



Natural Standard

The Authority on Integrative Medicine

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Trial Evaluates Kampo's Effect on Hepatitis C



Researchers at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York are conducting a clinical phase II trial to determine whether sho-saiko-to (SST) can help treat Hepatitis C (HCV). An estimated five million Americans have been infected with HCV, according to new research presented at the American Association For The Study of Liver Diseases Conference

in November 2005.

Most of the patients in the clinical trial have a genotype 1 infection, which is less responsive to conventional treatment than the other five genotypes. Of the 31 patients in the study, 15 have already completed the daily regimen of 7.5g of sho-saiko-to granules (4.2g of standardized herbal extract) for 52 weeks. Researchers reported the preliminary results of the 15 patients at the second [Society of Integrative Oncology](#) Conference in San Diego last November.

So far the study, titled "Sho-saiko-to for Patients with Chronic Hepatitis C Who Are Intolerant to or Have Contraindication to Interferon-Based Therapy: A Phase II Study," has shown promising results.

Among the 15 patients who completed the study, 11 patients showed reductions in alanine aminotransferase (ALT) and 10 patients showed reductions in aspartate aminotransferase (AST). Patients with hepatitis typically have high levels of both enzymes. No serious side effects have been attributed to sho-saiko-to among any patients enrolled in the trial.

The results are consistent with previous Japanese clinical trials, which found that SST has anti-inflammatory effects. In animal studies, SST has demonstrated anti-fibrotic effects by inhibition of lipid peroxidation in liver cells and stellate cells. It has also been shown to reduce the incidence of liver cancer in patients with hepatitis and liver cirrhosis.

Sho saiko-to is a Japanese herbal formula that is a part of the East Asian Chinese medicine tradition, called Kampo. A Kampo drug is a standardized and regulated multi-herb formula. Kampo formulas are an essential component of Japanese integrative medicine and are often given to

[Trial Evaluates Kampo's Effect on Hepatitis C](#)
[Cholesterol Remedy may be Ineffective](#)

[Family Health & Caregiver Expo](#)

[Natural Standard Published in JSIO](#)

[Soy may help Postmenopausal Symptoms](#)

[Pill Restores Immune Function in Athletes](#)

[Conference on Natural Products](#)

[FDA: Green Tea no Health Benefit](#)

[Diet Affects Odds of Having Twins](#)

[International Auriculotherapy Conference](#)

[Inside Natural Standard](#)

patients alongside Western treatments in even the most mainstream of Japan's hospitals.

For more information on this and other herbs, please visit [Natural Standard's Herbs & Supplements Database](#).

Reference: 1) Sho-Saiko-To for Patients with Chronic Hepatitis C who are Intolerant to or have Contraindication to Interferon-Based Therapy: A Phase II Study [View Abstract](#).

Cholesterol Remedy may be Ineffective



Policosanol, thought to be a natural remedy for high cholesterol, was found ineffective by a German study published in [The Journal of the American Medical Association](#).

The Drug Commission of the German Medical Association in Berlin conducted a multi-center study comparing Cuban sugar cane-derived policosanol with a placebo supplement.

Policosanol is a natural mixture of higher aliphatic primary alcohols, isolated and purified from sugar cane wax.

The study examined 143 Caucasian adults with low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels of 150mg/dL. The U.S. Federal Drug Administration (FDA) defines LDL as the type of cholesterol that is carried into the blood and is the main cause of harmful fatty buildup in arteries that increases the risk of heart disease. The normal range for LDL falls below 130 mg/dL.

Study participants were randomly given doses of 10, 20, 40 and 80mg of policosanol or placebo. After three months, the researchers were unable to find any distinguishable or significant effects on the patients' cholesterol levels.

The researchers concluded that in patients with unhealthy cholesterol levels, the sugar cane-derived policosanol in both usual and high doses did not demonstrate a reduction in lipid levels beyond placebo.

For more information on Policosanol, please visit [Natural Standard's Herbs & Supplements Database](#).

Reference: 1) Berthold HK, Unverdorben S, Degenhardt R, Bulitta M, Gouni-Berthold I. Effect of policosanol on lipid levels among patients with hypercholesterolemia or combined hyperlipidemia: a randomized controlled trial. 2006 May 17;295(19):2262-9 [View Abstract](#).

Family Health & Caregiver Expo



Nearly 50 million Americans are faced with the challenge of caring for a chronically ill, disabled or aged family member or friend. These caregivers spend \$54 billion annually on uninsured caregiver products and services, according to [The National Family Caregivers Association](#).

Recognizing the importance of reaching out to this growing segment of the community, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation (NACDS) and WJLA-TV, ABC's Washington affiliate, have jointly developed the Family Health & Caregiver Expo.

Over 100 exhibitors will offer information on: free health screenings, product sampling opportunities, educational seminars, new products and services, assisted living and healthcare facilities, innovative drugs and medications, financial planning services, community pharmacists' role in family caregiving and much more.

For more information on the expo, please visit: <http://www.familycaregiverexpo.com/index.html>.

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Natural Standard Published in JSIO



A **Natural Standard** manuscript will be published in the Journal of the Society for Integrative Oncology (JSIO). The review, titled, "An Evidence-based Systematic Review of Saw Palmetto," features a statistical analysis of scientific literature, expert opinion, folkloric precedent, history, pharmacology, kinetics/dynamics, interactions, adverse effects, toxicology and dosing.

Authors include: Ethan Basch, MD (Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center); Heather Boon, B.Sc.PhM, PhD (University of Toronto); Michelle Corrado, PharmD (Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates); Ivo Foppa, MD, ScD (University of South Carolina); Sadaf Hashmi MD, MPH (Harvard School of Public Health); Paul Hammerness, MD (Massachusetts General Hospital); Eileen Kingsbury, PharmD (University of Rhode Island); Michael Smith, M.R.PharmS, ND (Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine); Philippe Szapary, MD (University of Pennsylvania); Catherine Ulbricht, PharmD (Massachusetts General Hospital); Mamta Vora, PharmD (Northeastern University); Wendy Weissner, BA (Natural Standard Research Collaboration).

To read other systematic reviews of herbs and supplements, please log in to [Natural Standard's](#) Web site.

Soy may help Postmenopausal Symptoms

Isoflavones from soy may improve the mood and mental clarity of postmenopausal women, a study in Rome found.

At the University Hospital in Milan, Italy, 78 postmenopausal women participated in the six-month study. Patients were treated alternately with phytoestrogens containing 60mg of isoflavone or placebo.

[The Institute of Food Science and Technology](#) defines phytoestrogens as phenolic compounds that are natural components of certain plant foods and are structurally similar to estrogen.



The women given the phytoestrogen tablets tested better on measures of cognitive performance and mood, suggesting that soy may help treat postmenopausal symptoms.

For more information on soy, isoflavones and phytoestrogen, please visit Natural Standard's [Herbs & Supplements Database](#).

Reference: 1) Casini ML, Marelli G, Papaleo E, Ferrari A, D'Ambrosio F, Unfer V, Psychological assessment of the effects of treatment with phytoestrogens on postmenopausal women: a randomized, double-blind, crossover, placebo-controlled study. *Erspermer, University La Sapienza, Rome, Italy. Fertil Steril.* 2006 Apr;85(4):972-8 [View Abstract](#).

Pill Restores Immune Function in Athletes



In fatigued athletes, the production of a natural virus fighter, known as interferon, is decreased. However, new research suggests that it can be restored to normal levels with a "probiotic" pill that contains *Lactobacillus acidophilus*.

Decreased levels of interferon may cause a defective immune response against the Epstein Barr virus (EBV), which is common among fatigued athletes. The Epstein Barr virus can cause many diseases, including mononucleosis, and it has been implicated in chronic fatigue syndrome. However, interferon usually keeps

the virus in check.

Researchers tested for EBV in 24 saliva samples taken from eight fatigued athletes before and after receiving a one-month course of the probiotic capsules. Interferon levels were also measured in blood samples.

The results, published in the [British Journal of Sports Medicine](#), suggest that *L. acidophilus* can restore the body's natural levels of interferon. Before treatment, five of the subjects tested positive for EBV. After treatment, just one showed signs of the virus.

For more information on interferon and probiotic pills, visit Natural Standard's [Herbs & Supplements Database](#).

Reference: 1) Clancy RL, Gleeson M, Cox A, Callister R, Dorrington M, D'Este C, Pang G, Pyne D, Fricker P, Henriksson A. Reversal in fatigued athletes of a defect in interferon gamma secretion after administration of *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. *Br J Sports Med.* 2006 Apr;40(4):351-4 [View Abstract](#).

Conference on Natural Products

Now in its 55th year, the Gordon Research Conference on Natural Products continues to be a forum for developments in organic chemistry.

Speakers will represent areas such as chemical biology, medicinal chemistry, natural products isolation/structural elucidation, synthetic methods and total synthesis from academia and industry in scheduled lectures.

Poster sessions provide all attendees with the opportunity to present their latest research and exchange ideas in an informal setting. Similar to the lectures, the poster presentations will represent work that has not been significantly publicized.



All conferees are encouraged to present poster presentations and should submit an abstract complete with title, authors and affiliation/address (one page) to both the Chair Frederick A. Luzzio, PhD faluzz01@gwise.louisville.edu and the 2006 Vice- Chair, David Uehling, PhD david.e.uehling@gsk.com via e-mail.

Uehling will be responsible for both organizing the poster sessions and working with the Chair to select two to three poster abstracts for short-talk presentations.

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FDA: Green Tea no Health Benefit



There is no credible scientific evidence that green tea can reduce the risk of heart disease said federal regulators, rejecting a petition to allow tea labels to make the claim.

In June 2005, Ito En Ltd., a Japanese company that claims to be the world's largest green tea company and its U.S. subsidiary, Ito En (North America) Inc., petitioned the FDA. The company sought to make the claim that drinking at least five ounces of green tea a day reduced the risk of developing heart disease.

The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) reviewed the 105 articles and other publications that were submitted as part of the petition but did not find evidence to support the claims.

"FDA concludes that there is no credible evidence to support qualified health claims for green tea or green tea extract and a reduction of a number of risk factors associated with CVD," Barbara O. Schneeman, director of the agency's Office of Nutritional Products, Labeling and Dietary Supplements, wrote in a letter denying the petition.

Last year, the FDA also said that there is no credible scientific evidence to suggest that green tea reduces the risk of breast, prostate or any other type of cancer.

For more information about the FDA's response, please visit <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/qhcgtea2.html>.

For more information on green tea or alternative therapies for heart disease, please visit [Natural Standard's](#) Web site.

Diet Affects Odds of Having Twins



Women who adhere to a vegan diet are one-fifth as likely as other women to have twins, according to a new study published in the [Journal of Reproductive Medicine](#).

The [American Dietetic Association](#) defines a vegan diet as one omitting all animal products, including dairy. Researchers attribute the odds of having twins to the hormones some cattle are given to boost their milk and meat production.

The study, which took place at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center,

compared twin birth rates among women who ate a regular diet, vegetarians who consumed dairy products and women who followed vegan diets.

All animals produce a compound known as insulin-like growth factor, or IGF, in response to growth hormone. The hormone increases ovulation by increasing the sensitivity of the ovaries to follicle stimulating hormone.

Insulin-like growth factor is found in milk, particularly milk from cows undergoing growth-hormone treatment. Additionally, in cattle, regions of the genetic code that control the rate of twinning have been found close to the IGF gene.

For more information on diets, please visit: [Natural Standard's Complementary Practices Database](#).

Reference: 1) G. Steinman. Mechanisms of Twinning: VII. Effect of Diet and Heredity on the Human Twinning Rate. J Reprod Med. 2006 May;51(5):405-10 [View Abstract](#).

International Auriculotherapy Conference



The International Auriculotherapy Conference will focus on effective and modern procedures for pain management and addictions, including how to release endorphins, enkephalins and dynorphins, the body's own natural brain chemicals.

All attendees will be trained and able to use auriculotherapy in one week. Certificates of attendance will be awarded at the end of the seminar.

One and two-day seminars are available; the first day will be introductory while the second day will be advanced.

For more information and to register please visit, <http://www.electrotherapy.com> or contact Electro Therapy Association, PO Box 33189, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74153-1189; Phone 918.663.0297; fax 918.663.0298.

Inside Natural Standard

New Team Members: Please join [Natural Standard](#) in welcoming three new colleagues.

We welcome Jason Mahoney and Sandy Dennis to our Public Outreach and Library Services Department. Jason and Sandy are excited to be part of Natural Standard's International Team and we are proud to have them aboard.

Shaina Tanguay-Colucci was hired this month as an Editorial Assistant. She has BS degree in Journalism from Boston University and has written news articles for local and international audiences.

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