience worsening symptoms, including increased frequency of bowel movements, bloody stools, fatigue, weight loss, and abdominal cramping. These symptoms can have a significant impact on daily activities, work, and social interactions, leading to emotional distress and reduced quality of life.

Diagnosis and Evaluation

Diagnosing ulcerative colitis involves a combination of medical history, physical examination, laboratory tests, and imaging studies. Endoscopic procedures such as colonoscopy and flexible sigmoidoscopy are essential for visualizing the inflamed mucosa and obtaining tissue samples for biopsy.

The findings from these tests, along with clinical symptoms and other diagnostic criteria, help healthcare professionals confirm a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis and determine the extent and severity of the disease.

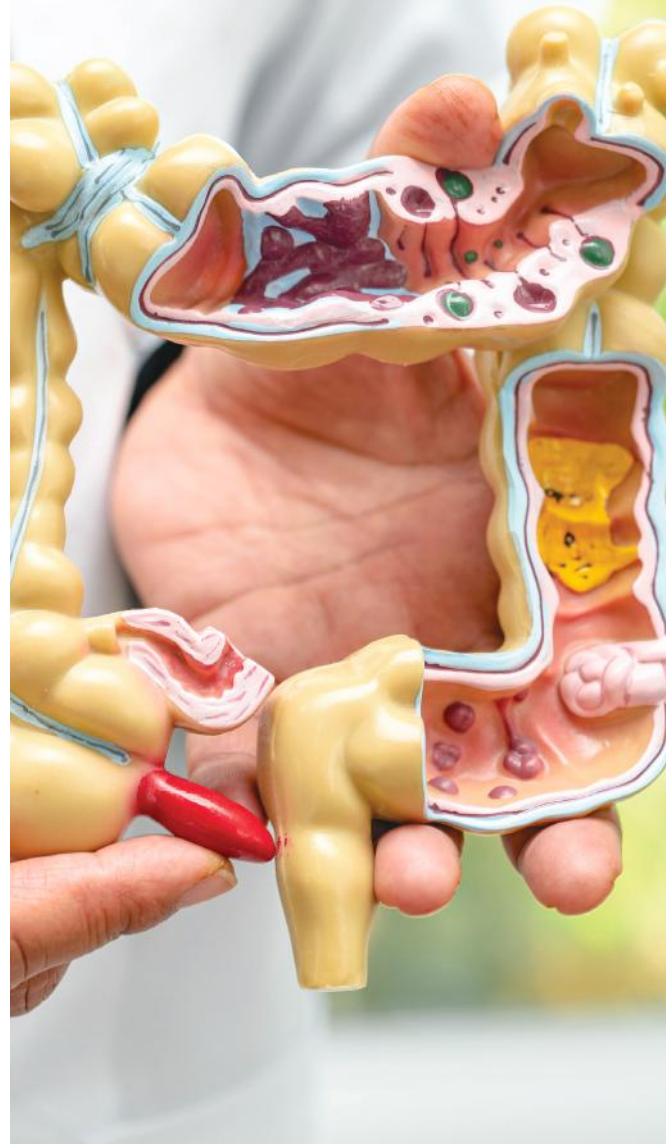
Treatment Approaches

Treatment for ulcerative colitis aims to induce and maintain remission, alleviate symptoms, and prevent complications. Medications such as amino salicylates, corticosteroids, immunomodulators, and biologic therapies are commonly used to reduce inflammation and suppress the immune response. In some cases, surgery may be necessary to remove the affected portion of the colon, particularly in cases of severe disease, complications, or failure to respond to medical therapy.

In addition to medical treatment, lifestyle modifications and coping strategies are essential for managing ulcerative colitis and improving overall well-being. Dietary changes, stress management techniques, regular exercise, and adequate sleep can help reduce symptoms and support overall health. It's also crucial for individuals with ulcerative colitis to work closely with their healthcare team, maintain open communication, and seek support from family, friends, and support groups. Research into ulcerative colitis continues to advance our understanding of its underlying mechanisms, risk factors, and potential therapeutic targets.

Ongoing studies focus on identifying novel treatments, biomarkers for disease monitoring, and personalized approaches to care. The ultimate goal is to improve outcomes for individuals with ulcerative colitis, reduce the burden of disease, and enhance their quality of life.

Finally, ulcerative colitis is a chronic inflammatory bowel disease that poses significant challenges to those affected. With its unpredictable nature and potential for complications, managing ulcerative colitis requires a multidisciplinary approach, including medical treatment, lifestyle modifications, and psychological support.



By raising awareness, promoting research, and advocating for improved care and support services, we can make a difference in the lives of individuals living with ulcerative colitis and work towards a future where they can lead fulfilling and productive lives despite the challenges posed by this condition.



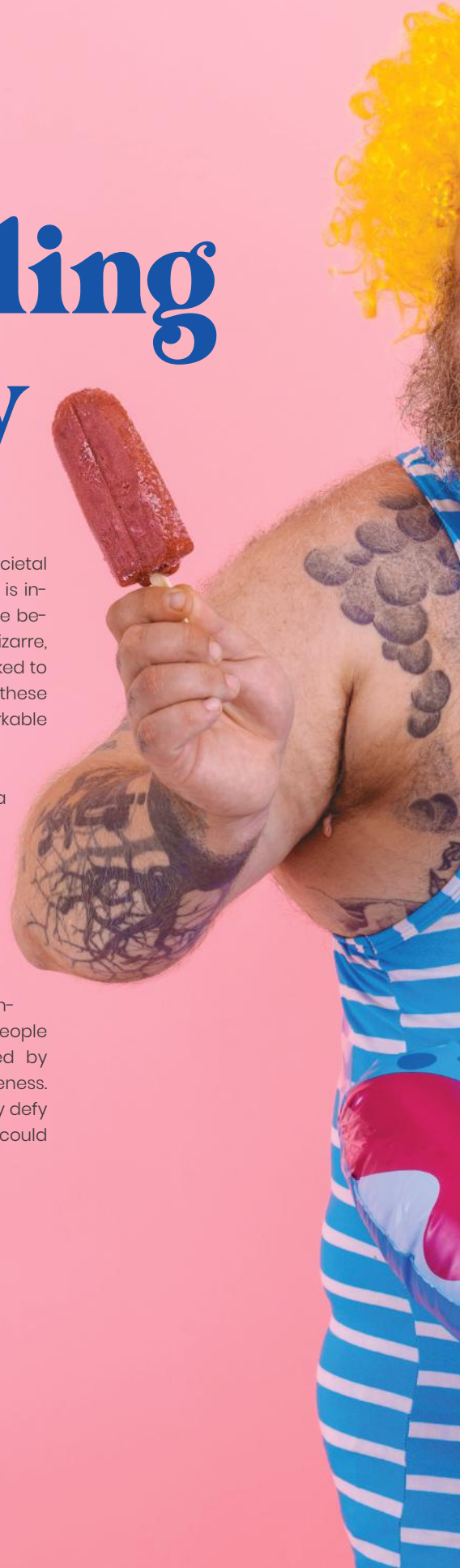
Understanding Excentricity

By Pavel Chamabe

A substantial departure from accepted societal norms in behaviour, beliefs, or attitudes is indicative of extravagant behaviour. These behaviours are frequently seen as odd, bizarre, or unconventional. They may also be linked to specific psychological problems. On the one hand, these behaviours may suggest a distinctive and remarkable personality.

It is possible for eccentric behaviours to appear in a variety of ways, such as distinctive eating or wardrobe preferences, uncommon interests or hobbies, or distinctive communication techniques. For instance, someone might choose to dress in vivid hues or amass an oddball assortment of objects, like old gadgets.

Society has mixed feelings on eccentric behaviour. On the one hand, people may be intrigued and impressed by their uniqueness and inventiveness. On the other hand, because they defy accepted conventions, they could





cause misunderstandings or social rejection. While eccentric people could be stigmatised, they might also be viewed as pioneers or misunderstood geniuses.

Notable historical people have been known for their ostentatious actions. For example, inventor and physicist Nikola Tesla followed certain routines and habits, like avoiding direct contact with rotating items and repeating operations in multiples of three. These peculiar actions did not lessen his important contributions to science and technology, though.

Not to mention that schizotypal personality disorder and other Cluster A personality disorders may be linked to eccentric attitudes.

This disease manifests as magical thinking, bizarre ideas, and abnormal social behaviours. It's important to understand, nevertheless, that not all eccentric behaviours are dangerous. Many eccentrics have wealthy and satisfying lives, and their individuality can even serve as a source of inspiration and strength.



Is a Hormone-Free Male Contraceptive Finally Within Reach?

By Enock Asune



U.S. researchers have developed a promising compound that could eventually lead to an effective, reversible, hormone-free male contraceptive.

It's an ancient sea snake, a hope that has repeatedly been crushed. The pill for males still doesn't exist despite numerous tries.

Many have pondered whether the pill for men will ever become available, leaving women in heterosexual marriages primarily responsible for using contraception. That day might not be as far off as we imagine!

Researchers from Baylor College of

Medicine in the United States may have discovered the secret to creating a male contraceptive that works, according to a study that was just published a few days ago in the scholarly magazine *Science*.

Their finding would have the benefit of being a hormone-free, reversible, and safe method of birth control. And what if the couple's contraceptive burden fell on these males in the near future?

The Baylor researchers employed mice

to investigate a novel non-hormonal sperm-specific methodology.

"We still don't have a birth control pill for men, despite the fact that researchers have looked into a number of strategies to develop male contraceptives," stated Dr. Martin Matzuk, chair of Baylor's Department of Pathology and Immunology and one of the study's authors.

In this work, we used a unique approach to the problem of finding a tiny chemical that will block the protein serine/threonine kinase 33 (STK33), which is specifically needed for male and mouse fertility.

The research team chose to focus on this protein since prior investigations have demonstrated that STK33 is particularly necessary for the development of viable spermatozoa in both humans and mice. Scientists found that male mice became sterile when the STK33 gene was turned off in rodents, since this resulted in aberrant spermatozoa with poor motility.

The same abnormality known as asthenozoospermia, which is connected to male infertility, has been demonstrated to result in sperm motility problems in men due to a mutation in the STK33 gene. Dr. Matzuk exclaims,

"STK33 is therefore considered a viable target with minimal safety issues for contraception in men."





Medical Jargons You Need to Know

Thrombocytopenia:

Refers to an abnormally low number of platelets in the blood, which can lead to problems with blood clotting and excessive bleeding.

Exacerbation:

An exacerbation: is a sudden worsening of the symptoms of a chronic disease. It can be triggered by various factors, including infections or non-compliance with treatment.

Stenosis: is an abnormal narrowing of a passage in the body, such as a blood vessel or a heart valve, which can restrict the flow of blood or other substances.

An anastomosis is a surgical connection between two tubular structures, such as segments of the intestine or blood vessels, to restore continuity or flow.

These terms are important in professional medical communication but might need further explanation to ensure patients fully understand their health conditions and the treatments being proposed.



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