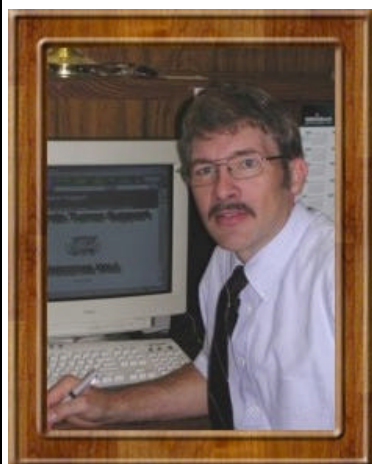




"The Gray Matter" is a monthly publication of WNC Brain Tumor Support.
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From the desk of George....

Greetings!

I am a little bit scared right now. As I sat down to work on the Gray Matter, I realized that I am not capable of doing it! I told myself, you are wrong, "George, you are capable of doing it. It is just a lot harder than it used to be!" As you know, from April to now, I have been going through some tough times, medically. Notably, a brain tumor, thyroid surgery, radiation for a malignant skin tumor and a persistent fever. I guess I am making excuses for my inability to think clearly anymore. That just makes me work harder to convince myself that I CAN still do it!

I spent nearly six weeks in Winston-Salem at Wake Forest University Comprehensive Cancer Center. It was a real eye opener. I really thought that I had it bad until I met some of the other patients with cancer. I could tell you about some of the brain tumor patients that I met but that is not really the point. The point is that when I feel depressed and bummed-out, I think about some of the special friends that I have met that have it so much worse off than I have, I thank the Lord for being able to do what I can do. And when you think you have it bad, look toward the Gulf coast...

George Plym
President, WNC BTS

Potential Treatment for Brain Cancer

Aug. 22.

Slipping past the blood brain barrier: Research shows potential treatment for brain cancer

ST. LOUIS -- A compound that kills cancer can sneak past the blood brain barrier, which protects the brain from foreign substances, to do its work in fighting a particularly invasive brain cancer, according to a new Saint Louis University animal study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"The bottom line is, if you can get drugs into the brain, you can cure brain cancer," says William A. Banks, M.D., professor of geriatrics in the department of internal medicine and professor of pharmacological and physiological science at Saint Louis University School of Medicine and a member of the research team.

The compound – JV-1-36 – is an antagonist of the hypothalamic growth hormone- releasing hormone, which has been found to cause cancerous tumors, such as malignant glioblastomas, to grow. The main known purposes of the hypothalamic growth hormone-releasing hormone usually are to trigger the hormone that makes children grow and affect how glucose is used in adults.

Researchers found that the P-gp system, an extra guardian located at the blood brain barrier that usually keeps anticancer drugs out of the brain, intercepted some of the JV-1-36 that was injected into mice but let much of it

pass into the brain to treat cancer.

"The blood brain barrier is set up to very carefully patrol what it lets into the brain and what it keeps out. It makes these decisions based on the physicochemical properties," says Dr. Banks, who also is a staff physician at Veterans Affairs Medical Center in St. Louis.

"Most of our drugs that fight cancers are toxic to cancer cells and to other cells, too. That's why the blood brain barrier locks them out of the brain."

The research was done in collaboration with investigators at Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans, including Nobel Laureate Andrew V. Schally, Ph.D.

Dr. Banks said the findings are promising because they show a way to get drugs into the brain to treat cancer.

"There are times when there's a big difference between an animal model and the human condition. In terms of getting drugs across the blood brain barrier to fight cancer, there's not such a big difference. There's pretty much the same rules in any blood brain barrier – be it in a mouse or human."

Laura Jaeger, the lead author of the study and a doctoral student in the department of pharmacological and physiological science at Saint Louis University, calls the findings "very positive and a good first step."

Study Finds no Link Between Tumors, Phones

By MATT MOORE

LONDON (AP) - Mobile phone users can dial without concern after another study found no evidence of a link between the ubiquitous devices and brain tumors.

The study, conducted by the London-based Institute of Cancer Research, and published this week on the British Journal of Cancer's Web site, found no increased risks of a rare benign tumor in the nerve that links the ear to the brain.

It echoed the findings of a similar study by Swedish investigators last year and of scores of other studies investigating a possible link between the use of cellular phones and brain cancer.

Researchers questioned 678 patients already diagnosed with the tumor - acoustic neuroma - and 3,553 who did not have it, about their cell phone use. There was no increased risk of tumor associated with using the phones for at least 10 years.

Retrospective questionnaires are not considered the most accurate method of determining a link between behavior and disease. Several previous studies, using more rigorous methods, have also found no evidence that the phones pose a health risk.

However, scientists have said it may not be a good idea for children to use the phones for long periods because their brains are still developing. Also, it is too early to tell what the effects of long-term use will be on adults.

"The results of our study suggest that there is no substantial risk in the first decade after starting use," said lead investigator Anthony Swerdlow. "Whether there are longer-term risks remains unknown, reflecting the fact that this is a relatively recent technology."

Golf Balls and Coffee

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the coffee...

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes." The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life." The golf balls are the important things, your God, family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions, things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car. The sand is everything else, the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal.

"Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

Events

Mark your calendars!
Visit our online
calendar for more info
on events.



Upcoming Events

Sep 15, Thursday


WNC BTS meeting at West Presbyterian Church Hall, 690 Haywood Rd., Asheville (west). Refreshements at 6:15, meeting 6:30-8:00.

Oct 20, Thursday

WNC BTS meeting at West Presbyterian Church Hall, 690 Haywood Rd., Asheville (west). Refreshements at 6:15, meeting 6:30-8:00

Parking at Normal Meeting Place

The best place to park is in the CCB bank drive-thru parking directly along the drive of the adjoining the church. Do not park next to the night deposit box! If you park in the back lot of the church, for security reasons, the back door will be locked at 6:30. So, park on the side of the bank!

<p>Member Update</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Member Update</p> <p>A big thank you to Kirsten, Bridgette's daughter, for her efforts in raising money for the brain tumor research. Kristen raised over \$30 at her school! That may not seem much, but it is the quarters and dollar bills that have been raised over \$500 million for the needy in New Orleans. If everyone donated just a little to brain tumor research, there will be a cure!</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Hmmm</p> <p>Why does Goofy stand erect while Pluto remains on all fours? They're both dogs!</p> <p>If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, then what is baby oil made from?</p> <p>If electricity comes from electrons, does morality come from morons?</p> <p>Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?</p> <p>Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?</p> <p>If quitters never win, and winners never quit, what fool came up with, "Quit while you're ahead"?</p>
<p>HAPPY BIRTHDAY</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>September Birthdays</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dave Storch 9/16</p>

