New Delhi Health Education

In an effort to improve student health, a group of New Delhi schools have adopted a US-developed health education program. The program, called “Know Your Body,” is backed by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and will not only teach students about dental care, but also about fire safety and the hazards of cigarette smoking. Teachers will not need to devote additional time for the classes as the module structure allows them to teach the material during regular classes. US expert John Martin will train teachers how to use the program. Russia and Belarus are among the more than 14 countries who have already introduced the program.

Archaea in the Mouth

A California group of researchers found that more than 1/3 of the periodontitis patients they studied had archaea in their diseased subgingival spaces, but nowhere else in their mouths. Archaea, which live in extreme environments such as hot springs and salt lakes, are also found in the human colon and the vagina. Although the researchers found that the quantity of archaea correlated with severity of the disease, they speculate that archaea may not directly cause periodontal disease. Instead, they may be related with severity of the disease. The medical history, it’s one of the most difficult skills for any professional to master. Indeed, it is the key to improving case acceptance. Learn how to improve your skills in this article by Dr. Roger Levin.

Healthy Protein Drinks

New Zealand dairy farmers are taking on the corporate might of Coca-Cola™ with drinks based on milk proteins instead of sugar. The farmer-owned Fonterra cooperative aims to take advantage of boom in soft-drinks in school vending machines introduced in the past year in U.S. cities such as Chicago, Philadelphia and New York, the New Zealand Herald reports. Simon Leitch, Manager of a Fonterra business unit called B-Cubed (Better Brighter Beverages), says the unit has started introducing the program. The group has already introduced the program in 14 countries who have not seen the benefits of the products in his private clinical practice over a period of time.

First Herb-Based Cancer Cure

A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB) in Calcutta has made a serendipitous discovery of a molecule that could become the first herb-based cure for Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia (CML), which is a severe type of blood cancer. The molecule, called chlorogenic acid, appears to target and kill leukemia cells. During in vivo-modulatory studies on betel leaf and its effect on human cell lines, the team found that chlorogenic acid induced programmed cell death in human cancer cells transplanted in experimental nude mice, explained team leader and immunologist Santu Bandyopadhaya. The molecule, which is extracted from the leaves of Piperaceae (Piper Betel), showed no deleterious effects on the growth of non-cancerous cells.

Currently there is only one drug available around the world for the treatment of CML, but its high cost prohibits widespread use. A new drug made from chlorogenic acid would prove to be a much cheaper option due to the wide availability of betel leaf. The team has subsequently applied for global and US patents on the molecule, which was referred to as icb-101 during their studies. Results of their work will be published in the October edition of the journal, Blood. In the interim, Dr. N.K. Ganguly, Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has given verbal permission so that multi-centre human trials can begin immediately. Funding for the project was provided by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).