

Focus on Faith

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH FROM A-Z

E

ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement means to give courage. The purpose of human relationships is for individuals to provide each other with encouragement to realize their full individual potential as human beings.

For further information about the Bahá'í Faith Please Call 1-800-433-3284

MARKHAM MISSIONARY CHURCH
Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada

Sunday December 28, 1997

10:30 a.m. Family Worship Service
Pastor Lougheed speaking
(no evening service)

Call church for additional program information.

5438 Major Mackenzie Drive East
Markham, Ont. L3P 3J3
(905) 294-5081 (905) 294-5383 (fax)

SUPPORT FOR THE SALVATION ARMY: Markham Kiwanis member Ted Rainey, right, presents Lt. Owen Budden of the Salvation Army with a cheque for \$750 recently at Markville Shopping Centre. The money came from the proceeds of selling hot apple cider at the Main Street, Markham Festival of Lights which was held on Friday, Nov. 28.

CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH
131 Main St., Unionville 474-0183

Sunday, December 28 - 11:00 a.m. worship service

"A warm welcome awaits you"

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

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143 Main St. Markham
(905) 294-4736



HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Colorectal cancer – second leading cause of cancer deaths in Canada

When 30-year-old Danny Vinnai visited his doctor in September 1994 because of troubling symptoms, he was relieved to hear it was irritable bowel syn-

drome, a common intestinal problem. But a month later, those symptoms remained. And there was a new one: blood in his stool. He was sent to a specialist for tests.

This time, the diagnosis was much more serious: colorectal cancer – a disease that usually strikes people in their 50s and older, not active young fathers like Vinnai.

Within two weeks, Vinnai had surgery to remove a tumour and then was put on 5-FU, the only chemotherapy drug available in Canada to treat colorectal cancer. He also underwent a colostomy to remove a portion of his bowel and to attach an external pouch to collect solid waste.

Second leading cause of cancer death

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths, with only lung cancer killing more Canadians.

The Canadian Cancer Society estimates more than 16,000 new cases will be diagnosed this year alone. The cancer – which can affect the entire large intestine (both the colon and rectum) – is usually slow-growing.

But because the symptoms do not appear serious, patients may delay seeing a doctor.

Delay was not the issue with Vinnai. Yet, despite the surgeries and drug therapy, the disease spread to his liver.

When doctors finally told him nothing more could be done, Vinnai and his wife Cheryl began searching for another answer. That's when they heard about Camp-

tosar, a new drug that acts differently from standard therapy.

New treatment option

Camptosar was only available in Canada in clinical trials and none were ongoing near their Brantford home. After waiting three months, Vinnai decided to go to the U.S. for weekly treatments.

Midway through his second cycle of chemo, he found a clinical trial in Canada willing to accept him. By then, he had paid \$12,000 out of his own pocket.

Now, after five months of Campptosar treatment, his tumour has shrunk and his symptoms have diminished significantly.

Although not a cure, Camptosar has improved his quality of life dramatically.

Vinnai not only encourages patients to talk with their doctors about all potential therapy options, including clinical trials, but he also wants to raise awareness of this neglected disease.

"It's true that some of the tests are embarrassing, but they are so important."

Symptoms of colorectal cancer include diarrhea, constipation or alternating episodes of both; change in bowel habits; an increase in gas or stomach discomfort; narrowing of the stool; a feeling that the bowel does not empty completely; general fatigue or weight loss.

Risk factors include: being older than 50; having a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps (non-cancerous growths) in the colon or rectum; having inflammatory bowel disease; and a high-fat and low-fiber diet heavy in red meat.

A low-fat diet high in fruits and vegetables may be protective against developing colorectal cancer.

New research suggests exercise, folic acid, aspirin and some forms of fiber may also reduce risk.

The Canadian Cancer Society suggests that anyone at a greater than normal risk discuss a surveillance program with their doctor.

Dr. Michael Pollak DDS
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