

Health Promotion NEWSLETTER

Health Ministries Department of the Euro-Africa Division

<http://health.euroafrica.org/>

EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues and friends:

A few weeks ago we had the privilege to be part of the World Advisory of the General Conference Health Ministries Department in Silver Spring. This is a special meeting that takes place once every quinquennium in order to trace strategic plans for the advancement of the gospel and medical work during the next five years worldwide. The overall motto was **“Every Church a Community Health Center.”**

Many important issues on health were addressed but there was one item that came up again and again in the messages of several speakers. It was the solemn forewarning of Ellen G. White, “I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work.” (*Evangelism*, p. 523)

It is urgent to get prepared for this soon upcoming crisis. This world is filled with suffering of all kinds, each one being a challenge for itself: alcohol, tobacco, AIDS, violence, drugs, pornography, and the growing pandemic of lifestyle related diseases as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, cancer, etc.

In addition, our churches are specially affected by the loss of our youth. How can we stop this avalanche? The words of Dr. Gary Hopkins were specially appealing when he asked two simple questions: 1) How would people describe an Adventist? - As someone who doesn't drink alcohol, doesn't smoke, doesn't eat pork and doesn't work on Sabbath. 2) How would people describe Christ? - As a loving, caring, accepting, forgiving and healing individual. If Christians are like Christ, then - was his conclusion - shouldn't Adventists be known as “loving, caring, accepting, forgiving and healing individuals?”

We are too often known as the people of DON'TS instead of active DOERS. Jesus himself described his true followers as such caring individuals by saying “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me. . . For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” (Mat. 25:34-46) In fact, “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is

this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27)

The communities around us should know that Adventist churches are “healing centers” for soul and body. People would seek us as they followed Jesus in large crowds.

Research has shown that kids would have better grades in school, be less destructive, less violent, show less premature sexual activity, use less drugs if adults would conform to the above made description of true Christians.¹

The great challenges our church faces in different areas can only be successfully addressed if we all join our forces as E.G. White so clearly appeals: “No line is to be drawn between the genuine medical missionary work and the gospel ministry. These two must blend. They are not to stand apart as separate lines of work. They are to be joined in an inseparable union, even as the hand is joined to the body. . .It is as these lines of work are united that we may expect to gather the most precious fruit for the Lord.” (*A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, p. 44)

The overall goal for this quinquennium is to make “every church a community health center.”

May God bless you in your efforts to reach this goal in your community!

On a personal note I wish to inform you that I will retire beginning August this year. It was a privilege and joy to work with you during the last 16 years. Thank you for all your support, counsels and friendship, always helping and encouraging me to fulfill my mission! I plan to continue to be active in health promotion and spreading the good news of God's love until the He returns.

May God's blessings and His mercies be always with you.

Yours, for better health

J. Hawlitschek

EUD - Health Ministries Department

¹ For further reading we suggest the book “It Takes a Church”, by Dr. Gary Hopkins and Dr. Joyce Hopp, Pacific Press Publ. Ass., 2002, 93 pages, www.adventistbookcenter.com

Actions Taken
World Health Advisory
March 13-21, 2006
Seventh-day Adventist World Headquarters

At the World Health Advisory, the following actions were taken:

1. Whereas we accept the imperative given to all Christians - and to our church in particular - to "Tell the World" of a loving Savior, and because the Savior is best evidenced in His followers, it is

Voted: *That Health Ministry be incorporated into all activities of the church as a tangible expression of Christ's healing ministry.*

2. Foundational to all ministry is the characteristic of integrity. Integrity requires openness in our interactions, complete transparency in our dealings, and genuine compassion as a basis for healing ministry.

Relationships provide channels for communication, transfer of love and affection, and a positive milieu for mentoring.

Need represents objective, rather than subjective, requirements, and should be incorporated into all healing ministry

Voted: *That we encourage all involved in Health Ministry to strive to meet true need through relationships built on integrity.*

3. Evangelism is the work of spreading the good news of the gospel. It has multiple avenues of expression - health ministry is one of those ways.

Voted: *That all public evangelism incorporate Health Ministry as a vital, integrated part of the program.*

4. Institutions of health and healing cannot provide complete care without attention to the spiritual needs of patients.

Voted: *That we reaffirm the intentional promotion of spirituality by every echelon of worker, in every Adventist healthcare institution, for the purpose of bringing peace and security to all patients.*

5. A church should be more than an edifice or hall that houses a congregation. A church represents a body of believers whose mission is to offer care and compassion to the community.

Voted: *That every church shall become a community health center, and that every administrative unit of the church promote this concept.*

6. Living in the end of time, there is no place for clouded thinking or sub-optimal mental ability. Gluttony and debauchery are not to be a part of the Christian lifestyle.

Voted: *That temperance be preached from every pulpit at least annually, and that every member be asked to sign the Temperance Pledge and join the International Health and Temperance Association.*

7. Because success only comes with careful planning and implementation.

Voted: *To request each Division to draw up a five-year strategic plan involving all departments for the formulation and implementation of ministry in all its Unions and Conferences.*

8. Health is of concern to men, women, youth, and children.

Voted: *That all departments of the church find ways and means of incorporating elements of each other into each specialized ministry.*

9. Because new members are joining the church in unprecedented numbers, and because most are untrained or skilled in a vegetarian lifestyle.

Voted: *That emphasis be placed on cooking schools in all Adventist churches, where the use of grains, nuts, fruit, and vegetables, along with low-fat dairy products or their equivalent be taught so as to provide a healthful, well-balanced vegetarian diet.*

10. Because Adventist healthcare institutions are often isolated from each other and have boards of diverse composition and expertise.

Voted: *That, where a system does not already exist, each Division give study to the establishment of a systematic form of governance and management of the healthcare institutions. A Division board of governance and policy, coupled with country boards of management, is recommended for study.*

11. As the Seventh-day Adventist church grows in membership and influence, there is a need to study future needs for the training of health professionals within each territory.

Voted: *That each Division establish a planning committee involving the Health and Education departments. The purpose of such a committee is to study projected needs and to create a strategic development plan for health professional training and establishment of new schools and training courses within the division.*

12. In light of the increasing natural and man-made disasters that face the church and the world as we near the end of time.

Voted: *That each congregation establish an Emergency Response Committee.*

13. Whereas the health message is very appropriate and relevant to the Global Mission program; and whereas the Health Ministries department in all levels can assist Global Mission effectively by deploying health professionals to enter unentered territories for a specified period of time, particularly in 10/40 window areas.

Voted: *That Health Ministries and Global Mission seek ways and means whereby Health Ministries can assist Global Mission outreach, especially in unentered or newly-entered territory.*

14. The principles of a healthy lifestyle are an integral part of the Adventist message (of the gospel).

Voted: *That a formal and comprehensive study of Seventh-day Adventist health philosophy and basic health principles be a required part of the theological curriculum in all SDA theological seminaries.* □

FACTS

Smoking and Incidence of Diabetes Among U.S. Adults

Objective - The objective of this study was to determine the association between smoking and incident diabetes among U.S. adults.

Research design and methods - The Insulin Resistance Atherosclerosis Study (IRAS) was a prospective study of the associations of insulin sensitivity and cardiovascular risk factors. We examined the relationship between smoking status categories (never, former, and current) and incident 5-year type 2 diabetes among 906 participants free of diabetes at baseline. We also considered the effect of pack-year categories (never, former <20 pack-years, former >20 pack-years, current <20 pack-years, and current >20 pack-years) upon diabetes incidence.

Results - Of current smokers, 96 (25%) developed diabetes at 5 years, compared with 60 (14%) never smokers. After multivariable adjustment, current smokers exhibited increased incidence of diabetes compared with never smokers (odds ratio [OR] 2.66, $P = 0.001$). Similar results were found among current smokers with 20 pack-years with normal glucose tolerance (5.66, $P = 0.001$).

Conclusions - Smoking shares a robust association with incident diabetes, supporting the current Surgeon General's warnings against cigarette smoking.

(Source: Capri Gabrielle Foy et al, Diabetes Care 28:2501-2507, 2005.)

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Glycemic Variability

New diabetes management research indicates that glycemic variability (short term high peaks of blood sugar levels) is very damaging, resulting in high levels of oxidative stress causing damage to the eyes, kidneys, and nerves. Developing good blood glucose management techniques to limit blood sugar variability may hold the key to limiting diabetic complications, even more importantly than reducing HbA1c levels. Examples of ways to limit blood glucose variability in diabetics include:

- Frequent monitoring of blood glucose levels (at least 3 times a day)
- Choosing foods that limit blood glucose variability (moderate in carbohydrate intake, lower glycemic index foods, including foods high in dietary fiber over refined foods)
- Regular exercise such as walking
- Reducing excess body weight

Diabetes now affects an estimated 20.8 million individuals in the United States, about 7% of all adults, age 20 and above, and the prevalence continues to rapidly increase. The lifetime risk of developing diabetes for those born in the year 2000 is 35% or 1 out of every 3 individuals.

(Source: Brownlee M. Glycemic Variability: A HbA1c Independent Risk Factor for Diabetic Complications. JAMA. 2006;295:1707-8. Apr. 12, 2006.)

In a **Finnish study** of over 4300 men/women, during 10 years, those eating the most whole-grains had 35% less type 2 diabetes, and those with highest cereal fiber intake had 61% less diabetes.

(Source: Amer J Clin Nutrition, March 2003)

FADS AND QUESTIONS ON NUTRITION

Is there any difference between sugar from sugar beets and from sugar cane?

No. There is no difference in the sugar produced from cane and beet. Sugar cane is a giant grass that grows in a tropical climate and stores sugar in its stalk. The sugar beet grows best in a temperate climate and stores sugar in its white root. The same sugar (sucrose) is also found naturally in all fruit and vegetables.

Does excess sugar in the diet contribute to type 2 diabetes?

Sugar intake is not linked to the development of diabetes. Diabetes is a complex disease, in which genetics and lifestyle factors play a joint role. The most common form, type 2 diabetes, is associated with obesity, especially central obesity, and sedentary lifestyles.

How does honey differ from sugar?

Honey is a mixture of sugars formed from nectar by an enzyme, invertase, present in the bodies of bees. Honey varies in composition and flavour, depending on the source of the nectar (clover, orange blossom, sage, etc). A typical analysis of honey would show (exclusive of undetermined substances): 38% fructose, 31% glucose, 1% sucrose, 9% other sugars, 17% water and 0.17% ash. On the other hand, sugar is pure sucrose. Honey straight from the farm may contain some pollen and other substances. Commercially-produced honey is usually filtered to remove these impurities and may have extra glucose and water added to prevent crystallization.

On an equal weight basis, there is very little difference between honey and sugar as both provide carbohydrate and energy. However, a teaspoon of honey weighs more than a teaspoon of sugar so it will contain slightly more carbohydrate and energy.

(Source: www.wsro.org/public/faqs.html and <http://rcrec-ona.ifas.ufl.edu/mol.pdf>)

Comment: The above information is correct. However, the source is from the sugar industry and on the website you will notice that the use of white sugar is freely recommended while its

harmful effects on tooth decay, heart disease, and obesity are played down. It is true that glucose or levulose, no matter if they originate from white sugar, honey or fruits, are chemically the same, but the rest of the components of the food makes a difference on our metabolism.

According to **Dr. Bill Sears**, Ass. Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard medical School, "Eating or drinking 100 grams (8 tbsp.) of sugar, the equivalent of one 12-ounce can of soda, can reduce the ability of white blood cells to kill germs by forty percent. The immune-suppressing effect of sugar starts less than thirty minutes after ingestion and may last for five hours. In contrast, the ingestion of complex carbohydrates, or starches, has no effect on the immune system."

We need to be wise and avoid extremes. Here is some counsel from **EG White** that is very in line with the above mentioned scientific findings:

"I frequently sit down to the tables of the brethren and sisters, and see that they use a great amount of milk and sugar. These clog the system, irritate the digestive organs, and affect the brain. Anything that hinders the active motion of the living machinery, affects the brain very directly. And from the light given me, sugar, when largely used, is more injurious than meat." (Counsels on Diet and Foods, 328)

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

Romania: Health Message opens Doors of Pentecostal Churches

"At the end of January and the beginning of February we were asked by a Pentecostal Church to hold a series of evangelistic meetings in Câmpeni. This was a great experience for the group to see how God is calling his people from everywhere to hear the advent message.

"Our continuing missions in Cuiesti and Herghelia are going well. Every Sunday (if we are at the school) we go to these neighboring villages. We also go to Cuiesti on Sabbaths, since a Pentecostal church opened the door of their church for us there. Last Sundays have been a couple of our best days in Cuiesti because the opportunity came for student Godfrey to preach to all the members about the importance of all the commandments including keeping the Sabbath. People responded well and we are praising God for this opportunity."

Sent by Thora Lilja, student at the International Medical Missionary Training Center in Herghelia.

LITERATURE & MATERIALS



Abundant Living Health Nuggets - are a series of 26 PowerPoint presentations with the latest scientific information on health topics of common interest. Available in several languages.

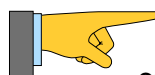
For information see www.heresources.com/

CONVENTIONS AND SEMINARS

AMALF

Date: 01-05 November 2006

Place: Prague, the "Golden City" of Europe.



There will be guided tours to the historical city of Prague and its wonderful castles.



Topic: **Dr. Gary Frazer, from Loma Linda**, head of the research team of the famous **Adventist Health Study**, will personally report about the latest findings and implications of this unique public health study of the lifestyle of Seventh-day Adventists that is revolutionizing the scientific world. Don't lose this opportunity. Register today! Info: www.amalf.org/
For registration and questions write to: congres@amalf.org

See also the following website on Adventists: http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0511/sights_n_sounds/index.html

THOUGHTS OF THE MONTH

"The work of health reform is the Lord's means for lessening suffering in our world and for purifying His church." Testimonies 9, 112

"When the third angel's message is received in its fullness, health reform will be given its place in the councils of the conference, in the work of the church, in the home, at the table, and in all the household arrangements. Then the right arm will serve and protect the body." Testimonies 6, 327

The *Health Promotion* NEWSLETTER is a quarterly report about new health promotion materials, conventions, important addresses, working strategies, etc. For best effectiveness we kindly ask you to share such information with your co-workers and also to supply to our department pertinent information to be published. Let us unite in the proclamation of God's health message!

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