

The Tribune

The Miami Herald

BAHAMAS EDITION

MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2000

LOCAL NEWS

Cure for cancer in a bowl of soup?

By Etienne Dupuch Jr Publications

When Dr. Alexander Sun's mother was diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer in 1984, it changed his life. The Taiwanese biochemist was working at the time at Mt Sinai's School of Medicine in New York City. He was determined not to let his mother die.

"I read all the papers on lung cancer treatment that I could

find," he told writer Paula Panzarella, "and I quickly learned this type of tumour responds very poorly to all types of chemotherapy or radiotherapy."

Dr. Sun's mother underwent surgery to remove the tumour, but the cancer involved lymph nodes as well. She was diagnosed with Stage IIIA lung cancer.

While friends advised him not to do anything, because nothing would work, Dr. Sun decided to put

his mother through chemotherapy anyway, hoping it would eliminate any cancer cells that had spread. Mrs. Sun was only able to endure three of the eight prescribed rounds of chemotherapy, after which a new tumour in her left adrenal gland was discovered and she developed fluid filled with cancer cells in her lungs. The cancer had advanced to Stage IV.

Dr. Sun continued to put his mother through radiotherapy,

against the advice of a radiologist friend. The tumour grew larger and Dr. Sun decided to take matters into his own hands.

Chinese medicine

He found a copy of a Chinese traditional medical textbook and studied it to learn about Chinese herbs, and how they can be used to treat disease. He learned which herbs are toxic and which aren't and how to prepare and use them. Based on his new knowledge, Dr. Sun put together an herbal vegetable soup, Selected Vegetable Herbal Mix (SV), which he hoped would boost his mother's immune system and shrink her tumour.

The soup contains all natural ingredients such as soybeans, mushrooms, red dates, garlic, lentil beans, leeks, mung beans, ginseng, liquorice, sesame seeds and parsley. Patients eat it by mixing a pouch of SV with hot water, adding it to existing soup, or sprinkling it on salad.

Three months after Mrs. Sun began eating the soup daily, her condition had improved and Dr. Sun convinced the surgeon to remove the second tumour.

Results of studies

At a National Centre of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) meeting in July 1999, Dr. Sun presented the results of his Study of Stage III and IV Non-small Cell Lung Cancer Patients Taking a Specific Dietary Supplement to the Cancer Advisory Panel, made up of 12 experts in cancer research. He explained that in December 1985, when his mother's tumour was removed, the surgeon was impressed that although the tumour was large, it was very well encapsulated and there was no cancer in the margins or lymph nodes. The surgeon had never seen that kind of encapsulation and felt there was something about Dr. Sun's herbal treatment that had caused it. Mrs. Sun has now been cancer-free for more than 14 years.

Dr. Sun also reported that he had given the soup to a family friend who had three brain lesions. The lesions shrank, then disappeared. A research team then tested the soup in laboratory mice and found it had immune-enhancing and tumour-reducing properties.

Tumour growth was slowed 30-40 per cent when one of the anti-tumour/immune-enhancing ingredients was mixed into mouse food. Tumour growth was slowed 85-90 per cent when both ingredients were given to the mice. It was time to test the mixture on people.

Clinical trial

A clinical trial on stage III and IV non-small cell lung cancer patients in the Czech Republic followed. Median Survival Time (MST) is the time after diagnosis when one-half of the patients die, and is used to evaluate the effectiveness of treatment for stage IV non-small cell lung cancer. In the first clinical study, MST of patients who ate Dr. Sun's soup was three times longer than for patients who did not eat the soup.

Body weight and patient health are the strongest predictors of patient survival. Dr. Sun found in his clinical trial that body weight and health were maintained or slightly improved in the patients who ate SV, contributing to their survival. The body weight and health of the control group who did not eat SV reduced dramatically. The results of this trial were published in the August 1999 issue of *Nutrition and Cancer*. The conclusions were that patients who took SV "felt better, lived longer, and were in better condition than those in the control group" and that further study was necessary.

The authors also concluded that "Apparently SV alone cannot cure Stage III and IV NSCLC patients at present. Nonetheless, SV may have opened the door to a new direction in the non-toxic treatment of this devastating disease."

Several terminally ill patients from Memorial Sloan-Kettering and Harvard Medical School have been referred to Dr. Sun for treatment. While he points out that it is difficult to draw conclusions before large scale clinical trials are carried out, he does say that at least one of the referrals who is using SV, without chemotherapy "has stabilised, and is doing fine. The other day I saw him playing basketball with his brother," he said.

Dr. Sun is optimistic about the conclusions drawn by the Cancer Advisory Panel after his presentation to the NCCAM. "They voted unanimously to recommend funding for a large-scale clinical trial," he said. "Their position is neutral, and they felt that the data was strong enough to warrant more extensive study."

Dr. Sun continues his research. He has been director of medical sciences at the Connecticut Institute for Aging and Cancer in Milford, CT since 1994.

In June 1998 and 1999 he was the invited speaker at a symposium for Comprehensive Cancer Care in Arlington, VA, sponsored by the University of Texas-Houston Medical School, The Centre for Mind-Body Medicine, the National Cancer Institute and the National Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

Breast cancer treatment

Maggie Jencks was diagnosed with breast cancer at 48 years old. Before her death in 1995, she wrote an article for the *Daily Telegraph*, recounting her struggle with cancer and suggesting improvements in cancer patient care.

Jencks tried various supplements and natural remedies, then heard about Dr. Sun's soup. "I began taking a tub of Sun Farm Vegetable Soup every morning for breakfast," she wrote. "By the time we got back to Britain three months later, I had so much energy I needed tethering."

Before starting the soup, Jencks took a test to monitor any malignancy still active in her. They found that one out of the three markers showed low but measurable active malignancy. Six months later, all three markers were negative.

"I realise this may be due to the delayed effect of the chemotherapy or a build-up in hormone therapy," she wrote. "But it could also be the soup."

She wrote: "Above all, what matters is not to lose the joy of living to the fear of dying. Involvement in one's own treatment is an empowering weapon. There is a reasonable body of evidence to suggest that patients who eat healthy, keep active and take steps to deal with stress and fear experience fewer symptoms and less pain even in the final stages of their disease."