

HEALTH

HEALTH BRIEFS

GENE THERAPY TO REDUCE CHOLESTEROL IS EFFECTIVE IN MICE

HOUSTON — A form of gene therapy designed to reduce high cholesterol has proven to be safe and yields long-lasting results in mice. Geneticists at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston conducted the studies in mice deficient in LDLR (low-density lipoprotein receptor), a gene that helps rid the body of cholesterol. This genetic defect is found in humans with familial hypercholesterolemia (FH), an inherited disorder that leads to high blood cholesterol and premature hardening of the arteries. The mice were fed a high-cholesterol diet and then treated with a single injection of a gene related to LDLR. The gene instructs the liver to make copies of a protein that helps restore low-density lipoproteins to normal levels. After five to seven months, the mice had an average reduction in plasma cholesterol of 30 to 50 percent, and no signs of liver toxicity. As a result of their successful studies in mice, Drs. Lawrence Chan and Arthur Beaudet have applied to conduct similar research in humans. Chan is a professor of cell biology and medicine, and Beaudet is chairman of the Department of Molecular and Human Genetics.

GENE THAT GOVERNS DEVELOPMENT OF HEARING IS IDENTIFIED

HOUSTON — The identification of a gene in mice that governs a crucial stage in inner-ear development might help millions of Americans in the future who are deaf or have balance problems. Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) researchers at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston identified a gene called "Math1" that signals cells in the early stage of inner-ear development to differentiate and proliferate into hair cells. These hair cells transform sound waves and head motion into information the brain uses for hearing and equilibrium. Mice that lacked the Math1 gene did not develop these delicate hair cells, which are vulnerable to disease, aging and trauma like loud noise. Knowing which gene drives hair-cell development in the early stages of life opens up the possibility of studies aimed at stimulating new hair-cell growth, particularly in age-related hearing and balance disorders, said Dr. Huda Y. Zoghbi, who headed the research with Dr. Hugo J. Bellen. Zoghbi and Bellen are HHMI investigators in Baylor's Department of Molecular and Human Genetics.

GENE MUTATION AFFECTS BODY'S 24-HOUR CLOCK

HOUSTON — A gene defect can disrupt the sleep-wake cycle even more than 12 cups of coffee. Scientists at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston found that in mice, a mutation in the gene called mPer2 essentially "broke" their circadian clock. When the mice with this mutation were exposed to 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness, their sleep-wake cycle remained normal. But when they remained in darkness for 10 days, they began to awaken two hours earlier each day, an indication that their internal clock ran faster than normal. Eventually the mice lost their circadian rhythms and woke up every two to four hours. "This study provides the first direct evidence that the mPer2 gene plays a role in regulating the body's internal circadian clock," said principal investigator Dr. Allan Bradley, Baylor professor of molecular and human genetics and Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. The discovery might give drug companies new strategies for treating jet lag and other problems involving circadian rhythms.

Controlling your life begins with healthy eating

Rebecca J. Al-Nakhli, A.T. Special to Sentinel-Voice

Always consult your physician before beginning any eating plan. Few of us know what a good friend water is to our bodies. But, it is the key to our health. Water is the only substance that naturally helps to flush your lymphatic system of unneeded toxins. You must drink at least eight glasses a day to thoroughly hydrate your body.

Most of us, however, are closer to dehydration than hydration. One way to use water to help control your weight is by drinking a marvelous beverage consisting of cider-vinegar and water. Cider vinegar is one of nature's greatest health promoters. If you start your

day with two teaspoons of cider vinegar in a glass of water, you will substantially cut down cravings.

Have you ever wondered why the first meal of the day is called breakfast? Well, it is just that. Every night when you go to sleep and stop eating, you go on a mini fast. This gives your body an opportunity to repair and rebuild itself with the energy that it used all day to try to digest what you ate. Giving your body these rest periods is helpful in promoting good health.

If you can continue to eat only fresh fruit for the majority of the morning, the body will have more time to cleanse itself of toxins ingested the day before. Any fruit or fruit juices are good.

By drinking water, cider-vinegar and fruit juices along with eating any fruit, you will have more energy. Begin eating other foods after 11 a.m. When you eat fruit keep in mind that it will digest in your system in 30 minutes. So, if you consume it with another food that takes longer to digest, it will cause the fruit to petrify in the digestive track and sour everything else. Therefore, always eat fruit two- to three hours after or 30 minutes before a meal.

When food combinations are simple, your body can easily digest them and you will have more energy. Have you ever noticed how sluggish you feel after most meals? This is because they consist of food combinations that do not mix well. Try not

to mix meat and potatoes in the same meal. Proteins do not digest well with starches.

If you want meat to be the focus of your meal, then eat vegetables with it like, corn, green beans, salads, broccoli, etc. However, if you want a starchy carbohydrate like potatoes or pastas and breads, then combine them with vegetables and salads.

People who combine three meals a day of meat and potatoes or meat and bread at the same time, will gain weight and have indigestion problems, etc. The secret to this system is to choose the focus of the meal — either carbohydrates or proteins. Combining food correctly opens the door to enjoying foods that have been taboo on all diets.



You can scratch & win prizes like a \$5 Wendy's gift certificate, cash or a \$25,000 interest-free loan just by opening a Norwest AdvantageSM Checking Account.

It's never been more rewarding to switch your checking account to Norwest Bank. Or simpler.

Norwest AdvantageSM Checking accounts pay you interest and give you benefits such as discounted loan rates and no-fee travelers' checks. And when you sign up, you're automatically entered to win a brand new Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo.

As you know, with Norwest relationship banking, the more accounts you have, the less loan interest you pay and the more benefits you receive. And for every new checking account opened, Norwest will donate \$1 to help Nevada kids with special needs be adopted.

Stop by or call toll-free 1-888-629-5363. It's simple to switch to Norwest Bank. And it pays.



©1999 Norwest Bank Nevada, N.A. Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender. No purchase necessary to enter. Void where prohibited. Complete rules available at participating Norwest Banks. Scratch & win cards available while supplies last. Donation benefits the Nevada Adoption Coalition.



C & T Communications
by Pacific Cellular

Pager airtime only \$8

Voicemail only \$12

657-0400

Open 10:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday

3254 N. CIVIC CENTER, STE A • OFF I-15 & CHEYENNE
(in the Cheyenne Square Shopping Center, just before NAPA Auto Parts)