

HEALTH

Consult pediatrician before switching baby formulas

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Q: My baby has become very irritable lately. Do I need to change formulas?

A: Often, parents will change formulas and not consult with their pediatrician when their infant develops any number of problems. Some will panic if their babies become irritable, spit up a lot or have diarrhea for an extended period of time.

Many times parents think they are changing formulas when they are simply changing name brands. The only reasons to change from a cow milk-based formula to a soy-based formula is if the child has had a bad bout of infectious diarrhea that has damaged the intestinal tract, or if they have a cow milk protein allergy. Infants who are allergic to cow milk-based formula may suffer from diarrhea, vomiting, respiratory problems or rashes.

It is best to consult with your pediatrician.

Q: Is it healthy for children to consume drinks with caffeine?

A: Many soft drink commercials influence children because they portray those who consume drinks loaded with caffeine as ultra "cool." Parents need to be aware that items containing caffeine, such as soft drinks, appear at the tip of the Food Guide Pyramid, which

means they should be consumed occasionally.

Caffeine is known to dull appetites. If children regularly consume caffeine, they may regularly exclude nutritious foods from their diets.

Caffeine is a chemical compound that stimulates the central nervous system. It might cause nervousness, irritability, anxiety, insomnia and disturbances of heart rate and rhythm. Caffeine is also a diuretic and increases urination, so it is imperative that both children and adults increase their water intake, especially during the summer months.

Parents who do not want their children to consume caffeine should offer milk, juice, water or caffeine-free drinks instead.

Q: How can I continue to successfully breast feed my son when I return to work in a few weeks?

A: Dedication and careful planning will help you overcome the many challenges ahead.

The stress of work tends to reduce a mother's milk supply. Pumping twice a day in addition to nursing will increase the milk supply gradually, and a good supply is essential at the start. You may want to begin pumping and stockpiling milk for at least two weeks before returning to work.

(See Formula, Page 16)

New drug could treat millions with disfiguring disease elephantiasis

By Alan Wheat

Special to Sentinel-Voice

More than 120 million people in 73 countries now infected with elephantiasis have been given real hope that the disease may be eradicated in the next few years.

This news was delivered at a recent joint news conference of SmithKline Beecham, a British-owned pharmaceutical company, and the World Health Organization.

Albendazole, a SmithKline Beecham drug used to combat intestinal parasites, is 99 percent effective when simultaneously used with other drugs to eliminate elephantiasis.

"SmithKline Beecham strives every day to improve people's health," said Jan Leschly, chief executive officer and president of SmithKline Beecham.

"We will donate Albendazole free of charge for this program to every country that needs it until this dreadful disease is eliminated as a public health problem," she said.

SmithKline Beecham plans to donate enough of an antiparasitic drug to vaccinate about one-fifth of the world's population each year for the next five years. The total contribution, including funds for distributing the drug, is expected to be \$500 million.

Epidemiologists believe that if the entire at-risk population is treated for five years, the disease will die out.

In addition to the 120 million already infected, more than one billion people are at risk from lymphatic filariasis, the scientific name for

elephantiasis. Approximately one-third of all infections of this chronic and disfiguring disease can be found in Africa.

Transmitted most often by mosquito bite, the infected persons may sometimes outwardly appear healthy, while internally their bodies are being damaged — often severely and irreversibly — until a disfiguring enlargement of arms, legs and genital organs occurs. Elephantiasis is believed to be one of six infectious diseases which are potentially eradicable.

A monumental collaboration between international medical groups, governments of over 73 countries and SmithKline Beecham has led scientists to agree that treatment of elephantiasis with the drug donated by SmithKline Beecham can put the infectious disease closer to joining the list of "extinct" diseases.

New research, disease control efforts and private and governmental support for distribution systems has made it possible for SmithKline Beecham to participate in this world-wide effort to eradicate the disease. The pharma-

ceutical company has signed a contract with the WHO which commits the company to donate sufficient quantities of Albendazole to make several billion doses.

Dr. James Hill, director and senior vice president for Corporate Affairs for SmithKline Beecham, said the international conglomerate will do more than just donate the drug.

"We will also offer technical assistance and health education. We want to make sure that this disease will be totally eliminated. Our employees in the 73 target countries will offer additional support," he said.

Now that the drug has been procured free of charge, it is incumbent upon affected countries to implement plans for appropriate delivery of treatment, monitoring and evaluation.

The WHO will provide, on a country-by-country basis, the necessary technical advice and assistance to governments for developing plans.

Alan Wheat is a former congressman from Missouri and sits on the Board of Directors of CARE.



Scholars participate in An Evening of Stars

Several RMHC/UNCF Health and Medical Scholars from Xavier University in New Orleans recently participated in The College Fund/UNCF's televised special 'An Evening of Stars'. Created and funded by Ronald McDonald House Charities, the program awards ten aspiring health professionals with two-year, full-tuition scholarships.

Drugs could prevent first heart attack

Special to Sentinel-Voice

HOUSTON — Cholesterol-lowering drugs may help people prevent a first-time heart attack, according to cholesterol experts.

Cholesterol experts at the DeBakey Heart Center at Baylor College of Medicine and the Methodist Hospital in Houston say cholesterol-lowering drugs may be beneficial in people who have never been diagnosed with heart disease.

"Our studies have shown that people who markedly reduce their total cholesterol level lower their risk of heart attack by one-third," said Dr. Peter Jones, associate professor of medicine at Baylor and Methodist.

More than half of America's adults have high or borderline high cholesterol levels, according to the National Cholesterol Education Program. Too much cholesterol can lead to heart disease — the No. 1 killer in men and women. Many people work at lowering their

low density lipoprotein (LDL) or "bad cholesterol" and increasing their high density lipoprotein (HDL) or "good cholesterol" to prevent a heart attack. Jones recommends that people with a high risk of heart disease regularly keep their cholesterol level in check.

Jones said the greater the number of risk factors, the more important it is to get treated.

"If you have more than one of these risk factors, seek medical advice," Jones said. "Sometimes a low-fat diet and exercise aren't enough. Cholesterol-lowering drugs may be more helpful in lessening your chances of heart attack."

Heart disease risk factors for people with high cholesterol include: • Age (men ages 45 and older and women ages 55 and older who are postmenopausal); • Diabetes; • Hypertension; • Cigarette smoking; • Low HDL (below 35 mg/dl); and • Family history of early heart disease.

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

- Collaborated with and performed on Paul Simon's *Graceland* CD
- Sang the South African National Anthem at the Inauguration of Nelson Mandela
- Accompanied Nelson Mandela to accept the Nobel Peace Prize
- Appearances on Sesame Street, Broadway, and Films



Performing in Concert Monday, March 16, 1998

Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall - UNLV Campus 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$15.00, \$20.00, and \$25.00

Available at the Performing Arts Center Box Office (895-3801) and Dillard's stores (800-654-9545)

Group Sales (20% discount) — for 20 or more, call Barbara Nielsen at (702) 857-0564

Presented by BARD PRODUCTIONS, LLC

(702) 323-0515 or (702) 857-0564

A BUDGET

Licensed • Bonded • Insured

Janitorial • Carpet Cleaning • Mobile Wash
Office Cleaning For Less!!

2 ROOMS & HALLWAY
ONLY \$45⁰⁰ • \$12⁰⁰ ADD'L RMS

216 7th Street • Suite 12

PHONE: 320-1122
PAGER: 692-3667

TEXT MESSAGE:
1-800-811-4018 pin #A BUDGET



CALL GEORGE