

What's Up in Urology Journal, Summer 2008?

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Urology for People is a new section in the *Urology Journal* for providing people a summary of what is published in this journal and describing urological entities in a simple language. The editors of the *Urology Journal* believe that the ultimate goal of scientific research is to improve the quality of life and prevent diseases. This point of view makes it an essence to inform the people of what is going on in medical research. Herein, we describe some of the studies presented in this issue of the journal in order to promote knowledge of people on the current advances in urology. The Persian translation of this article is available, too, from www.uj.unrc.ir.

It is noteworthy that the findings in medical papers are usually not directly applicable in clinical practice and patients should consult their physicians before any utilization of the results of medical studies.

BACTERIA AND UROLOGICAL DISEASES

Dr Al-Marhoon from Egypt has reviewed recent research on a bacterium that causes peptic ulcer. Some researchers believe that this bacterium, namely *Helicobacter pylori*, may cause other diseases, too. Some bacteria can cause inflammation of the prostate gland. Also, the body may react to the infections in other areas of the body that causes the release of agents in blood that can develop inflammation of the prostate. *Helicobacter pylori* are present in the stomach of many people. So, it might cause response of the body and indirect involvement of the prostate. However, this is only a hypothesis and it should be tested in the future.

Also, some cancers are connected with infection, one of them being prostate cancer. However any relation of *Helicobacter pylori* and prostate cancer has not been shown yet. *Helicobacter pylori* can cause a specific kind of bladder cancer. Researchers have shown that treatment of infection with these bacteria has a positive effect on the treatment of bladder lymphoma. A kidney tumor has been reported only in 1 patient with *Helicobacter pylori* infection. So,

we have to wait until further evidence. Finally, physicians recommend treatment of *Helicobacter pylori* infection in kidney transplant patients and those with kidney failure. To put it in a nutshell, we had better take *Helicobacter pylori* seriously and try to get rid of it before any consequences is documented by researchers!

BLACK SEEDS IN MEDICINE

Black seeds are the seeds of an annual-flowering plant, native to southwest Asia. They are used as a spice. Dr Hadjzadeh and his research group in Mashhad have focused on black seeds. They have hypothesized that black seeds may treat kidney stones and even prevent it. They tried it in rats and found interesting results; they induced kidney stone formation in the rats and injected an extract of black seeds into the body of some of those. A month later, they observed that black seeds reduced the number and size of the stony deposits in the kidneys and the concentration of stone forming ingredients in urine. Although this study recommends black seeds as a beneficial herb, it is still a long way to use it as a drug for kidney stones.

SAFFRON AND CANCERS

Saffron is another herb that has appealed researchers. Many therapeutic effects have been suggested for saffron and Dr Feizzadeh and his colleagues have tested it on bladder tumors. They showed that the extract of saffron slowed down the growth of tumoral cells. This was achieved in laboratory and they hope that one day saffron can be beneficial for patients with bladder cancer.

PATIENT WITH HEPATITIS CAN ENJOY KIDNEY TRANSPLANT

Patients with kidney failure may suffer from Hepatitis C or Hepatitis B infections. Physicians' concern is that these infections may impact their transplant kidneys if they undergo transplantation. They usually monitor patients with Hepatitis after transplantation and report the results. Dr Shahbazian did the same in Ahwaz. His team found that kidney transplant patients, with hepatitis C infection had slightly poorer but comparable results with other transplant recipients. So, these patients can be reassured about the favorable chance of living with a transplant kidney. However, they are at risk of the consequences of their infection and should be under vigilance care.

STONES IN A HORSESHOE KIDNEY

Horseshoe kidneys are a rare inborn abnormality. The kidneys of people with this abnormality are fused together and make a horseshoe shape. With a horseshoe kidney, one can live long without knowing even that, but they are at a higher risk of some diseases such as kidney stone.

Treatment of stones is somewhat more difficult in horseshoe kidneys. Shock wave lithotripsy is an option, but some researchers offer extraction of the kidney stone through a small incision of the flank. Dr Soufi Majidpour has done this procedure in 9 patients with horseshoe kidney in Sanandaj, Iran. He could treat 7 of them

successfully. This experience was reported by Dr Darabi in Mashhad, too (published in a previous issue of *Urology Journal*). Patients with a horseshoe kidney can be reassured of many treatment options for their problems with these kidneys in many cities of Iran.

SOPHISTICATED LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERIES BY UROLOGISTS

Laparoscopy is an advance surgical technique by which many sophisticated operations are done these days with only a few small incisions on the body. In fact, instruments go inside the body instead of the surgeon's hands. Dr Sadeghi-Nejad, an Iranian Urologist in the United States could remove both of the kidneys of a patient by a combination of 2 laparoscopic surgeries. Usually, removal of both kidneys needs 2 separate surgeries, but Dr Sadeghi-Nejad and his surgical team did it in 1 session with a few small incisions. These days experienced surgeons around the world report their achievements in using laparoscopy in various surgical operations. Laparoscopy has also a special place in urological surgeries and in Iran it has gained popularity among urologists.

AVICENNA AND HIS MODERN SCIENTIFIC VIEWPOINT

Avicenna, a great Iranian scientist has written the most famous medical book in the history. A thousand years ago, he donated a treasure to the world named *Canon of Medicine*. Dr Madinehie, a urologist interested in this book, has selected some chapters of the *Canon* that are about bladder and its diseases. In his article, he shows the similarities of Avicenna's theories with modern theories. Readers may find it interesting that 10 centuries ago, Avicenna could through away the superstitious beliefs in medicine and substitute them with experimental methodology we believe in now.