



Second Wind

NEWSLETTER

Pulmonary Education and Research Foundation
P.O. Box 1133, Lomita, California 90717-5133



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JULY 2004

PERF, The Pulmonary Education and Research Foundation, is a small but vigorous non-profit foundation. We are dedicated to providing help, and general information for those with chronic respiratory disease through education, research, and information. This publication is one of the ways we do that. The Second Wind is not intended to be used for, nor relied upon, as specific advice in any given case. Prior to initiating or changing any course of treatment based on the information you find here, it is essential that you consult with your physician. We hope you find this newsletter of interest and of help.

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KEY WORDS: Part 5 of Herb on Herbals: the Do's & Don'ts, Update on Dr. Petty, Cards & Caring, Independence Donor, Supporting Donor, Retinoic Acid and Vitamin A, How to Stay Young, Expiration Dates, Why the rush?, Drowning in Salt Part 4.

HERB on HERBALS

PART 5 of 5 parts



Dr. Herb Webb

"OK, then, what SHOULD I take?"

HERB'S CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS ON COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES

by Herbert Webb, MD Pulmonologist

Dr. Herbert Webb is a pulmonologist in private practice in **San Pedro, CA**, and an illustrious graduate of the program at Harbor-UCLA. He is Medical Director of the **San Pedro Peninsula Hospital Pulmonary Medicine Department** and their **Pulmonary Rehabilitation program**. He wrote this article for their Better Breathers' Club newsletter. With the gracious permission of **Editor Kris Brust, RN, and Dr. Webb**, we share it with you.

As I said in earlier articles, it's easy to understand why more and more people want to prescribe their own remedies - it's cheaper and faster, and certainly a powerful thing to do, even if there is a frustrating lack of any solid scientific studies to back claims of cures. I have also discussed lack of manufacturing standards and studies for many herbal remedies, and also talked about some real catastrophes that occurred because of haste to find "magic cures".

I'm definitely not an expert on herbals, so my skepticism and conservative medical background might leave you feeling as if the message is "I know what's best and I'll do it for you, I need to be in control all the way". Not so. I, and most of my colleagues, encourage you to take an active role in your health care. In fact, with all the changes in health care today, you can't afford to sit back and go along for the ride - you must ask questions and become involved with your medical care. But to me, this means talking frankly to your doctor about your concerns, learning as much as you can about any health care problems you may have, and working as part of your health care team.

So, for patients who wish to take an active role in their health care, here are my recommendations, based on solid science and a lot of research.

THE DO'S ---

- Get lots of bioflavonoids (Vitamins A, C, and E), but get them in your diet through nature's wisdom and not through some manufactured products. Bioflavonoids are found in bright

yellow, red, orange and green leafy vegetables and fruits.

- Take 1200 to 1500 milligrams of Calcium a day, preferably in a preparation of calcium citrate, rather than calcium carbonate. Also take Vitamin D 200 IU if you are under 50 and 400 IU if you are 51 to 70 years of age. If you're over 70, take 600 IU of Vitamin D a day.

- If you are childbearing age female, take folic acid constantly at more than 200 micrograms per day and if you are pregnant or nursing, take 400 mcg. **If you are over the age of 65, you should probably be taking 200 mcg of folic acid and 3 mcg of vitamin B12 per day.**

- Take a multivitamin if you wish, but don't take too many of them. It should include the above, plus **Vitamin B6 at about 2 mg.**

- If you are prone to urinary tract infections or are an older female, go ahead and eat plain cranberries, or drink cranberry juice, but NOT an herbal preparation.

- This next recommendation regarding Vitamin E has changed since June of 2002, so heads up.

Previously there was suggestion by several studies, that Vitamin E might decrease the risk of heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's disease and even improve mortality. None of the studies were very well done, so the data was never convincing. But we DO now know this: Vitamin E adversely affects your HDL cholesterol. For years, we've discussed "good" HDL cholesterol and "bad" LDL cholesterol. Things are a little more complex than that - there are several subcomponents of the good HDL and so it turns out there is a bad

HDL type cholesterol as well as a good HDL. And unfortunately, Vitamin E converts the good HDL into the bad HDL, so everybody should stop taking supplements of Vitamin E completely. Several noted locations state this and several very well known preventive cardiologists have stopped taking the Vitamin E themselves.

- The newest studies suggest Vitamin E turns good cholesterol into bad cholesterol, so I recommend you stop taking Vitamin E supplements.

- Selenium for men (200 mcg) per day may be beneficial in the prevention of prostate cancer.

- Glucosamine may help if you have osteoarthritis, but be aware it contains glucose, so **if you have diabetes mellitus it will perhaps worsen the control for your diabetes**. Studies suggest that it is probably effective. You must, however, wait a month for the symptomatic benefit. There are no studies on the safety of this taken in long duration.

- Although this article is not really about diet, I recommend eating lots of fish as a source of omega 3 fatty acids other than separate preparations of them at this time.

- Probably everyone should take low dose aspirin at 81 mg per day if you are over the age of 55 or 60. You should obviously NOT take aspirin if you are an aspirin sensitive asthmatic or have poorly controlled gout.

- Spend your time walking outdoors and enjoy it for more than 30 minutes daily instead of walking around food stores looking for "miracle" nutrients.

THE DON'T'S ---

- Don't take Beta carotene at all.
- Don't take excess Vitamin A, Vitamin D or Vitamin B6.
- Don't take any herbals manufactured in Asiatic countries. These may contain poisonous heavy metals.
- Don't take grapefruit juice in any form if you are taking medications, unless your physician has cleared this by specific analysis. The same goes for Echinacea.
- Don't take any herbals whatsoever if you are on Coumadin. This is especially true for Gingko Biloba, Ginseng and Garlic.
- Beware that any herbal can potentially have an interaction with any prescription medication. For example, many herbals impair the clotting of the blood, and can lead to hemorrhage during surgery. Herbals can also lead to protracted unconsciousness or sedation after general anesthesia for surgery. So, don't take any herbals within 3 to 4 weeks of surgery.

And this final piece of advice from Dr. Webb.

Don't kid yourself into thinking, "If it's herbal, it's safe!"

We hope that you have found this series of articles as helpful as we have. We really appreciate the generosity of both Kris Brust and Dr. Webb in sharing this series with us and are only sorry that it is ending. Thanks from all of us!

Update on Dr. Petty

As all of you know, Dr. Tom Petty has been seriously ill. Several weeks ago, he had his 4th open-heart surgery. He hopes to be able to write more about this later. In his own inimitable way, I'm sure he will turn his very difficult experiences into something profound and meaningful to him, and to you also. We asked you to send him cards and notes, which many of you did. Here are a few words from Dr. Petty about what those cards you send can mean to the person receiving them.

CARDS AND CARING

Of all the ways we can communicate our caring for other people, there is nothing to equal the hand written note. By its very nature, it is personal. Someone put a lot of thought into the message and indeed into the selection of the card and its message. Themes of caring, loving, comforting, healing and recovery are expressed in most cards, in a language that is art in itself.

During the past lengthy illness, I have received many cards of caring, and I deeply appreciate each one. Too many to respond to right now. One I particularly liked came from a long time friend DR Sreedhar Nair and his wife Rhoda, of Norwalk, CT. Sree, a renowned pulmonologist, has been an inspiration to many with COPD through his National Emphysema Foundation, that offers research support to worthy causes. The card I received yesterday says "Healing is a journey with a pace of its very own. It won't be rushed or hurried. It knows what's right for you alone"...How beautiful and appropriate for me.

All of the cards that I receive are treasured and saved to be read again, at a time when recovery is gaining momentum. Thanks to all who care.

Tom Petty

DONATIONS

Thanks to **Dale & Doris Thompson** for their donation AND for their kind words about the Second Wind. We appreciate both.

Jackie & Vince De Nevers, Madeline & Herb Rothchild, Ralph & Suzanne Donohue and Shirley Sinclair made donations in honor of the 50th wedding

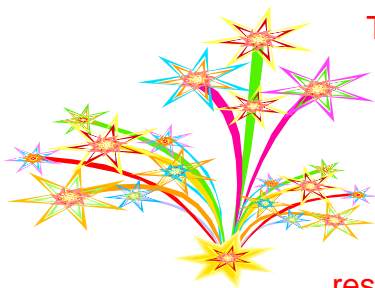
anniversary of **Carolyn & Bob Hoffman**
May we add our congratulations also?

When **Carolyn & Bob Hoffman** asked their friends to donate money to PERF for pulmonary research to honor their 50th anniversary, I'll bet they never dreamed what they would start. When we told Dr. Petty about this wonderful gesture he was excited and inspired by their example. Here is what resulted from that inspiration; another letter from Tom.

Celebrate Independence Day a Special Way!

Dear Friends,

This is the month that we celebrate our independence as a nation. The guarantees of freedom are the most precious gifts that our forefathers gave us. We now continue to enjoy these freedoms, as a way of life. This is the American Way!



Those of us who have suffered serious illness in the past, know what confinement and loss of control over most of our daily functions mean. Recovery signifies a restoration of these freedoms. All who have benefited from Pulmonary Rehabilitation, oxygen and other forms of care for COPD and related disorders have also experienced the restoration of personal freedom. So let's

celebrate with a special gift to PERF, where our support will help others in their quest for freedom. I have decided to be an "**Independence Donor**" giving \$230.00, one for each year of our country's existence. Perhaps some of you would like to join me in celebrating *your* independence?

Supporting Donors with donations of \$25, \$50, \$75, \$100, or \$150 would help update equipment, and support the newsletter. An even more ambitious goal would be to offer a grant of \$30,000 a year for a foreign physician to spend a year at the Harbor-UCLA Rehabilitation Clinical Trials Center. This would allow the pursuit of a research project for a year with the opportunity to also learn about pulmonary rehab. My check is in the mail. Is yours? Thanks for joining me in this special effort.



Fraternally,

Dr Tom Petty



We all know what Tom Petty is celebrating! The **Independence Donor Club** started by Dr. Tom has taken off like the Indy 500. Joining immediately were all the members of the PERF Board of Directors. We stepped to the front of the parade as we made our contributions to celebrate Tom Petty's return to health. Are you celebrating your own improvement, or that of a loved one? Join us as either an **Independence Donor** or a **Supporting Donor**. It's a worthwhile cause and you will be in good company as we reflect on our country's freedoms as well as our own. .

INTERESTING MAIL

Eduardo writes from *Buenos Aires, Argentina* saying that while he has moderate to severe emphysema he gets great results with his inhaler, a lot of respiratory exercises and yoga breathing techniques. He would like to know if we have any news concerning the results of the ongoing study on trans retinoic acid as possible remedy emphysema. He asks, "*Do you know how can I buy the medications actually used on those tests and would it be useful to take Vitamin A?*"

That is a good question we have had from some other readers also. Buenos Aires is a lovely city in a beautiful country. Dr. Rich Casaburi and Mary Burns had the privilege of lecturing there several years ago on pulmonary rehab and various related subjects. Just a few months ago in Vienna, we again met Dr. Mazzei, a wonderful pulmonologist from Buenos Aires. Dr. Mazzei is the physician who translated our book on **Essentials of Pulmonary Rehabilitation** into

Spanish. (This will soon be available on our Website.) He told us in Vienna what good pulmonary rehab you now have in Argentina. We hope you have been able to take advantage of one of these programs since we are sure it would be of more immediate benefit than the retinoic acid now being tested. All the results of the studies are not yet *out*, but it does not look promising at this particular time. Several other similar studies in this area are also on going on, so there is always hope in the future. **Do NOT take large doses of Vitamin A! It can be toxic and this is NOT what researchers are using.** Thanks for a great question.

HOW TO STAY YOUNG

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That is why you pay him/her.

2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things.
5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life, is ourselves. Be ALIVE while you are alive.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health: If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, to the next county, to a foreign country, but NOT to where the guilt is.
10. Tell the people you love that you love them, at every opportunity.

**AND ALWAYS
REMEMBER:**

“Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.”

Expiration Date

Have you noticed the expiration date of your newsletter label? That marks a year from the date we last heard from you. While we request \$20.00 a year to help us with costs, don't let that stop you if your finances are tight. We will continue to send the Second Wind to those who wish it, even if they can't afford it, but we MUST hear from you once a year. If you go too many months over the due date, we assume that you get us on the Internet or are no longer interested. So, if that date is an old one, and you still want the Second Wind, let us know so that you don't get dropped from the mailing list.

NEW SEARCH TOOL on PERF

Have you tried it yet? Do you try to find articles on something specific but don't know where to start? Go to www.perf2ndwind.org and look at the very bottom of the page. Type in the name of what you want to look up, e.g. exercise. Click the PERF button and it will list all the references we have. Want more information? Click the WWW button and Google will search for anything else available. Try it the next time you are on line. It is really neat!

Why the Rush?

Our new Independence initiative, just launched in this issue, suggests that we need to act quickly to be able to make changes in COPD. PERF is one small component of a huge national effort to bring COPD to public awareness, and to urge that all symptomatic patients be found and treated *early*, while treatment is fairly simple. COPD continues as the fourth most common cause of death in the USA and the *only* one that continues to rise. *We know that approximately 50% of patients with COPD are presently undiagnosed.* If we can stimulate public awareness, promote early simple spirometry and begin a treatment plan for smoking cessation, the use

of bronchodilator drugs and improved exercise, this disease can be stopped or turned around. "*Why not get EVERYBODY to stop smoking and quit worrying about spirometry?*" **Answer:** knowledge of spirometric abnormalities in smokers that got tested the first time was a powerful motivator for smoking cessation, based on a recent study done in Poland and published in Chest (by our friend Dr. Jan Zielinski). The rate of finding COPD in an office practice is doubled by the use of spirometry in a European Study. (published in Chest by Dr. Burrels and his colleagues).

Couple this with the new **COPD Caucus** spearheaded by Senator Mike Crapo to inform and arouse Congress about COPD, and the new **COPD National Foundation** initiative of many stake holders in COPD and you can see the momentum growing. PERF has the advantages of being small and facile. It can respond *quickly* to needs for research and education. PERF has a very loud voice that must be strengthened and heard. So, make your **Independence Donation** a top priority and join the growing movement against COPD *now*.

Dr. Tom Petty



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Dear Friends:

DROWNING IN SALT (Part IV)

The first three parts of this series give information on salt and some of the serious problems of excessive salt in the diet.

Why do we eat so much salt (sodium)? We tend to salt our food to "taste." (See "Second Wind" issues for April, May & June) Salt need not be cooked into anybody's food. It can be added to taste. Most people salt without tasting, which is a big mistake.

The taste for salt decreases with a low salt intake. Thus if you avoid all salty foods and particularly a salt shaker, food will taste great and even better than ever before without salt. If you achieve a low salt taste, virtually everything you used to eat will now taste horrible and salty and you would not ever want to eat it again!

Most people with edema should try to achieve a sodium intake of 1,000 mg (1 gram) or less. This is really tricky since lots of foods such as chicken or turkey are injected with salt as a preservative. Thus, you must read all labels about salt contents. It is very easy to add up to 1,000 mg of sodium daily, which should be the limit of anybody with a serious edema formation that cannot be adequately managed with diuretic drugs ("water pills").

Hopefully these four newsletters on salt have given you some insight into the regulation of "balance known as homeostasis" in the body. The body must have an adequate amount of salt but excesses are very harmful, particularly in older people with cardiovascular, liver, and kidney diseases. Excess salt stimulates the release of mechanisms within the body that drive up blood pressure and have other adverse effects on the heart.

I know from my own experiences that achieving a low salt diet is extremely pleasant, but it requires discipline. Seasoning your food with salt alternatives such as Mrs. Dash, pepper, salt-free vinegar, or a bit of Tabasco which has only a tiny bit of sodium, garlic and other herbs, will allow for some extra "spice" in your diet. If necessary, please learn to eat and enjoy a low salt diet. It will make you healthier and happier.

I'll be in touch next month.

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Petty".

Thomas L. Petty, M.D., Professor of Medicine
University of Colorado Health Science Center
President, Snowdrift Pulmonary Conference